

Japan 1968: The Performance of Violence and the
Theater of Protest

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Political activity is whatever shifts a body from the place assigned to it or changes a place's destination. It makes visible what had no business being seen, and makes heard a discourse where once there was only place for noise; it makes understood as discourse what was once only heard as noise.

Jacques Rancière, *Disagreement*

THE ICONIC YEAR 1968 marks the 1960s as a global moment. People took to the streets in nation after nation, their demonstrations recorded and distributed worldwide through a variety of broadcast media in a montage of popular activism (or disorder, depending on one's perspective). For participants and sympathizers, the spectacle of mass protest made visible the international, shared nature of the political imperatives of the moment, and promoted the possibilities of direct action.

This backdrop of ubiquitous activism also reinforced one of the era's key political characteristics: the blurring of conventional sociological categories and identifications as the basis for political transformation and reengagement.¹ The porous divide between political protesters and the larger, supposedly apolitical populace proved

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¹ To take the case of France, Kristin Ross analyzes 1968 as "above all else a massive refusal on the part of thousands, even millions, of people to see in the social what we usually see: nothing more than the narrowest of sociological categories." Kristin Ross, *May '68 and Its Afterlives* (Chicago, 2002), 7. Thus, "what has come to be called 'the events of May' consisted mainly in students ceasing to function as students, workers as workers, and farmers as farmers: May was a crisis in functionalism. The movement took the form of political experiments in *declassification*, in disrupting the natural 'givenness' of places; it consisted of displacements that took students outside of the university, meetings that brought farmers and workers together, or students to the countryside—trajectories outside of the Latin Quarter, to workers' housing and popular neighborhoods . . . The logic of the police worked throughout this period to separate students from workers, to prevent contact, to isolate students in the Latin Quarter, to prevent student-worker interaction . . . May '68 had less to do with the identity or interests of 'students' per se, than with a disjuncture or fissure created within that identity" (25; emphasis in the original). Ross discusses in turn the consequent depoliticizing results of applying conventional sociological or biographical modes of analysis to these events—"confiscations" that reduce the very form of its politicality back to normative categories (4). In the course of several years of teaching classes on "The Global 1960s," while developing research on phenomena in 1960s Japan, I have become convinced of the cogency of this approach in addressing the central comparative dimensions of this global moment.

to be a major source of anxiety for various authorities, who discovered that the former could be only incompletely described as “activists,” or in fact as any conventionally recognized social group. In case after case, the researcher of the 1960s encounters people who, although self-identified as “nonpolitical,” were drawn into committed activism, frequently through some key incident or encounter, in the process often examining and transforming their own social practices and identifications. But instead of a switch from apoliticality to activism, such transformations challenged this very division, and enabled additional possibilities for social agency and radical social change.

In Japan, the term *nonpori* (a phoneticized abbreviation of the English word “nonpolitical”) spoke to both this self-identification and its potential instability. The term denoted an individual’s status outside standard political classifications. It thus reflected a common view of the “political” as an overly narrow domain of government action, party politics, or hierarchical protest networks marked by firm ideological commitments. During the 1960s, however, *nonpori* came increasingly to designate individuals who were likely to self-mobilize spontaneously. They occupied a kind of “not-yet” position that was of great concern to both committed activists and the state. Rather than a contradiction in terms, however, the possibility of political engagement by the *nonpori* reflected an expansion of the field of the political itself as it came to encompass a much wider range of potential issues, actors, and possibilities. The apparent paradox of *nonpori* politics should actually alert us to an expansion of politics in practice that simply outpaced the conventional definitions of the term “political.”

In the context of the campus mobilizations, the “ordinary student” [*ippangakusei*] similarly came to denote the potentially mobilizable target of a variety of appeals by both campus activists and authorities. Likewise, during street battles, the witnesses and, occasionally, participants or casualties were typically identified as “citizens” [*shimin*], a term associated with new urban living patterns since the late 1950s, particularly the lives of those living in the new *danchi* housing complexes.² “Citizen” thus indicated a certain newness and an association with bourgeois comfort and complacency—but could also potentially denote the equally new “citizens’ movements” that originated during the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty (Anpo) protests of 1960.³ According to Takabatake Michitoshi, “The term ‘citizens’ movement’ was itself derived from the nature of its membership—normally apolitical people demonstrating in the streets on a part-time basis.”⁴ “Citizens” could therefore, depending

² *Danchi* refers to clustered apartment buildings, and particularly to the high-rise residential complexes sponsored by the Japan Housing Corporation after its creation in 1955. In the 1960s, the *danchi* were increasingly located on urban peripheries, leading to extended commute times. Although the *danchi* were initially emblematic of a promised lifestyle of modern comfort and convenience, residents found the realities falling far short of such expectations.

³ Somewhat confusingly, “Anpo” conventionally refers both to the Security Treaty and to the protests against it, typically identified by the renewal year (e.g., Anpo 1960, Anpo 1970). The formal name of the 1960 treaty is the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan; the previous treaty, signed in 1951 with ratifications exchanged on the day of its commencement, April 28, 1952, was the Security Treaty between the United States of America and Japan, a much less “mutual” affair.

⁴ Takabatake Michitoshi, “Citizens’ Movements: Organizing the Spontaneous,” in J. Victor Koschmann, ed., *Authority and the Individual in Japan: Citizen Protest in Historical Perspective* (Tokyo, 1978), 192. For an additional discussion of the ambiguous signification of “citizen” [*shimin*] and its consequent

on the occasion, refer to anything from a sort of Nixonian “silent majority,” to observers of events, and finally to active participants and victims.⁵

“Nonpolitical,” “ordinary student,” “citizen”: Jacques Rancière and Kristin Ross alert us to see in these and other conceptual and sociological ambiguities the very sign of an expansive and revolutionary politics.⁶ Categories that previously demarcated some degree of distance from political engagement come instead to identify potentially subversive social agents. It is for this reason that such unexpected and emergent political identifications tend to be read as “spontaneous.” If the contemporaneous use of the term “politics” lags behind this expansion and revision of political boundaries, that too should come as no surprise. The unsettling of the “political” as commonly understood and practiced is for Rancière the sign and essence of politics. But if politics is, as Rancière would have it, a struggle for visibility and voice out of noise, a shifting of places and designations, then one must look for its signs in a confluence of perceptual and practical transformations.

In Japan in 1968, as in so many other countries that year, the eruption of such a politics was conditioned by the question of “violence” as illegitimate action and force. The shifts in practice and perception that reveal and constitute this new politics were all hard-won—not only in the face of state opposition, but also against conventional assumptions that such transformations were improper.⁷ This expansive political practice that enabled the formation of new actors, practices, and possibil-

political effectiveness, see Wesley Sasaki-Uemura, *Organizing the Spontaneous: Citizen Protest in Postwar Japan* (Honolulu, 2001), 31–34, 177–178. The artist Akasegawa Genpei began his play with the ambivalent figure of the *yajiuma* [gawker or onlooker] during 1969 in manga works such as “Gendai yajiumako” [Contemporary Gawker Mentality], published in the monthly popular journal *Gendai no me* [Contemporary Eye]; in elliptical prose and drawings conflating helmets, heads, and rocks, he asserted a continuum of violence between apoliticality, government force, and activism. For Akasegawa, the roles performed by people in their daily lives were scripted via the violence of the bureaucratic order, and thus were imminently connected to violence and suppression. Violent activism thus represented an engagement with this situation at some fundamental level. At the time, Akasegawa was facing state authority himself, in the midst of a final appeal to the Supreme Court of his 1967 conviction for currency “imitation.”

⁵ In 1960, Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke identified a similar putative majority of silent supporters of the status quo as the “voiceless voices”—prompting the organization of the protest group Society of the Voiceless Voices [Koe naki koe no kai] to contest his presumption. See George Packard III, *Protest in Tokyo: The Security Treaty Crisis of 1960* (Princeton, N.J., 1966), 245–247, 274–276; Sasaki-Uemura, *Organizing the Spontaneous*, 155–162. For both Kishi and, later, Nixon, “silence” was the converse of reducing protest voices to inconsequential noise, and necessarily “spoke” for the status quo.

⁶ Jacques Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* (Minneapolis, 1999), 28–30, 58–60; Ross, *May '68 and Its Afterlives*, 20–27, 56–61.

⁷ For the classic statement on the modern state as a relation of dominance inseparable from legitimated violence, see Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation,” in Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans. and ed. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York, 1958), 77–128. In a lecture in October 1958 serialized in the *Mainichi Shinbun* in January 1959 (and revised for book publication in 1961), the prominent University of Tokyo political scientist Maruyama Masao linked the tendency for protest to be described as “violence” directly to the narrowing professionalization of the political realm and to an ossification of social roles. Maruyama declaimed the tendency for “political activities to become considered as the exclusive province of the ‘political realm,’ the groups of professional politicians, and thus be restricted *only* to [activities] within the Diet. Thus political activities in the broader society performed by those other than politicians come to be regarded either as acts transgressing one’s social role or as ‘violence.’” Maruyama Masao, “‘De aru’ koto to ‘suru’ koto,” reprinted in Maruyama, *Nihon no shisō* (Tokyo, 1961), 172, 181–182. Sasaki-Uemura discusses this work and its context within the author’s contemporaneous texts, and within developing citizen protest movements in advance of 1960 Anpo; *Organizing the Spontaneous*, 187–192, 259 n. 126. While noting the piece’s fundamental anti-authoritarian perspective, Sasaki-Uemura critiques Maruyama’s exclusively state-centered conception

ities in 1968 in Japan emerged from a fitful negotiation by which—for a time—the charge of “violence” was redirected away from activists, and onto the state.

IN JAPAN, THE YEAR 1968 SIGNALLED a diversity of temporal references. Viewed as a decade, the 1960s had opened with mass protests and strikes against the renewal and revision of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, and with the treaty set for automatic renewal in 1970, the events of 1968 were read by interested observers forward and backward, both in comparison with this previous high-water mark for postwar mass activism and as portents of a possibly larger convulsion at the close of the decade—particularly in the context of an intensifying security relationship with an America again at war in Asia. By the midpoint of the decade, 1965, there had been a massive escalation of U.S. troop strength in Vietnam, the “Rolling Thunder” bombing campaign of the North had commenced, and Japan had finally concluded a normalization treaty with the South Korean regime—a process interrupted by protests in both countries.⁸ America’s war on behalf of a U.S.-sponsored client government in a partitioned nation had brought together a confluence of troubling associations, including the Korean War, in which the United States’ actions had triggered direct military conflict with China, massively enriched the Japanese economy, and enabled the perpetuation of repressive regimes in two former colonies of Japan: Korea (in the south) and Taiwan (due to the interposing of the Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan Strait).

The year 1968 also marked the one-hundredth anniversary of the Meiji Restoration, the “return” of governance from the Tokugawa shogunate, which inaugurated a modern, centralized state and located a supposedly primordial institutional authority in a “restored” imperial rule. The Occupation of Japan after World War II saw the passage of a revised constitution that deprived the emperor of direct authority—and accountability—for state actions, but nonetheless retained the imperial institution (and Hirohito himself) as the “symbol of the state and of the unity of the people.”⁹ Both the Occupation and the revised constitution exploited the emperor’s potent symbolic authority—formalized under the Meiji Constitution of 1889, and

of “citizen,” and his identification of the tendency to narrow political professionalization as “nonmodern.”

⁸ In Japan, this marked the first post-1960 resurgence of mass protest; in Korea, protest commencing in 1964 had been so extensive that martial law was declared. This treaty entailed the recognition of the South Korean regime’s legitimacy (endorsing it both as *the* rightful government in Korea and in the form of its government—Park Chung-hee’s repressive regime) and effectively constituted a peace treaty with the southern half of Japan’s former colony. During the latter negotiations, Ambassador Edwin O. Reischauer cautioned against a proposed tripartite meeting for its potential effects in Japan, as “creating impression US ‘intervening’ directly in negotiations, which we still feel is most unwise”—such a revelation would energize the left and hamper the government’s maneuvers. Telegram 641 from Tokyo, August 20, 1964, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Md., Record Group 59, Records of the Department of State, Central File 1964–1966 [hereafter CF 1964–1966], POL JAPAN-KOR S, quoted in United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964–1968* [hereafter *FRUS, 1964–1968*], vol. XXIX, pt. 1: *Korea* (Washington, D.C., 2000), doc. 347 n. 4. The colonial past was especially hard to shake in 1965: thanks to the conventions of the sexagenary cycle, the year name for 1965 coincided with that of 1905, when Japan first established its Korean protectorate.

⁹ The Constitution of Japan, chap. 1, art. 1, <http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/etc/c01.html> (accessed December 10, 2008), based on the English text furnished by the Government Printing Bureau.

reinforced through decades of emperor-centered cultural practices—to facilitate their implementation and limit political realignments.¹⁰ At once a national centennial and a link to an archaic (even allegedly eternal) national order, this anniversary marked 1968 with yet another ambivalent relationship to a complex and troubling past. While the state hoped to build upon its celebration of national progress since the war in the 1964 Olympics—in anticipation, too, of Expo 1970 in Osaka—the invocation of Meiji also brought to mind the specters of both political absolutism at home and imperialist expansion into Asia.¹¹ The fixing of the official inaugural date for the year's observance on October 23—the date in 1868 when the era name was officially changed to Meiji in honor of the new monarch—directly invoked the temporality of imperial time.¹² Its ambivalent prehistory in Commodore Perry's forcible "opening" of the country received a contemporary echo in the continuing American role in shaping the form and policies of a postwar Japanese state bound tightly to the United States' cold and hot wars in Asia and the world.¹³ As it happened, however, October 23 was overshadowed by other pressing events.

IN THE FALL OF 1967, A CHANGE OF TACTICS by a subgroup of student activists transformed the purpose and effectiveness of protests. Late the previous year, a coalition within Zengakuren, the All-Japan Federation of Student Self-Government Associ-

¹⁰ Popular sovereignty, for example, was short-circuited by the inclusion of the emperor within the sovereign "people" (*kokumin*, itself a problematic term enabling the disenfranchisement of former citizens of the Japanese Empire after the war). See Koseki Shōichi, *The Birth of Japan's Postwar Constitution*, ed. and trans. Ray A. Moore (Boulder, Colo., 1997), 122, 179–181; in the Diet debates on the Constitution, see, for example, Ray A. Moore and Donald L. Robinson, eds., *The Japanese Constitution: A Documentary History of Its Framing and Adoption, 1945–1947*, CD-ROM, version 1.0 (Princeton, N.J., 1998), RM322.AMPM.SP10.P2, RM325.PM.SP35.P1-3, RM329.AM.SP26-8, and RM329.AM.SP39.P2. (The "RM id" reference system for this exceedingly convenient and easily obtained electronic document collection is explained by Keith Handley in "Referring to These Documents," *ibid.*) I discuss the return of imperial authority and the complex use of the emperor for post-World War II state legitimacy within a larger study, *Money, Trains, and Guillotines: Art and Revolution in 1960s Japan* (forthcoming from Duke University Press).

¹¹ In his March 1968 presidential address at the Twentieth Annual Meeting of the Association of Asian Studies, John Whitney Hall discussed these differing interpretations of the centennial (including accusations by Japanese historians of fascism, political manipulation, and historical distortion) in relation to the American practice of Japan scholarship. Responding both to the divergence between American and Japanese historical interpretations and in part to contemporary criticisms of "political bias" in Asian studies (then dominated by modernization theory), Hall noted the shift from prior critical readings of the Meiji era to "the current rash of essentially optimistic interpretations of Japan's modern history," and questioned whether "the 'success story' scenario is the natural, the objective, outcome of adopting a 'value free' method." Hall, "Reflections on a Centennial," *Journal of Asian Studies* 27, no. 4 (August 1968): 718.

¹² The October 23, 1868, designation of the "Meiji" era also began the practice of fixing a single era name for the entire reign of a monarch. Previously, different eras might be proclaimed during the life of an emperor, echoing the other cyclical temporal reckoning systems then in use. See Stefan Tanaka, *New Times in Modern Japan* (Princeton, N.J., 2006), 11. Thus 1968 was also Showa 43 by the convention of imperial era dating, connecting it both to Hirohito's uninterrupted reign since 1926—and attendant fraught history—and to a differently periodized decade, the Showa 40s, which commenced in 1965 with resurgent activism energized by normalization with South Korea and America's escalation in Vietnam.

¹³ Conversely, the prior commemoration of the Perry Centennial in 1953, according to Chizuru Saeki, managed to celebrate the close relationship and the return of sovereignty following the Occupation without invoking the specter of the Cold War for most participants—this despite the ongoing Korean War. See Saeki, "The Perry Centennial Celebration: A Case Study in U.S.-Japanese Cultural Diplomacy," *International Social Science Review* 80, no. 3–4 (Fall–Winter 2005): 147.

ations, united three groups in opposition to the quiescence of the majority Zengakuren group, Minsei, an affiliate of the equally quiescent Japan Communist Party (JCP).¹⁴ On October 8, 1967, activists in this Three-Faction Alliance, Sanpa Zengakuren, attempted to forcibly prevent Prime Minister Satō Eisaku's departure from Haneda Airport for Saigon, part of his second tour of Southeast Asia.¹⁵ Helmeted Sanpa members armed with lengths of timber and rocks fought riot police [*kidōtai*], who were outfitted with their standard meter-long truncheons, duralumin shields, visored helmets, tear gas guns, water cannons, and armored vehicles. On the three bridges that provided access to the airport, both sides also made aggressive use of the security forces' bus-sized vehicles.¹⁶ During the fighting on Bentenbashi Bridge, where most of the members of the Nucleus Faction, Chūkaku-ha, were initially concentrated, a Kyoto University student named Yamazaki Hiroaki was killed by one of these vehicles, said to have been driven by a fellow student.¹⁷ In the end, the prime minister departed for Saigon as planned; official figures indicated some 600 police and 100 student injuries, and some 50 arrests.¹⁸

While Sanpa had been preparing for direct activism against the prime minister's fall trips since that summer, the decision to employ timber staves appears to have

¹⁴ Zengakuren is an abbreviation for Zen-nihon gakusei jichikai sōrengo. It is a federation of the self-government associations [*jichikai*] at the various universities, and provides resources therefore controlled by the groups that have succeeded on their campuses in gaining control over their local *jichikai*. The three factions represented within Sanpa in 1967 were Chūkaku (the Nucleus Faction, part of the Marxist Student League), Shagakudō (the Socialist Student League), and Shaseidō (the Socialist Youth League; originally associated with the Japan Socialist Party, the breakaway, radical Kaihō faction was the one represented in Sanpa). This membership has shifted since the original formation of Sanpa in the early 1960s, which included Furonto [Front] and an unfragmented Shaseidō without Chūkaku. Sanpa is also frequently rendered as Sanpa rengōkei or Sanpa-kei zengakuren. As the decade progressed, the factions within Zengakuren proliferated, confounding many outside observers—and prompting the publishing of identification guides detailing favored helmet colors, slogans, and clothing. Minsei is short for Nihon minshū seinen dōmei, the Japan Democratic Youth League. Allegedly it was a federation of campus groups, although its JCP connection was a matter of common knowledge.

¹⁵ The trip to Saigon followed Nguyen Van Thieu's September ascent to the presidency of South Vietnam, a move initially greeted with qualified acclaim in the Japanese press as an emergence of popularly supported government, a view "immediately followed by pessimistic afterthoughts that the military was still in power, the U.S. had helped bring forth the form of democratic government without the content, and deep divisions in the populace remained as before." Memorandum, Leonard H. Marks to Walt Rostow, November 13, 1967, National Security File, Country File: Japan, vol. VII, Box 252, Johnson Library, Austin, Tex., 2, Secret. In addition to demonstrating support for the Thieu regime, Satō was under pressure from the United States to step up economic aid to Southeast Asia, both to support the American military commitment and to promote "stability" in the face of a perceived broadly active Chinese threat to the region. For example, Satō blamed Mao for the present violence in Burma. Memorandum of Conversation, Satō's Visit to Southeast Asia (Part III of IV), November 21, 1967, CF 1967–1969, Pol 7 Japan, 2, Secret. The trip was cut short by the death of former prime minister and Liberal Democratic Party powerbroker Yoshida Shigeru, which caused Satō to be recalled to Japan prior to planned meetings with the American ambassador and General Westmoreland.

¹⁶ Kakumaru members also fought on one of the bridges; by contrast, the majority Minsei groups sent only a handful of observers. Participants came from campuses throughout Tokyo and beyond, with many gathering the night before at Chuo University before moving en masse to the airport. Kakumaru developed separately out of another Mainstream group that had worked together with the Bund during the Anpo struggles; its adoption of the title Kakumaru Zengakuren reflects its self-understanding as the proper ideological inheritor of the Mainstream tradition. Kakumaru was often criticized for insufficient activist vigor and alleged bad faith; its violent conflicts with Chūkaku are near-legendary—culminating in a series of murders beginning in 1969.

¹⁷ Activists overran and captured several of these vehicles at one point during the struggle.

¹⁸ Telegram 02361, Ambassador Johnson to Department of State, October 9, 1967, Pol 23-8 Japan, Limited Official Use, in *Confidential U.S. State Department Central Files: Japan 1967–1969* [hereafter *Confidential Files: Japan*], reel 10, 0226–0230.



FIGURE 1: Sanpa Zengakuren members battle riot police on the Suzugamori Expressway ramp near Haneda Airport, October 8, 1967. Photo courtesy of the *Yomiuri Shimbun*.

been made at the last minute.¹⁹ The front page of the July 31 issue of Chūkaku's official organ, *Zenshin* [Advance], featured a long statement by Akiyama Katsuyuki, the committee chairman of Sanpa, declaring that the struggle against the renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty was already under way. According to Akiyama, Zengakuren would treat the upcoming confrontations as the year's most important "test cases" [*shikinseki*]: Would they prevent the trips or not? While Akiyama speaks of their commitment to this struggle, and of their "combat units" [*sentō butai*], he does not directly indicate the means that would be employed.²⁰

¹⁹ According to activist Fukawa Mitsuo's recollections, the weapons used at Haneda were laid in store as a direct result of violent sectarian conflicts in the immediately preceding week. Bound stacks of timber had been readied for use as staves by groups in conflict with Chūkaku-ha, after a rescue of three members from them at Hōsei University the previous day. Chūkaku-ha members also brought staves to Haneda; Fukawa suspects that these, too, had been on hand for the ongoing inter-sect conflict. The night of October 7, at the Bund [Bundo] meeting at Chuo University, it was resolved to bring the staves to the site, but not specifically to use them on riot police. Fukawa relates hearing that the groups set out for Haneda from Chuo the next day without the staves, but were brought them by latecomers catching up to the main group. He also suggests that Kansai students (those from the south-central region of the largest Japanese island, which includes the cities of Kyoto, Kobe, and Osaka) may have played a key role, having been fired up by a speech the night before by Shiomi Tayaka—of later fame as a founder of the Sekigun-ha [Red Army Faction] of the Kansai Bund; he served nineteen years in prison for his key role in the hijacking of a Japan Airlines airliner to North Korea from Haneda in 1970. Fukawa Mitsuo, *Za • 1968* (Tokyo, 2006), 309–310. The original Bund was the largest of the "mainstream" anti-JCP groups opposing the Anpo treaty in 1960; after the defeat, it fragmented into a variety of smaller groups. The tendency of subgroups subsequently to claim the name "Bund" marks both an assertion of preeminence among the Mainstream factions and perhaps a latent desire for a return to greater unity—much like the various appropriations of "Zengakuren" in group names.

²⁰ Akiyama Katsuyuki, "Zengakuren no hata sara ni takaku," *Zenshin*, July 31, 1967, 1.



FIGURE 2: Students are blasted by police fire hoses off of Bentenbashi Bridge into the river, October 8, 1967. Photo courtesy of the *Yomiuri Shinbun*.

In a flurry of editorials and articles, newspapers roundly condemned the violent tactics of the students, with some quoting Chief Cabinet Secretary Kimura Toshio's statement that Yamazaki's death was the result of student groups' rehearsal for violent revolution.²¹ The lead editorial in the daily *Asahi Shinbun* on October 9 accused them of attempting to deliver a "revolutionary" appeal through violent shock tactics, and thus "taking advantage of society's beneficence toward students and abusing the right of free expression" in their attempt to gather attention. A sensational two-page illustrated spread proclaimed a "Deadly Clash, Outrageous Conflagration," declaring that the violent action was premeditated (following a September 26 national appeal by Sanpa), and that female students had gathered stones

²¹ Ibid.

for the stone-throwers.²² The daily *Yomiuri Shinbun* printed excoriations of the students under headlines labeling them “mere yakuza” and “thoughtless violent gangs,” asking, “is this really a student movement?” Reducing the student voices to noise, as a collection of screamed, empty insults, the paper reported the incident as the appearance of a “new violent gang rioting on the basis of a-theoretical, special rights due to their freedom and youth,” “with faces like crazed wild animals, and smirking.”²³

The newspaper *Mainichi Shinbun* pointed out that the violent tactics had originated in the factional disputes within the student movement, and in a journalist roundtable, it asserted that such violence would garner zero support from the populace.²⁴ A week later, *Mainichi* depicted a mini-drama on the streets of Osaka when a pamphleteering Chūkaku student was spontaneously surrounded by critics. Passing out handbills in front of a sign proclaiming Yamazaki’s “slaughter by the police,” the student was confronted by a thirty-something businessman; their argument soon attracted “some seventy to eighty” scornful passersby. The accompanying photo perfectly dramatizes the article’s depiction of the student’s abjection in the face of a hostile public: overwhelmed by the throng, with his hand pressed to the side of his jaw and his mouth open, the student submissively continues his explanations before the stern face and crossed arms of an obviously unreceptive man in a suit.²⁵

Writing in *Zenshin*, Honda Nobuyoshi, the leader of the Chūkaku sect, lambasted the double standard on violence behind journalists’ condemnations of their actions:²⁶

The organs of the bourgeois press and their official critics . . . obscured [our] focus—“oppose the Vietnam war, obstruct the visit”—with the so-called problem of violence, castigating the Zengakuren struggle as a “violent demonstration” and “armed demonstration,” while simultaneously maneuvering to conceal and defend the fundamental problem of state violence . . . On October 8, Zengakuren had its right to demonstrate stripped from it: wasn’t it police headquarters and the public safety commission whose suppression through outrageous violence ensured that Zengakuren would be unable to exercise its right even to a one-meter-long march without forcibly breaking through the riot police’s obstructing line? And isn’t it

²² *Asahi Shinbun*, October 9, 1967, morning ed., 2, 14–15. (Per current practice, *shinbun*—newspaper—is Romanized in this article with an “n,” although the credit lines in the illustration captions use the established older conventional form *shimbun* to honor the terms of the publication agreements with the newspapers.) Reflecting both the composition of the activist groups and contemporary assumptions about them, the reported presence of women in a demonstration typically functioned as a marker for its nonviolence (see the *Asahi Journal*’s comments on the October 21, 1967, demonstration below). Thus, women’s participation in violence—even in an indirect role—prompted comment. Both aspects were complexly negotiated in the figure of Kanba Michiko, the casualty of a police/activist clash on June 15, 1960, during the Anpo protests (see below).

²³ *Yomiuri Shinbun*, October 9, 1967, 15.

²⁴ *Mainichi Shinbun*, October 9, 1967, morning ed., 5; *ibid.*, evening ed., 10.

²⁵ *Mainichi Shinbun*, October 15, 1967, morning ed., 15. Visible in the background, beyond the hostile crowd, is a scrawled message proclaiming Yamazaki’s slaughter. The student’s expression appears retouched in the photo.

²⁶ Their official name is Nihon kakumeiteki kyōsanshugisha dōmei zenkoku iinkai kakumeiteki marukusushugiha, the Japan Revolutionary Communist League, Revolutionary Marxist Faction. Honda was killed in his apartment in 1975 by rival Kakumaru sect members, a casualty of a multi-year bloody campaign of retaliatory sectarian warfare and murder. It was in fact in the course of sectarian warfare that students first introduced helmets and staves (and face concealment with towels), during the invasion of a Kakumaru meeting in 1964 by rival sect members from Chūkaku, Shagakudō, Shaseidō, and Furonto. Donald Frederick Wheeler, “The Japanese Student Movement: Value Politics, Student Politics and the Tokyo University Struggle” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1974), 219.

police headquarters and the public safety commission that for seven years since Anpo have mobilized the well-armed riot police against Zengakuren's unarmed demonstrations, inflicting bloody oppression by blows, kicks, and arrests, causing near-fatal injuries for dozens?²⁷ For one, the right to be armed and to strike, kick, and arrest; for the other, in order to declare an anti-war intent, the right to be struck, kicked, and arrested—only this is permitted. If this isn't state violence, what is? But on October 8, police headquarters and the public safety commission usurped the right even to be hit, kicked, and arrested.²⁸

While foregrounding the issue of state violence and the systematic obstruction of protest, Honda's argument simultaneously demanded that the press recognize student actions as purposeful and serious rather than as incoherent or irrational rioting. Sounding a similar note, Akiyama Katsuyuki denounced what he saw as efforts to slander and suppress such actions through demagoguery over "a small group of students run riot," or "students killing students."²⁹ Both Honda and Akiyama wrote from underground, however; in hiding from the police, they were hampered in their attempts to counter criticism.

Violence in itself was not new to post-World War II activism in Japan. Past protests had frequently turned into physical confrontations with security forces, most memorably in the May Day protests of 1952, when, a mere three days after the end of the Occupation, 5,000 Japanese police fought 6,000 workers attempting to occupy a newly forbidden site for public protest, the "People's Plaza" outside the Imperial Palace in Tokyo. According to Takemae Eiji's account, two workers were shot, 2,300 were injured, and more than 1,000 were arrested—a record for mass arrests that would stand until 1968.³⁰ "Nonviolent" protests subsequent to the mass actions of 1960 also frequently resulted in injured demonstrators. Contemporary sectarian clashes between student groups often took the form of violent, even armed, conflict—a condition that Donald Wheeler argues was promoted by the very structure of Zengakuren, which fostered competition over local *jichikai* [self-government associations] with no mechanism for limiting conflicts.³¹ What was new at Haneda, then, was the use of violence as a means to prevent the exercise of declared state policy—and consequently, the foregrounding of force itself in the confrontations between protesters and the state.

Some reflection in the weeks following the incident included a bit more nuance than in the initial press commentaries. The *Asahi Journal* issued a special section on the "Haneda bloodshed" on October 22; the lead article, by Takahashi Tōru, proclaimed the necessity of "both considering the situation surrounding the [students] and penetrating to their innermost thoughts." Although critical, the section recog-

²⁷ Literally "demonstrations of spirit and flesh alone."

²⁸ Honda Nobuyoshi, "Haneda tōsō no igi to tatakai no tenbō," *Zenshin* 337 (October 30, 1967), reprinted in Honda, *Honda Nobuyoshi Chosakusen I* (Tokyo, 1975), 341–342.

²⁹ Akiyama Katsuyuki, "Zennihon • zensekai no tatakau gakusei • rōdōsha jinmin e," *Zenshin*, October 17, 1967, reprinted in Takazawa Kōji and Kurata Kazunari, eds., *Shinsayoku riron zenshi, 1957–1975* (Tokyo, 1984), 353.

³⁰ Takemae Eiji, *The Allied Occupation of Japan* (New York, 2003), 494–495. Police records list 693 arrests, and 832 injuries among the police, of which 71 were serious and 8 life-threatening. *Kaisō: Sengo shuyō sayoku jiken* (Tokyo, 1968), 134. In banning the protest, the newly independent Japanese government was determined to continue the policy set by the Occupation in 1951 of forbidding May Day demonstrators from using the plaza.

³¹ Wheeler, "The Japanese Student Movement," 222–224.

nized intent and significance in student actions that called for engagement and reasoned consideration, rather than sheer dismissal of what they were doing as animalistic violence. Takahashi acknowledged that the students had three central goals: first, to forcibly oppose, out of an ethic of anti-imperialism, a trip connected to invasion and colonial domination in Southeast Asia; second, to protest the defeatism and lukewarm response of the Old Left (the article notes that the JCP was busy hosting a “picnic” on October 8); and third, to attempt through Sanpa to secure hegemony over the student movement with a shift in tactics.³² The novelist Ōe Kenzaburō and six others considered the meaning of the student’s death, the purpose and effects of the violent protest, and their relation to discourse and public opinion.

Mori Kyojō’s lead editorial, however, depicted the incident as a “nuisance . . . harshly condemned in public opinion. Disconnected from the people, talk of shock therapy, or of touching off a revolution, is meaningless . . . The response from abroad was larger than depicted here: the student activists were likely well-satisfied. Yet within Japan it will become another factor in a rightward shift in politics.”³³ The editors’ joint report on the First Haneda Incident in the next week’s issue stated that the event had failed to attract the interest not only of “average students” [*ippan-gakusei*], but also of student groups that were typically quick to respond, such as the student bodies at the universities that served as the home bases for the Sanpa and Kakumaru [Revolutionary Marxist Faction] sects, and the College of General Education at Tokyo University.³⁴ The report asserted that students were already turned off by sectarian violence, and thus the Haneda events merely confirmed them in their rejection of the activists. One student stated, “I see what they do every day [here], so it’s no surprise, really.”³⁵ On the other hand, the editors identified how the intertwined interests of purportedly opposed established political entities conspired to prevent more troubling consequences. They noted the odd “duet” between the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the JCP: both parties together “denounced running riot” [*bōsō hīnan*] and refused to consider the broader background to the incident.³⁶ The Japan Socialist Party (JSP) and the Japan General Council of Trade

³² Takahashi Tōru, “Haikēi no ronri to shinjō,” *Asahi Jānaru* 9, no. 44 (October 22, 1967): 3. The JCP’s decision to hold an alternative October 8 protest event, the “Red Flag Festival,” by Lake Tama—some thirty-five miles from the confrontation at Haneda Airport—became for many a paradigmatic instance of the party’s complacency and unwillingness to confront the state. It generated a possibly apocryphal, though often repeated, tale: a young JCP member (likely part of Minsei) is challenged at the picnic, “Aren’t you going to Haneda?” The JCP youth responds with satisfaction by pointing up in the sky to where a red balloon dangles a streamer declaring “We Oppose Prime Minister Sato’s Visit to South Vietnam.” Airgram A-11, Ambassador Johnson to Department of State, January 14, 1969, CF 1967–1969, box labeled “Politics and Defense: Pol 12-3 Japan to Pol 15-1 Japan,” folder Pol 13 Japan 1/1/67, 3, Limited Official Use. The JCP’s newspaper, *Akahata* [Red Flag], subsequently claimed that some 1,000 JCP demonstrators were at Haneda protesting on October 8, but the JSP’s Bureau of Citizen Movements corrected this figure to “thirty at best.” See “Haneda no hamon wa naze chīsai,” *Asahi Jānaru* 9, no. 45 (October 29, 1967): 15. The JCP called the students’ actions at Haneda a “clash of reactionary and ultra-left counterrevolutionary Trotskyite forces,” and counterproductive to the group’s fight versus “American imperialist aggression in Vietnam.” Quoted in Telegram 02361, 2.

³³ Literally “politics’ right wheel,” a military marching term. Mori Kyojō, “Fūsokuukei [Wind Gauge],” *Asahi Jānaru* 9, no. 44 (October 22, 1967): 3. Mori was chief editor of the parent *Asahi Shinbun*; his commentaries appeared on the third page of the journal well into the 1970s.

³⁴ “Haneda no hamon wa naze chīsai,” *Asahi Jānaru* 9, no. 45 (October 29, 1967): 13.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ This duet echoed a previous instance of bad faith on the part of the JCP during Anpo 1960, variously observed by Yoshimoto Takaaki, Oshima Nagisa, and others.

Unions, Sōhyō, were similarly blamed for conservative tendencies contributing to the “stagnation of reform” that the editors identified as a major cause.³⁷

It took another demonstration at the airport—the “Second Haneda Incident” of November 12, 1967—before press coverage sporadically began to consider a broader “violence” through the figure of innocent “victims” from the vicinity, distinguished from the students, who remained targets for journalistic vitriol. Once again the protesters’ immediate declared goal was to stop the departure of Prime Minister Satō, who this time was flying to the United States to meet with President Lyndon B. Johnson. The protesters again hoped that the confrontation would ignite the underlying and potentially explosive political issues occasioning the trip. Despite popular reactions to the First Haneda Incident, the November trip seemed potentially promising: public expectations and concerns about the visit were high, anticipating discussions in Washington, D.C., concerning the return of Okinawa from post-1945 American control.

By November, the central question addressed in the national debate in Japan was whether Okinawa post-reversion would accord with the declared state policy forbidding the “introduction” of nuclear weapons, or if such weapons would be permitted at the U.S. military bases.³⁸ In other words, both the Okinawa question and Satō’s perceived pliancy toward American demands were linked to a larger debate over Japan’s involvement in the United States’ cold and hot wars, including the potential for Japan to be drawn into a nuclear conflict.³⁹ That summer, Japanese had received a frightening and direct reminder of this peril in the form of newspaper warnings in mid-June advising the use of umbrellas to protect against expected “hot rain” contaminated with radioactivity as a result of China’s June 17 atmospheric detonation of a hydrogen bomb—a mere three years after the first Chinese atomic detonation in 1964.⁴⁰

Anticipating a repeat of October’s events, press editorials admonished the students against further violence; meanwhile, the authorities readied themselves. Met by a vast deployment of police—5,000 in the immediate vicinity of Haneda alone—the Sanpa students were beaten back with often indiscriminate force. *Asahi* reported the next day that “average citizens” [*ippanshimin*] were caught up in the melee between students and police and, “mistaken for students,” were subjected to concerted police beatings.⁴¹ The presumption that such acts were “mistakes” would, with subsequent demonstrations, become increasingly untenable. The press attention to cit-

³⁷ “Haneda no hamon wa naze chīsai,” 15–16.

³⁸ Robert S. Norris, William M. Arkin, and William Burr describe Okinawa as “chock-a-block full of nuclear weapons of all types until 1972.” Norris, Arkin, and Burr, “Where They Were: How Much Did Japan Know?” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 56, no. 1 (January/February 2000): 79.

³⁹ Prior to February 1968, Kadena Air Force Base on Okinawa was in selective use as a weather refuge for B-52 flights; this sporadic use nevertheless had generated 82 sorties to Southeast Asia from the base. Bombing strikes directly from Kadena began on February 15, 1968, and averaged 350 a month, with daily flights. “Fact Sheet: B-52 Basing in Okinawa,” March 7, 1969, 1, Secret, in “Japan and the U.S., 1960–1976,” Digital National Security Archive, <http://nsarchive.chadwyck.com> [hereafter DNSA], doc. JU01051.

⁴⁰ Telegram 015852, “SSN Visit to Yokosuka—Siterep One,” Embassy to Department of State, June 19, 1967, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 2, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 019–020.

⁴¹ *Asahi Shinbun*, November 13, 1967, morning ed., 15. The paper’s term for this is *fukurodataki*, which is typically associated with gang beatings.



FIGURE 3: Police lead beaten, bleeding demonstrators away to waiting wagons, November 12, 1967 (Second Haneda Incident). Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.

izen victims of the state continued with an article in *Yomiuri* on November 14 criticizing the chilly response to citizens' claims for damages inflicted by the police.⁴²

This more careful scrutiny of state force perhaps had something to do with the presence of groups other than the Sanpa activists—far more than during the October 8 action. In the vicinity of the airport, the actions of these groups included a sit-in by the Anti-War Youth Committee, Hansen seinen iinkai, composed of young workers.⁴³ Although themselves nonviolent, the members of Hansen proclaimed that Yamazaki's death was nonetheless "evidence of oppression directed at us." Several hundred JCP and JSP protesters were also in the vicinity; some 350 JCP-affiliated Zengakuren students held an energetic snake dance, with rank upon rank of participants linking arms and quick-marching in a zigzag pattern, causing a middle-aged JSP activist to murmur: "Haven't seen one of them in a long time."⁴⁴ One report speculated on the presence there of former participants in the "Red Flag Festival" (the JCP's own ineffectual "protest" on October 8, held some thirty-five miles from

⁴² *Yomiuri Shinbun*, November 14, 1967, morning ed., 13.

⁴³ The group originated in 1965; organized by the JSP and Sōhyō, it had developed its own dynamics by this time. See Takami Keishi, *Hansen seinen iinkai* (Tokyo, 1968).

⁴⁴ The snake dance tactic was famously employed during the 1960 Anpo demonstrations. The linked arms of the protesters, their erratic and quick movement, and the tendency for the front ranks to curl back against the rearward ones make it difficult for police to disperse the protest or seize individual members.

Haneda Airport at Lake Tama), noting a riot police official's observation that "from their docility, they're probably Minsei."⁴⁵ While none of these other groups were in the end directly assaulted by riot police, the palpable possibility brought to mind past incidents in which nonviolence had offered no protection from state force.

In the November 26 issue, the *Asahi Journal* issued its own report on the Second Haneda Incident. While renewing their objections to student violence, the editors broadened their criticism to consider the rationale and justifications for their tactical shift:

And yet, students are private individuals. Riot police are public servants. Was there not a private, personal element in the exercise of public authority by the police? . . . If we recall, during Anpo, students wore no helmets and bore no staves. Why, then, have these students taken up weapons and brutally intensified their actions like this? There can be no doubt that a major factor was the expansion of the riot police subsequent to Anpo. If we consider the escalation from October 8 to November 12, does it really reflect an improvement in policing in the long run? This is the question.⁴⁶

The editors reflected back on a scene during the International Anti-War Day Joint Action on October 21, when 2,500 unarmed (and unhelmeted) demonstrators from some forty citizen, student, and cultural groups were assaulted by riot police. According to the editors, half of those protesters were female students in skirts. After a lawyers' group arrived on the scene to object to the assault and arrests of lawful demonstrators, the police released their arrestees and apologized—but left in their wake a road scattered with injured protesters. The group had wished to show that Satō's trip to America was not opposed only by Sanpa; readers were left to ponder the possibilities for such protests in the face of this level of state response.⁴⁷ Implicit in such considerations, too, was the equivalence between "violent" and "nonviolent" protesters confronted by state violence: both the helmeted Sanpa member and the "nonviolent" civic group would equally face club-wielding riot police.

The mood of the press had perhaps also been altered by the dramatic self-immolation of seventy-three-year-old Yui Chūnoshin in front of the prime minister's residence on November 11, the night before the second incident. He died in the hospital the next day, around the time the prime minister's plane was departing Haneda. Yui, who addressed Satō as "Your Excellency" [*kakka*] in his suicide note, declared his intent to oppose with his death Satō's commitment to a violence in Vietnam that recalled for Yui Japan's prior violence in China. Proficient in Esperanto and its longtime advocate, Yui had connections to the peace movement reaching back to the interwar period.⁴⁸ He had recently taken to visiting the offices of the "Peace in Vietnam!" Citizens' Federation, Beheiren [Betonamu ni heiwa o! shimin

⁴⁵ "Satō hōbei soshi • sono hi no Haneda," *Asahi Jānaru* 9, no. 49 (November 26, 1967): 14–15. The LDP even managed to mobilize some 1,600 from its youth organization to demonstrate in favor of the prime minister. On the JCP's "Red Flag Festival," see note 32.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 11. *Esukarēto* is a phoneticization from the English. The parallel to Johnson's Vietnam escalation is intentional and is marked by the use of the loan word.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁴⁸ Yui's Esperanto proficiency and age suggest a possible connection to the interwar leftist politics and internationalism with which Esperanto had previously been associated.

rengō], to discuss peace issues with young people and lead Esperanto practice groups, according to Tsurumi Shunsuke in the *Asahi Journal*.⁴⁹

In the December issue of the journal *Gendai no riron* [Contemporary Theory], Nakajima Makoto put the Haneda events into a context that further legitimated the activists. He reported a recent subtle shift in public opinion about Yamazaki's death in response to increasing foreign demonstrations against the war. "While still including criticism calling this a small group of students run riot, those who are in solidarity with the goals of peace and national opposition to war have gradually begun to consider the meaning of meeting state authority with physical force." In contrast, he cited the *Asahi Journal*'s characterization of the LDP and JCP conservative "duet" as evidence of a lack of conventional political options. Nakajima noted that while some people distinguished the death of Yamazaki from that of Kanba Michiko during the 1960 demonstrations, he did not: in Kanba's case, too, the state had strongly asserted that the direct cause of death was her fellow students, thus obscuring the actuality of the confrontation with state force.⁵⁰

Since his death on October 8, Yamazaki had in many ways stood in for the ambiguous political significance of the students' actions themselves. While *Mainichi*'s editors had felt sufficiently assured to frame a street drama in Osaka around the angry reactions of passersby to claims of his martyrdom, others were less confident in this image of a uniformly unreceptive public. Two days after *Mainichi*'s article, in a report to Washington on October 17, the American embassy predicted that the "Left [would be] unlikely [to be] able [to] use this death as martyrdom symbol as it did death of girl student in 1960."⁵¹ Despite this, the embassy warned that "in any event incident will heighten emotional pitch of dispute over GOJ [Government of Japan] policies in coming months. Following close on suicide of JDA [Japan Defense Agency] official involved [in] Nike Hawk talks [EMBTel 2355], student death in effort [to] prevent Sato South Vietnam visit appears likely [to] create mood of emotional uncertainty concerning Sato handling of issues closely related to US-Japan relations, regardless of tenuous nature of connections between these tragedies and substance of issues."⁵² The embassy anticipated continuing, unpredictable, and ir-

⁴⁹ "Daijin no minshūshugi to Yui Chūnoshin: Shōshin de uttaeru to iu koto," *Asahi Jānaru* 9, no. 49 (November 26, 1967): 17–19. Tsurumi also appended to his report a personal observation on the First Haneda Incident: he had been present at Bentenbashi, and had even seen the vehicle in question moving along the bridge—although he had not witnessed Yamazaki being pulled beneath it. He wondered not only how an eighteen-year-old youth could fail to avoid such a slow-moving vehicle, but also how—unlike himself, a direct witness to the scene—the riot police could be so certain of the exact cause of Yamazaki's death. *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵⁰ Nakajima Makoto, "Haneda tōsō de no masu • komi to kokumin kanjō," *Gendai no riron* 4, no. 12 (December 1967): 21–22.

⁵¹ The diminutive "girl" here is telling. Kanba's status as one of the movement's few women, as well as her position as a Tokyo University student, contributed to her effectiveness as a symbol of martyrdom against state force for years after Anpo. The immediate cause of her death also provoked a gendered response, as even the official autopsy noted signs of pressure to her mouth, nose, and neck, indicating a possibility of choking—while a JSP Diet member's medical examination of the body strongly implied strangulation at the hands of the riot police. Kanba herself had allegedly joined the head of the Diet incursion with the male students in an assertion of her duties as a Zengakuren officer, bringing her into direct contact with the riot police. See Packard, *Protest in Tokyo*, 296 n. 109; Sasaki-Uemura, *Organizing the Spontaneous*, 49. As Sasaki-Uemura has noted, rightist attacks on Anpo demonstrators (with clubs and wooden swords) were observed to particularly target women marchers; *ibid.*, 39.

⁵² Telegram 02361, 3–4.

rational consequences manifested in a “mood of emotional uncertainty,” but had no umbrellas to recommend against this public fallout.

THE ARRIVAL IN JAPAN OF THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER USS *Enterprise* had been publicly anticipated since at least early 1966, when the topic was raised during several Diet sessions. On February 2 of that year, Prime Minister Satō was directly questioned by JSP Upper House member Tsubaki Shigeo over the likelihood of ongoing government preparations for a port call in Japan by the *Enterprise*, or by any of the other nuclear-powered surface ships (NPSS) newly assigned to the Seventh Fleet.⁵³ Tsubaki characterized the already ongoing—and increasingly routinized—visits to Sasebo by nuclear-powered “fast attack submarines” (SSNs) as one part of Japan’s increasing indirect aid to an aggressive and hazardous American strategy of preemptive war in Asia.⁵⁴ He also directly raised the likelihood that the *Enterprise* would “introduce” [*dōnyū*] nuclear weapons into Japanese territory. In response, Satō reiterated the government’s “three nuclear principles”—neither to manufacture, nor to possess, nor to permit the introduction [*mochikomi*] of nuclear weapons.⁵⁵ These high-minded principles, which were part of the reason why Satō was chosen to share the Nobel Peace Prize in 1974, were actually an exercise in dissimulation, and perhaps willful misunderstanding, that even today is incompletely detailed within the declassified archival record. By way of secret agreements to the Anpo treaty in 1960, Japan explicitly permitted such transits.⁵⁶ These arrangements, and the specific language for equivocating about them, had been further clarified in a discussion between Ambassador Edwin O. Reischauer and Foreign Minister Ōhira Masayoshi in April 1963.⁵⁷ Coupled with standard American statements—a refusal to discuss the

⁵³ Tsubaki was well-informed: government consultations with the United States over a visit by the *Enterprise* had been ongoing since at least January. See Memorandum for the President, Undersecretary of State Katzenbach to President Johnson, January 24, 1968, 2, Secret, Declassified Documents Reference System, doc. 1088.

⁵⁴ “The gravest threat to Asian peace is at base the self-righteous fervor of America’s tactics in menacing China with its military might by arbitrarily proclaiming that the Beijing government schemes to advance militarily through Asia, and adopting a posture of preemptive war.” House of Councillors, Plenary Session, *Kokkaikaigiroku*, 51-san-honkaigi-9 gō, February 2, 1966. Tsubaki began his comments by questioning incidents demonstrating linkages between the ruling party and violent right-wing gangs, and the use of anti-democratic tactics.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* *Mochikomi* is a nominalized form of the verb *mochikomu*, “to introduce.”

⁵⁶ Satō’s commitment to these three principles was cited by both the presenter and Satō himself during his receipt of half of the Nobel Peace Prize for 1974. See Aase Lionaes, “Presentation Speech,” Nobel Peace Prize 1974, http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1974/press.html, and Satō Eisaku, “Nobel Lecture: The Pursuit of Peace and Japan in the Nuclear Age,” http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1974/sato-lecture.html (both accessed December 10, 2008). As detailed in a declassified 1969 top secret paper on Japan policy, in a discussion of Okinawa reversion, “Japan now acquiesces in transit by naval vessels armed with nuclear weapons. This right would extend automatically to Okinawa. (This is sensitive and closely held information.)” East Asia Interdepartmental Group, NSSM 5: Japan Policy, undated, 25, attachment to Jeanne W. Davis, NSC Memorandum, April 28, 1969, Top Secret, DNSA, doc. JU01061. See also the authoritative discussion of this topic, and remaining gaps in the declassified record, in Robert A. Wampler, “Japan and the United States: Diplomatic, Security, and Economic Relations, 1960–1976: Essay,” DNSA, <http://nsarchive.chadwyck.com/collections/content/JU/essay.jsp> (accessed December 10, 2008).

⁵⁷ As Reischauer’s memorandum reports, “I explained that our treaty made Japan a somewhat special case, and we had accordingly modified our standing position to extent of being willing say no rpt no nuclear weapons had been ‘introduced’ in Japan or would be without prior consultation. I took occasion to make clear significances of our sticking to word ‘introduce’ as implying placing or installing

possible nuclear armament of any surface vessel (“neither confirm nor deny”) and promises to “faithfully observe treaty commitments to Japan”—Satō’s three principles were in effect a doctrine of implausible deniability, sufficing nonetheless to deflect direct accusations of violation from the arrival of any particular ship—even a fully provisioned aircraft carrier heading for a combat station in proximity to Vietnam.⁵⁸

Such careful parsing of words was capable of backfiring spectacularly, particularly when challenged. With the imminent arrival of the *Enterprise*, opposition parties in the Diet questioned the government closely; in response, Foreign Minister Miki Takeo flatly denied that the *Enterprise* was equipped with nuclear weapons—much to the concern of Special Assistant for National Security Affairs Walt Rostow.⁵⁹ The embassy recognized the gravity of the situation and issued secret instructions to Rear Admiral Horace Epes, Jr., and Captain Kent Lee of the *Enterprise* on how to handle the upcoming arrival press conference with “the utmost care”—to expect loaded questions that might make the standard “neither confirm nor deny” response damaging, and to instruct sailors, if pressed, to state, “I don’t know anything about nuclear weapons.”⁶⁰ The ambassador would fly to the *Enterprise* immediately before its arrival in port to elaborate these instructions and to coordinate the on-ship conference that day with members of the Japanese press and Diet; press would be managed through a Command Information Bureau established at the naval base Fleet Activities Sasebo on January 16.⁶¹

on Japanese soil, and our previous assumption that Japanese had been intending [to] achieve same effect by their use of word ‘*mochikomu*.’ Ohira then remarked that under this interpretation ‘introduce’ would not rpt would not apply to hypothetical case of nuclears [*sic*] on vessel in Japanese waters or port, and I agreed. He then said that while Japanese had not rpt not in past used *mochikomu* with consciousness of this restricted sense, they would do so in future . . . he agreed that henceforth he and others in [the Japanese government] would follow line of asserting that they have full trust in our assurances that we will live up to treaty; they would continue to use word ‘*mochikomu*’ for ‘introduce’ but would henceforth understand by it what we mean when we say ‘introduce.’” Ambassador Reischauer to Secretary of State, Cable 2335, April 4, 1963, Section One of Two, 2, and Section Two of Two, 1, Secret, Distribution to Secretary of State, Eyes Only, DNSA, doc. JU00223. The document references the (still-)classified record of discussions during the Anpo negotiations on January 6, 1960. See also Telegram 1282 to Tokyo, November 10, 1964, quoted in *FRUS, 1964–1968*, vol. XXIX, pt. 2: *Japan* (Washington, D.C., 2006), 46 n. 5 on standard responses. The need to preserve the secrecy of such arrangements by avoiding a written record or dissemination to all but a few key individuals perhaps explains how easily misunderstandings could occur—whether the one recorded above concerning American assumptions about the Japanese government’s statements on *mochikomu*, or more serious ones such as Miki’s (see below).

⁵⁸ The secret agreements concluded *as part of the treaty* enabled this to be a truthful statement. This practice, too, is explicitly discussed in Ambassador Reischauer to State, Cable 2335.

⁵⁹ House of Representatives, Special Committee on the Okinawan Problem, *Kokkaikaigiroku*, 57-shūgiin-okinawamondai nado ni kansuru tokubetsu iinkai-4 gō, December 22, 1968. Rostow called these affirmative statements “the most serious element in the *Enterprise* visit,” even before he learned that Miki and others were not aware of the Reischauer-Ohira arrangements—and had made even broader categorical statements at odds with actual practice. Memorandum for the President, Visits of Nuclear Ships to Japan, January 26, 1968, Secret, Sanitized, DNSA, doc. JU00882 (the paragraph that likely discusses the reason why such statements are problematic is deleted in the released copy); Telegram 005074, Ambassador Johnson to Secretary of State, January 26, 1968, Top Secret, No Distribution, Sanitized, DNSA, doc. JU00883.

⁶⁰ Ambassador Johnson to Department of State, January 16, 1968, CF 1967–1969, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0310; Telegram 04686, “*Enterprise* Visit: Nuclear Weapons Aspect,” Embassy to USS *Enterprise*, January 16, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 1–5, Secret, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 019–020.

⁶¹ Command History, 1968, U.S. Fleet Activities, Sasebo, Japan, Annex J: Public Affairs Office, in

In this situation, the embassy was particularly concerned about the possible role of the then-small anti-war Citizens' Federation, Beheiren, which had recently acquired a larger public profile. Its 300-person march on October 7, 1967, had been the first in years permitted by the Tokyo Public Safety Commission to take a route past the American embassy. Beheiren was granted such permission "because [the] group was small and had a history of orderly demonstrations," although Chairman Oda Makoto had to threaten suit to compel this action. In the intensified atmosphere surrounding the First Haneda Incident, the march attracted "more than usual publicity."⁶² In the context of the upcoming *Enterprise* visit, publicity about Beheiren's announcement the following month of the spectacular defection of four sailors from the aircraft carrier USS *Intrepid* caused real concern at the embassy over the possibility of a "fluke." "If even one American navy 'defector' fell into clutches of Beheiren (anti-Viet peace group) [*sic*] and started sounding off about presence [of] nuclear weapons on *Enterprise*, a situation would be created that, depending on its exploitation by opposition, could do considerable harm."⁶³ Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson reported that Prime Minister Satō shared these concerns.⁶⁴ In the absence of a "fluke," however, both expected the visit to be a success—violence by "a very small handful of extremist students who enjoy no substantial support" would be deplored in the press, while the visit itself would deepen and strengthen U.S.-Japanese relations.⁶⁵ Nonetheless, thousands of riot police were mobilized from all over Japan, while police closely surveilled the specific actions and movements of student leaders and notable members of Beheiren as they converged upon Sasebo.⁶⁶

folder Sasebo, Japan Fleet Activities CH. 1968, Box 1558, U.S. Navy Operational Archives, Washington, D.C., Confidential, unpaginated. The ambassador was accompanied by a delegation of some twenty members of the Foreign Office, Diet, LDP, and Defense Agency, in a show of trust and welcome. USS *Enterprise* Narrative Command History 1968, 1, and Historical Diary Information Chronology of Events 1968, 1, both enclosures to CO USS *Enterprise* to Chief of Naval Operations, OPNAV Report 5750-1, July 1, 1969, Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C.; Telegram 191926Z, USNIS Sasebo to USNIS Japan, January 19, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 2, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0362–0365.

⁶² Telegram 02379, "Demonstration in Front of Chancery October 7," October 9, 1967, CF 1967–1969, Pol 23-8 Japan, Unclassified, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 10, 0230–0231. Attention may also have been drawn to the demonstration thanks to the August 31 torching of several cars in the embassy compound when a Molotov cocktail was thrown by an unknown young attacker.

⁶³ Telegram 4763, "Enterprise Visit to Sasebo," January 17, 1968, 3, Secret, DNSA, doc. JU00876. The other "fluke" possibility mentioned was the generation of a "'martyr,' especially in a fight involving Americans"; *ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 1, 4.

⁶⁶ For example, details of movements, plans for force and for a "Third Haneda Incident," numbers of activists by university, and key leaders were communicated to navy investigators by the Japanese government, as reported in Telegram 020939Z, U.S. Naval Investigative Service Sasebo, January 1, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 2–3, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0272–0274. Police and the U.S. Naval Investigative Service (USNIS) also monitored the movements of alleged Chinese and Soviet agents to the area, without finding any direct connections to protest. Oda Makoto and Yoshikawa Yūichi of Beheiren and Iwanami Publishing's Yamaguchi Kazunobu (connected to reports on the desertions) are among those named specifically in surveillance of activists arriving in Sasebo. According to USNIS, two police sergeants from the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Board "were assigned to Sasebo specifically to work on Beheiren and related defector activities"; USNIS maintained close contact with them. USNIS took particular note of suspected Beheiren members' participation in Sanpa and JCP events, and their connections with journalists. Their pamphlets, which encouraged all levels of resistance from letter-writing and token walkouts to desertion and filing for conscientious objector status, were read closely. Telegram 191744Z, USNIS Sasebo to USNIS Japan, January 19, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7

The visit of the *Enterprise* had originally been intended to alleviate, rather than exacerbate, tensions over such visits. Japan's perceived "nuclear allergy"—the curious aversion to nuclear weapons of the sole country ever to experience a wartime nuclear attack—had been the subject of longstanding debate in official and popular circles in both the United States and Japan. The two governments had together embarked on an attempt at regularized therapy through the introduction of nuclear-powered vessels, beginning with a series of SSN visits that commenced in 1964.⁶⁷ True to the therapeutic plan, protests had declined markedly in intensity since then, with the most recent—the June 1967 visit of the nuclear submarine USS *Barb* to Yokosuka Naval Base—producing the smallest protest to date.⁶⁸ According to an embassy report, "Opposition was able to mount only two significant demonstrations—2000 [participants] June 20 and approximately 5000 on June 25. Both demos orderly and with significant decline in student participation . . . Although we have not reached point where Yokosuka visits can be considered 'routine' emb[assy] believes significant progress was made in lessening public concern in SSN's."⁶⁹ Even the typically most radical of the activist groups, the anti-JCP Zengakuren students, seemed to be losing steam. The U.S. Naval Investigative Service report commented on the subdued nature and "relative ineffectiveness" of some 720 "Mainstream" or anti-JCP Zengakuren demonstrators against the USS *Barb*'s visit: "During previous anti-SSN demonstrations, 720 of these youths could create far more public mayhem than they did during this protest." Here, however, they merely "staged snake dancing tactics" for some thirty minutes, then headed for the main gate, at which point Japanese police split them into small and easily managed groups "without difficulty"—and without attracting notable media interest.⁷⁰

Anticipating that the return of Okinawa would require continued nuclear basing

Japan-US, 3, Secret, NoFORN [No Release to Foreign Nationals], in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0353–0355; Telegrams 201523Z and 201552Z, USNIS Sasebo to USNIS Japan, "Defector Siterep Five," CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 1–5, Secret, NoFORN, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0366–0372.

⁶⁷ Visits to Okinawa were already in progress, and in fact the first of these SSNs, the USS *Seadragon*, arrived from Naha.

⁶⁸ The Yokosuka Naval Base was located in Tokyo Bay, south of Yokohama, in Kanagawa Prefecture. Although visits to Yokosuka by SSNs were not yet completely casual affairs, the U.S. embassy had reported declining participation and media interest in rallies during the three prior SSN visits (the USS *Snook* in May–June 1966, the USS *Seadragon* in September 1966, and the USS *Sculpin* in March 1967), and coupled with "little, if any, nation-wide interest" in the events, had thus anticipated "no political problems in connection with visit." Telegram 10948, Ambassador Johnson to Department of State, July 13, 1967, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, Secret, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0005; the report of "little, if any, nation-wide interest" addressed the March visit of the *Sculpin*, a Skipjack class submarine like the USS *Scorpion*, which, when lost in May 1968, sank with two nuclear torpedoes in its armament. Telegram 5790, USNIS to Secretary of State, March 6, 1967, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 2, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0097–0098. The Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force took advantage of the atmosphere to hold a forty-three-ship fleet review in Ise Bay on November 5, 1967, the largest since World War II; the press dubbed it a "success," although some observers complained that the ships were small by comparison with those of the wartime navy. Airgram, American Counsel Nagoya to Department of State, "Maritime Self-Defense Force Holds Fleet Review in Ise Bay," November 13, 1967, 1, Limited Official Use, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 2, 0284–0285.

⁶⁹ Telegram 025536, Ambassador Johnson to Department of State, June 29, 1967, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0008.

⁷⁰ Telegram 211112, USNIS Japan, "SSN Visit Yokosuka—Siterep Three," June 25, 1967, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 2, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0012–0013. This account perhaps underplays the vigor with which police routinely managed protests of this sort.

rights, American and Japanese officials hoped that the visit of the *Enterprise* to Sasebo—in Nagasaki Prefecture—could capitalize on and even perhaps encourage these positive results in nuclear desensitization therapy, “conditioning the Japanese to military nuclear matters.”⁷¹ Nonetheless, the arrival of the massive and probably nuclear-armed *Enterprise* in the midst of a hotly debated controversy over the possible non-nuclear future of a reverted Okinawa posed a “calculated risk.”⁷² In fact, the government’s determination to host the visit in the face of vigorous opposition energized public speculation about the exact reason for the visit, made all the more curious by official statements on the need for supplies, rest, and recreation for a ship less than two weeks out of port.⁷³ In the context of the simultaneous push by Satō to heighten domestic appreciation for defense issues, many read the visit as an attempt to overcome the “nuclear allergy,” thus throwing the issue into high relief.⁷⁴

The *Enterprise* would arrive at Sasebo from the United States, en route to Yankee Station in the Tonkin Gulf, where it would recommence military operations against North Vietnam—despite public assurances by Foreign Minister Miki in the Diet on December 21 that the carrier would not directly proceed to combat operations (since that would amount to using Japan as a base for its operational activities and infringe upon the prior consultation requirements of the Security Treaty).⁷⁵ Even within this haze of denials, the warship could not avoid being seen as the embodiment of all pressing military issues: a cartoon in the *Nagasaki Shinbun* on January 19, the day of the *Enterprise*’s arrival, featured three “opposition party” members standing atop a tiny Japan holding a “Smash the Anpo System” sign, while the *Enterprise* and its escorts bear down on them, trailing smoke inscribed with the words “Okinawa Problem” and “Anpo Problem.”⁷⁶

⁷¹ Action Memorandum, President’s Question about Visit of Nuclear Carrier Enterprise to Sasebo, Japan, Philip J. Farley and Samuel D. Berger to Undersecretary of State Nicholas Katzenbach, January 22, 1968, 2, Secret, DNSA, doc. JU00877. The *Enterprise*, then the world’s largest aircraft carrier, displaced 75,700 tons and carried 70 to 100 aircraft and a crew of 4,674. The *Enterprise* group would also include a second NPSS, the recently assigned cruiser USS *Truxtun*, of 8,200 tons displacement and with a crew of 496.

⁷² Telegram 4658, “NPSS Visit Sasebo,” Ambassador Johnson to Secretary of State, January 12, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 2, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0403–0406; Telegram 4763, 3. Satō’s contemporaneous push to increase “defense consciousness” had also contributed to the heightened prominence of the visit. Ibid.

⁷³ *Enterprise* left home port in Alameda on January 3, and Pearl Harbor on January 9. Historical Diary Information Chronology of Events 1968, 1.

⁷⁴ Telegram 4763, 4–5; see, for example, *Nagasaki Shinbun*, January 19, 1968, 4.

⁷⁵ USS Enterprise Narrative Command History 1968, 1–2. The *Enterprise* was delayed by the *Pueblo* crisis but would attack Hanoi again on February 23. Although the *Enterprise* had been in operation against North Vietnam in 1967, the visit was specifically arranged by both the American and Japanese governments to catch the ship coming from the United States—instead of the Tonkin Gulf—to minimize connections to the Vietnam War. Action Memorandum, President’s Question about visit of Nuclear Carrier Enterprise to Sasebo, Japan, 2–3. The Diet exchange is recorded in House of Representatives, Budget Committee Session, *Kokkaikaigiroku*, 57-shū-yosan iinkai-6 gō, December 21, 1967. Here, too, Miki and Satō both state that the introduction [*mochikomu*] of nuclear weapons would require prior consultation, or else violate the treaty. Miki repeats this the next day; see House of Representatives, Special Committee on the Okinawan Problem, *Kokkaikaigiroku*, 57-shūgiin-okinawamondai nado ni kansuru tokubetsu iinkai-4 gō, December 22, 1967.

⁷⁶ *Nagasaki Shinbun*, January 19, 1968, 4. The cartoon appears next to the article “Okinawa and Anpo Entangled, Spurred by ‘Curing the Allergy.’”

FOR THE ACTIVIST STUDENTS, THE *ENTERPRISE* VISIT represented yet another showdown with the state over its attempt to drag Japan further into the Vietnam conflict. Therefore they would oppose it with physical force. Meeting at Hosei University on December 17 and 18, the Mainstream Zengakuren national conference proclaimed the various groups' intent to make the *Enterprise* visit to Sasebo Port in January into "the Third Haneda."⁷⁷ Intense media interest in the events at Sasebo was predicated precisely upon the possibility of a repeat of events at Haneda: retrospectively, the embassy reflected that, despite media disavowals of the students' violent tactics, the "media interest in the possibility of another violent clash at Sasebo led to extraordinarily detailed reporting of the strategies and counter-strategies of both police and students."⁷⁸ Thus, while the student violence fell far short of achieving activists' goal of sparking a general mass insurrection, it brought attention back to what had been a waning issue for both media and other protest groups, creating the conditions for their voices to initiate a public debate over state force and the connections between internal suppression and support for war in Asia.

On January 15, police in Tokyo intercepted and skirmished with a number of Sanpa students on their way from Hosei University to board trains for Sasebo, arresting 131 under the Assembly in Possession of Dangerous Weapons Law [*Kyō-kijunbishūgōzai*], previously employed only against rightist mobsters; another 108 were similarly arrested on January 18 during a march toward the prime minister's office.⁷⁹ This legal tactic was one of several coordinated enhancements of police authority for the *Enterprise* visit, including the possible application of the Anti-Subversive Activities Law [*Hakaikatsudōbōshihō*], a matter under consideration since the First Haneda Incident.⁸⁰ The government's sense of general public disapproval

⁷⁷ "Undissuaded by the first and second Haneda, Japan's ruling class has launched a grand provocation in bringing the *Enterprise*—and thus a portion of the Vietnam War—to this port of call. They are once again attempting to drag the people into the war . . . We shall realize our proclaimed Third Haneda at Sasebo!" *Zenshin*, December 25, 1967, 1. The photo of the meeting shows the speakers below a banner proclaiming the slogan "Make Sasebo into a Third Haneda!" Mainstream Zengakuren is rendered as "Zengakuren shuryū-ha" in their December 18 announcement; *ibid.*

⁷⁸ Airgram A-1098, "The Enterprise Visit," February 23, 1968, 6, Secret, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0318–0334.

⁷⁹ Demonstrations against the visit of the *Enterprise* were not confined to Sasebo, or even Kyushu. In Kansai, the Kobe and Osaka offices of the Consulate General were particularly targeted by demonstrations that ranged across six prefectures; police counted thirty-nine rallies and sixty-one demonstrations (with 18,661 and 18,233 participants respectively) between January 7 and January 23. Airgram A-32, Consul General Stegmaier (Kobe-Osaka) to American Embassy Tokyo, January 26, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 1, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0292–0297. Student actions were more frequent, with the Mainstream groups accounting for thirteen of the rallies and twenty-four of the demonstrations. *Ibid.*, Attachment 1, Tabulations of Mass Activities, 1. JCP actions were largely separate from JSP and affiliated union actions. Several other "skirmishes" occurred in Tokyo during the visit, including a confrontation in front of the American embassy on January 20 between riot police and around 100 students, as well as an "embarrassing" surprise occupation of the ground floors of the Japanese Foreign Office by some 80 students (until they were extracted by police). The same day, Hansen held a rally; turnout exceeded 10,000. Airgram A-1098, 4, 8. Their January 17 rally in Hibiya Park had drawn 7,600, according to USNIS; the JSP claimed 12,000. Telegram 182019Z, USNIS Sasebo to USNIS Japan, January 18, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 3, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0341–0345; Takami, *Hansen seinen iinkai*, 67.

⁸⁰ Telegram 161507Z, USNIS Sasebo to USNIS Japan, January 16, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 4, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0302–0306; Telegram 191926Z, 3; *Asahi Shinbun*, January 17, 1968, 9, notes that such charges were a first in the history of student activism. The second group was also indicted under the Interference with Official Duties Act; as USNIS's report notes, the group included two women. The *Mainichi Shinbun* had declared its approval should authorities apply

of student violence prompted it to grant the police latitude to take an even harsher stance against the students—although what exactly had been green-lighted in Sasebo would in retrospect become a matter of some debate.⁸¹

A wide variety of demonstrators converged upon Sasebo in mid-January, along with thousands of riot police from all over Japan. Pro-Security Treaty and pro-visit demonstrators were mobilized by the ruling LDP, much as at Haneda in November; supporters also included rightists such as Akao Satoshi (a.k.a. Akao Bin) and his Great Japan Patriotic Party [Dai nippon aikokutō], who commenced speechmaking and leafleting on January 15.⁸² Business groups and local politicians also greeted the *Enterprise*, whose visit was expected to bring an additional \$2.2 million to the local economy, which was already closely bound to the U.S. naval base and ship visits. They had been campaigning for the visit for two years, and were engaged in an extensive pro-visit, pro-Security Treaty “propaganda campaign” in an attempt to counter opposition before and during the visit.⁸³

The *Enterprise* had been delayed by a day; in consequence, many protest efforts peaked on January 18, the day before its arrival.⁸⁴ The joint JSP-JCP-Sōhyō Grand Rally for Opposing American Aggression in Vietnam, for Petitioning for the Immediate Return of Okinawa to Japan, and for the Obstruction of Port Calls by NPSS was set for 12:30 P.M. at the Sasebo City Municipal Baseball Stadium, and drew some 27,000 participants—the largest demonstration in the area in half a decade, and four times the size of the largest anti-SSN demonstration in 1964.⁸⁵ Kōmeitō (the Clean Government Party), affiliated with the Buddhist organization Sōka Gakkai, held multiple anti-visit rallies, attended by some 20,000 members; the January 15 pre-visit

the Assembly in Possession of Dangerous Weapons Law to helmeted students brandishing lengths of timber. *Mainichi Shinbun*, January 17, 1968, 5. Calls in the Diet for its application continued with the Second Haneda Incident, but investigations into its application had still not been concluded by the time of the *Enterprise* visit. See House of Representatives Accounts Settlement Committee, Closed Session, *Kokkaikaigiroku*, 56-shū-kessan iinkai-hei 6 gō, November 13, 1967; Cabinet Committee Meeting, *Kokkaikaigiroku*, 56-shū-naikaku iinkai—1 gō, January 18, 1968.

⁸¹ Telegram 4763, 2; Airgram A-1098, 0318–0334.

⁸² Rabidly anti-communist, with a long and notorious history, the party was linked with the assassination of JSP chairman Asanuma Inejirō in 1960 (carried out by a young “ex-member”). Akao had previously led fights against leftist protesters in Sasebo during an SSN visit. Scattered rightist attacks occurred during the *Enterprise* visit as well. See Telegram 171945Z, USNIS Sasebo to USNIS Japan, January 17, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 3, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0335–0337.

⁸³ Approximately 10 percent of the local economy derived directly from the base and visits; in many ways, the establishment of the base in 1946 continued the previous economic links to the imperial navy, whose base here since the late nineteenth century had come to employ some 60,000 in Sasebo during World War II. In 1966, U.S. military expenditures in Sasebo were \$23.6 million, which exceeded the entire city budget of \$18 million. The Chamber of Commerce, the Sasebo Citizens’ Council for Protecting the Security Treaty, and other groups mounted an extensive “propaganda campaign” to promote the visit and to counteract leftist arguments with leaflets, pro-visit demonstrations, a lecture series, and conservative governmental and legislative visits. Airgram A-5, “Sasebo Prepares for the Enterprise,” January 11, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 1–3, 5, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0391–0395. LDP propaganda in the area was coordinated by Diet members Sakamoto Misoji and Satō Fumio. Telegram Fukuoka 30, “Impact of Enterprise Visit,” January 22, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 4, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0395–0398.

⁸⁴ Airgram A-5, 4.

⁸⁵ Airgram A-1098, 7. Nonetheless, this and other demonstrations organized by the JSP, JCP, and Sōhyō fell short of their organizing goals, and were often hampered by police-student clashes (e.g., planned parade routes to the base were interrupted). Telegram Fukuoka 30, 3.

rally by the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) and its allied union, Dōmei, mobilized 3,500.⁸⁶ Police estimated some 46,000 total demonstrators in Sasebo.⁸⁷

Despite these impressive turnouts, the hundreds of reporters, photographers, and television crewmembers on hand in Sasebo were there principally to record the expected dramatic student-police clashes, which consequently received the lion's share of the publicity.⁸⁸ Following weeks of anticipatory press and television reporting, the spectacle did not disappoint those expecting high drama and eye-catching news. According to the embassy's report, on January 17,

as hundreds of reporters and cameramen looked on, about 375 plastic-helmeted, stove-carrying and rock-throwing [Sanpa] students charged about four times as many riot policemen at a bridge directly in front of the US naval base. After taking the first student thrust, the police responded with their own billyclub charge, supported by tear gas and water cannons. The peak of the clash coincided perfectly with the noon television news and millions of television viewers were permitted to see the full force of the police counteroffensive by direct television relay.⁸⁹

The police also hurled concussion grenades and spiked the water cannons with eye irritant—but it was their generous use of tear gas, and above all the “liberal use of police clubs,” that most excited commentary.⁹⁰ Again, thanks to the timing, many witnessed the events nearly live, and barely edited, through continuing television coverage.⁹¹

As events unfolded, the neat boundaries between participants and observers soon collapsed in a way that would prompt revisions in the press and popular attitudes. Several correspondents on the scene subsequently testified about state violence after experiencing it firsthand. Five members of the press, including a correspondent from the *Asahi Shinbun*, were vigorously beaten by riot police, with no regard for their press armbands or their cries of protest.⁹² The report in the evening edition of the

⁸⁶ Telegram 171945Z, 2. The presence of Kōmeitō in the protests occasioned commentary (e.g., *Asahi Shinbun*, January 17, 1968, evening ed., 1) and governmental concern, although there appeared to be some overlap between their protests and standard election rallies already planned for the area.

⁸⁷ Airgram A-1098, 7. The math on the protesters' numbers appears a bit suspect. There were to be 5,500 police on hand to greet the expected 2,000–3,000 students, according to estimates on January 11; this was revised to 5,800 on January 12. Telegram 4596, Ambassador Johnson to CINCPAC, January 11, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 1, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0389–0390; Telegram 4658, 3.

⁸⁸ Airgram A-1098, 8. JCP, JSP, and Sōhyō protests in Tokyo were similarly ignored, even in the local papers, in favor of coverage of student-police confrontations, despite mounting “what were in fact the most impressive Tokyo demonstrations in some time.” Ibid.

⁸⁹ Airgram A-1098, 6. USNIS Sasebo estimated 720 students. Telegram 171607Z, USNIS Sasebo to USNIS Japan, January 17, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 2, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0338–0339. Efforts to deny stones to the students by paving the railway roadbed by the base were apparently of limited success. Airgram A-5, 3.

⁹⁰ Telegram Fukuoka 30, 2; Telegram 200311Z, USNIS Sasebo to USNIS Japan, January 19, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 2, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0356–0358; Telegram 171607Z, 2.

⁹¹ JSP Diet member Ōide Jun raised the matter in the Cabinet Committee meeting the next day. Discussing the out-of-control police, he mentions having watched a televised scene that very morning in which a policeman clubbed a cringing, gassed, unmoving student, all the while ignoring a supervisor's baton taps on his police helmet and shouts to stop. Cabinet Committee Meeting, *Kokkaikaigiroku*, 56-shū-naikaku iinkai-1 gō, January 18, 1968.

⁹² The *Asahi Shinbun*'s evening edition reported their correspondent's beating as part of their front-page article on the day's events, along with the hospital's statement that he would require two weeks of medical care for his lacerations; his account appears inside (see below). *Asahi Shinbun*, January 17,

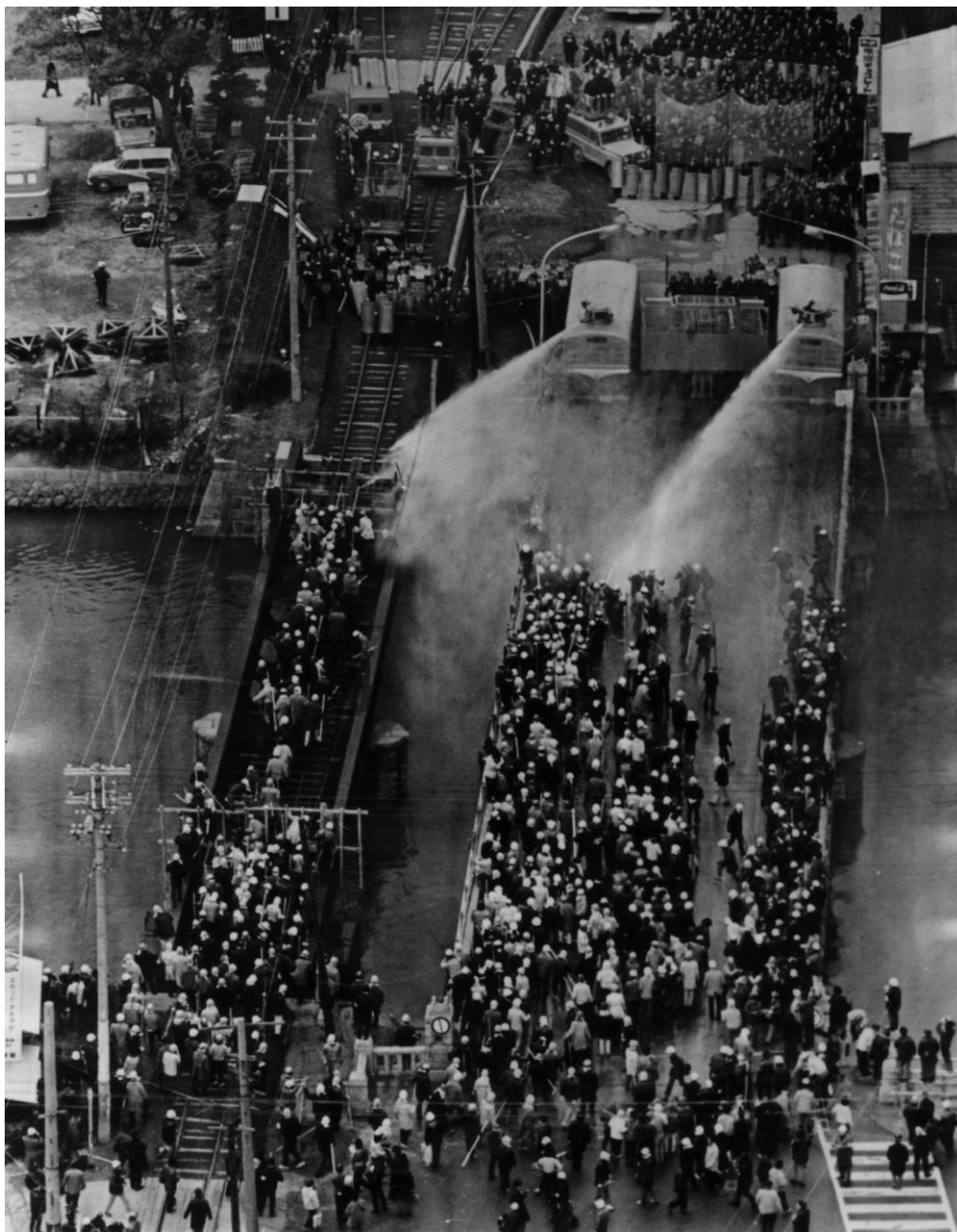


FIGURE 4: Students battle massed riot police and water cannons on Hirasebashi Bridge adjacent to U.S. Fleet Activities, Sasebo, January 17, 1968. Photo courtesy of the *Asahi Shimbun*.

Asahi on January 17 presented a firsthand account of a rather one-sided conflict, and marked a real turnaround in the casting of the dramatis personae. Beginning with

1968, evening ed., 1, 9. The figure of five comes from the announced Sasebo police figures; see *Nagasaki Shinbun*, January 18, 1968, 1.



FIGURE 5: Students are hemmed in and assaulted by riot police outside the Sasebo Citizens' Hospital while staff watch from the windows, January 17, 1968. Photo courtesy of the *Asahi Shimbun*.

a front-page photo of a police pincer attack overrunning the grounds of the hospital where the correspondent was beaten, the photographs sympathetically portray victims of police excess. (See Figure 5.) An image of an arrested student, his head bathed in blood, is featured above an image from the Sasebo Citizens' Hospital [Sasebo Shimin Byōin], where an activist student and a journalist sit side by side receiving care from the white-attired young nurses. (See Figure 6.) Other images show the massed protesters on Hirasebashi Bridge under fire from water cannon blasts, and a mass of perhaps nine riot police clubbing a downed student on the hospital grounds.

The paper's narrative of events echoes the photographs with depictions of solidarity, determination, and sympathy. The account begins with the students' evasion of the police at the station via the railway tracks; they make their way to Hirasebashi Bridge to face water cannons and tear gas in an attempt to cross to the base. They shout their determination, urging each other forward against the water blasts and the barricades, in a visual and auditory image of brave struggle. "Citizens" observe the events with contorted faces, crowding the street near the bridge and watching from open windows. Next, in a brief scene inside the nearby Sasebo Citizens' Hospital, a female student receives treatment, while others pass lemons to arriving male students. The stricken students press the lemons to their gassed eyes, then pick up their staves and rejoin the fight—a gendered image of care and heroism.⁹³ Mean-

⁹³ Lemons are typically squeezed into bandanas worn over the face to provide brief protection from tear gas.



FIGURE 6: Nurses at the Sasebo Citizens' Hospital treat students and press afflicted by tear gas exposure, January 17, 1968. Photo courtesy of the *Asahi Shimbun*.

while, the tear gas infiltrates the hospital, and numerous members of the staff and patients soon require treatment—the first point at which “ordinary citizens” become victims of the police action.⁹⁴

As the line of students collapses under the gas assault and retreats from the bridge, a leader attempts to rally them in front of the hospital under a banner proclaiming “Freedom for the People of Vietnam.” With this, the assault by riot police begins. Whereas descriptions of actions at Haneda often reduced the students’ voices to animalistic noises, here it is the riot police who are portrayed either as a silent, implacable menace or as violent attackers screaming meaningless epithets. They fall on the retreating students, who offer no resistance, display white handkerchiefs, and shout “Stop it!” as they are brutally clubbed by bellowing riot police. A citizen’s brave intervention marks the first of many recorded acts of citizen heroism—and in effect, the taking of sides.⁹⁵ As if to highlight the author’s changing perceptions, the next subsection is entitled “You’re Going Too Far! Police Actions Criticized by Citizens.” Witnessing police dragging injured students from the Sasebo Citizens’ Hospital to inflict further group beatings, two “middle-aged gentlemen” step between the students and the pursuing riot police, “shouting ‘No more mayhem and *violence* [*bōryoku*]!’ and ‘What on earth are you doing?!’”⁹⁶

⁹⁴ *Asahi Shinbun*, January 17, 1968, evening ed., 9.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*; emphasis added. Literally “No wielding of violence by riot police!” [*kidōtai wa bōryoku o furū na*]. A final note to the article adds that police reports of thirty-two officers injured in a confrontation on January 16 at the Hakata train station in Fukuoka with Sanpa members en route had been revised later that day to four—all minor.

In “No Police Warning; Riot Police Beat Citizens As Well,” the injured *Asahi* correspondent reports how riot police clubbed him and others on the hospital grounds.⁹⁷ “It was completely out of the blue,” he begins, focusing on the failure by police to issue standard warnings of intervention or arrest procedures that might have allowed citizens to retreat to safety. Without these cautions, observers had no idea what was taking place until it was too late. Instead, a black wave of riot police appeared, and citizens, unable to flee the scene, flooded into the hospital:

Those citizens last to run are brought down. Rising to flee, they are battered again. Ordinary citizens [*ippanshimin*] without helmets or lengths of timber, they cringe, shielding their heads with both hands. They are beaten, kicked with boots. With no way to escape, they press against the wall of the hospital; again and again they receive heavy blows. Truncheon blows fall upon even the motionless and cowering. I shouted “I’m an *Asahi* reporter!” Whether or not they heard, the rain of blows did not abate. My protective helmet flew off. At that point, I thought I’d likely die; I recall as many as four or five blows to my scalp. Diving through the legs of a riot policeman, I attempted to escape, but was again beaten and kicked.⁹⁸

Having finally escaped to the hospital, the reporter is treated in what looks like a wartime triage full of injured students. His reporter’s armband and pants drip with blood.⁹⁹

The *Asahi*’s reporting of January 17 not only starkly records state violence, it also portrays student activists sympathetically; meanwhile, it depicts citizen victimization by, and outrage against, the illegitimate violence [*bōryoku*] of the police. Although discussion in the *Asahi Shinbun* during the following days would shift back to a criticism of student violence, it would also note a shift in local public opinion against the police and government.¹⁰⁰ The *Mainichi Shinbun* similarly featured heroic, angry citizens, “bystanders” transformed from spectators into actors: “From among the watching citizens, angry calls of ‘That’s enough, stop it!’ fly. Citizens who until now have been mere gawkers [*yajjuma*] find courage and, unable to bear it any longer, step in among the police, calling out ‘That’s quite enough!’”¹⁰¹ The next day’s report included text and a photo of an injured fifty-eight-year-old postal employee described as having been intentionally beaten by police, next to a report titled “Over-excited Truncheons: Sasebo.”¹⁰² While still decrying student violence, the paper recognized the support and sympathy of “citizens,” commending their interventions between the combatants and decrying instances of their victimization by police.¹⁰³

Accounts of police violence on January 17 in the local *Nagasaki Shinbun* paralleled the shifting perspective of the national newspapers, and included the paper’s

⁹⁷ *Asahi Shinbun*, January 17, 1968, evening ed., 9.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.* Reporters wore helmets similar to police helmets—although typically emblazoned with press identifications. The next day, many wore gas masks as well.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* Such echoes of wartime scenes—and of imperial policing—troubled many observers. See Airgram A-309, “The Japanese Student Protest Movement,” American Embassy Tokyo to Department of State, April 10, 1969, 19, Limited Official Use, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 3, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 10, 0248–0278.

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, *Asahi Shinbun*, January 23, 1968, 2, 14.

¹⁰¹ *Mainichi Shinbun*, January 17, 1968, evening ed., 9.

¹⁰² *Mainichi Shinbun*, January 18, 1968, 15.

¹⁰³ *Mainichi Shinbun*, January 22, 1968, 15. See also *ibid.*, January 20, 1968, 2. By contrast, the *Yomiuri Shinbun* remains solidly critical of the students, and silent on both police excesses and the sympathy of onlookers; e.g., January 18, 1968, 15.



FIGURE 7: Massed riot police beat two fallen demonstrators in Sasebo, January 17, 1968. Photo courtesy of the *Asahi Shimbun*.

very first published statements of opposition to the *Enterprise* visit. As in the case of the *Asahi Journal's* reporting of October 21, police malfeasance was indexed by an attack on female demonstrators. "During the police action against the anti-war demonstration the other day, riot police first took aim at the female students. 'Ladies first' is perhaps fundamental to some other nations' character, but it is an import not to be borne in this form. Student violence is of course hard to excuse. It is equally important to make certain that the government and law enforcement does not similarly run riot."¹⁰⁴ Extensive coverage the following day described mass beatings of downed students with the meter-long truncheons, and of a female student clubbed down with a police duralumin shield. As the police pound the fallen students, an onlooker shouts his astonishment that they continue to beat the unresisting.¹⁰⁵

Even before the JSP addressed police misconduct in session at the Diet, Chief Cabinet Secretary Kimura Toshio publicly announced an investigation into the "circumstances leading to injuries of news correspondents and bystanders," saying that Sasebo police "had been instructed to pay courtesy calls on citizens who were injured."¹⁰⁶ The mayor of Sasebo issued a public apology to the injured bystanders and gassed hospital patients; he had been a strong advocate for the visit, but was shaken by the unfolding events. Chief of Police Kitaori Atsunobu declared that his forces would subsequently minimize the use of tear gas bombs, and would not beat unresisting students; he had heard reports that dozens of policemen engaged in the latter practice. His comments suggested that the beatings of reporters and prone demonstrators were individual acts of excess, and would be responded to with individual admonishments. If these limited admissions were made in the hopes of deflecting the question of police violence as a systematic and chosen method of dealing with protest, or of detaching such violence from the policies it supported, these hopes proved in vain—at least in the short term.¹⁰⁷

As the protests continued, authorities maintained their concern about Beheiren in the interest of preventing a "fluke." Maritime Safety Bureau vessels kept the group's rented water taxi at a sufficient distance to preclude sailors from reading their placards ("Follow the Intrepid Four," "Stop the Killing," "Love Your Constitution," and "Will Help You. Beheiren").¹⁰⁸ While leafleting and other efforts by

¹⁰⁴ *Nagasaki Shinbun*, January 17, 1968, 1. The paper also reported the JSP's condemnation of police "excesses" [*ikisugi*] and provocations.

¹⁰⁵ *Nagasaki Shinbun*, January 18, 1968, 8. The same page relates the crash of a Lockheed Orion P-3A from Iwakuni Air Force Base; such crashes, and the dangers they posed, would continue to energize anti-Security Treaty and anti-base opposition as they reoccurred throughout 1968. Much of the subsequent reporting of events at Sasebo, like that in the *Asahi*, voiced criticisms of the students' violence, but also continued to include accounts of the numerous citizen voices protesting police excess, and citizens' attempts to protect or aid injured students. See, for example, *Nagasaki Shinbun*, January 18, 1968, 9.

¹⁰⁶ Telegram 182019Z, 2. Some 300 were affected by the tear gas, in addition to those who were directly beaten. Kimura's admissions brought about an angry rebuke by other members of the government, including the transportation minister (and future prime minister), Nakasone Yasuhiro, for the "weak-kneed impression" of his statements that "might even be taken as a change in government policy," occasioning a public reaffirmation of the cabinet's position that NPSS visits would be permitted. Airgram A-1098, 9.

¹⁰⁷ Telegram 182019Z, 2; *Nagasaki Shinbun*, January 18, 1968, 1.

¹⁰⁸ Telegram 211118Z, USNIS Sasebo to Director, USNIS Japan, January 21, 1968, CF 1967-1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 2-3, Secret, NoFORN, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0378-0381. Judging from the site reports, USNIS efforts focused principally on Sanpa- and Beheiren-related groups (such as the

Beheiren members failed to yield any deserters, their waterborne tactics garnered rare news coverage, which was otherwise devoted virtually exclusively to confrontations between Sanpa and the police.¹⁰⁹

On January 19, the day of the *Enterprise*'s arrival, the *Nagasaki Shinbun* reviewed the nineteen visits to Japan by nuclear-powered ships over the previous three years, noting that the visit of the *Enterprise* had awaited a diminishment of concern over nuclear "introduction" [*mochikomi*]. It characterized the purpose of the visit as a "spur" [*hakusha*] toward "curing the allergy," and one thus entangled with Security Treaty and Okinawa issues. This was the first time the paper had broached the question of nuclear safety in conjunction with the visit.¹¹⁰ The same issue gave a detailed report on the events of January 18 in Sasebo: while describing scenes of police-inflicted violence (an unconscious female student, a male with a split brow smeared in blood), it noted the presence of some 10,000 citizen onlookers who reflected a politically transforming populace. Some were heard not merely objecting to police violence, but shouting encouragement and warnings to Sanpa students.¹¹¹ The next day, as the *Enterprise* arrived, the paper recorded a "trembling young housewife" speculating aloud that "although it hadn't crossed my mind with the submarines, isn't such a large ship likely to be piled with terrifying nuclear weapons?" As the violence continued, increasingly numerous onlookers [*yajiuma*] gave aid and encouragement to the students—evidencing the eroding line separating such individuals from activists.¹¹² A U.S. Naval Investigative Service site report on January 21 declared confidently that as a new tactic, "[Sanpa] students masqueraded as ordinary citizens . . . [and] intermingled with the bystanders and threw stones from among the bystanders thus adding to confusion." It noted, however, that "it was obvious to observers that police were significantly hampered in their efforts to control due to the presence of large numbers of bystanders and their attitude."¹¹³ American officials were in close touch with police, who themselves were well placed to monitor crowd attitudes thanks to the intermingled presence of numerous plainclothes officers.¹¹⁴

In a report to the embassy, the American consulate in Fukuoka took note of the perceptual transformations under way:

media coverage of the dramatic scene of students repeatedly attacking massed police lines and vehicles produced a curious shift of attitude among [the] local citizenry. Initial mood of apprehension and annoyance at invasion of troublemaking students replaced by sympathy and

Fukuoka Tenth Day Demonstration Society), perhaps testifying to their assessment of the manageability and unproblematic nature of other forms of protest.

¹⁰⁹ Telegram 221202Z, USNIS Sasebo to USNIS Japan, January 22, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 2, Secret, Noform, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0385–0387.

¹¹⁰ *Nagasaki Shinbun*, January 19, 1968, 4.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 6–7. The report also discusses actions in Tokyo.

¹¹² *Nagasaki Shinbun*, January 20, 1968, 5.

¹¹³ Telegram 211747Z, USNIS Sasebo to USNIS Japan, January 21, 1968, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 3, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0375–0377. The *Asahi Shinbun* reported a few days later that bystanders had themselves engaged in throwing rocks at the police; January 24, 1968, 14.

¹¹⁴ Such officers enabled the arrest of one of the Sanpa leaders. See *Nagasaki Shinbun*, January 19, 1968, 6.



FIGURE 8: Citizens object to riot police tactics in Sasebo, January 21, 1968. Photo courtesy of Kyodo News.

even grudging admiration. [Sanpa] students' fundraising campaign among townspeople reported surprisingly successful in collecting sympathy as well as money.¹¹⁵

This "curious shift," inexplicable within the governing assumptions by which U.S. and Japanese officials viewed these events, required explanation. Conservative Japanese observers advising American officials helpfully supplied one in the form of a patronizing culturalism: the shift was due merely to the "sentimentality of the average Japanese who tends to sympathize with [the] underdog without regard for objective right or wrong." The embassy repeated this conclusion to the equally curious State Department, adding that Japanese had a propensity to indulge students.¹¹⁶ While wishfully attributing these popular changes of heart to native romantic emotionality, the American consul in Fukuoka nonetheless concluded that the "main effect of week's developments [is] likely to be [the] sharpening of public

¹¹⁵ Telegram Fukuoka 30, 3. The students and the riot police were largely not from Sasebo, so both groups were potentially recognizable as outside invaders. Interestingly, an article in the *Nagasaki Shinbun*, "Battery of Fallen Students," notes that the riot police were "an elite chosen from Fukuoka, Yamaguchi, Osaka etc."—immediately before describing how five or six were clubbing and kicking a fallen student in the head and stomach in front of the hospital. *Nagasaki Shinbun*, January 18, 1968, 8.

¹¹⁶ Telegram Fukuoka 30, 3; Airgram A-1098, 6–7. This sentimentalism contrasted with the assessment (by Ambassador Reischauer) in the wake of the first SSN visit to Sasebo in November 1964: the "increasingly mature and sophisticated Japanese public is no longer willing [to] respond willy-nilly to leftist and extremist alarmism and demands for show of mass force and even violence in demonstrating opposition . . . [the] Japanese public simply refused to support such action." Telegram 1724, Ambassador Reischauer to Secretary of State, November 14, 1964, 1, Secret, Sanitized, in *FRUS, 1964–1968*, vol. XXIX, pt. 2: *Japan*, 44–46. Compliance with American wishes (and the wishes of their Japanese clients) signifying maturity, dissent indicating thoughtless sentimentality: a perfect illustration of the conflation of developmentalist social analysis and American strategic objectives.

debate on national defense and Security Treaty issues”—an impression confirmed by a *Nishi Nippon Shinbun* poll of Sasebo residents conducted February 10–12.¹¹⁷ The embassy noted that similar attitude shifts appeared to have taken place not just in Sasebo, but nationwide.¹¹⁸

IN *FIRE ACROSS THE SEA*, AN EVOCATIVE and detailed account of Japanese protest against the Vietnam War, Thomas R. H. Havens argues that “the rumpus at Sasebo brought the demonstrators much sympathy and helped to restore the peaceful image of the antiwar movement. People all over Japan watched the daily coverage on television and were aghast at the ruthlessness of the police against the defenseless protestors . . . This support ebbed when student radicals *began carrying staves* on campus later in 1968, but the antiwar movement itself stayed free of violence for the most part until the early 1970s.”¹¹⁹ Such narratives of promise and declension through subsequent violence are common enough in histories of the 1960s, and Havens’s conclusions here match their typical level of distortion and reductivism. Yet violence during this pivotal period played a much more ambiguous role, in many ways becoming the means of disclosing the incorporation of state violence in official policy, and in so doing, closing the distance between “ordinary citizens” (and “ordinary students”) and political activists.¹²⁰ The heightened attention to the issues highlighted by activist confrontations in turn created the conditions for “nonviolent”

¹¹⁷ Telegram Fukuoka 30, 3; on the newspaper poll, see Airgram A-11, “Nishi Nippon Shimbun’s Survey of Sasebo’s Reaction to Enterprise Visit,” American Consulate Fukuoka to Department of State, March 12, 1968, Limited Official Use, CF 1967–1969, Def 7 Japan-US, 3, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 3, 0276–0301. Reviewing the poll results, the consulate again called the locals “relatively unsophisticated and sentimental.” Despite overwhelming disapproval of student violence (83.5 percent), many had been won over by the students’ “pure feelings” of sincerity; their actions, the embassy nonetheless noted, had “jolted many Sasebo citizens out of their apathy and indifference and sensitized them to the security issue.” The *Nishi Nippon Shinbun* survey revealed other alarming opinion shifts, such as that 70.7 percent of respondents now favored removing the base even if it meant Sasebo’s decline, and 72.9 percent opposed the visits of warships, viewing them as a Japanese contribution to the war in Vietnam; 83.1 percent indicated that reporting on the events “had opened [their] eyes” and prompted them to “pay more attention hereafter to questions of war, peace, domestic and foreign situation.” The *Nishi Nippon Shinbun* editors speculated that the *Enterprise* visit had “transformed the people of Sasebo from mere residents into ‘thinking citizens,’” “moving in the direction” of “complete rejection of the Security Treaty” (1–3).

¹¹⁸ Airgram A-11, 6.

¹¹⁹ Thomas R. H. Havens, *Fire across the Sea: The Vietnam War and Japan, 1965–1975* (Princeton, N.J., 1987), 149–150; emphasis added. Versions of this declension narrative repeat elsewhere in the work. His assertion that the students were unarmed on January 17 is belied by many accounts, as well as by his own photographic illustration of the conflict on Hirasebashi Bridge, in which staves are clearly visible (149). Some participating groups did, however, attempt unarmed combat, a matter occasioning debate among the students. See the accounts by Kaihō faction members excoriating Chūkaku’s January 19 weaponless combat—but also Chūkaku’s opportunistic last-minute stave-waving on January 21: *Zenshin*, February 1, 1968, 2.

¹²⁰ For criticisms of reductive declension arguments elsewhere, see, for example, Robert Cohen (on the invidious comparisons between the earlier Berkeley Free Speech Movement and Columbia University in 1968), “The Many Meanings of the FSM,” in Robert Cohen and Reginald E. Zelnik, eds., *The Free Speech Movement: Reflections on Berkeley in the 1960s* (Berkeley, Calif., 2002), 38–39, 52–53 n. 87. For perhaps the most famous contemporary defense of armed “self-defense” (in the context of the 1961 nonviolent “Freedom Riders” actions) as a means to compel proper state law enforcement against violence by the Ku Klux Klan and to prevent bloodshed—and against an unacknowledged, omnipresent institutionalized violence in the racist social system—see Robert F. Williams, *Negroes with Guns* (Detroit, Mich., 1998), 3–5, 76.



FIGURE 9: Students battle riot police in Sasebo, January 21, 1968. Photo courtesy of Kyodo News.

protest to become effective. To put it crudely, “nonviolence” was enabled by violence, that is, by a violent display whose results revealed and delegitimated massive state violence, while reenergizing and broadening political possibilities.

In an odd way, Honda was right: it *had* been the demonstrators’ role “to be struck, kicked, and arrested—only this is permitted.”¹²¹ Now, as a result of their shift in tactics, the script for protests had been transformed. While there had been an escalation in the police response following Haneda, subsequent public disapproval and sensitization to protest issues brought about an entirely different situation, one that both constrained police action and focused public attention—a combination of circumstances that now made effective nonviolent protest possible. Whereas before such approaches had generated little interest, and had occasionally been dealt with summarily by authorities, now the imminent possibility of dramatic student involvement brought eager media attention.¹²² With attention and legitimacy conferred upon protest issues, a much broader group of “ordinary” people were motivated to commence activism, expanding the boundaries and possibilities of the political.

For the moment, too, police had retreated from their post-Haneda “aggressive posture,” thanks to reactions against their overt brutality at Sasebo and the ever-present danger that an incident would spark a much wider conflagration.¹²³ An anal-

¹²¹ Honda, *Honda Nobuyoshi Chosakusen I*, 342.

¹²² Other factors in the wake of Sasebo included a reenergized JSP, newly focused and with greatly reduced “internal strife.” See Airgram A-1098, 9.

¹²³ Airgram A-309, 19. This chosen defensive posture was opposed by hawks within the LDP, who

ysis of the student protest movement by Columbia University's James W. Morley in April 1969 reflected that police overreach at Sasebo had "raised the spectre of pre-war police brutality and so offended the public mores, which have been traditionally permissive toward students, that *for many months thereafter the police felt it wisest to fall back on the defense, hoping thereby that a public backlash would develop, enabling them to move out again forcibly later.*"¹²⁴

The beneficiaries of these new political possibilities frequently proved to be the nonsectarian groups, from Beheiren (whose numbers increased dramatically) to the All-Campus Joint Struggle Committees [Zenkyōtō], that, emerging mid-1968 from the developing Tokyo University and Nihon University conflicts, proliferated across hundreds of university campuses to create more than 67 campus seizures or lockouts by year's end (and 127 in 1969)—their ranks swollen with participants from the now-activist *nonpori*.¹²⁵ Widening public concern and disapproval of the Vietnam War and Security Treaty relationships created an atmosphere in which increasing numbers of "ordinary" people found the desire and the means for political engagement.¹²⁶ The Japanese government took careful notice of this development, with the Foreign Ministry, for example, observing in an internal report that during anti-U.S. base demonstrations following the *Enterprise* incident, "the local people in the vicinity of the military bases concerned and *ordinary students* with no particular ideological leanings have come to be involved."¹²⁷

in March 1968 began to push for outlawing Sanpa under the previously unapplied Anti-Subversive Activities Law of 1952—an approach rejected as likely to engender protracted litigation without immediate success, all the while inflaming protest. As a compromise, the LDP executive board decided in September 1968 to apply the anti-riot provisions of the criminal code, setting the stage for events in October. See Airgram A-309, 19–20. In many ways this restraint resembles that of the period between December 1945 and May 1946 when the still largely intact Japanese police forces limited their own responses to activism out of uncertainty over the possible Allied Occupation response—a self-restraint that crucially contributed to creating an atmosphere in which union organizing, "production control" incidents (where workers seized their places of employment, running them without owners or management), and protests could flourish. Repression speedily recommenced, with Occupation approval, following the speech by General Douglas MacArthur on May 20, 1946, excoriating protesters' "mass violence"—green-lighting suppression with language akin to the imperial state's "peace preservation" laws. See Mark Gayn, *Japan Diary* (New York, 1948), 231–240; John Dower, *Embracing Defeat* (New York, 1999), 254–273.

¹²⁴ Airgram A-309, 19; emphasis added. Morley was on hiatus as director of the East Asia Institute at Columbia University for a two-year assignment at the Tokyo embassy, serving as Ambassador Johnson's personal assistant "on a principal mission of liaison with the Japanese intellectual community." On Morley's assignment in the Tokyo embassy to continue former Ambassador Reischauer's "gains," see U. Alexis Johnson, *The Right Hand of Power* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1984), 455, and "Interview with Professor James Morley," March 21, 2005, <http://www.japanconsidered.com/Interviews/050321MorleyJames/050321MorleyJamesInterviewMain.htm> (accessed December 10, 2008). Like many of the documents considered here, Morley's confident account of police and LDP internal decision-making and attitudes in Airgram A-309 testifies to the degree to which he (and the embassy) maintained intimate contacts with Japanese officialdom.

¹²⁵ The figure is based on the Japanese academic year. Zenkyōtō had sprung up previously during struggles at Keio and Waseda University, but it was only with the 1968 conflicts that students came to recognize it as a distinctive and potentially powerful form of activism. See Wheeler, "The Japanese Student Movement," 131–132.

¹²⁶ While it is true that many of the campus eruptions were triggered by local issues—including massive misappropriation of funds by a repressive administration at Nichidai, and exploitative conditions imposed upon medical students at Todai, for example—such particular stories cannot account either for the rapid spread of campus eruptions across Japan or for the commonalities in the form and content of activism.

¹²⁷ Translated as "U.S. Military Bases in Japan," enclosure no. 1, Airgram A-2080, Ambassador

By year's end, *Asahi* chief editor Mori was even willing to entertain the claim that students' use of force might constitute anti-violence. In his column "The Ethics of 'Gewalt Staves,'" he considered the cogency of the activists' language: "what newspapers write of as lengths of timber [*kakuzai*] are called Gewalt Staves [*geba-bō*] by the students. At base is their sense that their acts of Gewalt are not violence but rather anti-violence."¹²⁸ Mori recognized that the choice of the German *Gewalt*—meaning variously force, violence, and power—involved a reconceptualization of the scope and purpose of force, and an attempt to distinguish it from the violence [*bōryoku*] that students associated with the state. "The thinking of the Sanpa-faction Zengakuren appears to be to break the law as a declaration of their intent to resist, and to thereby put their case before the general public. However, rather than being prepared [to accept] punishment, they view [the state's] right of punishment itself as violence, and repudiate it. According to them, Gewalt is neither terror, nor coup d'état, nor guerrilla warfare. *It is seen as a political means*. They strongly reject the stereotypical view that violence is the enemy of democracy, and is in contradiction with peace."¹²⁹ Force remained a complex component in all of these struggles. Students from Nihon University, for example, earned heroic acclaim and a reputation for toughness through their savage combats with police and rightist groups.¹³⁰ Meanwhile, anxious American officials worried that activists would provoke the involvement of U.S. military police or martyrdoms during Okinawan demonstrations, fearing that a nationwide conflagration might result.¹³¹

Certainly the possibility of such a conflagration was always imminent. Events such as the eruption of the Tet offensive at the end of January (including the brief occupation of the U.S. embassy in Saigon) and President Johnson's March 31 address suspending the bombing of North Vietnam and renouncing his reelection bid continued to raise doubts about the war and about Satō's notable support for American policy.¹³² The seizure by North Korea of the USS *Pueblo* during its surveillance op-

Johnson to Department of State, October 1, 1968, 3, Confidential (encl.) / Secret (Airgram), DNSA, doc. JU01001.

¹²⁸ *Asahi Jānaru*, December 15, 1968, 3.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*; emphasis added. Even if he ultimately remained concerned about the possibility of violence becoming an end in itself, Mori's engagement with activist claims marks a notable broadening of public acceptance of such claims.

¹³⁰ This was a tactic largely thrust upon them by necessity: the Nihon University students faced violent opposition for attempting to protest at a university that prided itself on the mass production of graduates free from political activism. The notorious president of the Board of Trustees, Furuta Jūjiro, had in fact boasted to the American embassy in September 1960, in his capacity as chairman of the Private Universities Deliberation Council, that Nihon University students had not taken part in Anpo demonstrations. He suggested that the U.S. lend support to such private institutions as a bulwark against political activism (which he said ought to be banned outright at all schools). He also urgently recommended revision of the constitution and the police law to allow for martial law in similar circumstances. Memorandum, Jūjiro Furuta to Ambassador MacArthur, "Summary of My Private Opinions," enclosure no. 1 to Dispatch 323, American Embassy Tokyo to Department of State, September 16, 1960, Confidential, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Md., Record Group 59, Box 69, 350 Demonstrations 1960–61 SECRET.

¹³¹ Memorandum, "B-52 Operations," Richard L. Sneider to William P. Bundy, February 17, 1968, Secret, Exdis [exclusive distribution], DNSA, doc. JU00900. "B-52 operations are becoming increasingly publicly visible," noted Sneider, suggesting that flights be reduced to three or four times a week.

¹³² See discussions in telegrams 07136 and 07158, both American Embassy to Department of State, April 4, 1968; and in Memorandum, Rostow to President Johnson, April 5, 1968 (enclosing Memo-



FIGURE 10: Sanpa students—many carrying *geba-bō* timber staves—march along the railway tracks on their way to Hirasebashi Bridge, January 17, 1968. Photo courtesy of Kyodo News.

erations, along with border incursions and an alleged assassination plot against South Korean president Park Chung-hee, for a moment made the sudden advent of a second Korean War conceivable, one that would immediately involve Japan directly.¹³³ Although this disaster never materialized, the events surrounding the seizure of the *Pueblo* demonstrated the degree to which Japan's security commitments and arrangements could bring about sudden participation in American wars, current and future. The ingredients were all there: the *Pueblo* had sailed from Sasebo in early January, as of course had the *Enterprise*, itself diverted en route to its Vietnam station to command the task force responding to the *Pueblo* situation.¹³⁴ Of the planes dispatched to the Western Pacific in response, Kadena Air Force Base on Okinawa received fifteen B-52s. Beginning February 15, these Kadena-based B-52s commenced regular bombing runs of North Vietnam, averaging 350 sorties per month.¹³⁵

random from Under Secretary Nicholas deB. Katzenbach to President Johnson), April 5, 1968, all Secret, Exdis, DNSA, docs. JU00927, JU00928, JU00929, and JU00930.

¹³³ This fear is explicitly discussed in Airgram A-1098, 15.

¹³⁴ A top secret CIA memorandum had anticipated the risk, noting the distinct possibility of North Korean action against the *Pueblo*, "in view of the current hostile attitudes and activities of the North Koreans along the DMZ and against South Korean vessels off its coast." R. J. Smith, Deputy Director for Intelligence, Memorandum for Director of Central Intelligence, JRC Monthly Reconnaissance Schedule for January 1968, January 2, 1968, 1, Top Secret, Sanitized, <http://www.foia.cia.gov>, doc. 0001458144 (accessed December 10, 2008).

¹³⁵ "Fact Sheet: B-52 Basing in Okinawa," DNSA, doc. JU01051. In June, the Okinawan high commissioner reported that "newspaper articles seeming to confirm officially and for the first time that the

When thousands of students took to the streets by Shinjuku Station in Tokyo the following October, however, police were able to regain some of their lost initiative and reduce the possibility of a wider domestic eruption. On October 8, 1968, the one-year anniversary of Yamazaki's death, some 6,000 to 8,000 students, Hansen members, and their sympathizers again joined in a massive inter-sect attempt to halt transshipments of military jet fuel through this central commuting nexus. The protesters' preparations—achieving a massive turnout, a new high point in inter-sect cooperation, and careful coordination of squads of 150 or so students that brought protesters directly to the tracks—were bested by a centrally coordinated response by the police. Their deployments, water cannons, clubs, and tear gas were enhanced by a concerted attempt to dramatize restraint on their part so as to yield negative press publicity for the protesters.¹³⁶ The success of this performance—most papers (with the exception of the *Asahi*) followed this lead, turning against the students in their portrayals of events—perhaps conditioned the events of October 21, which began with a peaceful Sōhyō protest involving between 35,000 and 55,000 participants, but ended with attacks on Shinjuku Station and wide-ranging street battles.¹³⁷ The participants were largely some 6,000 to 7,000 members of Chūkaku and Shagakudō (the Socialist Student League), joined by some 12,000 to 14,000 locals. The latter, however, were characterized not as “citizens” but rather as a disreputable crowd of opportunists and hoodlums from Shinjuku, and their violence returned to the criminalized, illegitimate category of *bōryoku*. The police response included the first invocation of the anti-riot law since the confrontations of May 1952, a move that met with virtually universal press approval. In contrast, the press rejected activist rationales about the station's involvement in jet fuel shipments destined for attacks on Vietnam.¹³⁸

planes stationed at Kadena were used to bomb North Vietnam further inflamed opposition.” In *FRUS, 1964–1968*, vol. XXIX, pt. 2: *Japan*, 287 n. 8, citing Telegram HC-LN 816605 from the High Commissioner, June 14, 1968. Such events added to the potential volatility of the political situation: the airstrikes against North Vietnam were not announced but were “patently known”; their increasing public visibility could provoke protests that might finally overwhelm the limited Okinawan police forces and bring about battles with American military police, or even a martyrdom—something that authorities feared as a potential political “trigger” for Japan as a whole. Memorandum, INR-Thomas L. Hughes to Acting Secretary, “Conservative Control of Okinawan Government in Jeopardy,” April 12, 1968, 3, Secret, Noform, DNSA, doc. JU00934; Sneider to Bundy, “B-52 Operations.” The other risk was of a general strike in Okinawa: even if short-lived, it would “prove in public what the US, the [government of Japan] and the Okinawans have known all along: that regardless of treaty rights, the US cannot have ‘free use’ of its Okinawa bases if the population is hostile.” It might also provide material for successfully depicting Okinawa as a military occupation. Memorandum, INR-Thomas L. Hughes to Secretary of State, “Brinksmanship in the Okinawan Reversion Movement,” February 3, 1969, 1–2, Confidential, Noform, DNSA, doc. JU01044.

¹³⁶ Telegram 12817, Ambassador Johnson to Secretary of State, October 9, 1968, 1–2, CF 1967–1969, Pol 23-8 Japan, Confidential, in *Confidential Files: Japan*, reel 10, 0316–0317. Police made 819 arrests, although only 42 were indicted, and of those, only 7 were charged under Article 106's anti-riot provisions—a measure of restraint that Morley attributes to lingering caution on the part of police and prosecutors. Airgram A-309, 20. By this point police were implementing a policy of long-term preventive detention, particularly against identified leaders of the activists. This, too, was enhanced by the achieved shift in public opinion: as Morley notes in his analysis, “as the public temper has risen, the courts have been willing to extend the period of detention of suspects in jail and have warranted police searches more freely”; *ibid.*

¹³⁷ Smaller groups also made forays against the Diet and the Defense Agency.

¹³⁸ Telegram 13148, Ambassador Johnson to Secretary of State, October 22, 1968, 1–3, CF 1967–



FIGURE 11: Photographers capture rough arrest of demonstrator by riot police near Haneda Airport, November 12, 1967 (Second Haneda Incident). Photo by Ishiguro Kenji.

The events in Shinjuku established a new equilibrium between state violence and public opinion, restoring legitimacy to police suppression, and threatening to once again reduce activists' voices to mere noise. Morley's extensive analysis of the student movement in April 1969—an analysis that anticipated the approaching Security Treaty struggles of 1970—concluded that “repeated incidents of student violence, crescendoing to the riot at Shinjuku on October 21, *have produced the backlash the police had hoped for.*”¹³⁹ New confidence by police and courts in public support against “protester violence” enabled escalated measures, including mass arrests, extended pretrial detentions, searches—even on university campuses without the acquiescence of their presidents—and finally, full-scale assaults against barricaded campuses.¹⁴⁰ Without another transformation of public perception, the decision by

1969, Pol 23-8 Japan, reel 10, 0305–0307. Again, police and prosecutors had been planning to apply the anti-riot law since September and were awaiting an opportunity; see Airgram A-309, 19–20.

¹³⁹ Airgram A-309, 20; emphasis added.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. As Morley's embassy report notes, assaults on seized campuses followed soon after the Shinjuku events (Sophia University in December 1968 and Tokyo University in January 1969)—and the general public acceptance of these measures encouraged other university administrations to seek such assistance. While it is not the case that every subsequent act of police or judicial repression met with acclaim in the subsequent years of struggle, the police were never again put on the defensive by the level of overwhelming nationwide disapproval that followed the *Enterprise* visit, and that had enabled 1968's long interlude from the usual “law and order” perspective. This ultimately provided an outer limit, even a level of containment, for subsequent political confrontations—one visible only in retrospect. The specter of this prior public backlash—in part, as a harbinger for a nationwide “conflagration”—nonetheless

some opposition groups to meet this force with force could only play into the hands of the police, hardening the categories through which such opposition was dismissed, and collapsing the possibilities for other forms of protest and political engagement—possibilities that had first been enabled, nonetheless, through the unpredictable results of transformative violence.¹⁴¹ For the brief period during 1968 in which the press widely portrayed student actions as heroic resistance (or at least as the political acts of rational people), dramatizing “citizen” outrage and intervention against an omnipresent and indiscriminant police repression, the borders of the political radically expanded to open up a wealth of unforeseen possibilities and actors.

continued to haunt American and Japanese governmental assessments both of continuing military arrangements and of possible countermeasures against this insurgent politics.

¹⁴¹ To take an iconic, even overdetermined, case, Yoshikuni Igarashi discusses the origins of the United Red Army in the declining effectiveness of performative violence in “Dead Bodies and Living Guns: The United Red Army and Its Deadly Pursuit of Revolution, 1971–1972,” *Japanese Studies* 27, no. 2 (September 2007): 122–128. On their embrace of weaponry and illegality—and the interesting repetition of corporate organizational forms—see also Patricia G. Steinhoff, “Hijackers, Bombers, and Bank Robbers: Managerial Style in the Japanese Red Army,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 48, no. 4 (November 1989): 724–740. On the spectacular standoff at Asama Cottage in 1974, the record-breaking marathon televising of the event (and equally record-breaking 98.2 percent television viewership), and its transformation of viewers of activist films, see Abé Marcus Nornes, *Forest of Pressure: Ogawa Shinsuke and Postwar Japanese Documentary* (Minneapolis, 2007), 150. This latter work provides a broad consideration of the role of contemporary activist filmmaking in representing, critiquing, shaping, and promoting political action in a counterpoint to the mass media. On the police use of selective Anti-Subversive Activities Law prosecutions against group leaders to tar entire organizations as criminal and deviant, see, for example, Patricia G. Steinhoff, “Student Conflict,” in Ellis Krauss, Thomas P. Rohlen, and Patricia G. Steinhoff, eds., *Conflict in Japan* (Honolulu, 1984), 194–195. Steinhoff’s discussion here of the application and acceptance of “labeling” might be profitably reconsidered within the Ross/Rancière problematic of the centrality to 1960s politics of the escape from determinative sociological categories.

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