Naoyuki Agawa

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The US Navy and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force

Second Edition

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Foreword

On August 28, 1945, 13 days after the surrender of Japan, the US Third Fleet entered Tokyo Bay. A long column of warships threaded a narrow entrance channel, making two sharp turns as it rounded the southern and eastern capes of the Miura Peninsula. American carrier planes patrolled overhead. The flagship *Missouri*, a 48,000-ton *Iowa*-class battleship, anchored about four miles offshore, in ten fathoms of water, not far from where Commodore Matthew Perry's "Black Ships" had anchored in 1853.

The officers and men of the fleet had rejoiced to learn that Japan had agreed to lay down arms. But now, with their hard-won victory behind them, they faced another daunting challenge. The sudden end of the Pacific War (and with it, the Second World War) had caught them by surprise. Relatively little advance planning had been done for the largely unexpected contingency of a peaceful surrender. Japan was a nation of 70 million people living on four main islands and hundreds of smaller islands. Sending a military occupation force into the defeated country was an operation of vast scale and complexity, especially because it had to be done quickly.

The US Navy had been asked by Supreme Allied Commander Douglas MacArthur to secure Tokyo Bay, including the sprawling Yokosuka Naval Base. The schedule of operations was very tight. The fleet had not even managed to return to its rear bases in Okinawa, Guam, or the Philippines before going into Japan. An expeditionary landing force would have to be mustered using the crews of ships already at sea. For the officers and sailors of the US Navy (USN), the weeks after V-J Day were an immensely stressful and difficult time.

From his post on the bridge, high in the *Missouri*'s towering superstructure, Captain Stuart Murray observed the devastated landscape along the shore of Tokyo Bay. Inland, in the direction of Yokohama and Tokyo, he saw fields of ash, hillocks of rubble, and the frames of gutted buildings—the results of huge incendiary bombing raids by B-29s. Moored near the piers of Yokosuka Naval Base was a row of smashed, blackened, listing warships. They had been pulverized by the Third Fleet's carrier bombers a month earlier. One was the battleship *Nagato*, which had served as Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto's flagship at the outset of the Pacific War.

This pitiful array of half-sunken wrecks was nearly all that remained of the once-mighty Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN), which had blindsided the American fleet at Pearl Harbor and conquered half of the Pacific less than 4 years earlier.

A Japanese harbor pilot stood by Captain Murray on the bridge. He had come aboard the *Missouri* earlier that morning, to assist in navigating the great battleship through the narrow, zigzagging, mineswept channel into Tokyo Bay. The two men had established an efficient working rapport, and were conversing freely through a translator. Captain Murray would later recall the pilot had told him that Japan had been "thoroughly defeated" in the war, and "if there is ever another big war we're going to be on your side." He added that he believed this view was widely shared by his fellow Japanese.

The initial occupation of postwar Japan was fraught with danger and difficulties. The emperor and the Japanese government had consented to surrender, but millions of Japanese troops remained under arms. No one knew whether the Japanese Army would comply with the emperor's edict. Allied forces might have to fight their way into Japan after all. But even if there was no organized armed opposition, it seemed likely that they would encounter, at a minimum, scattered resistance by disaffected or rebellious troops and civilians. They could imagine a range of lethal threats: lone snipers, bombs, booby traps, poisoned water supplies. They expected the inhabitants to display a sullen, noncooperative attitude, passive resistance, and perhaps to commit acts of sabotage against critical transportation and military assets.

More than a million Allied troops would pour into the defeated nation, representing every branch of the US armed forces and several Allied nations. The logistics required to support such a Herculean operation were comparable to those of an actual invasion. It was imperative that it be done *quickly*, so that a critical mass of military power could be established in every region of Japan, deterring any would-be insurrectionists. But speed, in turn, created its own logistical and engineering challenges.

A spearhead landing force of marines and sailors would occupy Yokosuka Naval Base. Simultaneously, the 11th Airborne Division would be airlifted from Okinawa into nearby Atsugi Airfield. Other units would occupy bases and airfields across the four main islands of Japan. But most such military installations had been hammered for months by B-29 and carrier bombing raids, and needed to be completely rebuilt. From the moment they set foot on Japanese soil, the occupation forces would have to begin rebuilding the bases they seized. General Robert Eichelberger, commander of the Eighth Army, wrote his wife from Okinawa: "We will have to rub a magic lamp suddenly and have the ruins of a destroyed city removed, bridges repaired, dead removed, electric lights and water turned on, food service installed, etc."

Anticipating the arrival of foreign troops, the Japanese people were naturally apprehensive. Rumors had warned that civilians were likely to suffer pillage, brutality, and rape. Such fears may have been especially acute among those who had some inkling of how Japanese armies had behaved in China and other overseas territories. The Japanese people's discovery that the Americans were generally decent and disciplined came as a great and welcome surprise. Often it was the children who were first to lose their fear. American servicemen were generous in

offering small gifts of candy or chewing gum. Japanese adults, witnessing these exchanges, were flooded with a sense of relief. Likewise, the first Americans to go ashore in Japan were stupefied by the open and friendly attitude of the civilians they encountered. Gestures of courtesy were offered and reciprocated on both sides.

Remarkably, not a single shot was fired at Allied occupation troops anywhere in the country. The transition from war to peace was sudden and total. Rear Admiral Robert Carney, the Third Fleet chief of staff, went ashore at Yokosuka on August 30. "We found no resistance whatsoever," he later recalled. "The whole thing was just fantastic. The Japanese were more than willing to cooperate in anything we wanted to do, and in a very short time they realized that they were not going to be brutalized."

An American photographer captured the moment when Vice Admiral Michitarō Tozuka, the commanding officer at Yokosuka, surrendered the base to Carney. In the photo, the two admirals face one another, neither smiling nor scowling. Both appear relaxed, open, and perhaps a bit curious. According to Carney, Admiral Tozuka was unfailingly professional and eager to cooperate. He told Carney that "the place was ours, and he made it known that it was ours, and they were at our service, and anything we wanted all we had to do was ask." Rear Admiral Roland Smoot, another senior commander with the landing force, was delighted by how efficiently the Yokosuka handover occurred. Like many Americans, during the long and bitter years of war, Smoot had carried a "deep and abiding hatred" for the Japanese. Now he was astounded at how quickly those feelings faded. Professional collegiality became the basis for individual friendships. Smoot eventually became "quite friendly" with Admiral Tozuka, and was a guest at the Japanese admiral's home on several occasions. "It's amazing how quickly your enemies can become your friends when you stop shooting at each other," he said. "The human side of people comes to the surface ... and it comes to the surface very rapidly."

That, in a nutshell, is the major theme of *Friendship Across the Seas*, Naoyuki Agawa's absorbing history of the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) and its relationship with the US Navy. This is a revised English edition of a book (first published in Japanese in 2001), updated with new material translated by Keith Krulak. It carries the narrative up to the present, with two new chapters by Professor Agawa covering the eventful history of the last two decades. *Friendship Across the Seas* is a fascinating and well-told tale, but also an essential new contribution to the existing scholarship on the subject. It should be read by all military and foreign policy professionals with an interest in the US-Japan alliance and the increasingly tense security environment in the Pacific and East Asia. I have recommended it to Admiral Michael M. Gilday, the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), for inclusion in the US Navy's CNO Professional Reading Program.

During his long and distinguished career, Naoyuki Agawa has been a lawyer, scholar, diplomat, and author. From 2002 to 2005, he was minister for public affairs at the Japanese Embassy in Washington. He has served for many years as professor of law at Keio University, and as that university's vice president for International Collaboration and Education. I first met Agawa-san in 2011, when I was in Japan for research related to my three-volume history of the Pacific War. We found that we

shared many interests and had much in common. I had read two books by his father, Hiroyuki Agawa, a prominent novelist, essayist, and biographer, who had served as a naval officer in the Pacific War. I had cited the elder Agawa's classic biography of Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto (*The Reluctant Admiral*, 1969) extensively in the first volume of my trilogy (*Pacific Crucible*, 2011). Naoyuki Agawa and I are both Hoyas—meaning that we are alumni of a certain Jesuit university in Washington, D.C.—and *my* father studied at Keio University for a year in the early 1960s. We stayed in touch over the years, and he was always generous with his time. As I was finishing my trilogy, he helped me to understand the finer points of Japanese wartime history and culture. I sometimes joked that while Professor Agawa's Japanese was *much* better than mine, my English was only a *little* worse than his.

Books about the JMSDF, at least those available in English, have been few and far between. One finds essays and lectures about the strategic roles and capabilities of the modern JMSDF, and the naval alliances and other security frameworks between and among the United States, Japan, Australia, and other Pacific nations. There is also an extensive literature concerning the political debates in Tokyo about the budget, mission, and deployments of the Self-Defense Forces. While covering those subjects extensively, *Friendship Across the Seas* takes a very different approach: it gives us the human dimension of its subject. It is a history of individual friendships and interactions between military and foreign policy professionals in Japan and the United States, and the way those relationships have shaped the two nations' bilateral relations since 1945.

* * *

The anthropologist Ruth Benedict, in her influential 1946 study *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, identified a strain of adaptability and pragmatism in Japan's national character. The Japanese, Benedict observed, do not have an "absolutist" ethic but rather "an ethic of alternatives."

> *Japan's real strength which she can use in remaking herself into a peaceful nation lies in her ability to say of a course of action, 'That failed,' and then to throw her energies into other channels. They tried to achieve their 'proper place' in war, and they lost… That course, now, they can discard, because their whole training has conditioned them to possible changes of direction. The Japanese sees that he has made an 'error' in embarking on a course of action which does not achieve its goal. When it fails, he discards it as a lost cause, for he is not conditioned to pursue lost causes.*

During the 15-year conflict known as the Asia-Pacific War (1931–1945), Japan had sought to earn the respect of the world through military conquest. Total defeat in the Pacific War had discredited that approach. On August 15, 1945, when the Shōwa emperor's "jeweled voice" went over the radio airwaves and told the Japanese people that the war was lost, they accepted this new fact and made the necessary adjustments. Devoted above all to their sovereign, they set out to "ease the emperor's heart" in trying circumstances. It does not go too far to say that this duty (*chū*) was sacred. *Shōwa tennō*, the Emperor Hirohito, had invited their recent enemy to enter Japan. Therefore, the occupation forces were to be welcomed as honored guests, rather than resented and resisted. And so they were.

Three weeks earlier, Japanese men, women, and even children had been training to fight the invading armies with bamboo spears. Now they were bowing, smiling, laughing, striking up conversations if they knew a little English, and volunteering to assist their recent enemies in whatever way they could. The transformation occurred so abruptly that the Americans and Allies found it strange and disconcerting, even unnerving. There was no precedent for such a sudden, stark, collective about-face in the history of any Western nation. But it certainly made their jobs easier. They were in charge, with undisputed authority, and even the humblest Japanese was keen to do his part to make the occupation function efficiently. A Japanese doctor in Hiroshima explained to a US Strategic Bombing Survey (USSBS) analyst, "It is the proper thing for the man of might to be on top, so the people are thinking of the future and about how to live comfortably and are quite at ease. That is why everything has gone smoothly up to now and it will continue to do so." Of course there were those who had anti-American attitudes of various forms, but they were clearly a minority and did not take any action against the occupation forces. They realized Japan had lost the war and it was no use to do so. Instead, most of them kept silent and hid their feelings from the Americans.

General Douglas MacArthur was a fortunate choice to serve as Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP). More than any other Allied commander, he instinctively understood that the Pacific War had been a contest of ideas as well as arms. The ideology underpinning Japanese militarism and imperialism had been defeated and discredited by force of arms. In the aftermath of defeat, the Japanese people were willing to surrender in good faith, and embrace new models of politics, economics, education, and even (to some extent) culture. MacArthur was wise to define liberalism and democracy as universal principles, not specifically American or even Western, and suitable for all nations. In the radio address he delivered aboard the *Missouri*, immediately after the surrender ceremony on September 2, 1945, he spoke not only for the victors but for all nations and peoples. Peace was a universal blessing: "Today the guns are silent. A great tragedy has ended." Technological advances had made war too terrible. If nations did not find peaceful means to resolve their disputes, civilization would be annihilated. Humanity's survival in the atomic era would depend on a kind of collective global awakening, a "spiritual recrudescence and improvement of human character that will synchronize with our almost matchless advances in science, art, literature and all material and cultural developments of the past 2000 years. It must be of the spirit if we are to save the flesh."

Many Japanese were not only willing but ardently determined to act upon those principles. They would devote their remarkable energy, ingenuity, and capacity for collective action into rebuilding their country on democratic foundations. During the following 6 years, ruling Japan as a kind of benevolent dictator, MacArthur would oversee the drafting of a democratic, pacifist constitution guaranteeing basic rights to all citizens, including women. Resisting pressure to put Hirohito on trial as a war criminal, he invited the emperor to a meeting in his office. Subsequently, a photograph of the two men, standing cordially side by side, was released to the media and published in Japanese newspapers. That single photograph, a political masterstroke, communicated to the Japanese people that MacArthur had their best interests at

heart, and was in common cause with their emperor. An imperial seal of legitimacy was thus placed on democracy itself, and on the other sweeping social, legal, and economic reforms that followed until the restoration of Japanese sovereignty in 1952.

Since his death in the 1960s, American historians and biographers have been hard on Douglas MacArthur, imposing harsh judgments on his command failures and certain unbecoming character traits—deviousness, corruption, hypocrisy, and egotism verging upon narcissism. But even his worst critics have tended to applaud MacArthur's leadership in postwar Japan. Perhaps his greatest legacy is a stable, flourishing Japanese democracy, a system of government that has lasted three-quarters of a century—about five times longer than the fanatical militarist regime that led Japan down the path of imperialist aggression in the 1930s and 1940s.

But in the fall of 1945, as the occupation began, those luminous historical achievements were part of a future yet unseen. Japan was flat on its back. Conditions in Tokyo and the nation's other major cities were especially desperate. Entire neighborhoods had been wiped out by bombing raids, and immense piles of rubble and debris would have to be carted away before the rebuilding could even begin. Many Japanese, having been burned out of their homes, had constructed rude temporary dwellings made of corrugated sheet metal, pipes, and pieces of lumber. Millions of urban residents had evacuated to rural areas, and now wished to return to their cities—but there was not enough housing to shelter them or food to feed them. Millions more Japanese servicemen and civilians were repatriating from overseas, which greatly exacerbated these problems. The food shortage threatened to turn critical in the winter of 1945–1946, because it was already too late to save the harvests of 1945. The Japanese had assumed that they would have to feed the occupying army, and since the Japanese people were already going hungry, mass famine seemed inevitable. Japanese officials were relieved to learn that US troops would ship their own provisions into the country. Indeed, beginning later that fall, the United States would ship large amounts of grain into Japan for relief distributions to the civilian population. But the basic problem of rebuilding the Japanese economy remained. Allied garrison forces, working closely with the Japanese government, were obliged to take urgent action to get the nation's basic transportation, energy, communications, and industrial infrastructure back into working order.

One grave problem among many was the presence of some 66,000 mines in Japan's coastal waters and harbors. These included approximately 55,000 defensive mines laid by the Japanese, and another 11,000 offensive mines laid by American submarines and B-29s. After the war, many ships transporting Japanese civilians and servicemen from overseas were lost to mines, causing the loss of hundreds of lives. Professor Agawa details some of these tragic sinkings, all occurring after the restoration of peace in 1945; altogether, he estimates that 1294 lives were lost to mines between V-J Day and 1953. The proliferation of mines impeded free navigation of Japanese coastal waters at a time when the nation desperately needed its fishing boats back at work, and its commercial trading vessels at sea. Even domestic industrial transportation depended, to a significant degree, on coastal maritime links between Japanese seaports, and throughout the Inland Sea. Moreover, US naval and

military forces needed free access to Japanese seaways in order to support their garrisons.

The threat presented by the American mines was especially serious. Most had been dropped from the air, by 20th Air Force B-29s based in the Marianas, in an operation appropriately codenamed "Starvation." No one knew their precise locations or depths, and many were armed with fiendishly intricate trigger mechanisms that made them difficult to detect and disarm. For obvious reasons, mine hunting and minesweeping were perilous work, and inevitably, many sailors would give their lives in the effort.

Allied occupation authorities ordered that former Japanese naval personnel be remobilized to man a minesweeping force. The crews wore plain uniforms without rank insignias, although they operated under discipline and procedures that were, by necessity, quasi-military. They were sometimes deployed in other missions as well—to repatriate troops from overseas, or to act as a coast guard in Japanese home waters, interdicting illegal immigration and smuggling into the country. The small force operated under the direction of civilian departments, first the "Second Bureau of the Demobilization Ministry," later the "Maritime Safety Agency," both being ultimately subject to the authority of the SCAP. The rump flotilla, a shadow of the once-mighty IJN, did the vital work of clearing mines from Japanese waters, and by 1952, the work was largely (though not entirely) completed. In the process, 19 ships and 77 lives were lost. With this hard-won experience, the fleet had developed into one of the most adept, seasoned, and technically proficient minesweeping operations in the world. This was the kernel of the maritime organization that would become the JMSDF.

With the onset of the Cold War, the security and stability of the Asia-Pacific region became more precarious. On August 9, 1945—the same day Nagasaki was hit by an atomic bomb, and just 6 days before the end of the war—the Soviet Union had suddenly declared war on Japan and launched one of the largest ground operations in history. The Red Army invaded Manchuria and South Sakhalin Island, and Russian amphibious forces advanced down the Kurile Island chain, overpowering the small Japanese garrisons on one island after another. The Japanese grew increasingly concerned about the security of Hokkaido, the northern island of Japan, which lies just 26 miles across the Sōya Strait (La Perouse Strait) from Sakhalin. We now know that Josef Stalin had hoped to seize Hokkaido in 1945, and the Red Army had prepared contingency plans to launch an invasion across the strait. (If the war had lasted even a few weeks longer than it did, Hokkaido might have passed through the entire Cold War as a Soviet client state, a Japanese version of East Germany or North Korea). In China, Mao Zedong's communist forces won the Chinese Civil War and drove the remnants of Chiang Kai-Shek's Nationalist forces across the Taiwan Strait. As Japanese military forces and civilians left the Korean peninsula, a power vacuum threatened to turn chaotic; in June 1950, communist forces invaded South Korea, commencing the Korean War. At sea, Japanese fishing and commercial vessels were frequently harassed by both Chinese and Soviet patrol craft.

American naval operations around Korea were impeded by heavy mining of the peninsula's coastal seaways and harbors. An estimated 3000 mines lay off the coast.

In 1950, the US chief of naval operations reported that the problem had grown critical: "The US Navy has lost command of the sea in Korean waters." The Americans requested the participation of Japanese minesweeping units to help clear coastal waters at Wonsan. Since Japan had adopted a constitution that renounced war, partly at the behest of the Americans, the request touched off a vigorous debate in Tokyo. But the Japanese leadership judged that it had no choice but to comply—this was before the nation's sovereignty had been restored—and the request was granted. Forty-six Japanese minesweepers operated off the Korean coast between October and December 1950, sweeping 300 kilometers of channels. Two ships were lost to mine strikes during these operations—in one case, with casualties of one dead and eight wounded. Strictly speaking, those casualties qualified as combat losses, making Japan a combatant in the Korean War.

From the adoption of the Japanese Constitution to the present day, the status of the Self-Defense Forces has been a subject of perennial controversy. In 1945, the Allies had set out to rid Japan of militarist influences. The Potsdam Proclamation had called for a permanent elimination of the authority and influence of the "self-willed militaristic advisers" who had led Japan to war, and a complete dissolution of the nation's "war-making power." By accepting those terms, the Japanese government had committed to a pacifist foreign policy, permanently and forevermore. Article 9 of the Constitution states that the Japanese people "forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes." It also specifies that Japan will never establish or maintain a military. Such was the necessity—so it seemed to the Americans, the Allies, and Japan's postwar leaders—to ensure that Japan could never again resume a career of international aggression.

And yet, from the beginning, it was never realistic to simply eliminate Japanese military capabilities root-and-branch. The mine-clearing mission, and the protection and regulation of Japan's home waters, were minimum capabilities even in a nation governed by Article 9. Since the 1950s, prevailing Japanese political and legal opinion has held that Article 9 allows for limited armed forces so long as they are strictly and solely for the purpose of self-defense.

To leaders and policymakers whose perceptions had been shaped by World War II, in Washington as well as Tokyo, it was natural to prioritize the demilitarization of Japan over all competing objectives. The proposal to deploy Japan minesweepers off Korea was controversial even in the United States, where opposition coalesced within the State Department. The debate reprised the essential dilemma that had existed since 1945. Was it more important for Japan to sever links to its imperial past, by accepting a strictly passive role in its own national defense? Or should Japan serve as a "brick in the wall" against communism in East Asia? The debate had begun in Washington even before V-J Day, when Truman's civilian and military advisors had considered whether the Japanese monarchy should be retained. After the surrender, the issue was put to rest by General MacArthur, who held primary responsibility for the security of Allied occupation forces. He insisted that Hirohito must be left on his throne, so that he might lend his prestige and stabilizing influence to the reconstruction of a democratic Japan. When it was suggested that Hirohito

should be arrested and tried as a war criminal, MacArthur warned that he would require an additional one million troops to garrison Japan. That settled the matter, and Hirohito remained on the throne until his death in 1989.

During the first 9 years of its life, the proto-JMSDF was known by many names and administered by various civilian bureaucracies. The formal creation of Japan's Self-Defense Forces (JSDF), of which the JMSDF is the maritime branch, dated to 1954. The existing fleet of veteran ex-IJN minesweepers was augmented by World War II-vintage American patrol frigates and destroyers, transferred to Japanese control by Washington. Two years later, the destroyer *Harukaze*—the first post-1945 warship built in Japan—was added to the JMSDF list. At about the same time, a new generation of Japanese aviators began to train in earlier-generation American aircraft such as the Avenger, the Harpoon, and the Catalina. These US-to-Japan transfers of military hardware, ships, and aircraft commenced a tradition, which continues to this day, of close interoperability of equipment and weapons systems between the two allies.

For the Japanese, the Cold War meant, above all, keeping a close eye on Soviet military operations and forces in Sakhalin, the Kurile archipelago, and the four islands to the south of which Japan continues to claim as the "Northern Territories." This long-running territorial dispute, still not resolved, has shaped the history and missions of the JMSDF. In the 1950s, as the Cold War heated up, the Soviet Navy kept an aggressive, well-equipped fleet of submarines at Vladivostok, directly on Japan's northern doorstep. Increasingly, the defense of Japan's home waters required sophisticated submarine detection capabilities and countermeasures, known collectively as anti-submarine warfare (ASW). The pre-1945 IJN had largely neglected ASW, with ruinous consequences for the Japanese wartime economy. After a slow start, the US Pacific submarine force had launched an all-out campaign to destroy Japan's maritime commerce. By early 1945, this campaign had severed Japan's access to oil and other critical overseas resources, crippled its war industries, and left its population on the verge of starvation. With that searing experience fresh in memory, the first generation of JMSDF officers were determined to master ASW. The JMSDF's Fleet Escort Force, inaugurated in 1954, was soon performing at a level comparable to that of the US Navy. Today, the Japanese Fleet Escort Force remains one of the best in the world, and its ASW mission would play a vital role in any future naval conflict in the Western Pacific.

International alliances are founded upon mutual national interests, but individual friendships are the bonds that hold international alliances together. That is the central premise of *Friendship Across the Seas*, and Professor Agawa illustrates his theme with intimate portrayals of key military and civilian officials on both sides of the Pacific. Students of the Pacific War will find many familiar names in these pages, including some of the most famous naval officers of that conflict, who went on to serve as high-ranking admirals in the 1950s and 1960s: for example, Forrest Sherman, James L. Holloway III, and Arleigh Burke. They had experienced some of the worst naval combat in one of history's most brutal wars, and inevitably, they were left with feelings of deep-seated bitterness against their former enemies. Subsequently, however, they either served in Japan or came into contact with

Japanese officers and diplomats, and revised their views. Many became quite fond of the nation and its people. Arleigh Burke, who served as chief of naval operations for six consecutive years beginning in 1955, plays an important part in Agawa's story. During the war, Burke had been chief of staff to Admiral Marc Mitscher of Task Force 58, the US Navy's main carrier striking force. While in that role, he had survived the nightmarish kamikaze strikes on Task Force 58 off the Philippines and Okinawa. He and Mitscher were forced to evacuate their flagship *Bunker Hill* after she was hit by two kamikazes in May 1945, an ordeal which killed almost 400 of her crew. After the war, Burke later said, "I did not like the Japanese even a little bit." His impressions changed when he was sent to Tokyo during the Korean War. As CNO, he advocated for an enlarged role for the JMSDF, arguing that it was in American as well as Japanese interests: "I feel that the problem must be faced directly someday and that the sooner it is faced the greater the probable benefit to the United States." Regarding the constitutional limitations in Japan, "the Japanese Navy need not be called a Navy. It can be called a Coast Guard or a sea police force or anything else." He also championed a program to allow Japanese JMSDF officers to study at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. Agawa names Arleigh Burke as "one of the key advocates and supporters for founding the JMSDF."

Agawa's portrait of the Japanese officers of the early JMSDF is fascinating and poignant. Like their opposite numbers in the USN, they had seen action in the crucible of Pacific naval combat. Before and during the war, the military had been a high-status profession, and naval officers were generally revered. After the surrender, those attitudes shifted abruptly; in Japan's postwar *zeitgeist*, contempt for all things military ran deep. At the end of the war, returning home in defeat, men who had worn gold braid were shunned by their fellow countrymen. Their jobs abolished, their services dissolved, they were cast adrift as outcasts in a society that wanted nothing to do with them. In a sense, they were the spiritual descendants of the *ronin*, the masterless samurai of the pre-Meiji era.

Doing their best to make their way as civilians, they put away their old uniforms and swords and sought work as civil servants, teachers, or salarymen. Some found employment in civilian maritime trades. Kazuomi Uchida, who had served as a young naval officer in several major Pacific battles, returned to his hometown in Okayama Prefecture and tried his hand at farming. He found it difficult to adjust to the pace of rural life, and had little success as a farmer. In 1952, an old colleague invited him to apply for service in the Coastal Safety Force. Uchida admitted to himself that naval and maritime service was the only life he really knew, and he yearned to return to sea. Thus began his second sea career. During a posting in the United States, he picked up some English and came to know and admire the country. Returning to Japan, he rose to flag rank (admiral) and became chief of staff, the JMSDF's senior commanding officer, in 1969. During that era, the operations of the JMSDF were more closely integrated into those of the US Navy. Uchida told Professor Agawa, "We can communicate well enough to understand each other only with the US Navy, with whom we jointly devote ourselves to conducting exercises at sea; it is better than with the Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) or the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF)."

In the 1980s, the JMSDF came of age—that is to say, it became a militarily significant factor in the Pacific. This was the peak decade of Japan's "economic miracle," when the nation stepped onto the global stage as a major economic and manufacturing power. The surging Japanese economy financed a major increase in Tokyo's defense spending. At the same time, leaders in the United States and Japan emphasized the benefits of a closer military partnership. In 1981, when Prime Minister Zenkō Suzuki visited Washington, a statement referred for the first time to "the alliance between the United States and Japan," prompting a storm of criticism from the Japanese left. Yasuhiro Nakasone, who had served in the IJN during the Pacific War, and favored a buildup of the JSDF, assumed office as prime minister in November 1982. The JMSDF's capabilities in ASW improved dramatically; by the end of the decade, Soviet submarines could not operate in the vicinity of Japan without being detected. With Washington's encouragement, the JMSDF took on new responsibilities in defending its sea lines of communication (SLOCs), and providing escort for merchant shipping, a core proficiency of any Navy. There was discussion of "sword and shield" mission-sharing between the JMSDF and USN, in which the JMSDF would perform defensive functions such as ASW and defending SLOCs, freeing the Americans to devote their efforts to offensive striking capabilities. Closer interaction between the USN and the JMSDF advanced along several lines simultaneously: operational planning, communications, training, and the interoperability of military technologies and equipment. In 1980, the JMSDF participated in the annual RIMPAC naval exercises near Hawaii for the first time and has continued to do so every year since.

These developments did not please all Japanese. As always, any expansion in the size or mission of the Self-Defense Forces was resisted vigorously by the Japanese left. In 1981, the above-mentioned reference to a US-Japan "alliance" was seized upon by opposition parties in the Japanese Diet, who maintained that Article 9 prohibited any such scenario. Critics feared that any joint peacetime mission with US military forces would implicate Japan in a future Pacific war. When a joint communique confirmed that Japan would take over responsibility for defending its SLOCs to a range of 1000 nautical miles from the homeland, the Japanese left again erupted, and the foreign minister was forced to resign over the issue. His successor stated that the policy was "not binding," a remark that rankled policymakers in Washington. Even the JMSDF leadership entered this new era with profound reluctance. Teiji Nakamura, the JMSDF chief of staff, said that he understood the logic of a mission-sharing relationship with the US Navy, but (as it meant the JMSDF would not be an independent, full-scale navy) found it "emotionally difficult to accept." The reluctant admiral is an old and venerable archetype in Japanese naval affairs.

As Japan rose to the status of a global economic superpower, its industries gained market share in the United States, and a lopsided trade imbalance began to strain relations between the two countries. Many Americans demanded the imposition of protectionist policies to correct the trade deficit, especially in the automobile industry. In January 1992, during a state visit to Tokyo, President George H. W. Bush (another naval veteran of the Pacific War) was accompanied by the CEOs of the Big

Three US automakers. The visit was seen as a crude, somewhat heavy-handed attempt to pressure the Japanese into buying oversized, poorly manufactured cars with the steering wheels mounted on the wrong side of the dashboard. During a state banquet, President Bush took ill, fainted, and vomited into the lap of Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa. It was not the proudest moment in US-Japan bilateral relations.

In 1990, when the United States led a multinational coalition to eject Saddam Hussein's Iraqi forces from Kuwait, Tokyo resisted committing ships or military personnel to the campaign. The Japanese government offered generous financial contributions to support the Gulf War, but that prompted charges by coalition partners that Japan was practicing "checkbook diplomacy." James E. Auer, who served in foreign policy and defense roles during the Reagan and Bush administrations, argued that Japan's sensitivities about military action should be respected. He counseled a policy of patience and gradualism. Auer suggested that the JMSDF could deploy minesweepers in the Persian Gulf, an operation that was clearly defensive rather than offensive. It was a suitable role for Japanese forces, because "the best and most skilled minesweepers in the world belong to the JMSDF." Following the close of hostilities, Japan sent a small minesweeping fleet to the Persian Gulf. As Auer had predicted, its performance was superb. This was the second overseas deployment of Japanese maritime forces since the end of the Second World War.

Born as a minesweeping force, the JMSDF continues to excel in this rather unglamorous but perilous and necessary work. More recently, during the first decade of this century, JMSDF destroyers operated in the Indian Ocean in support of US and allied forces in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Professor Agawa's book could hardly be timelier. Today's security challenges in East Asia and the Western Pacific are at least as serious as they were at the height of the Cold War. North Korea, ruled by the third generation of the Kim family's malevolent hereditary dictatorship, is testing ever more powerful missiles, and has often fired them over Japanese territory. China has made no secret of its intention to reunify with Taiwan, and a Taiwan Strait emergency remains one of the region's top security concerns. A Chinese move against Taiwan would likely include an attack on the Sakishima Islands, a Japanese territory, requiring the JSDF to come to their defense. People's Liberation Navy (PLN) warships have systematically tested Japan's willingness to defend its outlying islands, such as the Ryukyus, and has made provocative moves in the vicinity of the uninhabited Senkaku Islands, which are under Japanese administration but are claimed by China. (China refers to them as the Diaoyu Islands.) At the time of this writing, the Russia-Ukraine War has just reached its first anniversary. It is the largest ground war in Europe since 1945, and there are no indications that it will end soon. The fighting is far from Japan's doorstep, but the Russian Far East is a next-door neighbor, and the territorial dispute over four islands (the Northern Territories) has never been resolved. Debates in Japan over whether to revise Article 9 are proceeding at a time when the United States and NATO have welcomed a large German military buildup. There are obvious historic parallels between Germany and Japan; they were Axis allies who went down to defeat in the Second World War and were subsequently occupied and

disarmed. If Germany is to embark upon a truly large military buildup, the case for a comparable large-scale military buildup of Japan may be made on similar grounds. Both nations are economic titans and leading members of "team democracy." Their full participation is needed in the collective defense of the free world.

The modern JMSDF is a proud, formidable, and increasingly confident naval force. With 154 ships and 50,800 personnel, it is (by most measures) the third largest "navy" in the world, after the USN and the PLN. In certain categories, such as anti-submarine warfare and anti-mine countermeasures, it is second to no other navy in the world. A fleet of powerful guided-missile destroyers is on constant patrol in seas south and west of Japan. The new *Izumo*-class helicopter destroyers can carry 14 helicopters. Eight of the Japanese destroyers are equipped with state-of-the-art Aegis air defense systems, the same technology used by the US Navy. In 2021, the JMSDF had 12 diesel-electric submarines, with plans to build more, and has unveiled a first-in-class 3000-ton unit, the *Taigei*. Japan has been a major contributor to United Nations peacekeeping missions and international sea-security missions, such as anti-piracy patrols in the Red Sea. The JMSDF is a leading participant in international naval exercises such as RIMPAC and *Keen Sword*. As the North Koreans have made themselves into global pariahs, one missile test at a time, Japan has adopted some of the best anti-ballistic missile defenses (including ship-based systems) in the world. The JMSDF and the US Navy have been operating closely together for some 60 years, and American naval officers often praise the JMSDF's performance. They emphasize the consistent excellence of the JMSDF in basic operations, such as launching helicopters or navigating a squadron of ships through a narrow channel. Together, the two navies act as a well-balanced force with a clear delineation of missions and capabilities.

Although the JMSDF continues to be buffeted by political headwinds at home, it would likely play a critical role in any future naval war in the Indo-Pacific region. But given the constitutional limitations imposed by Article 9, as well as the political reality in Tokyo, the JMSDF may not call itself a "navy" in Japanese. The service is permitted to exist only under the fiction that it is a kind of coast guard. Language and terminology are regulated, often to an absurd extent. "Alliance" remains a trigger word. Modern helicopter destroyers, 20,000-ton warships that carry 14 helicopters on a flat, bow-to-stern flight deck, look remarkably like aircraft carriers but cannot be called by that name. Instead, they are innocently known as *goeikan*, or "escort ships." Guided-missile destroyers are called "special purpose destroyers." It is taboo to refer to "joint action" or "joint operations" between the JMSDF and USN, even as the two navies plan extensively for sharing of missions and roles. These constraints do not merely warp the language, but even lead to plainly ridiculous operational doctrines. For example, it has been remarked that if Japan's territorial airspace is violated, JASDF (Japanese Air Force) jets would be scrambled to intercept the intruders. But if a two-plane formation makes contact with foreign fighters in Japanese airspace, they are not permitted to fire first. If one of the two Japanese planes is shot down, the other would then be permitted to fire. Professor Agawa's prose is generally mild and measured, but he is scathing in his criticism of Japanese who continue to cling to the dogma that the nation can simply ignore direct

threats to its national security. He writes that such critics "could even be compared to religious cult followers who believe that their faith will exempt them from any disease."

Japanese infants born in the current year, 2023, will reach the age of 22 in 2045, a year that will mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the Pacific War. Some of those young men and women will be graduating from the Japanese Naval Academy at Etajima. They might think it exceedingly strange if Japan's military policies are still bound to a backward-looking constitutional framework that handicaps the country's inherent right to defend itself. They may ask themselves, "How long must our country live in the shadow of its past—a past that no living person can even remember?" Today, no one worries that Japan will menace its neighbors. But any rational person would be right to worry that certain of Japan's neighbors might menace Japan, as well as the rest of the region. With a continuous track record since 1945 of peace-oriented approaches to resolving conflicts, Japan is a nation that can be trusted to expand its military forces and capabilities to deal with the current security environment in the Indo-Pacific Region and beyond. In the future, the United States and its partners will rely increasingly on Japan's full participation in the new security frameworks that bind like-minded free nations together. With that future in mind, one hopes that many friendships continue to unify our navies and our nations across the seas.

April 2, 2023 Ian W. Toll

Translator's Note

All Japanese names appearing in this book are written in the Western order, with the given name first. All Japanese words are romanized with the Hepburn system and macrons have been applied to indicate long vowels wherever deemed appropriate, except for the names of places, such as towns or prefectures, and in the official romanized names of organizations, groups, and associations in which macrons are not used.

This English text has been revised and expanded by the author; some inaccuracies found in the Japanese and first English editions have been rectified here. In addition, Chap. 11 was substantially updated, and both a new foreword and Chap. 12 were written for this new English edition. Footnotes have been added for the convenience of English readers.

The official form of the name of Kazuomi Uchida, Chief of Maritime Staff, is "Kazutomi" Uchida, but in this book, his name is written as "Kazuomi" Uchida, which is the name by which he is more commonly known.

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About the Authors and Advisors

About the Authors

Naoyuki Agawa is a professor emeritus of Keio University in Japan. He taught the United States Constitution and its history as professor there (1999–2002, 2005–2016) and at Doshisha University (2016–2022), also in Japan. He served as dean of the Faculty of Policy Management of Keio University (2007–2009) and vice president of the Keio University as a whole in charge of international exchanges (2009–2013). Agawa also served as minister for public affairs in charge of public diplomacy, cultural exchanges, and the media relations at the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C. during his leave from Keio University (2002–2005). He has written and published a number of books, including *Umi No Yūjō* (the original Japanese version of this book) and the award-winning *American History through the United States Constitution*. He also frequently contributes to various academic journals, magazines, and newspapers. Agawa holds degrees from Georgetown University's Law Center and School of Foreign Service.

Ian W. Toll is a writer and independent scholar. He is the author of four highly regarded, award-winning works of American military history: *Six Frigates*, *Pacific Crucible*, *The Conquering Tide*, and *Twilight of the Gods* (the latter three titles are a nonfiction trilogy about the Pacific War and have been translated into Japanese, Chinese, and Dutch). Toll has been widely published in newspapers and magazines, including the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Boston Globe*, and had been interviewed on many national and local television and radio programs. He has served as a juror for the National Endowment for the Humanities, a cultural ambassador for the US State Department, and a lecturer at the Naval War College. Prior to beginning work on *Six Frigates* in 2002, Toll was a Wall Street analyst, a Federal Reserve financial analyst, and a political aide and speechwriter. He received an undergraduate degree (B.A.) in American History at Georgetown University and a Master's in Public Policy (M.P.P.) from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

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Keizo Kitagawa, captain, Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF), is currently Dean of the Strategic Studies Department, JMSDF Command and Staff College in Tokyo. A surface warfare officer, Kitagawa's first command was of JS *Matsuyuki* (2010–2011). During his time as commander, Escort Division Two (2019–2021), he was the JMSDF Task Group commander for RIMPAC 2020 and Pacific Vanguard 2020. Kitagawa has taught at the JMSDF Officer Candidate School; served in policy, strategy, and evaluations positions in the Maritime Staff Office (MSO); and was the first Director of the Naval Strategy Office, MSO. Kitagawa has served overseas as staff officer of Escort Flotilla Three in support of *Operation Enduring Freedom* (2002), in UNDOF in Syria (2003–2004), counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden (2009–2010), and as defense attaché in London (2013–2016). He is the author of *Intellectual Innovation of Military Organizations*; the coauthor of few books, including *Strategy and the Sea*; and a frequent contributor to academic journals. A graduate of the United States Naval Academy (BS), he earned a Master of Security Studies from the National Defense Academy of Japan and a PhD in Policy and Management from Keio University.

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Acronyms

ASW	anti-submarine warfare
ASY	Auxiliary Service Yacht
CINCPACFLT	Commander-in-Chief, US Pacific Fleet
CMS	Chief of Maritime Staff (Japan), i.e., chief of staff, Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations (US)
CPO	Chief petty officer
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
GHQ	General Headquarters, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers
HIJMS	His Imperial Japanese Majesty's Ship
HNLMS	His/Her Netherlands Majesty's Ship
IJN	Imperial Japanese Navy
ISR	Intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
JANAFA	Japan-America Navy Friendship Association
JASDF	Japan Air Self-Defense Force
JGSDF	Japan Ground Self-Defense Force
JMS	Japan Minesweeper
JMSDF	Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force
JS	Japan Ship
JSDF	Japan Self-Defense Forces (SDF)
JUMP	Japan-United States Military Program
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
LSSL	Landing ship support, large
METI	Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry
MSA	Maritime Safety Agency
MSO	Maritime Staff Office
NAVFE	Naval Forces, Far East (1947–1957)
NDA	National Defense Academy (Japan)
NWC	Naval War College (US)

OCS	Officer Candidate School
PF	Patrol frigate
PKO	Peace-Keeping Operation
RIMPAC	Rim of the Pacific Exercise
ROTC	Reserve Officers Training Corps (US)
SCAP	Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers
UNREP	Underway replenishment (ship)
USS	United States Ship
WAVES	Woman Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service

Chapter 1
James E. Auer and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force

The Etajima Museum of Naval History

In the spring of 1992, I was invited for the first time to the graduation ceremony of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) Officer Candidate School in the city of Etajima, Hiroshima. The school had formerly been the Imperial Japanese Naval Academy,[1] which was first established in Tsukiji, Tokyo in 1869 and was then moved to Etajima in 1888. Past tradition still shapes the scenery, including the cadet residence hall.[2] The hall, completed in 1893, was built with red bricks—as the legend goes, brought from the United Kingdom[3]—laid one by one.

Very little has changed since the old days. After the ceremony, graduates march in single file to the main pier, the school's official entrance, from where they take their leave of the campus, standing on the aft decks of tenders and waving their caps toward family, faculty, and other well-wishers seeing them off on the shore. The tenders will carry them to the vessels of the Training Squadron[4] anchored in Etauchi Bay. They then board the vessels, man the rail, and, when the anchor is aweigh, sail off for an overseas training cruise (Fig. 1.1).

Those of us who were invited to the graduation ceremony arrived at the school a day early. We flew aboard the JMSDF's YS-11 transport aircraft from the JMSDF air base in Atsugi, Kanagawa, to the air base in Iwakuni, Yamaguchi. From there, we transferred to a large tender and headed for Etajima across Hiroshima Bay. Captain Kōichi Furushō, the chief of the public affairs section of the Maritime Staff Office (MSO), looked after us guests for two full days, starting with our hotel stay in Kure, through the send-off of the graduates the next day, and finally, to our return to

[1] *Kaigun Heigakkō.*

[2] *seitokan*; the building is used as staff offices and midshipmen's classrooms at present.

[3] The author has since heard that the red bricks had been made in Hiroshima.

[4] *renshū kantai.*

N. Agawa, *Friendship Across the Seas*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-2997-9_1

Fig. 1.1 The JMSDF's newly commissioned officers departing for an overseas training cruise. (Photo credit: JMSDF)

Atsugi, again by air. An exemplary naval officer, Captain Furushō was attentive, meticulous, hospitable, and genuinely warm. Before and after the ceremony, whenever he had a bit of spare time, he told me about various naval customs and traditions:

> *Upon being commissioned as an ensign during the graduation ceremony, a graduate is no longer commanded to salute, because ensigns salute on their own when appropriate. . . . This metal hook under the cap rack was used by the Imperial Naval Academy midshipmen to hang their daggers. . . . On graduation day, two signal flags are hoisted on the mast in the schoolyard to send messages to the graduates: 'Well done, everyone' and 'Wishing you a safe voyage.'*

Captain Furushō's pride in Navy tradition was evident in his manner of speaking.

After arriving at the school, we the guests visited the Etajima Museum of Naval History[5] on campus. It is a must-see for anyone visiting Etajima. The museum has been used for the education of Naval Academy midshipmen since the days of the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN). It holds many valuable items related to Japan's naval history, including locks of hair from Admiral of the Fleet Heihachirō Tōgō, Admiral Horatio Nelson, and Admiral of the Fleet Isoroku Yamamoto; personal belongings left by Commander Takeo Hirose;[6] a copy of a farewell note written by the

[5] *Etajima Kyōiku Sankōkan.*

[6] Commander Takeo Hirose, a deified national hero of the Russo-Japanese War, sacrificed himself while trying to rescue one of his sailors who had been left behind during an unsuccessful attempt to block the entrance to Port Arthur (Lüshun) by scuttling a cargo vessel.

commanding officer of a sunken submarine, Commander Tsutomu Sakuma;[7] and farewell notes written by aviators of the Naval Kamikaze Special Attack Unit.[8] The museum also possesses a copy of the famous telegram that Vice Admiral Minoru Ōta, commander of the Okinawa Special Base Force,[9] sent to the vice minister of the navy. Recognizing that to continue fighting was futile, Ōta sent the telegram just before he took his own life: "The people of Okinawa fought [exceptionally bravely]. I request that in the future they be given special favor for their deeds."

While these displays are all fascinating in their own ways, they do not cover much beyond the defeat of Japan in 1945; no objects related to the JMSDF are on display.

"I do think we should display items related to the JMSDF," said Captain Furushō as he showed us around. "But regrettably, we currently only have displays related to the Imperial Japanese Navy."

There seem to be a few reasons why the Museum of Naval History currently has no displays on the postwar JMSDF. First, the defeat of Japan in World War II marked the end of the IJN tradition. The IJN, which the modern state of Japan established during the Meiji era and for which it allocated a huge sum of its national budget, ceased to exist in 1945. Although the JMSDF inherited IJN traditions in various forms, these two organizations are not the same. The Museum of Naval History commemorates the Imperial Japanese Navy above all else.

Second, the JMSDF is not recognized as a true navy even to this day. The highly capable JMSDF, with its sophisticated weaponry and equipment, in combination with its well-trained officers and sailors, ranks as one of the world's leading navies. Legally, however, it is not a navy. The text of Japan's postwar Constitution explicitly prohibits Japan from maintaining "land, sea and air forces as well as other war potential."[10] The JMSDF therefore cannot officially be called a navy. Such is its fate. Under these circumstances, the achievements of the JMSDF may not be suitable for display at the Etajima Museum of Naval History, which is a pantheon of the IJN.

Incidentally, since my visit to the museum, the facilities at other locations where the JMSDF's history is on display have been expanded and improved gradually. Different exhibitions can be found on each base. For example, items related to vessels are in Sasebo, Nagasaki; naval aviation materials are in Kanoya, Kagoshima; and those related to minesweepers and submarine forces are in Kure, Hiroshima. These displays center around the postwar JMSDF, and are mostly unrelated to the IJN.

The primary reason there are no displays related to the JMSDF in the Museum of Naval History, however, is that the JMSDF has not fought in any battles to prove its

[7] Lieutenant Tsutomu Sakuma was the commanding officer of the submarine *No. 6*, which sank due to an accident during training, resulting in the loss of all crew on board. When the sunken submarine was recovered two days later, a farewell note was found detailing the lieutenant's analysis of the accident and the crew's dedication to saving the vessel.

[8] *Kaigun Tokubetsu Kōgekitai.*

[9] *Okinawa Hōmen Tokubetsu Konkyochitai.*

[10] The original Japanese text of this section of Article 9 is *riku-kai-kū-gun sono ta no senryoku*, and clearly does include the word for navy in Japanese, *kaigun.*

strength since its inception after World War II. In any country, a military museum is a place to commemorate the distinguished service of heroes who fought to defend the country. In a corner of Washington, D.C., the National Museum of the US Navy has plenty of displays on their various units and men who rendered distinguished service in each era, including the Vietnam War and the Gulf War. I have never visited any military museums in China, but I am sure there are displays of heroes who fought against Japan. In Vietnam, the displays must be about the heroes of its wars with France and the United States.

The displays are not necessarily about triumphant victories. While Americans still have very complicated feelings about the Vietnam War, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, where the names of all the men who fought and lost their lives in the war are inscribed on a long granite wall, is one of the most emotionally moving of Washington, D.C.'s numerous memorial structures. *It's hard to say whether American soldiers should have fought in that war. But you all fought well, and you did your duty*. There are always fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, and wives and children of the fallen silently standing in front of the memorial wall, deeply absorbed in thoughts such as these.

Similarly, a museum at JMSDF Kanoya Air Base in Kagoshima (formerly an IJN air base)—as well as the Chiran Peace Museum, dedicated exclusively to kamikaze pilots, also located in Kagoshima on the site of a former Imperial Army air base across the Kinkō Bay from Kanoya—has on display the portraits and farewell letters of young kamikaze pilots who flew from those bases, never to return. The kamikaze way of warfare was ineffective, relative to the magnitude of sacrifice required. I personally think it was shameful for the senior leadership of the army and navy to force such warfare on young pilots. Nonetheless, the fact that numerous youths, probably knowing the futility of their actions, hurled themselves into enemy warships and aircraft carriers in defense of their homeland, is something that moves every visitor.

If the Museum of Naval History at Etajima is an IJN museum to commemorate naval heroes who fought for the country, then it might be more complicated to have co-located displays about the JMSDF and its personnel—an organization that is neither recognized as a navy nor has fought a war. A future scenario in which JMSDF heroes are displayed alongside Admiral of the Fleet Tōgō or Commander Hirose in the Museum of Naval History would mean that Japan had faced an enemy attack or invasion requiring the JMSDF to fight in actual combat, where some JMSDF officers and sailors rendered distinguished service in battle.

It is doubtless better for the nation were no such situation to arise. Whereas Japan fought a succession of wars in the 50 years after the First Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895, the 50 years that followed 1945 were miraculously free of war. It is no guarantee, however, that the next 50 years will be peaceful, too. Very few Japanese, accustomed to the peace that has lasted half a century, give serious thought to the unlikely event that Japan will be involved in a future war. Many seem to believe that they will not face war so long as they firmly refuse to fight. They might be compared to religious cult followers who believe that their faith will spare them from any

disease. For such people, even the very commemoration of armed forces personnel might appear to be a dangerous idea that could lead to war.

However, since Japan is an independent country, and its biggest obligation to its people is to guarantee the peace and security of the nation, someone must constantly think about worst-case scenarios and consider the national defense in case of emergency. The Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) is the only organization in Japan that has focused on this after World War II. Although the text of the Constitution of Japan prohibits the maintenance of armed forces and the nation does not appear to acknowledge its armed forces, JSDF personnel have been striving quietly to uphold their mission to guarantee the peace and security of the country for the last 45 years,[11] steadfastly training in case force must be exercised as a last resort.

The absence of war does not mean that they have been idle. Thanks to the formation of the alliance with the United States, as well as the delicate balance of power in East Asia, the peace and security of postwar Japan have been maintained without invasion from other countries. If the Soviet Union had attempted an invasion of Hokkaido, however, the JSDF would have done everything within their power to stop it. If an enemy were to have attempted an invasion by sea, the JMSDF vessels would have challenged them with a display of dauntless courage. Fortunately for the nation, no such situation has ever arisen. However, we tend to forget that this is the result of how history happened to play out, and that there were people who always trained and prepared for such a contingency.

In the absence of a crisis that would lead to actual military conflict, JSDF personnel carried out their duty by maintaining and improving their defense capabilities. Then, when the time came, they entrusted their successors with that same mission and retired without fanfare, simply saying "*Negaimasu* (please take over)."

They were, however, not without misgivings over their raison d'être in an era of peace. On the contrary, they had plenty of doubts. JSDF personnel always had a kind of inferiority complex, a former JMSDF admiral once told me. Seeing others who had gone on to pursue successful civilian careers, the JSDF personnel who had been given only poor equipment and had no chance of rendering distinguished service, could not help but feel envious. As a result, they tended to socialize among themselves, rarely opening up to outsiders.

Those who never had the opportunity to fight will never be commemorated as heroes in the Museum of Naval History, and neither will their achievements. Nevertheless, from an outsider's viewpoint, the achievements of JSDF personnel who neither complained about this nor neglected their training, who prepared for any eventuality and left active service content with the fact that no crisis had arisen, seem to be in no way inferior to the achievements of the prewar military and naval personnel who made their name in battle.

These were my thoughts when I learned that there was no display on the postwar JMSDF in the Museum of Naval History at Etajima.

[11] As of the date the author first wrote this chapter; about 70 years today, in 2023.

The *Tan-Tan Kai*

One winter evening, people start to assemble by twos and threes at a small club in Roppongi, Tokyo. To reach the club, they wind their way through the bustling streets of Roppongi, past the main entrance of the Japan Defense Agency,[12] and turn left soon afterward. The first person to arrive is, as usual, Kazuomi Uchida, former chief of maritime staff (CMS). Soon after, another former CMS, Teiji Nakamura, appears. These two are never late to any appointment. Always the first to arrive, they wait patiently for the others to show up, sitting ramrod straight. Then, Vice Admiral Kōji Yaita (ret.); Shingyō Yoshikawa, the Buddhist priest of Sensōji Temple; Yoshitaka Sasaki of the *Asahi Shimbun*, a leading Japanese newspaper; and other regular attendees appear. Five minutes before the appointed time, consultant Hideo Kimura and Rear Admiral Sumihiko Kawamura (ret.) arrive, accompanying the evening's guest of honor, James E. Auer. This is a friendship gathering held by the friends of US Navy Commander Auer (ret.), a lecturer and director of the Center for US-Japan Studies and Cooperation at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, whenever he visits Japan. At some point the gatherings came to be called *Tan-Tan Kai*, punning on the Japanese pronunciation of Auer's name.[13]

The group sits around the table prepared for them on the club's second floor and Uchida leads them in a toast. Dinner is served, and the old friends chat happily. They are seeing each other again after a long time. It does not get too boisterous. Kimura and a few others excitedly discuss recent developments in Japan-US relations, with Auer offering his views now and then when asked for his opinion. The gathering itself is restrained, as its name suggests. Uchida and Nakamura simply listen to the exchanges with a smile; though they do not speak much, they appear to enjoy the company of the group. After the food has been eaten, Uchida and Nakamura stand up to say a few words, for which Auer expresses his gratitude. Auer explains his recent activities and the political climate in the United States, and further talks about his son Teiichirō, who is named after the two admirals.[14] The two old admirals listen as Auer speaks, nodding occasionally. Uchida begins to appear slightly teary-eyed.

The gathering ends amiably. After exchanging farewells, Kimura, Auer, and a few others head out for another round of drinks while the admirals head straight to the subway station for home. "It was a good gathering," Nakamura simply says in a sonorous voice. "See you next time." Uchida nods wordlessly. The admirals turn on their heels and fade into the crowd of the bustling street, taking long strides, their backs held straight.

* * *

[12] Moved to Ichigaya in 2000 and reorganized as the Ministry of Defense in 2007.

[13] Auer (アワー) is pronounced "awā"; the first kanji repeated in *Tan-Tan Kai* (淡々会) can also be read "awa." 淡々とした can mean "calm, cool, and reserved."

[14] Taking *Tei* from *Tei*ji Nakamura and *ichi* from *Kazu*omi Uchida (another pronunciation of the first of the two characters used for Kazu-omi).

Anyone interested in national security issues in East Asia will probably have heard of James Auer or have read his articles. He might be remembered as the director for Japanese affairs at the US Department of Defense in the 1980s under the Reagan administration.

Japan and the United States successfully established close cooperation on defense during the final decade of the Cold War. Though economic relations were strained at times, their national security relationship was marked by an unwavering trust. Even in the late 1980s, at the time of the Toshiba-Kongsberg scandal[15] and the dispute over Japan's FSX (Fighter Support Experimental) program,[16] the bilateral relationship never experienced an irreparable rift. It certainly owed much to the leadership of the heads of the government, Yasuhiro Nakasone and Ronald Reagan. However, the close defense cooperation between Japan and the United States had the support and contribution of many experts working behind the scenes in both countries.

As one of those experts, Auer provided much-needed detailed and accurate information on Japanese defense policy and tirelessly advocated for Japan's importance as an ally to policymakers such as Secretary of Defense Casper W. Weinberger and Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard L. Armitage. It was by no means a small role that Auer played in maintaining and developing the Japan-US alliance. Even after leaving the Department of Defense and moving to Vanderbilt University in 1988, Auer continued to proactively express his opinions on the Japan-US alliance. And it was his Japanese friends, including the members of *Tan-Tan Kai*, who helped deepen his understanding of Japan and form his trust in the country from the time of his first arrival.

Ensign Auer

Auer came to Japan for the first time in August 1963. He had just graduated the previous June from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and had been commissioned as an ensign upon graduation. He arrived at the US Air Force's Yokota Air Base in outer Tokyo to join the minesweeper USS *Peacock*, homeported

[15] In violation of the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM) agreement, Toshiba Machine, a subsidiary of Toshiba at the time, exported machine tools that could be used in combination with Kongsberg Våpenfabrikk of Norway's numerical control devices, which were sold to the Soviet Union. Because the technology could contribute to making quieter submarine propellers, the governments of Japan and Norway as well as the companies faced harsh criticism when it was revealed in 1987.

[16] After some consideration and discussion, the Reagan administration and the Nakasone cabinet agreed in October 1987 to co-develop Japan's future support fighter, the so-called FSX, based on the F-16 Fighting Falcon. Criticism for providing US military technology to Japan, however, led to a review of the co-development agreement after George H. W. Bush was inaugurated president in January 1989. A revised agreement was announced in April 1989, yet criticisms of the agreement lingered on.

at US Fleet Activities Sasebo, a US Navy base on the southern island of Kyushu. It was his first appointment.

Auer was born into a German American Catholic family in Saint Paul, Minnesota and brought up in Milwaukee. When he decided to attend Marquette University, he applied to the Navy's Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC)[17] program on his father's advice. The ROTC program is a unique system of the US armed forces: participants are tasked with performing weekly military drills while enrolled in a 4-year undergraduate program. They are given the same qualifications and treatment upon graduation as the graduates of the service academies. While it is no easy feat to balance military studies and drills in addition to regular university coursework, they are exempted from paying university tuition fees and are paid a modest stipend. In exchange, they have a duty to serve in the military for a certain number of years after graduation. As the tuition fees at many universities in the United States can be quite high, many young people use this program as a way of receiving a higher education.

When I was studying at Georgetown University as a foreign exchange student in the 1970s, I saw a student dressed in a military uniform on campus. Somebody told me that he was an ROTC student. My roommate at the time also happened to be in the ROTC. I remember him going out dressed in his army uniform to attend military drills from time to time. After intensive military training during the summer, he quit the program, saying he was not cut out for the military. He was simply too exhausted to continue. The military drills appeared to be extremely demanding.

It was the naval version of the ROTC program that Auer had applied to. He did not apply for financial reasons, however; his family would have had no problem paying university tuition fees. Auer himself had no boyhood dreams of joining the navy. Rather his father, who had missed an opportunity to apply for the ROTC program in his youth and decided not to attend university, had been enthusiastic about the program. Not wanting to disappoint his father, Auer applied. A priest who was teaching at his high school also recommended it. The Marine major in charge of military drills at Marquette University had left a good impression when Auer had toured the campus.

Upon submission of the application, Auer was successfully selected as a freshman ROTC student. He studied hard at university while training. In the summer, he took part in a training cruise aboard a naval vessel navigating down the St. Lawrence River from Quebec, Canada to New York City. The training was tough, not to mention the hazing and mistreatment. He finished the 4-year curriculum despite coming close to quitting a few times, and he was successfully commissioned as an ensign. He recalls that he did not quit partly because he realized that he did not get seasick during training cruises, no matter how rough the waters became.

By chance, Auer's first assignment was in Japan. He had no special interest in this island country in the Far East. He had few encounters with Japan before leaving for the country. His childhood impressions consisted only of hearing adults shouting, "The war with Japan is over!" and of the toys stamped "made-in-Japan" that often

[17] Often pronounced "rotsee."

broke all too easily. Later, when he was in high school, he also saw Japanese artwork, which he thought was beautiful. This is probably the case for many US Navy personnel who end up working in Japan. Although a few come to Japan because they want to, many have no special interest in Japan. They were assigned to Japan instead of to Newport or Hawaii. It was as simple as that.

Auer requested service aboard a minesweeper because one of his instructors had recommended it. "A minesweeper is a small vessel," the instructor had said. "So, an ensign is given the third position following the commanding officer and the executive officer as soon as he joins the crew. No better opportunity than this exists for a young officer to gain experience as a surface warfare officer." He thought what the instructor said made sense, and he did want to be a surface warfare officer since he enjoyed serving on vessels during the training cruises. He also requested an overseas assignment because, now that he was in the navy, he wanted to see the world.

In those days, US minesweepers were stationed at only three naval bases: in Long Beach, California; in Charleston, South Carolina; and in Sasebo, Japan. Hence, the only way of getting an overseas assignment on a minesweeper was to go to Sasebo. Of course, not everyone received the assignment they wanted. Auer was growing frustrated: a long time passed without a reply. But his wish was suddenly granted when a vacancy unexpectedly became available on one of nine minesweepers at Fleet Activities Sasebo. His predecessor had apparently requested a transfer due to severe seasickness. If not for this coincidence, Auer might have gone down a completely different path in the Navy, one without any connection to Japan.

Commissioned as an ensign, Auer received 6 weeks of training at the US Naval Communication School in San Diego, California, before flying from Travis Air Force Base to Yokota on a military Boeing 707. He stayed the night at Tachikawa Air Base, located in a suburb of Tokyo. His first sight of Japan was a billboard for pizza next to the air base, probably aimed at US forces personnel. After reporting to US Fleet Activities Yokosuka, he flew from Tachikawa to Itazuke in Fukuoka, Kyushu, and then headed to Sasebo on a US military bus. His arrival was welcomed by heavy rain coming down sideways; there may have been a typhoon at the time. It was already dark, and the rain was reducing visibility, so the bus driver could not find the vessel Ensign Auer was supposed to board. Auer had no choice but to stay the night at the bachelor officer quarters on the base.

The next morning, Saturday, the weather had cleared; Auer climbed up the ladder of USS *Peacock* moored at the quay. He was about to begin his first duty as a naval officer on this small minesweeper with an overall length of 144 feet (about 40 meters) and a crew of five officers and 30 sailors onboard. The 22-year-old ensign, saluting and standing at attention, nervously reported to a young sailor on watch: "Ensign Auer reporting for duty, sir! Requesting permission to come aboard, sir!" After granting Auer permission to come aboard, the sailor, chuckling, called out to the officer of the watch and reported: "That ensign knows nothing about minesweepers." No one on this vessel acted in compliance with some Navy regulations at all times, such as saluting a sailor on watch and standing at attention.

Auer thus started his career in the US Navy. He served for 22 months aboard USS *Peacock*, homeported in Sasebo. After his promotion to lieutenant junior grade, he

spent 6 months studying at the Naval Destroyer School in Newport Naval Base, Rhode Island. In May 1966 Auer went to Long Beach, California, where he joined the crew of the Yokosuka-based USS *De Haven* on its return voyage home, serving as the destroyer's operations officer. Promoted again to lieutenant, he returned home to the United States in December 1967 to become the commanding officer of a minesweeper. His second tour in Japan lasted approximately 19 months. In short, since entering the Navy, Auer had gained about three and a half years of experience on two separate occasions as a surface warfare officer based in Sasebo and Yokosuka. Still, he had no special interest in Japan.

The United States was becoming more deeply entrenched in the Vietnam War in the 1960s. Both USS *Peacock* and USS *De Haven* deployed frequently to the South China Sea, spending little time in their home ports. Once during operations, USS *De Haven* came under a barrage of heavy machine-gun fire from a North Vietnamese unit when the vessel approached a Vietnamese island. Auer definitely belongs to the Vietnam War generation.

Even when the vessels did return to their home ports, Auer often stayed aboard and took no shore leave. Being single, he gave his shore leave to the married men who wanted to spend as much time ashore with their families as possible, taking the occasional leave himself in Hong Kong or the Philippines instead. Although the US Navy and the JMSDF used the same port, there was not much contact with the JMSDF officers. His only impression of the postwar Japanese navy at the time was how extremely poor its facilities were compared to the US Navy's.

Thus, Auer's experiences remained limited throughout his two postings there. Nevertheless, his impression of Japan was not bad. He taught English for a short time at the America-Japan Society in Sasebo and dated one of his students, the daughter of the municipal assembly chairman. In October 1964, USS *Peacock* docked in Yokosuka for repairs; when the increasingly tense situation in Vietnam forced the Carrier Task Force based in Japan to make an urgent departure, all 200 tickets to the Tokyo Olympic Games allocated to the US Navy were given to the USS *Peacock*'s 35-member crew. Auer and his colleagues took turns going to Tokyo from Yokosuka to watch various Olympic events. Olympics fever had gripped the entire nation, and foreigners, whether they were naval personnel or athletes, received a warm welcome wherever they went. Auer felt an affinity for the Japanese people.

Most US naval personnel stationed in Yokosuka or Sasebo after World War II also have fond memories of Japan and its people to this day. During my stay in the United States, whenever I met naval officers and petty officers, active or retired, who had been stationed in Japan, they unfailingly recounted their memories to me with nostalgia. The US forces personnel who served in Japan, especially naval personnel, are possibly the most potent Japanophiles, both in terms of variety and numbers.

Auer's genuine interest in Japan began, ironically, after his return to the United States. Again, this was purely by chance. Relieved of duty on USS *De Haven*, he came home to take command of USS *Parrott*, a minesweeper homeported in Charleston, South Carolina. Regarding seniority among commanding officers, USS *Parrott* was ranked 901st out of 902 vessels belonging to the US Navy at the time; Auer was one of two commanding officers who had graduated from university

in 1963 (the other was a graduate of the US Naval Academy). He was the youngest commanding officer in the entire Navy. He was relieved of his command in 1968, however, after President Lyndon Johnson agreed to a drastic cut in the number of naval vessels. Auer had enjoyed life at sea; now he was sad not to be able to continue serving on a ship. He considered quitting the Navy and taking this opportunity to attend graduate school, in order to make a fresh start as a civilian.

Just then the Navy made Auer a tempting offer: it suggested that he study at The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, a graduate school dedicated solely to international affairs, jointly established by Tufts University and Harvard University. The Navy was eager to develop experts from within its own ranks, in part having experienced the disruption of strategy and tactics by civilians—namely Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and his subordinates in the 1960s. It would select young, capable officers to be educated at prestigious universities; Auer was one of those chosen.

The opportunity was a godsend for Auer, who was hoping to study again. The Navy was going to send him to university for 2 years for free. He could study any subject he wanted. He did not mind the requirement to serve in the Navy again after graduation. Thus, he decided to accept the Navy's offer to study at The Fletcher School.

In his second year of graduate school, Auer attended an undergraduate course on modern Japanese politics taught by Professor Edwin O. Reischauer[18] at Harvard University. He wanted to study, a little more systematically, the country where he had spent three and a half years of his life. From this course, Auer gained a comprehensive understanding of the history, society, and politics of Japan for the first time. Impressed by Professor Reischauer's character, Auer also attended Reischauer's graduate seminar and asked the professor to oversee the writing of his master's thesis. Although the Navy did not require Auer to write a thesis on military affairs, he decided–since he was writing one anyway–to choose for his topic the US Navy's policy toward Japan during the Occupation. During his research at the Navy Yard in Washington, D.C., he came across some startling documents. They were official US Navy records revealing that Japanese minesweepers had been dispatched to take part in actual combat during the Korean War.

The US-led UN forces had been cornered in Busan soon after the start of the war. They managed to recover their position at a stroke with the dramatic Incheon landing led by General of the Army Douglas MacArthur. Following the success, it was decided to conduct another amphibious landing at Wonsan, on the Korean Peninsula's east coast. But first, this operation required the removal of Soviet mines that North Korea had laid in the harbor. However, the US Navy did not have sufficient minesweeping capabilities at the time. Accordingly, the US Navy requested that Japan dispatch the old Japanese Navy minesweeping units, which had been engaged in minesweeping operations in Japanese waters since the end of World War II and belonged to the Maritime Safety Agency (MSA).

[18] Formerly the US Ambassador to Japan (1961–1966).

Thus, a total of 1200 former IJN officers and sailors in 46 minesweepers were engaged in minesweeping operations at Wonsan and in other Korean waters between October and December 1950. One minesweeper sank during the operations after hitting a mine, leaving one dead and eight wounded. These were clearly combat operations in foreign waters.

Despite having renounced war and abolished its armed forces in Article 9 of its Constitution, Japan had engaged in combat. This fact, understandably, was kept strictly confidential for a long time. However, Auer learned of it as the records were made public 20 years after the event, in accordance with the US government's rules regarding the release of classified records. As far as he knew when he discovered these documents, the world at large was unaware of the fact that Japanese vessels had engaged in military activity after World War II.

Auer returned to Boston and completed his master's thesis with this discovery as its basis. On listening to Auer's research report, Professor Reischauer was surprised and excited by his findings. He recommended that Auer conduct further research in Japan and write a doctoral dissertation on the formation of the postwar Japanese navy. Auer hesitated because he could not read or speak Japanese. Professor Reischauer encouraged him, saying, "The history of the postwar Japanese navy will be lost unless someone records it in writing now. Someday a Japanese person will write the definitive study of that. But your dissertation could be an interim, stopgap measure."

And that is how Auer became a historian of the postwar Japanese navy.

Encounter with the JMSDF

In July 1970, soon after his promotion to lieutenant commander, Auer came to Japan for the third time, on this occasion as a PhD student at The Fletcher School. Using his privilege as a servicemember, he took passage aboard a naval transport aircraft to arrive in Atsugi. (This privilege allowed a US servicemember to fly anywhere in the world for free, as long as the military transport aircraft had a vacant seat.)

Auer had little money to spare, so when he arrived in Tokyo, he stayed at the Sannō Hotel in Akasaka. The hotel was used almost exclusively by US armed service personnel and their families. Anyone on official business was able to stay there in a small single room for a dollar a day, a price that was inexpensive even then. A guest had to check out every month, however, for stays exceeding 30 consecutive days were not permitted. In this way, Auer stayed in Japan for 6 months at first, and conducted rigorous research on the history of the postwar Japanese navy.

Auer had no trouble meeting people in Tokyo, because his navy connections in Washington, D.C. wrote many letters of introduction for him. Particularly invaluable was a letter addressed to Admiral Kazuomi Uchida, the chief of maritime staff, written by Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, the chief of naval operations (CNO). The CNO is the highest-ranking commander of the entire US Navy, except for the secretaries of defense and of the navy, who are both civilians. The leaders of the US Navy were

kind enough to lend a helping hand to Auer, a mere lieutenant commander. Captain William J. Crowe, Jr., who would serve as the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the 1980s, had arranged the preparation of this letter. He was serving at that time as the head of the East Asia Pacific Branch at the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. But the benevolence that Admiral Zumwalt and Captain Crowe showed Auer was not for his benefit alone. Their goodwill also derived from the close relationship between the US Navy and JMSDF; although their ties before World War II were reasonably good for the time, the two naval organizations had grown closer in the postwar era.

Admiral Zumwalt's letter had been delivered to the MSO by the defense attaché at the Embassy of the United States in Japan prior to Auer's arrival in Tokyo. Before Auer could finish unpacking upon arriving at the Sannō Hotel, he was requested to visit the Japan Defense Agency in Roppongi. The CMS would be meeting him in person, he learned. Thus, shortly after arriving in Japan in early July, he passed through the main gate of the Japan Defense Agency, accompanied by a female interpreter, and was ushered into the reception room for the CMS.

Auer discovered that CMS Uchida was not the only one waiting for him. Five flag officers in total welcomed him, including Vice Admiral Suteo Ishida, who was to succeed Uchida as the CMS, and Rear Admiral Kiyonori Kunishima, who had served on a minesweeper dispatched during the Korean War. Lieutenant Commander Auer was taken aback: never had he met so many flag officers at one time. The JMSDF appeared to take CNO Zumwalt's letter of introduction very seriously. After Auer nervously explained the aim of his research, Admiral Uchida told him:

> *We are delighted that you came to us to conduct research on the history of the postwar JMSDF. There are some good things about the JMSDF; there are some unfavorable things, as well. I would like you to study both. Then, please tell us the outcome of your research. You can talk to anyone in the JMSDF, as you wish. I hope you won't be disappointed when you learn of the negative aspects of our organization.*

Uchida instructed Rear Admiral Kunishima to look after Auer. He was given space at the JMSDF Command and Staff College in Ichigaya, Tokyo.[19] Auer then asked Uchida to let him read the minutes of the "Y Committee;"[20] the committee, which consisted of former IJN flag officers and others, had planned the formation of the postwar JMSDF in strict confidence. His request was duly accepted. However, because no one was allowed to copy or take the documents out of the building, Uchida asked that Auer come to his office to read the minutes. And so, Auer and his interpreter visited the Japan Defense Agency often to turn the pages of the Y

[19] The JMSDF Command and Staff College was relocated to Meguro, Tokyo, in September 1994.

[20] According to Auer, "[t]he name 'Y Committee' for the Japanese group was taken from the abbreviations used by the military before the end of the war, the Army as 'A,' the Navy as 'B,' and others (civilians) as 'C.' By reversing the alphabet the members came up with the Navy as 'Y.' To anyone who might object in official circles the explanation was offered that 'Y' stood for Yamamoto and Yanagisawa [two leading committee members]."

Committee minutes in the CMS's office. Uchida always welcomed them into his office with a smile.

The female interpreter, whom Auer ended up dating throughout his research, later told him she was surprised to discover that Uchida was a true gentleman. Like many Japanese of the postwar generation who were taught that all servicemen are evil, she did not expect that the highest-ranking officer of the JMSDF would be an intelligent, kind human being with a good sense of humor.

About 2 months after Auer started his research, Uchida even quietly offered financial support. "It must be really tough to live in Japan with the cost of living so high. Let me share part of my salary with you. Please don't hesitate to accept it." Auer politely declined this offer. Even though he did not have much to spare and had to cut down his living expenses, Auer knew his salary in Japanese yen was almost the same as the CMS's salary (as of 1970). When Auer asked why he was so kind, Uchida replied, "It's because your research benefits us, too."

Many people who had been involved in the formation of the JMSDF were still quite active at the time and willing to talk to Auer at his request. Based on these interviews and written records, he compiled a PhD dissertation entitled, "The Postwar Sea Forces of Maritime Japan, 1945–1971." The dissertation was translated into Japanese by Sadao Senoo, who had been a member of the minesweeping force dispatched during the Korean War. It was then published by *Jiji Tsushinsha* (Jiji Press) in 1972 as *Yomigaeru nihon kaigun* (The rebirth of the Japanese navy). The following year it was published again, in the United States, as *The Postwar Rearmament of Japanese Maritime Forces, 1945–71*.

The main findings of Auer's dissertation were as follows. Although the IJN was disbanded after the nation's defeat, several former IJN officers sought to maintain personnel and preserve institutional knowledge during the Allied occupation, preparing for revival of the navy one day. A number of former IJN officers, enlisted men, and vessels continued to operate as minesweeping units; they took part in the Korean War. When the US government actively began seeking ways to rearm Japan on the outbreak of the Korean War, these former naval personnel proactively pushed for the formation of a new navy instead of passively waiting. The proponents mainly consisted of advocates for cooperation with the United Kingdom and the United States before the war. The JMSDF's strategy became based on close cooperation with the US Navy, a position that was not a hasty creation of the postwar era; it had held this stance since before World War II rather consistently. And US naval personnel viewed the Japanese wish to revive the Japanese navy favorably and offered help to make it possible.

Nowadays, such a positive take on the JMSDF's formation is no longer out of place. Even the Social Democratic Party of Japan,[21] which participated in a coalition

[21] Until 1991, the English name was the Japan Socialist Party. The party underwent reformation and was renamed the Social Democratic Party in 1996. The party was extremely critical of the JSDF and the Japan-US security arrangements, claiming these were in violation of the Constitution. In 1994, when the party joined a coalition government, it recognized the JSDF's constitutionality. In 2006,

government led by its party leader, Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, recognized the JSDF's constitutionality. However, the Japanese public's attitude toward the JSDF was quite negative in the early 1970s. While the left thought that the JSDF was incompatible with Article 9 of the Constitution, and therefore should be abolished as soon as possible, the right considered it unsatisfactory and not a full-fledged military, as it was established for expediency at the outbreak of the Korean War.

In contrast, Auer's dissertation was the first attempt by an outsider to shed light on the JMSDF's raison d'être, and it revealed the continuity between the JMSDF and the IJN. It also argued that, from a geopolitical and strategic point of view, the necessity and importance of naval cooperation between Japan and the United States had not changed since the prewar days. Auer's belief that close, active cooperation between the Japanese and US navies is indispensable for peace and security in the Pacific remains unchanged to this day.

A Thread Connecting the Japanese and US Navies

An invisible thread seems to run through the chain of events beginning with Auer's discovery of records detailing the dispatch of Japanese minesweepers during the Korean War while he was a graduate student at The Fletcher School, linking to his meeting with CMS Uchida in Japan, and culminating in his recording of the history behind the JMSDF's formation.

The young US Navy lieutenant commander who had chosen that unusual topic for his PhD dissertation received extraordinary assistance from the naval communities in Japan and the United States. They offered him a considerable amount of information, as though they had found in him an apt storyteller. Their positive reaction appears to reveal a kind of universal, enlightened aspect of a navy organization as an institution as well as the surprisingly close relationship between the Japanese and US navies, once divided by war. Through the course of his research into the Japanese navy's revival, Auer met many naval people in Japan and the United States. Many of them, in turn, cultivated relationships among themselves through him.

This being the case, by tracing the different circles of people Auer met and befriended, it may be possible to shed light on the postwar Japanese navy or the JMSDF and on the relationship between the JMSDF and the US Navy. It might also be possible to depict the lesser-known people, within and around the navy, who supported postwar Japan-US security relations. This book is an attempt to portray a neglected facet of the history of postwar Japan-US relations, with a focus on naval traditions and culture long shared by Japan and the United States, through Auer, an

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however, the now renamed Social Democratic Party reverted to the party's prior stance and has considered the JSDF unconstitutional ever since.

individual who established a broad network of personal connections, as well as through my own interviews conducted with many of his acquaintances.

Chapter 2
Kazuomi Uchida, the Chief of Maritime Staff

Encounter with Auer

After getting off the Yamanote Line at Harajuku Station and heading north for a while on Meiji-dori Avenue, one arrives at Tōgō Shrine, where Admiral of the Fleet Heihachirō Tōgō, the hero of the Battle of Tsushima Strait, is enshrined. Should one pass through the *tori'i* gateway that marks the entrance to the Shinto shrine, one will find, deep in the precinct, the building housing the *Suikōkai* (Japan Naval Association)[1] where navy people gather. In complete contrast to the hustle and bustle of the streets of Harajuku, lined with boutiques and restaurants, this area, surrounded by a cluster of trees and a pond, is notably serene.

Admiral Kazuomi Uchida (ret.) waits for me in the first-floor lobby of the building. A member of the *Tan-Tan Kai* (the gathering of James Auer's friends), he has kindly spared time for an interview, accepting my request to ask him about his friendship with Auer, as well as the postwar relationship between the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) and the US Navy. An older man (already 80 years of age) of small stature, he sits on a sofa facing me. The soft sunlight of a winter afternoon streams in through the glass window, hitting Uchida's cheek.

Actually, I met Uchida once almost three decades ago, when he was serving as the chief of maritime staff (CMS), the JMSDF's highest-ranking officer. Still a junior high school student, I accompanied my father[2] who had been invited to ASY *Yūchidori*, the JMSDF's reception yacht. I exchanged words with the admiral who was sitting next to me. He was wearing a lily-white JMSDF summer uniform that was quite similar to the IJN uniform. He was not overbearing, receiving me with a dignity apparent even to a young boy. My father, somewhat embarrassed,

[1] A non-profit organization for naval research, education, public relations, and friendship, where retired JMSDF and IJN officers and sailors gather.

[2] Hiroyuki Agawa, a writer famous for his World War II novels and biographies.

N. Agawa, *Friendship Across the Seas*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-2997-9_2

reproached me: "Son, he is the most distinguished person in the navy; he would be like the chief of the Naval General Staff and the minister of the navy combined in the IJN days. You are being too casual with him." But the most distinguished person in the JMSDF was smiling, appearing not to mind at all.

Many months and years have passed since that day, and Uchida retired a long time ago. However, the impression he makes now has not changed at all since the first time I met him. Although he is somewhat small and seemingly slight of build, he is resolute and has a fine carriage, being efficient in everything he does. He states his opinion logically and clearly, without being tedious or saying too much. *Does his crispness come from his naval education? Or is it simply his nature?* I wondered as I listened to Uchida talk in a quiet corner of the *Suikōkai*.

Uchida served as the CMS from 1969 to 1972; he was in that position when he was one of the JMSDF officers Auer first met on coming to Japan to research the history of the JMSDF's formation, as mentioned in Chap. 1. Uchida said he does not remember that first encounter with Auer well. He was plain and brief from the beginning of my interview, claiming he did not have a particularly personal relationship with Auer.

> *I think I first met Dr. Auer in around 1970 when he came to research the formation of the JMSDF, having been introduced by the US Navy's chief of naval operations, Admiral Zumwalt. I was amazed that he intended to conduct research into the creation of the postwar Japanese navy. What an admirable person—he must be seeing into the future, I thought.*

In the early 1970s, a quarter of a century after the end of World War II, the presence of the JSDF, including the JMSDF, was still small. Japan, almost lacking the concept of contingency readiness, was entirely dependent on the US military's power for its defense. Many on the left refused to recognize the very existence of the JSDF, verbally abusing JSDF personnel and their families as tax parasites. "I consider National Defense Academy cadets as an embarrassing stain on our generation," Kenzaburō Ōe[3] wrote in 1958; the perception of progressive intellectuals had not changed much since then. Moreover, a strongly adverse reaction to the military lingered in each stratum of the society of politicians, bureaucrats, and citizens, regardless of their political inclination. There had been no decent discussions—they were avoided—on Japan's national security since the revision of the Japan-US Security Treaty in 1960.

The JMSDF's equipment compared poorly with the US Navy's, its vessels and aircraft were vastly inferior in number and types. The accommodation and welfare facilities for JMSDF personnel were still far from adequate. Ruling party politicians and civilian bureaucrats of the Defense Agency themselves did not consider the Japanese and US naval forces equal. The atmosphere of the time did not welcome the interchange between uniformed personnel[4] of the two countries.

[3] A novelist who won the Akutagawa Prize in 1958 and the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1994.

[4] *seifuku gumi*. Naval and military combat personnel who are, in the case of Japan, officially called "*jieikan*" (self-defense officials). The opposite is *sebiro gumi*, or suited personnel, which essentially means civilian bureaucrats within the Japan Defense Agency (now Ministry of Defense).

Under these circumstances, a young US Navy lieutenant commander came to conduct research into the JMSDF. An American naval officer recognized postwar Japanese naval power as a theme worthy of research and felt that it would play a significant role in the future. Uchida must have been delighted. For this reason, he instructed his subordinates to afford Auer their full cooperation. Moreover, this was why, both in public and private, he told Auer, who felt indebted to Uchida for his offer of help, "Your research benefits us, too."

Since then, the JMSDF has experienced rapid growth, quantitatively and qualitatively. In the 1980s, it came to play a part in the US strategy of deterrence against the Soviets in the Far East. In the 1990s, the JMSDF engaged in minesweeping operations in the Persian Gulf and started joint exercises with the Russian and South Korean navies. A maritime security operation was ordered to capture unidentified ships that appeared along the Sea of Japan coast; Japanese destroyers and aircraft fired warning shots at these craft. Such developments, taken for granted now, were beyond everyone's wildest dreams in the early 1970s. Not even JMSDF personnel would have believed that the JMSDF would establish itself in the nation as it has done at present.

However, Uchida had always firmly believed that the existence of the JMSDF was indispensable for Japan. He was also convinced that there would be no future for the JMSDF without a close relationship with the US Navy. He thought that the Japanese and US navies should cooperate to maintain the security of the Pacific. Yet no one expected the head of uniformed personnel to express such an opinion. Uchida, on his part, merely carried out his duties without saying much throughout his nearly 40-year naval career: as a young IJN officer before and during the war, then again after the war as a member of the JMSDF in its early period or as the CMS, his final assignment. Then he entrusted the future of the JMSDF to the younger generation and retired quietly, only leaving a farewell message about his beliefs regarding the role of a navy.

From an IJN Officer to a JMSDF Official[5]

Uchida is a graduate of the IJN's Naval Academy (63rd class); he entered the academy in 1932 and graduated in 1936. The Naval Academy, established in 1869, was formerly known as the *Kaigun Sōrenjo* (Naval Training Center); it was renamed the *Kaigun Heigakuryō* in 1870, and after 1876 was called the *Kaigun Heigakkō*. Initially located in Tsukiji, Tokyo, the academy moved to Etajima, Hiroshima in August 1888. Its 76-year history came to an end in 1945, when the academy was shuttered in October and abolished in November following Japan's defeat and the IJN's demise. Twelve years later, the JMSDF Officer Candidate

[5] JMSDF Officials (*jieikan*) are uniformed officers and sailors, not to be confused with civilian bureaucrats (see footnote four, above).

School opened in 1957 on the same site in Etajima. Traditions from the IJN days still live on in various ways at this school, including the red brick cadet residence hall, which has been used for instruction since 1958.

For instance, the style of the graduation ceremony for the JMSDF Officer Candidate School is not much different from the Naval Academy's ceremony. Commissioned as ensigns during the ceremony in the great hall, the graduates attend a celebratory meal with their families, after which they march in single file to the main pier while saluting, the "Gunkan March (Warship March)" playing in the background. This pier extending out into the calm waters of Etauchi Bay is the main entrance of the school, similar to the layout of the naval academies at Dartmouth in the United Kingdom and Annapolis in the United States.

As they arrive at the main pier, the graduates board tenders one by one. Once all are aboard, the band changes tunes, playing "Hotaru no Hikari."[6] A few tenders depart simultaneously from the main pier, dispersing to reach different vessels of the Training Squadron. The graduates line up on the aft decks of the tenders to face the send-off crowd, waving their caps in farewell. In response, the CMS, the school's superintendent, and other JMSDF officers and sailors present for the send-off wave their caps. Each of the Training Squadron vessels anchored offshore awaits the graduates, ready for departure, their anchor chain shortened. When the graduates board these vessels, they rush up to the deck at once and line up again, manning the rail and facing the school.

As everyone gets in line, the flagship uses flags to signal the order to get underway; each vessel weighs anchor accordingly at the commanding officer's order to "prepare to get underway, heave up the anchor." Onshore, the CMS gazes at the Training Squadron, standing on a platform with a pair of yellow-strapped binoculars in his hand. The duty officer gives the order: "JS *Kashima* is getting underway, wave caps to JS *Kashima*!" As all those gathered for the send-off slowly wave their caps and hats once more, the vessel begins to move quietly and depart from Etauchi Bay for the overseas training cruise. As each vessel begins to move, the order "*Bō fure!* (Wave your caps!)" is given, and the crowd, waving their caps and hats in farewell, prays for the safety of the cruise. On deck, the graduates respond by waving their own caps. A few JMSDF Fleet Air Force aircraft fly over the vessels at low altitude to celebrate the occasion.

Uchida left Etajima in a similar fashion in March 1936, departing on an overseas training cruise with other midshipmen in his class.[7] The Training Squadron then consisted of two cruisers, HIJMS *Iwate* and HIJMS *Yakumo*, and its destination was the United States. The squadron navigated across the Pacific, stopping at Seattle, San Francisco, and San Pedro, the outer port for Los Angeles. After passing through the

[6] "Glow of the Firefly"—original Japanese lyrics set to the tune of "Auld Lang Syne"—is often sung as a farewell at graduation ceremonies in Japan.

[7] In the IJN, the Naval Academy cadets were appointed midshipmen upon graduation and, after about a year, commissioned sub-lieutenants, second class (equivalent to ensign in the US Navy), hence the IJN's term midshipman is different from that of the US Navy today.

Panama Canal, crossing the Caribbean Sea, and stopping at Havana, it sailed around the Florida Peninsula and entered the Chesapeake Bay. It then headed north along the Atlantic Coast and arrived at the port of New York. When a bunch of condoms came floating downstream, a grinning instructor explained what they were to the innocent young midshipmen. The grand scale and might of the United States, evident in such things, impressed Uchida.

During his stay in New York, he visited RMS *Queen Mary*, the enormous new ocean liner operated by the Cunard-White Star Line of the United Kingdom, and the Empire State Building towering over the middle of Manhattan. From there, the squadron turned around, transited the Panama Canal once again, and reached Hawaii, receiving a warm welcome from Japanese Americans there. Then it returned home to Japan, stopping at the islands of the South Pacific Mandate en route. The opulence of the United States, its tall buildings and stunning highways, were burned into the midshipmen's memories.

That was the year (1936) of the February 26 Incident.[8] The following year, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident[9] expanded the war in mainland China; during this period, Japan-US relations were becoming increasingly uncertain. In the minds of young midshipmen sailing to the United States on their overseas training cruise, there was a feeling that they might end up fighting against the country they were about to visit. The midshipmen even discussed among themselves the possibility of a future war against the United States. "You should watch each wave closely in the Pacific—that's where you are going to fight in the future," Vice Admiral Sankichi Takahashi, commander in chief of the Combined Fleet, had told the midshipmen in his address before their departure. In contrast, the commander of the Training Squadron, Vice Admiral Zengo Yoshida, stated that "Japan and the United States would never fight each other," in the speech he gave in Tacoma, Washington.

Takahashi was known as the right-hand man of Admiral Hiroharu Katō (also known as Kanji Katō), the leader of the Fleet Faction[10] within the IJN, which opposed disarmament and cooperation with the United Kingdom and the United States. Yoshida, on the other hand, was in the same class at the Naval Academy as Isoroku Yamamoto, and was a member of the Treaty Faction,[11] which supported disarmament and advocated against war with the United States. Yoshida was appointed commander in chief of the Combined Fleet the next year and served as the minister of the navy from August 1939 to September 1940, succeeding

[8] The "2.26 Incident" was an attempted coup d'état on February 26, 1936, organized by a group of young Imperial Japanese Army officers. Although the coup failed, it led to increased military influence over the civilian government.

[9] Small numbers of both Japanese and Chinese soldiers were stationed near Lugou Bridge (Marco Polo Bridge), near the town of Wanping outside Beijing. Sporadic skirmishes broke out between the troops starting July 7, 1937. Efforts were made to de-escalate the situation and agree to a ceasefire. However, the incident eventually led to the full-scale Second Sino-Japanese War.

[10] *Kantai-ha*.

[11] *Jōyaku-ha*.

Mitsumasa Yonai. But, unable to withstand the pressure to conclude the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy, he resigned after suffering a nervous breakdown.

Having listened to both men's speeches, young Uchida was struck by the thought that even senior officers said things that were so different from one another. Still, he was a young man in his early twenties, newly graduated from the Naval Academy. He was not aware of the senior naval officers' conflict over strategy. Moreover, it was impossible for him to understand how Japan should interact with the United States, having visited the country just once on an overseas training cruise.

After that voyage, Uchida gained experience as a naval officer on board a destroyer, a cruiser, and submarines. He also took part in close combat during the Battle of Shanghai (the Second Shanghai Incident) in 1937, leading a unit of naval infantry.[12] Although it was war, he thought it was a horrible thing to kill someone. When the war against the United States broke out, he had already been promoted to lieutenant. His legs trembled thinking about the war against the United States, the mighty country which he had seen on the overseas training cruise. He joined HIJMS *Yamato*, the flagship of the Combined Fleet, and participated in the Battle of Midway. With four aircraft carriers sunk—HIJMS *Akagi*, HIJMS *Kaga*, HIJMS *Soryū*, and HIJMS *Hiryū*—he returned to Japan with the remnants of the defeated fleet.

During the battle, Uchida's perception of the United States changed somewhat. The headquarters on HIJMS *Yamato* was receiving wireless messages non-stop from the forward-deployed battle force. The US Navy's torpedo bombers and seaplanes—contrary to the assumption of evident inferiority in numbers and performance, as well as the lack of agility—kept taking off from their base in Midway to fight against the Japanese task force, even after many of them were consistently shot down.

This was a wholly unexpected situation for the Imperial Navy. The Americans were cowardly and spineless and had no stomach for a fight. At least, that was what most Japanese people believed. The battleships Uchida had seen at the naval base in San Diego, where he visited during the overseas training cruise, were dated and unimpressive. The sailors lacked discipline and their uniforms were disorganized, giving Uchida the impression that the US Navy was no match for the IJN. But lo and behold! Against heavy odds, the Americans charged toward the Japanese vessels. By an irony of fate, the Imperial Navy suffered a crushing defeat at the Battle of Midway. In his heart, Uchida knew this was a serious matter.

After the Battle of Midway, Uchida served at the Combined Fleet Headquarters on the Truk Islands,[13] then returned to mainland Japan. While the war situation was deteriorating by the day, he never expected that Japan would be defeated. He was on the naval staff of the Yokosuka Naval Gunnery School when Japan surrendered to the Allied Powers and lost the war. He was devoted to training to fight on land, in preparation for the landing of the US forces, which proved to be a wasted effort in the end. Nine years had passed since he had been commissioned as an ensign; he had

[12] *rikusentai*.

[13] Now called Chuuk Islands.

become a lieutenant commander. *As a survivor of the war, what can I do? Rumor has it that the armed forces personnel will be brought to the United States to become slaves. If that's the case, take me there.* That was how Uchida felt: he was ready for anything.

Before long, the US forces arrived at the gunnery school to assume control. He handed over their weapons, and the takeover of the school was completed perfunctorily without a hitch. He felt neither fear nor animosity. He was not taken anywhere, either. After relinquishing the school, he was sent to the Atsugi Naval Air Base, where the disarmament faced trouble because the commander, Yasuna Kozono, had resisted the order to surrender. Uchida was sent there to deal with the aftermath. He engaged in negotiations with a black US Army first lieutenant and was impressed to find him cool-headed, not acting highhandedly in the least. There was a great quantity of naval stores on the base, items such as soybeans and overcoats, so civilians sneaked in to steal them. When Uchida questioned a married couple pushing a large two-wheeled wagon, they made a thousand apologies and asked him to turn a blind eye. How pitiful, he thought. It was a misery he had never encountered in the armed forces. For the first time, Japan's defeat felt tangible and real.

After the assignment in Atsugi, Uchida dealt with the repatriation of overseas naval personnel at the Ministry of the Navy in Tokyo. When the ministry was abolished on November 30, 1945, he worked in the Second Demobilization Ministry[14] and then its successor, the Demobilization Agency,[15] which took over the repatriation mission. He returned to his hometown in Okayama in the summer of 1948 because food shortages in Tokyo made getting enough to eat difficult and he did not enjoy his work there, either. He had inherited farmland in his hometown. *Why not go back and be a farmer?* Taking off his uniform, the lieutenant commander, a Naval Academy graduate, returned to his birthplace with empty pockets.

Starting in 1945, Japanese public opinion toward armed forces personnel underwent a sea change. Before and during the war, they had been valued and respected as warriors defending the country; after the war, they were treated as villains. People blamed them for the hardship stemming from Japan's defeat. Even among the people in his hometown, there were some who gave Uchida the cold shoulder. They talked about him behind his back: "He was strutting around until just recently—but look at him now." Uchida kept his mouth shut and cultivated his small fields. He worked hard to secure food for his family any way he could and to send his youngest brother to school. In his spare time after his farm work was done, he wrote down his thoughts to heal his empty heart.

Yet the unfamiliar rural life was very hard. *I'm not cut out to be a farmer.* Utterly exhausted after struggling in the fields for 4 years, Uchida decided to be a salaryman (a Japanese white-collar worker) and applied for a job as an English teacher at a local

[14] *Dai-ni Fukuinshō.*

[15] *Fukuinchō.*

junior high school under the new educational system. It was 1952. Just a week after his employment was secured, however, a senior colleague from his time in the IJN invited him to take an examination to serve in the recently created Coastal Safety Force.[16] Uchida reflected to himself: *The navy is the only life I know. I don't know what the Coastal Safety Force will do, but it's possible I might be able to go to sea. I'd love to spend time at sea again.* Uchida gave up the teaching position he had managed to secure and joined the force. He was not envisioning anything on the scale of reconstructing the navy. He entered the force just to survive, he says, smiling. And this is how Uchida's second life in the navy started.

Rejoining the Navy

As Auer details in his research, IJN personnel began contemplating the rebuilding of the navy immediately after Japan's defeat. They laid out a plan in strict confidence, preparing for the future. In the meantime, the minesweepers that had belonged to the IJN continued their mission to remove the mines that Japan and the United States had both laid in the waters around Japan during the war. During the Korean War, Japan dispatched minesweepers to waters off the coast of the Korean Peninsula in response to a request from the US Navy. In that sense, as Auer pointed out, the ex-IJN officers and sailors continued to serve in the postwar minesweeping force, its operational activities uninterrupted in spite of the country's defeat. The outbreak of the Korean War was a turning point: thereafter the Occupation authorities began for the first time to consider the rearmament of Japan.

The United States did not initially seem to be giving much consideration to the Japanese navy's revival. With the US Navy protecting the waters around the Japanese archipelago, it was more or less believed that having the MSA,[17] a force similar to the US Coast Guard, would be enough for Japan. Despite this situation, some former IJN officers aggressively lobbied the Japanese and US governments, with the understanding and cooperation of old acquaintances within the US Navy; one such officer was former IJN Admiral Kichisaburō Nomura, who had been serving as ambassador to the United States at the outbreak of World War II. The Coastal Safety Force was established as a separate organization within the MSA on April 26, 1952. On that day, the law to amend the Maritime Safety Agency Act was promulgated and implemented immediately. The prescribed number of regular personnel at the time of its establishment was about 6000. By the end of June, the number of recruits only reached 1000.

[16] *Kaijō Keibitai*.

[17] In April 2000, the English name was changed to "Japan Coast Guard" when it was transferred to the Ministry of Transport (reorganized as the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism after the 2001 Central Government Reform).

In the beginning, most of the new organization's vessels were ex-IJN minesweepers taken over from the MSA. The US Navy lent two patrol frigates (PF) and a Landing Ship Support, Large (LSSL) on May 12 for the training of the Coastal Safety Force. As the official loan agreement was not in place yet, these vessels were handed over on the pretext of storage.

On August 1, 1952, the National Safety Agency was newly established as an extra-ministerial bureau of the Prime Minister's Office.[18] At the same time, the Coastal Safety Force was transferred from the MSA, renamed as the Safety Security Force, and integrated into the National Safety Agency along with the National Police Reserve, which was also renamed as the National Safety Force.[19] In January 1953, the US Navy officially transferred six PFs and four LSSLs to the Safety Security Force, based on a loan agreement concluded between Japan and the United States in November 1952. As the US national anthem was played, the US Navy crews lowered and removed the American flags and departed from the vessels. In turn, the Safety Security Force personnel boarded and hoisted Japanese flags and Safety Security Force flags as the Japanese national anthem was played. These were small ships: the standard displacement of a PF was about 1500 tons, while that of an LSSL was about 300 tons. Although it could not compare to the IJN, which had two million personnel and 500 vessels in its heyday, the Japanese navy was finally reborn 7 years after the nation's defeat. The old admiral, Kichisaburō Nomura, was said to have shed tears at the ceremony to accept the transfer of US vessels.

By December 1953 the Safety Security Force had taken a total of 18 PFs and 50 LSSLs on loan from the US Navy. It made a fresh start as the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) in July 1954, the month following the promulgation of the Act for Establishment of the Defense Agency and the Self-Defense Forces Act.

When the Coastal Safety Force was established, the first task was to assemble and train the officers who would form its core. The former IJN personnel who were involved in the revival of the navy selected the first group of officer candidates. The first 30 of them gathered in Yokosuka in January 1952 to begin their training to become instructors, which was held in a special lecture hall within the US naval base. The very fact that the Coastal Safety Force had been established was still strictly confidential. Thirteen of the group had come from various parts of the country, giving up the jobs they had secured after the war, upon receiving a letter from their former senior IJN colleagues. Among these men were future chiefs of maritime staff, including Takaichi Itaya of the 60th Naval Academy class and Suteo Ishida of the 64th class. Itaya's successor was Uchida, who, in turn, was succeeded by Ishida as CMS.

Officer recruitment activities then began in earnest in April, upon the official establishment of the Coastal Safety Force. Most of the applicants were former IJN officers who were notified of the recruitment by their senior IJN colleagues and

[18] The Prime Minister's Office (*Sōrifu*) was reorganized as the Cabinet Office (*Naikakufu*) in 2001.

[19] National Safety Agency: *Hoanchō*; Safety Security Force: *Keibitai*; National Police Reserve: *Keisatsu Yobitai*; National Safety Force: *Hoantai*.

classmates and decided to join the new navy. The sense of unity among the former IJN personnel was strong, and the officer recruitment went smoothly, in contrast to recruiting for the National Police Reserve, which had been established slightly earlier. In July, 257 Coastal Safety Force officers were commissioned. One of them was Uchida, who turned up from Okayama.

Although he joined the Coastal Safety Force from a desire to go to sea again, Uchida was initially assigned as an instructor to teach navy fundamentals to younger recruits. He taught gunnery at the former IJN Torpedo School (the current JMSDF Second Service School) facility. Rebuilding the navy required men, above all. People like Uchida, educated as a naval officer before the war, were needed to put the recently established Coastal Safety Force on track. Naturally, those instructors who had been educated in the IJN taught the younger generation the methods they had learned, as well as those that had been forged in action. Without much conscious effort, the new navy inherited the tradition and methods of the IJN. This is why the JMSDF, of all three service branches of the JSDF, has kept most closely to traditions of its pre-war predecessor to this day.

Furthermore, the IJN had been established modeled after the Royal Navy, so it had many things in common with the US Navy, which had also inherited its traditions from the Royal Navy. Thus, even though the JMSDF came under the guidance of the US Navy, it was not necessary to start everything from scratch.

Still, the Coastal Safety Force that Uchida joined was based entirely on the US style. The vessels and weapons were all American; the textbooks were translations of US texts; and the training methods were also American. Uchida had mixed feelings about this, having perceived the United States as the enemy and devoted his heart and soul to defeating it not so many years before. *No doubt the US Navy's technologies and equipment are marvelous, things like radar and proximity fuses. They're so much more advanced than the Japanese standard. There's no way Japan could have won the war. These new American technologies should be adopted. But Japan has its own way. A poor country can have its own weapons systems, ones that suit them. We don't have to do everything the same way.* That was what Uchida thought.

Before and during World War II, Uchida had not been involved in the IJN's central administration. Neither had he had any direct connections to that group of pro-UK/US former IJN leadership, which included Kichisaburō Nomura, for example, who strove to rebuild the navy. Hence, he had no clear idea about the relationship with the United States. As an officer belonging to the third-class navy of a defeated Japan, dependent on the US Navy for everything, he was simply mortified, and pledged that the Japanese navy would be back again as an equal in the future. However, his mortification and enthusiasm energized him, and he vigorously tackled various missions in the newly established Coastal Safety Force. Although he was not able to go to sea as he initially wanted, in 1954 he was involved in the plan to build submarines domestically for the first time since the end of the war. In addition, he took part in the construction of four destroyers that were to be built in Japan also for the first time since the end of the war. These plans were readily approved, probably under the pretext of promoting Japan's shipbuilding industry. In the atmosphere of

the time, it appeared that anything could be done so long as the United States approved. Although it was highly questionable whether Japan could be defended with only the armaments it had then, Uchida found fulfillment in the time he spent assigned to the administrative center of the JMSDF in its early days, accomplishing important missions despite having few resources.

The big turning point for Uchida was the year he spent studying in the United States, from 1962 to 1963. In a way, Admiral Arleigh Burke had made Uchida's study abroad possible. Still a rear admiral at the time, Burke had spent about 8 months in Japan during the Korean War as deputy chief of staff to the commander, US Naval Forces, Far East (NAVFE). During his stay, Burke had met and become friends with Kichisaburō Nomura and other former IJN leaders. When the new navy was created, he cooperated sympathetically during his time in Japan and afterwards, too. He is still respected as one of the people who played a critical role in the establishment of the JMSDF.

Burke was on good terms with Admiral Sadayoshi Nakayama, who was to become the fourth CMS. Burke is said to have given various pieces of advice to Nakayama, who was appointed the first president of the JMSDF Command and Staff College, established in 1954 to educate senior commanders and staff for the JMSDF. On his visit to the United States in 1955, Nakayama requested that Burke, who had become CNO, establish a program to let future JMSDF leaders study at the US Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. The program was implemented the following year: senior naval officers from more than 20 countries were to study together for 9 months at the US Naval War College. A Japanese officer would be invited every year, it was decided.

Five future chiefs of maritime staff, including Uchida, were sent[20] on this program, which was called the Naval Command Course.[21] At the time he was chosen for the program, Uchida was the director of the personnel division at the MSO. As such, he was supposed to be in a position to select an officer for the study abroad program. Thinking that someone younger should be sent, he went to see CMS Nakayama with the name of a submariner. However, Nakayama said Uchida should go instead. Uchida recollects that he couldn't help asking, "Why me?"

At the time, Uchida was already 47 years old. *How can I learn to drive a car in the United States and speak English at this age? Why did Admiral Nakayama choose me? Shouldn't it be someone younger?* He had mixed feelings, but eventually he set his mind on having a fresh look at the beautiful country he had visited on his voyage before the war. And so, Uchida, unexpectedly given an opportunity to study abroad, left Japan with some trepidation. It was April 1962.

Although he himself did not realize it at the time, the relationship between the Japanese and US navies would grow much closer thanks to his stay in the United States. It seems that the naval leaders of the two countries, including Admiral Burke and Admiral Nakayama, were pulling invisible strings behind the scenes.

[20] As of 2001.

[21] Established in 1956, then renamed the Naval Command College in 1971.

Uchida's Experience in the US

After arriving in the United States, Uchida studied English for 2 months at the Naval Intelligence School in Washington, D.C.[22] During his stay there, he visited Arlington National Cemetery on the opposite side of the Potomac River to see the Changing of the Guard ceremony. Afterwards, he also visited the Iwo Jima Memorial nearby. The US Marines who had landed on Iwo Jima, a prominent hard-fought battlefield during the Pacific War, raised the US flag at the summit of Mount Suribachi. A bronze statue had been created based on the famous photo capturing that moment. Here, Uchida made a discovery that changed his perception of the United States. In a letter to the author, Uchida wrote about his experience back then.

> *Before studying abroad, I was anti-American at heart and eager to see the full hypocrisy of democracy. When I saw the Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington, however, I was startled by the hollow-cheeked faces of the Marines. I was moved to tears. "Well," I thought to myself. "It was hard for you, too. I did not know." From that point, my view changed completely.*

Of the six Marines depicted in the bronze sculpture, three lost their lives in subsequent battles. Thus, rather than a display of hubris on the part of the victors, the work might be showing the severity and misery of war. Realizing this, Uchida felt, for the first time, great sympathy for these former enemies. This change of heart might seem sudden. Despite his unease at living in a foreign country for the first time, however, it seems Uchida's heart had already gradually softened in his meetings with US naval personnel after arriving in the United States.

After spending a hot summer in Washington, D.C., Uchida moved to Newport, Rhode Island, in September. He became a lodger at an ordinary home on Oak Street in a residential area. The owner of the house ran a Buick dealership. The owner's wife had been engaged to another man during the war; he had made a sortie on a submarine and was lost at sea near Japan before they had had a chance to wed. Partly because of that connection, the couple decided to take in Japanese naval personnel as lodgers. Before and after Uchida, successive students sent by the JMSDF to study at the Naval War College lodged with this family, each one passing down the room, along with the car he drove, to the next arriving student.

Despite having lost her first fiancé in the war with Japan, the hostess was warm and kind. Uchida shared evening meals together with the family in the dining room. He was pleased that the children understood his English. Through living with this American family, he learned many things. Unlike in Japan, the husband managed the finances. American husbands and wives, too, had quarrels. They also actively socialized with their neighbors. They fulfilled their responsibilities well as members of society. Uchida was impressed to learn what makes a true citizen.

[22] The US Navy taught languages at the Naval Intelligence School after the war. Their foreign language department was consolidated with other military language schools in 1963 to form the Defense Language Institute, while the Naval Intelligence School itself was merged with the Army Strategic Intelligence School to form the Defense Intelligence School in 1962.

Uchida never got homesick during his 9-month homestay, where he was well looked after; he enjoyed a series of very American experiences: the beautiful New England autumn foliage; the local Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas holidays; the new green of the following spring. The woman of the house, along with her family, shaped Uchida's formative experience in the United States. Later, it so happened that her husband went bankrupt after losing out to competition from Japanese cars; he gave up his Buick automobile dealership, became ill, and died. Although the woman ended up losing a fiancé and a husband because of Japan, she never expressed any animosity about it. She now lives in San Diego with her husband from her third marriage.

Uchida was also warmly welcomed by US naval personnel in the Naval Command Course at the Naval War College. There were still many World War II veterans in the US Navy. They came up to Uchida and praised Japan for having fought well. These were not just empty compliments, either; their words were full of sincere admiration. In Newport, there were naval officers from various lands, such as the Netherlands, Portugal, Vietnam, and the Republic of China. Uchida socialized with them all closely, but the respect shown by the US naval personnel to the Japanese navy was exceptional. In practice, there were many things to be learned from the United States regarding technology, but Uchida had the impression that the Japanese and US navies were equal in terms of strategy and tactics. In the course sessions, his US Navy instructors always asked Uchida for his opinion.

Uchida wondered: *Where did this respect come from? It was, in fact, because they had fought tooth and nail that respect was earned and friendships were forged, wasn't it? War is horrible. It would be better if the world were free of war. But sometimes people can find no reasonable way of settling differences. If true friendship and trust between the Japanese and US Navies have arisen for the first time because of the war across the Pacific, perhaps the sailors who lost their lives on both sides of that conflict may be at greater peace. If the Japanese and US Navies had not fought each other, a close postwar relationship between the two might not have been forged.* Uchida recalled the US Navy's brave torpedo bomber pilots throwing themselves against the Japanese task force during the Battle of Midway, no matter how many of them were shot down.

A while after returning from studying abroad, Uchida was promoted to CMS in 1969 (Fig. 2.1). After serving in this post for a little less than 3 years, he retired in 1972. For his last 10 years in the JMSDF, Uchida quietly carried out his assigned duties. Nonetheless, JMSDF senior officers were rarely respected in Japan, in contrast to the warm reception he had received in the United States. He thought that the views of JMSDF uniformed personnel on national defense were not well understood. The Japanese government was not considering national defense seriously. The Soviet menace was not recognized well enough. Civilian control was lacking. *We can communicate well enough to understand each other only with the US Navy, with whom we jointly devote ourselves to conducting exercises at sea; it is better than with the Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) or the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF).*

Fig. 2.1 Admiral Kazuomi Uchida, eighth Chief of Staff, JMSDF. (Photo credit: JMSDF)

The navy is unique. It has a sophisticated culture that's shared internationally. It has a common culture that allows interaction without ostentation. Starting with their manners, naval personnel share navy ways. They understand each other. They don't need to hold back. It must be the influence of the sea. When you face the sea, you can't lie. When a storm comes, everyone has to avert danger in the same way. As groups dealing with Mother Nature and sharing a common way, naval personnel have a sense of camaraderie. Sometimes it's easier to talk to other naval officers than to fellow countrymen.

Maybe I became attached to the US Navy. Perhaps I am fulfilling the will of my predecessors by getting along with the Navy that they had fought and lost to. Why not show them that I can be best friends with their worst enemy? That was my feeling.

Since navies find it easy to communicate with each other, a more robust level of personnel exchange should be encouraged among them so that they can become even closer and work together in case of an emergency. This was a belief that Uchida firmly held after returning from his study abroad. Perhaps he figured that promoting friendship among navies would provide a shortcut for the JMSDF to gain a respectable international status. As the CMS, he endeavored to promote personnel exchange with other navies. While he began interactions with Southeast Asian navies as well, he especially cherished the connection with the allied US Navy.

These were the convictions held by the JMSDF's top officer whom Auer encountered when he came to Japan to study the creation of the postwar Japanese navy. In this young US lieutenant commander, Uchida must have seen something of himself as he headed to Newport 10 years earlier. In Uchida, Auer saw the finest tradition of the Japanese Navy and was fascinated by it. He considered Uchida an outstanding leader of the Japanese Navy, both before and after the war. For his part, Uchida discovered in Auer a sympathetic storyteller for the JMSDF of the sort that was hard

to find in Japan. The uninterrupted exchange between the Japanese and US Navies dating back to the prewar period was strengthened through the contact between Auer and Uchida.

Thirty years have already passed since Uchida retired; the last of the former IJN officers retired from the JMSDF more than 10 years ago. The current leaders of the JMSDF were all born after the war and are graduates of the National Defense Academy and civilian universities. The JMSDF has not demonstrated its ability in an actual war in the nearly 50 years since the establishment of the Coastal Safety Force. Although the current JMSDF has capabilities that are equal to other countries' navies in terms of equipment, morale, and skills, the nation is scarcely aware of it.

IJN admirals fought three times at sea,[23] in wars where the nation's very existence was at stake, and they became heroes. Even today's youth know names such as Heihachirō Tōgō and Isoroku Yamamoto. But nobody knows the names of any JMSDF leaders. No matter how outstanding a leader Uchida was, few people know of his achievements as the JMSDF's senior commanding officer.

Still, JMSDF leaders, including Uchida, have trained hard, without losing heart, even though they have never fought a glorious battle and have been unable to gain the nation's recognition. They maintained close working relations at all levels with the allied US Navy and handed down the naval tradition to today's JMSDF. That was their greatest achievement.

In one of the essays that he wrote from time to time, Uchida compares daily life in the military to theatrical rehearsals.

> *For armed personnel, it can be said that everything in daily life is a rehearsal. Training, discipline, education, exercise, inspection—everything is a rehearsal in preparation for an emergency.*
>
> *Yet no matter how well they are set up, rehearsals are completely different from the reality. First of all, nobody is shooting at you. [In a real war] the opponent, allies, weapons, and locations would be different on each occasion. . . . No matter how serious you are when you deal with a rehearsal, it does not guarantee victory in a real war. In this respect, it is entirely different from a theatrical performance.*

Unexpected situations will always arise in a real war, no matter how many times you train and exercise. If this happens, training may not prove helpful. However, to face a real war in the best condition possible, there is no alternative but to work as hard as you can in training. You do not know when a real war will break out. Your opportunity to serve the country might come tomorrow, but it is also possible that it will not come at all. If anything, it is better for the nation that no such moment should arise. The duty of armed personnel, and the duty of the JSDF personnel, is genuinely complicated and delicate.

Not once during my interview did Uchida boast about his achievements. His talk was very detached and without gloss. Yet, throughout our conversation, I could

[23] The First Sino-Japanese War, the Russo-Japanese War, and the Pacific War.

sense his deep affection for the IJN and the JMSDF. We parted and I exited the *Suikōkai* building. As I made my way back to Harajuku Station, I had a moment of reflection: Japanese businesspeople, who won fame for making the country's Sonys and Hondas into world-class companies, were not the only ones who had built up postwar Japan.

Chapter 3
Teiji Nakamura, the Chief of Maritime Staff

Teiji and Teiichirō

In the mid-1970s, when James Auer was serving as the executive officer on the guided-missile destroyer USS *Parsons* homeported in Yokosuka, he met his future wife, Judy, who was teaching at the American school at Fleet Activities Yokosuka, and he married her in 1976. As they had no children of their own, they adopted three children in the 1980s. The eldest, Teiichirō, born in 1983, is Japanese. The second, Helen, born in 1984, is Korean. The third, John Ed, born in 1985, is Caucasian. A few years ago, when I visited Auer at the family's house in the suburb of Nashville, the children were still in elementary school. They were running around, playing cheerfully in the large yard. From time to time, there were sibling quarrels. "Mom! Mom!" one of them appealed to their mother. "John Ed pushed me! (or some such complaint)" Growing up freely, wrapped in their parents' love, they were no different from other American siblings.

But even a child notices the difference in the color of their skin. Once, John Ed asked Auer, "Dad, am I going to be Korean when I reach Helen's age, and Japanese when I reach Tei's age?" Teiichirō, whose nickname is Tei, has been aware from an early age that his roots are in Japan. When the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) minesweepers were dispatched to the Persian Gulf after the Gulf War, Tei prayed every night before going to bed, at Auer's suggestion. "Dear God, please protect the JMSDF officers and sailors who were sent to the Gulf. I hope everyone can return to Japan safely. Amen." For a while, Tei was crazy about plastic IJN aircraft models. Every time his father made an official trip to Japan, Tei begged him to bring back models like the Mitsubishi A6M Zero, the Mitsubishi J2M Raiden, the Mitsubishi G4M (*Isshiki Rikukō*), and the Kawanishi H8K (*Nishiki Daitei*). When Auer called home from Japan, Tei would persistently ask whether Auer had bought the model he had asked for and when he was coming back with it.

N. Agawa, *Friendship Across the Seas*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-2997-9_3

As mentioned before, Teiichirō was named after two JMSDF leaders whom Auer deeply respected, namely Teiji Nakamura and Kazuomi Uchida, taking a character from each of their given names. The two admirals attended Teiichirō's baptismal service at Sophia University in Japan when the Auers officially adopted him. For Tei, the two admirals are like his grandfathers in Japan.

In June 1994, when he was 11, Tei visited Japan with Auer for the first time since his birth. A special *Tan-Tan Kai* meeting was held to welcome the father and son; Tei met the two admirals, who had last seen him at his baptism. Prompted by his father, Tei timidly went up to Uchida and Nakamura and exchanged words with them. Tei knew that Uchida had been on board the battleship HIJMS *Yamato*—something Auer had probably told him in advance—and that Nakamura had sunk an enemy ship by firing torpedoes.[1] He asked innocent questions such as "Was the Yamato big?" and "How did you feel when your torpedo hit the target?" Uchida and Nakamura's faces creased in delight, and they answered slowly in English.

As mentioned earlier, Auer first met Uchida in 1970 when he came to Japan to research the founding of the postwar Japanese maritime forces. Chief of Maritime Staff (CMS) Uchida had assisted Auer's research both as the head of uniformed personnel and on a personal basis. When Uchida granted a meeting soon after Auer's arrival in Japan, someone from the JMSDF told Auer he was very lucky: *Mr. Uchida is an intellectual, so he would immediately understand how important your research is and provide you with all the assistance you need. It would be different with someone else.*

As predicted, Uchida was generous about cooperating with Auer's research. Thanks to Uchida's word from the top, other JMSDF personnel gave Auer their full cooperation. Auer would not have been able to complete his research if it had not been for Uchida. It is possible that Auer would not have become the expert in Japan-US security issues that he is today. Because of all he owed to Uchida, Auer took a character from Uchida's name for his son.

Auer also first met Teiji Nakamura, the other admiral from whom Tei's name was derived, during his 1970 sojourn in Japan to research the JMSDF. Back then, Nakamura was the director of the Fifth Staff Office of the Joint Staff Council.[2] Auer did not know much about Nakamura; since he was not directly involved in the JMSDF's creation, he was not an essential person for Auer's research. In fact, Auer canceled his first appointment with Nakamura when another meeting was arranged unexpectedly with Minoru Genda, famous as a central figure of the Pearl Harbor attack.

Learning that Auer had canceled on Nakamura to meet Genda, *Asahi Shimbun* journalist Shunji Taoka told Auer, "You must see him, by all means," and called Nakamura then and there. Although they made a new appointment, Auer does not recall what they discussed when they met. Whatever it was, there was not much information useful for his research, he says. From my own experience, I know that

[1] The torpedoes are said to have hit USS *Atlanta*, which survived the attack but was scuttled the next day.

[2] *Tōgō Bakuryō Kaigi.*

Nakamura never wastes his breath. He does not speculate or talk about things he knows nothing about. When he first met Auer, he was probably like that, too.

After completing his doctoral dissertation, Auer remained in Japan as a political advisor to the commander, US Naval Forces Japan, playing an active role as the person most knowledgeable about Japan within the US Navy. Auer's new mission was to investigate how leading figures in the Japanese government truly felt about issues that were critical for the US Navy. The methods he used to meet Japanese people in the course of writing his doctoral dissertation still proved useful in this new mission. With his proactive nature and a new title, he was able to meet almost anyone. It was around this time that he introduced Julian Burke, commander, US Naval Forces Japan, to Naka Funada, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to discuss the issue of homeporting the aircraft carrier USS *Midway* in Yokosuka. He also met Eki Sone, a Diet member of the Democratic Socialist Party, amid the fuss over the rumor that chemical weapons were stored on US naval bases.

Auer attended the weekly meetings held in the political section of the US embassy in Tokyo and exchanged views with State Department officials. He got a chance to meet Michael Armacost, the future US ambassador to Japan, during one of these meetings. There were many things to discuss at these meetings. In the summer of 1971, the announcement of National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger's sudden visit to China and plans for President Nixon's own visit the following spring, called the Nixon Shock in Japan, stunned the country. Kept completely in the dark, many Japanese expressed distrust of the US as an ally. The United States was unable to pull out of the conflicts in Indochina, even as Japanese leftists actively fanned anti-US and anti-war movements. In February of 1972, the United Red Army caused the Asama Sansō Incident.[3] With Japanese society in an uproar, it was a time when preserving the Japan-US alliance demanded a special effort. Auer's work as a political advisor must have been very worthwhile for the lieutenant commander, who had just turned 30.

Auer formed a close relationship with Nakamura around this time, developing unconditional respect for his character and insight. Auer focused on interactions with JMSDF uniformed personnel more than ever in those days. Nakamura had served at the MSO as the director general of the Operations and Plans Department[4] and then as the commander of the Fleet Escort Force,[5] the head of the JMSDF's largest and strongest operating surface force. Thus, he became an important contact for Auer. Although Nakamura had left no strong impression on Auer when they first met, in the course of their many meetings, Auer came to feel that Nakamura was an extraordinary person.

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[3] The United Red Army was a group of new leftists in Japan who went into hiding in the mountains as they were pursued by the police. After a violent internal struggle that claimed the lives of 12 victims, the remnants of the group barricaded themselves in a holiday lodge below Mount Asama, taking a hostage. The ten-day siege came to an end with a police assault, which was broadcast live; the sequence of events shook Japan.

[4] *Bōei Buchō*.

[5] *Goei Kantai Shireikan*.

Auer frequently visited Nakamura at the official residence of the commander of the Fleet Escort Force, located between US Fleet Activities Yokosuka Base and Kannonzaki, the eastern end of the Miura Peninsula. They would discuss how the Japanese and US navies could work together. On occasion, Auer would intimate the US Navy's intentions to Nakamura, who would relay this information to CMS Suteo Ishida. Nakamura, for his part, sometimes communicated the intentions of the JMSDF uniformed personnel to the US Navy through Auer.

Auer called on Nakamura even when there was no official business to discuss. Nakamura's views on current affairs were always accurate and correct. If Auer wanted to understand something about the politics and economy of Japan, he would not go wrong so long as he listened to Nakamura's opinions. Moreover, Auer was charmed by Nakamura's crisp personality. The mere pleasure of Nakamura's company made Auer feel that he should sit up straight, to show respect for this great man.

Their friendship continued even after Auer was appointed in August 1973 as the executive officer of the guided-missile destroyer USS *Parsons*, part of the Seventh Fleet, homeported at Yokosuka. Auer later studied Japanese at the Jesuit Language School in Kamakura from September 1975 to December 1976, and then studied in the JMSDF Command and Staff College for a year from January to December 1977. He was the first international student from the US Navy to be accepted by the college, which is the educational institution for senior officers (captains, commanders, and lieutenant commanders) who are expected to command various forces and become flag officers in the future. This period nearly overlaps with the period when Nakamura was the commander in chief of the Self-Defense Fleet[6] and then the CMS. Auer further served as the commanding officer of the Yokosuka-based frigate USS *Francis Hammond* from January 1978 to January 1979. Auer became acquainted with more and more Japanese naval personnel and deepened his exchanges with them; in particular, he remained actively in touch with Nakamura even after the latter's retirement.

Auer feels that becoming acquainted with Nakamura was the blessing of a lifetime. For Auer, Nakamura embodies the best aspects of the organization of the JMSDF and the state and nation of Japan, which Auer came to be deeply associated with by fate. For this reason, Auer took a character from Nakamura's name for his son. This required some persuasion of Nakamura, who tried hard to decline the honor, saying that he was nobody special and did not deserve it.

[6]This position has command of the Fleet Escort Force, the Fleet Air Force, and the Fleet Submarine Force as a whole.

Teiji Nakamura, the CMS

Auer is not alone in holding Teiji Nakamura in high regard. People within and outside the JMSDF who have met Nakamura have equally high esteem for the man. He has numerous fans in the US Navy, too. When Auer was serving as the executive officer on the guided-missile destroyer USS *Parsons*, he once invited Nakamura to come aboard and give a lecture for officers onboard. Impressed with Nakamura's character and the logic of his lecture, the officers asked why there were no such highly respected admirals in the US Navy. Auer and Commander Rudolph Daus, the ship's commanding officer, tried hard to explain that someone like Admiral Nakamura was also exceptional for the JMSDF.

Hideo Kimura, a Japan-US relationship consultant and a good friend of Auer who became acquainted with Nakamura through Auer, is the one who told me this anecdote. Kimura always likes to tell lewd jokes, but when he talks about Nakamura, he suddenly becomes humble. He still gets quite tense and straightens up when he faces Nakamura. "Look, you should know that there are two types of distinguished men," he once told me. "The first type lets you think that you could be like them if you tried hard enough, whereas the second makes you think that you'll never match them, no matter what you do. Mr. Nakamura is the latter type."

Kimura's father, who used to run a business on the Miura Peninsula before he passed away, had met Nakamura once. "He's like Admiral Katsunoshin Yamanashi," he told his son. Kimura's father had had an opportunity soon after World War II to meet Admiral Yamanashi. One of Yamanashi's junior colleagues was himself starting a business on the Miura Peninsula, and so the admiral had taken the trouble to visit Kimura's house near Kannonzaki to pay his respects. Kimura's father was very impressed and talked about the episode long after, saying, "The distinguished admiral who served as the president of Gakushūin, the imperial school, and who educated the crown prince bowed deeply to me. There was no arrogance or obsequiousness. He is such a respectable man." It is fascinating to know that Nakamura left people with an impression of being like Katsunoshin Yamanashi—all the more because he respected Yamanashi very much, as will be discussed later.

Kimura was working as a secretary to the local Diet Member Eki Sone, the secretary-general of the Democratic Socialist Party, when Auer was serving as a political advisor to the commander, US Naval Forces Japan. His father had introduced Kimura to Sone. It was Kimura who arranged the meeting between Auer and Sone. A foreign ministry official before the war, Sone was also one of the people who respected Nakamura. When Nakamura retired as the CMS, some argued it was a waste of talent and that he should be made advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to capitalize on his knowledge and experience. Upon hearing the argument, Sone unexpectedly raised objections. *Making use of Mr. Nakamura's talents is good. But if Japan were by any chance involved in war, no one but Mr. Nakamura could command the Japanese fleet. What would happen then? I oppose using him as a half measure.*

Fig. 3.1 Admiral Teiji Nakamura, 11th Chief of Staff, JMSDF. (Photo credit: JMSDF)

Others reconsidered, concurring with Sone's objection, and so the idea of Nakamura's employment at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was dropped. Fortunately, a situation has not arisen requiring the JMSDF to prevent a foreign invasion. And so, with no opportunity for him to command the fleet, the admiral is enjoying a life of peaceful retirement to date.

Nakamura was appointed the 11th CMS in March 1976 (Fig. 3.1). His relatively short service of one and a half years ended when he was relieved by Ryōhei Ōga in September of 1977. While some wanted him to serve longer, Nakamura stepped down to make way for a junior colleague.

It must be added that he had not expected to become the CMS, nor was he eager to assume the position. *I'd like to serve on the front lines as much as possible. I don't want to oversee naval administration at the central headquarters.* Nakamura hesitated, but those around him prevailed upon him to serve as the JMSDF's highest-ranking officer.

He was therefore relieved when he retired. Unlike many other flag officers, he did not seek reemployment in private companies with close ties to the Defense Agency. He appears to have thought that he should not inconvenience his junior colleagues by becoming a defense contractor employee supplying the JMSDF. To the best of my knowledge, the only admirals reaching the top position of CMS who did not parachute into private companies on retiring were Nakamura and Uchida.

Although he had not sought the position, Nakamura discharged his duties as CMS with great zeal once he was appointed. The JMSDF in the 1980s was still inferior to the US Navy in terms of armament and equipment. To begin with, due to constitutional, political, and budgetary restrictions, the JMSDF was not allowed the vessels, aircraft, and other weapons and equipment necessary for a reliable allied navy.

Undeterred by what was lacking, Nakamura always contemplated what the JMSDF could do with what it had, doing his best under the given circumstances. He endeavored to make the JMSDF a first-class "ready force" in terms of morale and skills, despite its inadequate equipment.

The person who knew Nakamura best around this time was probably Vice Admiral Nariaki Tomita, who served as the senior aide-de-camp to the CMS. He had also served on the staff when Nakamura had been the commander in chief of the Self-Defense Fleet. According to Tomita, Nakamura was a strict and imposing commander. He valued logical thinking—that is, the process of contemplation—and loathed baseless ideas. Similar exercises were repeated every year, yet he did not neglect careful planning. If his subordinates created and submitted plans merely imitating similar exercises carried out before, he demanded a detailed explanation of their thought process, causing them to stammer. This meant staff members were tense when they reported to Nakamura.

Nakamura was strict not only with his subordinates, but also with himself. The CMS is required to give lectures at various events. Nakamura wrote the speeches himself. He would write a draft in cramped handwriting on the back of a newspaper advertising insert, which he would put away in a desk drawer to revise a few days later. The staff grew used to the sight of Nakamura sitting at his desk in a dark room, lit only by the light of a desk lamp, after a busy day's work of meeting a stream of visitors.

Nakamura considered that capable administrators alone could not build and maintain a first-rate navy; he felt specialists in various fields were essential. Without aircraft specialists, minesweeping specialists, and torpedo specialists, the JMSDF could not be recognized as a true navy. Therefore, he established specialist courses in addition to the Command and Staff Course at the JMSDF Command and Staff College, and also tried to promote specialists so their achievements in less conspicuous fields could be appraised appropriately.

The JMSDF's top post comes with a measure of grandeur, requiring the CMS to review units and give addresses at JMSDF ceremonies, such as naval reviews, JMSDF Officer Candidate School graduation ceremonies, JMSDF foundation ceremonies, change of command ceremonies, and vessel delivery ceremonies. Just dealing with these official events takes up time. But Nakamura was not in favor of showy ceremonies and socializing. Instead, he made the rounds of JMSDF bases in remote areas, where the chiefs of maritime staff rarely visited, as much as his schedule allowed during his term in the post.

"There is a saying in Buddhism: *Those who light up a corner are the real national treasures*," Tomita explained. "Admiral Nakamura always appeared to care about the hardships of JMSDF personnel silently striving to do their duty in remote areas." Nakamura visited such places as Wakkanai, Yoichi, Hakodate, and Tappizaki in the north, and Iwo Jima, Okinawa, Kikaijima, and Amami Ōshima in the south; not everyone in the JMSDF knew there were bases in these locations. Moreover, bringing just an aide-de-camp, he visited the northern bases in cold winters and the southern bases in hot summers, when the natural conditions were harsh.

When Tomita accompanied him, they flew in the evening from Atsugi Air Base to Iwakuni Air Base and stayed there overnight. Early the next morning they

transferred to the flying boat PS-1 to inspect the naval exercises in the East China Sea, after which they landed off Koniya, Amami Ōshima, to visit Base Facility Amami.[7] Next, they flew to Ōmura Base in Nagasaki and stayed overnight in Sasebo. The following day, they boarded a helicopter to fly to Iki, where they descended from the hovering helicopter using a rope harness to visit Guard Post Iki.[8] They also inspected Coastal Defense Group Tsushima,[9] Mutsurejima, and Sub Area Activity Shimonoseki[10] in Yamaguchi, again by helicopter. Then they stopped at Ozuki Air Base, flew to Kanoya Air Base in Kagoshima, staying there overnight, and returned to Atsugi the next day. The entire journey took only 4 days and three nights. Tomita says that the director general of the Operations and Plan Department[11] in the Headquarters Sasebo District[12] scolded him for lacking judgment as an aide-de-camp and letting the CMS travel in such a reckless way. The personnel who greeted the CMS, their supreme commander, at each base must have been on edge; yet, surely they sensed an unusual degree of enthusiasm in the unconventional admiral's mode of arrival, descending by harness from a helicopter instead of touching down on the landing pad.

Nakamura, logical in everything, knew well that cooperation with the US Navy was the JMSDF's top priority; he made efforts to maintain it. *Big countries such as the United States, the Soviet Union, and China surround Japan. Because Japan can't possess a navy with the full capabilities that other navies have, it can't compete with any of those countries on its own. Japan has to ally with one of those countries to secure its safety. Whenever Japan allied with continental countries before World War II, it failed. In the final analysis, Japan must join hands with the United States, politically and economically. Japan couldn't survive if it were to alienate the United States. Hence, the Japan-US Security Treaty is the basis of everything else. Japan and the United States are both maritime countries, which, under their democratic systems of government, share a common interest in protecting the peace in the Pacific. The JMSDF should be able to compensate for the capabilities the US Navy lacks in the Western Pacific, and it should seek to have the capabilities to do so.* Those were Nakamura's thoughts.

In the mid-1970s, however, when Nakamura served as the commander in chief of the Self-Defense Fleet and the CMS, the US Navy neither valued nor counted on the capabilities of the JMSDF. Some US Navy personnel even looked down on the JMSDF. During Nakamura's appointment as the commander in chief of the Self-Defense Fleet, one of his staff came back mortified from a meeting where US naval personnel told him that "[t]he JMSDF is a training force, not a combat force." The

[7] *Amami Kichi Bunkentai*.
[8] *Iki Keibisho*.
[9] *Tsushima Bōbitai*.
[10] *Shimonoseki Kichitai*.
[11] *Bōei Buchō*.
[12] *Sasebo Sōkanbu*.

US Navy was, frankly, unconvinced of the JMSDF's dependability in case of an emergency.

The former IJN officers who had fought the US Navy realized that this lack of confidence would hinder cooperation, so they tried to build a relationship of mutual trust between the JMSDF and US Navy. The Sister Ship program pairing Japanese and US vessels was introduced, exchanges among young officers and sailors were encouraged, and the Japanese and US navies endeavored to hold more substantial and realistic joint exercises at sea. Although it had not acquired the level of capability it desired, the JMSDF aspired to have a professional relationship with the US Navy. Nakamura also cared about the ties between the younger generation of Japanese and US naval leaders. He introduced Manabu Yoshida and Hiroshi Nagata, two future chiefs of maritime staff, to Admiral S. Robert Foley, Jr. commander, US Seventh Fleet. Foley later became commander in chief, US Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT), and proposed that then-CMS Yoshida send JMSDF ships to participate in the Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC).

As the Vietnam War ended and Nakamura retired as the CMS, the United States gradually began to emphasize the necessity for Asian countries to build up their own defense capabilities. It also began to ask the JMSDF for closer cooperation in maintaining peace and security in East Asia. The JMSDF itself began to improve its capabilities to meet the US Navy's expectations. The cooperative working relationship between the two navies was to blossom in the 1980s in the shape of RIMPAC and sea lane defense. A decade before that, Nakamura had promoted preparation and training so that the JMSDF could play an active role in cooperation with the US Navy in the future. Manabu Yoshida believes that Nakamura, during his time as CMS, sowed the seeds of the JMSDF's more active and extensive cooperation with the US Navy in the early 1980s. Even now, successive chiefs of maritime staff who have come after Nakamura, including Yoshida, call on Nakamura at every turn to ask his opinion.

Teiji Nakamura as a Naval Officer

Nakamura does not like flashiness or socializing; he is extremely honest with money, pays no heed to fame, and being generally reticent, never boasts of his achievements. He is a temperate drinker and not known for romantic rumors; he gladly shares his views if asked without ever lecturing anyone; and he takes initiative rather than scolding others. In a sense, Nakamura is somebody who could appear in a textbook on morals. He is not adept at interacting with people. He does not and cannot pay empty compliments to either his superiors or subordinates. He is not so tall, but he carries himself well and so seems larger than life.

With such a character, Nakamura might give strangers the impression that he is a little unapproachable. But he does not consider himself stiff at all. Indeed, on the last business day of each year in which he was the commander in chief of the Self-Defense Fleet, the atmosphere in the office was relaxed and highly enjoyable as the

executive staff, petty officers, and administrative staff gathered around Nakamura. The successive former aides-de-camp who had served Nakamura still get together with him once a year even now, enjoying the reunion and remembering old times. Nakamura is said to be smiling and congenial during those gatherings. He likes to talk to youngsters, listening to their opinions and sharing his own. He always appears very natural: he never forces or demands anything; he visits anywhere he is invited but does not push if not; and he speaks very little. Even after his retirement, Nakamura's attitude has remained unchanged.

Describing Nakamura's personality in writing is difficult. There are no amusing anecdotes worth mentioning. When I interviewed him in person, he did not say much about himself, which does not make for an exciting story. He never said things like "Everything went well because I thought this and did that at that time."

Even when I tried to draw him out by pointing out the fact that he was the only JMSDF flag officer who graduated from the Naval Academy at the top of his class, his answer was simply, "Well, that's what they say." This was no ordinary achievement, graduating at the top of one's class at the Naval Academy, where, as at Tokyo Imperial University and Kyoto Imperial University, the smartest students had gathered before the war. And yet no one has ever heard Nakamura singing his own praises about this accomplishment.

Nakamura was known to be serious, smart, and hardworking even before he entered the Imperial Naval Academy. Born in Kyoto, Nakamura graduated from a junior high school in Tsu, Mie Prefecture; he was admitted to the Naval Academy in 1936 and graduated in July 1939. He was supposed to visit the West Coast of the United States on an overseas training cruise, but the Training Squadron turned back at Hawaii. World War II broke out with Germany's invasion of Poland, forcing the cancelation of the visit; Japan-US relations were growing increasingly tense. That, it turned out, became the IJN's final overseas training cruise. Whereas Japanese Americans warmly welcomed them in Honolulu and Hilo, the US Navy's welcoming reception was much smaller, almost limited to a show of marching in file.

Nakamura was full of fighting spirit, ready to do battle against the United States. That nation he viewed as the sworn enemy to settle scores with, including the issues of arms limitation and the exclusion of Japanese immigrants. When navigating off Pearl Harbor, he remembers keeping a sharp eye out per his instructor's direction to watch closely. No US Pacific Fleet vessels were observable from outside the harbor, needless to say.

After his first assignment at sea on board HIJMS *Takao*, the flagship of the Second Fleet, Nakamura was assigned in August 1941 to the destroyer HIJMS *Yūdachi*, where he served as the chief torpedo officer. In that position, he saw the outbreak of the war in December 1941 and took part in various missions and battles, most notably the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal (the Third Battle of the Solomon Sea). During this battle, his ship was hit and sunk on November 13, 1942, whereupon he was transferred to HIJMS *Samidare* in the same squadron. Later, he joined HIJMS *Nagato*, the flagship of the First Fleet, became a Naval Academy instructor, and

served as the special attack commander of a kamikaze unit[13] created for the coming decisive battle on the mainland, before seeing Japan's defeat. In Nakamura's more than 30-year career in the IJN and the JMSDF, the days of combat on HIJMS *Yūdachi* appear as though they were the most challenging and fulfilling experience.

To understand the character and personality of Teiji Nakamura (since he does not talk about himself), it would be helpful to look at three naval officers he admires. Several people suggested this approach to me, including Vice Admiral Tomita and Hideo Kimura, the Japan-US relationship consultant.

The first example of an officer Nakamura admires is Commander Kiyoshi Kikkawa, the commanding officer of the destroyer HIJMS *Yūdachi*, on which Nakamura served during the war. The second is Admiral Katsunoshin Yamanashi, vice minister of the navy in the prewar era. And the third is Admiral Arleigh Burke of the US Navy, one of the men who supported the idea of creating the JMSDF and helped to found it.

Commanding Officer as a Lifelong Model

Commander Kiyoshi Kikkawa served as the commanding officer of HIJMS *Yūdachi* starting in May 1942. According to "Fumetsu no kuchikukanchō Kikkawa Kiyoshi" (Immortal destroyer commanding officer Kiyoshi Kikkawa), written by Kōji Ishiwata, Commander Kikkawa was born in the city of Hiroshima in 1900. Despite being disqualified once for insufficient height and chest measurement, he was accepted by the Naval Academy on his second try in 1919, graduating in 1923. Due to his rather poor grades, after graduation he spent almost his entire career on board low-profile destroyers. As destroyers always lead the way for bigger ships, their commanding officers were informally called "rickshaw pullers" and looked down on. Commander Kikkawa never served in the mainstream of the navy, such as the Naval General Staff, the Ministry of the Navy, or the Combined Fleet Headquarters.

This inconspicuous mid-level officer rendered distinguished service on the actual battlefield. In the Battle of Badung Strait (the Battle off the Island of Bali) in February 1942, he commanded the destroyer HIJMS *Ōshio* that, together with its sister ship HIJMS *Asashio*, sank the Dutch destroyer HNLMS *Piet Hein*, damaged the Dutch cruiser HNLMS *Tromp*, and slightly damaged the US destroyer USS *Stewart*. Appointed the commanding officer of the destroyer HIJMS *Yūdachi* in May 1942, Kikkawa engaged in transporting supplies and soldiers from Shortland Island to Guadalcanal Island 18 times after US forces had landed on Guadalcanal Island in August. Thanks to skillful steering during these operations, the ship was never hit and survived without a scratch despite numerous US aircraft attacks.

[13] Special attack commander (*tokkōchō*) of a kamikaze unit (*totsugekitai*).

On September 4, on its return trip after landing soldiers, HIJMS *Yūdachi* bombarded an enemy airfield[14] and, encountering USS *Gregory* and USS *Little* by chance, sank the two US fast transports. On October 25, HIJMS *Yūdachi* saved 301 of the 550 crew of HIJMS *Yura*, boldly and calmly pulling up alongside the cruiser after repeated enemy aircraft attacks caused the ship's ammunition to explode and touched off a fire.

The Naval Battle of Guadalcanal was where HIJMS *Yūdachi* rendered its most distinguished service. IJN vessels led by the battleships HIJMS *Hiei* and HIJMS *Kirishima* formed a special volunteer attack force[15] and headed for Guadalcanal Island on November 12. Their aims were to regain command of the skies by bombarding the enemy airfield and to support the landing of Imperial Japanese Army forces on Guadalcanal Island again. Navigating at the forefront of the attack force, HIJMS *Yūdachi* sighted more than seven enemy cruisers and destroyers at 23:42 (JST) and raised the alarm for the entire force. A minute later, HIJMS *Hiei* also sighted enemy ships and, using searchlights, opened fire at 23:51. Meanwhile, HIJMS *Yūdachi* and its sister ship HIJMS *Harusame* crossed eastward, in front of the enemy fleet. The US fleet, trying to avoid a collision, broke formation and fell into disorder. HIJMS *Yūdachi* turned to port at around 23:48 and rushed into the enemy formation alone. At around 23:55, it fired eight torpedoes 1500 meters away from the enemy vessels, two of them hitting and crippling the cruiser USS *Atlanta*.

For the next 30 minutes, HIJMS *Yūdachi* placed herself in the middle of the enemy fleet and fiercely fired on the adversary at close range, severely damaging a few US cruisers and destroyers. At 00:15 the next day (November 13), *Yūdachi* momentarily suspended its attack and broke away from the enemy fleet, whereupon it was illuminated by a searchlight and received incoming fire, probably from a friendly cruiser, which struck the ship in several spots, including the engine room and the bridge, igniting a fire and crippling the ship. At 01:55 the destroyer HIJMS *Samidare* brought herself alongside HIJMS *Yūdachi*. Commander Kikkawa decided to abandon ship at 02:25; the crew of 207 transferred to HIJMS *Samidare*, with the commanding officer the last to leave the ship. Twenty-six *Yūdachi* crewmembers were killed in action, including the chief engineer. Although HIJMS *Samidare* attempted to sink HIJMS *Yūdachi* by bombarding and torpedoing the ship, it left the area without being able to confirm the sinking. HIJMS *Yūdachi* was eventually sunk by USS *Portland*'s shelling later that morning.

It was the young Lieutenant Junior Grade Nakamura who launched the eight torpedoes during the battle. After the war, the crew of HIJMS *Yūdachi* gathered and privately published a commemorative anthology titled *Kuchikukan Yūdachi* (Destroyer HIJMS *Yūdachi*) that detailed the records of the destroyer's life, from the time of its commissioning until its sinking. Nakamura allegedly took the initiative in the compilation; the book shows good workmanship, certainly giving

[14] Henderson Airfield.

[15] *Teishin Kōgekitai*.

the impression that it was his work. There are no typos despite being an amateur undertaking. In the book, Nakamura himself writes about his experience during the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal.

> *"Hard aport! Commence fire!" Following the commanding officer's order, I gave the order to commence fire. Upon hearing Torpedo Gunner Nomura's reply of "Ready, fire!" I ran out to the flag deck to check the successive launch of torpedoes . . . I stared at the enemy through the binoculars around my neck, desperate to see if the torpedoes had hit the target. The bows of the first two ships almost overlapped as though they were one long ship, but nothing was happening. Not yet? And just when I thought the torpedoes might have missed, more than two columns of fire shot up consecutively. They had hit! I had no regrets. Just as relief washed over me, I saw flashes of gunfire from both sides.*

Nakamura then devoted all his energy to loading the next set of torpedoes, but just as the preparations were completed, the ship took fire near where he was and he lost consciousness. *I don't know how long I was lying there. Suddenly I came to. I tried to move my hands, and they moved. My legs moved, too. I was able to stand up. I might have been injured, but it must have been nothing serious.*

Thus, Nakamura narrowly escaped death after rendering distinguished service and survived the battle. Although he does not speak of his exploits, the battle must have left the young lieutenant junior grade with intense, vivid memories.

And yet, rather than his own experience, Nakamura appears to have engraved the leadership and conduct of Kiyoshi Kikkawa, the commanding officer of HIJMS *Yūdachi*, on his heart after World War II. Tomita speculates that, after becoming a commanding officer, Nakamura always contemplated whether he would be able to fight as brilliantly if he were placed in Commander Kikkawa's position. In the book *Kuchikukan Yūdachi*, Nakamura records his recollections:

> *They say that the passage of time always makes every memory beautiful. Be that as it may, every moment of the 15 months I served on HIJMS Yūdachi is now precious and has given me valuable, irreplaceable guidance. . . .*
>
> *There is no doubt that the commanding officer of HIJMS Yūdachi, Kikkawa, was the bravest in battle. However, it wasn't all about bravery. Always cool and steady, he seized opportunities and, taking a broad perspective, considered contributing to the operations of friendly forces even if it meant sacrificing himself. His actions during the battle of September 4 and the Third Battle of the Solomon Seas are good examples of that.*
>
> *He had an earnest and serious attitude toward the duties of a commanding officer. He well understood that their roles and strategic objectives obliged those higher up the chain of command to order those on the seas to conduct unreasonable and reckless operations; he accomplished his duties to the best of his ability, going above and beyond what was expected in contributing to the operation. While impertinent younger folks like me grumbled about the higher command and friendly forces, I never heard Commander Kikkawa utter a word of criticism. He never boasted or bragged about his achievements. He preferred simply to carry out his duties pragmatically and naturally.*
>
> *Commander Kikkawa was strict about training. He especially never neglected his own rehearsals for battle, even for a day. His ability to judge the enemy's situation in the dark during the battle, as well as the free flow of precise instructions regarding the conduct of battle coming from his mouth as he controlled the ship's movements, must have been the fruits of his daily self-training.*

Though strict when it came to duties and training, the commanding officer was such a good father figure when he was relaxing. Just being around his cheerful, frank, and informal character naturally made us laugh and feel at ease.

I could serve with Commander Kikkawa to the depths of hell, I thought.

I do not know if Nakamura could have shown leadership in a real battle the way Commander Kikkawa did. He himself could not have known unless he was in that situation. It is clear from this writing, however, that Nakamura saw in Commander Kikkawa an ideal commanding officer and made efforts to reach that standard. Incidentally, Commander Kikkawa, having lost his ship, declined a preliminary notice of an order to be a Naval Academy instructor and asked instead to continue serving on the front line. He headed once again to the Solomon Sea to take command of the new destroyer HIJMS *Ōnami*. On the night of November 25, 1943, his ship was detected by a US destroyer's radar off Cape St. George, New Ireland Island, and it was sunk in a one-sided attack with him on board. Kikkawa was honored posthumously with a double promotion, unprecedented for a commanding officer of a destroyer; he was awarded the rank of rear admiral.

An Old Admiral's Lecture

Nakamura has repeatedly stated that the second person he admires is Admiral Katsunoshin Yamanashi.

One day, Hideo Kimura had occasion to dine with Nakamura, and he invited a young JMSDF officer who happened to be visiting his house to come along. Nervous about the opportunity to meet Admiral Nakamura for the first time, the officer spoke few words during the meal, but, mustering up his courage at the end of the meeting, he asked Nakamura to name a person, military or civilian, he admired as a human being. Nakamura replied:

I have met two admirals in my life. One was Admiral Sankichi Takahashi, the other was Admiral Katsunoshin Yamanashi. I wondered how two admirals could be so different. Admiral Yamanashi really impressed me; he helped me realize that a person could cultivate their character to such a high degree. Since then, whenever I've had to make a decision, I've always wondered what Admiral Yamanashi would do, although I'm far inferior to him, of course.

Katsunoshin Yamanashi was counted among the "navy men of good sense"[16] before the war, a group of IJN leaders who supported the Washington Naval Treaty and cooperative relations with the United States and Great Britain, and who opposed the alliance with Nazi Germany and Italy and going to war with the United States. It was after the war that Nakamura met the admiral.

[16] *Kaigun ryōshiki-ha*. This group is also known as the "Treaty Faction" as opposed to the "Fleet Faction" of the IJN.

At the end of World War II Nakamura was serving in Chiba as the special attack commander of a kamikaze unit created to prepare for the decisive battle on the mainland. He led a unit consisting of *kaiten* manned torpedoes, *kairyū* two-man midget submarines, and *shin'yō* suicide motorboats. He was willing to set off with his subordinates to carry out a kamikaze attack if US forces started landing. A Japanese victory was out of the question, given the progress of the war, but a Japanese defeat was equally unimaginable. Nakamura was stunned by the news that Japan lost the war. At some time around August 16, he even discussed the possibility of becoming pirates on *kairyū* with his fellow officers and sailors.

After carrying out his final naval assignment as the aide-de-camp at Osaka Guard District,[17] he began preparations for the university entrance exam to study again. He gave up that dream as raging inflation made it impossible to provide for his family. After a brief stint at a local demobilization bureau,[18] he got a job at a company trading in naval goods the government had sold off to the public, but he left the company because he hated working with colleagues who made money by putting assets on the black market. Eventually he began managing accounts at a company run by a relative of his wife, which is how he was employed when the predecessor to the JMSDF, the Coastal Safety Force, was established in 1952. Nakamura applied to join the force at the suggestion of a former senior at his junior high school and classmates at the Naval Academy. He joined the service in June 1952. According to Auer, Nakamura's family was strongly opposed to his serving in the navy again, but he joined up, nonetheless.

Having graduated from the Naval Academy at the top of his class, Nakamura would probably have had countless opportunities if he had aspired to succeed in civilian life. When I asked him why he was attracted to the JMSDF for all that, he replied: "I must have gotten excited at the thought of joining the navy again."

Nakamura intended to go to sea upon joining the Coastal Safety Force. He was optimistic that the restrictive Constitution would be amended and that a formal navy would be established within 5 years or so. Unfortunately, neither hope was realized so soon. He had to work at the force's general headquarters[19] making budgetary request documents, not at all what he wanted to do, which made him think about quitting. Although he had a chance in 1954 to finally go to sea as a staff member of the Sasebo-based Second Flotilla Command, he was soon recalled and sent to the administrative office of the recently established Joint Staff Council. Frustrated, Nakamura protested by staying on at sea for 40 days. Presumably, the central headquarters needed the talent of someone who had graduated from the Naval Academy at the top of his class and could not just leave him at sea. In any case, the reality of the JMSDF he joined was far from ideal, and it differed from the IJN in many respects. Sometimes Nakamura felt depressed.

[17] *Osaka Keibifu*.

[18] *chihō fukuinkyoku*.

[19] *sōkanbu*. This became the *Kaijō Bakuryō Kanbu* (Maritime Staff Office) after 1954, when the Coastal Safety Force was reorganized as the JMSDF.

It was a little after this that Nakamura first met Admiral Katsunoshin Yamanashi. Nakamura wrote an essay titled "Yamanashi Katsunoshin taishō ni manabu (Learning from Admiral Katsunoshin Yamanashi)," in the bulletin of the *Suikōkai*, the naval association of which he once served as president.

I met Admiral Yamanashi in 1957, when I attended his lecture as a student at the JMSDF Command and Staff College. Although it was almost 40 years ago, I still remember the lecture as vividly as though it were yesterday. The admiral was already over 80 years old. He brought a few bulky foreign books to the desk on the platform, and never used a chair or microphone even though the school president had suggested that he do so repeatedly. Sometimes walking on the platform from one end to the other, sometimes reading from the foreign books, without a sheet of prepared notes in his hand, he patiently and tirelessly explained to us numerous historical facts and the achievements of great admirals one after another, as well as his thoughts on and assessments of them.

The lecture was supposed to start at one o'clock and end at four, but because it was coming to the most exciting part, it didn't end at four or even five. It was well past six o'clock when he concluded the lecture. Twice he took short breaks, then continued his lecture, standing with a commanding posture, not once sitting in his chair. . . .

Back then, famous naval officers gave us quite a lot of lectures; sometimes we were disappointed by those that were merely nostalgic recollections from start to finish. When we attended Admiral Yamanashi's lecture, which was on a completely different level, we were deeply impressed with its content, but more so with the admiral's entire character that emanated from it. Even today, I cannot forget the strong impression of meeting a living exemplar of reaching such heights by cultivating one's character. I always thought it was the good fortune of a lifetime that I was able to listen to Admiral Yamanashi's lecture in person and experience the admiral's character.

Meeting Yamanashi at the JMSDF Command and Staff College, the institution where future JMSDF leaders are educated, was probably a turning point for Nakamura: for the first time, he was able to personally visualize the future of the JMSDF. In the same essay, Nakamura continues:

Admiral Yamanashi came as a guest speaker to the graduation ceremony for those of us who had completed the course at the JMSDF Command and Staff College. We graduating officers, full of burning enthusiasm to rebuild the navy when we had joined the JMSDF, were by then inclined to become frustrated and often demoralized in the face of enormous political, social, and economic constraints. It was to this somewhat dispirited audience that the admiral gave a speech along the following lines:

"The JMSDF doesn't have many ships or aircraft. Its equipment and facilities are really poor. But it has people. You who are graduating today are the JMSDF's irreplaceable assets. Numerous hardships await you. You are not the only or the first to bear those hardships, however. It might be unimaginable for you who only know the IJN of the Shōwa era. But the Japanese Navy grew to the size it was wholly because those who came before us struggled so hard despite facing hardships no different from yours today, or even bigger ones, from the founding in the Meiji era, to the [First] Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War, and through the era of arms limitation. To face huge hardships is what men should always wish for."

. . . Whenever things did not go as planned during my service in the JMSDF, I cheered myself up by recalling the admiral's speech on my graduation day.

There are signs that Nakamura, who has an inquisitive mind, also studied and learned from Admiral Yamanashi's achievements. And his admiration for Yamanashi grew with additional study. Until he turned 90, Yamanashi spent at

least 3 months every year preparing his annual lecture at the JMSDF Command and Staff College and examining the composition and emphasis of his speech, rehearsing constantly. He never boasted of his achievements or spoke ill of others. If someone tried to give him a compliment by mentioning that Emperor Hirohito (Emperor Shōwa) trusted him the most, he tried to change the subject by clearing his throat or suddenly bringing up a new topic. Rear Admiral Etsuzō Kurihara, who joined the cruiser HIJMS *Katori* as an ensign when Admiral Yamanashi was its commanding officer, remembers Yamanashi with nostalgia:

> *He was gentle. Nobody knew where he was or when he might be present. He didn't stand on his dignity or have an intimidating look. He didn't pay empty compliments. He dressed like a country person. And yet, before anyone was aware of it, he somehow elevated the discipline and morale of the ship to their peak. He was the best kind of leader.*

As is well known, Yamanashi was the vice minister of the navy at the time of the London Naval Conference in 1930. He was one of the central figures of the Treaty Faction that reined in Kanji Katō and Nobumasa Suetsugu, the chief and vice chief of the Naval General Staff, respectively, who had insisted that Japan secure the ratio for its heavy cruisers and auxiliary ships at 70 percent of those held by the United States. Eventually the negotiators succeeded in concluding the London Naval Treaty, which restricted the ratio of auxiliary ships to 69.75% of US and British holdings. Yamanashi was not passively being cooperative toward the United States. According to Nakamura's writings, Yamanashi recognized that "Japan addressed the matter of arms limitation, viewing the United States as its potential adversary; thus, for military personnel, the arms limitation talks were tantamount to war with no shots fired." And yet, considering Japan's national strength, Yamanashi concluded that agreeing on the best possible treaty for Japan was in the national interest. The public, however, did not accept that view. The argument that the signing of the treaty violated the emperor's prerogative of supreme command spread like wildfire throughout the country. Then, in the fashion of both sides taking the blame, both Vice Chief of Naval General Staff Suetsugu and Navy Vice Minister Yamanashi were replaced. Furthermore, 3 years after the London Naval Conference, the admiral was transferred to the reserves in a personnel shuffle by Navy Minister Mineo Ōsumi. The postwar recollection of Reijirō Wakatsuki, the chief delegate plenipotentiary sent to the London Naval Conference, recounts the following:

> *Vice Minister Yamanashi was also purged from the Navy. . . . I told Yamanashi that, under ordinary circumstances, he should be the commander in chief of the Combined Fleet or the minister of the Navy in the future, so I couldn't help but feel sorry to see him transferred to the reserves and put in the situation he was then. Yamanashi replied to me that he didn't regret a thing. Big issues like arms limitation couldn't be agreed upon without sacrifices, and somebody had to take the blame. He said that he did what he did to knowingly sacrifice himself, so it was no wonder that he was purged from important posts in the navy and found himself in that situation. Listening to him speak, I realized anew how splendid Yamanashi's character was.*

Yamanashi had not experienced active combat since serving on naval vessels during the Russo-Japanese War. Even if he had not been forced to retire early, he would have retired before the Pacific War anyway, as he was already 56 when he was transferred to the reserves in 1933. In that sense, he was an admiral without much

war experience. Nevertheless, he carried out his duties to the best of his ability and tackled problems with plenty of fighting spirit. When he had fulfilled his duties, he stepped aside with good grace. It is easy to understand why Nakamura sympathized with his situation and how he handled himself and why he looked up to the old admiral as his role model.

Study in the United States

The third naval officer Nakamura admires is Admiral Arleigh Burke, a strong proponent of the JMSDF's establishment. As mentioned in Chap. 2, Admiral Burke, after consulting his friend Admiral Sadayoshi Nakayama, established a program to let future JMSDF leaders study at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. Nakamura, the fifth officer to study there as a student, went to the United States in the summer of 1960. He flew to San Francisco and then crossed the continent by train. Seeing the United States, the country he had once fought, he wondered how in the world Japan could wage war against this huge country. After receiving 8 weeks' English training in Washington, D.C., he moved to Newport in September to study at the Naval War College with other international students sent by various navies.

In Newport, he became a lodger and experienced American family life in the house where Uchida would later stay. I have already mentioned that the lady of the house had had a fiancé, a Naval Academy graduate, lost at sea onboard a submarine during the war; partly because of that connection, the family chose to host Japanese naval personnel as lodgers. In fact, Nakamura was the family's first Japanese lodger. Probably because he left a good impression, the hostess looked after successive JMSDF officers as lodgers. Nakamura stayed in touch with her as if they were relatives, even after she moved to California.

Nakamura first met Burke when he joined a study trip to Washington, D.C., as part of a Naval War College course. Burke was then CNO, ranked at the top of the US Navy's uniformed personnel. Nakamura paid Burke a courtesy call at the Department of Defense as one of the international naval officers. The admiral talked to every one of the 23 students sent by 23 navies. Although he spent only a few minutes with each, he encouraged the officers with very apt remarks. Nakamura thought that the admiral was a first-rate person. At the time, Nakamura had only general knowledge about the fact that Burke had ferociously battled the IJN in the South Pacific during the war, had come to Japan after the war, and been deeply involved in the founding of the JMSDF. Watching how Burke interacted with naval officers from all over the world, Nakamura was thoroughly in awe of him.

Later, when he visited the United States as the CMS to attend the nation's bicentennial celebrations, Nakamura again met Burke (who had retired from the navy) at a reception held by the Japanese Embassy. At the time, the introduction of new antisubmarine patrol aircraft in Japan was completely frozen because of the

Lockheed bribery scandal.[20] The P2-Vs and P2-Js then in use were getting older, the end of their operational life fast approaching. The successor model had to be introduced soon, but for political reasons, it was not possible. If this situation persisted, the capabilities of the JMSDF would fall behind.

Noticing Nakamura's worried look, Burke appeared deeply sympathetic and cheered him up, saying, "The person in charge always faces a variety of problems, and you can only grow when you overcome those problems." Nakamura felt a warmth exuding from the admiral's own experience and his thoughtfulness in nurturing the younger generation. Those words came from a person who had endured similar difficulty, irrespective of national origin.

Except for a few parties they attended together when Burke visited Japan, these were the only interactions between the two men. They met only briefly and never discussed anything in depth, partly due to language issues. Nonetheless, Nakamura mentioned Burke alongside Katsunoshin Yamanashi as someone who had impressed him most. It was Burke's grandness that gave Nakamura such a strong impression. Moreover, Burke's goodwill toward the JMSDF in the postwar era would have been evident to Nakamura. They might even have felt the sympathy that was shared among naval officers who had fought each other in the Solomon Sea.

For CMS Nakamura, the highest-ranking officer of the JMSDF, former CNO Admiral Burke was a predecessor who had encountered similar difficulties some years earlier. Admiral Yamanashi and Admiral Burke, despite the difference of home country, appear to have shared similar talents in terms of their attitude and sincerity as leaders, something that Nakamura was well aware of, though he and Burke exchanged only a few words.

Cooperation with the US Navy

Although he had fought the US Navy with all his might during the war, Nakamura was placed in a position in the postwar JMSDF where he learned from the US Navy, accepted the ships and aircraft the US Navy transferred to the JMSDF as part of US military assistance, and trained with them. His American instructors, mostly kind and open, did not leave him with a negative impression. Navies generally did not entertain hatred or grudges toward individuals, insofar as war at sea was different from war on land, where soldiers killed each other face to face. In addition, there was no uneasiness about how the training and operations were carried out, for the US Navy and the IJN were both descendants of the Royal Navy. As a JMSDF officer from the founding era, however, Nakamura must have been frustrated at seeing how overwhelmingly well-off and powerful the US Navy was.

[20] In February 1976 it was revealed that the Lockheed Corporation bribed foreign officials while negotiating the sale of aircraft. The scandal caused considerable political controversy in Japan and led to the arrest of former Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka.

When he joined the JMSDF, Nakamura had thought about how long it would take Japan to recover the naval bases it had handed over to the United States and regain naval power comparable to that of the United States. While studying at the Naval War College in Newport, he was infuriated when he was shown *The Bridge on the River Kwai*. He lashed out at the American instructor: "What's the purpose of showing me a movie about Japanese troops torturing prisoners? You've wasted the time and money the United States government has spent on me so far." In one sense, Nakamura is a patriot of the old school who has not changed at all since the prewar era.

And yet, the patriotic naval officer's views did gradually change as he studied, at the JMSDF Command and Staff College as well as in the United States broadly; he began to think as a commander. Personally, he would have preferred that Japan have an independent navy, as it had before the war. However, he had to ask whether it was indeed a good thing for Japan. In order to fend for itself, Japan would have to have atomic weapons. And yet just having atomic weapons would not guarantee deterrence. Given these facts, the Japan-US security arrangements were the premise of everything. To protect the peace of Japan and guarantee the security of the Pacific, the close relationship between Japan and the United States was indispensable.

Then there were naval personnel in the United States, counterparts like Admiral Burke, who could be trusted and who shared the same objectives. The two countries would not have to fight each other again as long as the naval leaders of both countries enjoyed a genuine relationship of mutual trust, and both nations had reliable capabilities in times of war. It must have taken a naval officer so full of fighting spirit, hoping to defeat the United States, a long time to gain such understanding and conviction.

Come to think of it, however, it was to protect Japan that Nakamura fought the US Navy with all his heart and mind; likewise, prioritizing cooperation with the US Navy above everything else now was for the peace and security of Japan. For Nakamura, there was no contradiction in those two positions. Even after retirement from active service, Nakamura is still contemplating what the relationship with the US Navy means for his fellow naval officers and sailors who lost their lives in the war, and for the future of Japan and the Japanese he loves.

Chief Torpedo Officer Nakamura

On September 4, 1942, roughly 2 months before the torpedoes Nakamura had launched hit an enemy vessel during the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal, HIJMS *Yūdachi* sank two US fast transports after bombarding the enemy airfield on Guadalcanal Island. Nakamura wrote about this experience in the commemorative anthology *Kuchikukan Yūdachi*:

> *Suddenly I heard Chief Signalman Sone shout, "One black shape!" I turned my binoculars in that direction—they were certainly the silhouettes of ships. The commanding officer was busy giving gunnery orders and maneuvering the ship. I made up my mind to prepare the*

torpedoes for launch, without waiting for the command. "Prepare for battle, torpedo attack," I ordered, and then, "Open block valve!" . . . I continued to observe the targets. There were two enemy ships: the first was the bigger of the two, yet smaller than a light cruiser; the second was a destroyer. The gunfire and searchlights had already begun when, on hearing the report, "Block valve opened," I ordered, "Torpedo attack on the port side, heading the same way." I could clearly see the aircraft onboard the enemy ship, illuminated by searchlight. Our shells made hits, and the enemy ship burst into flame. After adjusting the firing angle, I reported that the torpedoes were ready to fire to the commanding officer, but he replied, "No need to use torpedoes—firing the guns will do." The tension was lifted from my shoulders at once. For the time being, I ordered, "Torpedo tubes to the center" to return them to the neutral position. Our shells hit the enemy ships, one after another. As we closed the distance, I could see the enemy crew in a panic. The fire spread to the entire ship. . . . Although it was too bad that I did not have the chance to fire the torpedoes, it was truly a satisfactory battle.

He did not have a chance to fire torpedoes on this occasion. The firing of torpedoes, whether preparations to fire were complete or not, would be canceled should the commanding officer decide against their use. According to Nakamura's explanation, because a Type 93 torpedo would explode if its oxygen was ignited directly, it needed to be ignited first with ordinary air, then fed pure oxygen. The order to "open block valve" opened the passage for the ordinary air to be used in the ignition. As the volume of ordinary air was very limited, the pressure decreased with leakage if the valve was opened too early, whereas the torpedo would miss the firing timing if opened too late. The question of when to give the "open block valve" order was a delicate matter, Nakamura said, and one of the things he had to pay close attention to in giving the commands to fire.

Nakamura actually fired torpedoes four times outside training. The first time was on February 27, 1942, when he fired two salvoes of four torpedoes—eight in total—toward the Dutch cruiser forces led by HNLMS *De Ruyter* during the Battle of the Java Sea (the Battle off Surabaya). On this occasion, he was mortified that, just after they were fired, the Type 93 torpedoes self-detonated in front of his eyes, completely missing the enemy ship. The second time was on October 25 the same year, when he sank the friendly cruiser HIJMS *Yura* after the HIJMS *Yūdachi* had rescued its crew who survived the enemy bomber strikes and ensuing fire. The third was during the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal, when the eight torpedoes fired made at least two hits on an enemy ship. The fourth was in 1974, during his term as the commander in chief of the Self-Defense Fleet, though that time he did not fire the torpedoes himself: he supervised the disposal of the LPG tanker *Yūyō Maru No. 10*, which had caught fire after colliding with a cargo ship in Tokyo Bay.

Needless to say, he has not fired a torpedo in actual combat since World War II. Nakamura and other JMSDF personnel were very much on edge, however, because the sinking of the *Yūyō Maru No. 10* had to be performed under scrutiny by the mass media. They must have felt like Nasu no Yoichi[21] as he drew his bow aiming at the fan. After successfully completing this mission, Nakamura revealed his thoughts to

[21] Nasu no Yoichi was a samurai famous for his skills in shooting a bow, just like Robin Hood and William Tell. According to the *Heike monogatari* (The Tale of the Heike), which chronicles the rise

his subordinates: "Although we're usually treated as a nuisance, the nation relies on the JSDF at critical moments. Moreover, they expect us to faithfully do a perfect job."

In 1941, on joining the destroyer HIJMS *Yūdachi*, Nakamura learned of his appointment as the chief torpedo officer when he was suddenly ordered to attend a weeklong course for chief torpedo officers held at the Naval Torpedo School. Nakamura's class had graduated from the Naval Academy 8 months early because of the rapidly deteriorating international situation. Consequently, they had received little education in the methods of firing torpedoes and fire control, and they were utterly ignorant of methods of antisubmarine warfare (ASW). After the weeklong course, Nakamura studied desperately for 3 months before the outbreak of the Pacific War. He gathered documents, visiting the Naval Torpedo School and the Naval Mine School, and sometimes asked others about uncertain points, but mostly he studied on his own. On the days he went out for meetings and recreation, even if he returned to the ship in the middle of the night, he would sit at his desk and study. He says he never studied so hard in his life. Before the war, he had only fired one torpedo, fitted with a dummy head, in training.

For 35 years afterward, until he retired as the CMS in the postwar era, it seems Nakamura never neglected to study, preparing himself for battle. He seems to have always been ready so that he could open the block valve immediately. After the two occasions during the war described above, he never fired torpedoes in actual combat again. There was no need to fire a torpedo: in the postwar era, Japan had no direct involvement in combat.

Nevertheless, it is as though Nakamura always stood next to the torpedo tube so that he could launch whenever necessary. The nation did not acknowledge his service, yet he strove to accomplish his duties and to take the initiative to set a good example, burning with a sense of responsibility and mission. He did not boast of his achievements; he loved the sea, devoted his life to the IJN and JMSDF, and retired when the time came. This was Teiji Nakamura, the man whom the US naval officer James E. Auer admired so much that he named his son Teiichirō, borrowing a character from Nakamura's own name.

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and fall of the Heike clan, he shot down a fan placed on an enemy ship with just one arrow from shore on a dare, despite the ship being far away and bobbing up and down at sea.

Chapter 4
Minesweepers Crossing the Sea

A Letter from Admiral Burke

There was one person whom James Auer wanted to see before he headed to Japan in July 1970 to study the history of the JMSDF's formation: Arleigh Burke. The significance of the role that Admiral Burke had played in the founding of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) became more evident the more Auer reviewed the literature. Deciding that he needed to interview Burke, Auer got in touch with the former CNO. Ten years since retiring from the Navy, Burke kept a busy schedule as an outside director of an oil company as well as the director of Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies. Unfortunately, Burke was on a business trip when Auer visited Washington, D.C., so Auer was not able to see him before he left. He therefore wrote Burke a letter soon after arriving in Japan to ask again for an in-person interview in 6 months' time, when he would be back in the United States. With his letter, he enclosed a list of questions that he had composed.

Auer was a young (under 30), active lieutenant commander at that time. Even if only for research, he had written a letter to an admiral, a man who had served as the country's top naval officer. And yet it was not all that unusual, which might give an indication of the Navy's organizational openness.

Before much time had passed, Burke sent his reply by return mail. He would gladly see Auer when Auer was back in Washington. He provided simple yet sufficient answers to Auer's questions; in addition, he remarked, "The following is what you should have asked me," then included a new set of questions as well as his answers. In the East and the West, regardless of rank, naval officers are equally diligent. Many scrupulously reply to letters without procrastinating. Burke concluded his letter with a few cryptic lines: "In the early 1950s, I had a fascinating conversation with Mr. Takeo Ōkubo, the MSA's first director general. I recommend that you ask him about it directly. I hope your research produces good results."

N. Agawa, *Friendship Across the Seas*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-2997-9_4

The conversation with Ōkubo that Burke referenced related to the US Navy's request for Japan to dispatch minesweepers during the Korean War. The US Navy's minesweeping capability in the Western Pacific was extremely limited at the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950, according to Auer's *The Postwar Rearmament of Japanese Maritime Forces, 1945–71*, which assembled his research findings. After the end of the Pacific War, CNO Chester W. Nimitz had abolished the minesweeping forces of the Pacific Fleet by 1947, and minesweeping was relegated to a collateral duty of the logistics and destroyer forces. As a result, there were only ten US Navy minesweepers in the Western Pacific, three of which were laid up in caretaker status. In August 1950 Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, commander, US Naval Forces, Far East (NAVFE), asked CNO Forrest P. Sherman, who was visiting the combat theater at the time, about the possibility of increasing the minesweeping forces, but Sherman replied that there could be no increase because of other priorities.

Burke, a rear admiral at the time, arrived in Tokyo to be the deputy chief of staff under Vice Admiral Joy, per CNO Sherman's direct request. His duty was to provide advice from Washington's perspective on the amphibious landing at Incheon on the west coast of the Korean Peninsula. The landing was masterminded by General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, commander in chief of the United Nations Command. Burke was also tasked with reporting the war situation to Washington. Following the success of the operation carried out on September 15, he was then ordered by Vice Admiral Joy to plan a similar landing at Wonsan on the peninsula's east coast. This was part of the UN forces' penetration into North Korea, aiming to unleash a pincer attack on Pyongyang from the east and the west. The severe lack of minesweeping capability soon made itself evident. As many as a few thousand mines had been laid, with the assistance of Soviet experts, off the east coast of North Korea, which made it impossible to push through with the landing unless they were dealt with. Burke suggested the operation was impossible, yet MacArthur did not relent. The landing was scheduled for October 20; time was running out. For Burke, there was only one solution: to dispatch the minesweepers that had belonged to the IJN.

The Postwar IJN Minesweeping Forces

With Japan's defeat in August 1945, the IJN ceased to exist. Naval personnel were disarmed and any remaining vessels, including the battleship HIJMS *Nagato*, were disposed of accordingly. On December 1, the Ministry of the Navy was abolished and renamed the Second Demobilization Ministry,[1] with its primary mission being to assist in the repatriation of Japanese armed forces personnel from overseas.

[1] *Daini Fukuinshō*. At the same time, the Ministry of the Army was renamed as the First Demobilization Ministry (*Daiichi Fukuinshō*). The two ministries later merged to form the Demobilization Agency (*Fukuinchō*).

However, part of the IJN forces—the IJN minesweepers—continued their wartime mission almost uninterrupted.

At the war's end, about 11,000 influence mines[2] laid by the US Navy and another 55,000 defensive mines laid by the IJN remained scattered around the coastal waters of Japan. The mines posed an extreme danger as economic activities resumed. Indeed, several private vessels sank after striking mines, resulting in many casualties. For example, on August 22, 1945, just after Japan surrendered, the *Ukishima Maru* sank after hitting a mine near Karasujima, Maizuru; the ship had been transporting those returning to the Korean Peninsula from Ōminato to Maizuru, and over 524 people drowned. On October 7, Kansai Kisen Kaisha's *Muroto Maru*, the first vessel to use the Seto Inland Sea-Kyushu route after its reopening, hit a mine immediately after departing the port of Osaka and sank, resulting in 336 dead and missing; there were only 25 survivors. On January 28, 1948, while navigating near Kuroshima on its way to the port of Ushimado in the Seto Inland Sea, Kansai Kisen Kaisha's *Joō Maru* struck a mine and sank in 15 minutes, resulting in 193 lives lost. The total number of victims lost to vessels hitting mines in the postwar era as of 1953 was as many as 1294 dead and missing and 402 wounded.

US forces had ordered the IJN minesweeping forces to continue dealing with the mines. In a meeting between the Japanese and US military staffs held in Manila following Tokyo's acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration, the Japanese were directed, as part of the end-of-war process, to remove all mines hampering access of entry to the Japanese main islands before the arrival of Allied occupation forces. Upon arrival off Yokosuka in September, US naval authorities reprimanded the Japanese officers for failing to complete the removal of all mines, as they had been directed. Yet, it was almost impossible for them to remove tens of thousands of mines in such a short period of time. The US military seemed to be overly optimistic about the minesweeping operations in Japanese coastal waters, Auer says. In December 1945 the IJN minesweeping forces commanded by Captain Kyūzō Tamura were transferred to the newly established Second Demobilization Ministry and continued the minesweeping operation. The vessels and crew were the same used in the IJN days. The NAVFE headquarters opposed attempts by the Government Section of the General Headquarters (GHQ), the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) to purge the former IJN officers commanding the minesweeping forces, and so active IJN forces remained in place, unaffected by the change in affiliation. This is why Auer claims the IJN did not actually cease to exist. Around this time, the strength of the minesweeping forces was 391 vessels and over 19,100 personnel.

The minesweeping forces passed through several sets of hands: from the Second Demobilization Bureau of the Demobilization Agency to the Second Demobilization Bureau of the Prime Minister's Office, then to the Department of Minesweeping

[2] Influence mines are detonated by the presence of a ship, rather than direct contact.

Vessels in the Marine Transport General Bureau[3] of the Ministry of Transport. With each move, the forces were progressively reduced until they were taken over as a whole by the MSA, which was established in 1948. Their overall strength then was 51 vessels and 1500 minesweeping personnel. The minesweeping operation was transferred again in November 1952 to the National Safety Agency's Safety Security Force (a reorganization of the Coastal Safety Force, established in April), and then finally to the minesweeping forces of the JMSDF. Despite the rapid and frequent organizational changes, the mission and principal commanders remained almost the same for 9 years. The commanders included Ryōhei Ōga, the future chief of maritime staff (CMS), and Sadao Senoo, who translated and published Auer's doctoral dissertation as *Yomigaeru nihon kaigun*. Even after Japan's defeat, their mission remained; they continued to struggle with the mines despite many lives being lost.

The JMSDF minesweepers conducted the last minesweeping operation to eliminate obstacles on sea routes in 1985. During the minesweeping operations between 1945 and 1952, as many as 77 crewmembers lost their lives due to accidents. In 1952, a memorial honoring those who lost their lives during the minesweeping operations was erected at Konpira Shrine in Kotohira, Shikoku. A memorial service has since been held annually at the shrine, whose patron deity is dedicated to navigational safety.

Dispatching Japanese Minesweepers

Burke had his eye on this valuable force. The number of vessels and crew far surpassed the US Navy's own minesweeping forces. Although the Japanese vessels were all old, its personnel were highly skilled, as they had been minesweeping continuously, even after the war. So, Burke called MSA Director General Takeo Ōkubo on October 2, 1950, to ask that he come as soon as possible to the NAVFE headquarters, which was located in the Bank of Tokyo's former head office building. When Ōkubo arrived, Burke invited him into his office and requested, in a straightforward manner, the dispatch of the MSA's minesweepers. Burke emphasized the danger of the sophisticated Soviet mines laid by North Korea, but he made clear that, as the UN forces had encountered difficulties, they were left with no other option but to ask for the assistance of the Japanese minesweeping forces. "The Japanese minesweeping forces are excellent, and I have huge confidence in their ability," he added.

Naturally, Ōkubo was taken aback and hesitated to accept the request. *Japan is not at war with North Korea; in fact, Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution prohibits Japan from participating in a war. The MSA is not an armed force. Its vessels cannot*

[3] Department of Minesweeping Vessels: *Sōkai Kansenbu*; Marine Transport General Bureau: *Kaiun Sōkyoku*.

be dispatched directly into the combat zone to engage in minesweeping. Burke argued that minesweeping would not be a hostile act. Yet Ōkubo did not accede to the request, insisting that it was beyond his authority to make a decision on the matter. Only Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida could do that. So, the two men got into a car and headed for the prime minister's official residence.

As expected, Yoshida was not willing to give an affirmative answer. Yoshida asked Burke if General of the Army MacArthur had granted consent for the matter. "That's why I'm here," said Burke. No matter how much Yoshida might resist the request, Japan was, after all, occupied by the US military. If MacArthur had approved it, there was no alternative. In the end, Yoshida acquiesced, and a decision was made to dispatch the MSA's minesweeping forces to Korean waters. Needless to say, this matter was kept strictly confidential.

And now 20 years later, in the fall of 1970, Auer had received Burke's letter with the mysterious recommendation to contact Ōkubo; Auer did so immediately and secured an appointment. Ōkubo had become a member of the House of Representatives for the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). On learning the purpose of the meeting, he invited Auer to dinner at a French restaurant in the Imperial Hotel. He gladly did so because Auer had contacted him upon the recommendation of Mr. Burke, to whom Ōkubo had felt indebted for years. Auer was accompanied by Ichirō Masuoka, who was a House of Representatives staff member, and Shunji Taoka of the *Asahi Shimbun*, who served as interpreter. Auer had been introduced to the politically connected Masuoka through the naval attaché at the US embassy in Tokyo, and Masuoka had set up the meeting with Ōkubo. Taoka, a young journalist interested in security issues, had become friends with Auer through the introduction of Yoshio Murakami,[4] who was studying at The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy where Auer was pursuing his doctorate.

Auer arrived at the hotel at the appointed time, whereupon Ōkubo handed him a book titled *Gekirō nijūnen* (20 years on the raging waves) chronicling the MSA's history and remarked, "This book covers everything you would want to know. You can read it later. So, let's just enjoy a meal together." He did not seem so keen on having a serious conversation about the circumstances of the formation of the JMSDF.

But Ōkubo's attitude changed when Auer revealed that, "Admiral Burke said he had an interesting conversation with you in 1950 and he urged me to ask you about it." Ōkubo confided, "I've never told anyone about it. That's the only thing that isn't mentioned in this book—Mr. Taoka, please consider this off the record." He then began to recount his conversations with Burke and Prime Minister Yoshida regarding the dispatch of minesweepers.

Auer temporarily returned to the United States for Christmas that year, and he met Burke in person for the first time. Burke invited the young lieutenant commander to his house in Bethesda, on the outskirts of Washington, D.C., to give an interview. As Auer told him about his conversation with Ōkubo, he looked amused and grinned while he listened. "Did you actually have MacArthur's approval beforehand?" Auer

[4] The future director of the foreign news department at the *Asahi Shimbun*.

asked him; Burke told Auer to "fuzz it over," or obscure the details a little. In fact, he had not obtained MacArthur's approval beforehand. Auer respected Burke's wishes and left that fact out of his book, *The Postwar Rearmament of Japanese Maritime Forces, 1945–71*. However, more than 30 years have passed since Auer had interviewed Burke, who died in 1996. It is no longer a problem for Auer to talk about it now. It was an extraordinary measure of the Occupation era, especially under the unique circumstances of the Korean War. Time and time again, history is marked by such momentary leaps.

Ōkubo himself—the very person who had the conversation with Burke—wrote about it in his own book *Uminari no hibi: Kakusareta sengoshi no dansō* (The days of the roaring of the sea: A hidden aspect of postwar history).[5] The details recounted in Ōkubo's book differ somewhat from what Auer had heard from Burke. After listening to Burke's request, Ōkubo immediately met with Prime Minister Yoshida at his official residence on his own to explain the situation and seek instructions. In contrast, according to the biography of Burke written by E. B. Potter,[6] whose draft Burke himself had read through, it was only Burke who took a car to see Yoshida at his official residence, soon after the meeting with Ōkubo. The difference could be simply due to the uncertain memories of the persons concerned. But now that they have both passed on, there is no way of knowing for sure.

"There's no other way," Yoshida was said to have muttered, according to another recounting of Ōkubo's reported by Yōichi Funabashi of the *Asahi Shimbun*. "But I fear it might be criticized in the Diet if it is interpreted as leading to the overseas dispatch of troops. Please keep it confidential," he instructed Ōkubo.[7] However, *Uminari no hibi* does not mention this. Yoshida, having listened to Ōkubo's briefing, allowed him to comply with Rear Admiral Burke's request, reasoning "It is the Japanese government's policy to cooperate with the UN forces." Ōkubo took a broad interpretation of Directive No. 2 issued by the Office of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers on September 3, immediately after the end of the war, which states: "The Japanese Imperial General Headquarters will ensure that all minesweeping vessels immediately carry out prescribed measures of disarmament, fuel as necessary, and remain available for minesweeping service. Submarine mines in Japanese and Korean waters will be swept as directed by designated Naval Representatives of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers." He also relied on the fact that MacArthur's order was absolute during the Occupation, in justifying his acceding to the request.

Moreover, upon accepting the request, Ōkubo asked the GHQ to direct the Japanese government in writing. "Although it was urgent, I thought the members of the minesweeping forces would be surprised by my sudden order, and I needed to

[5] Ōkubo, Takeo. 1978. *Uminari no hibi: Kakusareta sengoshi no dansō* (The days of the roaring of the sea: A hidden aspect of postwar history). Tokyo: Kaiyō Mondai Kenkyūkai.

[6] Potter, E. B. 1990. *Admiral Arleigh Burke: A Biography*. New York: Random House.

[7] Funabashi, Yōichi. 1999. "Sengoshi o yomu: Sekai to deatta kono issatsu, Part VI (Reading the postwar history: A book that showed me the world)", *Foresight*, vol. 6.

justify the dispatch of the minesweeping forces," he wrote. As a result, Vice Admiral Joy, commander, NAVFE, issued a directive to Minister of Transport Takeshi Yamazaki on October 4 that read, "The Japanese Government is hereby directed to assemble 20 minesweepers, one guinea pig [ship,][8] and four other Japanese Maritime Safety vessels in Moji as soon as practicable. These vessels will be prepared for such minesweeping operations as will be designated in future directives."

Two days earlier, Ōkubo had held an urgent executive meeting at the MSA and issued an order saying, "As it has been decided that we'll conduct minesweeping in Korean waters according to the US directive … gather vessels at Moji as soon as possible." Twenty-five vessels and their crews assembled from bases in Kure, Shimonoseki, Osaka, Otaru, Nagoya, and Niigata. The Special Minesweeping Force,[9] comprising four minesweeping units, was formed; its supreme commander was the former IJN captain Kyūzō Tamura, the director general of the Fairway Safety Office of the MSA.

Minesweepers Assembled at Shimonoseki

On October 6, 1950, the newly formed Special Minesweeping Force assembled at Karato Pier in Shimonoseki. That evening, Ōkubo summoned Supreme Commander Tamura, unit commanders, and commanding officers to the saloon of the flagship JMS *Yūchidori* to explain the circumstances of dispatching the minesweeping forces to Korean waters and the intention of the Japanese government. Then, he concluded by emphasizing the importance of their mission and encouraging them to do their best: "To regain Japan's independence, we must overcome this challenge and win international trust. There will be no one waving the Japanese flag on Karato Pier at your departure. But I believe the history of Japan will definitely value your services highly."

Despite Ōkubo's encouragement, the assembled minesweeper personnel's reaction was mixed. For example, whether to take part or not was left up to an individual's judgment, according to Sadao Senoo, one of the personnel. *You don't have to go if you don't want to.* Hearing this, a few of the crew did leave the vessels. One teary-eyed wife came to the pier to plead with her husband not to go.

[8] A guinea pig ship, its engine remotely controlled from the bridge, and with added protection for the crew, was used primarily to sweep pressure mines, which were triggered by the change in water pressure produced by a passing ship. Later, its purpose was shifted to verifying that magnetic mines were properly swept from a certain area. Introduced at the US Navy's suggestion, four guinea pig ships were operated by Japan between 1946 and 1953. See Suzuki, Sōbei. 1989. *Kikigaki kaijō jieitai shiwa: Kaigun no kaitai kara kaijō jieitai sōsōki made* (Oral history of the JMSDF: From the dissolution of the navy to the early days of the JMSDF). Tokyo: Zaidanhōjin Suikōkai, pp. 15–17.

[9] *Tokubetsu Sōkai Butai*.

On a side note, it was after he became acquainted with Auer that Senoo spoke about his experiences on the minesweepers dispatched during the Korean War for the first time. Soon after graduating from the Naval Academy in March 1945 (74th class), Senoo had witnessed the defeat of Japan. He joined HIJMS *Katsuragi* as a deck officer, making three roundtrips to Rabaul on the carrier that became a repatriation ship. He was then assigned to the minesweeping forces, continuing to take part in Kure-based minesweeping operations along the coast even after being transferred to the MSA. It was while serving in this post that he was summoned to Karato Pier in Shimonoseki and heard the explanation about the dispatch to Korean waters. He continued to serve after returning from Korea, first in the Safety Security Force, then the JMSDF, working hard to carry out his duties at sea until he retired.

Ultimately, most of the crew agreed to take part in the dispatch after hearing Ōkubo's explanation. Participants received a huge reward. On top of a monthly salary that was between 6000 and 8000 yen, they received an additional danger allowance of 30 yen per hour—double the money for minesweeping service at home. It was further doubled north of the 38th parallel. Moreover, danger allowance at home was typically paid according to the actual hours worked; for this service, it was paid for a full 24 hours a day from the time of their departure from Shimonoseki until their return. Also, a surprise bonus of 5000 yen was paid on top.[10] For his month of service in the Incheon-Haeju area, Senoo received 70,000 yen in total. Only 5 years after the war, Japan was still a poor country, and such a huge reward must have been attractive. Yet, the crew had received no explanation about the specifics of compensation at the time of departure. More importantly, most of the crewmembers were IJN veterans, many of whom had struggled through life-and-death situations. *We'll be alright, so let's go!* they thought. On Senoo's vessel, 25 members responded to the call and agreed to participate in the operation. Senoo was the commanding officer of the submarine chaser *MS14*. This vessel ended up striking a mine and sank off Wonsan, leaving one dead. Senoo narrowly escaped this fate: before the departure, he had been reassigned to *MS04* and dispatched to the Incheon-Haeju area, not the Wonsan area.

[10]The Maritime Staff Office gives a somewhat different account of the remuneration scheme in *Chōsen dōran tokubetsu sōkaishi* (The history of special minesweeping in the Korean War), published in 1961 and revised in 2010 [http://www.mod.go.jp/msdf/mf/other/history/img/006.pdf, accessed 26 Nov 2018]. According to the document, in addition to (A) their normal salary (including family and regional allowances), (B) navigation allowance, and (C) minesweeping allowance, the crew were paid a (D) special minesweeping allowance and (E) dangerous zone allowance. The special minesweeping allowance (D) was 100% of the (normal) minesweeping allowance (C), which means the minesweeping allowance was essentially doubled. The minesweeping allowances (C & D) were paid hourly according to the actual performance. The dangerous zone allowance (E) was paid differently according to two zones of operation: zone one (latitude: 33° to 36° N; longitude: 124° to 131° E) was paid 100% of A + B + C + D, and zone two (latitude: North of 36° N; longitude: 124° to 131° E) was paid 150% of A + B + C + D. If a vessel was damaged or attacked, or nearly damaged or attacked, her crewmembers were paid 5000 yen for that voyage.

"I couldn't make sense of the mission, to take part in minesweeping during combat in foreign waters," Kōji[11] Shiga wrote in his memoir, which is included in *Uminari no hibi*. Shiga, the commanding officer of *MS07* that was also dispatched to the Incheon-Haeju area, noted that his mind was beset with questions about the mission, such as the extent of risks, the protection and rescue in an emergency, and the freedom of action for safety. He could not, he said, "convince myself that it was worth asking the crewmembers who had wives, children, parents, brothers, and sisters to accompany me."

However, an earlier departing submarine chaser had to return to port due to generator trouble. Shiga was getting a haircut in a nearby barbershop when a subordinate notified him of the decision to dispatch *MS07* instead. Immediately making up his mind, Shiga said, "I'll return at once. Prepare the ship to get underway." He noted in his memoir: "Why did I make up my mind to go then, despite being quite against the idea? Why did the crew, who wholeheartedly supported me in opposing the idea of being dispatched to foreign waters, make perfect, obedient preparations to depart and wait for the commanding officer's return? I still cannot fathom it."

MS14 Sunk by a Mine

Thus, Supreme Commander Tamura aboard the flagship JMS *Yūchidori*—along with five minesweepers and three patrol ships of the Second Minesweeping Unit led by Commander Shōgo Nose[12]—departed Shimonoseki as the first group at 4 a.m. on October 8 and arrived off Wonsan on October 10. Neither Tamura nor Nose knew at the time of departure that they would be conducting minesweeping operations off Wonsan, according to Ryōhei Ōga, commander of the Fourth Minesweeping Unit in the second group, which headed for the Incheon-Haeju area a little later. They learned of their destination when they rendezvoused with a US Navy ocean tugboat and were handed the plan of operation. Their vessels were forced to drift at night, under radio silence and nighttime blackout, unable to drop anchor due to the danger posed by mines and the deep sea.

The minesweeping operation commenced on October 11. Operating day and night despite the six-knot current and rough sea, the crew's fatigue reached its limit. An incident occurred on October 17: *MS14*, ordered to clear the landing harbor in Yonghung Bay off the port of Wonsan in conjunction with the US minesweepers, struck a mine and sank instantly at 3:21 p.m. Most of the crew were thrown into the sea. Although minesweeping was suspended at once to rescue the crew, the casualties numbered one dead and 18 injured. The 21-year-old steward, Sakatarō Nakatani, was killed (Fig. 4.1).

[11] Or Hiroharu.

[12] Pronounced like "no-seh".

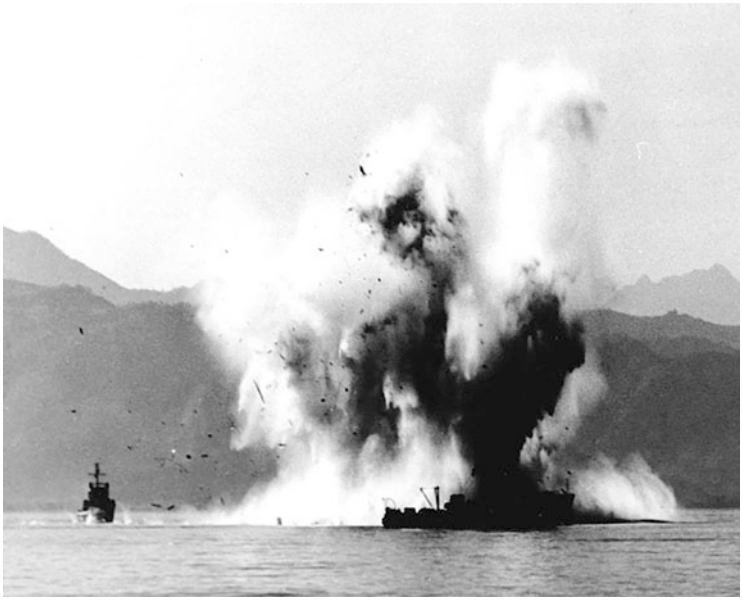

Fig. 4.1 South Korean minesweeper hits a mine off Wonsan, October 1950. (Official US Navy Photograph, 80-G-423625)

Due to the risk of hitting mines, all crewmembers were required to go up to the deck during minesweeping operations. On this occasion, too, the commanding officer had called out, "Everyone stand by in the safety compartment." Nakatani, however, had apparently gone down alone to the rice and wheat storage in the ship's hold to prepare dinner, and was unable to get out. His body was never found. His funeral was held in Kure on October 27. As Supreme Commander Tamura read his message of condolence, everyone mourned the death of a fellow sailor who had been with them conducting minesweeping since the end of the war. The US Navy did send four million yen in condolence money, but because the operation was conducted in strict secrecy, Nakatani's death was not publicly honored for 30 years.

The sinking of *MS14* left the minesweeping force unsettled. Just 5 days earlier, the crew had witnessed USS *Pirate* and USS *Pledge* sink instantly after the US minesweepers struck mines, resulting in 12 dead and 92 injured. This time, a fellow ship followed that fate and sank right in front of their eyes.

The commanding officers, gathered aboard the flagship JMS *Yūchidori*, insisted on suspending the minesweeping. *Using deep-draft minesweepers to conduct minesweeping is dangerous. Let's do preliminary minesweeping with small shallow-draft vessels first, followed by full-scale minesweeping.* Supreme Commander Tamura and Commander Nose suggested this method at the discussion, then later proposed it to the US forces. The US forces, however, impatient with the delay in launching the amphibious operation because the minesweeping was still incomplete, ordered them to conduct minesweeping as planned. According to Ōkubo's *Uminari no hibi*, again

attempting on October 18 to negotiate their request to conduct preliminary minesweeping, the higher-ups in the US military chain of command gave them an order: "Weigh anchor in 15 minutes and return home. Or start minesweeping in 15 minutes."

Supreme Commander Tamura and Commander Nose were anguished as they contemplated the current position of Japan, the duty of public servants, and the risk of hitting mines. Some members wanted to continue the operation, but the collective opinion of Nose's unit was that they should withdraw and return home. In the end, three minesweepers rapidly weighed anchor and left the waters off Wonsan, heading for Shimonoseki, with Commander Nose being overcome by his subordinates' will. Supreme Commander Tamura, mindful of the consequences of such an arbitrary action, issued an order to Commander Nose to "return home."

There seems to have been considerable confusion on the Japanese side as to what the US forces ordered them to do. They seem to have felt that the order given by the Americans was quite overbearing. Yōichi Hirama, a former professor of the National Defense Academy, himself a former JMSDF Rear Admiral, wrote in a book titled *Nihon no sōkai* (The Japanese minesweeping), that the US forces took an uncompromising attitude, saying, "If you don't get back and resume minesweeping in 15 minutes, we will fire." However, he also mentions that the US records state, "due primarily to language difficulties and consequent misunderstanding, three of the remaining JMS [vessels] left the area [Wonsan] and returned to Japan," and suggests that the Japanese might have misheard "hire" for "fire." He could be right. But instead, they might have understood the Americans' statement, "we will fire you [unless you start minesweeping]" as meaning that "we will fire *on* you." This is only my educated guess, however, with no concrete evidence.

In any case, there is no doubt that Nose's unit leaving the front line was the most significant crisis throughout the entire period of the Japanese minesweeping force's deployment in Korean waters. The US Navy was adamant that those responsible must be punished.

Under these circumstances, Ōkubo replaced Commander Nose with Kō Ishitobi, commander of the Third Minesweeping Unit, and ordered three replacement minesweepers to be sent. Then he heard about the situation directly from Supreme Commander Tamura, who had returned to Tokyo. On October 24, Ōkubo, as the MSA's director general, once more issued Tamura an order stating that the minesweepers were expected to "continue the minesweeping operations without delay in Korean waters following instructions given by the local US forces." He instructed Tamura to convey his message, without omission, to the Special Minesweeping Force: "There is an agreement between the Japanese government and the GHQ that the members will receive the maximum salary."

After managing the unrest among the frontline units this way, Ōkubo went with Tamura to the prime minister's official residence on October 31 to ask whether, according to the government's highest policy, the minesweeping should be continued. Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsuo Okazaki, the future minister for foreign affairs, received them and conveyed the Prime Minister's intention: "Prime Minister Yoshida thinks that the Japanese government must cooperate fully with the UN

forces and thereby conclude a peace treaty that is advantageous to us. He understands that there are considerable troubles associated with the minesweeping operations in Korean waters under adverse winter weather conditions, especially with small, old vessels. We hope that you will conduct the minesweeping operations to the best of your ability and fulfill the US Navy's requests."

After the meeting, Ōkubo called on Vice Admiral Joy, commander, NAVFE, again taking Tamura with him. He apologized for the three minesweepers' returning home and promised to punish those responsible. Vice Admiral Joy responded with a much gentler attitude than he had taken immediately after the incident: "I'm glad that the Japanese minesweeping force is working very hard. The accident was unfortunate, and I ask for your cooperation to prevent another such incident in the future. Supreme Commander Tamura, in particular, is doing very well. Please convey to the minesweeping force, through Mr. Tamura, that the US Navy is grateful." The punishment was settled with Commander Nose alone bearing full responsibility and being removed from his position.

"Well Done"

Vice Admiral Joy's favorable attitude toward Ōkubo was probably related to the fact that Ishitobi's and other minesweeping units deployed off Wonsan in place of Nose's unit accomplished their mission excellently. The minelaying off Wonsan was much more extensive than Rear Admiral Burke had feared. The presence of sophisticated magnetic mines was confirmed for the first time on October 18, the day after *MS14* had hit a mine. "The US Navy has lost command of the sea in Korean waters," assessed Rear Admiral Allan E. Smith, commander of the US minesweeping forces, in one of the most dramatic telegraphs he sent to the CNO. The US Navy on its own did not have the capability to remove the roughly 3000 mines hidden underwater. The amphibious operation would have been impossible if the Japanese minesweepers had ended their operation. It was not surprising, then, that the US Navy asked a big favor of the Japanese minesweeping force.

Freshly arrived in the area, Ishitobi's unit met the US Navy's expectations well. On October 26, 6 days after Ishitobi's unit resumed the minesweeping operation, UN forces successfully landed on Wonsan using a route where safety was now guaranteed. Ishitobi's unit continued minesweeping in the area until November 26, for 38 days in total, removing five mines. In addition, 15 mines were removed off Incheon and Haeju by the First Minesweeping Unit led by Commander Kimio Yamagami; two off Chinnampo[13] by the Second Minesweeping Unit led by Commander Jikyō Ishino; and three off Kunsan by the Fourth Minesweeping Unit led by Tōshi Hagiwara. Along with the three initially removed by Nose's unit, 28 mines were removed in total.

[13] Now called Nampo.

According to Auer's *The Postwar Rearmament of Japanese Maritime Forces, 1945–71,* between October 2 and December 12, 46 Japanese minesweepers, one large guinea pig ship, and 1200 former naval personnel were employed in operations off the Korean ports of Wonsan, Kunsan, Incheon, Haeju, and Chinnampo, sweeping 327 kilometers of channels and anchorages extending 607 square miles. No areas swept by Japanese ships ever had to be reswept, unlike the case of other, less experienced UN minesweeping units. Japan had no more casualties after the *MS14* incident; the only other accident occurred on October 27, when *MS30* grounded and sank off Kunsan.

"Well done," read the message Vice Admiral Joy sent on December 7 through Ōkubo, praising the achievements of the Japanese Special Minesweeping Force. A member of Vice Admiral Joy's staff explained that "well done" was the highest praise within the US Navy. On December 9, Ōkubo stood once again on Karato Pier in Shimonoseki, addressing the personnel of the minesweeping force. He thanked them for their effort. "For Japan to become an honorable member of the international community in the future, we cannot obtain that status by sitting on our hands. . . . We must obtain it ourselves, by our own labor and sweat." And so, the Japanese minesweeping force's operation in Korean waters, an activity that spanned over 2 months, was completed.

The Legacy of the Japanese Minesweeping Force

There are a variety of evaluations of the mission and accomplishments of the Japanese minesweeping force that was dispatched to Korean waters in the fall of 1950. Initially, the Japanese government tried to hide the very fact for a long time. This was probably because justifying this overseas minesweeping operation was problematic under the interpretation, at the time, of Article 9 of the Constitution; even if the operation was conducted in support of the UN forces, it was not for self-defense, and was therefore not possible to justify.

The first reports of the matter appeared in the *Tokyo Shimbun* on October 9, the day after the minesweepers left Shimonoseki. The *Asahi Shimbun* followed with a report, citing foreign dispatches, on the sailor who had died carrying out his duties. There was no reaction from the opposition parties to the news, however, possibly due to the influence of the Occupation forces at the time. Four years later, in January 1954, when the *Sankei Shimbun* ran a detailed story on the circumstances of the dispatch of minesweepers, the lawmakers from the Japan Socialist Party and the Japanese Communist Party began criticizing the operation in the Diet. Yet the prime minister feigned ignorance, saying "A minesweeper is said to have sunk, but I have no record of that incident at the moment." At the March 27 meeting of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, in a discussion of the minesweeping operations during the landing operation at Wonsan, Diet Member Shichirō Hozumi asked, "If you interpreted the Constitution as allowing these activities, please clarify the criteria for your interpretation." Takezō Shimoda, the

director general of the Treaties Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, answered as follows:

> *Legally speaking, there were two things happening, each of a different nature. First, as it was US ships that conducted the minesweeping, the service was provided according to procurement . . . by the United States, and a Japanese individual died while providing the service when a US ship sank. In this case, as the service was provided based on a personal and free contract, there would be no issue as a state.*
>
> *Second, the GHQ demanded minesweeping service not from individuals, but from the Maritime Safety Agency as an institution of the Japanese government, which was under the command of the Occupation forces. This certainly could have been an issue if Japan had not been under occupation. Japan did not actually have the right to raise it as a breach of international law, however, because the nineteenth article of the Peace Treaty states that Japan could not pursue liability for actions done under the directives of the Allied forces during and after the war.*

Japan as a state had no business with the matter if each member of the minesweeping force provided service to the US forces as individuals. Even if the operation were executed based on the GHQ's order to the MSA as a state institution, nobody could bring legal action against the US government and sue for damages because Japan had renounced the right to do so in the Peace Treaty. This was the gist of his answer.

For the minesweeping crew, this negative interpretation would have been difficult to accept. "[With such a negative interpretation,] my brother's death would mean nothing. What did my brother die for?" wondered Tōichi Nakatani, the elder brother of Sakatarō Nakatani who died onboard *MS14*, in an article "Shōgen: Chōsen sensō ni sansenshita nihonjin (Testimonies: The Japanese who fought in the Korean War)," featured in the July 1976 issue of *Ushio* (The tide) magazine. Citing this, Yōichi Funabashi finds a link between Sakatarō Nakatani's "death in action after the war" and Vice Admiral Joy's "Well done," a link whose vague meaning Funabashi sees as symbolic of the uncertainty of the postwar Japan-US alliance.

A somewhat more positive perspective on the minesweeping off Wonsan had been posited about 2 years prior to Director General Shimoda's aforementioned interpellation. During the December 4, 1952 Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives, Diet Member Yasuhiro Nakasone, admitting that the minesweeping off Wonsan conducted under the occupation might have been different in nature, asked:

> *In the future, in the name of cooperation with the United Nations, the vessels of the Coastal Safety Force or the MSA could be pressed to do similar things, such as minesweeping and escorting at sea. . . . If Japan would cooperate with the United Nations at sea, where can you put a limit to cooperation?*

Minister of Foreign Affairs Okazaki replied as follows:

> *To say the least, there is no question that we would not be involved in the battle itself. Therefore, we would like to cooperate from our perspective in peaceful missions, providing services in the rear—such as meeting special procurement demands for ammunition and other supplies; allowing the use of port facilities; as well as providing transport and other services—ordinary activities that would not mean involvement in the so-called battles, as much as practicable.*

How can Japan cooperate with the UN or US forces when they act? What should Japan do in the future? There was already at that time a discussion of the same issues that are in the current discussion on the Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation, or the New Guidelines. Diet Member Nakasone continued his line of questioning and expressed his concern about Japan being dragged into war in the name of UN cooperation. But the government expressly declared that it would do what it could within the limits of the Constitution. It was consistent with the idea that Ōkubo stated at Karato Pier in Shimonoseki, that the Japanese had to win an honorable international status "ourselves, by our own labor and sweat."

For almost 40 years thereafter, the dispute over Article 9 of the Constitution became preoccupied with a futile discussion over Japan's right to self-defense; a long time passed before Japan again dispatched minesweepers to foreign waters, making a small contribution to international security. And yet, the dispute continues today over what is, or should be, the limit, under Article 9, of cooperation with other countries to contribute to international security. Foreign Minister Okazaki stated Japan should "cooperate as much as practicable," but that begs yet another series of new questions, which are beyond the scope of this book.

A Thread Connecting the IJN and the JMSDF

The US Navy valued the Japanese minesweeping force's contribution highly. For armed forces personnel, there are only two types of people: friends or enemies. Friends and allies who can be trusted in times of emergency are irreplaceable. Despite the initial discord, the US naval officers and sailors discovered a reliable ally in the Japanese minesweepers with whom they conducted minesweeping operations in waters around Wonsan and other areas. They were colleagues who overcame dangerous challenges and worked hard together.

According to Michinaga Ōnishi, the executive officer of *MS14* that struck a mine, the US Navy auxiliary tugboat's crewmembers, whose strong arms rescued the Japanese sailors who had spent half an hour in the water, were very kind. They gave up their beds so the rescued Japanese sailors could rest. In the evening, they cooked curry with rice, a favorite dish for the Japanese. The curry (made with poorly cooked foreign rice) was not so tasty, but the goodwill was certainly appreciated.

In addition, Commander Ishino, who was deployed off Chinnampo, was especially impressed by Commander S. M. Archer, a calm and collected Southerner in command of the US naval forces. Commander Archer never once in 4 weeks spoke in a stern tone of voice despite being on a battlefield; he "worked diligently and was always gentle." Moreover, the US forces' attitude was totally different before and after the operation, according to Ryōhei Ōga, the last to return from Haeju. Ōga was given a hero's welcome upon his return to Sasebo. The "Interim Evaluation Reports," lessons of the Korean War compiled by the US Pacific Fleet Command, state that "Japan's minesweepers, having obtained the permission of the Allied Forces to participate, contributed greatly to the tactical success."

The Japanese minesweeping force had not only interacted with the US Navy. An older person, seemingly a Korean sailor, once spoke to Commander Ishino inconspicuously at the side of a Korean minesweeper. Although there were some who felt animosity toward prewar Japan, he said, "in my ship, most are grateful to you for your cooperation at this time of crisis in Korea." Commander Shiga of *MS07*, who was engaged in minesweeping in the Incheon-Haeju area, was placed under the command of the Royal Navy's frigate HMS *Whitesand Bay*. Initially, the British supervision was strict and felt like forced labor rather than like working together. It also felt as if they were watching closely. As the operation went on, however, the Japanese crew started chatting with the British crew about families and girlfriends, and the relationship improved as they came to understand each other better. British naval officers began to treat the Japanese as equals and sometimes even used respectful language.

Rear Admiral Burke, who had planned the operation in the first place, expressed trust and gratitude toward the Japanese minesweeping force most fervently. On December 15, 1950, after the procedure to disband the Special Minesweeping Force, Ōkubo visited Burke at the NAVFE headquarters. Burke welcomed Ōkubo with "joy expressed in his big eyes and large body" and said, "The MSA's achievements on this occasion have been highly valued, and in my personal opinion, they've strengthened the momentum to conclude a peace treaty with Japan." He also suggested that Ōkubo go to America to discuss with the US government and the Pentagon the idea of strengthening the MSA.

Following this advice, Ōkubo visited Washington, D.C. in January 1951. Burke had notified Ōkubo with a grin, "I've already ordered my aide-de-camp in Washington to look after you." It turned out that the aide-de-camp he was referring to was, in fact, his wife, Bobbie. She looked after Ōkubo in many ways during his stay; she even petitioned high-ranking US officers to enhance the capabilities of the MSA.

The goodwill Burke showed toward Ōkubo and the MSA would have been unlikely without the actions of the Japanese minesweepers. The former IJN officers who comprised the minesweeping forces had left Burke with a strong impression of their capabilities and sense of responsibility; Burke must have been convinced that Japan's maritime forces would be an asset for the United States in the future. I believe that, behind Burke's extraordinary efforts to strengthen the MSA and, beyond that, to establish the Coastal Safety Force the following year, there was a sort of realization that the postwar Japanese maritime forces were dependable. The Japanese minesweeper crew who took part in the minesweeping in Korean waters carried out their duties well, despite the challenges their dispatch posed given their unclear status under the Occupation. They laid the essential foundation of the postwar relationship between the Japanese and US navies, the thread connecting the IJN to the JMSDF.

Chapter 5
Arleigh Burke and the Founding of the JMSDF

JS *Akizuki*[1]

On December 7, 1993, at precisely 9:45 a.m.—or "zero nine four five" in Japanese navy parlance—the "Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) Ensign Return Ceremony" begins onboard the service ship JS *Akizuki*, moored at Yoshikura Pier at JMSDF Yokosuka Base. On the "Dutch slope," a unique quarterdeck that partially slants toward the stern,[2] the entire crew of JS *Akizuki*, senior officers from JMSDF Headquarters Yokosuka District, former commanding officers, representatives of the US Navy in Japan, and a few other guests are lined up. Among them is James Auer.

The order comes to "lower the JMSDF ensign." As the JMSDF Band Yokosuka lined up behind them plays the national anthem, "Kimigayo," sailors slowly lower the JMSDF ensign (the same flag that IJN vessels hoisted as their ensign) fluttering at the stern, then carefully fold it, all according to ceremony. An officer, holding it reverently, steps forward a few paces to hand it to the commanding officer, who then returns it to the commandant of the Yokosuka District. According to the timetable distributed to the attendees in advance, the time to return the JMSDF ensign is 9:53 a.m., "zero nine five three." The minute-by-minute schedule is characteristic of the JMSDF, which inherited navy traditions. Then Commandant of the Yokosuka District Takeo Fukuchi and his guest, Rear Admiral Jesse J. Hernandez, commander, US Naval Forces Japan, give short speeches and the ceremony concludes at 10:00 a.m. The attendees leave the ship.

[1] It is the tradition of the IJN and JMSDF to reuse the same names for their ships, such as *Kaga*, *Hyūga*, *Atago*, and *Ashigara*. The *Akizuki* described here is the second of the name (the first being a IJN destroyer; the current third vessel was commissioned in March 2012).

[2] The JMSDF ships built by the Mitsubishi Shipbuilding Company's (and later Mitsubishi Heavy Industries') Nagasaki Shipyard tend to have a unique quarterdeck called an *Oranda-zaka* ("Dutch slope," or "Hollander slope" in English), named after a scenic sloping street in Nagasaki.

N. Agawa, *Friendship Across the Seas*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-2997-9_5

As the band, now lined up at the pier, plays the "Gunkan March," JS *Akizuki*'s crew disembarks, marching in formation with the commanding officer at the rear. While the music is gallant, the sailors are not marching in time by anyone's standard, the movement of their arms and legs somewhat inconsistent. I see some middle-aged sailors about my age among them. The line departs, the music stops, and silence once again fills the air, just as it had before the ceremony. It is a warm and sunny winter morning, a few seagulls float on the sea nearby. With its crew ashore, JS *Akizuki* shines in the winter morning sun, deserted. Although older and smaller than the newer vessels surrounding it, it maintains the dignified look of a ship that has worked hard for many years.

The service ship JS *Akizuki* was a destroyer with a standard displacement of 2350 tons, a top speed of 32 knots, and a complement of 330. Built at Mitsubishi's Nagasaki Shipyard, it was delivered to the JMSDF on February 13, 1960. As the JMSDF's first 2000-ton-class destroyer, it came well equipped with flagship facilities, serving as the fleet flagship for over 20 years. But its classification was changed to Service Ship at the end of fiscal year (FY) 1984 because of its age. The oldest ship in active service, whose life coincided with the JMSDF's own expansion and development, JS *Akizuki* finished its service life on the day when the JMSDF ensign was returned. (The JS *Teruzuki*, another vessel of the same class and same vintage built by Mitsubishi's Kobe Shipyard, was retired several months earlier.) Although the ensign return ceremony did not attract any media attention, JS *Akizuki* was a historic vessel that symbolized the US Navy's role in the formation and development of the JMSDF.

According to *Kaijō jieitai nijūgonen shi* (The JMSDF's 25-year history), which chronicles the history of the JMSDF, JS *Akizuki* and JS *Teruzuki* were financed through the Offshore Procurement Program in the US Navy's construction budget for FY1957. Offshore procurement was a method in which the US government orders a vessel's construction from a shipyard in Japan and, when completed, provides it directly to the JMSDF. The contract was concluded at the end of March 1957, after the United States notified the JMSDF of its offshore procurement policy, and the two governments discussed the details. Based on the contract, the US Navy ordered construction from Mitsubishi's shipyards in Nagasaki and Kobe. Initially, these ships were registered as US Navy destroyers, and US Navy hull numbers were allocated: the *Akizuki* was *DD-960*, the *Teruzuki* was *DD-961*.

For the launching ceremony for JS *Teruzuki* on June 24, 1959, the wife of Captain Alexander C. Veasey, chief of the naval section of the Military Assistance Advisory Group, Japan, cut the ceremonial rope tethered to the ship as spectators observed, and the vessel slowly slid down the slipway. On June 26, the wife of Rear Admiral Frederic S. Withington, commander, US Naval Forces Japan, did the same for JS *Akizuki*. During the delivery ceremonies in February 1960, the shipyards first transferred the newly completed ships to the US Navy, which hoisted *The Stars and Stripes*. The US Navy, after lowering the US ensign, then handed the ships over to Japan. JMSDF personnel boarded, and the two vessels were commissioned with the JMSDF ensign newly hoisted. JMSDF ensigns would fly at the sterns of both ships, as symbols of Japan-US naval cooperation, for the next 33 years.

At the time, the Cold War was in full swing. It was an era when the US national objective was to enhance the strength of its allies as much as possible to confront communism. Providing the JMSDF with destroyers was in the national interest of the United States, and the country had money to spare. The US Congress, however, opposed the idea of using tax money paid by US citizens to procure equipment offshore to provide to foreign armed forces. Consequently, the offshore procurement of JS *Akizuki* and JS *Teruzuki* was the first and last instance of this practice.

In fact, it was the supreme commander of the US Navy, CNO Admiral Arleigh Burke, who promoted offshore procurement, despite domestic opposition, to improve the JMSDF's equipment and to enhance Japan's shipbuilding capability. That this method was adopted conveys the extraordinary goodwill Admiral Burke showed toward the JMSDF in its early days. Burke not only loaned 16 of the (then) latest P2V-7 antisubmarine patrol aircraft and 60 smaller S2F-1 antisubmarine patrol aircraft to the JMSDF without compensation, but also spared nothing in cooperating with the domestic production of the P2V-7 in Japan. There is reason enough for the JMSDF to remember Admiral Burke as its benefactor still to this day.

Fighting the IJN

Admiral Arleigh Burke, who served for an unprecedented three terms (6 years in total) as CNO starting in 1955, was born on a large farm at the foot of the Rocky Mountains in 1901. According to Burke's biography, written by Professor Emeritus E. B. Potter of the US Naval Academy, his paternal grandfather apprenticed with a baker and emigrated from Sweden to the United States in 1857. He changed his surname to Burke when he arrived in the United States, finding his American friends had trouble pronouncing his original surname, Björkgren. It was a common practice among immigrants at that time. He attached himself to a US cavalry unit as a cook and journeyed west, where he established a bakery in the pioneer town of Denver, Colorado. He had six children: four boys and two girls. His second son, Oscar, took up farming after trying his luck as a cowboy; Oscar's first son was Arleigh. The future admiral grew up in a family of solid frontier farmers who made their living through hard labor.

The Burkes could not afford to pay tuition and other fees to send their son to college. So, Burke initially set his eyes on the United States Military Academy at West Point, where the students received free board and tuition. However, a nomination by a member of the US Congress was needed to take an entrance examination. Unfortunately, the district's congressman had already decided whom to nominate. Changing his mind, Burke decided to apply to the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. Luckily for him, the district's nomination to Annapolis for that year became vacant, and he took and passed the examination. If he had gone to West Point, he would not have succeeded as a naval officer in later years. Burke said he had never regretted entering the Navy. Arriving at the academy after crossing the

continent by train, Burke enrolled at the Academy as one of 709 new students in June 1919.

As a Naval Academy student—called a midshipman—Burke was in no sense a standout. Being a country boy educated at a small-town high school might have been a handicap. However, he absorbed and mastered the lessons the long-established Naval Academy taught him. At the academy, midshipmen were taken on an annual summer cruise. The academy's main entrance faces the sea, just like in Etajima. A training squadron, consisting of a few battleships, appears out in the Chesapeake Bay; with the midshipmen on board, they weigh anchor for a long-distance training cruise—no different from the IJN or the JMSDF. For Burke, the destination of the first cruise in the summer after his plebe year was to Hawaii via the Panama Canal; the second was to Europe; the third, to the Caribbean Sea and Halifax, Canada.

After 4 years training as a future naval officer at the Academy and at sea, Burke graduated from the Naval Academy on June 7, 1923, tossing his midshipman cover[3] in the air alongside his classmates. He was 71st in a class of 413. Considering that the approximately 700 midshipmen at enrollment had been reduced to about 400 by graduation, it was a very respectable standing. That afternoon in the Academy Chapel, he married Roberta "Bobbie" Gorsuch, whom he had been dating since his first year. The bride and groom walked out of the chapel under an arch of swords created by his classmates. Thereafter, Arleigh and Bobbie went on to enjoy 72 years of harmonious married life.

Although he made little impression at the academy, Burke quickly distinguished himself after being commissioned. His first duty was aboard the battleship USS *Arizona*. The young officer attracted the attention of his superiors by perfectly carrying out tough onboard assignments and being inherently fit and eager. Burke served on that ship for 5 years, an exceptionally long period without a change of duty. Seeing his tremendous, incessant work ethic, one of his shipmates remarked, "Arleigh Burke will be dead before he's 50, or he'll be the chief of naval operations."

Whenever USS *Arizona* moved from port to port, Bobbie also traveled by land to find accommodation and welcome her husband. It was a time before the development of regular air service. There is a saying: "Behind every strong sailor, there is an even stronger woman who stands behind him, supports him, and loves him with all her heart." Bobbie Burke was a model navy wife. While her husband was off fighting, at sea for a long time, or serving overseas, Bobbie looked after the family without a murmur of complaint.

It appears that Burke grew interested in Japan at around this time. In 1929, after completing a series of duties in the fleet, Burke returned to Annapolis to attend the Naval Postgraduate School. He then studied chemistry for a year at the University of Michigan. One day, a fellow student asked Burke why the walls of his office were plastered with maps of the Pacific and Asia. "One day, my friend," Burke replied, "our country will be at war with Japan. In that conflict it will be my mission to do my

[3] The hat toss, originating in 1912, is now the symbolic and visual end to the Naval Academy's 4-year program.

bit for my country in that theater of operations. When that time comes, I intend to know that area of the world as intimately as possible." A decade after Burke successfully graduated from the University of Michigan with a Master of Science degree, war broke out between the two countries, as he had predicted.

It was only after his extensive actions in the Solomon Sea during the war that Burke's name became known at home and abroad. He had been serving in Washington, D.C. at the outbreak of the Pacific War, but after making numerous requests to serve in the fleet, Burke finally sailed to the South Pacific as the commander of Destroyer Division 43 in February 1943. Following his promotion to the rank of captain, he was appointed commodore of Destroyer Squadron 23 in October. Arriving on his flagship USS *Charles S. Ausburne* at Espíritu Santo, he passed out a tactical doctrine he had prepared for the destroyer commanding officers assembled before him. The cover page read as follows:

If it will help kill Japs—it's important.
If it will not help kill Japs—it's not important.
Keep your ship trained for battle!
Keep your material ready for battle!
Keep your boss informed concerning your readiness for battle!

Leading a destroyer squadron nicknamed the "Little Beavers," Burke first fought the Japanese fleet that showed up to prevent the US forces' landing on Bougainville Island in the Battle of Empress August Bay (the Battle off Bougainville Island) before dawn on November 2, 1943. The Japanese lost the light cruiser HIJMS *Sendai* and the destroyer HIJMS *Hatsukaze*. According to the chapter on USS *Charles S. Ausburne* in Kōji Ishiwata's book *Meikan monogatari* (Tales of famous warships), Burke's flagship fought most gallantly at the spearhead of Task Force 39, persistently attacking the fleeing Japanese fleet to the end. Once again, before dawn on November 25, at the Battle of Cape St. George, New Ireland, his squadron rushed from the south in pursuit of an IJN destroyer squadron heading from Buka Island, north of Bougainville Island, to Rabaul on New Britain Island. When its radars picked up the enemy ships, Destroyer Squadron 23 fired simultaneous torpedoes from a distance of 6000 meters. Under this onslaught, the destroyer HIJMS *Ōnami* exploded and sank in minutes, soon followed by the destroyer HIJMS *Makinami*. The remaining three Japanese destroyers turned north and retaliated, launching torpedoes. Maneuvering the vessels skillfully, Burke evaded the attack and then sank the destroyer HIJMS *Yūgiri* with concentrated fire.

Incidentally, this was when Burke got the nickname "31-Knot Burke." According to Potter's *Admiral Arleigh Burke*, the US Navy South Pacific Command (SoPac) at Nouméa on New Caledonia obtained reliable intelligence by deciphering coded messages on November 24. The intelligence reported that a Japanese destroyer squadron had delivered troops to Buka and would transport aviation personnel from Buka to Rabaul that night. The person directing operations, substituting for SoPac Commander Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr., was Captain H. Ray Thurber, a friend of Burke's. Thurber sent a coded message to Burke, who was heading north off Vella Lavella Island, south of Bougainville Island, asking the speed of the five

destroyers under his command and their ETA[4] at the destination. "Proceeding at 31 knots," Burke replied. (Some claim the reply read "Stand aside, stand aside, I'm coming through at 31 knots," which is not mentioned in Potter's biography.) In any case, Thurber replied with the instruction "31-Knot Burke, get athwart Buka-Rabaul evacuation line . . . If enemy contact, you know what to do." The dispatch, signed "Halsey," was leaked to reporters, which gave Burke worldwide celebrity status with this distinguished service.

Destroyers at the time could reach a speed of 35 knots, in fact. Thirty-one knots was a very moderate speed. There was one destroyer in Burke's squadron, however, USS *Spence*, with an engine in poor condition that could make barely 31 knots with the boilers cross-connected. Burke only specified 31 knots because he had decided to take a chance and include USS *Spence* in the pursuit operation. Unaware of these facts, the public generally supposed that 31 knots meant high speed, and it became the symbol of Burke's fighting spirit.

There was another coincidence in the Battle of Cape St. George. The commanding officer of HIJMS *Ōnami*, one of the destroyers that Burke's squadron had sunk, was Commander Kiyoshi Kikkawa, who had rendered distinguished service as the commanding officer of the destroyer HIJMS *Yūdachi* during the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal in November 1942. Temporarily sent back to Yokosuka after the sinking of HIJMS *Yūdachi* in that battle, Commander Kikkawa declined the order to serve as a Naval Academy instructor and returned to the Solomon Sea as the commanding officer of the new destroyer HIJMS *Ōnami*. Then, the following year, he died at sea off Cape St. George in the darkness of night, receiving a one-sided preemptive attack by Burke's squadron giving him no chance to retaliate. It is not known how Kikkawa died, for there were no survivors on HIJMS *Ōnami*. His extraordinary skills in ship handling and a fighting spirit comparable to Burke's notwithstanding, Kikkawa was helpless in the face of the US Navy's radar. Teiji Nakamura, who had served as the chief torpedo officer of HIJMS *Yūdachi* at the Naval Battle of Guadalcanal, admired Commander Kikkawa as a leader. It is such a curious turn of fate that Nakamura, as a senior JMSDF officer, would later meet Burke, the very person who killed Kikkawa, and be impressed with his character.

While serving as commodore of Destroyer Squadron 23, Burke achieved glorious military results, sinking a cruiser, nine destroyers, and a submarine, as well as shooting down 30 IJN aircraft in all. He would be transferred in March 1944, becoming chief of staff of the Fast Carrier Task Force (Task Force 58), and, as Admiral Marc A. Mitscher's right-hand man, engage in fierce aerial warfare against the IJN through the end of the war—but that's another story, one beyond the scope of this book.

[4] Estimated time of arrival.

Interaction with the Japanese

Burke came to Japan for the first time in September 1950, immediately after the Korean War began; he had been promoted to rear admiral after the end of World War II. Burke was asked by CNO Admiral Forrest P. Sherman personally to advise Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, commander, NAVFE, as his deputy chief of staff, and to report the war situation on the Korean Peninsula directly to Washington.

Burke appears to have been unwilling to accept the mission at first. During the war, many of his friends and subordinates had lost their lives fighting Japanese forces. The battleship USS *Arizona*, sunk at Pearl Harbor, was the first ship Burke had joined after graduating from the Naval Academy. He had seen Japanese forces fire on US crewmembers of downed aircraft descending in parachutes. He had also read about the Bataan Death March and other examples of Japanese atrocities, and of course, he had been influenced by Admirals William Halsey and Marc Mitscher, both champion "Jap haters," under whom he had served.

Burke wrote down his feelings toward the Japanese at the time. Few of his own writings remain, but he appears to have once thought about writing an autobiography. He was named "Swedish American of the Year" in 1968, and so a part of his draft autography was included in a Swedish-American society publication,[5] where Burke wrote:

> *On the way to Tokyo by plane, I suddenly realized the significance of the fact that our headquarters would be in Tokyo. I would probably have to have considerable dealings with the Japanese and from my experience in the last war, I did not like the Japanese a little bit even. I decided I would have as little contact with them as I could and would be exactly proper, cold, courteous, and distant.*

On arriving in Tokyo on September 3, he settled in at the Imperial Hotel, which had been requisitioned as housing for US occupation personnel. The hotel staff were the first native Japanese with whom Burke had come in contact. As he was very busy, however, he had few occasions to exchange words with them. He left the hotel at 6:30 a.m. every morning and returned late at night, around 10 p.m. He did nothing there but sleep. The room was small, with only a small bed, a chair, and a dresser. It was somewhat dreary.

After a month or so, Burke bought a bunch of flowers from the florist in the hotel's basement and put them in a drinking glass atop the dresser. When Burke came back from work the next night, the flowers had been very nicely arranged in a vase. The room was much more cheerful. After that, fresh flowers were added from time to time. Sometimes only a sprig, but always in a pleasant arrangement.

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[5] Burke, Arleigh. 1982. "Arleigh Burke" in *The Swedish-Americans of the Year*. Karlstad: Press Förlag, pp. 80–121. Most of the anecdotes mentioned in this section also appear in Burke's oral history volumes published by the US Naval Institute, albeit with minor differences. See US Naval Institute. 1979–80. *Reminiscences of Admiral Arleigh Burke, Special Series on Selected Subjects,* vols. 1 and 2. Annapolis: US Naval Institute.

After several weeks, Burke went to the front desk and expressed thanks for the flowers in his room. But the front desk clerk said that they had not put them there; the Americans would not let them. He did not know who was putting flowers in Burke's room, but he promised to investigate. A while later, it was discovered that a room maid had been doing it.

> *[The clerk] made arrangements for me to see her. She was an elderly little woman whose husband had been killed in the war. She spoke no English. I spoke no Japanese. I had to thank her through an interpreter.*

Burke wanted to give her some money through the hotel, but they would not accept it. To reimburse her in some way would be a violation of Japanese etiquette. He should simply express his gratitude for her courtesy, they told him. Despite her meager wages, she bought flowers to make the room as comfortable as possible for a foreigner. He wanted to repay her thoughtfulness, but the hotel people could not understand him. In the end, they settled the matter by setting up a little retirement fund for her anonymously. "That little incident made me wonder if my dislike of the Japanese were sound," Burke wrote.

UN forces in Korea were forced to retreat when Chinese forces entered the war in late November 1950; Burke went to the Korean Peninsula for inspection. The front line was cold, dirty, and muddy. There were no baths, no chance to shave, and little time to sleep. He returned to Tokyo a week later, exhausted. At check-in, he was assigned to a different room, which he did not mind at all. In his new room, he took off his muddy boots, removed his dirty frozen overcoat, and was just starting to undress to take a hot bath, when he heard a knock on the door. Opening it, he discovered a familiar young employee who worked on the floor where he had stayed previously.

> *After a few minutes exchanging the amenities while I was wondering why he had come to see me, he told me that he and the others were sorry I could not come home. Then it dawned on me that he was thinking of my old room as home and for some reason that I did not know about, I should have gone back to my old room. After much argument, much effort on my part, and much palaver of the room clerk's part and mine too, I was able to get my old room assigned to me. When I went up to that old room, all the Japanese who worked on that floor were gathered there with a pot of tea to welcome me back home. Tired as I was, I nearly wept right there. There was not any American who welcomed me back or really cared whether I was back or not, but I felt then and still do, that those Japanese really did think I should be welcomed home and if nobody else would do it, they would.*

As these memorable things frequently happened when he dealt with the Japanese, Burke wrote, he began to think they could not all be bad people.

Potter's *Admiral Arleigh Burke* also depicts Burke's interactions with the Japanese. At the NAVFE headquarters was Burke's Naval Academy classmate, Captain Edward "Eddie" H. Pierce, who had participated in the Navy's Japanese language program. Sent to Japan as a lieutenant junior grade by the US Navy before the war, Pierce had spent 3 years there, and so was familiar with the IJN officers. One day, he asked Burke if he remembered the name Jin'ichi Kusaka. Indeed, he did. Though he had never met the man, when Burke was fighting in the Solomon Sea as the commodore of a destroyer squadron, Kusaka had been his wartime enemy as the

Japanese naval commander at Rabaul. Kusaka was the very person who had sent the aircraft and ships from Rabaul that killed his colleagues. In turn, Burke had had the satisfaction of destroying several of Kusaka's ships. Pierce said that Kusaka had been purged from public office and was living in poverty. "He's working on the railway, swinging a sledge. His wife's selling flowers on a street corner. They're starving. He won't accept charity, but if you can arrange it, perhaps I can get food to him." Burke replied to Pierce that he would do no such thing: "Let him starve." As he contemplated the situation calmly, however, he thought it was preposterous that IJN admirals who had fought so gallantly for nearly 4 years were rewarded with hunger and the scorn of their fellow countrymen as soon as the war was over. Having reconsidered, Burke had a box of groceries delivered anonymously to the Kusakas.

A few days later the door to his office was flung open, and in stormed a little Japanese man shouting. It was Kusaka. Not knowing his intentions, Burke reached into a drawer for his pistol, thinking he would use it if he had to. Through a quickly summoned interpreter, Kusaka expressed his indignation: "I've been grossly insulted. I accept charity from no one, certainly not from Americans. I want nothing to do with Americans," he concluded, and coldly stalked out. Burke was favorably impressed. Kusaka had done exactly what he would have done under the same circumstances.

Through Pierce, Burke invited Vice Admiral Jin'ichi Kusaka, Rear Admiral Sadatoshi Tomioka, and Vice Admiral Tsuneyoshi Sakano to dinner at the Imperial Hotel on December 26, 1950. The three former IJN admirals wore formal dress, now threadbare, and held themselves aloof. In their view, Pierce told Burke, they had been summoned by the occupying force, so they would keep their distance. Burke treated them to whiskey. Knowing that they had not been able to drink liquor for some time, out of consideration he had the whiskey poured in tiny sake cups. Although the guests initially declined the proffered drinks, they began to sip after Pierce remarked that refusal would be rude to the host.

They started feeling tipsy after a while. Eventually, the admirals were chattering away. It turned out they could all speak English, with Kusaka being the best of the three, having served as a naval attaché in London before the war. At the meal's end, Burke rose and offered a toast to his guests. Kusaka then stood, raised his cup, and said:

> *I want to give a toast to our host, but not just to our host, who has been very kind to have us for this dinner. I want to give a toast also to the time when I failed to do my duty, because if I had done my duty, I would have killed our host, and then we would not have had this fine steak dinner tonight.*

After they all drank to the toast, Burke added:

> *I would also like to propose a toast to the time when I also failed to do my duty, because if I had not failed to do my duty, I would have killed Admiral Kusaka, and therefore neither of us would have enjoyed this fine steak dinner.*

Everybody laughed; the icy atmosphere had warmed completely. Thus, Potter wrote, "Arleigh's war with the Japanese amicably concluded."

It was IJN Admiral Kichisaburō Nomura (ret.), the ambassador to the United States on the eve of the war, who influenced Burke most significantly during his stay in Japan. Burke's dealings with the hotel staff made him want to know more about Japan. *What is the Japanese philosophy and reasoning? What impelled them to make* banzai *attacks? Why are the Japanese so polite and considerate of each other and of foreigners? How could they be such vicious fighters and yet so careful about the feelings of their associates? How are they different from the Chinese and Koreans? Is there anyone who can explain these matters?* When Burke asked Captain Pierce, he recommended Nomura.

According to Burke's own writing, Nomura at first invited Burke to his house, where he made him wear a Japanese kimono and sit on the tatami mat floor. Nomura brought out a map of Korea, laid it on his desk, and explained the history of Japanese rule in Korea and why it had not gone well. He then asked Burke to study the map for 15 minutes and remember as much as he could. After that time had elapsed, Nomura put the map away and instructed him to think about what he remembered, connecting those things with the current war. After about 15 minutes in silence, Burke moved his legs a little. Nomura asked, "What's bothering you?"

> *I told him I was uncomfortable and that caused me to move. He said, "Ah, that is the first lesson. If you had really been concentrating, you would not have known you were uncomfortable and you would not have been uncomfortable."*

And so began the exchange between a retired old admiral from the vanquished country and a rear admiral with a promising future from the victorious country. Over the 9 months or so Burke stayed in Japan, he met Nomura about once a week when he had time to spare in his busy schedule. Nomura taught Burke the importance of factors constant across time, such as geography, weather, and national character. "Do you think China will enter the war if the UN forces approach the Yalu River?" Burke asked Nomura one day. "They'll definitely come in, and [they'll] do so in secret to launch a surprise attack," Nomura replied, confidently. "Chinese Premier Chou En-lai [Zhou Enlai] issued a warning [using the Indian ambassador as his mouthpiece]. Nations are like wolves, they fight harder when they are pushed into a corner."[6] Although Burke reported this to UN forces intelligence officers, nobody listened to him. And Nomura's prediction turned out to be 100% accurate, Burke wrote.

In early May 1951, ordered to assume the post of commander of Cruiser Division 5, Burke flew to Pearl Harbor to join his flagship USS *Los Angeles*. The cruiser headed for the Sea of Japan and entered Japanese waters in June. Burke invited Nomura to a dinner party aboard his flagship. There is a photograph of Burke welcoming Nomura and shaking hands with him. In July, Burke left the fleet to participate in peace talks to end the Korean War as a member of the Military

[6] According to Potter's biography and Burke's interview, Nomura said that if the UN forces went north of the 38th parallel, the Chinese would enter the war "to save face, live up to their own words." See Potter, *Admiral Arleigh Burke*, 342; US Naval Institute, *Reminiscences of Admiral Arleigh Burke*, Vol. 1, 192.

Armistice Commission. After completing the mission, he flew from Haneda to Washington, D.C. in December 1951. Let me quote Burke's own words again.

> *I left Japan about 0200 on [one] December morning [in] 1951. There was nobody to see me off and I did not expect anybody. There was no reason why anybody should inconvenience himself so much by coming down to that airport in the middle of the night to see me off. The Japanese had very few cars and public transportation was just starting to get back on its feet. About 1330* [sic] *much to my great amazement, in came Admiral Nomura, one of the great Japanese of all time. He was an old man in his 70's by then and he had come part way by streetcar and part way by train and had walked several miles to come down to see me off. There are other reasons why I had great respect and admiration for him but that night he was typical of the Japanese I had met in the last two years, most of whom I had fought against. No American would be so considerate as that.*

Their friendship continued even after Burke's return to the United States. Nomura welcomed Burke when he came to Japan, while Burke entertained Nomura when he visited the United States. When Nomura's eldest son and his wife studied abroad in the United States, the Burkes treated them well. In 1961, at 83 years of age, Nomura visited Washington, D.C. once again, saying, "I came here to say goodbye to everyone." He stayed with Burke at the CNO's official residence at the top of the hill northwest of the city. The future Chief of Maritime Staff (CMS) Suteo Ishida, then posted to Washington as defense attaché, greeted Nomura and accompanied him to the official residence. Though he had just been hospitalized for a complete physical examination, Burke slipped out of the hospital to await Nomura's arrival. Ishida saw firsthand how, on arriving, Nomura shook hands affectionately with Burke, as though they embraced each other. Nomura said nothing in English to Burke. In Japanese, he greeted him, "Oh, Mr. Burke! It's been a while," while Burke listened to him, smiling.

Nomura passed away in 1964. In Burke's foreword to Auer's *The Postwar Rearmament of Japanese Maritime Forces, 1945–71*, he wrote: "When Admiral Nomura died in 1964 I lost one of the best friends I've ever had."

Burke and the Founding of the JMSDF

During his stay in Japan, Burke played a significant role in the creation of the Coastal Safety Force, the JMSDF's predecessor. The IJN had been disbanded after Japan's defeat, yet naval leadership, spearheaded by men who had favored cooperating with Britain and America before the war, was hoping to rebuild the navy. A plan to rebuild the navy was discussed in secret within the Second Demobilization Ministry, which replaced the disbanded Ministry of the Navy. For a while after the war, however, resurrecting the navy was no more than a pipedream. Even when the MSA was established in May 1948, and its patrol boats began to maintain order at sea with the minimum armaments allowed, the Soviet Union was opposed to it, claiming that it would lead to the IJN's revival. Representatives of the United Kingdom, China, and Australia expressed their wariness at the Allied Council for

Japan and the Far Eastern Committee at around the same time. The Government Section, GHQ opposed it, too, at the beginning.

The US Navy stationed in postwar Japan often invited Mitsumasa Yonai, Katsunoshin Yamanashi, Kichisaburō Nomura, and other former members of the navy men of good sense[7] to functions and treated them very respectfully. The Japanese and US Navies had a history of meaningful interaction prior to the war. For example, back in 1929, when Nomura in his capacity as commander of the Training Squadron visited the flagship of the United States Fleet USS *Texas*, the commander in chief, United States Fleet was Admiral William V. Pratt. Vice Admiral Russell S. Berkey, who had been Pratt's aide-de-camp back then, went on to serve in East Asia as commander, NAVFE, and commander, US Seventh Fleet, from July 1948 until his retirement on September 1, 1950.[8] In the wake of the Shanghai Incident of 1931–1932, Pratt, who had become CNO, had dinner with Captain Shōsuke Shimomura, the naval attaché in Washington, D.C. At the dinner, Pratt asked why the IJN was not sending Nomura to Shanghai. Shimomura sent a telegram to the Ministry of the Navy at once to report the US Navy's feelings on the matter. The naval leadership in Tokyo respected the US wishes and dispatched Nomura to Shanghai. As a result, the Shanghai Incident had no negative influence on Japan-US relations. Thus, the Japanese and US Navies kept in close contact with each other.

Because of these prewar connections, Nomura brought up the vision of rebuilding the Japanese Navy whenever he met his friends from the US Navy, including Vice Admiral Berkey. While they were sympathetic, nothing came of it. Notwithstanding the friendship between the nations' naval officers, Americans were not seriously considering Japan's rearmament just yet.

The US attitude began to change gradually around the outbreak of the Korean War. According to Auer's research, the US National Security Council had decided to secretly enhance Japan's military capacity in late 1948; it sent a Japanese American civilian to the NAVFE headquarters the following year. Twice a week, this person would meet former IJN Captain Kō Nagasawa, who would become the second CMS, and, in Japanese, ask former IJN officers about intelligence matters and their ideas on rearmament.

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[7] Also known as the Treaty Faction; please refer to Chap. 3, Footnote 16.

[8] The author's source, Auer's book, refers to Rear Admiral Donald W. Beary, the first naval representative for the GHQ "who had been Admiral Pratt's aide," citing Nomura's memoir. However, the memoir actually mentions "Vice Admiral Berrey" [sic] who was "the first [sic] commander [of the NAVFE]." Rear Admiral Beary was serving as a Naval Academy instructor in 1929, and never served as Admiral Pratt's aide. The text is revised accordingly. See Auer, *The Postwar Rearmament of Japanese Maritime Forces, 1945–1971*, 70; Nomura, Kichisaburō. 1970. "Jiēryoku kensetsu no urabanashi (An inside story of the establishment of the defense forces)" in *Kaiyōkoku nihon no shōrai* (The future of Japan as a maritime nation). Anzen Hoshō Kenkyū-kai, p. 408; Nakayama, Jun. 2014. "Nomura Kichisaburō no sengo: Kaigun saiken undō o chūshin ni (Kichisaburō Nomura in the postwar era: With a focus on the movement to rebuild the navy)" in *Seijigaku kenkyū* (Political studies), vol. 51, pp. 330–31.

When the Korean War broke out in June 1950, General of the Army Douglas MacArthur sent a letter to the Japanese government, instructing them to create the National Police Reserve and to expand the number of MSA personnel by 8000. Then, in the fall, at a cocktail party to which Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida invited American dignitaries, Vice Admiral Turner Joy, commander, NAVFE, said to Nomura, "There are 18 frigates (PFs) that the Soviet Union has returned to the United States. Those ships could be made available to Japan." At around the same time, soon after his arrival in Japan, Burke told Director General Ōkubo of the MSA, "We're going to get the frigates back that we lent to the Soviet Union, so we can provide them for MSA missions. You should look into ways to use them."

That winter, delighted with the actions of the Japanese minesweepers in Korean waters, Burke recommended that Ōkubo visit Washington, D.C. to make an appeal for strengthening the MSA. Ōkubo followed his advice, visiting Washington in January 1951. At the Pentagon, he asked about abolishing the restrictions on the speed and size of patrol boats (maximum 15 knots and 1500 tons), permitting guns to be loaded on the ships, providing US frigates, and allowing Japan to possess aircraft to locate floating mines. Because Burke had paved the way for Ōkubo, all his requests were granted.

John Foster Dulles, a consultant to the US Secretary of State and personal representative of President Truman, visited Japan in June 1950 to discuss a peace treaty and rearmament with Prime Minister Yoshida. Seeing as Burke was supporting Ōkubo's plan to strengthen the MSA, the Americans did not intend to establish a separate Japanese maritime force at that time. The plans for rearmament appeared to focus on the enhancement of land forces.

The former IJN leaders who hoped to rebuild the navy were increasingly worried about these developments. IJN Vice Admiral Zenshirō Hoshina (ret.), whose stance was similar to Nomura's, had served as the last chief of the Naval Affairs Bureau under Minister of the Navy Mitsumasa Yonai; he left a memoir titled "Waga shin-kaigun saiken no kei'i (The circumstances of the rebuilding of our new navy)." According to his memoir, a movement for rearmament emerged as the Korean War broke out. "According to what we heard about US intentions, they were apparently pursuing a policy of rebuilding only the army, while taking on the responsibilities of the naval and air forces themselves. There was a danger that this could lead to a repetition of the bitter history of the Meiji and Shōwa eras, where the army acted without consulting the navy. Since it was deemed necessary to make the US understand the importance of rebuilding the land, naval, and air forces simultaneously, we endeavored to launch a campaign for that purpose."

On January 17, 1951, Hoshina called on Nomura at his house and expressed his concerns. Nomura revealed that he had been trying to set up a meeting with Dulles, who was to revisit Japan soon. Hoshina promised Nomura that he would prepare a memorandum for Dulles containing proposals on rebuilding the navy.

To lay the groundwork, Nomura first visited C. Turner Joy, commander, NAVFE, on January 22 to show him the plan to rebuild the navy. This plan was based on the study materials on rearmament created the previous October by former

IJN personnel now within the Ministry of Health and Welfare.[9] According to the study materials, the new force was to have two branches, the Land Force and the Sea Force, with the maritime force comprising a total of 275 vessels and 210,000 tons, including two cruisers and 13 destroyers, along with about 34,000 personnel. Joy was surprised by the scale of the rebuilding plan presented to him. He stated that, although the GHQ had entrusted him with the rebuilding of a Japanese Navy, the US Navy was planning to secure the command of the sea in the Western Pacific by itself and had no intention of leaving the area. He had been considering that the size of the rebuilt Japanese navy ought to be something like a coast guard, centered around the frigates then anchored at Yokosuka. At Nomura's proposal to have the planners explain the details further, Joy brought up Burke's name and arranged an introduction.

Nomura chose Hoshina to explain the plans to Burke; Hoshina shared the rebuilding plan with his old friend, Captain Eddie Pierce, and asked him about the character of Rear Admiral Burke. "He's a fighting officer, sincere and able, with a good reputation among his classmates," Pierce explained. He then called Burke to introduce Hoshina, saying, "I've known Hoshina for 20 years. He can be trusted; he has a good reputation within and outside the navy. You should have an open discussion with him." Pierce played a critical role at every juncture in the history of the creation of the Coastal Safety Force.

Hoshina and Burke officially met for the first time on January 23. According to Hoshina, Burke treated him extremely well. Hoshina showed Burke the rebuilding plan. This time, the scale was greater than in the study material created by the Demobilization Bureau: the plan called for an Air-Sea Force[10] of 341 vessels and 292,000 tons in total, including four escort carriers, eight submarines, and four cruisers, as well as 750 aircraft. Though it was not comparable to the prewar navy, the Japanese were aiming for a full-scale navy.

Burke responded with some comments: "Explain why Japan needs the Air-Sea Force. State a practical plan to establish a navy. The US Navy, for its part, proposes that the US Department of the Navy will hand over the frigates anchored at Yokosuka as soon as possible. Describe the navy's mission more specifically. Explain why you need well-trained officers at sea. Write the reasons clearly, because civilians do not understand it well." These were all useful suggestions, and Burke's reaction was generally favorable. On January 29, Hoshina brought Burke a revised plan with a map of force distribution. After reading through the revised plan, Burke praised it, calling it "excellent and perfect." When Hoshina reported Burke's reaction to Nomura, he was very pleased.

[9] The Unsettled Affairs Management Department (*Zanmu Shoribu*) of the Demobilization Bureau of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, which had taken over the operations of the Second Demobilization Ministry.

[10] As the name suggests, the former IJN officers seemed to be initially planning to establish a force covering both the sea and the air, alongside a ground force, the army.

Nomura initially could not meet with Ambassador Dulles on his visit to Japan in late January. So he wrote a private letter, enclosed the revised plan to rebuild the navy, and gave it to Dulles's assistant, Robert A. Fearey. Nomura felt a bit uneasy, seeing no US Navy representative in Dulles's entourage and knowing that Dulles was only considering the army's reestablishment. When he met Dulles at a cocktail party at Ambassador William J. Sebald's residence on February 3, however, Nomura was pleased to be thanked for the revised plan. The revised plan was also handed to Prime Minister Yoshida on February 9.

Later, Hoshina met Burke and expressed his concerns that Ambassador Dulles appeared to be considering a land force only. Burke said that the special envoy would not be able to cover the details of rearmament, but that there had been no objection when Burke told U. Alexis Johnson, a member of Dulles's entourage, that an island nation like Japan required a navy and naval air corps for national defense, just like the United Kingdom. He further indicated that Nomura's revised plan had been sent on, under Vice Admiral Joy's name, to CNO Sherman, who had already concurred, and there would be a reply through an official route. He added, "I submitted a memorandum to the chief of naval operations arguing for the rebuilding of a proper Japanese navy based on mutual trust, with the fundamental idea that it would be beneficial to both the United States and Japan."

According to Auer's study, Burke temporarily returned to Washington, D.C. in March and met with CINCPACFLT Admiral Arthur W. Radford to discuss lending Japan the frigates the Soviets had returned. From Washington, Burke wrote to inform Vice Admiral Joy in Tokyo that he had stressed to Admiral Radford the eventual need for a Japanese Navy and expressed his belief that the Japanese should start with minesweepers and patrol craft. He also likely discussed the matter with CNO Sherman during his stay in Washington.

Back in Tokyo, Burke communicated on March 31, to Hoshina and others, Sherman's intention that the US Navy would support the Nomura-Burke plan, provided that the Japanese government concurred with Nomura's revised plan. Japan's Ministry of Finance did not agree, however, mentioning the problem of maintenance costs after the establishment of a navy. From their position in charge of state finances, they must have thought that Japan would hardly be able to maintain a navy. Hence, the US Navy's favorable response came to nothing. "It was most regrettable, looking ahead to the future of our country," Hoshina wrote.

Despite this, Burke continued his ardent support for the activities of Nomura and others. When he and Pierce had a friendly talk with Nomura at Hoshina's house on April 3, Burke stated, "I have submitted a plan to the Department of the Navy to send around ten suitable naval officers to build the Japanese Navy. If this is agreed to, Vice Admiral Joy will discuss with General of the Army MacArthur how to create a department with Japanese ex-naval officers to plan and train jointly, which would become the basis of the future Ministry of the Navy. Soon I'll leave Japan to become commodore of a cruiser division, and I'll return to Washington in the fall. Then I'll keep trying to push the plan through at the Department of the Navy."

A little earlier, Burke had asked the Japanese to submit "a study of a structure to plan and execute the duties of shipping escort, coastal patrol, minesweeping, and

protection of fishing boats." In response, on April 18 Nomura presented Joy with the results of the Second Special Study Material, which had just been drawn up in the Demobilization Bureau; Hoshina presented it to Burke. This study material called for the establishment of a nucleus for a future air-sea force set up by temporarily lending ships, aircraft, weapons, and ammunition from the United States, which would be supported by personnel, pay, and non-munition logistics supplied by Japan. It put forward three possible ways of achieving the plan: first, as an independent organization with the nature of an armed force; second, as an external bureau of the MSA; or third, as an organization that would operate under the command of the US NAVFE. Of the three, the first option was ideal, the third was the least preferred, and the second was the most feasible. The Japanese side stressed that if an independent organization was established, it should not be in contradiction to the Constitution; it should be officially recognized by foreign powers—at least by the West; it should be approved by the Diet; it should be an independent and autonomous Japanese organization; and it should be able to employ former naval officers. Also, an especially close liaison between the organization and the US Navy should be maintained by sending liaison staff to work with the US forces and by creating a Joint Japanese-US Research Commission.

Burke was very impressed by the new Japanese plan, and on April 22 sent a seven-page letter along with the plan to Rear Admiral James H. Thatch, Jr., the director of the International Affairs Division of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, asking Thatch to brief CNO Sherman on it. In the letter, Burke said, "I feel that the problem must be faced directly some day and that the sooner it is faced the greater the probable benefit to the United States." On the three Japanese options, he stated, "The Japanese Navy need not be called a navy. It can be called a coast guard or a sea police force or anything else." It would be best, he said, to establish a Japan-US joint study group comprising four or five US naval officers and about ten Japanese ex-naval officers and let them study, plan, and direct the initiation of a small Japanese navy. "This Japanese contingent would become the nucleus of the Japanese Navy Department. This joint group, at that stage, could then, as a first step, establish a small seagoing force perhaps of not over half a dozen patrol craft and a small officer and enlisted man training school."

After assisting up to that point, Burke left Tokyo in early May because he had been appointed commander of Cruiser Division 5. In September, the Treaty of Peace with Japan and the Japan-US Security Treaty were signed in San Francisco. During his visit to GHQ on October 19, Prime Minister Yoshida officially told General Matthew B. Ridgway, SCAP, that Japan would accept the frigates moored at Yokosuka. (These were the vessels returned by the Soviet Union that had been offered to Nomura and Ōkubo a year earlier.) The day after the Ridgeway-Yoshida meeting, Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsuo Okazaki invited IJN Rear Admiral Yoshio Yamamoto (ret.) and the MSA's second director general Yonekichi Yanagisawa to the prime minister's official residence. Okazaki told them to organize a committee of ten members, including eight former naval officers and two from the MSA, that would advise the government on how to accept the loaned vessels and how to establish the institutions to operate them.

Thus, the "Y Committee" was established. The committee discussed numerous times whether the new organization would be established independently from the MSA. In April 1952, the Coastal Safety Force was established, for the moment as an organization attached to the MSA. In August, it became independent of the MSA, and became the Safety Security Force, part of the National Safety Agency, along with the National Police Reserve. The Safety Security Force absorbed the MSA's Fairway Safety Office, the minesweeping forces that operated successfully in Korean waters. Then, the Safety Security Force made a fresh start as the JMSDF in July 1954, thus taking the first steps on the path to rebuilding the navy that Nomura and others had dreamed of.

Needless to say, the creation of the JMSDF was not achieved through Burke's goodwill alone. Japanese and US personnel held negotiations among themselves, each hoping to fulfill their own motives. Moreover, a shift was underway in international politics. To begin with, after the successful operations of the Japanese minesweepers in Korean waters, for a while Burke backed Director General Ōkubo, who was trying to strengthen the MSA. There was also discussion in the United States as to what the nature of the Japanese maritime forces should be in the future, and the US Coast Guard personnel supported the enhancement of the MSA. Burke was directly involved in the movement to rebuild the navy for only 4 months, from January to April 1951; he had already left Japan when the Y Committee held its meetings.

Ever since first meeting Hoshina in early 1951, Burke had consistently supported the establishment of a maritime force separate from the MSA. According to Hoshina's memoir, Burke often stated that the enhancement of the coast guard would not lead to the rebuilding of the navy. Yet Burke did not recommend the establishment of a full-scale navy as contemplated by Nomura and Hoshina. He appeared to be considering building a much smaller navy, and the newly established Coastal Safety Force was indeed very modest in size.

Nevertheless, the plans of Hoshina and others to rebuild an independent navy could not have materialized without Burke, who listened favorably to their proposal and communicated it to US Navy leadership in Washington. Japan might have ended up with the MSA only. Although the Y Committee ultimately decided on the shape that the Coastal Safety Force would take, Burke's contribution was significant in terms of paving the way for the committee.

Contributing to the formation of the Coastal Safety Force was a fond memory for Burke, too. Burke himself remembered the circumstances thus:

> *[During discussions with naval personnel] I expressed the view that Japan ought to have a navy of sufficient size to protect the Japan homeland and her essential sea lines of communications. I made that argument not for the good of Japan but for the good of the United States. It was to the best interests of the free world and of the United States that Japan should be able to protect herself because the time would soon come when the United States would not be able to protect Japan. I believed that the United States and Japan should be friends and allies. . . . [Any] nation who can contribute to the betterment of the world needs to be strong economically, militarily, and politically, meaning in the ability to influence other nations. All three are needed. No nation should be absolutely dependent on any other nation or she will either become an adjunct to the strong nation or she will not contribute to improving anything.*

Also, in his foreword to *Kaijō jieitai nijūgo-nen shi*, Burke stated: "Among the most gratifying experiences I have ever had were the discussions on the essentials of a suitable sea-going protective force with men for whom I had come to have the highest esteem and respect. Men such as Admiral Kichisaburō Nomura, Admiral Zenshirō Hoshina, Admiral Kō Nagasawa, Admiral Sadayoshi Nakayama, and Mr. Takeo Ōkubo."

Furthermore, his foreword to Auer's *The Postwar Rearmament of Japanese Maritime Forces, 1945–71* stated:

> *Since the most important elements of any military force are the attitude and ability of its senior officers, I suggested that the most important first step that Japan could take was the election of ten—and only ten—of the very best officers from the old Imperial Japanese Navy to start its new navy. Japan did this, and because it did the Japanese Navy today is excellent.*

It is for this reason that Burke is regarded as one of the key advocates and supporters for founding the JMSDF.

Death of the Old Sailor

Burke was appointed CNO in 1955, after he left Japan. It was an exceptional promotion, leapfrogging him over 92 flag officers senior to him. During his term as CNO, Burke continued to be generous and helpful toward Japan and the JMSDF. Not only did he support enhancing the JMSDF equipment by providing vessels and aircraft, but he also launched a course at the US Naval War College that accepted foreign naval officers. Future JMSDF leaders such as Kazuomi Uchida and Teiji Nakamura studied in Newport through this program. Burke visited Japan numerous times and renewed his friendship with Japanese acquaintances, including Nomura. When the crown prince and princess of Japan visited Washington, D.C. in September 1960 to commemorate the centenary of Japan-US diplomatic relations, he went to meet them at Washington National Airport. There is a photograph that captures the young crown prince reading out an official statement at the airport and standing just behind him, watching over the royal couple, is the only member of the armed forces personnel, a tall, uniformed Burke.

After serving an unprecedented three terms—6 years—as CNO, Burke retired in August 1961. President John F. Kennedy asked him to serve another term, in fact, but he declined, retiring to make room for the younger generation.

Even after his retirement, Burke's relationship with the JMSDF did not fade. During the JMSDF Training Squadron's visits to the East Coast, he visited the training ships on request, five times in total, and gave lectures to the newly commissioned officers (ensigns). A commander of the Training Squadron once made the new ensigns submit essays on their impressions of the overseas training cruise on the return journey to Japan. One of them wrote, "Why are there no great admirals like him?" baffling the instructors.

As an aside, during the war, Burke's destroyer squadron discovered and sank the large IJN tugboat *Nagaura*, which was withdrawing from Rabaul with aviators. The *Nagaura's* captain, refusing to surrender, fought back with machine guns against all odds and lost his life when his ship sank; Burke, praising the courage of her skipper, had offered a minute of silent prayer with the rescued Japanese prisoners aboard his ship. On learning this, the members of *Rabauru Kai* (Naval Rabaul Association) were deeply moved and invited Burke to their meeting. Former IJN Vice Admiral Kusaka, who presided over the *Rabauru Kai* and who had fought in the Solomon Sea, also invited Burke to speak to bereaved families at Yasukuni Shrine.

To acknowledge Burke's contributions to the JMSDF, its chiefs of staff paid him a courtesy call whenever they visited the United States. Furthermore, successive defense attachés sent flowers to his home on his birthday every year. In his last years, Burke joked that the JMSDF valued him more than the US Navy did. Likewise, IJN Admiral Katsunoshin Yamanashi, who had impressed British naval officers with his performance at the London Naval Conference in 1930, was treated very well by successive British naval attachés in Tokyo after the war. Such actions are part of the naval culture that is shared across countries.

In September 1989, Mrs. Bobbie Burke, with her husband at her side, broke a bottle of champagne and launched the Aegis guided-missile destroyer USS *Arleigh Burke*. Burke was the third person to have a ship named after him during his lifetime, and the first to attend the launch ceremony in person.

Burke developed pneumonia and passed away quietly on January 1, 1996 at Bethesda Naval Hospital on the outskirts of Washington, D.C. He was 94 years old. The *Washington Post* reported his death on the front page. The funeral was performed in the Naval Academy Chapel where he had married Bobbie on his graduation day. The funeral was attended by President William J. "Bill" Clinton, who sat next to Mrs. Burke, as well as representatives from all parts of society, including the secretary of the navy and the CNO, Burke's Naval Academy classmates, and his brothers-in-arms—all mourning the death of a hero. The president ordered that all *Arleigh Burke*-class destroyers and Destroyer Squadron 23, Burke's old squadron, that were at sea were to steam at 31 knots for 5 minutes starting at noon that day.

Among the few Japanese attending Burke's funeral was Suteo Ishida, the former CMS who paid his respects as the representative of the JMSDF. Ishida had been posted to Washington, D.C. as defense attaché during Burke's last term as CNO, and met him often, even after Burke's retirement. Having received the JMSDF's request for their attendance, Ishida and his wife flew to Washington in haste to attend the wake, which was held at a funeral home near the hospital. They were led before the coffin by an escort officer. Burke's face in death was noble and full of dignity. Ishida bowed, then looking inside the coffin, noticed that a bright red sash lay across Burke's chest. Standing on tiptoe, he discovered that it was the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun, first class, which the Japanese government had presented to Burke in 1961. Burke did not appear to be wearing any other medals. Medals from other foreign nations were lined up on a table outside the coffin. When he asked Burke's aide about it, he learned that it had been Burke's wish to wear the Japanese medal.

Fig. 5.1 JMSDF Training Squadron members lay a wreath to honor Admiral Arleigh Burke during their visit to Annapolis. (Photo credit: JMSDF)

In fact, Burke had lost the medal once: it had been stolen while on display somewhere. On hearing of Burke's anguish about the loss, JMSDF personnel asked for donations, collecting about a million yen in no time. At their request, the Decoration Bureau of the Prime Minister's Office reissued the medal, and it was sent to the United States. Burke was extremely grateful for this gesture.

At the funeral the next day, Ishida could not confirm if the medal was still on Burke's chest as the lid of the coffin was already closed. When I visited the National Museum of the US Navy in Washington, D.C., however, the display on Burke had a row of medals from various countries except the one from Japan, so I guess it was buried with him.

After the service at the Naval Academy Chapel, Burke's coffin was transferred to the Naval Academy Cemetery on a caisson drawn by six black horses. Crewmembers of the Aegis ship USS *Arleigh Burke* were among the funeral procession. At the grave, the coffin was buried underground after a 19-gun salute, three rifle volleys by sailors, and a flyover by four F-14 fighters in missing man formation (Fig. 5.1).

Burke now rests in peace on the grounds of his beloved Naval Academy, a medal on his chest awarded by Japan, his onetime enemy, a country whose JMSDF he helped to establish. The tombstone is large, befitting the man's greatness. Its upper half depicts the Aegis ship USS *Arleigh Burke*. Inscribed below are Burke's name, "United States Navy," "Sailor," and the dates of his birth and death; beneath which appears his wife's name, the "Sailor's Wife" who outlived him.

Chapter 6
Mr. Navy: Ichirō Masuoka

Encounter with Ichirō Masuoka

One of the many Japanese whom Auer became acquainted with was known as "Mr. Navy." This man, Ichirō Masuoka, served for many years as private secretary and the household manager for the official residence of the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Auer remembers meeting Masuoka in the fall of 1970, either in September or October, when he started his research in Japan on the formation of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF). He was chatting with some people in the lounge of the Sannō Hotel[1] where he was staying, when Masuoka just happened to pass by. Commander Alan H. Bath, an assistant naval attaché at the US embassy in Tokyo who knew Masuoka, introduced him to Auer, remarking that the Japanese man was a big fan of the IJN. Auer called Masuoka a few days later and they met again the following week for dinner at the hotel, where they were joined by Lieutenant Commander Yasuaki Imaizumi, an aide-de-camp to Chief of Maritime Staff (CMS) Kazuomi Uchida, and Lieutenant Akira Tamai, who was taking care of Auer at Uchida's behest. Masuoka kept talking about the navy, especially the IJN. When Auer praised him, saying "Mr. Masuoka, you know all about the navy, more than anybody I've ever met," Lieutenant Commander Imaizumi interjected, "Mr. Auer, now you know why we call him 'Mr. Navy.'"

After that, Auer often sought Masuoka's help as he continued his research. In January 1971 Masuoka introduced Auer to his boss, Naka Funada, the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Raymond Y. Aka of the Mutual Defense Assistance Office, a Japanese American, served as interpreter. Aka also had many connections among former IJN officers, several of whom he introduced to Auer. At that first meeting with Funada, no important issues were raised.

Masuoka also introduced Auer to former IJN Rear Admiral Jitsue Akishige, an influential member of the Y Committee who had discussed the formation of the

[1] The Sannō Hotel was under the control of the US military.

N. Agawa, *Friendship Across the Seas*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-2997-9_6

Coastal Safety Force. Masuoka brought Auer to the rear admiral's house in Hinokichō, Akasaka. Akishige drew forth the straw paper-wrapped records of the Y Committee from a chest and lent them to Auer for a month. He became good friends with Auer, inviting him to his house to celebrate the New Year in 1971 and to share his family's traditional New Year's dishes. As Masuoka was absent, they had to communicate in German (Akishige had served as the naval attaché in Germany before the war). At Akishige's urging, Auer tried eating a fish's eye for the first time, but he lost his nerve and swallowed it down with sake in one gulp. Masuoka had been amused to hear this story, and he often brought it up afterward.

It was also Masuoka who had introduced Auer to then Lower House Member Takeo Ōkubo, the MSA's former director general. Before the war, Masuoka's father, Commander Hozumi Eguchi, had accompanied Ōkubo (a director at the Ministry of Communications at that time) on his flight to Tehran for the Iranian crown prince's wedding celebration in 1939 aboard the *Soyokaze*, an Imperial Japanese Airways passenger plane, presumably a remodeled Mitsubishi G3M (Type 96 Rikkō). At Rear Admiral Arleigh Burke's request, Ōkubo told Auer the circumstances behind the dispatch of Japanese minesweepers to Korean waters during the Korean War.

Masuoka also brought Auer to a reunion of his father's Naval Academy classmates. One such classmate (although it was not Masuoka who introduced the two) was former IJN Captain Atsushi Ōi, famous for being the IJN's top US expert, who kept company with Auer for many years afterward. In this way, having many acquaintances within the IJN and the JMSDF, Masuoka soon became indispensable to Auer's study. Through Masuoka, Auer gained many new acquaintances.

On the back cover of *Yomigaeru nihon kaigun*, the translation of Auer's doctoral dissertation, is a photo of the tall Lieutenant Commander James Auer in uniform standing between Yoshio Yamamoto and Jitsue Akishige, both former rear admirals and members of the Y Committee. Masuoka, who had a taste for photography and brought a camera wherever he went, took the photograph during a party held at the Sannō Hotel in early 1971, to which Auer invited those who helped him with his research. When the book was completed, Senoo, the translator, and *Jiji Tsushin*, the publisher, hosted a book launch to which many people were invited, again at the Sannō Hotel. It was reportedly a grand party, bringing together not only those who cooperated with Auer's research, but many Japanese and US Navy personnel, too.

Many people assisted in Auer's research. Before Auer's arrival in Japan, CNO Admiral Elmo Zumwalt wrote him a letter of introduction to CMS Uchida. Although it was Auer himself who prepared the draft, the letter unlocked the JMSDF's full cooperation. Auer wrote a letter of thanks to Zumwalt soon after beginning his research in Japan.

Surprisingly, he received a reply before long. The letter, probably also written by a subordinate, contained some kind words: "I have a keen interest in the relationship with the JMSDF, and I consider Japan a country of great value for the United States. Please let me know the progress of your research. Don't hesitate to let me know if there is anything I can do to be of help."

Deeply touched, Auer subsequently sent two letters to update the CNO on his progress. Then, before temporarily returning to the United States upon completing

his research, he told Admiral Zumwalt of the extraordinary kindness CMS Uchida had shown him. In the same letter, Auer mentioned Masuoka: "There is a Masuoka who serves as a private secretary to Speaker of the House of Representatives Naka Funada. This person is profoundly knowledgeable about the navy, and mediates between Funada and the US Navy. He also helped me a lot with my research. Incidentally, Funada and Masuoka visited the battleship USS *New Jersey* that called at Japan last year. To mark the visit, the commanding officer gave Funada a commemorative shield, but Masuoka only got a lighter. Masuoka collects US Navy commemorative shields. Could you award him a USS *New Jersey* shield for helping me with research? He is called Mr. Navy. He would be very pleased if you could engrave the shield 'From Mr. Navy of the United States to Mr. Navy of Japan.'"

A lieutenant commander asking the Navy's supreme commander for a favor! Auer sometimes seems quite bold this way. When he mentioned Mr. Navy, Auer must have recalled what Lieutenant Commander Imaizumi had told him at that first dinner gathering. In Japan, just as Shigeo Nagashima of the Yomiuri Giants baseball team was called "Mr. Giants," it is not uncommon to give someone a nickname by adding "Mr." before the thing associated with him. Auer proposed, without too much thought, that Admiral Zumwalt use the nickname as a gesture of goodwill to Masuoka.

After a while, Masuoka received a USS *New Jersey* shield through the US naval attaché in Tokyo, along with a letter from Admiral Zumwalt. On the shield were engraved the exact words Auer had asked for. For the CNO, making an arrangement like this was no problem at all.

Regardless of the circumstances, Masuoka was extremely happy to be called "Mr. Navy" by the CNO. It is no wonder that he felt as though the US Navy's highest-ranking officer had officially recognized his role. Thereafter, Masuoka began to hand out new business cards with "Mr. Navy" proudly printed on them. For Admiral Zumwalt, it might have been a mere token of goodwill at Auer's suggestion, but the nickname became official before anyone knew it. And that is how there came to be the only Japanese who could freely visit US naval bases and introduce himself as "Mr. Navy."

Masuoka and the Navy

Masuoka's bond with the navy dated back to a time long before he received his nickname. You might even say that he was born with this bond. His father was Commander Hozumi Eguchi of the Naval Academy's 51st class (Class of 1922). This class went on an overseas training cruise to Australia and New Zealand in 1923, the year of the Great Kanto Earthquake. His classmates included Yuzuru Sanematsu, who served as a private secretary to Minister of the Navy Mitsumasa Yonai; Yasuji Watanabe, who actively served as a staff officer to Commander in Chief of the Combined Fleet Isoroku Yamamoto when the war broke out; and Atsushi Ōi.

Eguchi also happens to have been the superior of my father, Hiroyuki Agawa, during World War II. When my father was serving in the Special Section[2] of the Naval General Staff in Tokyo, in charge of deciphering the coded telegrams of the Republic of China's military and diplomatic services, Commander Eguchi was appointed director of the Russia Division. Around that time, Eguchi was assigned to look after the China Division while the director of that division went overseas on an extended business trip. A big man, Eguchi had a stern, dark face that never cracked a smile; he appeared quite arrogant. Every day, as he puffed away on a Dunhill pipe filled with British tobacco, he would be absorbed in reading "confidential" documents with a red cover. He took no notice of the decoded telegrams handed to him. One day while Eguchi was away, my father, wondering what his boss was always reading, checked under the red covers and discovered that the documents were all stories from the historical detective fiction series *Hanshichi torimono chō*.

At the end of 1943, my father had an occasion to drink with Commander Eguchi. My father raised the question that was always on his mind: how would the war develop after the fall of Guadalcanal, the death of Commander in Chief Yamamoto, and the suicidal attack on and complete defeat at Attu Island. Commander Eguchi replied, "The navy has more capable people, but since Shima-*Han* (a nickname for Navy Minister Shigetarō Shimada) is acting completely like [Prime Minister/Army Minister Hideki] Tōjō's aide-de-camp, the situation is hopeless." Commander Eguchi left the Special Section a few months later, having been appointed the executive officer of the carrier HIJMS *Zuihō*, and died in the Battle of Leyte Gulf on October 25, 1944. My father wrote about these episodes twice in his books and spoke about them many times. It appears his superior officer left a profound impression on him.

Masuoka was born in Sasebo, Nagasaki in October 1927. He had just turned 17 when his father died. After the war, he graduated under the old educational system from Saga High School in 1949, traveled to Tokyo, and called on former IJN Vice Admiral Shigetoshi Takeuchi at his house. Masuoka's father had served as an aide-de-camp to Takeuchi. The navy has always looked after its own, and still does. If the family of a Naval Academy classmate or former subordinate is in trouble, everyone tries to help them. Vice Admiral Takeuchi let Masuoka stay at his house and supported him. In October that year, Masuoka got a job in the Secretariat of the House of Representatives with an introduction from Takeuchi. In later years, Masuoka expressed his gratitude toward the vice admiral: "At times of extreme adversity, when I had trouble getting into university and finding employment just after coming to Tokyo, he always gave me hope and a helping hand so that I could maintain my human dignity."

Commander Eguchi had also served as aide-de-camp to admirals Katsunoshin Yamanashi and Kichisaburō Nomura. Whereas Vice Admiral Takeuchi served as the naval attaché in Washington for about 3 years in the early 1910s, Yamanashi and Nomura were well known as leading naval figures in the prewar years who favored

[2] *Tokumu Han.*

cooperation with Britain and the United States. It is easy to imagine that these excellent admirals influenced Commander Eguchi. Moreover, Vice Admiral Takeuchi's daughter was married to former IJN Rear Admiral Akishige's son; Akishige was on good terms with Masuoka and, as mentioned before, was involved in the formation of the Coastal Safety Force as a core member of the Y Committee. Personally, I find it very interesting that those naval personnel acquainted with Masuoka's father also had close ties to the US Navy and were deeply involved in the formation of the JMSDF.

In any event, long before he put himself in the middle of Japan-US naval relations, Masuoka had been connected to naval personnel through the senior officers and Naval Academy classmates of his father.

Around this time, fate was generally unkind to Masuoka. In 1951, soon after getting his secretariat job, he contracted tuberculosis and spent the next 4 years constantly in and out of hospital. Due to family and health issues, he was depressed and unable to enjoy life, forced to recuperate instead of fulfilling his aspirations. Had Japan not been defeated, had the IJN continued to exist, and had he enjoyed good health, Masuoka would have aspired to enter the Naval Academy, just like his father. The times and his personal circumstances, however, did not allow it.

In those days, Masuoka picked up my father's autobiographical novel, *Haru no shiro* (A citadel in spring). The novel's protagonist (the author) meets Commander Eguchi and receives his moral influence. Masuoka had no personal experience as to the kind of naval officer his father had been. He was glad to find that his father was very favorably depicted in a novel he picked up by chance. "Nothing was more encouraging than making this discovery while I was ill. I've read that part so many times since then," Masuoka told me once.

After recovering from his illness, Masuoka boarded his first destroyer at the JMSDF Fleet Review in 1957, where he happened to meet former Admiral Katsunoshin Yamanashi. Unfortunately, the fleet review was held in bad weather; it started raining as the ship set sail. Everyone took shelter from the rain around the ship's superstructure except for an older gentleman who remained standing ramrod straight at the stern despite getting wet, a soft hunting cap being his only protection from the rain. It was Yamanashi. Masuoka approached and introduced himself: "I'm Eguchi's son." "Of course," said Yamanashi, quickly realizing who he was; "Your father was my aide-de-camp. He was a great help to me."

According to the research of Hidemi Nagao, a US Naval Forces Japan media liaison and spokesperson, Masuoka had been on board JMSDF destroyers 31 times between 1957 and 1970 when he met Auer. He could be seen at every fleet review and tiger cruise. In 1964, he was aboard JS *Harukaze* for a week, navigating from Ōminato to Yokosuka, and observed a gunnery exercise at sea. He became seasick when a typhoon hit and witnessed the rescue of the crew of a capsized fishing boat. Through such experiences, Masuoka became well acquainted with the harshness of the duties required of a destroyer crew.

It was also around this time that Masuoka first came into contact with the US Navy. When the 1960 JMSDF Fleet Review was held in Tokyo Bay, Masuoka went aboard JS *Akizuki*. He was frantically taking photographs of the JMSDF ships, as

usual, when he ran out of film. Commander Roy Jones, an assistant naval attaché of the US embassy in Tokyo who happened to be nearby, handed him a roll of film, saying, "Please use this." Masuoka was impressed by the US naval officer's kindness.

In 1963, learning from a newspaper that the carrier USS *Constellation* would call at Yokosuka, Masuoka wrote to Commander Jones, requesting a tour. Since he mentioned his personal history, his work, and the relationship between his father and the IJN, Jones soon arranged for his visit. Masuoka made his first visit to the carrier at anchor in May that year. The US Navy even assigned a lieutenant as his escort to show him around the ship. "It was the best day of my life," Masuoka wrote in his letter of thanks to Jones.

That same month, he went aboard the carrier USS *Ranger* off Sagami Bay. It was the first time for him to see the launch and landing of carrier-based aircraft. Masuoka wrote a letter of thanks to Captain George Duncan, USS *Ranger*'s commanding officer, saying, "My late father would have been standing on the bridge of a carrier just like you are." After that, Masuoka started to appear at the US Navy's Fleet Activities Yokosuka and Naval Air Station Atsugi whenever there was a change of command ceremony for commanders and commanding officers.

Naka Funada and the Japan-US Alliance

Masuoka moved to the secretary section of the Secretariat of the House of Representatives in 1959. Then, in December 1963, LDP Diet Member Naka Funada assumed office as the 51st Speaker of the House of Representatives. Masuoka was introduced to Funada by one of his father's classmates, the former IJN Captain Takao Yasunobu, who had served as a private secretary to Kichisaburō Nomura. Masuoka at the time was just one of many on the secretariat staff. However, he was the one entrusted to draft the 1964 New Year's speech for the Speaker to read. The draft speech he submitted was returned to him without a single revision—just the comment, "Well done." He must have left a good impression. Seven years later, when Funada again assumed the office as the 56th Speaker of the House of Representatives, Masuoka was personally nominated to be his private secretary. He served as Funada's right-hand man from 1970 until Funada's passing in 1979.

Naka Funada was born in 1895 in Utsunomiya, Tochigi Prefecture. After graduating from the English Law Department of the Faculty of Law, Tokyo Imperial University in 1918, he entered the Home Ministry. He became a secretary in the Tomosaburō Katō cabinet formed in June 1922, directly serving the prime minister.

Admiral[3] Katō had served as chief of staff to Commander in Chief of the Combined Fleet Heihachirō Tōgō at the time of the Battle of Tsushima. Katō,

[3] Posthumously promoted to admiral of the fleet.

Navy minister in the Takashi Hara cabinet, attended the Washington Naval Conference in the fall of 1921 as the chief commissioner plenipotentiary, and contributed to the conclusion of the treaty limiting the tonnage ratio of capital ships (battleships and battle cruisers) and aircraft carriers to 5:5:3 for the United States, the United Kingdom, and Japan, respectively. Because of this treaty, Japan abandoned its plan to build the "Eight-Eight" Fleet (eight battleships and eight battle cruisers) and sank several of its own capital ships.

Considering the status of Japanese national power at the time, arms limitation was very timely. Nevertheless, it provoked strong opposition in Japan; within the IJN, it brought the Fleet Faction and the Treaty Faction into conflict later at the conclusion of the London Naval Treaty of 1930, which foreshadowed the period leading to the outbreak of the Pacific War.

Funada, then a young bureaucrat in his late 20s, was strongly influenced by Katō. He later described Katō in a lecture during his time as Speaker: "Admiral of the Fleet Katō had a clear head and showed penetrating insight ... on the other hand, he showed clemency like an affectionate father. When I was filing documents after a cabinet meeting, Katō, who was now prime minister, gave me helpful advice even about trifling things, such as 'This document is important' and 'Deal with that matter so-and-so,' but he was never too fastidious." Although Funada himself had never served in the navy, he might have come to love and respect that maritime organization through serving Katō, who was well known for being the best leader of the navy men of good sense (i.e., the Treaty Faction).

In the fall of 1924, Funada witnessed the sinking of the battleship HIJMS *Aki* as a member of the entourage of the prince regent, the future Emperor Hirohito. Five of the IJN's best battleships—HIJMS *Mutsu*, HIJMS *Nagato*, HIJMS *Hiei*, HIJMS *Kongō*, and HIJMS *Yamashiro*—participated in the gunnery exercise at sea to dispose of the capital ship, as the Washington Naval Treaty called for. The target ship appeared and proceeded slowly, being towed. The bombardment unit, including HIJMS *Mutsu* and HIJMS *Nagato*, proceeded in parallel at the battle speed of 15–16 knots. Then, reaching the specified distance, they started firing salvoes on HIJMS *Aki*. The prince regent observed from the imperial flagship HIJMS *Kongō*, 3000–-4000 meters away from the target. According to Funada's own writing, "Shells fired simultaneously from each of the eight 16-inch guns [of HIJMS *Mutsu* and HIJMS *Nagato*] flew straight toward the target. A few moments later, the roaring sound of explosions reverberated. At the same time, HIJMS *Aki* was covered in spray from huge water columns rising a few hundred meters into the air. It was just like a scene from an actual battle." Incidentally, Funada was watching from behind the prince regent, wearing a frock coat, a silk hat, and a pair of gray leather gloves. "When the wind got a little stronger, my silk hat was blown away, while my frock coat got caught on a handrail. I had a hard time dealing with it," he wrote.

Later, Funada was elected to the House of Representatives in 1930 and assumed office in 1937 as the chief of the Cabinet Legislation Bureau in the first Fumimaro Konoe cabinet. He served in this capacity for 2 years. The times were becoming tense in the wake of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, which led to the expansion of the war in China. In the postwar era, after the GHQ had purged "undesirables" from

public office from 1947 to 1951, Funada returned to the House of Representatives the following year, having been elected to the Diet as a member of the Liberal Party. In 1955, he offered to be the director general of the Defense Agency in the Ichirō Hatoyama cabinet. Back then, it was a post that everyone shied away from as it was not useful in gaining votes. Funada later was active as an influential LDP member of the Diet, twice serving as the Speaker of the House of Representatives. As the chairman of the LDP's Research Commission on National Security, he drafted a plan contributing to the establishment of the automatic renewal of the Japan-US Security Treaty during the 1970 *Anpo Tōsō*.[4]

Funada considered nothing as being more critical to Japan's security than having friendly relations with the United States, probably because he had served Tomosaburō Katō and had also directly witnessed from the center of power how Japan had chosen the path to war, harming its relationships with the United States and the United Kingdom. When he was ill in bed for a month in 1970, he tape-recorded his memories and feelings as a politician; these were published as *Aoyama Kanwa* (A quiet talk in Aoyama). His views on national security are clearly expressed in the book.

As an island nation without resources, Japan must obtain raw materials from overseas to develop its economy. "Hence, the freedom of the seas and the safety of navigation is a *sine qua non* for the existence of Japan as a country." Ergo, Japan has to cooperate with other maritime countries.

> *Japan has maintained an extremely close and friendly relationship with both the United States and the United Kingdom throughout the Meiji and Taishō eras. . . . Japan, the United States, and the United Kingdom are all maritime nations . . . the public sentiment of maritime nations is generally moderate and impartial, naturally different from that of continental nations where the temperature undergoes extreme changes.*

After World War I, Japan came to be referred to as one of the three biggest naval powers, which led to arrogance. The conclusion of arms limitation treaties in Washington and London kindled an averse national sentiment regarding the United Kingdom and the United States. The Great Depression and the rise of the Nazis in Germany in the early years of the Shōwa era were contributing factors that fueled the military's intervention in Japanese domestic politics, ultimately leading to a political environment that prioritized military affairs.

> *The army took control and aimed for an alliance with far-off Italy and Germany and for a* modus vivendi *with the Soviet Union. Forming the [Tripartite Pact] meant joining continental powers by ignoring Japan's requirements for survival and welfare as a maritime nation. Such an unnatural policy would never succeed. I think it was inevitable that we completely lost the Greater East Asia War [World War II].*

Conversely, Japan-US cooperation was renewed after World War II with the aim of confronting Communism. "I think our relationship returned to its natural state, which is the most favorable to Japan." Regardless of difficult economic issues, the friendly relations between the two countries would "not only directly benefit both

[4] Campaign against the automatic renewal of the Japan-US Security Treaty.

countries, but also contribute to stability in Asia as well as to the establishment of world peace."

These beliefs made Funada value the relationship with the US forces in Japan, especially US Naval Forces Japan. Starting in 1956, he would invite US military personnel in Japan to the Akasaka Odori[5] celebration held at the Kabukiza theater in Tokyo every spring. Whenever a major US Navy vessel called at a Japanese port, Funada would be the first Diet member to visit it. The ships he visited included the carrier USS *Kitty Hawk*, calling at Yokosuka in June 1964; the nuclear submarine USS *Snook*, calling at Yokosuka in June 1966; the carrier USS *Enterprise*, calling at Sasebo in January 1968; and the battleship USS *New Jersey*, calling at Yokosuka in February 1969. He encouraged the crew and toured the vessels.

On these occasions, it was always Masuoka who communicated with the US Navy and accompanied him. Funada instructed Masuoka to take good care of the US Seventh Fleet. Although the 1960 *Anpo Tōsō*[6] had been brought to an end, the leftist anti-US movement was at its peak. The All-Japan Federation of Students' Self-Governing Associations[7] and trade unions ran vigorous campaigns against USS *Snook* and USS *Enterprise* whenever they called at Japanese ports. The Japanese people also strongly opposed the Vietnam War. Even under these circumstances, Funada actively welcomed port calls by US naval ships. In particular, Funada and Masuoka boarded USS *Snook* twice during port calls in Okinawa and in Sasebo. In Okinawa, he held a press conference on board to emphasize the safety of nuclear submarines. In Sasebo, he transferred at sea from a helicopter to USS *Snook*, which then entered the port. For the US naval officers and sailors who had doubts about their welcome in Japan given the intense opposition, Funada's appearances carried a message: "Don't worry, your presence is indispensable for Japan's security, and we are sincerely grateful for your visit." There were politicians with that kind of spirit in those days.

Homeporting USS *Midway* in Yokosuka

Thus, it was these two men with pro-Navy views outlined above whom a young Lieutenant Commander James Auer appeared before. Auer happened to arrive in Japan to conduct research in the same year that Funada became Speaker for the second time and Masuoka was appointed his private secretary. After completing his studies, Auer stayed on in Japan as a political advisor to the commander, US Naval Forces Japan, and was engaged in maintaining the Japan-US Naval relationship. When the decision was made concerning the homeporting of the carrier USS *Midway* at the US Navy Fleet Activities Yokosuka, one of the most significant

[5] An annual dance performance by geisha in the Akasaka area.

[6] Campaign against the ratification of the revised Japan-US Security Treaty in 1960.

[7] *Zengakuren.*

issues in the history of Japan-US security relations, Auer assisted from the side, in close communication with Masuoka.

Significant events preceded this decision. Under the newly elected President Richard Nixon, who took office in 1969, the United States set out to scale down its military presence in Asia because of difficulties it faced from the Vietnam War. Reducing the military's budget, above all else, was essential. Based on this objective, the US Forces Japan headquarters notified the Japanese government on November 27, 1970 that its combat forces would be withdrawn almost entirely by end-June of the following year. This meant that the Seventh Fleet vessels in Yokosuka, along with the air squadrons in Yokota and Misawa, would be moved to Sasebo and the US mainland.

The decision came like a bolt from the blue for the JMSDF. It was front-page news on the morning of November 28. The next day (Sunday), senior JMSDF officers paid a visit to Rear Admiral Julian Burke,[8] commander, US Naval Forces Japan. They complained about the lack of advance notice and appealed to him to overturn the decision somehow. Once the US forces relinquished their Yokosuka base—which the IJN had used until 1945—the JMSDF would never be able to use this historic naval port in the future, they worried. As a matter of fact, soon after the announcement, the mayor of Yokosuka appeared to have initiated an attempt to attract private companies for commercial redevelopment.

Speaker Funada was also actively involved in this matter, according to Masuoka. When Funada had dinner with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Thomas Moorer during his January 1971 visit to Japan, he requested that Moorer overturn the decision to reduce the size of the Yokosuka base. Before becoming chairman, Admiral Moorer had been the CNO, Admiral Zumwalt's immediate predecessor. Around 1964, he had once been posted in Yokosuka as the commander, US Seventh Fleet. He was already acquainted with Funada. Twice during the war, he had had to swim for his life in the western Pacific: once after his aircraft was shot down, and again when the ship that rescued him, SS *Florence D*, was sunk later that day. Nevertheless, Moorer was very friendly toward the leaders of the former IJN and the JMSDF. The request to maintain US forces in Yokosuka was also conveyed directly to CNO Zumwalt by CMS Uchida, who happened to be in Washington at the time.

Having learned that Japan would not welcome the US Navy's decision to leave Yokosuka (and likely knowing that Washington was about to reverse that decision), Admiral Moorer told Funada that the US Navy would overturn the decision. Funada made an additional request: "There will be some chaos if it is announced now. Please announce it after the budget bill has passed and become effective for the new fiscal year starting April 1." On March 31, Auer, who had already started working unofficially for Rear Admiral Burke, notified Funada through Masuoka that the US Navy had announced the retraction of the decision to scale down the Yokosuka base. The issue was settled for the moment.

[8] Unrelated to Admiral Arleigh Burke.

In January of that year, the US Navy had started contemplating the homeporting of an aircraft carrier in Yokosuka to maintain the presence there, seemingly at odds with the force reduction policy decision. Once an aircraft carrier departs its home port for an operation, it becomes very difficult to return until the operation is finished, which means that the crew cannot see their families for a long time. However, if a carrier was homeported in Yokosuka and the crew's families settled there, operations at sea would be limited to 6 months at the longest, unlike carriers homeported on the West Coast of the United States. Moreover, the carrier's total operational days per year would be reduced by 12 weeks. Doing this would boost the morale of the crew, improve the recruitment of sailors, and increase the rate of service retention. CNO Zumwalt showed exceptionally keen interest in this plan, for improving the working conditions of sailors was a key concern of his. If the carrier's operational days were reduced by the same extent without a forward deployment in Northeast Asia, a new carrier would have to be built. Hence, this measure was expected to facilitate the reduction of the military budget, as well.

The real question was how the Japanese government would respond. In the political climate of the day, already facing strong opposition to US naval vessels calling at Japanese ports and to the Vietnam War, would the Japanese government accept the homeporting of a carrier in Yokosuka? Auer's first mission as a political advisor was to sound out reactions to the plan in various sectors of Japanese society. Auer made full use of the personal connections he had cultivated during his dissertation research, meeting many people and traveling from Yokosuka to Tokyo frequently. He attended the regular weekly meetings held in the US embassy's political section to gain the latest information on political issues between Japan and the United States. He made friends with US Ambassador to Japan Robert S. Ingersoll and his assistant, Michael Armacost. He also made connections in the Japan-US Security Treaty Division of the North American Affairs Bureau in the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At Funada's invitation, Auer frequently brought Rear Admiral Julian Burke, dressed in plainclothes, to Funada for discussions. It would have been a slightly sensitive matter for the commander, US Naval Forces Japan, to make political contacts outside of official channels (the foreign ministry and the US embassy), even though it was his duty to express the intentions of the US Navy in Japan. Thus, Burke's appearing in plainclothes was a discreet move to avoid attracting undue attention.

Through his contacts, Auer got the feeling that the Japan-US Security Treaty Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was relatively supportive of the plan. What was needed was a political decision. When Rear Admiral Burke met Speaker Funada, he explained that the forward deployment of a carrier is beneficial, both strategically and financially. Funada replied to Burke, "The Japan-US Security Treaty is beneficial to Japan. The Japanese government always does what is necessary, even if it is politically difficult. Tell the government clearly what you want. And never back down."

In 1972—in August, according to Auer's memory—he received a late-night phone call from Masuoka, who told him briefly, "Mr. Auer, [take] action." Masuoka went on to explain that Funada had discussed the issue that day with Ambassador

Ingersoll at a reception held at the Speaker's official residence. Speaker Funada shared with the ambassador the Japanese government's highly political judgment conveyed to him by Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka: "The United States has the right to homeport USS *Midway* in Yokosuka. It's not necessary to obtain permission from Japan. However, if you wish to ask our opinion on the matter, that's OK. We will say 'Yes,' if asked."

The issue first became public in September, when Masayoshi Ōhira, foreign minister in the Tanaka cabinet, appearing at the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, stated that the US Navy had requested homeporting of USS *Midway* in Yokosuka. The US government did not ask for official permission, and the Japanese government did not officially approve. But by this time, both countries had agreed on the plan.

Through this sequence of events, the forward deployment of a carrier became possible, and it was decided that USS *Midway*, the first carrier ordered to be homeported in Japan, would arrive at Yokosuka in October 1973. However, a concerned Ministry of Foreign Affairs inquired about the possibility of delaying USS *Midway*'s arrival, as the protests around the Yokosuka base grew to a few thousand people a few days before the carrier was to enter its new home port. The US Navy insisted on entering port as scheduled; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was reluctant to concur.

Then a defense attaché sent by the JMSDF, based at the Japanese embassy in Washington, called Masuoka. Vice Chief of Naval Operations Admiral James Holloway personally requested that Speaker Funada persuade the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Masuoka passed on the request to Funada immediately. Funada's intercession bore fruit, and USS *Midway* entered the Yokosuka port on October 5, as scheduled (Fig. 6.1).

Subsequently, USS *Midway* was dispatched from Yokosuka on numerous missions before its final departure in August 1991. When the carrier returned to port from the Gulf War without having lost a single aircraft or crewmember, Masuoka was among those at the wharf to greet it. USS *Independence*, the second forward-deployed carrier that replaced USS *Midway*, was decommissioned in 1998. Now a third carrier, USS *Kitty Hawk*, is homeported in Yokohama.[9] Although the original plan was to greatly scale down the base with the withdrawal of the Seventh Fleet in 1970, Fleet Activities Yokosuka has since become one of the most important bases for the US Navy's global strategy.

Needless to say, Funada was just one of many who contributed to the homeporting of USS *Midway* in Yokosuka; Masuoka's influence had little to do with it. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs played an active part; many local people also endeavored to enable the reception in Yokosuka, including Mayor Masayoshi Nagano (elected with the support of the Japan Socialist Party and the unions). There were also political incentives, such as the return of the US Navy's restricted

[9] In 2008, USS *Kitty Hawk* was replaced by USS *George Washington*, which was in turn replaced by USS *Ronald Reagan* in 2015.

Fig. 6.1 USS *Midway* entering Yokosuka Port. (Photo credit: JMSDF)

waters in front of the base, which enabled land reclamation. And yet the influence of Funada as a politician was critical. Therefore, the US Navy treated Funada and his subordinate, Masuoka, increasingly well.

In 1973, the Department of Defense awarded Funada a special decoration, the Medal for Distinguished Public Service, to acknowledge his services—only the third time it had been awarded to a foreigner. In 1976, already retired as Speaker, Funada was invited by the US Navy to the Parade of Sail, which was to be held at the mouth of the Hudson River for the United States Bicentennial. Masuoka and Auer accompanied him on the 17-day journey to New York, Washington, D.C., and Texas. As Funada's escort officer, Auer took care of the older politician throughout the journey. He delivered *umeboshi* (pickled plums) to Funada's room every morning, at Masuoka's suggestion. Funada was always in a good mood, thinking highly of Auer. The US Navy also accorded Masuoka every courtesy, assigning a naval officer as his escort. His nickname, Mr. Navy, was beginning to carry a certain weight.

"Mr. Navy Arriving"

Masuoka became the household manager for the official residence of the Speaker of the House of Representatives in 1977. He kept the post after Funada's death in 1979, serving seven politicians who were Speaker after Funada. Starting around this time, Masuoka came to be treated like a flag officer whenever he visited US Navy vessels.

In the navy, a boatswain's call sounds a long whistle with a "low—high—low" series of pitches whenever a flag or commanding officer boards the ship or goes ashore. This is a custom common among navies the world over, carried out not only in the JMSDF and the US Navy, but also in the Russian and Chinese navies. (According to one theory, in the days of sailing warships, the Royal Navy's flag officers were too fat to climb the rope ladder. They were therefore hoisted and lowered in a boatswain's chair with a whistle coordinating the timing; the custom is a reminder of that past.) In the US Navy, a sailor also rings a bell, with the tone sounded in pairs: *ding-ding*, *ding-ding*. Several sailors, called sideboys, line up on the deck to welcome visitors. The number of sideboys depends on the visitor's rank and status: two, four, six, or—if the visitor is an admiral or the president—eight. Additionally, when a commanding officer boards or leaves the ship, the name of his command is announced over the shipboard loudspeaker. So, for example, if he is the commander, US Seventh Fleet, "Seventh Fleet arriving"; for the commanding officer of the carrier USS *John F. Kennedy*, "*John F. Kennedy* arriving"; and for the President, "United States arriving."

Somewhere down the line, Masuoka began to be honored with this ceremony when he boarded or left US Navy ships. Furthermore, he was reportedly treated as equivalent to an admiral. As Masuoka climbed the ladder, the bell was sounded eight times, a sailor piped, and "Mr. Navy arriving" was announced. In accordance with custom, Masuoka saluted aft toward the naval ensign before stepping onto the ship. As he was leaving the ship, "Mr. Navy departing" was announced. Again, Masuoka saluted aft toward the naval ensign before climbing down the ladder. The bell was sounded, and a sailor piped for the short, gray-haired Japanese gentleman. Officers and sailors not familiar with the special treatment wondered what was going on.

Masuoka not only frequented the US Navy bases in Yokosuka and Sasebo, but also often attended, by invitation, the US Navy's major ceremonies, such as the change of command for the CNO in Washington, D.C. and for the CINCPACFLT in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

There were a few reasons why the US Navy valued Masuoka even after Funada's death, treating him with the utmost courtesy. First of all, successive commanders of the Seventh Fleet and the US Naval Forces Japan had personal friendships with Masuoka because of his frequenting US Navy bases since the 1960s. Many of the flag officers who arrived in Yokosuka as fleet commanders had known Masuoka since they were lieutenants, commanders, and captains. The relationship with Masuoka was one matter fleet commanders passed down to their successors. Whenever they returned to Yokosuka, Masuoka looked after them very hospitably, taking them sightseeing to Kamakura or Nikko[10] or entertaining them at Komatsu, a historic restaurant in Yokosuka that IJN personnel had frequented since before the war.[11]

[10] Both are tourist towns with a rich history, not far from Tokyo.

[11] Unfortunately, the restaurant Komatsu was completely destroyed by fire on May 16, 2016.

For the US Navy, Masuoka also served as a go-between with political and official circles in Japan. He introduced many influential politicians to US Navy leadership and gladly helped when the US Navy had a favor to ask of the politicians. In addition to his contributions to the forward deployment of USS *Midway*, he acted as a coordinator on issues such as the partial return of land at the Sasebo base in 1974 and the dispatch of the Japanese sailing ship *Nippon Maru* to the Parade of Sail for the United States Bicentennial in 1976. Masuoka himself was not particularly influential, but for the US naval personnel who did not understand the intricacies of Japanese politics, he was invaluable for his willingness to function as a bridge to Nagata-chō, Japan's political center.

Masuoka's closest friend among flag officers in his final years was Admiral Archie R. Clemins. Clemins (then a captain) first met Masuoka in the fall of 1986, when he arrived at his post as commander of Submarine Group 7 homeported at Fleet Activities Yokosuka. Clemins knew nothing about Japan, so Masuoka taught him about Japanese culture and customs, explained Japanese politics, and looked after him in various ways. From then on, when he was posted to Yokosuka as the chief of staff and later as commander of the Seventh Fleet, the Masuokas welcomed the Cleminses warmly. "It was entirely thanks to Mr. Navy that I was able to understand Japan," Clemins wrote in a letter to me. During Clemins's term as commander, US Seventh Fleet, Masuoka went out to sea with him aboard the fleet flagship USS *Blue Ridge* many times. At sea, the two often talked about the importance of the friendly relationship between the US Navy and the JMSDF, as well as the future of the two countries. Clemins listened to Masuoka's views and used them as a reference. For Clemins, Masuoka was like a window into Japan. When Clemins held a reception and invited people, Masuoka was always alongside him and introduced any Japanese guests to him: it was Masuoka who introduced me to the admiral on board USS *Blue Ridge*. Their close relationship continued even after Admiral Clemins became CINCPACFLT.

Masuoka also voluntarily endeavored to publicize the US Navy by inviting a number of influential figures from the private sector to US Navy bases and vessels. For example, Masuoka would often lead a group of Japanese to a US Navy carrier that had appeared near Japan, flying from Atsugi Naval Air Station aboard a C-2A Greyhound cargo aircraft that would land on the carrier by catching its tailhook on an arresting wire. The VIPs would step down onto the flight deck still excited by the impact of the landing. Senior officers, including the commander of Carrier Strike Group 5 and the carrier's commanding officer, would receive the guests and guide them around the ship. In the meantime, carrier-based aircraft were launched from catapults one by one, and after a while landed back on the 200-meter-long runway as if they were being hurled at the deck. Masuoka enjoyed watching the awe on the guests' faces.

Among the people Masuoka invited to the carriers were Akio Morita, chairman of Sony; Shizuo Tsuji, headmaster of the Tsuji Culinary Institute; Hidemi Nagao, a US Navy spokesperson; and the novelist Hiroyuki Agawa, my father. The group visited the nuclear-powered carrier USS *Carl Vinson* from the air in 1989. Deeply impressed with the experience, Tsuji invited Masuoka and the senior officers of

USS *Kitty Hawk* to his house for a banquet and entertained them with splendid cuisine in return.

It was no wonder that Masuoka was flattered by the US Navy's special treatment. *Being just a staff member of the House of Representatives, I'll never be treated as a person in my own right by Japanese society because it only evaluates people by their title. A politician's private secretary is no more than an errand boy. On the contrary, the US Navy treats me on equal terms as an individual and a friend.*

However, some say that Masuoka might have become slightly conceited after receiving special treatment from the US Navy. In particular, he tended to look down on senior JMSDF officers somehow. When he attended the change of command ceremony for CINCPACFLT in Hawaii in the early 1980s, he even got into a quarrel with another guest from Japan; the person challenged Masuoka's request for a seat superior to that of a retired JMSDF admiral who was attending the ceremony as a JMSDF representative. A witness says Masuoka was extremely stubborn when such incidents arose. His attitude might have been a reflection of his discontent with his undistinguished role in Japanese society.

Masuoka retired in 1990 as the household manager for the Speaker's official residence. He kept his connection with the world of politics by setting up a small personal workspace in the office of Ganri Yamashita, a Lower House member who focused on security issues following in Naka Funada's footsteps. After Yamashita's death in 1994, however, Masuoka lost the support of politicians and his influence as a public figure waned gradually. In the US Navy, too, the flag officers close to Masuoka retired one after another, whereas young officers increasingly did not know about him. Masuoka also became somewhat estranged from Auer around this time.

Masuoka kept attending the change of command ceremonies for commanders, and entertaining new commanders of the Seventh Fleet and the US Naval Forces Japan at his own expense when they arrived in Japan, though he hardly played a political role like he had before. Short and scrawny, he looked lonely somehow whenever he was seen at the JMSDF Fleet Review or on the Seventh Fleet flagship USS *Blue Ridge*. He may have been experiencing some health issues.

In 1993 he decided to go to the United States to visit the secretary of the Navy and as many as 40 US Navy flag officers, both active and retired, who had served in Yokosuka. Masuoka seemed very happy when he was looking at the photos from the visit.

Masuoka's Death

Masuoka contracted a lung disease in October 1996, and after repeated hospitalizations, died in hospital in Yokosuka on September 2 the following year. On learning that he was seriously ill, CINCPACFLT Admiral Clemins visited him at the hospital along with Auer. Four days before Masuoka's death, Vice Admiral Yasumasa Yamamoto, the commandant of the JMSDF Yokosuka District, and Rear Admiral Michael Haskins, commander, US Naval Forces Japan, called on him at the hospital.

Masuoka, with labored breathing, asked if the preparations were going well for USS *Independence*'s visit to Otaru, scheduled for the following week.

His condition became critical, but he briefly revived the day before his death. He started calling the names of his many friends as his wife, Yōko, sat with him. Because he was moving his hands incessantly, she handed him a notepad and a pen, and he wrote in English, "To Mr. Auer, A strong man . . ." This was the last thing he wrote. CINCPACFLT Admiral Clemins sent a telegraph to the entire naval force under his command the next day, mourning Masuoka's death.

The funeral, which took place in the city of Yokosuka on September 4, was attended by senior officers of the US Navy and the JMSDF dressed in white summer uniforms. Vice Admiral James O. Ellis flew from Washington, D.C. on the CNO's behalf and Admiral Clemins came from Hawaii; many JMSDF senior officers, both active and retired, attended, including the CMS, Admiral Kazuya Natsukawa. A few of Masuoka's close friends read their condolences, then Japanese and US naval officers carried the coffin, covered by the Japanese and US national flags. Admiral Clemins gave a final salute to the coffin.

On October 22, which would have been Masuoka's 70th birthday, two ceremonies were held, at Pier 12 and a waterfront park at the US Navy's Yokosuka base, for the unveiling of memorials with reliefs of Masuoka's profile.

Although the plan had been to complete and unveil the two memorials while Masuoka was alive and well, they were not ready in time. Two days before Masuoka's death, Rear Admiral Haskins showed him the design drawing. Pier 12, where carriers berth, was named Masuoka Pier, while the newly created waterfront park was named Masuoka Memorial Park. During the unveiling ceremony at the park, Haskins made a short speech, quoting a poem in Japanese by Takuboku Ishikawa.

Yue mo naku/umi ga mitakute/umi ni kinu
kokoro itamite/taegataki hi ni

For no reason, I longed for the sea. I came to the sea;
On the day my heart hurt and I couldn't cope.

The wind was strong that day and the waters in the bay in front of us were rough with whitecaps. From this peaceful park, Masuoka's memorial watches over US Navy and JMSDF vessels coming and going from Yokosuka Naval Base every day.

Chapter 7
The US Navy's War Generation

Auer as a Political Advisor

James Auer served as a political advisor to Rear Admiral Julian Burke, commander, US Naval Forces Japan, for roughly 2 years starting in August 1971. They first met when Burke was invited as a US Navy representative to a Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) exhibition exercise held in Sagami Bay in the spring of 1971. He boarded a destroyer, looked around, and a young US lieutenant commander caught his eye. A sailor can tell another's rank with a glance at a uniform sleeve. It was an unfamiliar face in Yokosuka. Wondering why this officer had been invited to the exhibition, Rear Admiral Burke approached the lieutenant commander and asked, "Who are you?"

The naval attaché of the US embassy in Tokyo, standing nearby, had the good sense to introduce Auer to the rear admiral. Burke understood quickly, for he had heard about an officer sent by the Navy to study in Tokyo. Auer told the rear admiral about his research, saying he had been in Japan since the previous July, conducting interviews with people who were involved in the formation of the JMSDF, that he had become friends with many JMSDF personnel through his research, and that he planned to complete the research that summer and return home. After listening to Auer's explanation and thinking about it quietly, the rear admiral said, "We have an ideal job for you. Come to Yokosuka next week."

Soon after arriving at his post as commander, US Naval Forces Japan, the previous summer, Rear Admiral Burke had had to deal with a complicated issue, the plan to reduce the forces at the US Navy's Fleet Activities Yokosuka, as mentioned in the last chapter. Just before he left for Japan, the naval leadership notified him of the plan and asked him to handle the matter with care. The United States, having grown weary of the Vietnam War, had decided to withdraw a considerable number of its forces in Asia. As for the naval forces in Japan, only the US Naval Forces Japan headquarters would stay in Yokosuka, whereas the flagship of the Seventh Fleet would be transferred to Sasebo. Other vessels based

N. Agawa, *Friendship Across the Seas*,
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in Yokosuka were to return to the United States, and the ship repair and maintenance facilities, except the No. 6 Dock, were to be handed back to Japan. As commander, US Naval Forces Japan, Burke had to coordinate many issues apart from the strategic and political challenges with the Japanese, including employment on the base and moving the families of US armed personnel. However, it had to be done; reducing the defense budget was an absolute imperative under President Nixon.

The Japanese side's adverse reaction had been unexpected, making Rear Admiral Burke keenly aware that there was a lack of mutual understanding with the Japanese, especially the JMSDF. Burke believed that situation called for a dedicated coordinator and so he requested that the Bureau of Naval Personnel in Washington send someone suitable. "I need an officer who has connections with the JMSDF and can speak directly with the Japanese side as the representative of the commander, US Naval Forces Japan. Due to the nature of the matter, the person should hold the rank of captain." Washington consented to the request, but finding a suitable officer was easier said than done.

Just as he was beginning to lose patience, Rear Admiral Burke met Auer at sea. Here was someone who satisfied almost all of his requirements. The only problem was that Auer was a lieutenant commander, just turned 30, not the captain he wanted for the job. However, Burke did not take issue with that point, and pushed ahead with Auer's appointment. And so, Auer the researcher became directly involved in the practical business side of Japan-US security issues as an active-duty naval officer.

Auer met Burke's expectations very well. The biggest issue at the time was the forward deployment of an aircraft carrier at Yokosuka. Auer, still with the status of research student, started working for Rear Admiral Burke unofficially; he was soon notified of the plan. Immediately after the proposed reduction in forces at Yokosuka base was canceled due to Japanese opposition, the US naval leadership proposed to homeport a carrier in Yokosuka.

To enact this plan, Japanese reactions had to be sounded out. There had already been strong opposition to the continued existence of US bases in Japan and to US naval vessels calling there. Would the Japanese government allow the US forces to have a more prominent presence by homeporting a US carrier in Yokosuka? How could residences for naval personnel and their families coming with the homeporting be secured? There were many challenges to be tackled, and sources at the US Embassy in Tokyo were pessimistic about the possibility that Japan would welcome a carrier. On the other hand, some thought that Japan would not oppose the plan.

In fact, when former Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi visited the carrier USS *Constellation* with Naka Funada and a few others in 1962, they had a discussion with the US Navy about the homeporting of a carrier in Yokosuka. For Japan, which did not have its own aircraft carrier, the homeporting of a US Navy carrier in Yokosuka would support the nation's defenses.

In any case, because Burke felt it was necessary to collect information on his own, he frequently sent Auer to Tokyo to make contact with influential people. Through Ichirō Masuoka, Auer introduced Burke to Speaker of the House of Representatives Naka Funada. As described in the previous chapter, Japan and the United States

reached agreement on homeporting the carrier USS *Midway* in Yokosuka when Funada persuaded Kakuei Tanaka, who became prime minister in July 1972.

Auer played an important role behind the scenes in this matter, a contribution that Rear Admiral Burke valued highly. When Auer took the qualifying examination to become an executive officer of a destroyer, Burke wrote a persuasive letter of recommendation for him. In August 1973, just before Auer was relieved of his post and instructed to report to the destroyer USS *Parsons* of the Seventh Fleet as its new executive officer, the rear admiral left Yokosuka to take up a new assignment in Washington, D.C.

Dinner with Rear Admiral Julian Burke

For a year starting in August 1995, I lived in Charlottesville, Virginia, as a visiting scholar at the University of Virginia School of Law. Graced with plenty of free time, I thought it was an excellent opportunity to meet US Naval personnel with deep connections to the JMSDF, so I asked Auer to arrange meetings. I was thinking of writing about the ties between the JMSDF and the US Navy when the time was ripe.

The first person with whom Auer suggested I meet was Admiral Arleigh Burke, who championed the establishment of the JMSDF. Admiral Burke lived with his wife in a retirement apartment in Virginia, across the Potomac River from Washington. "He can't recognize people well due to his old age. But he's a symbolic person in US-Japan naval relations, so you should meet him once. You can only meet him on the condition that he's feeling good and we obtain a doctor's permission. Let's visit him together." It was December 7, 1995, the anniversary of the IJN attack on Pearl Harbor, when Auer and I rendezvoused at a military conference hall not far from Admiral Burke's residence. It was a bitterly cold day with low-hanging clouds, the kind of day where you would likely catch a cold if you were careless.

When I arrived, Auer was just coming out of the conference hall; as soon as he saw me, he apologized: "I've just called Admiral Burke, but his doctor said we can't meet him today, as his cold has gotten worse." We had no choice but to give up that idea. It was disappointing not to be able to meet him, but we promised to find another opportunity. We had no way of knowing that the admiral would pass away in less than a month due to pneumonia. Thus, I missed the opportunity to meet the legendary Admiral Arleigh Burke forever.

Seeing that we would not be able to meet Admiral Burke, Auer and I got in a car and drove to meet another "Admiral Burke"—Rear Admiral Julian Burke. We had arranged to have a meal with him at a restaurant after our visit with Arleigh Burke. Auer called the rear admiral to tell him about the change in plans. "Then why don't you come now?" he suggested. "I can't offer you much, but let's talk at my home." And so, Auer and I decided to call on Julian Burke at his home. We bought a bottle of wine at a liquor store en route and drove to the rear admiral's house in northern Virginia, not far from the nation's capital.

It was getting dark, and the short winter day was ending as we reached Alexandria. We parked next to our destination, a house on a steep hill. Rear Admiral Burke, pulling on a cardigan, came out of the house to shake Auer's hand. After introductions, I also shook hands with him. Though nearly 80, he was tall and stood upright. Whether in Japan or the United States, naval officers always have good posture.

Auer and I stayed at Burke's house for about 4 hours. Although he had said he did not have much to offer on short notice, the dinner was very formal. At first, drinks were arranged on the bar set up on the porch next to the dining room, and the rear admiral personally offered us aperitifs. After some chatting with glass in hand, we moved to the dinner table, where we said grace, picked up our napkins, and began to eat. After the meal, dessert was served and then digestifs were offered. Through it all, Mrs. Burke took charge of everything, from cooking to laying the table. It is rare to be served such a formal dinner when invited to an American family's home. On this point, he was indeed an old-fashioned naval officer of some standing.

Over the meal, little by little, Rear Admiral Burke told me his memories of the Navy and Japan. In the summer of 1970, when he was working at the Pentagon, CNO Zumwalt summoned him and asked which post he would prefer: commander, US Naval Forces Japan, or commander, US Naval Forces Philippines. Rear Admiral Burke consulted with Admiral Arleigh Burke, then the director of Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies. Admiral Burke urged him to choose Japan. Although the rear admiral was willing to go to Japan, it was a difficult choice for his family.

His youngest son had just died from a brain tumor at the age of six while the rear admiral had been away, serving at sea. His wife wanted to stay in Washington, D.C., to quietly mourn the loss of her son; she was not ready to go to a country in the Far East where she had never been before. Being a military family, however, they had to follow orders. Only 4 days after being relieved of his previous post at the Pentagon, he hurriedly left for Japan.

As naval leadership had notified him even before he arrived at his new post, Burke's authority as commander, US Naval Forces Japan, was to be curtailed significantly under the soon-to-be implemented base reduction plan. It was impossible for him to be excited, as he was ordered to arrange the reduction of forces himself. Furthermore, not long after his arrival at his new post, the policy was reversed, and he was instructed to make the homeporting of a carrier in Yokosuka possible instead. "Frankly, that made me pretty angry," Rear Admiral Burke said.

War Memory

Though he did ask to go to Japan, Rear Admiral Burke might have had a shadow of a doubt in his heart. It was his memory of the war.

Julian Burke was born in 1918. He graduated from the Naval Academy in Annapolis in 1940, a year before the war broke out; he was assigned to USS *West Virginia*, a battleship commissioned in 1923. In March 1941 he was transferred to

USS *North Carolina*, the latest battleship still under construction in New York's Brooklyn Navy Yard. Nine months later, USS *West Virginia* was sunk by six torpedoes and two bombs in the IJN attack on Pearl Harbor. Burke's successor died on the ship. Rear Admiral Isaac C. Kidd, commander of Battleship Division One, also died on his flagship, USS *Arizona*; Kidd was the father of a friend of Burke's, a junior schoolmate at the Naval Academy. When he still served aboard USS *West Virginia*, Burke had asked to take 2 weeks' leave to see his girlfriend in New Orleans. Whereas the executive officer had turned down his request, Rear Admiral Kidd had allowed it; that kind admiral was dead. In addition, some of Burke's friends died aboard the battleship USS *Oklahoma*, which capsized in the attack.

In July 1942 the battleship USS *North Carolina* entered Pearl Harbor to rebuild the Pacific Fleet. On seeing the wreckage of sunken battleships in the harbor, Burke swore to seek revenge on the Japanese forces. He was also angry as he learned, after the war broke out, of the reports of Japanese forces torturing prisoners.

That autumn, as it was escorting a fleet of transports with Guadalcanal landing forces onboard, USS *North Carolina* was hit by a torpedo fired by a Japanese submarine. The carrier USS *Wasp*, which was accompanying the fleet, was sunk by the torpedo attack.

After returning to Pearl Harbor, Julian Burke became the executive officer and navigator of the submarine USS *Flying Fish* in July 1943. During the Pacific War, the US Navy's submarines rendered distinguished service. Japan lost merchant ships representing a total of roughly 8,430,000 tons, of which 57%—roughly 4,770,000 tons, or 1150 vessels—were lost to submarine attacks. With its sea lanes disrupted by enemy submarines, Japan was defeated. The IJN itself also lost more than 200 vessels to US submarine attacks, including a battleship, eight carriers, three heavy cruisers, nine light cruisers, 42 destroyers, and 20 submarines. However, the US Navy's sacrifice was similarly huge: according to Rear Admiral Burke, 52 submarines were sunk, with 3300 lives lost.

USS *Flying Fish*, with the future rear admiral onboard, was twice attacked by Japanese submarines and bombed by aircraft once, but fortunately, all missed their target. On one occasion, one of the six torpedoes the *Flying Fish* launched changed its course for some reason and headed straight back to the submarine, which narrowly escaped. The line between life and death was a very fine one. His submarine circumnavigated the vast Pacific, including the waters off Palau, Taiwan, Okinawa, the Philippines, and Indonesia, sinking a total of ten Japanese ships.

In July 1945 he was transferred to the submarine USS *Guardfish* and participated in *Operation Barney*, which penetrated the Sea of Japan through the Strait of Tsushima. Mines had been laid every 100 yards in the strait, and the 10-yard-wide submarines had to slip between them. A submarine could not survive if it struck a mine. Crews prayed hard to stay safe until they had passed through the strait. One of the nine US submarines that sneaked into the Sea of Japan never came back.

After the war, Burke mainly served on the US mainland. He had little contact with Japanese people outside of his visit to Yokosuka during the Vietnam War. Hence, his appointment as commander, US Naval Forces Japan, in 1970 was his first

opportunity to get to know Japan. There was no time to be sentimental—soon after his arrival, he had to deal with momentous issues such as the reduction of the forces on the Yokosuka base and the homeporting of the carrier USS *Midway* in Yokosuka.

In dealing with these issues, he frequently met with influential Japanese figures. The chief of maritime staff (CMS) at the time was Admiral Kazuomi Uchida. Burke often visited Uchida at the Defense Agency. Uchida was always cooperative and supported Burke's position. They played golf together. Uchida once disclosed that he had many painful memories from before and during the war, a feeling with which Burke concurred. Burke respected and liked Uchida.

He often met with Vice CMS Suteo Ishida and the Director General of the Operations and Plans Department Teiji Nakamura, as well. Burke's former classmate at the Naval War College in Newport, Admiral Takaichi Itaya, was then serving as the chairman of the Joint Staff Council. They were all naval officers of the same generation who had fought as enemies during the war. Although they did not say it, they must have had mixed feelings for one another.

Through Auer and Masuoka, Burke met Speaker Funada several times. Also, the former IJN Vice Admiral Zenshirō Hoshina, who was involved in the formation of the Coastal Safety Force in cooperation with Arleigh Burke, came to see him to discuss the issue of carrier deployment. "He was convinced that I was the son or brother of Arleigh Burke," Burke laughed. The two Burkes are, in fact, completely unrelated. However, the name of Burke had a magic effect of opening doors among the JMSDF personnel. Admiral Arleigh Burke himself visited Tokyo while the rear admiral was serving as commander, US Naval Forces Japan. Rear Admiral Julian Burke witnessed the gratitude and respect that JMSDF personnel showed to the old admiral.

All these experiences gradually changed Burke's perspective on Japan. "After I served in Japan, my views toward Japan underwent a big change," he confirmed, without going into detail. His wife, who was sitting next to him, smiled as if to agree. Initially reluctant to move there, the couple who had just lost a young son found that life in Japan was good enough to heal their trauma. In the end, Mrs. Burke, who had not wanted to go to Japan, did not want to leave.

Burke as a Southerner

In the living room of Julian Burke's house, there was a drawing depicting the Port of Alexandria as it appeared sometime around the early nineteenth century. While we were chatting after dinner, he noticed me looking at the drawing, and told me about it and his family. Alexandria had prospered as a port for shipping tobacco since long before it was ever decided to locate the capital of the federal government in the District of Columbia. Tobacco-laden ships sailed down the Potomac River to the Chesapeake Bay, then headed across the Atlantic Ocean bound for Europe. The Burke family had been bankers in the city for generations. Following Southern tradition, many in the family had served in the military. In the Civil War, they

naturally fought on the Confederate side. General Robert E. Lee, the supreme commander of Confederate forces, was a relative.

The Civil War tends to be perceived as a rebellion of the stubborn Southern States clinging to slavery, but Southerners don't think like that. Many people still believe that they stood up to defend the states' own rights, being fed up with the tyranny of the federal government taken over by the Northerners. It was a war that had to be fought.

Every Sunday, the Burke family has always gone to the church attended by the first US president, General George Washington. The rear admiral still served as an official at that church. Old families keep their bonds and maintain tradition, centered around their church. Alexandria has transformed into a commuter city for Washington, D.C., yet it retains traces of the aristocratic culture of the South. During his youth, Rear Admiral Burke had only one Catholic friend. Naturally, black people lived in an entirely different world. There was a clear distinction between the family you could interact with and the family you could not. That was the kind of place the South was.

"There is one thing in the United States that happened thanks to World War II," said Rear Admiral Burke, looking at the drawing. "The scars of the Civil War finally healed." There was large-scale migration as the military mobilization scheme was put in place. Northerners moved to the South, while Southerners moved to the areas around military bases in the North and the West. They remained there after the war.

As the Northerners and Southerners worked shoulder to shoulder and lived next to each other, the hostility and ill feelings were finally dispelled. Through the fight against the common enemies, Germany and Japan, the awareness of America as one came into being for the first time.

A major war had been fought within the United States, and it took almost 80 years to heal the scars, even though the two sides were from the same nation. It might take another 30 years of working hard together until the scars of the Japan-US war completely disappear.

Ebullient with food and drink, the old rear admiral stepped out of his house to send us off into the night. Before we got into the car, he stretched out his long arm to shake our hands; he spoke some parting words, his breath white in the air: "I'm too old. I'll leave the future to you." Through the rear window, I saw him wave farewell at the departing car, slowly go into the house, and close the door.

Admiral Holloway, Auer's Benefactor

Another admiral Auer introduced me to was former CNO James L. Holloway III. As a political advisor to the commander, US Naval Forces Japan, Auer was officially tasked with promoting closer cooperation between the US Navy and the JMSDF. This also reflected the firm intention of CNO Zumwalt, who valued the relationships with allied navies. In line with this policy, Auer routinely briefed US flag officers visiting Japan on the state of the Navy's relationship with the JMSDF. Auer

proposed that, in the short term, US naval officers should be sent to the JMSDF Command and Staff College, the institution for training JMSDF leaders; in the long term, a joint US Navy-JMSDF task force should be established and conduct joint operations.

Vice Admiral Holloway, then commander of the Seventh Fleet, showed the most positive reaction to the proposal. Holloway even told Auer to let him know if he could help, should Auer's proposal be implemented in the future.

Some 3 years later, while serving as the executive officer of the guided-missile destroyer USS *Parsons*, Auer learned that the Department of the Navy in Washington, D.C. had decided to send an officer to the JMSDF Command and Staff College. It turned out that the officer chosen was an aviator who knew nothing about Japan. Apparently, he was supposed to be able to get along in Japan after a year-long language course. Dissatisfied, Auer wrote a private letter to Admiral Holloway, who had become the CNO, pointing out that it would be wrong to send an officer who had never been to Japan before to the college, and that a year-long language course was not sufficient to understand Japan.

Less than 10 days later, he got a reply. "I've discussed the matter with the chief of naval personnel. We've agreed that you should be chosen to be sent to the staff college. So, find a suitable language school and inform the Bureau of Naval Personnel, which will issue orders accordingly." Admiral Holloway was surprisingly understanding.

Hence, Auer studied Japanese at the Jesuit Language School in Kamakura from September 1975 to December 1976. Then he studied for a year at the JMSDF Command and Staff College, the first student that the US Navy sent to the college. Auer humbly claims that his Japanese did not reach the level the US Navy and the JMSDF expected, as he was busy dating an American girl (his future wife, Judy) while he was studying at the language school. All the same, Auer's connection with the JMSDF was further deepened thanks to his study abroad. In this way, Admiral Holloway, along with Rear Admiral Julian Burke, was a benefactor to Auer.

Annapolis in the Snow

On December 9, 1995, 2 days after meeting Rear Admiral Julian Burke, I visited Admiral Holloway at his house. Auer had contacted him in advance, so when I called him directly to explain the purpose of the visit, he readily accepted. It takes about an hour to drive from Washington to Annapolis. It had been snowing since the morning that day, so I left early from the friend's house where I was staying. In one hand, I held the map that Admiral Holloway had sent to me by post. As soon as the falling snow touched the front windshield, it streaked across the glass. Driving down the highway, I realized that the gas tank was almost empty. I should have fueled up in the city, but now it was too late. Unfortunately, there seemed to be no service stations along the highway, so taking a risk, I decided to exit the highway and started driving on local roads. I found myself in the middle of a snowy wooded area, with no gas

station or even a house in sight. Eventually I happened upon an emergency hospital in the woods where I was able to ask for directions to a gas station. After filling the tank, I got back on the highway.

Turning off the freeway at the Annapolis exit, I drove on a state highway with the map in my hand, checking street names. I took a left turn and slowly drove down a private road in the woods. The trees stood leafless as if they had been thrust naked into a snowy white world. In this silent world where no one could be seen, I suddenly noticed a large Land Rover parked by the side of the road. As I passed the car, wondering why it was parked there, the driver rolled down the window to ask, "Are you Mr. Agawa?"

"Yes, that's me, sir," I replied.

"I'm Holloway. Nice to meet you. The road is slippery, so it's dangerous for you to drive your own car downhill from here. Why don't you park your car here, and come with me in mine?" It turned out that the admiral himself, concerned that my car would slide in the deep snow, was waiting for me at the top of the hill. And with those few words, he drove me down the hill to his home.

Whether Japanese or American, naval officers, regardless of rank, tend to prepare for any contingency, even when inviting guests to their homes. I don't know how long he waited there for me. When I looked at my watch, it was 10 o'clock in the morning, exactly as we had agreed. I was secretly relieved, thinking how fortunate it was that I had decided to leave Washington early and that refueling had not taken me any more time.

Admiral Holloway's house was situated in a quiet wood; the window of the large living room had a view of the Chesapeake Bay below. A large oil painting of the carrier USS *Enterprise* hung on the living room wall. After removing my coat, I exchanged greetings with the admiral once again. Though not as tall as Julian Burke, he looked masculine and youthful; he did not look like a man in his late seventies. The admiral talked to me one-on-one for 4 hours; we shared lunch between interviews.

The Formidable Imperial Japanese Navy

Admiral Holloway was born in 1922 in Charleston, South Carolina. He came from a military family: his father was an admiral, his maternal grandfather a general. One of his brothers graduated from the Military Academy at West Point, and a cousin joined the Navy. His father-in-law was also an admiral. The United States is a democratic country, yet it is not rare to find families that have been in the military for generations. The Navy, in particular, had an aristocratic atmosphere of sorts, up to a point. It was natural in such an environment that a boy who had grown up being taught by his father that Japan was the potential enemy of the United States would aspire to join the Navy.

As he had hoped, he entered the Naval Academy in Annapolis in 1939. He was out with his future wife on December 7, 1941, and so learned of the Japanese attack

on Pearl Harbor when he returned to the gates of the academy. He did not know where Pearl Harbor was, in fact. His first thought on hearing the news was, "Great! Japan is completely beaten." Back then, most Americans thought Japan was just a country that made cheap, low-quality goods. *If the Japs attack the US Pacific Fleet in Hawaii with outdated biplanes, they'll easily be shot down, one by one*, he thought. As the details came out, however, the gravity of the situation became clear. His fiancée's father, who was serving in the Bureau of Ships in the Department of the Navy in Washington, D.C., told him that they were "badly beaten." Discovering the truth, Holloway and other midshipmen thought: *The Japanese Navy has sound skills. The Japanese launched a successful surprise attack, just as we were taught in the Naval Academy. They would make a formidable enemy.*

President Franklin D. Roosevelt thoroughly condemned the attack on Pearl Harbor as a sneak attack, a view many Americans shared. But Admiral Holloway says this was just propaganda to whip up the nation's appetite for war. According to him, US sailors even came to have a kind of respect for the IJN's competence.

He graduated from the Naval Academy in June 1942; his graduation was moved up by a year due to the outbreak of the war. The war situation was dire. One day, the surviving crewmembers of cruisers that had been sunk in the southern Pacific returned to Washington, D.C. They were all in a state of shock. A strict news blackout was imposed, and the general public was not informed that US naval ships had been sunk. The US Navy was unable to prevail against the IJN for a long while, with only a handful of commanders achieving remarkable results. Among those were Captain Arleigh Burke and Captain Frederick Moosbrugger, who led destroyer forces in the Solomon Sea.

Admiral Holloway says that, in the end, the US Navy was able to win the war due to the massive gap in resources; without that, Japan would have won. Phrases like "Little Jap" were only propaganda for noncombatants, and most sailors thought highly of the ability of the IJN, their enemy.

After graduating from the Naval Academy and being commissioned as an ensign, Holloway first joined the destroyer USS *Ringgold*, which was operating in the Atlantic and North African waters. In December 1942 he was transferred to the destroyer USS *Bennion* in Boston, which moved to the Pacific via the Panama Canal and fought in Saipan, Palau, and Tinian for 2 years. The ship rendered the most distinguished service on October 25, 1944, during the Battle of Surigao Strait, which was fought coincident to the Leyte landing operation in the Philippines. USS *Bennion* was in the Seventh Fleet, which was led by Rear Admiral Jesse B. Oldendorf.

After assisting with the landing by offering bombardment, Seventh Fleet vessels received notification of the approaching enemy fleet, so they moved to the exit of the strait to wait. US forces launched a frontal attack on Vice Admiral Shōji Nishimura's Third Group (part of the First Raid Force,[1] dubbed the "Southern Force" by the Americans) that was heading north; a major torpedo and gunnery battle ensued at

[1] *Daiichi Yūgeki Butai.*

dawn on October 25. US torpedo boats attacked the Japanese vessels, after which destroyer squadrons on both sides of the strait headed south in columns, launching torpedo attacks in turn. At that moment, Japanese and US forces began firing simultaneously. USS *Bennion* also launched five torpedoes toward the battleship HIJMS *Yamashiro* while turning around, and then withdrew northward at full speed. As it was on its way north, *Bennion* sighted an enemy ship firing off the starboard bow, so it launched its remaining five torpedoes at that vessel.

Changing course again, USS *Bennion* returned to the strait at daybreak where it found the surface of the sea covered with oil, remnants of sunken ships, as well as many Japanese survivors. USS *Bennion* finished off the damaged destroyer HIJMS *Asagumo*, which was attempting to escape southward. Almost the entire Japanese fleet was lost in this battle, including Nishimura's flagship HIJMS *Yamashiro* and another battleship, HIJMS *Fusō*. And thus ended the most dramatic battle at sea for the young lieutenant Holloway. A week later, Holloway left the destroyer to return home for aviator training and went on to witness the end of the war.

Despite his experience on the battlefield, Admiral Holloway says he never felt hatred toward the Japanese enemy. Instead, he was strongly impressed that the Japanese Navy was an honorable adversary. His friends were killed at Pearl Harbor, and a roommate at the Naval Academy lost his life at sea. However, his view was that it could not be helped that so many died in war. One of his cousins was captured by the Japanese forces in Corregidor and underwent the Bataan Death March, later surprising those around him by not entertaining hatred after the war. "We lost the battle. The Japanese were stern, but they were also stern toward their own people," he said. A friend who was captured in Vietnam much later was not trapped in hatred for long, either. Holloway says this is a characteristic of armed forces personnel. He does know an admiral who hated the Japanese until the day he died, but such cases were rare.

During the Battle of Surigao Strait, a sailor under his command had asked permission to shoot the Japanese sailors floating at sea. "No," Holloway replied. "But they shot my friend Robbie," the sailor insisted; he wanted to take revenge on the Japanese survivors for the severe wounds his fellow sailor had suffered by enemy bombardment while assisting the landing operation. Nonetheless, Holloway did not allow it.

Encounters with Japan

Holloway first visited Japan in the fall of 1951. He was serving as a jet fighter pilot based on the carrier USS *Valley Forge* when it entered Yokosuka port. The purpose of the call was to install a reinforced net to catch jet fighters as they landed on the flight deck. It was a cold, dark day. Watching the Japanese working in the dock, Holloway felt that it was strange that they had once been the enemy. The work performed by the Yokosuka Ship Repair Facility was excellent and beyond reproach. The workers were diligent, their work thorough. Holloway respected the Japanese.

During the Korean War, pilots of carrier-launched jets could take 10 days' leave after every 30-day period of flying combat missions. Holloway was an outstanding aviator, it appears. He was the model for the main character of a film about a pilot who bombed a dam in North Korea. He spent most of his holidays in Japan and gradually became attached to the country. In 1958, when a crisis arose over the Kinmen and the Matsu islands (Second Taiwan Strait Crisis), he was dispatched to the Taiwan Strait as commander of the A-4 Skyhawk carrier-based fighter squadron on the carrier USS *Essex*, and visited Japan on the way home. Later, he became the commanding officer of the nuclear-powered carrier USS *Enterprise* in 1965 and served in operations off Vietnam. When USS *Enterprise* entered Sasebo port in 1968 and met the intense opposition to the first visit there by a nuclear-powered carrier amid the general anti-war sentiment of the times, Holloway coordinated the US Navy's response from the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations in Washington, D.C. He received the JMSDF's full cooperation. He was confident of the nuclear reactor's safety but was relieved when the port call ended without problems.

In May 1972 Holloway returned to Yokosuka to assume the position of commander, US Seventh Fleet. Soon he flew south, piloting an A-4 Skyhawk himself to land on a carrier, and then performed the change of command ceremony in the Gulf of Tonkin aboard the flagship USS *Oklahoma City*, which was bombarding North Vietnam. When he came back to Yokosuka a month later, he called on CMS Suteo Ishida. Although he was often at sea because of the ongoing Vietnam War, he endeavored to meet the JMSDF leaders while he was in Japan. He visited the JMSDF ships and was impressed with their thorough training. The Seventh Fleet and the JMSDF conducted combined antisubmarine warfare exercises that also involved aircraft.

Holloway, the Chief of Naval Operations

After these assignments, Admiral Holloway assumed office as the 20th CNO in July 1974. Like his predecessor, Admiral Zumwalt, Holloway valued the relationship with the JMSDF. Admiral Teiji Nakamura was the CMS at the time. Nakamura invited Holloway to Japan, and in turn, Holloway invited Nakamura to the United States; during these visits the two naval leaders would exchange opinions on various matters. Holloway told Nakamura: "The pressure to reduce the US defense budget will continue. The US Navy can't secure safety in the Far East by itself. So, the US Navy and the JMSDF should divide strategic roles in the future. The Seventh Fleet will protect Japan from the Soviet Tupolev Tu-22M [NATO codename "Backfire"] strategic bombers. Meanwhile, the JMSDF should monitor the three straits—Sōya, Tsugaru, and Tsushima—and prevent the passage of the Soviet Navy. Also, as a country completely dependent on oil imports from the Middle East, Japan should protect the approximately 1000 miles of sea lanes by itself. As the *Mayaguez*

Incident[2] revealed, a small country could effectively disrupt Japanese commercial activities by interfering with its sea lanes."

To this, Nakamura replied: "I agree with you entirely, but to do that, the JMSDF must first obtain the operational capability to protect the sea lanes." Unfortunately, the JMSDF at the time did not have this strength.

These were informal, not official, exchanges, of course. However, the division of missions and roles between the JMSDF and the US Navy that was put into practice during the Reagan administration was almost exactly as they had discussed. More than 5 years before its actual implementation, Holloway and Nakamura had been discussing the future path of the Japanese and US maritime forces.

The two men were able to discuss anything frankly, and never shared what they talked about with others. Also, Nakamura refrained from asking delicate questions that Holloway would have found difficult to answer. Holloway had complete trust in him.

"How were you able to build such a relationship of mutual trust?" I asked Holloway over a meal at a coastal restaurant in Annapolis. He thought for a bit before he answered:

> *I believe it was because Admiral Nakamura was an excellent leader. He was very intelligent, and he thought just like me, so there was no need to talk much. It wasn't like that with other countries or other leaders.*
>
> *The JMSDF and the US Navy share the tradition inherited from the Royal Navy. The JMSDF is not legally a navy, but it is a first-class navy in all ways, including skillfulness, professionalism, sense of humor, dignity, finesse. When faced with the same situation, they are trained to think and deal with it in the same way as us. Without much talk, we can work together. In that sense, they were very easy to work with.*

Before I took my leave, I asked him: "Is there a deep relationship of mutual trust between the JMSDF leaders and the US Navy leaders today, 20 years later, just like the one that existed between you and Nakamura?" Holloway was absorbed in thought for a moment as he drove.

> *Hmm, I'm not sure. Naturally, it's partly an individual matter, so I can't make a sweeping observation. But our juniors don't appear to see each other as often as we did. They're too busy with other duties. My concern is that the US Navy has become a bit too bureaucratic. However, in any case, I believe that the leaders of the JMSDF and the US Navy will maintain a relationship of strong mutual trust. Of course, they need to make an effort.*

Toward the end of Admiral Holloway's term as CNO, Jimmy Carter had become the new president. The Carter administration set forth a new plan to reduce the size of US forces overseas. However, it had to retract plans to withdraw US forces stationed in South Korea in the face of strong opposition from Seoul and Tokyo, but it did not end there. Around the same time, there was a policy discussion led by Secretary of Defense Harold Brown to reduce the size of the fleet, according to Holloway, even

[2] The US container ship *Mayaguez* was captured at sea by the Khmer Rouge, the armed wing of the Communist Party of Kampuchea (Cambodia), in May 1975. It prompted a US Marine rescue operation that became the last official battle of the Vietnam War.

though the president had served in the Navy. Holloway says that Brown tended to neglect the importance of naval power, as he had previously served as the secretary of the Air Force. Feeling alarmed, Holloway frankly stated his opinion when he was asked to testify as CNO in the Senate Committee on Armed Services. Although CNOs, as heads of uniformed personnel, must follow orders issued by the civilian secretaries of defense and the Navy, they are allowed to state their opinion directly to the Congress and the president if asked. That is an American tradition.

Holloway expressed his thoughts thus: "If the fleet size is reduced as planned, the US Navy can't fight two wars in the Atlantic and the Pacific at the same time. Hence, it can't fulfill its duty to defend Japan. If the United States were to demand that Japan support and cooperate with the US forces in case of a Soviet attack, Japan would naturally expect the United States to defend Japan. Without such assurances, the US-Japan Security Treaty is meaningless for Japan. An alliance can't be unilateral."

Following Admiral Holloway's testimony, Secretary of Defense Brown visited Japan. After listening to the Japanese opinion, the Carter administration's plan to reduce the size of the Pacific Fleet was also retracted. As the first Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation was agreed upon in 1978, Admiral Holloway may have been a secret contributor with distinguished service in supporting the Japan-US security arrangements.

Two Naval Academies

After saying my goodbyes, I got out of Admiral Holloway's car and back into my own; on my drive back to Washington, I decided to stop by Annapolis. I cannot remember how many times I have visited the Naval Academy since my first visit as a foreign exchange student at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. On the Naval Academy's expansive campus, which, like Etajima's, faces the sea, there are many historic buildings lined up in orderly rows. In an ice-skating rink in the gymnasium, young midshipmen were playing ice hockey, throwing their weight against each other furiously as they vied for the puck. Despite the cold air emanating from the ice rink, one felt the heat of the competition.

Young ensigns like Julian Burke and James Holloway had graduated from this academy and fought in the Pacific. Many of them never came back. Likewise, the ensigns of the IJN, including Kazuomi Uchida and Teiji Nakamura, graduated from Etajima and set sail for overseas training cruises and for the battlefields. Many of them, too, never set foot in their home country again.

Those who survived the war, carrying on the spirit of those who lost their lives, have nurtured a friendship between Japan and the United States that spans the Pacific. Nowadays, JMSDF senior officers teach US Naval midshipmen in Annapolis as exchange instructors, while US naval officers likewise teach JMSDF officer candidates in Etajima. This tradition must be cherished. These were my thoughts as I departed Annapolis (Fig. 7.1).

Fig. 7.1 Japanese and US navy midshipmen pose for a photo on a Japanese destroyer's flight deck during a cadet exchange event. (Photo credit: JMSDF)

Chapter 8
A Dogwood in Etajima, a Cherry Tree in Annapolis

Auer Leaves His Ship

James Auer was promoted to commander while he was studying at the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) Command and Staff College. In January 1978 he became the commanding officer of USS *Francis Hammond*, a frigate in the US Navy's Seventh Fleet, homeported in Yokosuka. The commanding officer of a ship is a post everyone aspires to, whether in the US Navy or the JMSDF. No matter how high the rank an officer attains in his or her navy career, there is no match for the sense of fulfillment derived from being in command of a ship. *As long as I'm in the navy, I'd like to be a commanding officer one day*, is something everyone thinks. Auer was happy and proud to have fulfilled his dream. Aside from submariners and aviators, only one in three US Navy officers could command a ship in those days.

After he completed his commanding officer tour in January 1979, Auer contemplated his future career. Based on his past assignments, his next job could be as a staff member in the Pacific Fleet Command or the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. The duties of both are central to naval operations. The deputy CINCPACFLT at the time, Admiral Carlisle A. H. Trost (who would later become CNO), had known Auer in his previous position and asked him to join his staff. However, Auer wanted to continue to work on the relationship with Japan if possible.

Around this time, Michael Armacost (the future US ambassador to Japan) was serving as deputy assistant secretary of defense in charge of East Asia and the Pacific in Washington, D.C. Auer had met Armacost, then Ambassador Ingersoll's special assistant, at the weekly meetings hosted by the political section of the US Embassy in Tokyo; Auer attended these meetings as a political advisor to the commander, US Naval Forces Japan, as mentioned previously. Before leaving Tokyo, the academic-turned-diplomat cordially remarked to Auer, "I'm hoping to work in the Pentagon in the future. If that happens and you're willing to work with me, just let me know."

N. Agawa, *Friendship Across the Seas*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-2997-9_8

Remembering the offer, Auer called Armacost in Washington, D.C. to explain his situation and to express his desire to work on Japan-US security issues at the Pentagon. Armacost welcomed this, and so Auer flew to Washington after obtaining approval from the Navy Department's Bureau of Naval Personnel. In April 1979 he became the head of the Japan desk, the special assistant for Japan in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. If Auer had left his ship a little later, he could not have obtained the post, because Armacost would already have left his position. Auer, a sailor at heart, felt sad about leaving the sea. Instead, he was able to work on worthwhile assignments directly dealing with the Japan-US alliance at the Pentagon for his last decade or so as a public servant.

Encounter with Armitage

Auer returned to Washington and started working at the Pentagon during the Carter administration. The Office of International Security Affairs, which was under the authority of Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, was headed by an assistant secretary of defense. According to Auer, the office was known for being the secretary of defense's mini-State Department. The convergence of political and military concerns made the office powerful in terms of both its budget and its authority. Paul H. Nitze was in charge of the office during Lyndon Johnson's presidency; famous for his role in US-Soviet arms limitation talks, Nitze was allegedly more influential than Secretary of State Dean Rusk. Auer initially worked in the office under Deputy Assistant Secretary Armacost.

The office became even more powerful when Ronald Reagan assumed the presidency in January 1981. Unlike the Carter administration, which had had strained relations with the Pentagon, the Reagan administration made national security issues a priority. After some twists and turns, a solid new East Asia policy team was in place by 1983, with Caspar W. Weinberger as the secretary of defense, Richard L. Armitage as assistant secretary of defense for International Security Affairs,[1] and James Auer as the director of Japanese affairs. As an aside, Colin L. Powell, a senior military assistant to Secretary Weinberger around that time, was a friend of Armitage. He was to become the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and later the secretary of state in the George W. Bush administration. In addition, General Powell's son, Michael, once worked under Auer while serving as an active-duty army officer.

Armitage was formerly a naval officer who had graduated from the Naval Academy in 1967, when the United States was struggling with its involvement in the Vietnam War. Armitage volunteered and engaged in dangerous operations during that conflict. When the Paris Peace Accords were concluded in January

[1] Served as deputy assistant secretary of defense for East Asia and Pacific Affairs from 1981 to 1983.

1973, he quit the Navy in protest, upset that the country was ending its involvement in the war without seeing it through to its conclusion. Nonetheless, he stayed on in Vietnam as a civilian advisor in the US defense attaché's office in Saigon, and took part in special missions. There were unconfirmed rumors that he was the model for Rambo, the fictional movie character played by Sylvester Stallone.

Armitage returned to Washington. However, when the North Vietnamese forces approached Saigon in April 1975, the Department of Defense asked him to help get South Vietnamese naval assets and personnel out of the country. Having fought in Vietnam for 6 years, he could not help but want to see things through to the very end. He returned to the war-torn country aboard the last regular flight of Pan American World Airways and entered Saigon just before its fall. He helicoptered into Bien Hoa Air Base on the outskirts of Saigon, which was surrounded by North Vietnamese forces, and destroyed devices and equipment on the base to protect secrets. Together with 30 South Vietnamese Air Force personnel who had been left behind, he barely escaped alive in the face of continuous bombardment. Then he led the South Vietnamese Navy vessels and personnel, as well as thousands of their family members, to the Philippines, arriving unhurt after an 8-day journey. Like Auer, Armitage belongs to the Vietnam War generation.

Later, Armitage returned to Washington, D.C. and worked as an aide to Senator Robert "Bob" Dole. He took part in Reagan's presidential campaign and was invited to join the administration. As a special presidential envoy, he worked on solutions to crises and conflicts, traveling all over the world. Not only did he negotiate in person and encourage democratization with Philippines dictator Ferdinand Marcos and Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega, but he also negotiated with representatives of the Mujahideen, and afterward sat together at the table sharing a meal of mutton with the knife-brandishing Afghan rebels. He was a very courageous expert on national security and diplomatic issues. Despite his tough, masculine image, however, he was very kind, and took many foster children of different races into his home.[2]

When Armitage was assistant secretary of defense, a group of Japanese Diet members came to see him at the Pentagon. Showing up a little late, Armitage asked for their understanding at the start of the meeting, saying that he might not be able to give exact answers because he had not gotten any sleep the night before. He explained that he had been up all night, taking care of one of his foster children who had a high fever. He also mentioned his feeling of gratitude that he was raising the child in the United States, where anyone could succeed, in spite of any challenges that might be presented by their race. He added that he had said to the boy, "So let's bring this fever down and go for it." Upon hearing Armitage's remarks, a Japan Socialist Party member of the Diet said, "I wanted to complain to you about the

[2] Richard Armitage and his wife have eight children, six of whom they adopted. They also fostered at least 40 other children. See "Now here's a powerful figure," *Los Angeles Times*, February 10, 2003.

Reagan administration's aggressive security policy today. But after hearing your story, I can't say anything anymore."

It was much easier for Auer to fulfill his duties under Armitage, who was slightly younger than Auer, yet also from the navy. Not only was Armitage a brave warrior who had fought in Vietnam, but he was also exceptionally intelligent and his judgment unerring. Auer calls him a "closet intellectual." Although he initially appeared to be wary of Auer, who had stayed on from the Carter administration, he came to trust him fully after they had worked together awhile. Auer brought Armitage proposals on policies toward Japan. Armitage listened to them carefully, and if he concurred, he would convey them to Secretary Weinberger in person, and then carry them out.

The system seems to have functioned very well. In 1983, as Auer neared his retirement from the Navy as a commander, as required by regulations, Weinberger invited Auer into his room to tell him that he and President Reagan thought it was a pity that Auer had to retire, and he asked him to stay in the Department of Defense after retiring from the Navy, if possible. This offer was apparently based on Armitage's suggestion, but Armitage insisted that it had been the secretary's idea.

The new offer was a political appointment that required White House approval. After the necessary documentation was submitted, the White House initially refused to approve it. Republican hardliners toward Japan were opposed to it, claiming that Auer was too close to Japan and that he was trying to make Armitage a Japan sympathizer. However, the decision was overturned after strenuous protests from Weinberger and Armitage. Needless to say, Auer's trust in the two deepened.

And so, Auer continued to carry out the duties of the director of Japanese affairs as a civilian until August 1988. Even after his move to Vanderbilt University, Auer's connection with Armitage stayed strong.

Auer as Director of Japanese Affairs

For the Japanese officials in charge of defense policy, especially the JMSDF personnel, the decade that Auer worked in the Department of Defense was a very happy period: the US Navy commander who had been their colleague in Yokosuka until quite recently was at the center of policymaking in the Pentagon. The person who knew Auer best at the time would be Rear Admiral Sumihiko Kawamura (ret.) who served as a defense attaché in Washington, D.C. from 1981 to 1984. A P-3C antisubmarine patrol aircraft pilot born into a naval family from the Satsuma area,[3] Kawamura was a graduate of the National Defense Academy of Japan,[4] fourth class

[3] The Satsuma domain (*han*) was one of the most powerful domains in the Meiji oligarchy. While another powerful domain, Chōshū, was influential in the army, Satsuma exerted influence over the navy.

[4] *Bōei Daigakkō.*

(Class of 1960). He had known Auer since 1971. He also served as a JMSDF liaison officer on the US Navy's Yokosuka base when Auer was the executive officer of the guided-missile destroyer USS *Parsons*. He had more experience than anybody else with joint operations between the JMSDF and the US Navy.

After his transfer to Washington, Kawamura would leave the defense attaché's office in the Watergate building and cross the Potomac River to visit Auer at the Pentagon nearly every day. There was no need to make an appointment beforehand. Any necessary information was given. It was the same with the naval bureaus in the Pentagon: they welcomed Kawamura on every visit. When he showed up, his counterparts offered help without being asked. Other defense attachés sent from the JGSDF and the JASDF did not enjoy the same privilege; they had to make an appointment every time. The relationship between the US Navy and the JMSDF was very close and special.

Auer used the connections he had established during his stay in Japan to the fullest. Whenever he had a query to be confirmed or needed to get a feel for something regarding the JMSDF, he would call his close friend since his time in Yokosuka, Hideo Kimura. Kimura would relay Auer's query to former Chiefs of Maritime Staff (CMS) Kazuomi Uchida or Teiji Nakamura. Then they would contact the JMSDF leadership, including then CMS Ryōhei Ōga. There were many other unofficial negotiation channels, and they functioned very effectively. Japan-US defense cooperation in the 1980s went well, thanks to those personal relationships of mutual trust between policymakers in Japan and the United States.

The "Nakamura Lines"

Auer worked in the Department of Defense, needless to say, for the American national interest. He focused on strengthening security relations with Japan, in accordance both with his past career and the character of his current post. In particular, he made every effort to develop a cooperative system with the JMSDF. His first proposal was to let the JMSDF defend sea lines of communication (SLOC) by themselves.

The JMSDF's taking over Japan's own sea lane defense would be very beneficial for the United States. US Naval forces that were no longer needed in the Western Pacific could be deployed elsewhere—a division of areas of responsibility between Japan and the United States, so to speak. The JMSDF would monitor the activities of Soviet submarines day and night in the neighboring waters, with a focus on sea lanes stretching from the Japanese archipelago to the south, as well as the Sōya, Tsugaru, and Tsushima straits. The US Navy would defend sea lanes in the Southeastern Pacific and the Indian Ocean that Japan could not defend by itself and, if necessary, would attack the Soviets with carrier strike groups.

However, some officials within the US government, especially within the Department of State, took a dim view of Japan's increasing its military presence. They argued that Japan should not be asked to occupy those roles because postwar Japan

had a strong aversion to everything military. Others were wary of Japan's becoming a military power again. In response to these criticisms, Auer argued: "To deter Soviet military power, we should trust Japan and ask for its cooperation. The United States needs its help. Moreover, Japan has the financial capability to procure the necessary equipment for sea lane defense. If Japan cannot be trusted or asked to cooperate, our alliance is useless."

Sea lane defense had been a long-held aspiration of the JMSDF, anyway—or rather, it was arguably the fundamental reason for its foundation. If defending the homeland had been the Japan Self-Defense Force's only role, the sea could have been left to the Maritime Safety Agency, which was focused on coastal defense.

Auer remembers well what Professor Masataka Kōsaka of Kyoto University told him when Auer was researching the foundation of the JMSDF in Japan. "I don't understand very well what the JMSDF's mission is. If Japan were to adopt an exclusively defensive security policy, it wouldn't need the JMSDF. What is the objective of the JMSDF?" Auer viewed Professor Kōsaka's query as being fundamental to the JMSDF's raison d'être.

Of course, the JMSDF, in achieving its mission to defend Japan from the sea, did not want to be "exclusively defensive,"[5] staying strictly within Japan's territorial waters and using minimum necessary force only if and when Japan was attacked, or its territory was invaded. Instead, the JMSDF hoped to sail into the vast Pacific and defend the SLOC of the maritime power that Japan was. JMSDF leaders called this a yearning for a "blue water" navy—one that sails across the ocean. However, this was an almost impossible dream for the JMSDF in its early days, bereft of the necessary budget or vessels. Even within the Defense Agency, some were opposed to the possibility of JMSDF activities outside territorial waters, including Osamu Kaihara, who later served as the secretary general of the National Defense Council.[6] Nevertheless, JMSDF uniformed personnel trained hard day and night, dreaming of building a blue water navy one day.

During his time at the JMSDF Command and Staff College, Auer saw a large map with bold lines on the wall. The instructors and students called the markings the "Nakamura lines." One line stretched from Osaka Bay along the Nansei Islands to the Bashi Channel between Taiwan and the Philippines; the other stretched from Tokyo Bay to the north of Guam via Iwo Jima. These lines, drawn by CMS Teiji Nakamura, delineated the SLOC to be defended by the JMSDF. The two lines, each representing approximately 1000 nautical miles, became the origin of the 1000-Mile Sea Lane Defense Policy. The sea lanes beyond that—between the Bashi Channel and the Persian Gulf, and between Guam and the North American continent, for example—were tacitly assumed to be within the US Navy's command of the sea. While Nakamura says there are no such lines named after him, Auer recalls hearing Nakamura talk about such a JMSDF defense policy often.

[5] *senshu bōei.*

[6] *Kokubō Kaigi.*

"Roles and Missions" Sharing

Without a doubt, Auer's proposal reflected a long-standing aspiration of the JMSDF. Having conducted research on the formation of the JMSDF and studied at the JMSDF Command and Staff College, Auer restructured the outcome of his research in light of US national interests and suggested that it be presented to the Japanese side as an American request. Based on Auer's suggestion, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Armacost asked Japan to defend the North Pacific in working-level discussions on Japan-US security issues as early as 1979.

Soon after becoming deputy assistant secretary of defense, Armitage visited Japan unofficially with Auer in February 1981, to explore the proper direction for US security policy regarding Japan. He was the first senior official to visit Japan after Reagan's inauguration. *I want to set out a new policy, somewhat different from the Carter administration's*, he thought. Armitage proactively met and exchanged opinions with leading Japanese figures, including Minoru Tanba, director of the Japan-US Security Treaty Division in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Hisahiko Okazaki, counselor for International Relations within the Defense Agency; Motoo Shiina, the deputy chairman of the LDP's Policy Research Council; and Auer's friend Hideo Kimura. The idea of sharing roles and missions between the Japanese and US Naval forces came up for the first time on this occasion. The JMSDF and the US Navy would share roles and missions, essentially forming a naval force. They would deal with the Soviet threat jointly, with the JMSDF conducting antisubmarine operations and minesweeping, while the US Navy provided offensive capabilities, with a focus on the carrier strike groups.

Hideo Kimura, who claims he was the first to explain the idea to Armitage, calls this the Uchida Doctrine. Considering the international environment in which postwar Japan was placed and analyzing the role of the blue water navy that JMSDF leadership had contemplated since the days of CMS Uchida, it was the logical conclusion, Kimura says. He says CMS Teiji Nakamura once commented that, while he understood the logic of merging Japanese and US maritime forces into one, he found it emotionally difficult to accept. After all, they had worked hard to develop the JMSDF to one day become an independent, full-scale navy. Having known the IJN in its glory, the JMSDF leaders felt that they wanted to do everything by themselves, but it was neither wise nor possible to pursue that option.

According to Auer, General Alexander Haig, selected as the Reagan administration's first secretary of state, first used the term "roles and missions." Keeping in mind that the Carter administration publicly criticized Japan for its purchase of Iranian oil and inadequate defense budget, he avoided openly criticizing allies under the new Reagan administration. Instead, he stated his intention to encourage a frank exchange of opinions, in closed meetings, on their respective roles and missions regarding security issues.

On learning this, Armitage and Auer wrote a memo on the roles and missions shared by Japan and the United States and submitted it to Secretary of Defense Weinberger. The memo stated that Japan and the United States should designate sea

areas and airspace which each would be primarily responsible for defending, determine their respective roles and missions, and provide military technology to each other as much as possible. Around the same time, US Ambassador to Japan Michael "Mike" Mansfield, who had agreed to remain in his position under the Reagan administration, sent a message to President Reagan, recommending that he announce his policy toward Japan on security and trade issues as soon as possible. Following this advice, the president requested that the relevant departments make policy recommendations, and the Auer-Armitage memo on security issues was officially adopted as the Reagan administration's policy.

Sea Lane Defense

In March 1981 Defense Secretary Weinberger officially communicated this policy to Foreign Minister Masayoshi Itō, who was visiting the Pentagon, and requested Japan's cooperation. He stated, "Soviet naval forces are operating actively in the northwestern Pacific area west of Guam and north of the Philippines. We want Japan to make a defense effort as a member of the West. In particular, we would like Japan to enhance its antisubmarine and air defense capabilities, especially antisubmarine capability against Soviet submarines."

The foreign minister's response was ambiguous. After listening to the foreign ministry official who accompanied him whispering in his ear, the minister answered carefully that it might be constitutionally tricky to implement the proposal, as it could touch on the issue of Japan's right to collective self-defense, and that he would reply "in due course" after returning to Japan and examining the issue. After the meeting, Weinberger asked how long "in due course" means in Japanese; Auer answered that it could mean anything from tomorrow to a hundred years later.

The situation changed that May, when Prime Minister Zenkō Suzuki[7] visited Washington, D.C. In his joint communiqué with President Reagan, Suzuki used the phrase "the alliance between the United States and Japan" for the first time, and officially stated that "[President Reagan and Prime Minister Suzuki] acknowledged the desirability of an appropriate division of roles and missions between Japan and the United States." Moreover, after his speech at the National Press Club, the prime minister specified the geographic area of Japan's maritime operations in his reply to a reporter's question, saying, in essence, "Japan aims to defend its surrounding waters to a distance of several hundred miles, and regarding its sea lanes, out to about a thousand nautical miles."

According to Hisahiko Okazaki, who was working in the Defense Agency at the time, the prime minister's remark did not contain anything particularly noteworthy, as it was a compilation of parliamentary statements that Okazaki and others had previously made. However, no previous statement had gone as far as this one did.

[7] Successor to Prime Minister Masayoshi Ōhira, who had passed away the previous year.

Armitage, Auer, and the rest of the Japanese Affairs team of the department of defense were surprised and delighted. They interpreted this as Japan's pledge to fulfill Secretary of Defense Weinberger's request to Minister of Foreign Affairs Itō. *Japan's prime minister can speak rather frankly*, they thought.

However, it seems Prime Minister Suzuki himself was to be the most surprised. Finishing his first meeting with President Reagan without a hitch, he casually picked up Japanese newspapers in Alaska on his return journey only to find articles playing up his pledge to defend 1000-mile sea lanes. The prime minister had been completely unaware of the significance of his remarks. He insisted that his statement to the press had just been a reading of a document written by bureaucrats. He claimed that, during his meeting with President Reagan, all he had said was that Japan was a peace-loving country, and its new Constitution was holding up pacifism, and there was no military aspect to the Japan-US alliance. Foreign Minister Itō was forced to resign for his blunder in preparing the joint communiqué. Ito's successor, Sunao Sonoda, backed away from the joint communiqué, repeatedly stating it was not binding. His comments angered the Americans.

However, once issued, the joint communiqué took on a life of its own. Even though Japan-US relations were somewhat strained, Japan-US defense cooperation was gradually strengthened on the basis of the joint communiqué and the pledge to defend the sea lanes. The inauguration of Yasuhiro Nakasone as prime minister in November 1982 was the decisive moment. Unlike Suzuki, who had simply read a statement in Washington, D.C. without understanding its content, Nakasone understood very well the strategic significance of the Japan-US alliance against the Soviet Union. And so, he did his best to meet American expectations and pursued the sharing of roles and missions.

For example, Japan's defense budget rapidly increased over the 5 years following 1981, and the JMSDF became a world-class navy in both quality and quantity by the end of the 1980s. The JMSDF's search capability against Soviet submarines rapidly improved, with the introduction of the P-3C antisubmarine patrol aircraft around the same time. The Soviet Navy in the Far East was helpless in the face of the continuous antisubmarine patrol operations carried out 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in close cooperation between the US Navy and the JMSDF. As both navies were operating the same P-3C patrol planes, they exchanged information directly using computers. Moreover, the Soviet economy could not endure an arms race against the United States, Japan, and the NATO member countries. The Soviet Union eventually seemed to quietly give up. Auer firmly believes that the Western camp was able to win the Cold War against the Soviets because of the joint operations between the JMSDF and the US Navy.

Participating in RIMPAC

The close Japan-US defense cooperation of the 1980s, apart from the decisions made at the political level, was made possible operationally because of the officers and sailors of the JMSDF and the US Navy. The one absolute requirement to implement the sharing of "roles and missions" between the two naval forces was the advanced capability for them to execute operations jointly. Japanese and American politicians' expressions of firm determination to implement the sharing of roles and missions would all be meaningless if their forces could not execute operations jointly. And to do that, the JMSDF and the US Navy must conduct joint exercises often and improve a range of warfare skills. In addition, interoperability must be pursued through the standardization not only of military equipment—including ships, aircraft, and weapons—but also of methods and procedures—including operational planning, commands and instructions, and communications.

Regarding the interoperability of equipment and methods, the JMSDF was the most advanced of the three JSDF services, and probably still is. According to Rear Admiral Kawamura (ret.), the JMSDF and the US Navy basically use the same equipment and follow the same procedures. Accordingly, JMSDF officers and sailors can board and operate US Navy vessels and aircraft without a problem, and vice versa. Japan-US joint exercises began in the 1950s and were conducted rather seriously during Nakamura's term as CMS. But it was not sufficient: the gap between the United States and Japan in terms of equipment was still considerable at the time, and the US Navy was occupied with the Vietnam War and other challenges. The scale of the exercises was also small. Incidentally, the JASDF first conducted a joint exercise with the US Air Force in 1978; the JGSDF conducted its first joint exercise with the US Army in 1981.

For the JMSDF, the Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) is the occasion when it conducts joint exercises with the US Navy to the fullest. RIMPAC, which began in 1971, is a comprehensive naval exercise conducted off Hawaii by allied navies in the Pacific region, centering around the US Navy's Third Fleet. Four navies—from the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada—took part in the first exercise. Japan was asked from the start if it wanted to participate. It passed on the opportunity, however, because of the prevailing view that the JMSDF's conducting an exercise with countries other than the United States might violate the Constitution because the Japanese government's interpretation at the time held that the Constitution prohibited the exercise of the right to collective self-defense.

Japan's participation was considered a few times in later years, but the Defense Agency could not easily reach a consensus. The Defense Agency's director general of the Bureau of Defense Policy, Kō Maruyama, who was in favor of participating, gave up after watching a public relations film for RIMPAC. He concluded that the film, which emphasized the importance of alliances, would never be accepted in Japan's political climate at the time. CMS Nakamura made a considerable effort to bring about Japan's participation in RIMPAC as well, but it was not approved.

The situation began to change when Admiral Ryōhei Ōga succeeded Nakamura as the CMS in September 1977. Ōga raised RIMPAC during an informal talk in the summer of 1978 with Defense Agency Director General Shin Kanemaru, who replied, "Exercises with the US Navy are important, so carry them out by all means." The next director general, Ganri Yamashita, who had been a short-term active-duty naval paymaster, was also willing to let JMSDF participate in RIMPAC. Yamashita ordered the intra-ministerial bureaus to support the JMSDF.

Some of the Defense Agency civilian bureaucrats were incomparably more sympathetic toward the uniformed personnel's arguments than before. Among those were Counselor Okazaki, who was on loan from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Counselor Atsuyuki Sassa, who was in charge of education and training, on loan from the National Police Agency. Sassa made great efforts to answer parliamentary questions on RIMPAC by himself. He answered more than 300 times; indeed, Japan Socialist Party Diet member Takako Doi made fun of him, calling him "a broken tape recorder" for repeating the same answers.

According to Ōga, the Defense Agency was essentially a JSDF management agency until the mid-1970s. The important posts in the intra-ministerial bureaus were occupied by former prewar Home Ministry bureaucrats who did not allow the uniformed personnel to say or do anything. This situation finally changed when the Japan-US defense leadership conference and the regular working-level meetings were established, and the preparation of the "Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation" (the so-called First Guidelines) was agreed on. This was a result of the meeting between Defense Agency Director General Michita Sakata, and US Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger in August 1975. Part of the change may also have been that Administrative Vice Minister of Defense Kō Maruyama gave the Defense Agency's intelligence-related post, formerly held by the police, to Okazaki (the foreign ministry official on loan) in 1978.

In the spring of 1978, Soviet ground forces were redeployed in the Northern Territories,[8] and the latest large vessels joined the Soviet Pacific Fleet. The summer of 1979 witnessed the outbreak of the Sino-Vietnamese War, while in December the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Tensions ran extremely high between the Western and Eastern camps. According to Okazaki, the new breed of bureaucrats (himself included) did not take the side of the uniformed personnel, but instead merely kept Japan's national interest in mind. In any case, against the backdrop of increased tension in international affairs, the Defense Agency transformed into a proper defense policy department with members like Okazaki and Sassa, according to Ōga. Under these circumstances, the JMSDF's participation in RIMPAC would finally begin to materialize.

Even after Japan's participation in RIMPAC was decided as a policy matter, many practical issues were left to tackle. Manabu Yoshida, the director general of the Operations and Plans Department in the MSO, was at the center of efforts to

[8] These islands, which Moscow calls the South Kuril Islands, are currently under Russian administration. Sovereignty over them is disputed between Japan and Russia.

participate in RIMPAC under CMS Ōga. On the US Navy's part, Rear Admiral Lando W. Zech, Jr., commander, US Naval Forces Japan, negotiated with the JMSDF directly, with assistance from Vice Admiral S. Robert Foley, commander, US Seventh Fleet. Foley encouraged Yoshida (who would later become CMS): "Let's make this a success in spite of all the obstacles to the JMSDF's participation in RIMPAC. Success will mean opening the door to future joint operations for the US Navy and the JMSDF."

Perhaps the biggest, most fundamental problem hindering the JMSDF's participation in RIMPAC was how to explain the nature of Japanese participation to each government and senior flag officer. For the Americans, the event was simply a joint exercise conducted by allied navies as preparation to fight together against a potential common enemy. For the Japanese, however, the term "alliance" was still a taboo, as it evoked the exercise of the right to collective self-defense which was then considered unconstitutional; by definition, there was no potential common enemy. Hence, JMSDF ships and aircraft could not be put under the US Navy's command and the JMSDF could not conduct exercises together with navies other than the US Navy. Moreover, the basic concept of the exercise—the "joint action" against a potential enemy—could not be used. The purpose of the exercise would have to be the improvement of tactical skills.

Such domestic intricacies are extremely complicated for the US Navy to understand. And yet Rear Admiral Zech somehow harmoniously intermediated between the JMSDF and the US Pacific Fleet in Hawaii, despite some difficulty. Through visits with Naka Funada and Ganri Yamashita, he came to understand the Japanese position better. Yoshida calls Zech "my brother," feeling indebted to him for these efforts.

The work devoted to dealing with all these various issues, probably unknown to outsiders, finally bore fruit. Starting in late February 1980, the JMSDF forces participated in RIMPAC and engaged in exercises held in the eastern Pacific around Hawaii for about a month. Commanded by Captain Tsutomu Yoshioka, commander of Escort Division 51, the forces dispatched were still relatively small, consisting of the helicopter-carrying destroyer JS *Hiei*, the guided-missile destroyer JS *Amatsukaze*, and eight P-2J antisubmarine patrol aircraft. When the dispatched vessels left Yokosuka, Yoshida and Zech firmly shook hands.

Since then, the JMSDF has participated in RIMPAC regularly. Starting in 1986, a whole escort flotilla comprising "eight vessels and eight aircraft," as well as a P-3C squadron and a submarine, participated in the exercise; an underway replenishment ship (supply ship) began taking part in 1988. At present, the JMSDF forces are the largest among the participating navies after the US Navy's.[9] The JMSDF's performance in the exercises has stood out; on one occasion, the hit rate of their missiles

[9] Since 2000, the number of JMSDF vessels participating in RIMPAC has gradually declined, as the number of participating countries has increased, other multi-country exercises have been initiated, and the operational duties of the JMSDF have expanded. Only the helicopter destroyer JS *Ise*, along with three helicopters and two P-3C antisubmarine patrol aircraft, participated in 2018; however, JGSDF units have participated twice since 2014.

Fig. 8.1 A helicopter comes in for a landing on the flight deck of the JS *Izumo* during a rescue exercise at RIMPAC 2022. (Photo credit: JMSDF)

was so high that a US Navy referee supposedly questioned whether the results were some kind of mistake. The JMSDF's P-3Cs always shone so brightly that other navies asked a JMSDF public relations officer, "Are you flying brand new aircraft every year?" Some even claimed that RIMPAC had essentially become an exercise centered around the US Navy and the JMSDF (Fig. 8.1).

The Japanese Fleet in Pearl Harbor

The leaders of the JMSDF and the US Navy who pushed to strengthen cooperation between their forces in the 1980s, including RIMPAC, were mostly veterans of the Pacific War. For example, Admiral Ryōhei Ōga graduated as part of the Naval Academy's 71st class in November 1942. After taking part in the evacuation of Kiska Island and other operations, he entered the Ōtake Submarine School and finished out the war as a submariner. During the war, he lost his mother and an elder sister to the atomic bomb dropped on his hometown, Nagasaki. After the war, he engaged in the repatriation of soldiers and stayed on in the minesweeping forces. During the Korean War, he engaged in minesweeping off Chinnampo and Haeju on the west coast of the Korean Peninsula as commander of the Fifth Minesweeping Unit. After the establishment of the Coastal Safety Force and the formation of the JMSDF, he continued with minesweeping operations for 10 years or so. These were unsung yet dangerous operations.

Similarly, Admiral Manabu Yoshida was a graduate of the Naval Academy's 75th class, the last class to graduate from Etajima in October 1945, too late to have

any combat experience. The class was educated under the academy's superintendent, Vice Admiral Shigeyoshi Inoue, who would be the last IJN officer to be promoted to the rank of full admiral before the war's end. Also, Lieutenant Teiji Nakamura, just returned from the Solomon Sea, directly taught them as leader of the student corps.[10] Nakamura was said to be dashing and clearheaded, strict and imposing, a man who spared no effort. Although the 75th class was a large one, the classmates were still bound by an extremely strong sense of unity.

Once the war was over, Yoshida engaged in the repatriation of soldiers. Then, when he was about to take university entrance exams, he was told by an Etajima instructor that he should remain to carry on the naval tradition, as the 75th class was not purged from public office. So, he decided to become a member of the Illegal Vessel Entry Monitoring Headquarters[11] (predecessor to the MSA) rather than attend university. While taking part in the policing of illegal immigrants and smugglers, he awaited the rebuilding of the navy. For about 40 years until his retirement in 1985, he worked tirelessly for the IJN, the MSA, the Coastal Safety Force, and the JMSDF without interruption.

For his part, Rear Admiral Zech was a first-year student (a "plebe") at the Naval Academy in Annapolis when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. Restraining his eagerness to see the excitement of the battlefield, he stayed in school and graduated in June 1944, ahead of schedule. He fought in numerous battles, from the Philippines to Okinawa, aboard the USS *John D. Henley*. In the summer of 1945, the destroyer was anchored just off Tokyo Bay at a point called Picket Station No. 12 to engage in the rescue mission of downed B-29 pilots. As the ship was stationed within a stone's throw of the metropolitan area, it became the target of incessant kamikaze attacks. Once, a kamikaze aircraft flew only 10 meters from his vessel. He had a narrow brush with death.[12]

The crew called the picket station "50/50 Station," meaning there was a 50% chance of getting killed by a kamikaze aircraft. So, when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, Zech knew he could survive the war. He also felt that it was no longer necessary to force a landing on the Japanese mainland under enemy fire.

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[10] *Seitotai-tsuki Kanji.*

[11] *Fuhō Nyūkokusen Kanshi Honbu.*

[12] The description of USS *John D. Henley*'s activity during the summer of 1945 is based on the author's interview with Rear Admiral Zech. According to the ship's history and war diaries, however, the *John D. Henley* performed picket duties near Iwo Jima in February 1945, and participated in the amphibious operation in Okinawa from late—March to June 1945. During these operations, it underwent periodic kamikaze attacks. On August 24, the ship departed Buckner Bay (Nakagusuku Bay, on the southern coast of Okinawa) to take air-sea rescue station off Amami Ōshima; on August 28, it recovered three crewmembers of a B-32 Dominator that had crashed due to mechanical difficulties while on a photo reconnaissance mission. It seems unlikely that the ship was anchored off Tokyo Bay in the summer of 1945. See "*John D. Henley* (*DD-553*)," Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships [https://www.history.navy.mil/research/histories/ship-histories/danfs/j/john-d-henley-dd-553.html, accessed 26 Nov 2018]; "History of USS *John D. Henley* (*DD-553*)," compiled by David Wright [http://www.navsource.org/archives/05/DD553.docx, accessed 26 Nov 2018].

Many of his fellow shipmates died in the war. Even after the war, his animosity toward Japan did not fade easily. He entered Yokosuka port once, soon after the war. But it was not until he was posted in Yokosuka as commander, US Naval Forces Japan between 1978 and 1981 that he had an opportunity to learn about Japan properly. So much time had passed since the war, he no longer hated Japan. As he worked with the JMSDF, Zech's respect for its personnel grew as he came to know them better.

Many JMSDF leaders were former IJN officers around his own age. There were even a few officers, like Vice Admiral Kunijirō Saitō, who had fought on the same battlefields as Zech had, from the Philippines to Okinawa. They told each other they were lucky to be alive. Unlike the armed forces personnel he had befriended in postwar Germany, the former IJN officers did not talk much with Zech about their wartime experiences. As naval officers, however, they treated each other with respect. They forged deep friendships and mutual trust, as in the case of Yoshida and Zech, who came to address each other on a first-name basis after their combined efforts on the JMSDF's participation in RIMPAC.

Before leaving Japan, Zech was awarded the Order of Sacred Treasure Second Class by the Japanese government. At the award ceremony, he reportedly said that half the medal was for Yoshida's service. Promoted to vice admiral after returning to the United States, he was transferred to the higher-ranking position of chief of naval personnel within the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. This was an unprecedented appointment for someone who had served in the post of commander, US Naval Forces Japan. Before leaving his post, Zech stressed to Yoshida that the two navies' future relations should be based on mutual respect, rather than mere friendship.

Admiral Yoshida was then appointed CMS and made an official visit to Washington, D.C. in 1984. On his return home, he stopped by Hawaii and reviewed the 80 ships from various navies, including the JMSDF, that had assembled in Pearl Harbor to take part in RIMPAC. In the commander's barge, he joined Admiral Foley, who had been promoted to CINCPACFLT.

Forty years had passed since the IJN that Yoshida had joined was annihilated in its fight-to-the-death with the US Navy, a fight that began with the attack on Pearl Harbor. The Japanese navy had been reborn as the JMSDF, and its ships were now berthed in Pearl Harbor alongside the US fleet.

The Introduction of Aegis Ships

The sharing of roles and missions between Japanese and US naval forces gradually materialized in the 1980s. If taking part in RIMPAC was its beginning, the procurement of Aegis ships could be called its final stage. When the JMSDF began to properly deal with sea lane defense, a huge challenge for the force was the fleet's vulnerability to aerial attacks. In particular, the Soviet Air Force's Tu-22M

"Backfire" bombers deployed in Russia's Far East were capable of hitting a surface ship with anti-ship missiles from beyond the range of the ship's anti-air missiles.

To deal with this threat, the JMSDF studied various countermeasures, including the construction of light aircraft carriers and the adoption of Harrier V/STOL (Vertical/Short Take Off and Landing) attack aircraft operated by the Royal Navy and the US Marine Corps, but these countermeasures would not work for various reasons. Then the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System captured their attention. The system uses a combination of high-powered radar and computer systems to automatically launch anti-air missiles and to track and shoot down more than ten threats that appear within a 360-degree perimeter, including straight overhead, with a radius of 100-plus kilometers. Dozens of anti-air missiles are arranged in several rows and launched from the magazine-storage canister called the VLS (Vertical Launching System) embedded in the ship. The name "Aegis" is a reference to the shields that Greek gods, Zeus and Athena, wore on their chests. It suggests that the system will shield vessels from enemy arrows—or, in this case, missiles.

The air defense capability of destroyers equipped with this system (i.e., Aegis ships) would be significantly improved. The problem was twofold: this system was extremely costly and the United States, which had developed the monstrous computer of this advanced weapons system, had never provided it to any allied navy. While the first half of the problem was resolved by a substantial increase in the defense budget through the 1980s, the latter half remained a huge challenge. This is what lay behind the strong opposition in the US, and even within the US Navy, to providing Japan with the Aegis system.

However, CMS Manabu Yoshida did not give up. He wrote a few letters weekly to CNO Admiral James Watkins and made every effort to persuade him. *The JMSDF's possession of Aegis ships would serve the American national interests, as well, because it would enable joint actions against the Soviet threats and help to protect the US Navy's carriers. The sharing of Aegis technology would help nurture the same operational ideology using the same weapons, while also enhancing interoperability. Providing the Aegis system to Japan would deepen the mutual trust between the Japanese and US maritime forces and strengthen the alliance based on values we share.*

As an aside, Admiral Watkins's mother had been a passionate Japanophile before the war. For many years, she served as the president of the Japan America Society of Southern California. Whenever an IJN Training Squadron visited California, she would visit them, leading the very young future admiral by the hand. She would say, "Jim, when the United States wants to access Asia, it will be important to go through Japan, because Japan has a long history and culture that America lacks."

When the IJN Training Squadron visited the United States in 1929, she gave a 20-minute lecture to the ensigns in self-taught Japanese; they gave her a big round of applause even though she had made four mistakes, she happily recounted to her son. In 1940, when Japan-US relations were strained, she visited Japan with her daughter as a guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She returned home to the United States feeling relieved, having heard there would be no war between the US and Japan.

When the war broke out a year later, she was sad and disheartened. After the war, she was awarded a medal for her contributions to Japan-US friendship.

Admiral Watkins visited Japan as CNO in 1985 and he was awarded a special medal by the Japanese government. When Yoshida met him again after the award ceremony, he presented Watkins with two items he had discovered in the National Diet Library: a photocopy of a newspaper article on the 1940 visit to Japan by the admiral's mother and a photograph of his mother and sister that showed his mother wearing a long white skirt and a hat with a broad brim. Yoshida had mounted the photograph, article, and an English translation of the article in one picture frame together with a photograph of Admiral Watkins's own medal award ceremony. Admiral Watkins was moved to tears.

Eventually, the US Navy relented; it initially proposed providing Japan with a previous-generation Aegis Air Defense System. The JMSDF insisted on obtaining a state-of-the-art system, which led to a heated exchange. In the end, the US Navy fully accepted the Japanese argument and decided to provide the latest system. CNO Watkins persuaded the opposition both within and outside the Navy. For his part, Auer fully supported Watkins from the policy point of view, winning Armitage's support by arguing that providing Japan with the latest Aegis system was in keeping with the principle of "roles and missions" sharing. Congressman Stephen Solarz, too, was helpful; chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Solarz was familiar with East Asian affairs. On the Japanese side, Administrative Vice-Minister of Defense Haruo Natsume and others ultimately agreed with the argument of Yoshida and other uniformed personnel. After Yoshida's retirement, a later administrative vice-minister of defense, Seiki Nishihiro, exerted himself to secure a budget for the construction of Aegis ships.

The first destroyer with the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System, JS *Kongō*, was commissioned in 1993. It was followed by JS *Kirishima*, JS *Myōkō*, and JS *Chōkai*. The JMSDF now possesses four Aegis ships[13] with a standard displacement of 7250 tons. The imposing silhouette, which is equipped with the VLS and emphasizes stealth capability, is uniquely impressive, distinguishing it from past destroyers. Apart from the US Navy, only the JMSDF possesses Aegis ships today.[14]

Notwithstanding the Japanese government's official position on the purpose of the these JMSDF Aegis ships,[15] these vessels play a role in the air defense of the US carrier strike force in the Western Pacific from the American perspective. When President Clinton visited Japan in 1996 and issued the Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security with Prime Minister Ryūtarō Hashimoto, the US Navy and the JMSDF berthed the carrier USS *Independence* and JS *Myōkō* next to each other in Yokosuka

[13] As of 2022, Japan has eight Aegis destroyers in total: four *Kongō*-class and two *Atago*-class Aegis destroyers, and two further *Maya*-class vessels have been commissioned.

[14] As of 2018, current operators of Aegis ships include Spain, Norway, South Korea, and Australia, along with the United States and Japan.

[15] In accordance with the government's official interpretation of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution at the time, the government's long-maintained official position was that Japan introduced the Aegis ships solely for the purpose of defending Japan and its people.

to welcome the president. JMSDF senior officers and sailors were flushed with tension and excitement as they lined up on the flight deck of USS *Independence* to be reviewed by the US president.

A Dogwood in Etajima, a Cherry Tree in Annapolis

In 1985, the 75th class (Class of 1945) of the IJN Naval Academy held a joint class reunion at the US Naval Academy in Annapolis with the US Naval Academy class that had also enrolled in 1943. To commemorate the day, they planted a young cherry tree brought from Japan. The Americans assured them there was no need to worry if the tree withered. If it did, they would dig up another from the banks of the Potomac River in Washington, D.C. and plant it again. Two years later, they held another joint class reunion, this time in Etajima. The American representatives brought and planted a dogwood, a typical American flowering tree. This time the American representatives worried about whether the tree would take root in this salty soil. But the superintendent of the JMSDF First Service School, who attended the event, assured them that if the tree were to wither, they would bring in another and plant it again.

The close cooperation between the JMSDF and the US Navy is by no means a given thing. Mutual friendship and trust take a long time to nurture and are all too easily lost. To prevent this, one has to water the relationship, fertilize the soil, and spare no effort. If it should wither, one should promptly do what must be done and plant a new young tree. This way, the dogwood in Etajima and the cherry tree in Annapolis will continue to blossom this year and the next, and for many years to come.

Chapter 9
Minesweepers Crossing the Sea Again

Auer's Proposal

James Auer worked as the director for Japanese affairs at the Department of Defense until the end of August 1988. During the nine and a half years he worked at the Pentagon, defense cooperation between Japan and the United States grew significantly stronger. The Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF), with its enhanced antisubmarine warfare capabilities, and the US Navy, with its core carrier strike groups, operated jointly in the North Pacific. Thanks to the clear role and mission sharing established by the Japanese and US Naval forces, the Soviet Navy was unable to act. As he now headed into retirement, Auer was satisfied that the policy of strengthening Japan-US security relations, a policy that he had been instrumental in developing, had helped to bring an end to the Cold War.

The Gulf War began on August 2, 1990, with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. It proved to be a situation that challenged the fundamentals of Japan's security arrangements, only 2 years after Auer's retirement from the Department of Defense. The Japanese government was initially quick to take measures to establish the economic blockade of Iraq and support the deployment of multinational forces in the Persian Gulf, but it took no further tangible actions. A bill on Cooperation with United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations was drafted, but deliberations stalled, and the bill was scrapped in November.

Even after multinational forces launched military operations against Iraq in January 1991, Japan not only avoided sending combatants, but also failed to contribute any other personnel, including non-combatants or other logistics support. Even a plan to send JASDF transport aircraft to transfer refugees failed to materialize. Twenty-eight countries took part in multinational operations in one form or another, such as Czechoslovakia, recently liberated from the Communist Party's one-party dictatorship, and small countries like Bangladesh. Despite depending heavily on oil imports from the Middle East, however, Japan did nothing visible.

N. Agawa, *Friendship Across the Seas*,
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All it did was to contribute $13 billion toward the cost of the Gulf War—approximately 10,000 yen per citizen.

The United States, in particular, was disappointed with Japan for having contributed no personnel, just money, even as many UN member states joined in taking firm measures against the illegal invasion. Some even felt Tokyo's response created a severe rift in the Japan-US alliance, a sentiment that was not openly expressed because the Gulf War ended in a relatively short time and in an overwhelming victory for the multinational forces.

This was worrying for Auer, who believed, more than anyone, that the Japan-US alliance was essential. *Japan-US security arrangements shouldn't be further undermined by ill will toward Japan for not having taken part in the Gulf War. It's not too late. Japan needs to take concrete and visible action.*

With these thoughts in mind, Auer attended a symposium on Japan-US security affairs held on the outskirts of Washington, D.C. The symposium was hosted by Ambassador Richard Armitage (who was a Special Emissary to Jordan's King Hussein during the 1991 Gulf War) on February 28, 1991, the day Iraq accepted the ceasefire. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Carl W. Ford, Jr. arrived late, just as the discussion was about to finish. Given the situation, Auer was surprised that he showed up at all. Ford informed the audience that "[t]he Iraqi government has notified the US government that it conducted extensive mining of combat zones." Auer asked if that information was classified, to which the reply was "not necessarily." He returned to his accommodations and began writing. The resulting article, titled "Sōkaitei no haken o susumetai: Nihon ga ase o nagaseru zekkō no michi (Recommendation to send minesweepers: the best way for Japan to break a sweat)," was published in the "Seiron (sound argument)" column of the *Sankei Shimbun* on March 11.

Because President George H. W. Bush valued Japan—which, after Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, provided the largest amount of funding for the Gulf War—it would not be fair to criticize Japan's contribution as mere "checkbook diplomacy." Nevertheless, now that the Gulf War was over, Japan had the opportunity to complement its financial contribution with concrete actions. Auer argued his case as follows: "Iraq notified the multinational forces that there are more than a thousand mines on international navigation routes in the Persian Gulf. It will take at least 6 months to remove them with minesweepers." Although it was reported that the German Navy's minesweepers would be used, "the best and most skilled minesweepers in the world belong to the JMSDF." Hence, Japan should dispatch its minesweepers to the Persian Gulf. Auer also listed five specific reasons in support of his position.

First, the Japanese minesweeping forces were capable of carrying out complicated operations. Second, Japan would not be involved in a military conflict since the war was already over. Third, overseas dispatch of minesweepers would be justified by an article of the Self-Defense Forces Act specifying the removal of mines as its mission. Fourth, the dispatch of minesweepers would meet with the approval of countries that had sent their armed forces to the Gulf War. Fifth, the minesweeping operation would be a significant precedent for JSDF peacekeeping operations. Auer argued that if it "wants to be valued as a major world power, Japan needs to decide to

take actions that other countries would admire as unselfish." Furthermore, he said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Defense Agency "must consider whether Japan now wants to demonstrate that it is willing to break a sweat now that other countries have done so." If Japan were to declare that it wanted to play a major role in minesweeping navigational routes in the Persian Gulf for Japanese and other vessels, other countries would understand. "I hope Japan's leaders will earnestly consider this opportunity."

Auer faxed the article to many of his Japanese friends. One recipient, LDP Diet member Michio Watanabe, instructed his secretary to distribute a copy of the article to all members of his political faction. Furthermore, soon after reading the article, Takujirō Hamada, who had experience serving as the parliamentary vice-minister for foreign affairs, asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Treaties Bureau if it was legally possible to send minesweepers. Auer's article created sizable ripples in Nagata-chō.

Paving the Way for Minesweeper Deployment

Well before Auer's article, there had been quite a number of Japanese, both in the government and outside it, who felt that Japan should take concrete action during the Gulf War. From the start, the dispatch of Japanese minesweepers to the Persian Gulf had been one option under consideration.

Already in 1987, then Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone had seriously examined the possibility of dispatching JMSDF minesweepers to remove mines laid in the Persian Gulf during the Iran-Iraq War. It was a response to criticism expressed by some members of the US Congress that it was inexcusable for Japan, dependent on imported Middle East oil, to do nothing. Nakasone considered the dispatch to be constitutionally and legally justifiable, but ultimately, it was not implemented due to strong opposition from Chief Cabinet Secretary Masaharu Gotōda, who objected to dispatching the JSDF overseas. However, the MSO retained in its files the results of the specific studies on the organization, supply, and support of the minesweeping forces at the time.

On August 16, 1990, soon after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, Diet Member Michio Watanabe visited Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu at his official residence and proposed visible cooperation, explaining, "It doesn't make sense for Japan to be a free rider, doing nothing, while being the most dependent on oil imports." A reporter pointed out to Watanabe after the meeting that the Nakasone cabinet had examined the possibility of dispatching minesweepers; Watanabe remarked, "Minesweepers are not offensive. They are extremely defensive," suggesting the dispatch was possible. Watanabe appeared to have gotten the idea from Auer, whom he had known for a few years; already, Auer had begun to advocate the dispatch of minesweepers to a few of his close Japanese friends. The next day, in response to Watanabe's remark, a government source expressed the view that "[the dispatch of

minesweepers] is not currently being considered by the government," but "it is legally possible."

Asked in a regular press conference held around that time about possible actions for the JMSDF, its chief of maritime staff (CMS), Makoto Sakuma, made a rather bold remark: "We've begun a preliminary investigation into every possible mission." Sakuma recollects that he made the remark because if he was given a mission, he would have had to carry it out no matter what; it would be irresponsible not to. He says the people around him observed that he would have been fired for saying such a thing just a few years earlier when things were different. In October, a project team undertook research into the specifics of the issue; a key person on the team was director general of the MSO's Operations and Plans Department, Chiaki Hayashizaki, who would later become the CMS. The results of the previous studies into the possibility of sending minesweepers during the Iran-Iraq War were also reviewed in detail.

Yet the government was rather slow to act. Michio Watanabe's suggestion fizzled out before long. According to Sakuma, the atmosphere discouraged the Defense Agency from doing anything on the matter throughout 1990. There was even a time when Administrative Vice-Minister of Defense Tomoharu Yoda was instructed not to visit the prime minister's official residence. Prime Minister Kaifu had no philosophy for dealing with such a crisis and failed to demonstrate leadership. Even as the details of the draft bill on Cooperation with United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations were being worked out, instructions coming from the Prime Minister's official residence to the Defense Agency included nonsensical ideas like painting the destroyers white and making the guns unusable by tying them down. Those involved in the matter at the time remember that it was like speaking to beings from another planet. Moreover, the overseas dispatch of the JSDF was opposed not only by dogmatic pacifists like Takako Doi, the leader of the Japan Socialist Party, but also by some within the government.

"Dispatch the Minesweepers"

The mood started to change in the new year, however. For example, Minister of Finance Ryūtarō Hashimoto, who handled Japan's $13 billion financial contribution, was forced to realize, through talks with Western leaders, that contributing money was not enough. LDP Secretary-General Ichirō Ozawa had a similar opinion. Michio Watanabe was in favor of personnel contributions from the start. When the Gulf War ended with the multinational forces victorious, calls for concrete action on Japan's part snowballed.

In early February 1991 Hajime Funada, a young LDP Diet member, flew to Washington upon instructions from Ichirō Ozawa to hold unofficial talks with US foreign policy and national security officials about ways for Japan to actively contribute after the Gulf War. Funada was accompanied by the well-connected consultant Hideo Kimura, who knew many American defense personnel. At Funada's

request, James Auer also joined the group. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was aware of their mission, which was coordinated by some officials of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry.

In Washington, Funada had meetings with a number of influential figures involved in US policy toward Japan, including Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Carl Ford, Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Randall M. Fort, Ambassador Richard Armitage, and Senator William "Bill" W. Bradley. They discussed what specific actions Japan should take. Funada also met with diplomats working in the Japanese embassy in Washington, D.C., accompanied by Kimura and Auer, who both proposed again the idea of dispatching minesweepers to the Persian Gulf. At first, US policymakers and Japanese diplomats alike viewed the plan with skepticism. In the course of discussing it, however, the mood shifted, and they began to feel it could be done.

As an aside, some US naval personnel, on hearing that Hajime Funada was visiting Washington, proposed to entertain and show respect for the grandson of Naka Funada, who had been a powerful supporter of the Japan-US security arrangements. Funada therefore postponed his departure by one day and attended a dinner party at the home of retired Captain Rudolph H. Daus in Alexandria, not far from George Washington's former home in Mount Vernon. Daus was the commanding officer of the guided-missile destroyer USS *Parsons* of the Seventh Fleet, homeported in Yokosuka. Auer had served Captain Daus for 3 years as the executive officer of that ship in the early 1970s, after having completed his role as a political advisor to the commander, US Naval Forces Japan. Welcoming Funada at Daus's house were a number of men involved in Japan-US defense cooperation, especially between the JMSDF and the US Navy, among them: former CINCPACFLT Sylvester Robert "Bob" Foley, Jr., who had filled several important posts including commander, US Seventh Fleet, and had a deep connection with Japan; Rear Admiral Dean R. Sackett, former commander, US Naval Forces Japan; Vice Admiral Lando Zech, former commander, US Naval Forces Japan, who had contributed to making the JMSDF's participation in RIMPAC possible; Commander Torkel Patterson, then in charge of US policy toward Japan in the White House, who previously had served as Rear Admiral Zech's aide-de-camp and then studied at the University of Tsukuba; and retired Army Captain Michael Powell, the son of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell, who had worked for a while under Auer when the latter was director for Japanese affairs in the Department of Defense.

At the dinner table, Auer told the attendees that Speaker of the House of Representatives Naka Funada was always the first to receive the US Navy's nuclear-powered submarines and carriers calling at Yokosuka and Sasebo, at times welcoming the ships by going aboard himself, despite fierce domestic opposition. Hajime Funada listened silently to Auer speak about his grandfather.

The next day, on board the All Nippon Airways plane bound for Tokyo, Funada told Kimura that he was determined to do everything in his power to make the dispatch of minesweepers a reality. However, there were many challenges to overcome before that could happen. For example, would insurance cover the JMSDF personnel who took part in minesweeping operations in the Persian Gulf? If by any

chance there were casualties, how would they be compensated? "If the minesweepers were dispatched, we would have considerable responsibility for the crew, wouldn't we? Well, Mr. Kimura, in the worst case, let's all do everything we can for them, even if it means selling off our personal assets." Funada said this to Kimura looking unusually serious.

When he arrived back in Japan, Hajime Funada began to explain in earnest the need to dispatch minesweepers to people within the LDP. Day after day, he repeated his explanation to all the influential people he could get hold of. Some of the senior officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs felt a sense of crisis, believing there was no alternative, and so they endeavored to build a consensus within the ministry. At the Defense Agency, Shigeru Hatakeyama, director general of the Bureau of Defense Policy, was busy seeking support from various parties. At Kimura's request, Shunsuke Miyao, Toshiba Corporation's section chief of international affairs, conveyed the message to key people in Japanese business circles. A few years earlier, Miyao had directed the lobbying effort in Washington, D.C. during the Toshiba-Kongsberg scandal, with the help of Auer and Kimura. As Miyao had been the private secretary to Toshiba's doyen, Taizō Ishizaka, the former chairman of the Japan Business Federation,[1] he had connections in the federation and beyond. Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) member of the House of Councillors, Akihisa Terasaki, tried to urge the All Japan Seamen's Union into action and gain support from other unions. Terasaki had once been a vice president of the Confederation of Japan Automobile Workers' Unions; he was a close friend of Kimura, who had served as a private secretary to DSP giant Eki Sone (as mentioned in Chap. 3). Furthermore, many people in various sectors of Japanese society called on the LDP and the government to send minesweepers. The novelist Hiroyuki Agawa, my father, for example, wrote a long letter to Mutsuki Katō, the LDP's chairman of the Policy Affairs Research Council (PARC), urging the dispatch of minesweepers to the Persian Gulf. Toshiba's Miyao remembers that it was not the achievement of one person; rather, the momentum to dispatch the minesweepers grew spontaneously.

It was in this context that Auer's article was published in the "Seiron" column of the *Sankei Shimbun* on March 11. Two days later, Japanese newspapers reported that PARC Chairman Katō, a member of the Watanabe group, had met with his counterparts from the Social Democratic Party of Japan, Komeito, and the DSP, and stated: "The United States has unofficially requested the dispatch [of minesweepers] to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, the ministry is keeping the request secret." According to a senior party official in charge of defense affairs, a former US government official told someone at the LDP that "Japan should dispatch minesweepers." This LDP person conveyed the request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Defense Agency. In response to this, a government source stated, "The US government has been requesting the dispatch of minesweepers since the outbreak of the Gulf War; there is no new request at the moment." While there is no conclusive

[1] *Keidanren.*

proof, it appears the former US government official mentioned was Auer. The movement to dispatch minesweepers suddenly gained more steam.

On March 14, Foreign Minister Tarō Nakayama stated in the Budget Committee of the House of Representatives, "[The dispatch of minesweepers] is a non-military operation and not an act of hostility. How to guarantee the safety of Japanese vessels and crew is a matter that the government has to pay attention to." His attitude was positive. On the same day, Diet member Michio Watanabe argued for the dispatch at the LDP's National Defense Division and demanded a government decision.

A still reluctant Prime Minister Kaifu gradually became unable to ignore public opinion. On April 8, Japan Business Federation Chairman Gaishi Hiraiwa issued an official statement supporting the dispatch of minesweepers and revealing his intention to lobby the government. The Japan Federation of Employers' Association, the Petroleum Association of Japan, the Japanese Shipowners' Association, and the Arabian Oil Company followed. As the Arabian Oil Company was doing business in the region, it could not afford to be indifferent. Around the same time, the efforts by Diet member Terasaki and others bore fruit: the All Japan Seamen's Union requested that the government dispatch minesweepers. On April 11, a joint meeting of the three LDP defense committees[2] passed a resolution to dispatch minesweepers and proposed it to Prime Minister Kaifu and the politicians holding the LDP's three main posts.[3]

On April 12, Prime Minister Kaifu finally reached a decision, and the Defense Agency was instructed unofficially to prepare for the dispatch of the minesweeping force. On April 16, Defense Agency Director General Yukihiko Ikeda officially ordered CMS Sakuma to begin studying the details regarding the dispatch of minesweepers. It seemed to have taken a lot of coaxing to get the reluctant prime minister to reach this stage. Kaifu kept saying the decision was not yet final, and that he would give a final decision after the second half of the nationwide local elections on April 21. It appeared he was thinking that canceling the dispatch was a possibility, depending on the election results.

Sakuma's Concerns

The overall responsibility for preparing the minesweeping force for dispatch fell to the CMS, Admiral Makoto Sakuma. Although he had begun studying the issue in the fall of 1990, being at the mercy of the complicated political climate, he was not sure until the very end whether there would be an actual opportunity to dispatch the force. He found it hard to believe, even when the mood changed in March of 1991

[2] The National Defense Division, the Research Commission on National Security, and the Special Committee on Measures for Military Bases.

[3] The secretary-general, the chairman of the General Council, and the chairman of the Policy Affairs Research Council.

and the Defense Agency's intra-ministerial bureaus communicated that the minesweepers could be dispatched. He went so far as to ask Administrative Vice-Minister of Defense Yoda to "[p]lease confirm it with Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs [Takakazu] Kuriyama." However, Sakuma proceeded to make full-scale preparations because it became clear at this point that the Defense Agency's intra-ministerial bureaus had a firm understanding that there was no alternative.

Sakuma acted swiftly, beginning with the preparations that lay within his authority. To move resources and personnel, the approval of the head of the Defense Agency was necessary, so he visited Director General Ikeda to ask for provisional permission. Ikeda understood the circumstances very well and arranged to make it as easy as possible for Sakuma to prepare. Sakuma says it was easy to work for a director general like Ikeda.

There were two reasons compelling Sakuma to make haste. The first was the timing of the dispatch of minesweepers. In response to the ceasefire on February 28, minesweepers from the United States, the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, and Belgium had already arrived in the mined zones in the Persian Gulf and were engaged in minesweeping. Germany, France, Italy, and the Netherlands also announced the dispatch of their minesweeping forces early in March, and they were already starting to arrive in the area. Even the most delayed minesweepers belonging to the German Navy would start work at the end of April. If the Japanese minesweepers were to depart too late, there was a possibility that there would be no mines left to sweep once they had traveled all that way to reach the Persian Gulf. Even if they were dispatched with the intention of contributing to the Gulf War's postwar process with their labor and sweat, the Japanese minesweepers might have to return home having achieved nothing.

The second reason to rush was the weather. In the Indian Ocean, the monsoon arrives and the cyclones come after April, making for rough seas. Small minesweepers of less than 500 tons are built on the assumption that they will mainly operate along the coast of Japan; they are not built to navigate the ocean. Studies during the Iran-Iraq War showed that they had suitable transoceanic capability and would not capsize easily in a storm. But they were slow; unlike larger destroyers, they had no reserve power. They had no way of making up for any delays due to stormy weather. If that were to happen, their arrival in the Persian Gulf would be later still. Ideally, the minesweepers should arrive by the end of March, but this was not possible for political reasons. Frustrated by the lack of resolution exhibited by politicians postponing the decision with an eye to the election, Sakuma went ahead with the preparations.

While he prepared, Sakuma was most concerned about the possibility of casualties during the dispatch. *Disposing of mines is very dangerous work. Accidents can happen even when preparations are perfect. There is still no national consensus on dispatching the JMSDF overseas. If minesweepers went overseas absent a national consensus and there were casualties during the operation, the JMSDF would also suffer considerable damage. We might have to withdraw the minesweepers if the situation grew dire. I don't want to risk the lives of my men when we have no clear national support.*

And yet, if you think about it, the JMSDF exists for the country, not for its own sake. Even if it suffers damage as an organization, it can't be helped. With the preceding line of thought, Sakuma convinced himself.

When Sakuma was serving as president of the JMSDF Command and Staff College in Ichigaya in 1987, former CMS Teiji Nakamura once paid him an informal visit. Haltingly, Nakamura told Sakuma about the speech former IJN Admiral Katsunoshin Yamanashi had given after the war at the JMSDF Command and Staff College: "The JMSDF doesn't have many ships or aircraft. Its equipment and facilities are very poor. But it has people. . . . The Japanese navy grew to the size it was wholly because those who came before us struggled so hard despite facing hardships no different from yours today, or even bigger ones, from the founding in the Meiji era, to the [First] Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War, and through the era of arms limitation [after WWI]." Nakamura confided that, whenever things had not gone as planned during his service in the JMSDF, he had taken courage by recalling the admiral's speech that day. With that, Nakamura took his leave.

Nakamura had apparently visited the JMSDF Command and Staff College just to tell that story, to personally encourage his juniors through Sakuma and entrust them with the future of the JMSDF, in which things still rarely went as planned. At least, that was Sakuma's impression. He says that when the minesweepers were sent to the Persian Gulf, he often recalled Nakamura's remarks from that day.

The Commander of the Minesweeping Force

Perhaps the most crucial decision CMS Sakuma made regarding the dispatch of minesweepers was the choice of commander of the Minesweeping Force. He chose Captain Taosa Ochiai, who had just arrived at his new post, commander of Mine Warfare Force 1, on March 20; until the day before, he had served as director of the JSDF Provincial Liaison Office in Nagasaki, where he recruited new JSDF personnel. Ochiai was the son of Rear Admiral Minoru Ōta.[4]

Like his father, whom local citizens were exceptionally fond of despite the strong anti-military sentiment prevailing in postwar Okinawa, Captain Ochiai was known for being a commanding officer who showed compassion toward his subordinates. Despite his rank, he would sometimes volunteer to load supplies on the ship alongside young sailors when he had time, marking him as unconventional: in the JMSDF, following the IJN tradition, there is a stark distinction between officers and enlisted men. When he was serving in the Regional Liaison Office in Okinawa as a

[4] Posthumously promoted to vice admiral, Ōta, commander of the Okinawa Special Base Force, had fought in the Battle of Okinawa, which began in March 1945. He fought bravely to the end and took his own life after sending a telegram that read, "The people of Okinawa fought [exceptionally bravely]. I request that in the future they be given special considerations for their deeds." See also Chap. 1.

lieutenant, locals adored him, saying, "So you're the son of Vice Admiral Ōta." He alternately served in minesweeping and recruiting JSDF personnel. He was not an elite type who would participate in policymaking in the central headquarters. *Only Captain Ochiai can be entrusted to maintain morale and command the minesweeping force, which may be dispatched for an extended period*, Sakuma judged.

However, Ochiai laughs the selection away with his natural sense of humor. "Pin-chan is great." Affectionately calling Sakuma by a nickname that comes from mah-jongg,[5] he talks in a characteristically friendly tone. "He chose someone who doesn't understand he is an expendable scapegoat, making him the commander of the minesweeping force." Seeing who their commander was, Ochiai continued with a grin, the crew "must have done their best, thinking, 'We can't rely on this guy. I don't know what would happen if I had to depend on the commander. I have to protect my own life.'" Joking aside, if an incident arose, Ochiai would respond perfectly, and if necessary, he would take responsibility with good grace. *Sakuma chose me because he trusted me. I need to meet his expectations.* Knowing that was the actual reason why Sakuma chose him and feeling thankful for it, Ochiai expresses himself with wry humor. In any case, Ochiai accepted the post of commander with a promise that he would "call Pin-chan if something happened."

Having received the order in Tokyo to lead the special mission, Ochiai began organizing the force to be sent to the Persian Gulf. JMSDF personnel are used to going overseas. Around five teams go overseas annually for missions, including the RIMPAC exercise, overseas training cruises, and Antarctic exploration cooperation with the icebreaker JS *Shirase*. Within the JMSDF, in fact, only the minesweeping force had little familiarity with overseas operations. Only 28% of the JMSDF officers and sailors of the dispatch force had prior overseas experience. In the present day, this is probably a rather low figure. And yet the minesweeping crews would become the first JMSDF unit to travel 7000 nautical miles (13,000 kilometers) on an actual mission. Captain Ochiai was worried.

"Generally speaking, those posted in the minesweeping force are not JMSDF elites. Many officers are also from the bottom of the heap. When you're assigned to the minesweeping force, people ask if you've done something wrong, you know," Ochiai says. A few of the officers in the dispatch force were Internal Officer Candidates who had joined the JMSDF upon graduation from high school, had worked as petty officers for a few years, and had applied to and attended the JMSDF Officer Candidate School in Etajima, in contrast to the elites who had graduated from the Defense Academy and civilian universities.

The dispatch force was organized in an extremely short interval before its departure, roughly a month after Captain Ochiai had assumed command of Mine Warfare Force 1 on March 20, and exactly 10 days after the order to study the specifics had been issued on April 16. Six vessels were dispatched in total: the

[5] In Japan, especially among mah-jongg players, "one" is sometimes called "pin," which is derived from a Portuguese word, "*pinta*" (pip). CMS Sakuma's nickname was "Pin-chan" because his given name is Makoto, written as "one" in Japanese ("chan" is a suffix used among close friends).

minesweeper tender JS *Hayase*; the minesweepers JS *Hikoshima*, JS *Yurishima*, JS *Awashima*, and JS *Sakushima*; and the underway replenishment ship JS *Tokiwa*. A total of 511 crew were aboard, including 50 headquarters personnel.

The typical fulfillment rate of various JMSDF forces is somewhere between 75% and 90%. Similarly, only around three-quarters of a minesweeper's complement of 45 is usually filled. While organizing the dispatch force for the Persian Gulf operation, Sakuma promised Ochiai that at least the complement would be filled 100%. Forcible transfers from nationwide forces filled the deficiency. It was not something done in ordinary times, but it was made possible by special order of the CMS. *What a powerful man the chief of maritime staff is!* Captain Ochiai thought.

One crewmember even hurried to Yokosuka from Hokkaido as soon as his appointment was announced on April 18; his vessel departed Yokosuka just after his arrival. While Ochiai asked for capable crewmembers, some units did not send their finest personnel. Their ages varied greatly, from those who would reach their 19th birthday during the dispatch to those over 50 who were nearing retirement. Not all of these JMSDF officers and sailors were hand-picked.

Crewmembers were not forced to go to the Persian Gulf: they could leave the ship if they did not want to go. Sakuma and Ochiai were expecting that around 25% of the entire crew would refuse to go. They were surprised to find that only five people backed out when the mission was announced, and even those five were actually willing but unable to go because of various circumstances, such as a doctor's prohibition or a parent's illness. There were even crewmembers who took part although their own or their daughter's weddings had been scheduled during the traditional long May holiday when they would be away. The fiancée of a JMSDF official who went to the Persian Gulf was herself a JMSDF official, a WAVES (Woman Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service);[6] she postponed her wedding for half a year to wait for his return. The mother of Lieutenant Akihiro Watanabe, who played an active role as an explosive ordnance disposal diver, happened to pass away on the day of her son's departure. However, his father kept the news from him so he would not be upset. And the father, who traveled to Singapore to tell him of his mother's death, did not ask him to return home, nor did the son say he wished to.

The crewmembers were calm as usual. Captain Ochiai quipped that "They probably didn't know how important it was." But that was not the sole reason. *Certainly, we feel uneasy going far away. You never know what environment awaits you. But the mission we've been given is minesweeping, our area of expertise. We've been training to dispose of live mines off Iwo Jima every year. The place might be different, but the procedure is the same. Disposing of mines is terrifying regardless of the number of times you do it, but it's not something unfamiliar. You just have to coolly carry out your duty.* The crew was full of quiet confidence.

Ahead of their departure, CMS Sakuma visited each of the six vessels to be dispatched and talked to the crew on each vessel for an hour. "Never mind your rank. Just tell me frankly what's on your mind." Encouraged, petty officers, notebooks in

[6] A JMSDF program originally modeled on the US Navy's World War II program of the same name.

hand, threw a series of sharp questions at the supreme officer of the JMSDF. A staff member reprimanded them, asking, "Aren't you willing to go?" They continued their questions with tears of frustration in their eyes: "That's not why we're asking questions. We just want to know more about the area, to do our job well." Sakuma was relieved to hear the crew speak their minds. Had they been silent, he would have worried. He could only send them off, believing they could do the job. He felt it was his role to lighten their burden as much as possible.

Departure

Thus, in a very limited time, the force was organized, the crew chosen, equipment and supplies prepared, and local information gathered. The MSO, as well as other the units involved, including the Supply Demand Control Command,[7] had needed to work night and day for the final few days. The official decision that JMSDF minesweepers would be dispatched to sweep mines in the Persian Gulf was made at an extraordinary cabinet meeting and in the Security Council[8] on April 24. Preparations were finally complete 2 days later: supplies were being loaded right up to departure and there was no chance to grant the crew any leave. On April 26, the flagship JS *Hayase* and the minesweeper JS *Yurishima* left Kure, while the minesweepers JS *Awashima*, JS *Sakushima* and the underway replenishment ship JS *Tokiwa* departed Yokosuka, and the minesweeper JS *Hikoshima* sailed from Sasebo. Civilian protest boats attempted to approach the three vessels at Yokosuka to prevent them from leaving, but they were blocked by MSA patrol boats.

In his address to the commanders and commanding officers of various ranks, sent to them in a sealed envelope to be opened after leaving port, CMS Sakuma stated:

> *Looking back, the environment surrounding the JSDF has been extremely unforgiving ever since the establishment of the JMSDF in 1954. Our predecessors endured these hardships, inherited good naval traditions, tried to adapt to the new era, and worked hard to build up the JMSDF of today. We must never forget the noble sweat, tears, and even blood that they shed.*

The spirit of Admiral Yamanashi's lecture that Nakamura conveyed to Sakuma seems to be deeply reflected in this address. Coincidentally, the day of departure, April 26, was the 39th anniversary of the establishment of the Coastal Safety Force, the predecessor of the JMSDF.

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[7] *Jukyū Tōsei-tai*. Since 1998, it has been called the Maritime Materiel Command (*Kaijō Jietai Hokyū Honbu*), which is in charge of JMSDF's logistics operations.

[8] A domestic government body established in 1986 to replace the Defense Council, which had been set up in 1956. In 2013, the Security Council was replaced by a National Security Council with much more authority on security policy. All of these councils have been a part of the cabinet and chaired by the prime minister.

Fig. 9.1 The JMSDF minesweeping force proceeds in a single column, September 2014. (Photo credit: JMSDF)

On April 28, 2 days after departing separately from Yokosuka, Kure, and Sasebo, the six vessels of the dispatch force rendezvoused in Kasari Bay at Amami Ōshima, Kagoshima, and held their first study meeting. Here, Captain Ochiai addressed the whole crew. *First, let's bring our hearts together in making navigation safe. Second, let's not have any accidents. This is not a war; this is a peacetime operation, so act on the principle of safety first. When in doubt, choose a safer way. Let's go to see the cherry blossoms together in Kure next year. Don't rush to achieve results.* Ochiai pledged himself to bring all 511 crew safely home.

The dispatch force, heading south along the Nansei Islands, received an aerial send-off from a formation of JMSDF P-3C antisubmarine patrol aircraft and JASDF C-130 transport aircraft. At sea, the ships' crews responded by waving their caps, in keeping with JMSDF customs inherited from the IJN. The six vessels left Japanese waters in a single column, with JS *Hayase* in the lead, headed straight toward the Persian Gulf (Fig. 9.1).

Cooperation Among Navies

After leaving Japan, the minesweeping force called at several ports en route: the US Navy's Subic Bay Naval Base in the Philippines; Singapore; Penang, Malaysia; Colombo, Sri Lanka; and Karachi, Pakistan. In the Strait of Malacca, the crew of a

Japanese dredger cheered, waving small Japanese national flags, which moved the minesweeper crews.

Fortunately, the dispatch force encountered no cyclones on its journey; it passed through the Strait of Hormuz and entered the Persian Gulf on the morning of May 26. The following day, it arrived at Port Rashid in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, which was used as a supply base by the minesweeping forces of various countries. Straight away, Captain Ochiai visited Rear Admiral Raynor A. K. Taylor, commander, US Navy Middle East Force, aboard his flagship, USS *La Salle*. He then attended the coordination meeting of the commanders from various countries onboard the German Navy's tender FGS *Donau*.

Ochiai was feeling bad when he arrived in Dubai. The Japanese force had arrived in the region a month after the German Navy, the last to send minesweepers before the JMSDF. He was worried that the other navies might criticize him for arriving too late. Indeed, 800 of the 1200 mines laid had already been disposed of.

However, all the various navies gave the JMSDF latecomers a warm welcome. The first 800 mines had been laid in areas that were relatively easy to sweep. The remaining mines were laid in difficult areas, and everyone was grateful for any support in getting rid of them. Although he arrived in Dubai feeling uncomfortable, the atmosphere was welcoming, as if to say, "Here comes the ninth guy. Let's get to work right away. We'll give you our full cooperation."

Minesweepers are built of wood so that they do not trigger magnetic mines, but they become magnetized after a long voyage due to the influence of the Earth's magnetic field. It would be dangerous to start minesweeping without addressing this first. When the Japanese force arrived at Dubai, the Royal Navy lent them their mobile degaussing facility straight away. Although degaussing usually takes more than a day per vessel, the JMSDF force spent only half a day degaussing four vessels, much to the surprise of the other countries' naval personnel.

According to Ochiai, the most important thing in minesweeping is information about the mines: what kinds of mines have been laid and where. With this information, the work of minesweeping is as good as 70% completed. For that reason, information about mines is top secret in every country. Unfortunately, the JMSDF minesweeping force had no information of its own about the mines laid in the Persian Gulf, so they had to rely on the other navies, especially the US Navy. Since the initiation of the use of force against Iraq in January, however, the US Navy had stopped providing the JMSDF with this kind of information. They circulated the details to countries that took part in the multinational operations, but they did not share it with the Japanese who were unwilling to fight. It was a matter of course.

Once the dispatch of minesweepers to the Persian Gulf had been decided, the JMSDF had desperately been requesting this information from the US Navy, but nothing had been sent even by the time Ochiai's force arrived in its last port of call, Karachi. Ochiai was concerned that the US Navy would not share the information after all. When he paid a courtesy call on Rear Admiral Taylor in Dubai, however, the commander matter-of-factly handed him a stack of documents, saying, "This must be the information you want." In these documents was necessary data such as

the number and location of mines, methods of disposal, and the presence of floating mines, all organized in charts. On calm reflection, there was no reason for the information to be concealed when the navies were going to be minesweeping together. The US Navy simply treated the JMSDF as an ally cooperating against a common threat. Nonetheless, the information was shared because the US Navy trusted the JMSDF minesweeping force. Ochiai was delighted.

Besides providing information, the US Navy offered both material and nonmaterial support. They took the trouble to give up the best section of the pier to the JMSDF minesweepers, provided missing equipment, and allowed the JMSDF minesweeping force to buy beer for its crewmembers at the US Navy's NEX (navy exchange). And the US Navy was not the only one that displayed generosity. The Royal Navy let the JMSDF use their degaussing facility; the Dutch Navy carefully taught the JMSDF its method of mine disposal; and the German navy loaned the JMSDF a plastic model of MANTA, a highly effective Italian mine that is hard to dispose of. In return, the Japanese force opened the helicopter deck of the flagship JS *Hayase* to helicopters of other navies and refueled them. It felt like everyone was working on the same mission, regardless of nationality or flag color.

The Dispatch Force's Crew

The four Japanese minesweepers and the tender JS *Hayase* departed Dubai on May 31, 4 days after the minesweeping force had arrived. They were destined for the waters off Kuwaiti ports, waters that had been left untouched and placed under the Japanese force's charge. After supplies had been loaded, JS *Tokiwa* also departed and headed for the area on June 2. Thereafter, the *Tokiwa*, alone, made 11 round trips between Dubai and the minesweeping area, bringing food, water, and mail from crewmembers' families to the minesweeping force. At the anchorage, the crew of the *Tokiwa* tried to assist the minesweeping crews, laundering their workwear, providing them hot baths and freshly baked bread, and entertaining them with barbeques on the deck. The minesweeping crews called the *Tokiwa* "*Ofukuro* (dear mother)" and waited longingly for the next supply run.

The minesweeping operation began on June 5. Minesweeping in these waters was not technically challenging, but the crew was nervous as this was their first task. Ochiai addressed the crew, informing them that the number of mines they would dispose of was not the issue. It would even be acceptable not to dispose of any mines, he said, as long as safe navigation could be guaranteed.

The waters of the Persian Gulf were a tough environment for conducting minesweeping operations. During the day, the temperature reached 43 °C (109 °F). In this heat, the crew had to wear helmets and life jackets and stay on deck in case they struck a mine. They also had to wear air-tight goggles and masks to prevent dust and soot blown off the coast from blowing into their eyes and mouths. The humidity at night was over 90%. Flies and mosquitos also plagued them.

Under these difficult conditions, the crew worked on a schedule of five consecutive working days followed by a day off. In the morning, they woke up at 4:30 a.m., left the anchorage soon after sunrise (just after 5:00 a.m.), and started minesweeping around 7:00 a.m. They returned to the anchorage around 7:00 p.m. as the sun was setting, then deployed an anti-mine net against floating mines, and carried out maintenance and inspection of equipment. They went to bed at 11:00 p.m.

Every night, when the minesweepers came back, Captain Ochiai boarded each vessel and inspected the meal leftovers. He also checked the faces of young crewmembers. When they were tired, there were more leftovers, especially of fatty food. After consulting the doctor who accompanied the force to look after the health of the crewmembers, he changed the schedule to four consecutive working days followed by a day of rest. As the US and German Navies had taken a day off after three consecutive working days, the schedule kept by the Japanese force was still the hardest.

And yet the crews continued working without complaint. In particular, the chief petty officers (CPOs) worked diligently, leading by example. A minesweeper is naturally small in scale; the crew is like a family without much distinction by rank. So, they look up to their senior CPO as a father figure. In the minesweeping operation, the CPOs volunteered for mine lookout duty at the bow, for example. If a ship navigating the danger zone hits a mine, the lookout will be blown away first. The CPOs, who were approaching their 40s and 50s, took on the dangerous duty, saying, "The young crewmembers haven't enjoyed their lives to the fullest. We have lived long enough." CPOs also played an active part aboard the minesweeper tender JS *Hayase* and the underway replenishment ship JS *Tokiwa*. The young crew performed their duties while learning a great deal from the examples set by their senior colleagues.

It was not just the CPOs they looked up to. Everyone followed Captain Ochiai's example as they worked. When Sakuma talked to the young crew during his field visit, they said, "It's hard work, but we do it because *Oyaji*[9] [Ochiai] says, 'Let's do it.'" Ochiai himself made his career as a JMSDF officer under the influence of his senior colleagues. He still remembers Teiji Nakamura, then commander of Escort Division 32, yelling at him when he was an ensign, serving as assistant operations officer of the destroyer JS *Kitakami* on the bridge alongside the commanding officer. Naturally, he was scared and drew back. It was alright, however, because Nakamura's severe reprimand was not done in selfish anger. While in port, Nakamura would wear a shabby raincoat when he returned to the official residence after a day's work, so Ochiai and others affectionately called him "Teiji Columbo."[10] When Ochiai's service on the *Kitakami* came to an end, Nakamura called to him and rewarded him by saying, "Hey, would you like to go on an overseas training cruise?"

[9] An informal term for one's own father, like "my old man." Also used to refer to one's boss; here, the commander, Captain Ochiai. Counterpart to *Ofukuro*.

[10] A reference to Peter Falk's raincoat-wearing TV detective, Lieutenant Columbo that puns on Nakamura's first name, Teiji: *keiji* means detective in Japanese.

One of the trainee officers Ochiai instructed during that voyage was the future Admiral Kōsei Fujita, the current CMS.[11] Ochiai recollects that everyone grew by learning from the example set by their senior colleagues.

The crews were exemplary even when they were not working. Normally, when sailors of any given unit carry out duties at sea or ashore for a certain length of time, about 5% of them violate service regulations and rules. Whenever sailors are involved in an incident, such as trouble with a drunk crewmember or a traffic offense, the commander has to deal with the issue. However, the force dispatched to the Persian Gulf did not cause a single problem during the 188 days from the time they left Japan until they returned home. "These people were not the cream of Japanese society," Ochiai says. "If anything, they were the less able of their generation. And yet, they caused no problems and carried out their work properly. On our return, I told the CMS that the JMSDF's training is doing something right."

The dispatch force's crew had a good reputation for behaving well at ports of call in Dubai and Bahrain. Unlike sailors of certain other navies who often caused incidents, including violent ones, the JMSDF personnel were polite, never drunk and disorderly, and taxi drivers liked giving them rides. City markets welcomed them as well. Commanders of other navies frequently asked Captain Ochiai, "Why aren't there any troubles with the Japanese minesweeping crews? Are there really no problems? How do you teach them to behave so well?" They were worried and nervous whenever they called at ports, thinking their crews might do something bad. Ochiai answered that he had not taught his crews anything out of the ordinary; still, he must have been pleased at heart. Most of the crewmembers were very ordinary young people, but he says they seemed to understand without being told that they were traveling abroad representing Japan.

Regarding the crew, Captain Ochiai was the most concerned about their families left at home. If their families did not feel reassured, the crew themselves would feel ill at ease while working. So, when he left Japan, he asked CMS Sakuma to look after the families well. He personally wrote to the families of all 511 crewmembers. Every day, he wrote to the parents of the unmarried crewmembers and to the wives of those who were married. He received replies from almost 80% of the families who received his letters. Among them, one said, "I didn't even know my son had been dispatched to the Persian Gulf until I read your letter. Please kindly take care of him." Ochiai thinks the parents and wives on the home front of this day and age were admirable. They all waited, quietly praying that their sons and husbands would carry out their duties well and return home safely.

Ochiai also advised the crewmembers: "Write to your family. If your hearts aren't as one with your family, you'll never be able to work steadily on a tough job for a long period. So, you must write to them." Young crewmembers seemed to be making collect calls from the ports of call, however, probably feeling that writing letters was too much trouble. Ochiai came to realize that letter writing was a relic of his own generation. At the suggestion of Captain Kōichi Furushō, the chief of the

[11] Retired in March 2001.

MSO's Public Affairs Section, a newspaper, *Taosa Times*, featuring reports on aspects of the crews' daily life, was published and distributed to families. The crewmembers' families were also invited to attend informal gatherings at the naval bases in Kure, Sasebo, and Yokosuka.

Operation Gulf Dawn

The minesweeping operation commenced on June 5; for some time thereafter, the Japanese disposed of no mines. They carried out their operation using a safe and reliable method called "strip minesweeping," dividing the water into strips of 100 yards (about 90 meters) and processing them one by one, like cutting a piece of paper into rectangular shapes. After finishing a group of ten, they moved to a different section. Tokyo appeared to be quite frustrated by the slow progress: "Why are there no results yet?" Someone overheard an officer in charge at the MSO and Captain Ochiai shouting at each other over the telephone. For Ochiai, the crew's safety was the top priority, regardless of whatever Tokyo expected. To ensure safety, he did not rush. In the afternoon of June 12, MSO's Public Affairs Section Chief Furushō led members of the defense press club to the operational theater aboard JS *Tokiwa*; "You came a week too early," Ochiai told Furushō. At a press conference the following day, Captain Ochiai revealed that the minesweeping operation had been named *Operation Gulf Dawn*, in the hopes that peace in the Persian Gulf would begin again with this operation. Ochiai might have been thinking that the operation would also mark a new dawn for the JMSDF.

After confirming the locations of mines in 70% of the area by June 17, the crews commenced the actual disposal. On the morning of June 19, the minesweeper JS *Hikoshima* dropped a depth charge designed to destroy mines and then everyone held their breath and waited. Lieutenant Commander Hiroyuki Niino, the commanding officer of JS *Hikoshima*, was on edge. *Should the first disposal fail, it will have a serious effect on the crew's morale.* After a countdown, at exactly 10:01 a.m. as scheduled—"one zero zero one" in the JMSDF style—the sounds of two underwater explosions could be heard and the sea surface bubbled. Slowly, a column of water rose, reaching a height of 50 meters. Success! A great cheer went up from the crew.

Another mine was disposed of that afternoon, and then another the following day, this one by divers for the first time. Three mines in total had been destroyed; by July 1, a total of 16 mines had been removed. The dispatch force temporarily entered the Port of Mina Salman in Manama, the capital of Bahrain, on July 4. After a month of working continuously, the minesweeping force crew took its first weeklong rest. The operation resumed on July 14, and another mine was disposed of, bringing the total up to 17. Every time a mine was destroyed, the crew celebrated in the evening with lots of beer. As another mine was destroyed, they drank again. They ended up consuming a 6-month supply of beer by the end of July. Half suspecting the crewmembers might be limiting mine disposal to one a day so they could enjoy their evening beer, Captain Ochiai sent a telegram to Tokyo urgently requesting

more beer nonetheless. That was when the US Navy let the JMSDF Minesweeping Force buy all the canned beer at the American NEX. Even that was not enough, so Ochiai asked the Dutch and German navies to supply some as well.

Joint Minesweeping Operation with the US Navy

The Japanese minesweepers completed operations in the designated area on July 20 and returned to Port Rashid in Dubai. It so happened that, on that same day, the navies from the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands headed home after minesweeping the Kuwaiti ports, because the UN resolution to "remove mines in international waters" had been achieved. Still, one troublesome area remained left to sweep, an area with rapid currents and an intricate network of pipelines. Only the US Navy and JMSDF minesweepers remained in the region, so it was natural for them to work together. The remaining area extended across the Iraq-Iran border and the permission of both governments was required to conduct minesweeping operations there. The US Navy could not operate openly: the United States had no diplomatic relations with Iran and could not seek Tehran's permission. That meant that the JMSDF dispatch force took charge of the most challenging section with assistance from the US Navy.

Iraq granted Japan permission to operate in this innermost part of the Persian Gulf on July 25; the Minesweeping Force left Port Rashid the following day to head for the area. The water in that area is only about 10 meters deep for it is very close to the mouth of the Shatt al-Arab (River of the Arabs) formed by the confluence of the Euphrates and the Tigris. The tidal current is also extremely fast. Moreover, any rupture of the oil pipelines running across the sea floor there would pollute the sea. It was the worst area for minesweeping. The Iraqis had sought to prevent the multinational forces from landing there by laying numerous mines, including the highly effective Italian MANTA bottom mines.

The staff of the US Navy Mine Countermeasures Group, including its commander, Captain Leslie W. Hewett, forcefully debated the question of how best to conduct minesweeping operations with the staff of Ochiai's force, at times shouting at each other. The JMSDF and the US Navy used different procedures. Where and when would divers be sent in? When were mines to be detonated? With crewmembers' lives depending on the answer to each question, the arguments were serious and heated. Coordinating their operations with a passion that came "only short of an actual exchange of blows," they developed a deep sense of mutual trust by the time the minesweeping was done.

The dispatch force commenced the minesweeping operation on July 28. According to Lieutenant Akihiro Watanabe, the chief explosive ordnance disposal diver on the minesweeper JS *Sakushima*, the water was too shallow to tow the minesweeping equipment. The mines were detected by sonar, and then disposed of by divers working in almost zero visibility, the fast current lifting sand from the seabed to muddy the water. The divers could not even see their own hands. They

crawled on the seabed, held themselves steady by sticking their knives in the sand, and felt around for mines. Because it was judged to be too dangerous when the tidal current was flowing fast, the minesweeping operation was carried out hurriedly when the current slowed. Yet visibility was still bad: the divers only had a narrow field of view through their goggles. A diver's head or leg could have easily touched a mine's antenna (fuse) unwittingly. Once, Watanabe accidentally bumped a mine with his knife, making a sound. Although an acoustic mine cannot be triggered by a single sound, he felt himself cowering, thinking he would die if he made another. In the end, the divers removed 29 of the 34 mines that the JMSDF removed from the Persian Gulf.

The claim that the JMSDF has the highest level of minesweeping capabilities in the world is only half true, according to Ochiai. Undoubtedly, the skills of divers like Watanabe are the best in the world. The US and European navies, however, possess unmanned underwater search vehicles that can be used to search for underwater mines through a monitor on the surface, maneuvering the vehicle with a control lever like a joystick. There is no need to risk divers' lives. Ochiai's stomach was in knots every time the divers entered the water, and he waited for them to surface 9 minutes later as specified by regulations.

In addition, the other countries' minesweeping forces were capable of processing all the data from GPS, radar, and sonar by computer. Mines that were located were automatically plotted on a chart. The JMSDF at the time had no computerized minesweepers, so charting depended on craftsmanship. Of the nine navies of the coalition that took part in the minesweeping operation, only Saudi Arabia's minesweeping equipment was more outdated than the JMSDF's. The shabby vessels and equipment of the JMSDF required constant maintenance, and the Japanese crews used every trick in the book to keep them running. During the entire operation, the dispatch force's maintenance crew repaired as many as 315 breakdowns and defects, keeping the operational readiness rate at 100%. It was almost a miracle.

After returning to Japan, Ochiai strongly advocated for modernizing the minesweeping force, but it has not been implemented as he had hoped. It is not as though Japan lacks the technology. But, given the limited defense budget, funding runs out before it can be appropriated to the minesweeping force. Whereas the displacement of the US Navy's minesweeping tender USS *Tripoli* was 25,000 tons, JS *Hayase* was only 2000 tons. Ochiai proposed building a new 35,000-ton minesweeping tender, however, the new ship was only 5600 tons.

The crewmembers did their best with their limited vessels and equipment in the challenging environment. They finished minesweeping in the difficult waters on August 19. They disposed of 17 mines in this troublesome area, bringing the total number of mines Japan removed in the Persian Gulf up to 34. During the operation, one minesweeper had been detached to engage in expanding the navigational routes off Kuwait. After paying a goodwill visit to an Iranian Naval base, the ship resumed its mission and engaged in minesweeping of the anchorage; then the final minesweeping operation was carried out on the navigational route to Khafji, Saudi Arabia.

A "steel beach" party was held with US sailors on September 11 to celebrate the completion of the operation. Held on the minesweeper tender's deck, the crews could socialize together, enjoying themselves without letting language differences get in the way. After everyone had a considerable amount to drink, a call came from Tokyo, informing them that the Iranian government had finally approved minesweeping in Iranian waters. *The JMSDF is to dispatch two vessels, and the US Navy is also to dispatch two. Begin preparations immediately.* The crews sobered up at once and soon left the anchorage, arriving in the area at 6 o'clock the following morning. Another call came from Tokyo, however, ordering the cancellation and termination of the operation: the Iranian president said the minesweeping could not be allowed after all. The tension lifted from Ochiai's shoulders at once. "It's over. There's no need to risk the lives of my subordinates anymore," he thought to himself. The mission of the dispatch force was fully accomplished. The operational readiness rate was 100%, and there were no casualties. It was a triumphant outcome.

Ties with the US Navy

The cooperation between the Japanese and US forces in the Persian Gulf was rooted in the mutual trust between the JMSDF and the US Navy. Without the friendship that had developed over the years, it would have been inconceivable to share intelligence on mines with the JMSDF, which was not part of the multinational operations. During the period leading up to the Gulf War, Vice Admiral Henry H. Mauz, Jr., commander of the Seventh Fleet, was commanding US Naval forces in the Persian Gulf when he had been relieved as previously scheduled;[12] on his way home, he stopped at Yokosuka and Atsugi to explain the situation to the crews' families. In a courtesy call with Sakuma, the admiral expressed his true feelings: "Although 19 navies are taking part [in the multinational operations], only four can be relied on when it reaches the point where shots are fired. I thought, how reassuring it would have been, if the JMSDF vessels had been there."

Once Japan made its decision to dispatch JMSDF minesweepers to the Persian Gulf, Admiral Robert J. Kelly, CINCPACFLT, sent a message to the forces under his command, ordering them to give full assistance to the JMSDF operation. The US Navy not only provided information on the mines, but also prepared detailed weather maps while the minesweepers were heading to the Persian Gulf. The US Navy's support was very reassuring to the JMSDF.

Admiral Kelly's father was a young Navy pilot who died fighting at Rabaul during the Pacific War. His mother, made a young widow, had raised her son by herself. The son became a fine naval officer. Yet, years after the war had ended, his mother still regarded the Japanese as the hateful enemy who had taken her husband

[12]The US Seventh Fleet was being forward deployed in the Persian Gulf when Vice Admiral Stanley R. Arthur assumed command in December 1990.

from her. She hammered this into her son. When Kelly, as the commanding officer of the carrier USS *Enterprise*, arrived at Sasebo for the first time in 1983, he still considered the Japanese as the hateful enemy who had killed his father; he had not forgiven them in the least.

And yet, after meeting Japanese people himself and learning about Japan, his feelings changed. He made many valuable friends, and Japan became his favorite country. His mother, however, could not understand her son's change of heart. *How could you become friends with those who killed your father?* They argued over it many times. Many years passed, and the disagreement continued.

One day, the admiral had a chance to return to Washington, D.C. and spend a day with his aged mother who was living in the suburbs. The admiral showed her the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun that he had been awarded, and they talked for hours.

> *She listened to my story for the first time and began to understand. Before my eyes, my mother started to open her heart. We both wept. She finally forgave the Japanese. My mother even called a local paper and asked them to print an article about her son receiving a medal. Already over eighty, my mother is not well. However, when she departs this life, she can go to her eternal rest peacefully, leaving behind the hate she's been holding on to.*

The paragraph above is part of Admiral Kelly's speech at the Seventh Fleet's change of command ceremony in Japan when he was nearing his own retirement, 3 years after Japanese minesweepers were sent to the Persian Gulf. Since the time of Admiral Arleigh Burke, the officers and sailors of the Japanese and US navies who fought bitterly in the war, as well as the younger generations that came after, have fully cooperated despite holding differing opinions. Sakuma strongly feels that the respect and mutual trust born of the interactions between JMSDF and US Navy personnel enabled the bilateral cooperation during the dispatch of Japanese minesweepers to the Persian Gulf.

The Minesweepers Return Home

The dispatched minesweeping force left Port Rashid, Dubai and headed home to Japan on September 23, calling at Muscat, Oman; Colombo, Sri Lanka; Singapore; and then Subic Bay Naval Base in the Philippines. To avoid Typhoon Ruth then bearing down on the Philippines, the Minesweeping Force made a hasty departure from Subic Bay, reaching Japanese waters on October 24. It received a warm welcome from JMSDF P-3C antisubmarine patrol aircraft and JASDF F-4EJ fighter jets from Naha Air Base, flying in formation. As the ships approached the main island of Okinawa, two minesweepers from JMSDF Sub Area Activity Okinawa met them at sea, celebrating their return with a sign that read "Welcome Back" and traveling alongside them.

The six vessels of the dispatch force entered the Seto Inland Sea from the Hyūganada Sea and arrived at the anchorage off Ōkurokamishima Island in Hiroshima Bay

on October 28. They anchored there to take a one-day rest; Captain Ochiai ordered the crews to "do nothing other than breathe." Once the minesweepers entered port, the crews would be caught up in the welcome-home ceremony. They were exhausted and needed a proper rest. The JMSDF veterans waiting ashore wondered why the ships did not immediately enter port once they reached it; Ochiai still believes that the one-day rest was essential.

On October 29, Admiral Makoto Sakuma, chairman, Joint Staff Council (as of July 1); Admiral Fumio Okabe, the new CMS; Rear Admiral Jesse J. Hernandez, commander, US Naval Forces Japan; and Commander in Chief of the Self-Defense Fleet Tatsuji Itō boarded JS *Hayase* by helicopter to hold a meeting. The dispatched force finally entered the port of Kure on the morning of October 30. Around 20 boats at sea, shouting protests through loudspeakers, were prevented from approaching the minesweeping force by MSA patrol boats, which came between them and the six returning ships.

The entire port was in a welcoming mood. On the side of the ferry connecting Kure and Etajima hung a banner that read, "Thank you for your service." On the portside of the minesweeper JS *Awashima*, a banner reading "HOME AT LAST" in English was attached along the rail. The crews' families, waving flags on the pier, welcomed the ships home. The crewmembers of each ship were glad to find their families among the crowd. When the flagship JS *Hayase* moored alongside F Berth, Captain Ochiai briefly spoke to Chief Staff Officer Hidehisa Miyashita, standing next to him: "Thank you for your good work."

Prime Minister Kaifu, who had not sent the dispatch force off, attended the welcome-home ceremony at the pier. There was scant applause when he appeared. In sharp contrast, the attendees reacted enthusiastically when Captain Ochiai appeared on the minesweeping tender JS *Hayase*. Among those welcoming Ochiai at the pier was, of course, Admiral Sakuma.

At that instant, Ochiai and Sakuma must have felt many conflicting emotions in their hearts: frustration surrounding the difficulties preceding the dispatch of minesweepers to the Persian Gulf; satisfaction of having carried out the mission successfully and without mishap and having brought back all 511 crew safely; and pride in each crewmember who had grown tougher as a JMSDF official through the experience in the Persian Gulf. Beyond that, Captain Ochiai might have remembered his father who had died in Okinawa, the history of the JMSDF minesweeping force that had continued minesweeping along the coast of Japan despite many casualties, and his recruitment and training of young recruits at the Provincial Liaison Office. And for his part, Chairman Sakuma might have recollected townspeople calling him a "tax parasite" when he entered the Defense Academy as a cadet of the first class (Class of 1957); his less-than-exemplary times as a student (he was the first to be reprimanded for drinking in the academy); and the resentment he felt as a young officer toward his superiors, former officers in the IJN who were always referring to the "Navy" as though the IJN was a true navy while the JMSDF was not.

That evening, the crewmembers and their families attended a welcome-home party hosted by Defense Agency Director General Ikeda. The following day, a ceremony was held at 9:00 a.m. to disband the force. After CMS Okabe and

Commander in Chief of the Self-Defense Fleet Itō had addressed the crowd, Captain Ochiai gave the final speech. First, he read the messages of thanks from Rear Admiral Taylor, commander, US Navy Middle East Force, and Captain Hewett, commander of the US Navy Mine Countermeasures Group, who had "carried out the operation together [with the JMSDF dispatch force crew] with their arms around each other's shoulders." The messages were attached to an Iraqi contact mine given as a gift in commemoration. Captain Hewett wrote, "This mine laid by the Iraqi forces is presented to my dear Captain Ochiai and his officers and sailors, who gallantly engaged in the minesweeping operation in close cooperation with the US Navy's Mine Countermeasure Group."

Captain Ochiai then spoke to the crew about three points.

The first thing I want to talk about is gratitude. The mission of this dispatch force was made possible not only through the crews' efforts, but also due to the support of many others, especially your families who held down the fort. We must never forget our gratitude toward them.

The second is about pride. For the last six months, you have quietly carried out the dangerous operation of mine disposal under difficult environmental conditions, including high temperatures and high humidity, dust and soot. You accomplished the mission to secure safe passage for our ships and contributed internationally. It is really splendid, and I'm very proud of that. However, pride is something you should keep in your hearts, and not something to hang from the "tip of your nose," to show off to others or boast about. As soon as you show off or boast about it, that pride is no longer true pride, and it turns into arrogance. I want you to keep pride in your heart as spiritual nourishment to refine yourself and use it as a tool to encourage yourself when you are experiencing hard times.

The third is about practice. You were able to accomplish this mission because you demonstrated perfectly the skills you had been honing until now. Skill is not something you can learn in a day. Unless you continue to constantly hone your skills, you can't prove your mettle when it counts. It is imperative we start again today, working hard together, polishing our skills, and training for tomorrow's missions.

Then Captain Ochiai concluded his address: "The Persian Gulf Dispatch Force is hereby disbanded. I wish you a safe voyage to Yokosuka and Sasebo; please give my kind regards to your families."

And so, the first actual mission force assembled by the JMSDF since its founding was disbanded, and the crew resumed their training, in preparation for new missions.

Chapter 10
After the Gulf War

Auer in Nashville

When James Auer retired as the director for Japanese affairs at the US Department of Defense in August 1988, President Reagan's term of office was set to end the following January. Auer thought to himself: *Soon an era will end. I'd like to resign when the administration changes, and then go on to observe the Japan-US security relationship that I was involved with as a naval officer and a Department of Defense bureaucrat. And I'd like to put my experience to use as an outside advisor.*

Just around the same time, there was a surge in the US public's interest in Japan, which had undergone remarkable economic growth in the 1980s. Universities around the United States were establishing Japan studies programs. The chancellor at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, showed an interest in Japan studies. Upon learning about this, Auer contacted Vanderbilt. The university said that it was going to establish a new Center for US-Japan Studies as part of the Institute for Public Policy Studies; it offered Auer the position of director. Vanderbilt University was his wife Judy's alma mater; her parents lived in the city of Franklin on the outskirts of Nashville. She would be happy if she could live close to her parents. Auer decided to accept the university's offer. His superior, Assistant Secretary of Defense Armitage, also approved his plan (Fig. 10.1).

As an aside, Lieutenant Commander Torkel Patterson, who had studied at the University of Tsukuba, succeeded Auer as the Director for Japanese affairs in the Department of Defense. Patterson was later put in charge of security policies regarding Japan and South Korea in the White House in both the George H. W. Bush and Clinton administrations. Patterson continued to speak actively on Japan-US security issues and East Asian security issues in general, even after he retired from the Navy with the rank of commander; he returned to the White House under the new George W. Bush administration.

N. Agawa, *Friendship Across the Seas*,
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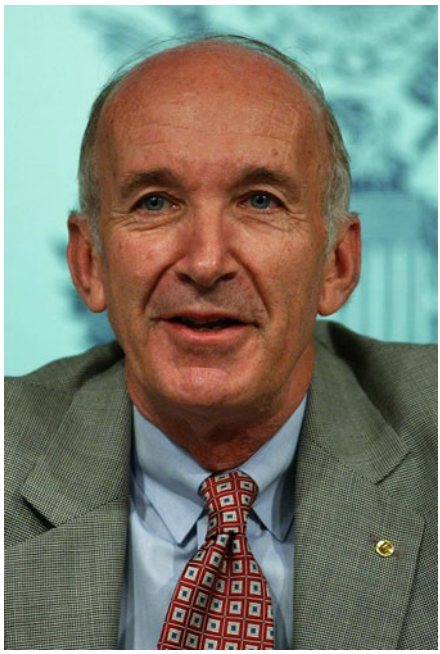

Fig. 10.1 Dr. James E. Auer, Professor Emeritus, Vanderbilt University, Director, James E. Auer US-Japan Center. (Photo credit: Sankei Shimbun)

Auer's final day at the Department of Defense was the last Friday in August. The next day, he and his family moved out of their dear old house in Arlington across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. and headed for Franklin by car, so that Auer could start his new position at Vanderbilt as soon as the new semester began. Approximately a 30-minute drive from Nashville, Franklin is in the middle of tranquil countryside with undulating hills. It is also the site of a famous Civil War battle. The lots were quite a bit larger here than the areas around Washington, D.C. The Auers bought a house next to the dairy farm that Judy's father ran as a hobby. Later, when his father-in-law passed away, the family bought the farm and has lived there ever since. Auer's children grew up healthy in this blessed environment.

The Center for US-Japan Studies, Auer's new workplace, is in an old stone building in a corner of the Vanderbilt University campus in Nashville. Built in the late nineteenth century, it was formerly a private residence. The university bought the house, used it as the chancellor's official residence initially, and then converted it into a research building. Climbing the stairs to enter Auer's office (which used to be the main bedroom), a visitor will see a painting of Admiral Heihachirō Tōgō on the wall. This painting has an interesting bit of history.

When Auer was doing research for his doctoral dissertation in Japan in 1970, he went to see the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) Officer Candidate School in Etajima, Hiroshima at the suggestion of Chief of Maritime Staff (CMS) Kazuomi Uchida. During his visit, he toured the school's Museum of Naval History. Uchida had worried that Auer, as an American, might be offended seeing the display on kamikaze pilots, but Auer told him that he had not been offended at all. Instead, he was deeply impressed by a large oil painting of Admiral Tōgō at the triumphant

fleet review after the Russo-Japanese War with Emperor Mutsuhito (Emperor Meiji) on the battleship HIJMS *Mikasa*. Admiral Tōgō is a person of respect for naval officers, regardless of their nationality. Auer told Uchida how taken he was with the painting; after some time had passed, he received an envelope by post. Enclosed he found an enlarged photograph of the painting displayed in the Museum of Naval History, taken on Uchida's orders. Auer, grateful for Uchida's generosity and thoughtfulness, took the photograph with him whenever he changed jobs. He even displayed it in the commanding officer's cabin on USS *Francis Hammond*.

The photograph began to fade a few years later. Auer remembered a shop near Fleet Activities Yokosuka that sold paintings to US sailors. The shop's owner, at his customers' request, painted portraits of their girlfriends or pictures of warships. Auer sent the photograph to his friend Hideo Kimura, who lived in Yokosuka, and asked him to inquire if the owner would paint a replica of it for 300 dollars. Seeing the photograph, the owner showed an interest. Not only did he complete an oil painting of excellent workmanship that could pass for the genuine article, but he also mounted it in a fine frame. Auer displayed the "counterfeit" in his office in the Department of Defense and at Vanderbilt University. Whenever he has visitors who know about the history of IJN, Japanese or American, Auer shows them the painting, arousing their envy.

Another treasure Auer keeps in his office is a pair of cufflinks that he understands Emperor Hirohito (Emperor Shōwa) had given to Admiral Shigeyoshi Inoue. Auer had hoped to find an opportunity during his doctoral dissertation research in Japan to interview Admiral Inoue, who had steadfastly opposed fighting a war against the United States and took part in intragovernmental initiatives to end the war. Auer persistently requested an interview through former Naval Academy students from Inoue's term as president there, including Auer's friend Sadao Senoo. Having retired to his home in Nagai, Yokosuka, and withdrawn from public life, however, Inoue declined, giving illness as an excuse. He passed away 5 years later in December 1975. Auer, then studying Japanese at the Jesuit Language School in Kamakura, attended Inoue's funeral in navy uniform. Two summers later, he also attended the funeral of Inoue's wife, Fujiko. Wearing a white uniform with a black armband, Auer sat properly in Japanese fashion for about two and a half hours with the other Japanese attendees.

In April 1979, a farewell party was held in Tokyo for Auer upon his transfer to the Department of Defense in Washington, D.C. Takeo Itō, Senoo's friend and Inoue's grandnephew, handed Auer a letter along with Admiral Inoue's cufflinks. Itō had been impressed when he heard from his family about an American Naval officer who had attended the funerals of Admiral Inoue and his wife. "He is an honorable naval officer," he thought. And so, Itō gave Auer the cherished cufflinks that his grand-uncle had given him while he was still alive. According to what Auer had heard, Emperor Hirohito had been worried about Inoue, who had retired to Nagai after the war, so he sent his chamberlain to see how Inoue was doing and to give him a bit of money as a sign of sympathy. Living in a dilapidated house as he was, Inoue felt unable to offer the chamberlain a warm welcome and declined to accept the money, stating "Every one of the Japanese people is now struggling to survive." Upon

receipt of the chamberlain's report on Inoue's refusal to accept the money, the emperor asked that a pair of cufflinks be delivered to Inoue. Auer felt honored to receive a pair of cufflinks with such a venerable history; he wore them at the ceremony in which the Department of Defense awarded him a medal.

The Auers have one more IJN-related family treasure. Given to Auer by Hideo Kimura's father, it is a piece of wood from the deck of the battleship HIJMS *Mikasa*, inscribed with the word *katsu* (to be victorious). Kimura's father rendered services as a local representative, in cooperation with the US Navy, to permanently preserve HIJMS *Mikasa*, which had fallen into disrepair after the war and was about to be scrapped. Before his death, he offered to give this historic wood plank to Auer. Auer hesitated, saying that it should be passed down to his son, Hideo, but Kimura insisted that it should be in the hands of a naval officer. Auer had kept the treasure safe since. A few years ago, however, he consulted his friend, Hideo, and suggested that this valuable item be returned to Japan. Kimura instead advised Auer to give it to Teiichirō, his adopted son who goes by the name Tei. When Tei attained Eagle Scout, the Boy Scouts' highest rank, Auer gave the wood plank to his son after reading congratulatory letters from Admiral Uchida and Admiral Nakamura at the award ceremony. *Be an honorable Eagle Scout. Be proud to be Japanese.* American attendees at the ceremony were all impressed, complimenting Auer on his excellent speech.

* * *

Even after having left Washington and moved to Nashville, Auer continues to lead a busy life. At Vanderbilt University, he teaches students in the classroom, and writes articles as well. One of his courses is for ordinary students on international relations in East Asia with a focus on Japan-US relations, while another is on naval history, mainly for students in the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC). NROTC students are required to take a course on military history. Usually, a naval officer teaches this course. However, Vanderbilt University's Department of History decided that course credits would not be given unless someone with a doctoral degree taught the course. And so, Dr. Auer was asked to teach the history of the rise and fall of sea powers, teaming up with an active-duty naval officer. Auer was an NROTC student himself at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and he embarked on his naval career after graduation. Almost 40 years later, he is enthusiastic about teaching youth who aspire to join the Navy just as he did in the past. Many of his former students have gone on to successful careers as active-duty naval officers.

The Center for US-Japan Studies also accepts students from Japan. Auer has looked after young bureaucrats from governmental institutions such as the Defense Agency,[1] the Ministry of International Trade and Industry,[2] and the National Police Agency, as well as other civilian students. Over the years, several former students

[1] Reorganized and renamed the Ministry of Defense in January 2007.

[2] Renamed the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) after a 2001 merger with other economic agencies.

have invited Auer to their weddings, and he has taken the trouble to fly to Japan and attend. He cherishes his relationships with former students more than most Japanese professors do.

The Japan-US Security Relationship in the 1990s

Auer's activities are not limited to Nashville. He often flies to Washington, D.C. to meet security policy experts and hold discussions with them. He testifies on US policy toward Japan in the congressional committees on foreign affairs. He is also invited to various conferences and symposia across the United States and gives lectures on Japan-US security relations. In addition, he visits Japan every year to meet and discuss issues with people in various fields, including JMSDF personnel, those in charge of security policy, politicians, academics, and journalists. The sight of Auer stressing the importance of the Japan-US alliance has become a familiar one at conferences on Japan-US relations. In fact, throughout the 1990s, Auer was asked to express his views on many occasions.

Even as the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union proved the effectiveness of the Japan-US security arrangements, these events also brought them up for review. What would the Japan-US alliance's raison d'être be post-Cold War? Could the alliance be maintained with the current strategy and equipment? What should be changed and what should remain the same? How should roles and missions be shared in the future? Even after Japan's lack of participation in the Gulf War led to tensions in Japan-US relations, those in charge of security policy in both countries continued their search for answers to these questions.

The Clinton administration, inaugurated in 1993, attached relatively little importance to Japan-US security relations initially. It emphasized economic and trade relations instead, aiming to obtain concessions from Japan even if it meant sacrificing cooperation on security issues. Hence, Japan-US relations during the new administration were under considerable strain at first. The aggressive trade policy of the Clinton administration, which focused on concrete results rather than process, triggered strong opposition in Japan. Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa clearly refused President Clinton's demands at the 1994 summit. Japan-US relations faced a serious crisis.

Security experts in and out of government, including Auer, were worried about the situation. As Japan and the United States locked horns with each other over economic and trade issues, East Asia remained in a state of tension. It was dangerous to have shaky Japan-US relations when the international situations involving China and the Korean Peninsula were unstable. In fact, the United States came close to launching a military campaign in 1994 after it obtained proof that North Korea was developing a nuclear program. Japan was completely unprepared; there was no preexisting cooperative arrangement between Japan and the United States. Had war broken out, Japan might have panicked, leading to a further rift in Japan-US security arrangements.

In addition, Americans were concerned about Japan's security policy because of a report written by the Advisory Group on Defense Issues, established initially as a private advisory body to Prime Minister Hosokawa and chaired by Hirotarō Higuchi, then chairman of Asahi Breweries, Ltd. One of the members was Makoto Sakuma, formerly CMS and chairman, Joint Staff Council. The Higuchi Report (as it came to be called), issued in August 1994 under then Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, gave the impression that the Japanese government was focused on promoting multilateral security cooperation rather than upholding Japan-US security arrangements.

Such uncertainty was unsustainable. The sense of crisis shared by policymakers in both countries led to a push to review the structure of the bilateral security arrangements. A series of dialogues between Japan and the United States, both official and unofficial, culminated in the Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security announced by Prime Minister Ryūtarō Hashimoto and President Clinton in Tokyo in April 1996. The declaration reaffirmed that the Japan-US security arrangements were vital for not only both countries but also the whole Asia-Pacific region, as well as for global peace and prosperity. Discussions continued following the declaration, leading to the creation in 1997 of the new Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation (also simply called the New Guidelines). Japan enacted domestic laws in response, including the Law Concerning Measures to Ensure the Peace and Security of Japan in Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan. A cooperative scheme between Japan and the United States to deal with emergencies near Japan was tentatively established, although it had some flaws.

Auer has actively expressed his opinions on these issues. In particular, he has repeatedly objected to basing the study of the roles the JSDF should play under the New Guidelines on the premise that Japan will not exercise its right to collective self-defense. If the Japan-US alliance is to play a meaningful role for both countries in the future, Japan should change its past policy and examine the possibility of exercising its inherent right to collective self-defense. Under the current interpretation of the Japanese Constitution regarding the right to collective self-defense, JMSDF ships cannot fire shots to defend allied sailors unless the JMSDF ships themselves are under attack, even if they are engaged in logistical support in the vicinity and directly witnessing US Navy ships under attack. If a situation were to arise in which US sailors were suffering heavy casualties and JMSDF ships nearby did nothing to help them, the Japan-US alliance would collapse immediately. To prevent such a scenario, Auer maintains, the Japanese government should revise its current strict interpretation of the Constitution that Japan's exercising its right to collective self-defense is unlawful.[3]

[3] In July 2014, under Prime Minister Shinzō Abe, a cabinet decision was made to change the interpretation of the Constitution to allow exercising a very limited right to collective self-defense under some exceptional circumstances. In 2015, the laws on security issues were revised to reflect the new interpretation, despite strong opposition both within and outside the Diet.

When JMSDF-US Navy cooperation successfully deterred the Soviet Navy in the 1980s, Japan's position was that the action had been carried out within the scope of its right to individual self-defense. But from an American point of view, it was, in fact, nothing other than the exercise of the right to collective self-defense. Both Japan's participation in RIMPAC and US provision of Aegis system technology to Japan were possible only because the United States saw Japan as an ally who would fight beside it. Japan should abandon its factitious official position as soon as possible to make Japan-US defense cooperation truly meaningful.

In March 1996 China conducted a military exercise, including a missile launch, to coincide with the presidential election in Taiwan, which led to a tense situation in the Taiwan Strait. When the US Navy dispatched two carriers in response, Auer argued that JMSDF destroyers should also have been deployed to deter China.

Many national security experts in Japan shared Auer's position. Hisahiko Okazaki, a noted former diplomat, argued that suggesting Japan might exercise its right to collective self-defense would be an effective deterrent in itself.

The Admirals Today

Auer has enjoyed a long relationship with Japan: it has been 37 years since his first visit to the country as an ensign and 30 years since he stayed there to research the JMSDF's founding. His many friendships with Japanese are the most significant assets Auer has acquired through the years. The *Tan-Tan Kai*, with Rear Admiral Sumihiko Kawamura's lead, is still held every year when Auer visits Japan. The members, all getting older, are still going strong.

Kazuomi Uchida has already turned 85. He has retired from all public positions, but he is hale and hearty. Last year, in recognition of his achievements as an IJN officer and as a JMSDF admiral, he was granted the title of honorary townsman by his hometown of Shōboku-chō, Okayama Prefecture. In commemoration, he received gifts including a large quantity of rice, along with *narazuke* (vegetables pickled in sake lees). When he was informed about the award, Uchida returned to his hometown. In a gathering with the influential townsmen, he recounted, "I came home after the war to work as a farmer. But I wasn't any good at making straw rice bags. I remember an inspector telling me to do it over. He had to help me make them. Do you really want to make such a poor farmer an honorary townsman?" Everyone laughed, approving of his honorary title. Surprisingly, the very inspector who helped Uchida make straw rice bags was there in attendance; he came forward and they shook hands. Uchida looked very amused and delighted as he shared this story with everyone at the *Tan-Tan Kai*.

Teiji Nakamura has not attended the *Tan-Tan Kai* in a while, for he has been busy taking care of an ill family member. In 2000, Auer decided to go and visit Nakamura at his house, finding him very fit and cheerful. Nakamura often writes to me, covering postcards in his meticulous handwriting to tell me his impressions of

what I have written. He is generally favorable about the content, but he does not like being written about. As usual, he never boasts about his achievements.

In 2000, 15 years since retiring as the CMS, Manabu Yoshida became the president of the *Suikōkai* (the association of naval personnel), following in the footsteps of Uchida, Nakamura, and Ryōhei Ōga who had all previously held that position. Yoshida calls himself Instructor Nakamura's unworthy pupil at the Naval Academy, from which he graduated (75th class); he keeps busy flying all over the country. Since the *Suikōkai*'s members are mainly former IJN personnel who are aging, in April 2001 the association was incorporated with the *Kaijō Ōbi-kai*,[4] an association of retired JMSDF personnel. The task of promoting harmony between the two associations and leaving good naval traditions for future generations fell to Yoshida, who represents the close-knit class that was the last to graduate from the Naval Academy. As a JMSDF veteran, Yoshida has also served for many years as the president of the Japan America Navy Friendship Association (JANAFA), endeavoring to promote friendship between the US Navy and the JMSDF. He still communicates frequently with former US commanders he worked with when he was CMS, including Vice Admiral Zech and Admiral Foley.

The supreme officer of the JMSDF in 2001 is CMS Admiral Kōsei Fujita of the Defense Academy's ninth class (Class of 1965). He is the sixth to hold the post after Admiral Makoto Sakuma, the CMS during the Gulf War in 1991. Since that time, many events have required the services of the JMSDF. The Great Hanshin Earthquake occurred in January 1995; the JMSDF was dispatched alongside the other services of the JSDF for disaster relief. While the media's coverage was thin, a cumulative total of 679 vessels were deployed, and their rescue activities were appreciated by the earthquake victims. In January 1997 the Russian tanker *Nakhodka* had a maritime accident, causing an oil spill in the Sea of Japan. The JMSDF prevented the spill from spreading and assisted in the cleanup; a total of 920 vessels were deployed on that occasion. The August 1998 North Korean missile launch over the Japanese archipelago was first detected by the Aegis destroyer JS *Myōkō*, which was dispatched to the Sea of Japan. In March 1999 two unidentified ships, assumed to be North Korean, were spotted in the Japanese territorial waters to the east of the Noto Peninsula. In the first maritime security operation in JMSDF history, the destroyers JS *Myōkō* and JS *Haruna* pursued the ships and ordered them to stop, and then fired warning shots, while P-3C antisubmarine patrol aircraft dropped depth charges as a warning. Although these actions did not lead to the capture of the unidentified ships, it was the first time the Japanese public witnessed the JMSDF's operational capability. Thus, the JMSDF has increased its presence considerably over the decade since the dispatch of minesweepers after the Gulf War. There have been some issues, such as the arrest of an active-duty JMSDF officer who leaked information to a Russian military attaché. But it appears that the Japanese people feel that the JMSDF, as a whole, is doing well.

[4] Using Japanese characters for beautiful cherry blossoms.

Japan-US Exchanges Among the Younger Generation

The leaders of today's JMSDF are from the same generation as the sons and grandsons of Uchida and Nakamura. Although the speed of promotion varies with the individual, some of those born in the late 1950s/early 1960s, now in their early 40s, have been promoted and play essential leadership roles: commanding officer of a ship; commander of an escort division; and section chief or director in the MSO. They were, at most, junior high school students in the late 1960s/early 1970s when the left-wing movement was at its height. Unlike the slightly older generations who had joined the JMSDF through the Defense Academy or civilian universities and were regarded as oddballs for going against the trend of the times, the younger generation did not find joining the JMSDF unusual in any way. Instead, many joined the JMSDF because they were attracted to the work of the Self-Defense Forces, or because they had a longing for the sea or the sky. One, for instance, joined the JMSDF as if by fate; his father, who was in the export-import business, named him Umio ("Man of the Sea") when he was born. Another joined the JMSDF because his father, who had joined in the early days when it was still the Coastal Safety Force, persuaded his son to follow in his footsteps.

One JMSDF officer had planned to take over his parents' company after studying management at the Defense Academy. When he told one Defense Academy instructor of his intentions, he was harshly reprimanded. Reluctantly, he stayed in the JMSDF because his family's company went bankrupt. Still, he thought about quitting after making lieutenant, either to start a business in tourism or farming, or to rebuild the family business. He had no time to ponder his future career after joining the JMSDF, however, as he was kept extremely busy—first in Etajima, then on an overseas training cruise, and then as a newly commissioned officer. He was assigned to serve on various ships, and when he attended the JMSDF Command and Staff College, he thought about national security for the first time. Then he found himself in charge of defense policy. And so, he gave up thinking about making a life outside the JMSDF. His job was tough and always a challenge, but he did not complain. Before he knew it, he had become a full-fledged JMSDF officer.

Many of these middle-ranked officers have studied in the United States or have experience in being in close contact with the US Navy through RIMPAC and other joint exercises. Unlike the first postwar generation of JMSDF officers, they do not have any peculiar inferiority complex or enthusiasm for the United States. Japan has been an affluent society for as long as the younger officers can remember, and they find nothing particularly surprising when they visit the United States. After all, their generation has grown up eating McDonald's hamburgers since their junior high school days. They have a generally good impression of the US sailors they interact with closely. A submarine officer said people in Portsmouth, UK, threw eggs at him when he passed through on an overseas training cruise. However, when he crossed the Atlantic on the same cruise, he thought the Americans were very kind and cheerful, by contrast; they treated him extremely well in the United States.

They also consider their skills equal to the US Navy's. If anything, they are confident that they are superior in some fields. One JMSDF officer, a helicopter pilot, went to Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation's headquarters in Connecticut to accept delivery of a new model of helicopter; there he showed Sikorsky's test pilots—former US Navy pilots—the full extent of his maneuvering skills. They treated him with a great deal of respect after that. "Americans have unconditional respect for anyone highly skilled," he said. On the last day of the orientation flights, an American test pilot he made friends with took the trouble to fly to Manhattan and circle over the Statue of Liberty. The JMSDF's new helicopter, emblazoned with Japan's national flag, circled many times above Lady Liberty's torch.

At the same time, however, these officers are awed by the US Navy, the most powerful in the world. JMSDF personnel who have never fought in an actual war respect US sailors who have been in numerous combat situations. "On any given day, they appear to be undisciplined and do things without enthusiasm. I always wonder how they can work like this," says an officer who returned from study in the United States. "But in actual combat, they are really strong. We can't do the same thing." One logistics officer will never forget what he saw on his visit to Naval Station Norfolk to observe during the Gulf War. Lines of trucks stretching continuously for several miles made orderly deliveries of vast quantities of provisions of every kind, including Coca-Cola, eggs, and bread, to vessels headed to the Persian Gulf. He says he realized this was what it meant to wage a war. JMSDF personnel are often aboard the same vessels with US naval officers in joint exercises; studying side by side with them at US Navy schools; or discussing Japan-US security policies, including the Guidelines, with them. These experiences help them to develop a deep understanding of the US Navy's might and, behind it, the national power of the United States. They feel that, if by any chance Japan had to fight another war, they would rather be fighting on the same side as the United States.

These middle-ranked officers worry that daily contact between the JMSDF and the US Navy might have lessened somewhat since their days as young officers. There was a time when they boarded US Navy ships during RIMPAC and were put on watch duty in the engine room right away. The exchanges between sister ships belonging to the US Fleet Activities Yokosuka and the JMSDF Yokosuka Naval Base across the bay were flourishing. They always visited each other to promote mutual friendship. In recent years these activities have become less frequent. Young JMSDF officers and sailors on the front line of the Japan-US security arrangements have surprisingly little direct and frank daily contact with US naval personnel.

Young pro-Japanese US Navy officers stationed in Yokosuka express similar concerns. One commander, a big fan of Japan who taught at the JMSDF Officer Candidate School in Etajima for a year, worries that the US Navy in Yokosuka, as a whole, is not as enthusiastic about the exchanges with the JMSDF as compared to a few years ago. "When I was an ensign and lieutenant junior grade, our superior officers always used to pester us, asking what we were doing with the JMSDF sister ship that week. Nowadays, they don't ask those questions anymore. It's too bad." A female officer who had studied at Keio University and served on the Seventh Fleet flagship USS *Blue Ridge* in Japan before being recently transferred to Washington,

D.C., concurs. "I think the JMSDF personnel should be invited to traditional American festivals like Halloween and Thanksgiving, but it doesn't happen so easily. In contrast, the JMSDF invites us on every occasion."

According to these US Navy officers, there are a few reasons that exchanges with the JMSDF have grown sporadic. First, thanks to efforts made by the Japanese government, the residential environment of US Naval officers has improved in recent years and the number of personnel living outside the base has decreased. As more and more houses were built exclusively for US forces personnel, interactions with the JMSDF personnel and other Japanese have become less frequent. Being on the base or living in an exclusive residential area is just like living in the United States. It is possible to live without interacting with the local people—a wasted opportunity when you have come all the way to Japan.

Second, whereas the US Navy's budget and personnel have been reduced, the volume of its work has not—if anything, it has increased. Navy personnel no longer have the time and scope for exchanges with the JMSDF as they did before. They say it is surprisingly hard for US sailors, overburdened with daily tasks, to go out of their way to seek exchanges with JMSDF personnel.

Third, there is a question of leadership. Unless the commanders of the Seventh Fleet and of US Naval Forces Japan express strong intentions to promote exchange with the JMSDF, their subordinates will not act on their own initiative. For the last few years, no one has sensed any such firm intention. The commanders themselves are also busy. The extent of their interest in Japan varies by individual. Some always carry out their duties with an eye toward Washington or Honolulu. Some might be unhappy with the Japanese attitude toward the US Navy regarding such issues as night-landing training for carrier-based aircraft in Atsugi or the proposal for US Navy vessels to call at Kobe port. Officers who have many friends in the JMSDF say that, above all, an explicit declaration of intention from the top is needed to maintain a smooth relationship between the JMSDF and the US Navy in the future.

Notwithstanding the various issues mentioned above, the JMSDF and the US Navy are the armed forces that form the backbone of the Japan-US alliance, which sustains security in the Western Pacific. The political situation surrounding them will not change that easily, and there is no major security crisis in East Asia at the moment. But you can never tell what the future holds. To prepare for an emergency, the sailors of the JMSDF and the US Navy must conduct joint exercises and carry out daily missions together. The current middle-ranked officers will mostly be retired in 20 years' time. Those who retire, saying "*Negaimasu* (please take over)," will be succeeded by the younger generation currently undergoing training at sea and in the sky. The new officers who will depart from Etajima on an overseas training cruise in March 2001 are 23 or 24 years old. They had just started junior high school when the Gulf War broke out. Even the memory of the Gulf War is just history for these young JMSDF personnel. Still, they will be in the position to maintain and strengthen the JMSDF and the Japan-US alliance 20–30 years from now.

Lowering the JMSDF Ensign

In the fall of 2000, I visited the JMSDF Sub Area Activity Hanshin in Kobe; I had been asked to give a lecture to the *Suikōkai* members living in the Kansai area. Soon after arriving, I was greeted by Rear Admiral Kōichi Furushō, commander of Sub Area Activity Hanshin. Eight years earlier, when I had been invited to the graduation ceremony in Etajima, then-Captain Furushō, as the chief of the public affairs section, had shown me around. Now, promoted to rear admiral, he led the officers and sailors of the Hanshin base.

I was to dine with some of the *Suikōkai*'s core members following the lecture in the base's auditorium. While waiting for Rear Admiral Furushō to change his clothes before dinner, I went out to see the three minesweepers moored at the pier that had come from Hakodate, Hokkaido. These vessels happened to be in port to undergo an examination at the Degaussing Range Station on Awaji Island. Minesweepers like these had disposed of mines off Wonsan and other ports during the Korean War and had traveled across the ocean to dispose of mines in the Persian Gulf after the Gulf War. Never had I seen a real one this close up before.

As I walked along the pier, I heard about these ships from the base's general affairs division director, who used to serve in the minesweeping force himself. It was almost time for the lowering of the JMSDF ensign. "Five minutes until the JMSDF ensign is lowered," we heard announced over the loudspeaker. Alongside the JMSDF ensign hoisted at the stern of each minesweeper, two JMSDF officials stood preparing to lower it; a third official waited along the bow flag. Whereas the JGSDF and the JASDF always lower the national flag at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, the JMSDF lowers the flags precisely at sunset every day: on onshore bases, the national flag is lowered; on vessels, it is the JMSDF ensign. As it was in the past with the Imperial Japanese Naval ensign, the JMSDF ensign is treated as the national flag on JMSDF vessels. The tradition of treating the naval ensign as the national flag and lowering it at sunset is common among navies around the world.

The skies over Kobe were clear, with cirrus clouds floating in lines above the port. Just as the sun set, painting the clouds a beautiful rose madder red, a bugle sounded. The JMSDF personnel and sailors walking on the base all stood still and saluted in the direction of the JMSDF ensign. From the distant base headquarters, "Kimigayo," Japan's national anthem, began to play. The JMSDF sailors standing on the bow of the minesweepers lowered the bow flag quickly, then turned and saluted the JMSDF ensign at the stern. The national flag flying in front of the headquarters was slowly lowered to the strains of "Kimigayo." Almost simultaneously, the JMSDF ensigns were lowered. No loud noises were heard during the ceremony; the minesweepers just swayed slowly. The JMSDF sailors held their salutes until the JMSDF ensign and the national flag were completely lowered. My guide, the division director, was also standing at attention and saluting. Once all the flags had been lowered, the JMSDF personnel resumed walking again, as if suddenly regaining consciousness.

For JMSDF personnel, the ceremony of lowering the JMSDF ensign at sunset is an everyday sight. It is unchanging, whether in the icy cold of winter or the scorching

heat of summer. For an outsider like me, however, this brief ceremony with its moment of solemnity, held against the crimson sky on a fall evening, felt refreshing. Uchida and Nakamura once saluted the JMSDF ensign the same way. The minesweeping crews dispatched to the Persian Gulf also saluted the JMSDF ensign. Day after day, the salute is made on bases and vessels around Japan. It is not just the JMSDF—navies around the world hold the same flag lowering ceremony. It is how they all confirm that the day has ended peacefully and the work of defending the home country is done for the day.

Soon, the curtain of night descends, and officers and sailors of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force turn in for the night. In the morning, a new day begins with the raising of the JMSDF ensign.

Chapter 11
The Alliance and the Two Navies: 2001–2022

The JMSDF Today

Time flies. In 2022, the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) celebrated the 70th anniversary of its establishment in 1952. The Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) lasted 73 years, from its establishment in 1872 until its disbandment in 1945. Thus, by the end of 2025, the JMSDF will have existed for longer than the IJN.

Twenty-one years have passed since 2001, the year that the first edition of the original Japanese version of this book was published and the 9/11 terrorist attacks took place. This time span corresponds to nearly a third of the history of the JMSDF. In these years, the JMSDF's missions, roles, and capabilities have expanded significantly, arguably more than they did during its first 49 years.

For example, the JMSDF in 2022 operates two new helicopter destroyers, each with the standard displacement of 19,500 tons: JS *Izumo*, commissioned in 2015, and JS *Kaga*, commissioned in 2017. Their carrier-like structure with a flat flight deck from bow to stern permits each to carry as many as 14 helicopters. Taking advantage of this structure, the 2022 defense budget provided for the cost of making JS *Izumo* and JS *Kaga* capable of allowing the (STOVL)[1] F35B combat aircraft to take off from and land on their flight decks. Thus, these two ships will start functioning as fully-fledged light aircraft carriers, as well, in a few years, symbolizing the JMSDF's entry into a new era.

The JMSDF also operates eight Aegis ships, more than any other navy in the world except for the United States Navy. Developed and deployed by the US Navy, the Aegis system is an air-defense system integrating high-performance radar, information-processing devices, and missile-launch capability. It has the

This chapter was reworked substantially for the revised English edition.

[1] Short Take-Off and Vertical Landing.

N. Agawa, *Friendship Across the Seas*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-2997-9_11

revolutionary capability to track more than 200 targets simultaneously and intercept more than ten of them at once. Japan's first Aegis destroyer, JS *Kongō* (standard displacement of 7250 tons), was commissioned in 1993, while the two newest *Maya*-class Aegis ships with more advanced capabilities, JS *Maya* and JS *Haguro* (standard displacement 8200 tons), were commissioned in 2020 and 2021.

In addition, the JMSDF now operates 12 *Sōryū*-class non-nuclear submarines with their highly advanced capabilities, including an air-independent propulsion system that uses Stirling engines. This system allows the submarine to stay submerged for an extended period of time without taking in atmospheric oxygen. In addition, a new *Taigei*-class submarine with even higher capabilities was commissioned in 2022, with five more scheduled to be built and commissioned in the next 5 years.

With this series of reinforcements, the JMSDF has become a world-class navy today. As the JMSDF has improved its capabilities, it has expanded its cooperation with the US Navy, including in fields that are critical but less visible, such as communications, intelligence, and information technology. The two navies have also increased their joint focus on new domains of war, such as space, cyberspace, and the electromagnetic spectrum. These efforts are to deal with significant shifts in the security environment.

Yet, an observer of the trajectory of the Japan-US alliance would notice that not everything has gone smoothly. Over the past two decades, the alliance and defense cooperation have faltered at times. There were even periods of crisis when the basis of the alliance was severely shaken. This chapter traces these ups and downs in the alliance that occurred in those 21 years, focusing mostly on bilateral navy-to-navy relations.

Japan-US Naval Relations in the Post-Cold War Period

The biggest turning point in the 70-year history of the JMSDF was the ending of the Cold War. Before that watershed event, Japan's defense policy was firmly based on two presumptions. One was that the Cold War would continue for many years to come. The other was that US armed forces would deter the Soviet Union from attacking Japan and, in the event, defend Japan with every means available including its nuclear weapons. After that turning point, the first presumption disappeared, and the second did not seem as solid as before. As a vital element of the Japan-US alliance, the relationship between the JMSDF and the US Navy had to adjust to this entirely new reality.

This book covers this naval relationship during the Cold War period in Chaps. 1–8, while Chap. 9 describes Japan's and the JMSDF's response to the Gulf War, the first major international security crisis in the post-Cold War period, focusing on the post-combat dispatch of minesweepers to the Gulf. Chapter 10 touches upon some aspects of the relationship during the first decade of this period in a summary fashion up through 2000. Before turning to the post-Cold War naval relationship between Japan

and the United States from 2001 up through 2022, let us take a brief look at what took place after the dispatch of minesweepers to the Gulf in 1991 through 2000.

The end of the Cold War did not lead to the arrival of lasting peace. In reality, a series of security threats that had been suppressed during the Cold War emerged in new forms in the developing world, as well as international terrorism. With the Cold War's end, threats did not disappear, they proliferated. The search for a proper response to this fundamental change in the security environment started in earnest.

The first major challenge Japan faced in the post-Cold War era was the Gulf War; Japan's considerable financial support was roundly criticized as all but failing to contribute to the cause of the multinational forces. So, Japan started to take part in the United Nation's peacekeeping operations (PKO) to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and order. Japanese PKO troops, mostly from the JGSDF, were first dispatched to Cambodia in the fall of 1992, under the recently passed Act on Cooperation for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations (the PKO Act).

The second post-Cold War challenge was the 1994 North Korea crisis. The United States was on the verge of attacking North Korea over concerns about North Korea's nuclear development. For Japan, the emergency on the Korean Peninsula represented an incomparably greater threat to Japan than the Gulf Crisis. Nevertheless, it could do almost nothing under its security and legal systems of the time. There were no laws or preparations whatsoever in place regarding, among other issues, the rescue of Japanese nationals abroad, the handling of mass refugees, the support of the United States as a party in conflict, or the maritime blockade in accordance with the UN economic sanctions.

Driven by this sense of crisis, Japanese and US experts, including JSDF personnel, held numerous meetings, mainly to deal with the possibility of an emergency on the Korean Peninsula and to review the post-Cold War Japan-US alliance. That led to President Clinton and Prime Minister Hashimoto issuing the Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security during the president's visit to Japan in April 1996. Although, as Chap. 9 describes, Japan-US relations had become strained, even in the security realm, during his administration's first term, President Clinton came to understand the importance of the bilateral alliance through the North Korea crisis and the subsequent Taiwan Strait Crisis.[2]

Following the Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security, the new Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation, drafted by Japanese and US experts, were issued in 1997. In 1999, the Law Concerning Measures to Ensure the Peace and Security of Japan in Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan was enacted to give the Guidelines a legal basis.

The third challenge after the Cold War was North Korea's launch of its Taepodong ballistic missile in August 1998 and the incident involving unidentified

[2]The 1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis arose due to China's conducting missile tests in the waters around Taiwan, possibly with the intent of influencing the upcoming Taiwanese elections. The actions drew a strong response from the US military.

ships on the Sea of Japan off the Noto Peninsula in March 1999. These two incidents represented direct threats to Japan. Moreover, these were the first cases in which Japan faced national security problems of its own that featured the new threats of the post-Cold War world: the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and irregular warfare such as terrorism and guerrilla attacks. Japan's security and legal systems, however, were utterly inadequate to deal with these incidents. In the case of the unidentified ships, the minister of defense ordered the JMSDF to undertake a maritime security operation (provided in the JSDF Act as a police action on the seas) for the first time. JMSDF destroyers, JS *Myōkō* and JS *Haruna*, as well as P-3 antisubmarine patrol aircraft took over the pursuit of the unidentified ships from MSA patrol vessels and aircraft, which had been unable to keep up, and kept firing warning shots.

Following this incident, the MSA and the JMSDF examined and implemented various countermeasures to deal with threats falling into the gray zone between police and military actions. It accelerated the preparation of what came to be called contingency legislation (including the Armed Attack Situations Response Act), which had been a long-standing issue since the establishment of the Japan Defense Agency and the JMSDF.

The Clinton administration in its second term showed its firm commitment to the alliance through the Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security, responding to Japanese urging and to the changing security environment in Northeast Asia. Nevertheless, the administration never seemed truly enthusiastic about the alliance with Japan throughout its 8 years in power, occasionally showing a tendency to lean toward China. It also substantially cut the US military budget, which resulted in fewer joint exercises and operations between the JMSDF and US Navy.

The *Ehime Maru* Incident

As this initial decade following the end of the Cold War was drawing to a close, the alliance confronted yet another challenge: the *Ehime Maru* incident. People tend to forget that the incident was a major crisis for the Japan-US alliance, partly because the 9/11 terrorist attacks 7 months later were so shocking, and the alliance thereafter became closer than ever. What prevented the *Ehime Maru* incident from getting out of hand and damaging the alliance before 9/11 was the friendship, trust, and respect that had long been cultivated between the JMSDF and the US Navy.

On February 9, 2001, at 1:45 p.m. local time, 18.5 kilometers south of Oahu, Hawaii, the US Navy's nuclear-powered submarine USS *Greeneville* (6080 displacement tons) performed an emergency ballast-blow surfacing maneuver and collided with the *Ehime Maru*, a tuna longline training ship of the Uwajima Fisheries High School, a prefectural high school in Ehime, which happened to be sailing nearby. The Greeneville's vertical rudder hit the hull of the *Ehime Maru*, causing a huge crack, and the Japanese vessel immediately began to sink; in about 5 minutes, the training ship was underwater. There were 35 people aboard the ship, including

13 second-year students in the marine engineering course and two teachers. Twenty-six people (12 of them with minor injuries) were soon rescued, but nine, including four students, went missing despite a frantic search.

The US submarine had been navigating underwater with 16 civilians onboard for a Distinguished Visitor Embarkation (DVE) mission. Its commanding officer, Commander Scott Waddle, had ordered, among other maneuvers, an emergency surfacing to show the submarine's excellent maneuverability. The lookout for surface ships was reportedly neglected, with everyone distracted by the civilians. Clearly caused by human error, the incident drew criticism not only from the families of the victims lost aboard the training ship but from citizens all over Japan as well.

A week after the incident, the *Ehime Maru* was found on the seabed roughly 900 meters away from the collision site, at a depth of 620 meters. The bereaved families demanded the US Navy salvage and search the ship, because the bodies of those who had been unable to escape due to the speed with which it sank likely remained inside. They were angry and the atmosphere was tense. However, the US Navy was initially reluctant to undertake that task.

The *Ehime Maru* incident happened only 20 days after the George W. Bush administration had assumed office on January 20, having stated it intent to reinvigorate the alliance with Japan. Tokyo and Washington both seriously considered the possibility that the incident would harm bilateral relations. Aware of that risk, the Bush administration accepted responsibility and set out to meet, to the fullest extent possible, Japanese requests on how to respond to the incident.

After performing a technical survey, the US Navy promised to lift the *Ehime Maru* from the ocean floor, move it to a shoal where divers could work, and search the ship for the missing. A workboat of a Dutch salvage company commissioned by the US Navy transferred the *Ehime Maru* roughly 26 kilometers from the grounding site to a point which was approximately 2 kilometers off the seaside runway of Honolulu International Airport (at a depth of 35 meters) (Fig. 11.1).

To support the US Navy's salvage operation, the JMSDF decided to send its newest submarine rescue ship, JS *Chihaya* (5450 displacement tons), to Oahu. How the JMSDF should respond to the *Ehime Maru* incident raised a difficult question. The accident had occurred off Hawaii, far from Japan, and the JMSDF was not a party to the incident. Hence, the JMSDF was not obligated to assist. Its involvement carried a risk that the JMSDF might find itself facing unwarranted domestic criticism for siding with the US Navy, whose submarine had caused the accident. At this time of crisis that shook the foundation of the alliance, however, the JMSDF could not help but support its naval ally facing difficulties. With this rationale, the JMSDF leadership decided to send JS *Chihaya*.

JS *Chihaya* entered Pearl Harbor on August 20. As soon as it arrived, the US Navy commenced the salvage operation for the *Ehime Maru*. The *Chihaya* launched an unmanned submersible to survey the ocean floor. Initially, the lifting and transfer were expected to be completed by the end of August, but the operation faced hard going. All sorts of difficulties occurred including two incidents in which the wires lifting steel plates inserted between the ship's bottom and the seabed snapped. The operation began to fall behind schedule, with no end in sight.

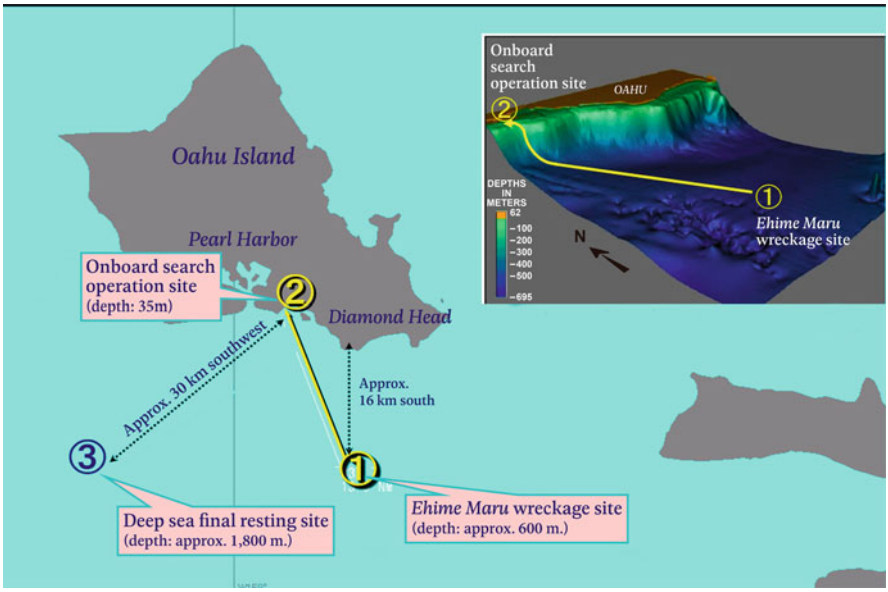

Fig. 11.1 Map of the *Ehime Maru* Incident. (Courtesy of Hideki Hayashi)

In the meantime, the September 11 terrorist attacks occurred in New York and Washington, D.C. Following this unprecedented incident, some within the US Navy demanded that the salvage of the *Ehime Maru* be discontinued, arguing that the Navy should concentrate all its energies and resources on taking countermeasures against the terrorist attacks. The operation continued, however, at the insistence of Admiral Fargo, CINCPACFLT.

The lifting and transfer of the *Ehime Maru* were finally completed on October 15, far behind schedule. The following day, with the ship now in shallow waters, US Navy divers commenced the onboard search. The bodies of eight of the nine missing members were found and recovered, and their identities were confirmed.

At the end of October, as the search for the bodies drew near the end, the US Navy brought the bereaved families to the salvage area in a chartered commercial boat. They could just make out the yellow beam floating near the surface that was lifting the *Ehime Maru*, but not the sunken training ship itself. One by one, they tossed flowers into the sea.

When the time came to leave the salvage area, and the chartered boat was preparing to move, a family member asked the JMSDF liaison officer, Commander Hideki Hayashi, in a voice choked with emotion, to convey their gratitude to the divers working on the dive platform. He radioed the message to the US Navy officer in charge; the divers on the platform answered that they would continue to do everything they could for the families. When he relayed the divers' reply, the families spontaneously began to wave toward the platform; the divers on the

platform all waved back. At this point, everyone in the salvage area began to cry, the family members, the US naval personnel, and Commander Hayashi, too.

The US Navy concluded the search on November 7 without finding the body of the last trainee student, despite their unrelenting efforts. Based on the original agreement, the JMSDF divers conducted the final onboard checks from November 8, the day after the US Navy's search was completed, to November 16. They, too, were unable to find the last body. Upon completing their final search, the divers wept on the deck.

For Commander Hayashi, the 9 months following the accident that he spent frantically coordinating as liaison officer between the JMSDF, the US Navy, the bereaved families, and the media with no chance to rest were more demanding than the 17-years' worth of his other experiences as a JMSDF officer. He saw it through to the end for the sake of the families, the JMSDF and the US Navy, the Japanese and US governments, and the alliance. He wrote in his memoir (Fig. 11.1):

> *Japan and the United States have many differences in our values and sentiments. Our understandings of history often collide, and at times the gap feels unbridgeable.*
>
> *Despite these differences, Japan and the United States must interact with each other as allies. I think it requires the accumulation of shared experiences above all else. Only after overcoming difficulties and problems together will we start to empathize with and trust in each other.*

When he finished his 2-year term in Hawaii and headed home, he sent an email to about 600 US Navy officers and sailors with whom he had worked, stating, "I'll never forget that I learned about 'honor,' the US Navy's most splendid tradition."

One last episode of the *Ehime Maru* incident. Soon after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, a few of the *Ehime Maru* family members whose loved ones were still missing came to see Commander Hayashi. Entrusting him with some money, they requested that he convey the money to Admiral Fargo, CINCPACFLT. They explained how grateful they were to all the US Navy personnel who had been working so hard to find the bodies of their loved ones. Now that the 9/11 attacks had occurred, they were certain, they said, that the families of those US Navy people who were killed on 9/11 must be experiencing pain and suffering just as they had. Thus, they wanted to express their sympathy and love to the families of those who died on 9/11 by giving them the donations that Japanese American citizens in Hawaii had raised for the *Ehime Maru* families.

Commander Hayashi visited Admiral Fargo, expressed the families' wish, and handed him an envelope with their donation. The admiral remained puzzled as to why the families of the students had to donate money to the US Navy. As Hayashi further explained the families' feelings, Admiral Fargo's eyes gradually misted over: he seemed to have gotten the point. He thanked Commander Hayashi, then asked him to shut the door on his way out. The episode stuck with Hayashi. He later learned from the admiral's flag aide that, after Hayashi departed, the admiral had been weeping in his room, apparently needing some time alone to regain his composure (Fig. 11.2).

Fig. 11.2 US Navy divers send off the submarine rescue ship JS *Chihaya*, departing Pearl Harbor. (Courtesy of Hideki Hayashi)

The War on Terror and Japan's Response

The multiple terrorist attacks simultaneously carried out in the United States on September 11, 2001, shook the US government's and the nation's views on national security. US citizens were dismayed to learn that the US armed forces, the mightiest in the world, were unable to prevent the attacks by highjacked jetliners on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.[3]

Following this unprecedented incident, President Bush declared the launch of the "War on Terror," a conflict that has lasted for 20 years. In the early period of the war, the United States received sympathy and support from all over the world. NATO member countries promised to join the United States in fighting in the War on Terrorism. To do so, they passed a joint resolution to exercise, as necessary, the right to collective self-defense for the first time since World War II.

Japan's response to the 9/11 attacks was quick. A former member of the Maritime Staff told me that he and a few of his colleagues at the Operations and Plans

[3] Except during the War of 1812, the US mainland had never suffered a direct enemy attack since the nation's founding. (Strictly speaking, the IJN's attack on the US naval base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, in December 1941 was an attack on US overseas territory.)

Department, MSO, got together a couple of hours after the attacks occurred, late at night on September 11 Japan time. They discussed what impact these terrorist attacks in New York and Washington would have upon the alliance. They agreed that the JMSDF needed to act promptly.

About a week after the attacks, the Jun'ichirō Koizumi cabinet issued a statement on "seven immediate measures," including dispatching JMSDF ships to gather information and to provide support, such as medical services and transportation, to US forces.

According to press coverage, when USS *Kitty Hawk* was about to make an urgent departure from its homeport of Yokosuka, the JMSDF destroyers JS *Shirane* and JS *Amagiri* left the same port at roughly the same time to escort the US carrier out of Tokyo Bay. If terrorists had hijacked a commercial aircraft and turned it slightly left as it was landing at Haneda Airport, they could have crashed it into the carrier anchored at the US Naval Forces Japan's Yokosuka base in a few minutes. The very fact that USS *Kitty Hawk* departed under fears of such a possibility shows how abnormally tense the atmosphere was at the time.

The JMSDF sent the two destroyers as a gesture of sympathy for the US Navy. A CNN broadcast of the JMSDF destroyers navigating Tokyo Bay as they accompanied USS *Kitty Hawk* evoked a considerable response in the United States. Michael J. Green, who served in the White House during the George W. Bush administration as special assistant to the president for national security affairs and senior director for Asian affairs, told me later that the video sent a strong message that Japan and the United States were cooperating at a difficult time.

One day after the terrorist attacks, the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1368, which recognized member states' inherent right of individual and collective self-defense. Subsequently, US and multinational forces launched an attack in Afghanistan on October 7. The US government also requested that the Japanese government participate in the War on Terrorism. A decade had passed since the Gulf War when Japan essentially failed to respond to similar requests. Lessons learned from that episode remained fresh in the minds of many Japanese involved in national security matters at the time.

If Japan had done nothing in the face of the greatest security crisis in American history, it would have meant the collapse of the Japan-US alliance. The Koizumi cabinet decided to assist and support as much as it could within the constraints of the Japanese Constitution. Concluding that a response under the existing laws would be problematic, a cabinet decision was made on October 5 to submit the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Bill to the Diet. The bill was passed by both houses of the Diet and enacted on October 29.

In response to this development, the JMSDF first dispatched the underway replenishment (UNREP) ship JS *Hamana* as well as the destroyers JS *Kurama* and JS *Kirisame* to the Indian Ocean on November 9 under the pretext of doing research. Then the UNREP ship JS *Towada*, the destroyer JS *Sawagiri*, and the minesweeper tender JS *Uraga* were dispatched as part of the Coalition of the Willing, and they started operations based on the just-enacted Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Act together with the three vessels dispatched earlier. Their main operation was to refuel

coalition vessels taking part in the war in Afghanistan. This refueling operation earned the appreciation of other countries and further strengthened the Japan-US alliance.

As the United States began a second offensive, the Iraq War in 2003, and international society grew increasingly critical of "Bush's war," the Koizumi cabinet's assistance in the War on Terrorism and support of the Iraq War also came under fire in Japan. Refueling operations in the Indian Ocean came to an end when the enabling legislation expired in January 2010 and was not extended under the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) administration that came into office after winning the 2009 general election.[4]

Nevertheless, the Japan-US alliance was stronger and closer than ever before under the Bush administration, which vigorously prosecuted the Global War on Terrorism for 8 years, and the LDP cabinets led by four prime ministers—Jun'ichirō Koizumi, Shinzō Abe, Yasuo Fukuda, and Tarō Asō. Notably, Prime Minister Koizumi and President Bush enjoyed one of the friendliest relationships between Japanese and American leaders.

The friendship between the two leaders was not merely because they got along with each other well. Koizumi and his cabinet supported Bush's wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. In the face of opposition from France, Germany, and other US allies, Washington had to give up the idea of obtaining a UN resolution approving the use of force against Iraq. Because the United States was feeling increasingly isolated, the support of the Japanese and the British at that time was crucial for President Bush and many American citizens. They were grateful for it.

An alliance is a relationship in which one country stands with an ally that is facing difficulty, provides it support and advice, and, if necessary, fights alongside it. Japan had long depended on American military power for the defense of its homeland under the alliance. Half a century after the conclusion of the Security Treaty, the United States genuinely needed the support of one of its key allies, Japan, for the first time. Prime Minister Koizumi did not just blindly give his support to American wars. He also frankly demanded that President Bush make every effort to obtain a UN resolution when starting a war against Iraq. British Prime Minister Tony Blair is said to have made the same demand. The Japanese and British prime ministers had significant influence over the president.

Japan-US relations were, in view of the difficult international circumstances, extremely positive during the period I served as the minister for public affairs in charge of public diplomacy and press relations at the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C. from September 2002 to April 2005. Bush administration officials, including the president, Vice President Richard B. Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul D. Wolfowitz,

[4] Since the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Act was temporary legislation with a 2-year term limit, its extension required Diet approval. When the DPJ became the dominant party in the House of Councillors after the 2007 election, the bill to extend the Act was rejected and the JMSDF's operations in the Indian Ocean were temporarily discontinued. They resumed when the new Act, with another 2-year term, passed in January the following year.

Secretary of State Colin Powell, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, as well as their deputies, all maintained close relationships with the Japanese embassy team led by Ambassador Ryōzō Katō. They had frank exchanges at various levels.

The Bush administration appointed people with experience managing the alliance with Japan to important posts, including Richard Armitage, James A. Kelly, Michael Green, and Torkel Patterson. What is more, many of them were former US naval officers.

Likewise, Ambassador Katō was an exceptionally seasoned diplomat. He had been in charge of Japan-US security relations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for years and was respected by Japanese and American politicians, diplomats, bureaucrats, armed forces personnel, and business leaders alike. Under Ambassador Katō, the capable diplomats he had mentored came together and concentrated on maintaining and strengthening the bilateral alliance under the complicated circumstances of the Global War on Terrorism. The friendship across the sea that had been fostered between the Japanese and US navies now existed beyond navies.

China, Democratic Party Leaders in Power, and the Great East Japan Earthquake

The focus of the Bush administration after 9/11 was fighting the Global War on Terrorism; Japan spared no effort in supporting the United States and other countries in the international effort that Tokyo conceived as its own security issue. In the meantime, the global strategic environment was beginning to change yet again.

While the United States was pouring its military resources into the Middle East, China was steadily improving its military strength such that by the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, it began to reveal glimpses of being a major military power. Russia, too, showed signs of revival, after having suffered a significant decline and loss of influence with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and began posing a security threat to the West once again. Meanwhile, unconventional and asymmetrical threats like terrorism and piracy did not disappear. In addition, regional powers such as Iran and Turkey gained prominence, while North Korea continued to pose a serious threat by increasing its offensive capabilities through the development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. New threats also emerged in space, cyberspace, and other high-tech domains. As a result, the global strategic environment became more diversified, complex, and technologically advanced.

Amid the significant change in the security environment, President Barack Obama was inaugurated in January 2009, and the Democrats came into power in the United States for the first time in 8 years. In Japan, Yukio Hatoyama formed a DPJ cabinet in September, after his party won the most seats in the House of Representatives: the DPJ gained the largest percentage and number of seats under

the current constitution. The LDP did not come in first place for the first time since the party was established in 1955. The DPJ remained in office for the next 3 years.

Having won the election by criticizing the Bush administration's War on Terror and promising to withdraw from Iraq, President Obama, along with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, put forward what was called the "rebalance" or "pivot" strategy. They asserted that core American security interests lay in the Asia-Pacific region, not in the Middle East. Born in Hawaii and raised in Indonesia, Obama called himself America's first Pacific president. He appealed for deeper cooperation with Japan on his first visit to Tokyo in November 2009.

Prime Minister Hatoyama, however, did not respond positively to President Obama's appeal for closer security cooperation with Japan. Instead, he pledged to relocate the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma out of Okinawa and created chaos on the question of reorganizing the US bases in Okinawa, which were and remain to this day vital to the deterrence of the Chinese power in the region. "Trust me," he told the president, implying that his administration would continue to support US security policy in the Asia-Pacific region as an ally. Yet, Hatoyama failed to either relocate the base within Okinawa to Henoko, as the Japanese and US governments had agreed, or move it out of the prefecture. The matter of the relocation of Futenma Air Base was set back to square one; the base relocation has yet to take place.

President Obama and his administration grew to distrust Hatoyama and appeared to hold serious doubts about the DPJ cabinet's commitment to the Japan-US alliance. Some officials within the Obama administration proposed improving security relations with China instead, while others allegedly attempted to strengthen the US-South Korea alliance as the core US alliance in East Asia. Having failed to please anyone, Hatoyama resigned less than 9 months after he assumed the premiership.

Naoto Kan, another DPJ leader, succeeded Hatoyama as the new prime minister in June 2010, but he, too, failed to build a good relationship with President Obama and regain his trust as an ally. Although Kan focused his attention on dealing with the triple disaster of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami of March 11, 2011 and the ensuing Fukushima nuclear reactor accident, arguably the biggest national crisis since 1945, he was an ineffective leader overall and resigned in September 2011 having lost the trust of his own party.

It was Yoshihiko Noda, succeeding Kan to become the third DPJ prime minister, who finally began the process of putting Japan's alliance with the United States back on track. A strong supporter of the alliance and a smart and solid politician, Noda arrived a bit too late to make lasting progress with the security relationship. Full-scale improvements had to await the formation of the LDP's second Abe cabinet.

Regardless of any damage the Hatoyama/Kan DPJ administrations' erratic policies caused to the alliance, *Operation Tomodachi*, which commenced immediately following the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011, provided a broad sharing of experiences between the JSDF and US armed forces as well as between the Japanese public and US forces. Carried out by the US Navy, Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps joining the rescue and relief efforts of the JSDF, police, fire departments, local governments, and other government and non-government

organizations, *Operation Tomodachi* was a series of major disaster relief operations and programs. Other foreign governments also sent their rescue teams into the most severely hit areas of Japan, but *Operation Tomodachi* was by far the largest—in scale, in kind, and in the number of people involved.

It began when the US Navy aircraft carrier, USS *Ronald Reagan*, sailing near Japan to take part in a US-South Korea joint exercise, immediately changed its course upon learning that a major earthquake had hit northern Japan. The vessel headed straight for the waters off the eastern coast of the Tohoku region and started relief activities 2 days after the earthquake.

People living in the disaster area sincerely appreciated the US forces' quick and effective relief activities; US officers, sailors, and soldiers, for their part, were impressed by the stoic way the Japanese people coped with the crisis, well-mannered and appreciative even in the midst of immense tragedy. One Navy helicopter pilot landed at a small village badly hit by the earthquake and wanted to leave a villager with a box full of food, water, and other items he had brought from USS *Ronald Reagan*. Yet, the villager declined to accept the box; he told the pilot through an interpreter that they had already received enough relief goods from US forces, and he asked that the pilot kindly deliver the box to a village nearby that had been cut off from the outside and had received no relief supplies yet.

The Senkaku Islands rose to prominence after the Noda cabinet acquired three of the islands from a private owner in 2012. China started to let its navy and coast guard behave more assertively around the Senkaku Islands (which it claims is Chinese territory) that are near the Okinawa Islands, with its vessels frequently entering Japan's territorial waters. While avoiding a direct clash, the JMSDF, in cooperation with the Japan Coast Guard,[5] has dealt with these incidents in the East China Sea, where tensions continue rising due to increased violations of Japanese territorial waters by Chinese government ships.

In 2009 the JMSDF also started sending aircraft to a facility in Djibouti to monitor the activities of pirates in the neighboring waters as well as dispatching vessels to escort merchant ship convoys in the Gulf of Aden. Since 2014, Japan has taken part in the multinational forces, CTF151. The monitoring and escorting activities are based on the Law on Punishment of and Measures against Acts of Piracy that Japan enacted in June 2009, in line with the UN resolution that aimed at dealing with piracy off Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden.

Abe's Second Appearance and His New Security Policy

Prime Minister Noda's genuine efforts to regain Japanese voters' trust in the DPJ and to rebuild the alliance with the United States failed to bring him victory in the 2012 general election. Noda had no choice but return power to the LDP.

[5] Formerly the Maritime Safety Agency in English (until April 2000).

The second Abe cabinet, formed in December 2012, grappled with, *inter alia*, the fundamental reconstruction of Japan's security policy, which had stagnated during the DPJ's tenure in office. Making a solid Japan-US alliance its cornerstone, the Abe cabinet established the National Security Secretariat, formulated Japan's first National Security Strategy, drew up the new National Defense Program Guidelines as well as the Medium Term Defense Program, enacted the Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets, and set out the Three Principles of Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology. In 2015, it also overcame strong opposition to enact new and comprehensive national security legislation that permitted Japan to exercise its right to collective self-defense under a few strictly qualifying circumstances. Thus, we can safely say that a consistent security structure was finally established under the leadership of Prime Minister Shinzō Abe during his second and subsequent terms (2012–2020).

The reconstruction of Japan's security policy, which Abe initiated and implemented by establishing a new strategic framework and legislative structure, was only the beginning of his cabinet's effort to improve the effectiveness and readiness of the alliance. The JMSDF and the US Navy both had issues and challenges to cope with. For example, US Navy ships homeported in Yokosuka caused a series of ship collisions and near misses in 2017, which the Navy addressed by relieving the commander, US Seventh Fleet, of his post in order to take responsibility for these incidents. Some attributed a perceived decline of morale and discipline among US sailors to the significant cuts in the Navy's budget during the 8 years of the Obama administration.

For its part, the JMSDF has in the last 10 years upgraded its weapons and equipment in response to China's military expansion, tensions in the East China Sea, and concerning developments on the Korean Peninsula. Military technology has become increasingly sophisticated. The JMSDF, together with JGSDF and JASDF, has had to come to grips with entirely new threats, including those in cyberspace, outer space, and the electromagnetic spectrum. To deal with these threats, JMSDF personnel need specialized education and training in these new fields. That requires time. With the declining birthrate in Japan, the number of JMSDF personnel is unlikely to increase, even if the number of ships, aircraft, and new areas of technology do. The JMSDF is already unable to recruit enough people and currently operates a growing number of vessels and aircraft without meeting their staffing targets. Naturally, this places a burden on young officers and sailors, many of whom leave the JMSDF early, unable to bear the excessively demanding working environment. Other service branches of the JSDF have similar problems.

After Ukraine

Thirty-three years since the ending of the Cold War and 21 years since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the world remains dangerous and uncertain. During his term in office (2017–2021), President Donald J. Trump gave US allies reason to question the

US commitment to global peace and security, given his unfriendly and even hostile stance toward NATO allies and the growing bipolarization of American society with respect to political and social goals and values. Yet Prime Minister Abe succeeded in forging cordial relations with President Trump and in keeping the Japan-US alliance intact. This was perhaps partly because Trump needed Japan's cooperation in taking a firm stance against China. Moreover, Abe greatly contributed to keeping the United States engaged in regional security by coining a new strategic phrase, "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)," in 2016 as a shared strategic objective of the maritime nations in the region, a concept the Trump administration officially adopted as a vital element in its own security strategy in 2019. Nevertheless, Trump remained an unpredictable and reluctant counterpart for allies and partners in the East and West in managing their alliances with the United States.

President Joseph R. "Joe" Biden Jr. has been striving to restore good relations with NATO member countries, Japan, and other US friends and allies. Russia's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, instigated by President Vladimir Putin, started an entirely new serious military contest that has had a huge impact worldwide. Simultaneously, heightened tension over Taiwan, the East and South China Seas, and elsewhere between China, on the one hand, and the United States, Japan, and other countries, on the other, may be another sign of the world moving into a new era of global tensions and security threats. Some call it a new Cold War. The seas around Japan are as rough as ever. The world in 2022 was arguably more dangerous and uncertain than in any year since the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The whole world wonders if the new year, 2023, will bring slightly more stability and lowering of tensions, or if the global security environment, as a whole, will become even more dangerous and uncertain. As for Japan, by the end of 2022, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and his administration had issued the new National Security Strategy together with two companion documents, the new Defense Strategy and the new Defense Buildup Plan, describing the serious and difficult nature of the world's security environment including the areas surrounding Japan. Recognizing that Japan now finds itself in a new security environment, these documents lay out the measures the government needs to take in dealing with it.

Based on the content of these documents, Kishida, who became prime minister in October 2021,[6] announced that he would undertake a major increase in defense spending over the next 5 years reaching the level of 2% of GDP annually by 2027. This is the standard level of defense spending the United States has been requesting NATO member countries to achieve.

Mr. Kishida also declared that his administration would start building counterattack capabilities for the JSDF, to maximize its ability to deter, together with US armed forces, any attacks on Japan by would-be adversaries in East Asia, the Pacific, and beyond. Possessing counterattack capabilities would be a major change in Japan's post-WWII security policy: since 1945, Japan has refrained from

[6] Succeeding Yoshihide Suga (2020–2021), who took over from Shinzō Abe, continuing the line of premiers from the LDP.

possessing offensive military capabilities, relying instead on the US military's capabilities. The government maintains that counterattack capabilities would remain within the boundaries of Japan's right to self-defense under Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan. Some opposition parties strongly disagree.

It is beyond the scope of this book, however, to consider how effective these major policy changes will be in enhancing the security and peace of Japan as well as in the Indo-Pacific region, let alone what roles and missions the Japan-US alliance and naval cooperation will play. What we can say, after Putin's surprise war in Ukraine, is that anything can happen, and that Japan needs to be prepared for any eventuality.

Chapter 12
Naval Alliance for a Better Peace

How JMSDF Officers and Sailors View the US Navy and the Alliance

When I completed the Japanese version of this book in 2000, I wrote the following in the final chapter (Chap. 10 of this book):

> *The current middle-ranked officers will mostly be retired in 20 years' time. Those who retire . . . will be succeeded by the younger generation currently undergoing training at sea and in the sky. The new officers who will depart from Etajima on a long-distance training cruise in March 2001 are 23 or 24 years old. When the Gulf War broke out, they had just started junior high school. Even the memory of the Gulf War is just history for these young [Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force] JMSDF personnel. Still, they will be in the position to maintain and strengthen the JMSDF and the Japan-US alliance 20 to 30 years from now.*

More than 20 years have already passed since then, and it turned out just like I wrote. The youths of the Class of 2000[1] who set off on a long-distance training cruise as ensigns after graduating from Officer Candidate School in Etajima in March 2001 are already in their mid-40s. They work as mid-grade officers in various fields throughout the service. The early ones have made captain already, and serve in leadership positions, such as commanding officers of warships, escort flotilla staff, or section chiefs at the Maritime Staff Office (MSO) or the Joint Staff Office. They are in the same positions today that JMSDF officers who were my age or slightly younger were appointed to around 2000.

Over the past 20 years, the generation of the Class of 2000, including officers and enlisted from several years on either side of it, have lived through the War on Terrorism, North Korean threats, counter-piracy measures in the Gulf of Aden, the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, rising tensions with the Chinese navy

This chapter was newly written for the revised English edition.

[1] Who entered Officer Candidate School in 2000.

N. Agawa, *Friendship Across the Seas*,
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over the Nansei Islands, and the intensifying confrontation between the United States and China. They have experienced a greater diversity and complexity of joint activities, not just with the US Navy, but with the navies of Australia, Canada, India, Singapore, Great Britain, France, and even Germany.

How do these mid-level officers and enlisted personnel currently on active duty in the JMSDF view today's JMSDF-US Navy relationship? How do they feel about the future of the bilateral alliance? Are there any elements that make them uneasy?

The Interviewees: Joining the Maritime Self-Defense Force

Fortunately, I was able to interview several JMSDF personnel and hear their thoughts thanks to the efforts of Captain Ryōko Azuma, chief of the MSO's Public Affairs Section, and others. They included five officers (Classes of 1996–2000), and a chief petty officer (CPO) and a petty officer third class who work in the same field. These men and women had different reasons for joining the JMSDF. (The ranks and positions of the interviewees are as of the time of their interviews; a few of them have been promoted and have moved on to new positions of responsibility as of the time of publication.)

Captain Shūsuke Kitaguchi (Class of 1996) is currently chief of liaison section, Administration Division, Administration Department, MSO. He joined because of a strong childhood interest in the IJN and a dream of one day commanding a JMSDF destroyer. He had worked at a private company in Kyoto for a while after graduating from a Kansai area university. But, unable to give up on his dream, he studied hard, sat for the JMSDF officer candidate exam, and passed.

Captain Kazushi Yokota (Class of 1997) is currently the director of the Plans and Programs Division, Operations and Plans Department, MSO; he is from Tokyo. So, ever since high school, Yokota wanted to find a job where he could serve his country. *I happened to learn about a medical officer treating wounded soldiers in a cave on Iwo Jima in 1945 in the last phase of the battle. The army doctor persuaded the soldiers to live and return home instead of dying in a final assault. It made me consider becoming a naval doctor, to make my contribution in the field of medicine. But after twice failing the entrance examination for the National Defense Medical College, I went instead to the National Defense Academy, which I passed.* For a time, he thought about joining the JASDF. However, he came across portraits of Admirals Nimitz and Burke at the US Navy Officers Club in Yokosuka, not too far from the Academy where he was studying. He learned how they had fought against the IJN in the war. He also read a translation of the US Naval Institute's *Naval Leadership*, a textbook for midshipmen. He thus felt that there was a healthy skepticism and rational scientific thinking in the US Navy, a way of thinking that is somewhat different from Japan's. He wondered if perhaps that was a reason for the IJN's defeat. And so he decided to join the JMSDF, to serve the country, and never let Japan repeat that mistake again.

Captain Toshihiko Shiraishi (Class of 2000) is currently chief of the Aircraft Section, Aircraft Division, Logistics Department, MSO; he is from Hirado City, Nagasaki Prefecture. His father was a fisherman, so Shiraishi loved the sea. He went to Sasebo North High School and was quite familiar with the JMSDF and the US Navy. After entering the National Defense Academy, he naturally chose the JMSDF. Similarly, Captain Takuo Kobayashi (Class of 2000) is chief of the Plans and Policy Section, Plans and Programs Division, Operations and Plans Department, MSO and Yokota's subordinate; he is from Yokosuka. His father served as chief engineer on commercial and fishing vessels, and Kobayashi, too, was familiar with the JMSDF, US Navy, and National Defense Academy (NDA). After graduating from junior high school, he was educated as a JMSDF student at Etajima (a system to train enlisted personnel, abolished in 2011, where a student simultaneously followed the high school curriculum to obtain a diploma). After completing his studies, he entered the National Defense Academy and chose the JMSDF. Developing an interest for the sea appears to be a result of growing up near it.

Some people, in contrast, join the JMSDF without knowing much about it. Captain Junko Kawashima (Class of 1997) is currently liaison officer, Operations Support Division and Administration Division, MSO, assigned to US Naval Forces Japan; she is from Saitama Prefecture. After graduating from Dokkyo University, an institution near her home that emphasizes international education, she wanted a job related to foreign countries, so she applied to two or three foreign-affiliated trading companies. However, an SDF recruiter told her that if she wanted to do international work, the JMSDF was definitely the way to go. Thinking that this advice made sense, she took the officer candidate examination, and joined the JMSDF without knowing almost anything about it.

Chief Petty Officer Makoto Takitō, currently the system chief of the destroyer JS *Maya*, also said that he knew nothing about the JMSDF when he enlisted in 1991. He passed the recruitment exam, which he took only because a close friend from high school suggested they take it together. He said he had not planned to serve long, thinking he would leave the service after a few years. Petty Officer Third Class Masato Alexander Yasuda, currently an instructor at the Surface Warfare Center, had a similar story when he enlisted in 2015. He took the exams for the fire and police departments in addition to the JMSDF, but he joined the JMSDF because it was the first to confirm that he had passed. Neither man had particularly strong feelings for the JMSDF at the time of enlistment. There are always some people like that among JMSDF applicants.

Encounter with America and Beyond

Regardless of why they joined the JMSDF, once they did, they ended up working with the US Navy. Many of them have varying degrees of routine contact with US Navy personnel, which is natural given that the United States is Japan's sole ally and that JMSDF-US Navy ties are particularly close. What impressions and assessments

have they formed through personal experience with the US Navy and of the United States, more generally?

Listening to their stories, I came to realize that the diversity of JMSDF personnel has made great strides compared to 20 years ago. The number of people who, before joining the JMSDF, lived and/or studied abroad, especially in the United States, seems to be steadily rising.

The one who kicked off this trend, so to speak, is Captain Keizo Kitagawa (Class of 1993); though he was not a subject of these interviews, I have known him personally for years. In fact, he is the only graduate of the US Naval Academy in Annapolis in the history of the JMSDF (the eighth Japanese to graduate; the one prior to Captain Kitagawa graduated in 1900). Originally from Ube City, Yamaguchi Prefecture, Kitagawa did a homestay in the United States as a high school exchange student. At his US high school, he came across a brochure for the Naval Academy, famous for offering a quality education comparable to that of top-level civilian American universities. Young Kitagawa, with his innate ability for taking action, inquired at the Academy, and was told that he would be allowed to take the exam. He applied, and based on his examination scores, received notification of his acceptance. He moved to Annapolis in the summer of 1989, entered the Academy, and worked exceedingly hard to keep up with his studies and training in English. He completed the 4-year course, making many friends.

A big question arose just before graduation: who would pay for his tuition? This unprecedented case apparently reached the notice of relevant officials in the US Navy and the JMSDF, as well as the officials in charge of national security policy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. *What a waste to force a young Japanese graduate of a US service academy to find employment in the private sector. If he was to join the JMSDF*, they judged, *surely he will contribute to deepening the Japan-US alliance*. Thus, a bilateral solution was devised: upon graduating from Annapolis, he would be treated as though he had graduated from Japan's National Defense Academy, proceed to JMSDF Officer Candidate School, and become an officer of the JMSDF.

Deeply influenced by his education at Annapolis and building on his experiences as a JMSDF officer, Captain Kitagawa had developed a strong ongoing interest in the differences in naval officer training in Japan and the United States pre-World War II, and in the best way to train JMSDF officers today. Long interested in academia, Kitagawa later obtained a master's degree from the National Defense Academy and a doctorate from Keio University. His doctoral thesis was on the topic of intellectual innovation in military organizations, specifically the relationship between theory and practice in naval education. (Incidentally, I served as one of the assistant examiners of his thesis.) Until December 2022, he served as the first director of the Naval Strategy Office, Operations and Plans Department, MSO, offering his thinking and advice on the proper balance between theoretical knowledge and practical art in the JMSDF to the chief of maritime staff (CMS) and other JMSDF leadership.

Captain Shūsuke Kitaguchi grew up mainly in Great Neck, Long Island, a suburb of New York City from the second grade of elementary school to the tenth grade of high school because his father, a Japanese trading company employee, had been

transferred to the United States. He had a carefree childhood, studying with Americans in public schools. The locals were very kind, and he still misses them, he told me. Yet, he also had some experiences to realize that not all of American society is just freedom and tolerance.

The increase in the number of personnel with one non-Japanese parent heightens the perception of the diversity within the JMSDF. Petty Officer Third Class Yasuda's father had been in charge of carrier-based aircraft maintenance aboard the aircraft carriers homeported at US Fleet Activities Yokosuka in the 1990s and early 2000s. He met a Japanese woman from Yokosuka, they got married, and Yasuda was born. *When my father retired, he returned to Los Angeles, so my mother and I moved to the United States to join him. After we lived in America for a while, my father got a new job in Guam, so that's where I graduated from high school. However, I have a strong sense of being Japanese: I was born in Yokosuka, grew up surrounded by my mother and her family and relatives, and I studied at a Japanese public school. I could have joined the US Navy if I had wanted, since my father is a US citizen. But I joined the JMSDF without hesitation. It made me happy that, when I told my father about enlisting, he told me that when he worked on the aircraft carrier, he often worked with the JMSDF, watched what they did, and respected them. "You will now join the JMSDF I respect," he told me; "I respect your decision."*

Apart from his height and exotic features, Petty Officer Third Class Yasuda is every bit the old-fashioned sort of Japanese young man, extremely well-mannered and unusually reserved. The number of personnel with one non-Japanese parent, like him, will likely grow. Anyone with Japanese citizenship who meets certain qualification requirements should be very welcome, but JMSDF personnel are national civil servants who often come into contact with classified information. This is not a problem if the father is a citizen of the United States, an ally, but the decision is made more difficult, it seems, depending on the nationality of the parent. Several years ago, a top student at the National Defense Academy with a parent who was a Chinese national was not permitted to join any of the three SDF service branches, an outcome his classmates protested. The decision may be handled on a case-by-case basis, as the issues involved are complex and full of nuances.

In the United States, a foreign national can gain citizenship by serving in the military for a few years. Many young foreigners, swearing allegiance to the United States, acquire the pride and attitude of an American in the military, and then, upon leaving the service, go on to become good American citizens. Ordinary citizens respect and treat these former foreigners who served the country in the military as true Americans. The military was among the first government institutions to abolish discrimination against blacks. In Japan, where the birthrate is declining, is it still too difficult to adopt a similar system utilizing the SDF as a place to foster good Japanese citizens?

Drawn to America, Repelled by America

Other personnel had no direct personal experience with America before joining the JMSDF; their prior views ranged from fascination or simple awareness to dislike of that country. Captain Yokota attended a junior high school affiliated with Ochanomizu University[2] that had a class for returnee students, many of whom had grown up abroad. *Since they spoke in English, I was exposed to the world of English for the first time. I worked hard to study English, writing down the lines from* Top Gun*,* Back to the Future*, and other movies I was obsessed with at the time; challenging myself by reading books in the original English; and getting hold of an English-English dictionary to push myself further.* It appears that Captain Yokota's view of America before he joined the JMSDF was a combination of admiration for contemporary America and knowledge that the US and Japanese Navies had fought in the Pacific War.

Captain Kobayashi, meanwhile, as a second-year junior high school student, had the opportunity to visit the aircraft carrier USS *Independence* at US Fleet Activities Yokosuka, where he was treated kindly. *I thought Americans were cheerful people. The movie* Top Gun *made me want to be a pilot. However, I was shocked to read the farewell note of a kamikaze pilot on my first visit to the Museum of Naval History when I was a JMSDF student at Etajima. The pilot, just 17 when he wrote his note, crashed into an American ship and lost his life. I remember thinking that I was 2 years younger than he was. That could have been me.*

In spite of the self-sacrifice of the pilot and deaths of innumerable others, in the end Japan lost the war to the United States. I didn't feel any hatred, just an overwhelming sense of chagrin. I wanted to do it over and beat America. The feelings I had were complicated. They have not disappeared completely, even now. After that, I began to visit the museum by myself two or three times a month, and to think about the war. Kobayashi advanced to the National Defense Academy where he joined the rugby club. At an international conference with students from foreign military academies, he befriended Joe, a member of the American football team at West Point, the US Army's military academy. While horsing around, he tackled Joe on the snow, knocking him down. Kobayashi felt a weight lift from him.

It is fascinating that, although their feelings toward America differed, both Captains Yokota and Kobayashi, born nearly 30 years after Japan's war with the United States, had been thinking about that war when they joined the JMSDF.

[2] A women's university located in Tokyo.

Female Personnel Seek to Globalize the Workplace

Any consideration of diversifying the JMSDF must include the increase in the number of female personnel and the expansion of their scope of activity. The SDF's recruitment of women began surprisingly long ago. The National Safety Force, the JGSDF's predecessor, began hiring female nurses in 1952; the JGSDF began employing college-educated female officers in 1968. The JMSDF and JASDF started hiring female officers in 1974. The number of female recruits, however, was small and the types of jobs open to them remained limited for a long time.

The Japan Defense Agency declared in 1993 that all SDF occupations would be opened to female personnel, yet for a long time afterward, women were not assigned as destroyer, submarine or aircraft crewmembers, for instance, owing to maternity protection, the potential for close combat, difficulty in ensuring privacy between men and women, economic efficiency, and other excuses. Newly commissioned female ensigns finally embarked on an overseas training cruise for the first time in 1995, after women's quarters with locks were installed on the training ship JS *Kashima*; the first assignment of female personnel to destroyers began in 2008. Before 1995, female JMSDF officers had no experience working at sea. There have been two female rear admirals to date, Hikaru Saeki in 2001 and Natsue Kondo in 2016, but neither of them has been on sea duty: Admiral Saeki was a medical officer, and Admiral Kondo is from the pre-training cruise generation whose main occupations were accounting and supply.

Around the year 2000, a female officer assigned to the MSO's Education Division, a classmate of former CMS Tomohisa Takei, provided me with assistance several times when I did some work for the JMSDF. She was popular among her colleagues and classmates who often sought her help. She married a more senior JMSDF officer. Nevertheless, she once told me that, looking back, she had been sad that, though a JMSDF officer, she was not able to serve on a naval vessel because she had not been able to go on that overseas training cruise.

Captain Kawashima, interested in international work, joined the JMSDF just as the SDF began cautiously expanding the categories of work open to female SDF personnel. *It was difficult for women to be selected for overseas assignments, such as international operations or foreign details. Even though there were other women like me who wished to be sent overseas, it was not permitted for a long time. No matter how hard we worked at English and how eager we were to do such work, being a woman was an obstacle for some job categories and placements—it was a painful experience. The male personnel likely were unaware of that. Yet, believing that these occupations would open up some day, I didn't give up, continuing to express my wishes, and I was accepted in the end.* Over the past few years, she has served as the commanding officer of the training ship JS *Setoyuki* in Kure; as an advisor to the Special Representative of the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) Secretary General at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Belgium; as a liaison officer in Bahrain; and currently as a liaison officer to the US Navy in Japan. She acknowledges that she is much more fortunate than the previous generation of

female SDF officers, who could not do her jobs because they were not allowed aboard ships. Nevertheless, she feels that it took far too long.

Incidentally, Captain Miho Ōtani, a Class of 1996 classmate of Captain Kitaguchi and 1 year senior to Captain Kawashima, was in the first class of female cadets at the National Defense Academy, the first woman to serve as the executive officer and commanding officer of a destroyer, and the first female commanding officer of an Aegis destroyer, JS *Myōkō*. Also Class of 1996, Captain Ryōko Azuma, currently chief of the public affairs section who made these interviews possible, was the first female training ship captain and the first woman to serve as the commander, Escort Division. Captain Kawashima, as a female officer, is following in the footsteps of Captains Ōtani and Azuma.

September 11 Terrorist Attacks

Soon after becoming officers, these men and women experienced the 9/11 incident in 2001, which forced a new awareness of the US Navy. Captains Kobayashi and Shiraishi (Class of 2000) just happened to return to Harumi, one of the passenger ship terminals in Tokyo, from their overseas training cruise on September 10. That day, Kobayashi disembarked from the training ship JS *Kashima* and moved to Sasebo to take up his first posting on the destroyer JS *Kurama*. On the night of September 11, he was watching TV as he ate ramen and drank beer at a restaurant in Sasebo. Suddenly, there was a commotion among the customers watching the television, which showed a video of jet airliners crashing into a New York skyscraper; Kobayashi had no idea what had happened. But, when he called a superior on the *Kurama*, he was told that he did not have to return to base. He never imagined that what he saw was a terrorist attack, nor did he consider the implications for the JMSDF.

Kobayashi moved to Etajima, as originally scheduled, to take the introductory training course for junior surface officers at the First Service School. While he was at school, it was decided that JS *Kurama*, a component of Escort Flotilla Two, would be dispatched to the Indian Ocean on November 9 together with the destroyer JS *Kirisame* and replenishment ship JS *Hamana*. Kobayashi was headed to the Indian Ocean for his first real mission.

After 9/11, the US government requested the Japanese government to participate in the Global War on Terror in Afghanistan. In response, the Koizumi cabinet decided to dispatch destroyers and a replenishment ship to the Indian Ocean under a new Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law. After the law was enacted, JS *Kurama* and the other two vessels were dispatched, nominally to survey and research.

The sailors soon to be on their first deployment to the Indian Ocean were so tense that many wrote out their wills. Kobayashi, too, was worried he might die. He had just been bid an emotional farewell by an old woman who had looked after him on

the weekends.[3] "Why you?" she had cried; just 20 years old at war's end, she well remembered how young naval officers went off to fight, never to return. Because his overseas training cruise had gone to the Indian Ocean and the Middle East, Kobayashi had not experienced a port call at a US Navy base, and so this deployment would be his first time seeing US naval operations.

Coincidentally, Kawashima was an assistant ASW[4] officer on JS *Kashima,* the flagship of the Training Squadron for the Class of 2000; it had been her first visit to the Middle East. She learned of the 9/11 incident at sea, as her ship was heading to its home port in Kure after having dropped off Shiraishi, Kobayashi, and the other newly commissioned officers at Harumi. *It came as quite a shock, though the news did not provide much detail at the time. I wondered what the United States was going to do. I remember feeling disappointed when I heard that there would be no more training cruises to the Middle East because of this incident.*

Twenty years later, in 2021, she was appointed as the liaison officer to the US Navy's Fifth Fleet in Bahrain, as Kitaguchi's successor. She learned about America's decision to withdraw troops from Afghanistan from President Biden's statement. Bahrain became the site of operations for the withdrawal from Afghanistan. From US Navy briefings, she could get a sense of the progress of preparations for withdrawal and the tensions mounting by the day. After the fall of Kabul, she was very impressed with the decisiveness of the United States, the strong will to act and the logistical capability of US forces to achieve their goals, and the leadership of the US Navy's commanding officers. Reflecting on the past 20 years, she told the commander of the Fifth Fleet of her involvement with the war in Afghanistan, at the start when President Bush declared the war on terrorism right after 9/11, and at the end in the Middle East. *He told me that for me to understand the start and end of a serious mission was valuable for the US military.*

Bonds Between Japanese and US Navy Experts

Increased internationalization of the JMSDF notwithstanding, the majority of personnel first come into contact with the United States and its people after joining the JMSDF, as they conduct exercises, patrols, operations, resupply, and information exchanges with the naval forces of their sole ally. They visit America, the first foreign country for many of them, through training trips to the United States and joint exercises at sea, for instance a helicopter pilot's landing on the flight deck of a US Navy ship. Alternatively, the JMSDF bases in Yokosuka, Atsugi, Iwakuni,

[3] In a tradition dating back to the Imperial Japanese Naval Academy, students living in the dormitory would each rent a room in private lodgings on the island to spend the weekend relaxing. Kobayashi also rented a room while at the Officer Candidate School. The old woman who had looked after him there until his graduation a year before had welcomed him back as a trainee at the First Service School.

[4] Anti-submarine warfare.

Sasebo, and Okinawa share various facilities with the adjacent US Navy bases. For example, submarines at Yokosuka base are always moored at a pier in one corner of the US naval base. Similar arrangements are only just beginning with the JGSDF and JASDF, but the JMSDF has been like that since its inception.

CPO Takitō had no particular hopes for his assignments when he enlisted in the JMSDF. *Asked what I wanted to do after enlisting, I only replied that, since I had joined the JMSDF, I wanted to be a crew member on a naval vessel. First of all, I knew next to nothing about the JMSDF. I never dreamed that I'd be working with people in the US Navy in the future.*

And so, after completing basic training, I was told I was assigned to fire control because I had an aptitude (in the JMSDF, each job category is called the technical specialty required to perform the duties in that category). You can be sure, I had no idea what fire control was. Since then, CPO Takitō has spent his nearly 30-year career in the JMSDF focusing unremittingly on missile fire control systems for Aegis ships. He feels great contentment with how it turned out: improving his knowledge and skills in this technical field gives him a great sense of purpose and identity in his life.

The role of a fire controlman, when firing artillery or missiles mounted on a destroyer, is to calculate the position and movement of the target, fire the shell or missile, track the ordnance with radar to verify correct flight trajectory, and hit the target. Simultaneously, he must radar track the enemy's incoming ordnance and relay that information to the ship's captain and other officers. In the IJN, fire control staff used a rangefinder to measure the distance to the enemy vessel, calculated the sailing speed and direction for both ships, and reported that to the gunners, who fired the guns. Nowadays, the radar determines the target's location, and a computer calculates the correct rate and angle of fire instantaneously. The technology improves year by year. The SPY radar that the Aegis missile interception system uses possesses groundbreaking capabilities for target detection and calculation of projectile speed and angle. Thus, the Aegis system using SPY radar is a top-secret technology of the US Navy, which is why the JMSDF was given the radar system as a black box at first, without any information how it was put together.

The JMSDF commissioned its first Aegis-equipped warship, JS *Kongo*, in 1993, 2 years after CPO Takitō enlisted; it subsequently deployed a series of Aegis destroyers to each escort flotilla. To operate Aegis ships effectively, the JMSDF had an urgent task to train fire control personnel who could understand and master the workings of the Aegis system, a completely new system for the JMSDF. CPO Takitō was selected as one of those candidates. The most enthusiastic of students, he devoted himself to mastering SPY radar technology, setting himself on the path to becoming the JMSDF's SPY radar specialist responsible for operating and maintaining the radar, installing new operating system software and application updates. In his seventh year after enlisting, he was selected and ordered to study at the US Navy's SPY radar school in New Jersey for 1 year. He crossed the Pacific with his wife and 3-year-old son—it was their first time in America.

Takitō returned twice more for further study at the US Navy's school, but it appears that he feels particularly nostalgic about his first experience in America. *My*

wife also enjoyed her first time living in America. However, we had a lot of trouble with English in our daily life. Though I had attended an English school before leaving, it didn't do me much good right away. I'd go to a restaurant and not know what or how to order. The Americans at the school were kind and looked after us.

Since the classes at school were conducted in English, I struggled to follow along. But, hungry for new knowledge about SPY radars, I studied hard. The instructors were kind. I wondered why they were so caring and spent time with me. It took so much time to pose a question in English, then more time to understand the response. They answered my questions no matter how much time it took. There were times I'd suddenly realize that it was 9 or 10 o'clock at night. I thanked the instructor, who told me, "Don't worry about it. I am here for you." "So that is what the student-teacher relationship is like in America," I marveled. I met this instructor again 15 years later, when I came to study for the second time.

There was a lot to learn, but after returning from studying abroad and gaining more experience, I no longer felt my understanding of the SPY radar was any less than that of my US Navy counterparts. Whenever the JMSDF builds a new Aegis destroyer, one of the US Navy SPY radar specialists comes to give advice. Although we work together, there have been times we adamantly disagreed with each other. One time, it was so emotionally charged, it almost got out of hand, and I barely stopped myself from punching him. After arguing over who was right, we decided to give it a try to find out. When it turned out Takitō was right, the Navy specialist came to respect the Japanese CPO.

This man recently came to Yokosuka again. JS Maya*, one of the newest Aegis destroyers, is about to go to Hawaii for testing. I suddenly received an email from him saying that he'd seen my name in the crew list of the* Maya*, so he got himself assigned to oversee the testing. We'll be working together for the first time in 20 years. He retired from the Navy but still works on SPY radar as a civilian contractor. I am so happy to see him again after such a long time; I missed him. We respect each other. Soon we'll board* Maya *and depart Yokosuka for Hawaii. There are several other US Navy specialists that I've known for about 10 years.* CPO Takitō has been sent to the United States to participate in bilateral training and exercises on an Aegis destroyer eight times.

Because of this relationship, we both know that everything will go well when the Japanese and US navies conduct joint exercises at sea, with Aegis ships from both sides taking part: he is watching the Aegis on the US side and he knows that I'm watching on the Japanese side. There is thus an unwavering sense of trust and camaraderie between SPY radar specialists, which I find rewarding to think is part of the strong bond between our two Navies.

Enhancing JSDF Interoperability with US Forces

The encounters that JMSDF personnel have with the US Navy vary. Captain Yokota, after having visited America for the first time on his overseas training cruise, crossed the Pacific with units from the JGSDF and JASDF to train for several months at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton in California for the 2013 joint exercises, *Operation Dawn Blitz 13.2*. This was the first of such trainings following the 2011 publication of the new and revised National Defense Program Guidelines, enabling the SDF to train and acquire island recapture and amphibious warfare capabilities. Learning how the Marines fight by taking part in live-fire exercises was a completely new experience for Yokota. He realized what it was like for a military to fight.

This training was, in fact, the first full-scale joint training that assumed the JMSDF and JGSDF units would cross the sea and fight together. Since its inception, the JMSDF has shared various experiences and lessons learned with the US Navy, but it has conducted training and exercises only infrequently with the JGSDF and JASDF. Conducting joint operations, therefore, has been relatively uncommon. The three SDF service branches differ in the history of their founding, their assigned duties, and their institutional cultures and conventions that have been handed down; they have completely separate command structures. Consequently, it was rather difficult to operate together.

After two laws regarding the structure and responsibilities of the SDF[5] were revised on the basis of long debates and changes in the situation, it resulted in the establishment in 2006 of the Joint Staff Office, to replace the Joint Staff Council, and the creation of the position of Chief of the Joint Staff, instead of the Chairman of the Joint Council. The Joint Staff Council lacked independent command authority. In contrast, the chief of staff, Joint Staff, is given ultimate command of the three SDF service branches and, assisted by staff members of the Joint Staff Office, actually operates the ground, maritime, and air forces. For the SDF, this was a major transformation, one very much needed to respond to diverse security threats jointly with the US military.

Achievement of this major transformation has made island recapture operations possible: in the event that a foreign country attacks and occupies islands in the Nansei Islands region that is Japanese territory, Japanese ground, maritime, and air forces will act jointly to recapture them.

In concrete terms, the purpose of this operation is for JGSDF combat units to land on and recapture an island occupied by an enemy country. The landing forces will be transported by JMSDF helicopter-carrying destroyers from their bases on the mainland to the waters of the occupied island. JASDF fighters and attack aircraft will support the landing of JGSDF units from the air. And the JGSDF troops will make an amphibious landing on the island.

The problem, however, was that even though it had the duty and capability to deal with an enemy landing on Japanese territory, the JSDF, which has followed an

[5] The SDF Law and Bill for Partial Revision of the Defense Agency Establishment Law.

exclusively defense-oriented policy due to constitutional restrictions, lacked the strategy, know-how, and experience necessary to execute landing operations on islands under enemy control. The JMSDF never envisioned conducting such operations since its establishment. The JGSDF-JMSDF joint force with Captain Yokota went to the United States to learn island-recapture know-how from the US Marine Corps.

Japan simultaneously carried out joint ground, maritime, and air operations with the US military forces after the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011. Then, too, Captain Yokota worked with JGSDF, JASDF, and US military personnel at the bilateral coordination center located at JGSDF Northeastern Army Headquarters in Sendai. A bilateral joint operation command center, established at Yokota Air Base, set the overall direction for carrying out relief activities as well as decided the areas of operation and division of roles and duties between the JSDF and the US military. At the bilateral coordination center in Sendai, the three SDF service branches and US forces allotted personnel, secured logistics, and gave detailed instructions and coordination for the specific relief activities for each unit to carry out jointly. Captain Yokota served as the JMSDF representative there. Though not a war, it was for both the JSDF and US military their first large-scale joint mission and operation.

The US military's relief operation, where the mightiest military in the world employed its powers fully, held a groundbreaking significance because it proved that the Japan-US alliance functioned effectively in an emergency situation. The friendship and trust of the Japanese people towards their US ally increased markedly.

The JMSDF has learned much from the US Navy and has improved its capabilities since its founding. The JMSDF may be the first of the three SDF service branches to have achieved actual joint operations (except for joint command), a goal it had aimed for with the US Navy.

In conjunction with the development since the 2000s of the JSDF's own joint operations, the conducting of training, exercises, and missions jointly with the US military is no longer the sole purview of the JMSDF. The "friendship across the seas" between Japan and the United States is now a "friendship on the ground" and "friendship in the skies," too.

The Job of Liaison Officer

The JMSDF and US Navy have led the other service branches in all forms of cooperation and joint activities, from communications between the JMSDF CMS and the US Navy CNO on down to interactions between enlisted sailors, in the course of joint training, exercises, surveillance, replenishment of fuel supplies, and other routine activities. Contacts occur through the course of carrying out these duties, hence interaction with the US Navy, itself, is not the mission. Although friendship and trust may frequently be generated as JMSDF personnel work together with their US counterparts on difficult tasks, it is altogether distinct from the

institution-to-institution communication and exchange of information between the JMSDF and US Navy. The JMSDF has a job category that specializes in that.

The primary duty of liaison officers, such as Captains Kitaguchi and Kawashima, is to facilitate communication and information sharing between the JMSDF and the US Navy. The two navies must maintain close communication on a daily basis, especially between the commanding officers responsible for mission execution, so that they can share strategies, define clear objectives, and carry out joint operations to achieve them. The position of liaison officer was established for that purpose.

By no means are liaison officers a new institution. Stationed at US Fleet Activities Yokosuka, the headquarters of US Naval Forces Japan, during the Cold War of the 1970s and 1980s, they coordinated tasks and conveyed information obtained there to the Maritime Staff Office in Roppongi. As described in Chap. 7, Commander James Auer had been a staff member for the commander, US Naval Forces Japan, who, along with his staff, comprised the counterpart for the CMS and his staff. In that capacity, Auer coordinated and communicated various policy matters with the top levels of the JMSDF, either through JMSDF liaison officers or by traveling to Tokyo himself. There was no direct line of communication between the JMSDF and US Seventh Fleet or Pacific Fleet Command.

As JMSDF-US Navy relations have grown deeper and the JMSDF's activities have become more global, so too have JMSDF liaison officers seen their number and postings, as well as their duties and roles, expand dramatically. For example, Commander Hayashi was the lone JMSDF liaison officer at US Pacific Fleet Headquarters at the time of the *Ehime Maru* incident; he alone was busy with communications between the MSO and Hawaii and with the JMSDF's on-site response to families of the crew of the sunken training ship, and to the media covering the incident. Today, in contrast, the JSDF routinely dispatches seven or eight liaison officers from all three service branches to the Indo-Pacific Command and the Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor. There are many visitors from Tokyo on business, and JMSDF vessels call at Pearl Harbor constantly. This direct communication channel between the three JSDF service branches and the US Indo-Pacific Command may be taken to symbolize the changing times. Currently, the JMSDF also dispatches liaison officers to USS *Blue Ridge* and to the office of the CNO at the Pentagon; in return, the US Navy has liaison officers placed at the MSO and the Self-Defense Fleet to facilitate communications with the JMSDF.

Captain Kitaguchi is fluent in English, having spent his childhood studying alongside Americans at local New York public schools. Naturally, he has often been given responsibility for negotiations and coordination in English since he joined the JMSDF. His first placement was aboard JS *Kirishima*, and he participated in RIMPAC 98.[6] He was dispatched overseas many times, including a visit to

[6] Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC), which began in 1971, is a multi-nation fleet exercise in the Pacific Ocean to enhance the tactical capabilities of participants in maritime operations. In 1998, the exercise took place in the waters off Hawaii and included participants from six Pacific nations.

Petropavlovsk[7] in Russia on board JS *Hiei* as its assistant engineer. He first served as a liaison officer early (as a lieutenant), assigned to the US Third Fleet in San Diego; he also served as a liaison officer for the US Fifth Fleet in Bahrain.

I had a lot of experience living in the United States and I have worked with US Navy personnel many times since my first deployment. People are approachable, maybe because I am approachable to them. Perhaps that was why I could speak freely and directly, regardless of class or rank, and I felt it was a better environment to work in.

People in San Diego rush home around 3:00 pm on Fridays. US sailors, once aboard ship steaming out of port on a mission, often work in fairly demanding environments. The ensuing land assignments allow them to relax and prepare for the next duty on the frontline. It's a pretty good balance—something the JMSDF does not have, I realized.

Of course, as a liaison officer, Captain Kitaguchi has frequently seen harsh aspects of the US Navy. In two separate incidents in 2017, Seventh Fleet vessels collided with civilian ships resulting in several fatalities. The string of scandals involving the Seven Fleet became a hot topic for discussion in Japan, too, because of the possible implications for effectiveness of the Japan-US alliance. US Navy leadership took the situation so seriously that they abruptly relieved Vice Admiral Joseph Aucoin of his command. It came as quite a shock to everyone in the Seventh Fleet, from the sailors and officers up to the commander himself.

While serving at JMSDF Self-Defense Fleet headquarters, Captain Kitaguchi at the time had been assigned to work on the USS *Blue Ridge* as the JMSDF's second ever liaison officer to the Seventh Fleet. Then came Aucoin's sudden dismissal. *He was shocked, his staff was shocked, his family and those around him were left in a state of shock. Likewise, the JMSDF was surprised. It seems everyone at the MSO was at a loss as to how to deal with this situation; such a sudden dismissal would be unlikely to occur in Japan.*

In fact, Vice Admiral Aucoin was supposed to leave Japan that fall, so a grand farewell party hosted by the JMSDF had already been scheduled, and he was to be awarded a decoration by the Government of Japan. With all of that now out of the picture, the CMS wanted to pay a visit at least, so he instructed Kitaguchi to make him an appointment with Aucoin. The vice admiral's office, somewhat perplexed, agreed to the visit. The CMS visited the vice admiral at his hilltop residence within US Fleet Activities Yokosuka to express his gratitude for all of Aucoin's contributions. The vice admiral received him politely.

Kitaguchi felt it was, in a sense, one of the US Navy's strongpoints that Vice Admiral Aucoin was held responsible for the series of incidents and was relieved of command, for it showed America's strict top-down chain of command as well as the leader's taking responsibility when push comes to shove. It seems that there was not much precedent even in the US Navy to dismiss him when he was about to leave Japan. But given the gravity of the situation, the US Navy's top brass took bold

[7] The capital of Kamchatka Krai, it lies across Avacha Bay from a Russian naval base.

action. No one could assume that he would be treated leniently for his negligent job performance. The higher the rank, the stricter it is. Everyone worried that US Navy morale was declining, but perhaps discipline has improved as a result of this punishment. Kitaguchi thinks so. This story reminded me of something former CMS Kazuomi Uchida told me when I interviewed him for this book. Recalling that the IJN had promoted a certain admiral just after he had made a major blunder in a campaign against the United States, Uchida told me, "The IJN and the JMSDF are both too lenient; neither had such a thing as mandatory punishment. And so, the same mistakes were repeated." Or something like that; my memory is somewhat hazy. Is this a characteristic of Japanese organizations, not just its navy?

Kitaguchi felt that, as in this dismissal case, there are times aboard a US Navy vessel when you did not know what the commander would do until the very end, even at sea. It is unpredictable. For one thing, the commander has latitude to make decisions at his discretion, entrusted with a broad range of options to take. Consequently, these actions will vary from one commander or captain to the next. The Seventh Fleet Command believes it needs to be apprised of only the necessary information, leaving it to subordinates to carry out the mission. In fact, the total unpredictability is frightening for the enemy.

A gourmet dinner of steak and lobster is served on occasion aboard US Navy vessels out at sea for 6 months at a time to places like the Western Pacific, the Indian Ocean, or the Middle East. All-you-can-eat ice cream for dessert. The crew isn't always happy when that happens. Even as they eat, they wonder what's the catch—their enjoyment is tempered by worry. When JMSDF vessels are dispatched overseas, the return date is decided from the beginning and rarely altered; in the US Navy, the return home is often postponed suddenly near the end of a long voyage. The day after the steak dinner, the captain makes an announcement from the bridge, informing the crew that, as expected, the return home has been postponed. This is perhaps another sign of the unpredictability of the US Navy's actions. The sailors grumble but carry out their duties as before. Here, too, lies the strength of the US Navy.

Captain Kawashima has followed a career path similar to that of Kitaguchi, one class senior to her. As mentioned above, she joined the JMSDF wanting to do international work but was initially disappointed to find that the assignments she wanted were closed to women. Later, she had opportunities to learn about navies in America and around the world, taking part in overseas training cruises, which now allowed women aboard, a total of five times, as a crewmember and as a member of the command staff. She was stationed abroad twice, at NATO Headquarters in Brussels and at US Fifth Fleet in Bahrain, and now serves as a liaison officer at the headquarters of US Naval Forces Japan.

As a female JMSDF officer with a wealth of international experience, she has been interested in how foreign navies treat their female personnel ever since her first training cruise; the more she learned, the more she compared those cases to the JMSDF. In her view, there are countries where women work just the same as men, and there are others that are slightly behind. Whereas some countries demand the same abilities and results from female as from male staff, other navies expect and

utilize them in fields such as health or information/communications. The US Navy is no exception. There was a time when discrimination and sexual harassment against women were prominent in the US Navy, such as the Tailhook scandal of the early 1990s. Now, however, there are many women working in every kind of position; there are female fighter pilots, commanding officers of ships, and commanders of flotillas. It is nothing unusual, and they do not get treated any differently from the men.

Actually, there are not that many female officers, and few at the rank of captain, at US Fleet Activities Yokosuka, where I currently work as a liaison officer. I'm not sure why that is. But women in the US military are not denied opportunities or choices, nor are they given special consideration because of their gender. It is a comfortable workplace, Kawashima feels, because she can work naturally without being too conscious of gender. *Ironically, it is the Japanese staff working in the US military that seem to feel uncomfortable with my being a liaison officer; I have heard them asking if the current liaison officer is a woman.*

I worked with US Navy officers at NATO headquarters in Brussels and again in Bahrain. I thought that the US military officers at NATO headquarters were friendly and worked hard. This is perhaps partly because the United States plays the central role in NATO, both in terms of budget and military power. Aware of Russia's presence, the United States considers the security of Europe as its own security. It seems that America has the will and thinking to pull the other members along. I got the impression that US Navy personnel, in general, are always thinking about what they should do to engage with the world. Scandals plagued the Seventh Fleet for a while, but that can happen in any navy. The US Navy remains strong and has not changed; it is not in decline. Kawashima believes so.

JMSDF Official as Diplomat

Captain Shiraishi, meanwhile, had little connection with Americans before joining the JMSDF and felt that they were a blunt people. *After I joined, however, I came to think that the people in the US Navy I have met through work are the same as us.* From June 2015 to June 2018, he worked as an assistant defense attaché at the Embassy of Japan in the United States. Officials from various ministries and agencies are dispatched to work at embassies around the world; this includes uniformed SDF personnel, too. Once such an assignment is decided, each official is detailed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and receives basic training as a diplomat at the Foreign Affairs Training Institute in Sagami Ono, Kanagawa before posting.

The majority of defense attachés are posted to embassies in three types of countries: those important to Japan's national security (such as the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, and South Korea), those whose military information is essential (such as China and Russia), and those that are geopolitically important (Israel, Turkey, India, and Indonesia). A total of six SDF personnel—one attaché and one assistant from the JMSDF, JGSDF, and JASDF—make up the defense section at

the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C., which has probably the most embassy staff in the world, reflecting the importance of Japan-US relations. In addition, the Ministry of Defense sends public servants from its own Internal Bureau staff to the embassy's political affairs section, to be responsible for security-related policy matters and working alongside section members from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Officials detailed from their ministries and agencies are assigned to various sections—general affairs, political affairs, finance, economics, Congressional affairs, cultural and public affairs, science and technology, and so on—where they share office space with foreign ministry officials. The embassy is like a mini Kasumigaseki,[8] and in my experience as a cultural and public affairs officer for the Japanese embassy in the United States, there is no more convenient place to get information from each ministry's experts. If the detailed embassy staff does not have the information, they will contact their ministry immediately to ask for it.

For Shiraishi, it was his first experience working in such an environment, assisting the head of the defense section, a rear admiral dispatched from the JMSDF. *Although I have many contacts in the US military and other armed forces around the world, I have learned a great deal by looking at the Japan-US alliance from a non-military perspective, becoming acquainted through daily interactions with experts in non-military fields. Also, it was very good to be seconded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and work at the embassy as foreign ministry staff, as I was able to use the Ministry's diplomatic buttons and levers. I was able to achieve what I could not have had I been simply a JMSDF or JSDF representative.*

Through their many years of diplomatic experience with America, both Ambassadors Sasae and Sugiyama, whom Shiraishi served under, had a good understanding of the importance of the military in the United States as well as the importance of the SDF-US military relationship. He briefed Ambassador Sasae on a regular basis, which was appreciated. One of the tasks of the defense attaché is to attend, together with the ambassador, not only military events, but also national anniversaries and holidays in which the military is an integral part.[9] For the ambassador as well, it would be more formal, as well as polite, as an expression of sympathy from the people of Japan to attend these anniversaries with a defense attaché.

The US Navy also took good care of Japan's defense attachés. Shortly after Shiraishi arrived at the embassy, the Navy invited the defense attachés to commemorate the Battle of Midway. He felt they had the broad-mindedness to include former enemies into their group.

In 2017–2018, when North Korea's missile tests were front-page news in the United States, Shiraishi grew worried that US Naval Academy graduates would not want to be stationed in Japan. This was not the case. It was his impression that those

[8] The area in Tokyo where most Japanese government ministries and agencies are located.

[9] Military personnel, their military parades included, are an integral part of federal and non-federal holidays related to wars and battles that have gone down in US history. They include Independence Day, Memorial Day, Veterans Day as well as Patriot Day (the anniversary of 9/11), among others.

graduates with ability and drive wanted to serve in Japan. For Japan, it is very important that the best and brightest young US Navy officers come: through their experiences in Japan, they will understand the importance of the Japan-US alliance. For that reason, the ambassador hosted a reception to send off the group of Annapolis graduates who had been assigned to Japan. It was not something the SDF could do by itself.

Not all US Navy personnel have a keen interest in Japan. JMSDF personnel often say: in Washington D.C., there are mainly Atlantic Sailors, concerned with the Atlantic Ocean, and Pacific Sailors, who focus on the Pacific Ocean. It was Shiraishi's impression that the notion of Japan as an ally had yet to sink in for the Atlantic Sailor. Those who have been stationed in Japan are very friendly to JMSDF personnel, greeting them anywhere, even at the Pentagon. They talked about their experiences in Japan and seemed to miss the country a lot. For example, Rear Admiral Charles W. Rock, who had served as commander, US Fleet Activities Sasebo, was commandant, Naval District Washington, when Shirashi was at the embassy. He would invite JMSDF personnel coming from Japan as well as their families to his home, providing comfort and assistance. Apparently, he was repaying the good will and kindness he received from the people of the JMSDF during his time at Sasebo.

US military personnel who have been stationed in Japan are actually the largest pro-Japan group of Americans. This is true for the Army, Air Force, as well as the Navy and Marines. Though not based on objective survey data, a fairly high percentage of them, irrespective of rank, return home with a fondness for Japan and relate their experiences there to their friends and colleagues. This phenomenon is notable compared to other countries where the US military is stationed, a US Navy friend of mine once told me. And more importantly, they can be found all around America. Many of them, even after separating from the military, continue to cherish their memories of Japan and, for instance, join the local Japan-America Society to become actively engaged in private-sector exchanges between Japan and the United States. Quite a few military personnel spent several years in Japan when their parents were sent to a military base there.

Yet, there had never been an alumni association for active duty or retired military personnel who had been stationed in Japan. In the early 2000s, someone proposed that the embassy might offer assistance of some kind for those military personnel who had been stationed in Japan, to organize and run such an alumni association. But there were concerns that, unless it were done very carefully, for a foreign government to organize another country's nationals could very well ignite a political backlash. It took a while to materialize, but finally in 2015 the Japan-United States Military Program (JUMP)[10] was launched for active duty and former military personnel who had been stationed in Japan, providing a space for voluntary gatherings, and sometimes assisting them with "homecomings" to Japan. At the embassy,

[10] https://www.jumprogram.org (Its predecessor, the US Military Japan Alumni Association [USMJAA], had been established in 2010.)

the defense section is in charge of the JUMP program, which remains quite active. Shiraishi's duties at the embassy included assisting the head of the defense section, a rear admiral, to lead JUMP activities, and coordinating with other relevant parties.

English Proficiency of the JMSDF

Language, of course, is necessary for communication between the JMSDF and the US Navy to have such close ties. They could use either Japanese or English. From the outset, a modern navy has been associated with English: the British Royal Navy set the prototype in the nineteenth century, which the US Navy developed further from the end of the nineteenth through to the twentieth century. Today most of the world's navies are modeled after these two navies, with English as the common language. So, naturally the JMSDF uses English to communicate with the US and other foreign navies.

Today's JMSDF is one of the world's most capable maritime forces. Consequently, its leaders at the flag officer (rear admiral and above) level must use every opportunity to engage their foreign counterparts, and be able to speak precisely, concisely, and persuasively about how the JMSDF and Japan views its national security. They must demonstrate their whole character and personality through their humor and culture, not just their area of expertise.

Do the JMSDF's top leaders really have that level of English proficiency? So far as I am aware, there have been only one or two admirals with that level of competency until quite recently; it was a rare ability even looking at the entire JMSDF. I have often wondered if this is acceptable for a global navy. Compared to the US Navy, where most admirals earn master's degrees or doctorates while on active service, there are relatively few active-duty executive officers among the JMSDF leadership who have reached that level with sufficient language ability and broad international experience.

However, some officers believe that the JMSDF's language skills have made rapid progress over the last decade or so. With his ability to speak English, Kitaguchi has been asked by his superior officers to help with liaison duties with the US Navy, regardless of his actual assignment. There was a time when many captains and admirals could not communicate nuances and subtleties with the US Navy without Kitaguchi's involvement. But it is different now. *When I was present as the head of the Maritime Staff's liaison team, I have often admired how high-ranking JMSDF officials communicated in English so naturally and confidently when speaking with their respective US Navy counterparts in informal discussions and in VTCs (video-teleconferences), without relying on an interpreter.* The English proficiency and intercultural communication skills of many JMSDF senior officers today are extremely high.

Also, in April 2022, when the training ship JS *Kashima*, and its accompanying ship JS *Shimakaze*, called at Yokosuka before departing on a long-distance training cruise, the commander of the Training Squadron had invited several naval attachés

working at the Tokyo embassies of the countries where the two vessels were scheduled to visit to come aboard to lecture the new graduates of the Officer Candidate School. As Kitaguchi observed, many of these newly commissioned officers asked questions in English quite naturally. *It has changed considerably from when we were at their stage. Some were so fluent that they seemed to have grown up abroad, and been educated in English, as I had been.* The number of such young officers is on the rise. Moreover, when Kitaguchi was a new officer, whenever he stood before the senior and dignified captain of his first assignment, JS *Kirishima*, he was so nervous that he could only say "yes, sir" and "no, sir." In contrast, *today's young people can have a natural conversation with the captain. They look very promising.* Kitaguchi believes that the JMSDF is definitely better than it used to be, in this respect.

Yasuda also feels that the English skills of the JMSDF members around him are improving. A native speaker of both English and Japanese, he used to have to help explain the details of English conversations to his colleagues. At first, he was pleased to do it. *But, I no longer think I'm special. Language is important, but a depth of specialized knowledge is more important and necessary. If you don't master that, it doesn't matter how good your English is. That's what I came to realize.*

In addition, I am a fire control officer, a SPY radar specialist, on an Aegis destroyer. On my ship, there are many petty officers who can speak English well and work comfortably in English because they are sent frequently to the United States for training and so must communicate with US Navy SPY radar specialists. Perhaps this is because an Aegis crew operates in a somewhat unique environment. General purpose destroyer crews do not require much English to carry out their duties, so I'm sometimes surprised by how few officers or enlisted can communicate in English without difficulty.

One of the JMSDF's leading SPY radar specialists, Takitō, whom Yasuda respects as god-like, has personally experienced things similar to what Yasuda has described. *I couldn't speak English at all when I first went to study in America; I wasn't good at shopping or ordering at restaurants in English. Yet, I concentrated on studying in my classes at school, taught in English, and gained further experience when I came home as the person in charge of SPY radar aboard an Aegis destroyer. Before I knew it, I no longer felt inferior to my US Navy counterparts in understanding SPY radar. I'm still not fluent in everyday conversation, but when it comes to SPY radars, I can understand everything a US Navy specialist has to say. I can also tell my counterpart exactly what I want to say. Accurate communication even without being able to speak the language. Strange, but I believe it.*

I imagine that, as he struggled to learn about the SPY radar in English, Takitō achieved a high degree of understanding so that, before long, he probably ceased thinking about what language he was speaking. That is just my amateur opinion, however. Continuing to use English as a means of communication, his understanding of technical terms and how to use them in his area of expertise far surpassed his general English proficiency. That is what it seems like to me. I myself have had the experience of completely forgetting that I was speaking in English while engaging in difficult negotiations as a lawyer or engaging in discussions as a scholar at an

American university or law school. A certain level of English proficiency is required, but English is only a means to gain the professional understanding necessary to accomplish work.

Remembering the Past at the Naval War College

As the SDF's international mission has expanded over the past 20 years, so too have the needs and opportunities increased markedly for the SDF to conduct joint exercises, counter-piracy operations, peacekeeping operations, and large-scale disaster relief operations together with the US and other foreign militaries. International activities will likely increase further in the future. Each SDF service branch needs not just the SDF officers who can perform their duties in such missions; it also needs personnel who can command military personnel from other countries and who can carry out their missions jointly with them. Admiral Hiroshi Itō, the current commandant of the JMSDF Headquarters Kure District, was appointed in 2015 as the commander of the multinational naval task force conducting counter-piracy operations in the waters of the Gulf of Aden (CTF 151). Since then, four officers have been appointed as commanders from the JMSDF. This happened because, although SDF personnel cannot command the armed forces of other countries under the interpretation of Article 9 of Japan's Constitution, anti-piracy operations are not combat operations under international law. The know-how that SDF officers gained from commanding foreign military personnel may still be useful for when conditions for exercising the right to collective self-defense are further eased. Commandant Itō's achievement was a watershed event, for both the JMSDF and the SDF as a whole.

In preparation for further expansion of international missions in the future, each SDF service branch is sending promising mid-ranking officers to study at military educational institutions and other graduate schools in Japan and abroad in order to develop the personnel to follow Commandant Itō's precedent. The JMSDF is no exception; it has long been more enthusiastic than other SDF service branches about sending its executive officers to study abroad. In particular, it is customary that each year one person is selected from among the top JMSDF mid-ranking officers to study at the United States Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. Several of those who studied there became chiefs of maritime staff, including Admirals Uchida and Nakamura, who are described in detail in this book.

The Naval War College is an advanced research and educational institution where the US Navy, which boasts a history of over 200 years, continuously accumulates knowledge, develops theories, and imparts knowledge to future naval leaders. But the US Navy's journey was far from smooth until the College's founding in 1884. The United States established a permanent navy in 1794 when Congress passed the Naval Act, based on its experience during the American Revolutionary War when confronting the British Royal Navy in its alliance with France. As Britain had completely seized control of the Atlantic Ocean after Napoleon's defeat, any threat from the Atlantic Ocean had been eliminated, leaving the US Navy little work to do

throughout the nineteenth century, except for during the Civil War. It remained very small, its ranks were full of sailors from the old school, and lacked discipline due to frequent drinking and brawling.

There was no organized educational system for officer training in the early days of the US Navy. The only way to train a full-fledged officer was to put a 15-year-old boy aboard a ship to have him learn by doing through an apprenticeship. This way of thinking, in line with the traditions of the Royal Navy, was overwhelmingly dominant, and there was strong opposition to the establishment of a school for officer training. It was in 1845 that the Naval Academy was established, overcoming the opposition, on the coast in Annapolis, the capital of Maryland. (By way of contrast, the Military Academy was established at West Point on the Hudson River in New York State in 1802, making it 43 years older than Navy's Annapolis.)

The US Navy entered a period of stagnation again after the Civil War, in which the Union Navy blockades of Southern ports had contributed greatly to the North's victory. The United States moved forward on industrializing the domestic economy and was largely indifferent to the Navy's existence. The US Navy grew even smaller in scale, its equipment was lacking and outdated, and its sailors underqualified and low in morale. Alarmed by this situation, a group of US Navy officers led by Steven Luce appealed to top naval leaders and to Congress to reform the US Navy. And thus, the Naval War College was founded as an institution of higher education to promote the professionalization of naval personnel, research the art and science of war, and develop future executive officers and staff capable of thinking logically.

The significance of the Naval War College went unrecognized at first, even within the Navy. But before long, outstanding scholars and educators appeared from among those Luce had educated, men who would influence the very nature of the US Navy. Alfred Thayer Mahan is the epitome, providing Theodore Roosevelt with the theoretical framework for his push to construct a modern navy. Moreover, some of the officers who had acquired strategic and tactical theories at the Naval War College returned to teach what they had learned during the US participation in World War I. This, in turn, produced officers like Nimitz, Halsey, and Burke, who eventually fought the Pacific War against the Imperial Japanese Navy and won a spectacular victory.

A major cause of the IJN's total defeat by the US Navy in the Pacific War, according to Admiral Sadayoshi Nakayama, the first president of the JMSDF Command and Staff College (who would later serve as JMSDF's fourth chief of staff), and other IJN officers who contributed to the establishment of the JMSDF, was that the IJN traditionally overemphasized spirituality and lacked theoretical thinking of war as a science. To address this point, the postwar JMSDF decided to replace the old Imperial Naval War College with the Maritime Command and Staff College, as well as to send students to the US Naval War College shortly after the JMSDF was established. Former IJN officers, who had fought numerous ferocious battles in the Pacific, sought instruction from their erstwhile enemy, and US Navy veterans of those same sea battles willingly consented to their requests.

Kobayashi relates that, as a JMSDF officer and as a Japanese born in the 1980s, a major turning point in his own understanding of Japan-US naval relations was his

study in the Naval Command College course. Before going, Kobayashi apparently did not know the history of how it came to be that senior JMSDF officers study at the US Naval War College. Many JMSDF leaders, including Admirals Uchida and Nakamura, have studied there alongside naval officers from more than 20 countries around the world. When the program started, memories of the war were still fresh. Yet, Admiral Nakayama, who set up the study abroad program with the help of CNO Arleigh Burke, and the Naval War College officials accepting the students, all understood that cooperation between the postwar Japanese and US naval forces was vital to keeping the peace. *And now I am here studying as part of that stream of history*, Kobayashi felt keenly.

As mentioned above, Kobayashi had somewhat mixed feelings about the loss of the Pacific War and the death of many Japanese. As he studied at the Naval War College in New England's four beautiful seasons, he came to truly understand how important and precious are the close Japan-US naval relations, forged by overcoming the war, and the significance of his being allowed to study there.

Incidentally, there are active-duty or retired naval personnel and civilian employees who were stationed in Japan among the current Naval War College (NWC) faculty and staff, who are nostalgic about their interactions with JMSDF and their experiences in Japan. A few years ago, these Navy people with ties to Japan, in coordination with other retired naval personnel living in Rhode Island who had been stationed in Japan, on their own initiative established the Japan-America Navy Friendship Association (JANAFA)[11] of Newport; it hosts the cherry blossom festival and various other events at the Naval War College together with the JMSDF liaison officer and students dispatched to the College.

Looking back, Japan began its war against the United States with the Imperial Navy Air Corps' attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. In the ensuing four and a half years, countless sailors from both navies lost their lives in fierce sea battles, creating a wellspring of deep mutual animosity. The current relationship between the JMSDF and the US Navy has overcome the trauma of Pearl Harbor, where it all began. Kobayashi, who came to truly understand this through his NWC studies, wished to put down his thoughts in a form that he could share with the people he met before he left the Naval War College. Kobayashi proposed a joint 79th Pearl Harbor Commemoration Ceremony, which was accepted by the NWC president and staff and was implemented. Assisting JANAFA-Newport were volunteers from among NWC researchers, faculty, and staff, and the Japan-America Society of Newport sponsored the event. The Japanese side made its preparations with the assistance of JMSDF Liaison Officer Captain Yuki Bitō. As for Kobayashi, he felt like he had completed another homework assignment by successfully holding this event. Even after his return home, Kobayashi hears that they will continue to hold an annual event jointly commemorating Pearl Harbor, and that Japan and the United States together marked the 80th anniversary in 2021 and the 81st in 2022.

[11] Independent from the association in Tokyo with the same name, but they communicate with each other.

Think, Communicate, Do! At the Naval War College

Division Director Yokota studied at the US Naval War College a few years before Kobayashi did. And just like Kobayashi, Yokota also was greatly stimulated and influenced by his experiences there.

Starting the year Yokota arrived at the College, foreign students who came to study there were allowed to enroll in the Naval Command College[12] with US and other foreign students, provided they passed a selection examination. *So, I chose this course and studied very seriously in my own way, but I was greatly shocked by the instructor's words. "You are in my class, but you do not participate in my class," he scolded me. Speak up. If you are Japanese, introduce your Japanese perspective and contribute to the class. Along with my shock, I realized that just remembering what I had been taught is not good enough, that I must always express my thoughts in words. There is a difference between having one's own opinions, thinking, and participating in class and attending class just to sit there silently. This very clear way of thinking left me with a very strong impression.*

In US schools generally, not just in the navy, education is provided to foster the ability to think for yourself and to communicate your thoughts to others. It is important to have your own opinion, and if you are wrong, it is okay. I also learned this from the education my daughters, who I took to study abroad, received in elementary school in the United States. People learn multiplication tables in America, but once they understand the explanation, they do not need to use it for calculations. They use a calculator for that. What humans have to do is look at the results of the calculations and think for themselves, not make the calculations.

Expanding on what I learned at the Naval War College, the important thing is to think of methods to solve problems. This is task analysis. We extract lessons for policy, strategy, and leadership from a detailed analysis of military history, politics, economics (including corporate management, etc.) and general history. We also extract lessons from diversity, rationality, critical thinking, justice and liberty, rights and duties, which we apply to the current environment and in the end summarize diverse opinions. This is what it is all about, I think.

One of the things I learned at the Naval War College is the concept of a "better peace." A "best peace," one that is satisfactory on all points to all parties to the conflict, allies and enemies alike, does not exist. By calmly analyzing the goals of one's own country and the goals of other countries, and striking a seesaw-like balance, we come to an agreement on a comprehensive basis. Reaching agreement is better than not agreeing. I was taught that it was necessary, in order to protect the

[12] According to the NWC website, "International officers in the Naval Command College (NCC) complete a robust program of academic core courses and electives, as well as professional development including a Field Studies Program. Upon completion they receive a U.S. Naval War College (NWC) Diploma. Selected students will be eligible to earn a Master of Arts degree in National Security and Strategic Studies." https://usnwc.edu/naval-command-college accessed 26 Feb 2023.

peace, to reach an agreement after making such a decision. It is essential that, for the bilateral alliance to function, Japan and the United States should achieve a better peace, calmly, and from a broader perspective, on the basis of such thinking.

Yokota believes that the better peace concept is nothing but an application of the logical, rational, and comprehensive problem-solving methods emphasized at the Naval War College. As mentioned earlier, as a National Defense Academy cadet, he came to believe this US Navy way of thinking may have helped the US victory over Japan. *I recalled having these thoughts as well as my determination to serve and contribute so that this would never happen to the JMSDF again. At the time, I only had the vaguest sense, being an NDA student, of what this meant. But as it happened, I went to study at the US Naval War College 20 years later, where building on my own experience I gained even deeper understanding of the US Navy's problem-solving methods and the importance of rational and scientific thinking.*

The JMSDF as Seen by a US Navy Officer

I, the author, have not visited the United States in recent years owing to the COVID-19 epidemic. And so, I interviewed only members of the JMSDF to supplement this revised English edition. What I have written so far is how these JMSDF members view relations with the United States, our ally, and its navy; I hardly touched on how US Navy personnel view Japan and the JMSDF. Fortunately, however, I had the opportunity to speak separately with Captain James "Jim" Hartman, a US Navy liaison officer serving as a bridge between Japan and the United States, who frequently visits the Maritime Staff Office. (Captain Hartman's interview reflects his personal views and not the official policy or position of the US Navy, the department of defense, or the US government.)

He is a graduate of Harvard University. While a student, Hartman completed the Navy's ROTC training program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) down the Charles River from the Harvard campus. (In protest against the Vietnam War, Harvard University did not allow such military-related courses until relatively recently.) He aspired to be a military pilot, partly influenced by his father, a former Air Force pilot. He joined the Navy and became a shipboard helicopter pilot. His first deployment was to US Naval Air Facility Atsugi. He fell in love with Japan and subsequently served five times in Japan or as a pilot on Yokosuka-based naval vessels.

Captain Hartman is the second US Navy liaison officer assigned to the MSO. He plays a vital role as a fountain of wisdom in maintaining smooth relations between the two navies, keeping in close daily contact with JMSDF staff under CMS Sakai, exchanging information, and occasionally conveying messages from the US Navy's top brass to the MSO and *vice versa*. Over the years, Captain Hartman has deepened his working relationship with the JMSDF and gained many trusted friends among his JMSDF colleagues. He admires the organization and understands the JMSDF perhaps better than anyone else in the US Navy. I cannot think of anyone more

suited to the "ambassadorial" job of liaison officer from the US Navy to the JMSDF. He is not without some criticism of the JMSDF, however.

I believe that the JMSDF excels in many ways. Relations between our two navies are close and we need each other. Nevertheless, disparities do exist between them, and the JMSDF faces many problems and issues to tackle. Misunderstandings and lack of understanding also exist on the part of the US Navy. That is why, at every opportunity, I candidly speak my thoughts to CMS Sakai and his staff.

For instance, the JMSDF is presently struggling to meet its quota, so as a recruitment strategy it emphasizes improvements in benefits, the acquisition of specialized skills that are useful in the private sector, and the ability to stay in the local area where one's parents live. Hartman finds this trend may miss the point of service in the JMSDF.

Many US Navy personnel—the officers, warrant officers, sailors, and captains I know, and myself included—joined the Navy because they wanted adventure, they wanted to see the world, they wanted to go to foreign lands. Rarely do you find someone who, after joining the Navy, wants to work in the town where he or she was born and raised. How could sailors possibly do their job if they lacked such a positive, outgoing attitude? The US Marine Corps is skilled at recruiting: instead of hiding the fact that the Marine Corps is the toughest military service, they succeed by selling it, emphasizing pride, honor, worthiness, adventure. Young people enlist in the Marine Corps for the challenge and adventure. Perhaps this is not possible in Japan, where young people are becoming more introverted. Some say that America has turned inward, but I believe that our young people's adventurous spirit and strong curiosity have not been lost. Is it not possible for the Self-Defense Forces to inspire young people to take on new challenges in Japan as well?

He also thinks that the JMSDF could make more use of the innovation and energy of young people. *When the US Navy trains pilots, for example, they appoint pilots in their 20s with fresh aerial combat experience as instructors, who then fly with and teach their juniors the lessons and skills that they acquired in actual combat. Just as the movie* Top Gun *portrayed it. Juniors are trained in this way and hone their skills through their own efforts and ingenuity. Moreover, the young instructor pilots in their 20s also create the tactics the Navy uses. In the JMSDF, however, instructors who are far more senior than students give lectures and write papers.* The captain questions the practical use of such approaches.

Hartman also considers the relationship between the US Navy and JMSDF in terms of capability. *The American side tends to ask the JMSDF to further strengthen its roles, missions, and capabilities. Among the topics being discussed are calls to place F35Bs on* Izumo*-class vessels and for stronger capabilities to respond in a timely manner to enemy attacks. Japan is trying to increase its defense budget significantly and striving to improve the SDF's capabilities dramatically. Political rationales may lay behind the debates in both Japan and America. I would not call it unnecessary; I think the direction is correct.*

However, even if each Izumo*-class ship is equipped with 10 F-35Bs, the contribution to the alliance strike capability, for example, the supplement to a US Navy aircraft carrier's capability, may not be sufficient to significantly alter how we fight.*

But meanwhile, the JMSDF has advanced capabilities in other areas, capabilities that the US Navy may not possess to the same degree, and the provision of those capabilities can and does complement the overall capabilities of the US Navy quite well. For example, the JMSDF's mine countermeasure capabilities are high, and it has as many as 22 high-performance minesweepers and larger mine warfare vessels. There had been 26 ships until a few years ago, but that number has decreased by 4.

In contrast, the US Navy's minesweeping capability is extremely limited, with only four ships in the region. Captain Hartman believes that the US Navy needs and appreciates the JMSDF's supplementing US Navy mine countermeasure capabilities in the region, perhaps even more than if Japan were to build a full-fledged aircraft carrier. *I hope that the JMSDF will retain and continue to provide these capabilities which complement those of the US Navy. In that sense, it would be problematic for the overall mine countermeasures capability of Japan and the United States if construction of helicopter-carrying destroyers led to a further reduction in the number of JMSDF minesweepers. The same holds true for such capabilities as anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and aerial intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities (ISR).*[13]

The Future of Japan-US Navy Relations

What do the mid-ranking JMSDF officers whom I interviewed think about the future of Japan-US Navy relations and of the alliance? While each responded from a personal perspective, overall, they felt that current close-knit relationship would likely continue and grow stronger for quite some time to come. Yet, for that to happen, both sides must make efforts to overcome the existing problems and challenges through cooperation. If I were to consolidate their views, this seems to be what they believe. *Our countries cannot afford to let our guard down: the quantity and quality of external threats to address will change, as will the political, economic, and technological factors within each country. While the trust, respect, and the friendships among individual service members that have been built up between our two countries over the years are important assets for maintaining close ties between our navies, we should not take them for granted, relying on them too readily.*

For the United States, its alliance with Japan is irreplaceable, Captain Shiraishi underscored. *For a country which confronts China, North Korea, and Russia in East Asia, there is no more valuable ally than Japan located so close to all three. It is only natural for the US Navy to have bases in Japan and work with the JMSDF to deal*

[13] See Captain Hartman's March 2021 essay on this topic, "The United States and Japan Still Benefit from Complementary Maritime Capabilities" at https://warontherocks.com/2021/03/the-united-states-and-japan-still-benefit-from-complementary-maritime-capabilities/ Accessed 5 Jan 2023.

with these threats; there is no reason to change this. That being the case, the close JMSDF-US Navy relationship will likely continue for many years to come.

Captain Shiraishi also points out that the common bonds uniting Japan and the United States have, over the 77 years since the war ended, become firmly established, and will continue going forward. To give a familiar example, the US Navy and JMSDF both have the same basic attitude of valuing fellow sailors. They cherish each other as allied navy sailors and as companions. Such common ethics or values underpin the bilateral alliance and the Japan-US Navy relationship, he believes.

CPO Takitō, too, remarked on the ethics and values common to the two navies, as Captain Shiraishi had raised. *The US Navy holds the JMSDF in high esteem. They admire how our maintenance is always spotless and our aircraft and ships are always like new. They also appreciate our sailors' manners and praise them for being polite and punctual. This is not because the US Navy lacks these elements, I think, but rather because we share the same sensibility for improving techniques and prizing manners. That is why we respect each other.* Takitō speaks from his own experience.

Shiraishi, meanwhile, notes that we cannot predict what will happen, when, or where in today's world. He worries that, should the unexpected happen, the very closeness of the Japan-US navies, which may lull us into automatically assuming that it cannot be otherwise, may be a vulnerability. To ensure that does not happen, the navies need constant people-to-people communication, exchange, and discussion of ideas. Without such meetings, friendship cannot be nurtured, and it atrophies.

The Japanese people, it is said, do not think for themselves about national security, preferring to leave that to the Japan-US alliance and the JSDF. Shiraishi's own view on that is a bit different. *I think that such criticism is evidence that the joint JSDF-US military deterrence is working effectively against foreign threats. As SDF members, we are carrying out our duty to defend the country, and as such, we are highly regarded by the public in the sense that we are doing our jobs properly. Conversely, the major topics going forward are what should we do when deterrence is no longer effective? And how can we maintain the deterrence?* Still, Shiraishi believes that the basic idea remains unchanging: to work together with the United States.

Captain Kobayashi, too, thinks the close bilateral naval relationship will continue for the foreseeable future. *Whether this relationship will function then as does now is hard to say. We face problems on a different level than what we have dealt with so far, such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the growing possibility of China's invasion of Taiwan. Whatever the future may hold, the US Navy needs South Korea, the Philippines, and especially Japan, all situated on the front lines in the region. Japan will remain America's most important partner.* The JMSDF and US Navy built the close relationship they enjoy today after having fought each other in the war and survived the chaos of the early postwar period. *There is a saying: "After it rains, the earth hardens (adversity builds character)"—indeed, after the great storm of war, the bilateral alliance became possible for the first time and the ground, the foundation for the new alliance, has been hardened by the acts of both nations'*

citizens, including, of course, the service members of the JSDF and US forces. However, how will those generations who are unaware of that process maintain these connections? The challenge, he believes, is how to nurture new friendships.

To make the Japan-US alliance even more unshakable, Kobayashi believes that the bilateral relationship should be boldly institutionalized and a system to effectively manage the alliance should be put in place. Japan and the United States enjoy a "good chemistry." The United States leads but does not order or force Japan to do whatever it says. Both allies must take good care of this harmony. *America is still a country rooted in liberty and democracy, and so I believe that both sides can maintain this harmony with each other.*

Kobayashi earned a master's degree from the School of Government, Kyoto University studying under Professors Hiroshi Nakanishi and Satoshi Machidori. He recalls that in his frequent discussions, Professor Machidori emphasized the importance of institutions in the governing structure that underlies the American Constitution. Kobayashi thinks it might be the same with the alliance. *If some sort of situation were to arise, what must be done and by whom should be determined automatically.* (Currently, it is not automatic, and allies might not know what they are supposed to do and how they can work together.) *Our shared values, like liberty and democracy, and our shared experiences are important; people-to-people connections are important, too, of course. But the conditions and requirements of our response to contingencies should be institutionalized so that the alliance functions more effectively. Doing so would greatly increase transparency and certainty in the alliance and enhance its deterrence.*

The point is that both people and institutions are needed. There is much that can be done now, even without amending the Japanese Constitution, which would entail much political cost. What is needed is firm political leadership, enactment of statutes, and the high abilities of the JSDF. Ultimately, I think that it is a matter of deciding whether to do it or not.

Toward an Alliance Sharing Honor

Working constantly on the ideal form that the Japan-US alliance should take is the duty of Captain Yokota, director of the Operations and Plans Division, MSO. He also spoke eloquently about the future of the alliance.

At the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake, Yokota worked with US Navy personnel at the Sendai Coordination Center to save the lives of several victims, but not everything went smoothly. He witnessed the cultural differences between the JMSDF and the US Navy/Marine Corps; there were also disagreements. US Navy commanders, rather than give detailed instructions, leave the particulars to frontline officers: it is up to these frontline officers to decide how to deliver relief supplies when assisting victims. It is a very rational and practical way of thinking. In the JMSDF, the senior officer tends to decide even the smallest details; he is not used to or good at delegating decision-making authority.

However, despite our differences of opinion and our different ways of carrying out our missions, working together for the same purpose created mutual understanding and trust, which grew into friendship. The name, Operation Tomodachi, *I think captures that nicely. It became a true alliance because we recognized each other's culture. I believe this is important for the future of the Japan-US alliance.*

There is one thing that Yokota has witnessed that worries him about the Japan-US Navy relationship. Whereas US Navy officers will sometimes severely reprimand and then provide guidance to US and Australian naval staff, they do not do that to JMSDF staff and treat them as guests. It is important for the Japanese staff to have their opinions challenged, to earnestly defend them while persuasively contesting others' views until one side is convinced and a better outcome for all is reached; this is something they must be able to do, if not now, then in the future, he believes. It may be an issue of language. Nevertheless, it is not just a matter of asserting one's own opinion, but also of finding areas of agreement, of building a relationship of give-and-take, which he feels is important.

Yokota was taught at the US Naval War College that there are three main reasons for nations to form alliances: fear, national interest, and honor. For example, postwar Japan concluded an alliance with the United States out of fear that, having just lost the war, it was powerless and could not survive on its own. In contrast, the United States formed an alliance with its erstwhile enemy, Japan, out of the necessity to preserve its national interests—the defense of the United States and the security of East Asia, by dealing with the Soviet and Communist Chinese threats in East Asia—and to that end, it was best to secure US military bases in Japan.

If alliances are based on fear and national interest alone, however, the underlying situation can change; indeed, much has changed in the 70 years postwar. In particular, it is possible that the United States, a superpower, may form an alliance with a nation with completely different values in order to ensure its own security. During World War II, the United States [and Britain] formed the Grand Alliance with the communist Soviet Union, which brought the Allies victory over their common foe, Nazi Germany. They allied with the dictator, Josef Stalin. We must not forget this fact.

In order to maintain the bilateral alliance as an effective system for the security of both countries, it must be the best option for both Japan and the United States. Japan must continue to make unremitting efforts to maintain and strengthen the effectiveness of the alliance, its credibility as an ally, and the sharing of basic values, so as to convince the United States that, in the final calculation, an alliance with Japan is indispensable and that it has no option but to maintain the alliance with Japan. The JMSDF and the US Navy both take pride in constituting the underpinning of the Japan-US alliance. The story is probably the same with the JGSDF and JASDF. And so, I would like to aim for a Japan-US alliance based not on fear and not just on national interests, but one also based on honor between the two countries, and in particular, among the five service branches of the US armed forces and the three SDF service branches.

What is honor? One of the things Yokota felt while studying at the Naval War College was the respect that the American people, regardless of party affiliation,

have for the military and its personnel. When military personnel board a civil aircraft as a passenger, they are given priority boarding, and if seats are available, they will be upgraded to first class. The general public takes it for granted. It is because, regardless of political affiliation, they have a feeling of gratitude toward the military personnel.

On vacation with my family, we were at the gate waiting to board the airplane, when I happened to hear an announcement that the body of a US soldier had arrived. When the coffin was carried off the plane and to the gate, the civilians present stood up, one after another, to express their condolences. Many (presumably veterans) saluted. In America, which has a diversity of values and where different values are conspicuously in conflict, men and women join the military without hesitating to give their lives for their country, and as soldiers, they serve their country, risk their lives fighting, and sometimes make the ultimate sacrifice. A strong respect for their service unites the nation.

Yokota was aboard the *Haruna* when the government ordered the JMSDF to carry out a maritime security operation[14] during the suspicious ship incident off the coast of the Noto Peninsula. *I was selected as a member of the boarding team to search the suspicious vessel and if necessary, use force. I was prepared to die. For the first time, I understood the readiness of American soldiers in times of emergency; I empathized with them.* It is his most significant experience as a JMSDF officer. A US Naval War College classmate of Yokota's died soon after graduating: his friend who attended class with him just a few weeks before lost his life in combat—a reality all too familiar for military personnel.

That is the very reason why it has become customary in the United States to honor the soldiers who risk their lives in service to their country on Memorial Day (a national holiday that began after the Civil War to mourn soldiers who died on the battlefield), through "Thank you for your service" campaigns, displaying flags and posters here and there expressing thanks to those defending the homeland, and similarly hoisting POW (prisoner of war)/MIA (missing in action) flags and praying for the safe return of soldiers lost on the battlefield or captured by the enemy (initiated by the families of POW/MIA soldiers during the Vietnam War). This is what honor means.

We could cite many factors as strengths of the Japan-US alliance—interoperability, mutual complementarity, and the sharing of technology and information—but these are only tools and methods. What is indispensable are the intangible factors shared between our two peoples as well as between JSDF and US military personnel: spirituality, ethics, values, and pride. The people's feelings toward their military personnel differs greatly in Japan and in the United States, and it is unlikely to change much in the future. However, I would like for the alliance to be one that shares honor while holding common values between the SDF and US military personnel who share the same mission. This is what Yokota believes.

[14] *Kaijō Keibi Kōdō.*

Yokota also believes that there are various things that the JMSDF must do, practical things as well as attitude, to strengthen and develop the bilateral alliance and naval relationship. Again, the JMSDF must form a relationship with the US Navy rooted in honor, rather than in a fear-based alliance, and this relationship must be the foundation of the Japan-US alliance. It must evolve into a true friendship starting from a practical place, rather than simply from a mere sense of security that we are "friends."

We must go beyond the buzzword of the 1980s, interoperability (the ability to operate jointly with weapons, equipment, communications, and various standards and procedures) and embrace interchangeability (a comprehensive ability to carry out missions on behalf of the US Navy when the necessity arises). In other words, if the US Navy were unable to defend a certain area because it was mobilized to deal with other threats, the JMSDF would be capable of stepping in to fulfill that same role. That capability will be necessary. And it may entail sacrifice.

We must make sure the means does not become the end. If it does, realizing the true purpose becomes impossible. Perfecting the means alone, without clarifying the purpose for doing so, means nothing and merely invites the question, "So what?" or "What's next?"

There is a need for the JSDF to be closer to the people, and for the people to have a sense of the work of defense in Japanese society. I don't think that the Japanese people will ever adopt the sort of honor and respect the US public has for their troops without putting effort into a full-fledged public relations campaign that would have the Japanese public understand and personally experience the common values shared by Japan and the United States, as well as the importance of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. They are both concepts worth protecting.

There are growing concerns that the conspicuous divide among the American public will spill over into US national security policies and its policy for the alliance. Yokota, however, thinks that any such impact is limited, and that the US military's power is fundamentally unchanged. First of all, the perception of core national security staff in Japan and the United States remains largely unchanged. In particular, he thinks that, at least for the time being, both countries will continue to work together to deal with the China threat, trying to realize and maintain a "better peace" There is no fundamental change in bilateral naval relations, which will continue to improve for some time.

On the other hand, it seems to Yokota that how the US military and the general public perceive change is somewhat different. America has maintained a set of common values even as it values diversity of religion, culture, and ideas. Recently in America, however, it feels as though the larger framework has disappeared (or has grown thin) and excessive individualism is taking over. The general public is much more inward-looking than it once was. I honestly do not know if it will affect the US -Japan alliance in the future.

Differences in Culture, Ways of Thinking; Yet Japanese and US Navies Remain Allies

I also asked Captain Hartman his thoughts on the future of the bilateral alliance and relations between the two navies. He highlighted the need to remember that a sailor's understanding of the JMSDF varies depending on factors such as his or her proximity to Japan and depth of experience of working together with the JMSDF. (Similarly, Captain Shiraishi believes that US Navy leaders with an Atlantic Sailor background must gain a deeper awareness of the JMSDF and understand its importance to the entire US Navy, to make further advances qualitatively and quantitatively in the naval relationship.)

Hartman feels that Yokota's statement that US commanding officers treat JMSDF staff like guests is less an attitude and rather an indication that some US Navy leaders' understanding of the Japanese is not that high. A US Navy commander unknowledgeable about Japan hesitates to yell at JMSDF staff, probably from a belief that Japanese are very polite and well-mannered people. *It's a good observation, but I do not think it necessarily means there is a lack of trust in the bilateral naval relationship. Yokota may be concerned that the Japan-US alliance will not fully function unless both sides interact without such discretion or restraint. It merits further consideration.*

Similarly, Captain Hartman thinks this aspect shines through in visiting US Navy commanding officers' praise of JMSDF maintenance and tidiness, the phenomenon that CPO Takitō noted. The fastidiousness of JMSDF personnel—their ships and aircraft fixtures are polished to a sheen, all rope is neatly wound and stowed like works of art, and everything is in order—impresses these US Navy officers, who sometimes see equipment and tools cluttering the decks of their own vessels.

Captain Hartman thinks that, if that's the case, it should serve as a stimulus for the US Navy. Good housekeeping is fundamental to all navies. To perfectly carry out equipment maintenance, cleaning, and organizing—tasks that are easy to neglect when out at sea and there is much work that must get done—Captain Hartman thinks this testifies to the JMSDF's latent and spare capabilities and therefore indicates the high level of JMSDF's overall abilities as a navy.

Yet, Captain Hartman thinks these US Navy commanders often do not understand the JMSDF very well and tend to comment only on what they see when they visit. The JMSDF must also have strengths and weaknesses in less easily observable areas. *Failing to appreciate this point, and just settling for a superficial understanding will mean that future efforts to strengthen and deepen Japan-US naval relations will not be accompanied by substance, or so I fear.*

In fact, this point applies to both sides of the Japan-US Navy relationship, it seems to me. A few years ago, a retired admiral (an old acquaintance of mine) told me, "US Navy enlisted personnel do not usually appear as polished as JMSDF enlisted, their order not as orderly and it makes you wonder if everything is really alright. But once they're in a fight, they are incredibly strong." Reconsidering his point, I sense that the habitually disorganized appearance of US Navy personnel is

somehow connected to their ability to prove their mettle on the battlefield when the unpredictable happens. Might this be a result of the combat experience the US Navy has accumulated by constantly operating "battle-ready" ever since World War II. Conversely, no matter how perfectly organized or how outstandingly rehearsed a force may be, it is no guarantee that it can demonstrate an ability to fight in actual combat. This may well be the big question hanging over the JMSDF, which has never actually fought since its founding.

The point ties directly to Captain Hartman's final thought regarding the future of Japan-US naval relations, that there is one fundamental difference between the JMSDF and the US Navy. *It's hard to say it directly to my friends and colleagues in the JMSDF, but the Japanese and US Navies have never fought together. Allied navies are supposed to fight alongside each other, acknowledging the possibility that sailors may lose their lives for their comrades if it came down to it. The IJN, which had fought the US Navy so fiercely in naval battles of (at least initially) equal strength, was remade after the war as the JMSDF, which has been actively working in partnership with the US Navy to maintain peace and stability in Japan and now in the Indo-Pacific region. The fact that we have never fought together, however, leaves a spot of uncertainty in the alliance.*

The same holds true, in fact, for the navies of other countries, Hartman noted. *A friend of mine who had been in the Royal Navy mentioned at a recent gathering that militaries that are not prepared to shed blood together could not be true allies.*

I myself heard the assertion that an alliance with a country one has never fought alongside cannot be a true ally at a conference of experts on the Japan-US alliance held in Washington in the mid-1990s. One of the attendees, former Army Captain Michael Powell,[15] raised his hand to inquire if the Japan-US alliance was an alliance in the true sense of the word. Just in the period after World War II, Australian, New Zealand, Canadian, and South Korean soldiers fought and died alongside US soldiers in the Korean War, Vietnam War, and the 1991 Gulf War. Even Germany, which like Japan was a US enemy in World War II, fought in Afghanistan, as a member of NATO with other European nations. Japan's Self-Defense Forces and the US military lack this experience.

It was a superb alliance, countered Auer, scholar of the JMSDF's creation and Powell's onetime boss at the Pentagon. He ticked off points supporting his argument, asking rhetorically: *During the height of the Cold War in the 1980s, didn't the JMSDF and the US Navy work hard together to prevent Soviet nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines from advancing into the Pacific from Vladivostok? Immediately after the Gulf War, didn't Japan dispatch minesweepers to the Persian Gulf to clear mines laid by Iraq in cooperation with foreign navies to great success?* Mr. Powell was not persuaded, however.

The Japanese people have been truly fortunate that Japan in the postwar has never engaged in actual combat, whether alone or jointly. After their country's utter defeat

[15] Son of the former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff/Secretary of State Colin Powell. He once worked at the Pentagon under Japan Desk chief James Auer.

in the war against the United States, they wished never to go to war again, a situation that Article 9 of the Constitution made impossible. But, notwithstanding their "no war" pledge, would they not fight if Japan was to be invaded? Would the state not protect its citizens? The SDF was created to prepare for such a contingency, and the bilateral alliance was formed with the condition that the SDF would fight alongside the US military only in the defense of Japan. More than 70 years later, however, the international situation in which the Japan-US alliance finds itself has changed dramatically, and so, too, has the role expected of Japan as an ally. Like it or not, the day is coming when Japan will fight jointly with the United States, albeit on a limited basis, in areas other than the defense of Japan. *Japan and the United States must one day become allies sharing glory and honor*—Captain Yokota's statement may be the same as Captain Hartman's final point. This, of course, is a matter for the Japanese people to decide, not the JSDF.

Aiming for Ever Better Japan-US Alliance and Navy Relations

I heard the JMSDF officers and petty officers (and US Navy Captain Hartman) speak about the present state of the Japan-US alliance and its future. Since joining, they each have developed such a depth of experience and long ties to the US Navy (JMSDF, in Captain Hartman's case) that I cannot say for sure that their thoughts and opinions are representative of the average sailor's.

Clearly, each of them thinks deeply and can analyze flexibly, rationally, and logically, whether one agrees with what they say or not. They agree on the overall direction yet have diverse opinions, which they are capable of expressing eloquently and freely. These JMSDF personnel are heirs to the naval legacy and traditions bequeathed by their predecessors, former IJN officers who founded the JMSDF. Amid major changes in the international situation and under various constraints, they will remain always at the ready to do their utmost to fulfill the duties entrusted to them by the people of Japan: to maintain the peace and security of Japan. To that end, as they grapple with various problems and challenges, they devote their energies working through the Japan-US alliance and deepening the bonds between the Japanese and US Navies to achieve the better peace Yokota referred to (Fig. 12.1).

Fig. 12.1 Commander of the US Pacific Fleet pays a courtesy call on the Chief of Staff, JMSDF. (Photo credit: JMSDF)

Afterword

On March 11, 2023, I returned once again to the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) Officer Candidate School (OCS) at Etajima. The Chief of Maritime Staff (CMS) Admiral Ryō Sakai had invited me to attend the graduation ceremony for the Class of 2022.[1] The ceremony took place in the school's main auditorium, built in 1917. In attendance were the 210 graduating officer candidates, their families, the CMS, the superintendent of the school, instructors, and guests, including Rear Admiral Carl Lahti, commander, US Naval Forces Japan. The candidates were commissioned as officers when the CMS announced that he, by his authority as head of the JMSDF, "now promotes the candidates from chief petty officers to ensigns."[2] From that point on, they will no longer be commanded to salute, or to stand at attention or at ease; they will perform such military customs and courtesies according to their own judgment as officers. This is part of the tradition of the school going back to the days when it was the Imperial Japanese Naval Academy.

I attended this ceremony for the first time in 1992, which is when I first visited the Museum of Naval History on campus. This visit to Etajima, as a whole, was an entirely new experience for me. In particular, the tradition of the newly commissioned officers leaving the school from the sea was moving. Nothing had changed 31 years later. Little seems to have changed since the days of the Imperial Japanese Naval Academy.

[1] The class comprised 170 officer candidates who entered the OCS in April 2022 after having graduated from the National Defense Academy and other universities and 40 flight officer candidates who entered the OCS in September 2022 after having completed the 4-year aviation cadet corps education and training process at another JMSDF school and a few flight-training bases, thus receiving a wing mark, *plus* about a year and a half of actually working/flying as pilots at various JMSDF air bases.

[2] University graduates who earned a master's degree before entering the OCS are promoted to the rank of lieutenant junior grade.

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It was shortly after my 1992 visit to Etajima that I began to write the first edition of this book in Japanese. The visit had inspired me greatly and aroused my curiosity in the postwar navy-to-navy relationship (as I wrote in Chap. 1). I described how Japan and the United States entered into an alliance as the occupation period came to an end, how the JMSDF was established after the outbreak of the Korean War, and how the JMSDF and the US Navy had eventually established a close navy-to-navy relationship based on trust and friendship for half a century. It made a stark contrast to relations between the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN), the JMSDF's predecessor, and the US Navy before and during the Pacific War. I wrote about these events and changes mainly from the perspective of those people who were involved in that process. This book is a revision of the English translation of the original Japanese book, updated with a new manuscript covering the additional 22 years following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001.

Alliances are not born from friendship. Nineteenth-century British politician Lord Palmerston, speaking in the House of Commons when he was secretary of state for foreign affairs, expressed it this way: "We have no eternal allies, and we have no perpetual enemies. Our interests are eternal and perpetual, and those interests it is our duty to follow." An alliance will not survive a day unless it serves the interests of each ally, perhaps not fully, but to a satisfactory degree.

Nevertheless, it is also true that an alliance, once established, does require trust and friendship between the allied services as well as between individual officers, sailors, and soldiers for it to function and better serve each ally's interests for a long time.

It seems to me that the close and stable relationship between the JMSDF and US Navy today is deeply rooted in the trust, respect, and friendship between officers and enlisted men and women of the two navies, and is guided by the two countries' and peoples' commonly shared values such as democracy, rule of law, and freedom.

Yet, it does not mean that we can remain happy and content with the current status of the alliance. The world today is a more dangerous place than at any time since World War II. It is also very complex, technologically, economically, and politically. Those recent OCS graduates will, in 20 years or so, be in charge of maintaining the peace and prosperity not only of Japan but also of the Indo-Pacific region and beyond, and perhaps in an even more complex and dangerous world. In order to achieve those roles and missions, Japan and the United States will have to improve the current alliance even more. This book addresses how the JMSDF and US Navy have succeeded in that task to date, and what the current generation of leaders of the JMSDF think is necessary to continue that tradition.

* * *

A book can only be completed with the cooperation of many people. This book is no exception. Many retired and active duty JMSDF officers as well as US Navy officers agreed to talk to me about their personal and official experiences in the context of the navy-to-navy relations between Japan and the United States. The original Japanese edition is a series of these stories that I collected, compiled, and rearranged. In fact, so rich and compelling were their stories that I was sometimes under the illusion that it was not I who was writing the book. I felt as if the

interviewees' deep affection for the navy and their long-held memories of their duties were moving my pen.

I will not list the names of all those people I interviewed more than 20 years ago; they are too numerous and quite a few of them have already passed away or have moved into a life of quiet retirement. I will simply acknowledge that speaking directly with such illustrious naval leaders as Admirals Kazuomi Uchida and Teiji Nakamura, among others, was a sheer pleasure and honor, and a highly valuable experience for me personally. I will also note the extraordinary contributions from Commander James Auer (ret.), who graciously allowed me to share his expertise on the history of the postwar JMSDF-US Navy relationship and encouraged me to write this book; Admiral Kōichi Furushō (ret.), who kindly showed us invited guests around Etajima in 1992 as the chief of the Maritime Staff Office's (MSO) Public Affairs Section and later read all of my draft manuscripts and gave me some invaluable advice on the naval tradition and its unique expressions; and several of my editors with the publisher Chūō Kōron, who agreed to let me write this book and waited a long time for its completion, usually with patience but sometimes by yelling at me—they all made it possible to finally complete the original Japanese version of the book.

The same is true of this second English edition of the book. My special thanks go to the seven JMSDF active-duty officers and petty officers who kindly agreed to talk to me and told me about their experiences in their dealings with the US Navy. Their names, ranks, and expertise are provided in Chap. 12, which I composed especially for this edition based on these interviews. My thanks also go to Captain James Hartman, the US Navy's special liaison officer stationed at the Maritime Staff Office. Though he was the only US Navy officer I interviewed for this version, he provided me with his unique observations about the JMSDF and an insightful comparison of the two navies.

I also owe a great deal to Captain Ryōko Azuma, who, as the chief of the MSO's Public Affairs Section, arranged a series of interviews and kindly coordinated the interviewees' reviews of my draft of Chap. 12. Captain Keizo Kitagawa, the Dean, Strategic Studies Department, JMSDF Command and Staff College, an old friend of mine, also kindly provided key advice on our drafts, particularly on technical naval expressions and jargon, to me and our extraordinarily hard-working and able translator and English editor, Mr. Keith Krulak, to whom I owe a special thanks.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank my dear friend and fellow author, Mr. Ian Toll, who kindly prepared a wonderful foreword for this edition. Mr. Toll, as many readers already know, has written marvelous books on the history of the United States Navy, including his first book, *Six Frigates*, as well as his Pacific War Trilogy on the sea battles in the Pacific Ocean between the IJN and US Navy between 1941 and 1945. As Mr. Toll writes in his foreword, we met for the first time in 2011 in Tokyo; he was with his father, a retired banker who had resided (with his family, including Mr. Toll) and worked in Tokyo, and his father's close friend, a former senior diplomat of Japan, Ambassador Kiyohiko Arafune. I recall that somebody had contacted me and suggested that I come meet Mr. Ian Toll, who was planning to write the Pacific War Trilogy. It may have been Ambassador Arafune, himself, who

called me (he might have obtained my contact information from another diplomat who had known me at the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C.); he hosted our meeting at a private club, of which he was a member. Mr. Toll and I kept in touch because of our common interest in naval history; I have long admired his wonderful non-fiction naval history books from afar. So, when I learned that a new English version of this book would be published, it occurred to me that perhaps I could ask Mr. Toll to contribute a foreword. I am so thankful that, despite his very busy schedule, he was able to complete the lucid and compelling foreword that starts off the book, which I am of the belief provides great value to this second English edition.

* * *

I have been following the maturing of the relationship between the JMSDF and the US Navy, both at the organizational and individual levels, as an outsider over the past 30 years. I have witnessed the accumulation of shared experiences between the two navies on the oceans and under the sea, in the sky and on land. These shared experiences, I believe, have fostered mutual trust, respect, and friendship. In addition, most, if not all, navy men and women love the navy and love the seas. That is the fundamental key to understanding why they most often become friends.

When I reflect on this friendship across the seas, I often recall my own experience aboard the training squadron flagship, JS *Kashima*, off the coast of Florida. At the end of June 2006, I spent 8 days at sea together with the newly commissioned officers who had just graduated in March from the OCS as they sailed from Baltimore, Maryland to Tampa, Florida.

Departing Baltimore, passing through the Chesapeake Bay, and reaching the Atlantic, the training squadron then headed south. A few days later, when we were sailing off the Florida Peninsula, I was standing on the bridge when I heard a report that radar had picked up a warship. A follow-up report identified it as a *Wasp*-class amphibious assault ship of the US Navy. In a time of war, it would be deployed as part of an amphibious task force with Marines onboard to execute landing operations. The USS *Wasp* herself had been deployed at the US Navy's Fleet Activities Sasebo base but since 2019 has been replaced by USS *America*, the lead ship of the *America*-class amphibious assault ships.

Although we could not see the US warship, as it was heading south beyond the horizon, an atmosphere of relief somehow filled the bridge. The US Navy ship's sudden appearance dispelled the feeling of isolation that had enveloped the three Maritime Self-Defense Force training squadron vessels sailing the vast, unfamiliar ocean far from Japan. It would instantly come to our aid should our squadron have required it. If something were to have happened to the US ship, naturally we would rush to help. No matter how large a JMSDF vessel or a US Navy amphibious ship was, it was just a tiny dot on the vast ocean. How reassuring it was to have an allied navy's ship nearby on the ocean. The realization struck me: *Ah! So, this is what an alliance is all about. This is friendship across the sea.*

The next day, we saw the *Wasp*-class amphibious assault ship in the far distance for the first time. The ship sailed in parallel with us for a while, but never came any closer and soon disappeared over the horizon. When I stood alone on the flag deck

above the bridge, I saw a thundercloud towering in the sky. Far away, a rain cloud hovered over the sea, showering down sheets of rain. It was the height of summer. Without any particular reason, I recited to myself a verse from John Masefield's classic poem, *Sea-Fever*, which was on the back cover of a program for Admiral Arleigh Burke's funeral at the chapel of the US Naval Academy in 1996:

> *I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,*
> *And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by;*
> *And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,*
> *And a grey mist on the sea's face, and a grey dawn breaking.*

The inscription on Burke's tombstone at the Naval Academy's cemetery shows that he ("Sailor") is buried here together with Mrs. Burke ("Sailor's Wife"). Perhaps he wanted to let people surviving him know that, in a deeper sense, we are all sailors. In the end, it matters not whether one is an officer of the US Navy, the JMSDF, or some other navy. Even if one was never a member of any navy, so long as one loves the sea and understands what it means to be a sailor, one is a fellow sailor. The graduates of the JMSDF OCS in 2023, I am sure, are learning this deeper truth of being sailors on their long-distance training cruise. It is indeed a friendship across the seas.

Naoyuki Agawa
March 2023
Kyoto, Japan

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