

National Policies and Urban System : The Japanese Experience

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I. Prologue

In the summer of 1984, the General Assembly of the International Geographical Union approved the establishment of the Commission on Urban Systems in Transition without a single negative vote. The immense success of the Commission on National Settlement Systems, a predecessor of the present commission, was sufficient enough to warrant the support of the new commission. According to the proposal made by the new chairman, Professor Larry S. Bourne, the principal aim of this commission is to focus the efforts of an international collaborate research group on recent trends in urban development and on changes in the spatial organization of national urban systems.

At the Seventh General Meeting of the previous commission held in Leipzig, G. D. R., in 1983, members of the commission decided to support the proposal to establish a new commission and formulated the proposed terms of reference as follows: (Dziewonski, 1984)

- (1) Recent trends of transition in urban systems
- (2) National policies on urban systems
- (3) Methodological developments on changes in urban systems
- (4) Specific problems involved in urban systems in transition

In order to review and evaluate the goals, effectiveness and spatial impact of national policies pertaining to urban systems, an earlier version of this paper was read at the Leipzig meeting and has been revised and expanded to be a final version. (Yamaguchi, 1983B)

The period from the early 1960's through the early 1980's witnessed rapid shifts in economic structure and performance, in demographic profiles as well as in government policies. Such changes in turn have been translated into very different spatial patterns and processes of urban growth in the highly developed countries as well as in newly-industrialized countries. The Japanese experience described in this paper is beneficial to predict the future of those countries where the industrialization is still a prime concern for their developments.

Professor Robert Sinclair, a deputy chairman of the new commission, made stimulating comments on my paper at the meeting in Leipzig. The author would like to thank him for his encouragement.

II. Some Premises

Recently, in most of the developed countries, the ratio of urban population to the nation as a whole has surpassed the level of 70% and this trend is expected to continue even in the 1980's. During the 1970's, however, significant differences began to emerge between urbanization trends in Japan and those in other developed countries. (Yamaguchi, 1983A) Japan has continued along the path of rapid urbanization at a metropolitan scale, while other developed countries have begun to experience dramatic changes in the processes and patterns of urbanization.

In view of these changes and increasing diversity of urbanization processes in the developed countries, it is evident that the policies used to solve the problems arising from urban growth may no longer be appropriate. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the causes and characteristics of urban growth in developed countries and to evaluate the effectiveness of the policies used to guide urban growth and development in the 1980's.

During the period of rapid urbanization, governments in several developed countries have tried a variety of measures to regulate the locational patterns of urban growth. In general, these measures have been applied to control the rapidly growing areas and some strategies have been tested to redistribute urban growth among selected regions or specific urban areas. These measures have tried to manipulate employment potential for the purpose of improving the balance of economic opportunity and its distribution through the reconcentration of population. In some developed countries, measures have been taken to encourage the relocation of existing industry and the allocation of new industry to selected areas

in order to maintain a more stable balance in the level of economic development among regions. (Ministry of Construction, 1981)

In Japan, in accordance with the three Comprehensive National Development Plans set by the central government, various measures have been taken to encourage industrial development in less developed regions by means of plans for: New Industrial Cities, Special Areas for Industrial Development and Large-Scale Industrial Development Projects, all in the 1960's; and for Industrial Relocation in the 1970's. As a result, Japan has now reached a point where most places within the country can be made equally accessible.¹⁾ (Yamaguchi, 1979)

Japan is a highly urbanized nation and rapid urban growth is expected to continue even in the 1980's due to the population increases in regional capitals as well as in metropolitan areas where the natural increase compensates for declining in-migration. Although the rate of increase has slackened, the population of Japan is still growing accompanied by some social changes such as an aging population, rapid urbanization, higher numbers of college students and increasing participation of women in the work force. At the same time, in order to catch up with the expanding labour force, securing of employment opportunities and rehabilitating the infrastructure for living are required to a full extent. Moreover, based on the past achievements and lessons from the comprehensive national land development policies it has become necessary to stabilize the living conditions throughout the country, in both urban and rural areas, while overcoming various difficulties, such as the problems of overpopulation and depopulation.

In the following sections, I would like to review the recent trends of urbanization in Japan and the national plans formulated in response to the changes in the urban system, especially with regard to the advantages of Japanese government's well-developed and long standing "idea of the state." (Ginsburg, 1973)

III. Behind the Scene

During the 1950's, urban growth was concentrated in the large urban centres. The six largest cities increased in population by 50%, and their share of the total population went from 14% to 18%. In the early 1960's, only Tokyo, Yokohama and Nagoya continued to grow, while in the other three cities in the west, Osaka, Kyoto and Kobe, growth slowed down.

A principal characteristic of Japanese urbanization at that time was certainly

the rapid increase of urban population. With a particularly high rate of economic growth since the 1950's, the share of urban population had almost doubled over the twenty years from 1950 to 1970, that is, from 37% to 72%.

In the 1970's, Yokohama was the only exception to the general tendency for growth to be slower in the largest urban centres, due to its unique location within the Tokyo Metropolitan Area, and Osaka has shown a gradual decline. The share of the traditional six large cities has actually fallen from its peak of 19% in 1965 to 16% in 1980. This, however, does not mean an end to the urbanization process. These figures simply reflect the saturation of the large cities themselves and the shift of population concentration to the areas surrounding them. Excessive densities in the large cities and extraordinarily high land prices and speculation have prompted an increasing inflow into the areas from which commuting into the CBD is possible.²⁾ At the same time, as has shown, there has been continued population expansion in the major metropolitan areas.

The rapid increase in urban population led to urban sprawl, housing shortages, traffic congestion and associated environmental problems. These problems were especially keen in the three largest metropolitan areas. Although these areas accounted for only 10% of the total land area of the country, they experienced a massive net inflow of 0.4 to 0.6 million people annually during the period between 1950 and 1970. As a result, their share in total population increased from 39% in 1960 to 46% in 1970, reaching a peak of 48% in 1980. The increase of the percentage since then seems to have been rather modest.

As the growth rate of the large urban centres has slowed down, growth in smaller cities has increased. The effects of urbanization under rapid economic growth had begun to reach the smaller cities. Many of the areas newly designated as cities in the 1960's, and thereafter, have been purely new urban concentrations in the suburbs of the larger metropolitan centres and they were also the products resulting from the amalgamation of municipal units in the 1950's. The common pattern for a small, previously existing town within a metropolitan area is simply to swell rapidly in population, to be upgraded from town to city, and to continue to grow in size. The metropolitan areas have thus grown without much increase in population within the metropolitan centres themselves. In general, this urbanization has not been a matter of packing more people into existing urban areas which have been developed in some way, but rather the result of cities expanding into what were once rural areas. In other words, villages are literally being "citized."

(Fukutake, 1982) The expansion of low-density urban areas accompanied by suburbanization trends are imposing heavy financial burdens on the provision of infrastructure.

The excessive concentration of population and industry in the three largest metropolitan areas has led both to overcrowding in major urban centres and to population decline in rural areas away from these cities.³⁾ Since these problems are deeply rooted in the dynamics of politics and economy of the nation, it is extremely difficult for local governments to cope with this situation. Furthermore, since regional planning in Japan is undertaken by the government at different levels, composed of ministries of the central government, prefectural offices, and municipal authorities, the scope of planning differs at each level of government. In short, planning at these different levels is determined by the hierarchical system of the central government and by the territorial unit of the planning area. Therefore, nation-wide dispersal of population and industry from major metropolitan areas was constantly pursued as an important policy objective of national urban policy. Policies concerning urban problems were coordinated and integrated into a single national plan in order to accomplish this task.

In the post-war period, the planning function, as represented by the Economic Planning Agency and later by the National Land Agency of the central government, has been instrumental in creating a consensus among planners and it has filtered into planning agencies at lower levels as well. These two agencies of the central government are separated from implementing agencies, and have gradually been established themselves as institutions that provide the lower agencies with guidelines.

Formally, post-war Japan appears to be a kind of decentralized state with emphasis on local self-government, but, in effect, the central government exercises considerable control over the prefectures, as well as over the cities, towns, and villages. This strong centralization of power, in practice, has been a dominant factor which explains the concentration of population in the capital of Tokyo, in the regional capitals and in the prefectural seats. Therefore, quite a number of cities have actually drawn population by virtue of their administrative and political functions, and then had their growth accelerated by the consequent development of industry around them.

IV. Making the "Pie" Bigger

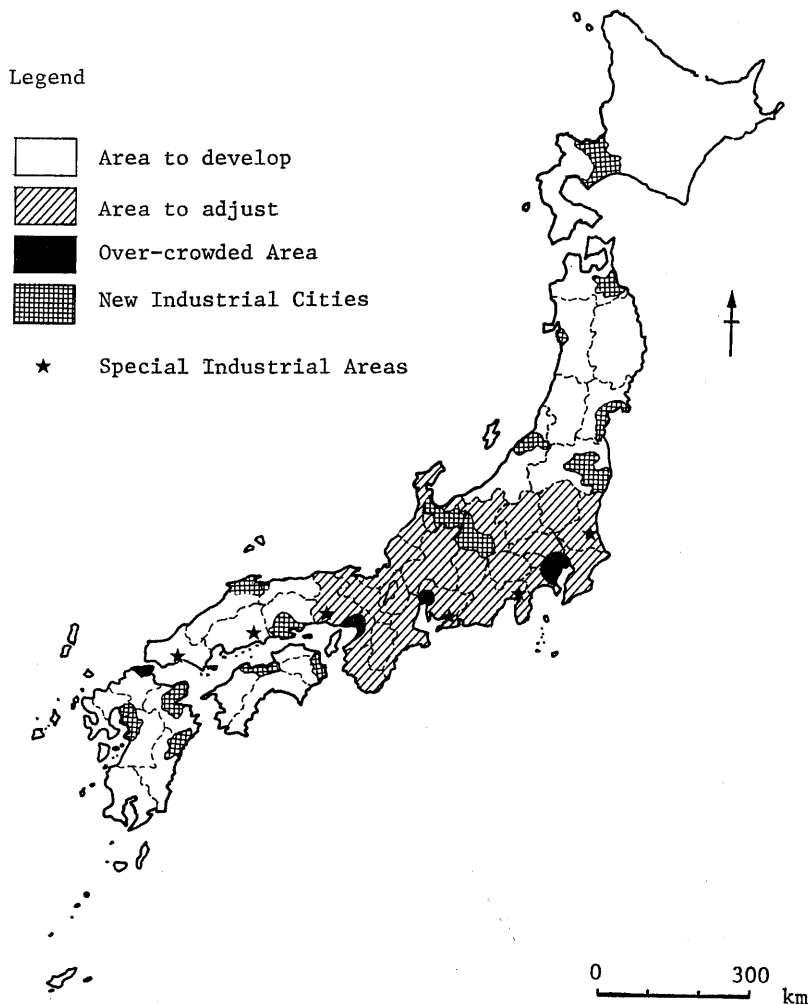
Under the Comprehensive National Development Act enacted in 1950, the three comprehensive national development plans have been set as the basic guideline for national development. The first plan was approved by the Cabinet in 1962. At that time, the concentration of population and industries in the three largest metropolitan areas was creating problems of overcrowding in large cities and of depopulation in rural areas. The strategy taken was to try to resolve the two problems simultaneously and to achieve a balanced population distribution throughout the country by means of restricting the concentration of urban functions in large cities and revitalizing the community life in rural areas. This idea has been used successively in the following plans, particularly the third one, and is succeeded to the proposed fourth plan. The strategy of the growth pole was used to the first plan and large-scale projects were elaborated by the second plan relevant to a nation-wide network of high-speed transportation. Finally, the third plan features a national settlement system based on integrated residence policy or "Teijū-ken Kōsō."

1) The Comprehensive National Development Plan of 1962

This plan was formulated in the line with the National Income Doubling Programme worked out in 1960 and accomplished in 1967, three years earlier than the scheduled year of termination, 1970. With due consideration given to the prevention of excessive urban explosion and the reduction of differentials in income between regions, this programme aimed at working for balanced development in local regions by means of effective use of resources and their reasonable regional allocation. To solve these problems, attempts were made to disperse industry and population from major metropolitan areas to local cities and to develop these cities as pivots of local employment. This is known as a pivotal development formula, which is designed to rectify income differentials among regions. As a part of this strategy, the New Industrial City Development Act was enacted in 1962 and the Industrial Development of the Special Area Act in 1964. (Figure 1)

(a) New Industrial Cities

From 1964 to 1966, fifteen areas throughout the nation were designated as New Industrial Cities; measuring 28,000 square kilometres they are equal to 7.5%



Source: Nishikawa and Kawabe, 1966 Revised by the author.

Fig. 1. The Comprehensive National Development Plan of 1962.

of the total area of the nation. The fifteen areas, in aggregate, in 1965 accounted for 10.6% of the national population.

New Industrial Cities are designated by the Prime Minister on the basis of a request which comes out of consultation among the ministers of related government agencies after an application is filed by the Prefectural Governor. Upon designation, prefectural governors make basic plans concerning industrial development targets, population scale, land utilization, roads, harbours, factory sites, and housing.

For the accomplishment of the programme, the central government prepares special financial measures including: (1) an increased rate of subsidy for municipal projects; (2) a grant for paying a fixed rate of interest for local bonds floated by the prefecture for projects; and (3) compensation for loss under a preferential system of local tax.

The basic plan decided after the designation of new industrial cities was scheduled to be completed in 1975. The ratio of accomplishment as of 1975 in terms of average percentages for the fifteen areas was 88% for the population, 160% for industrial shipment values, and 92% for facility development. (Ministry of Construction, 1978)

(b) Special Areas for Industrial Development

This act aims at developing industrial activities in the areas where excellent conditions for the localization of industrial plants are found. In order to contribute to a balanced development of the national land and economy, further development of facilities for the foundation of industry and the associated infrastructure is expected.

Under this act, six areas within the Pacific Industrial Belt were designated. These areas account for 2.1% of the total area of the nation, and aggregated population is 3.8% of the total. The basic plan of the industrial development for special areas was approved by the Prime Minister in 1965. As was the case of the plan for New Industrial Cities, the central government provided special financial measures for development projects. The ratio of accomplishment as of 1975, in terms of average percentages for the six areas, was 88% for the population, 150% for industrial shipment value, and 77% for facility development. (Ministry of Construction, 1978)

After an initial period of favourable treatment, newly-established industrial plants in these cities and areas could increase the revenue of local governments mostly by means of property tax. However, a very limited amount of funds were allotted to improve living conditions with acceptable modern standards in urban areas.

2) New Comprehensive National Development Plan of 1969

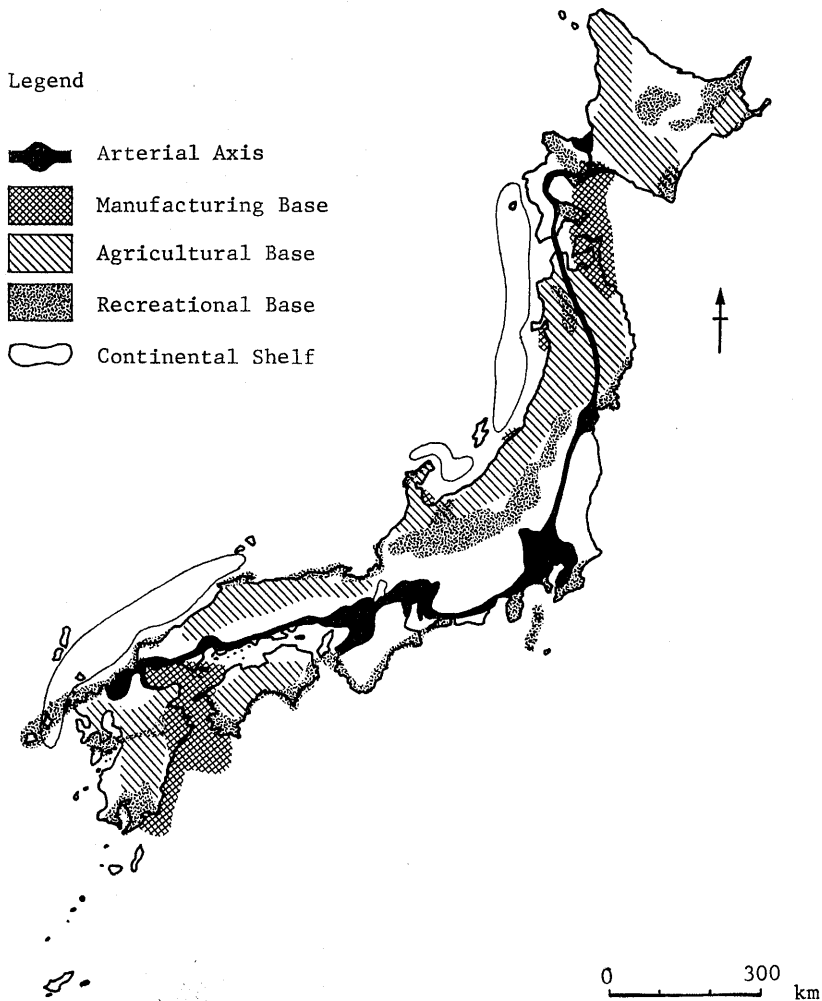
Although industrial development was seen in the new industrial cities and in special industrial cities, income differentials between regions did not shrink as

expected and the concentration of population in the three major metropolitan areas continued to grow. This urban development trend led to reconsideration of the regional development strategy put in operation and there was a need to re-examine the conventional formula of pivotal development. Subsequently, the New Comprehensive National Development Plan, which set guidelines for national policy in the following 20 years, was published in 1969.

The basic strategy of this plan was to construct a nation-wide transportation network composed of motorways and high-speed railways, together with implementation of three large-scale industrial development projects established in the peripheral regions in Hokkaido, Tohoku, and Kyushu. Measures were also taken to relocate industries from over-concentrated areas to less developed areas. In short, the plan designated a new development axis for the country. It was proposed that, through a new network of transportation and communication, the decision-making and distribution function should be reorganized around this axis thus creating the foundation for higher economic development in the future. (Figure 2)

The concept of a national transportation and communication network is an extension of the previous concept of growth poles, proposed in the First Comprehensive National Development plan, and is based on the proposal that a national axis or "supporting growth pole" should be constructed. The concept found in both new and old plans are consistent in terms of physical planning, and they conceive of the Japanese Islands as an integral unity. At the same time, the development of the new industrial cities and special industrial areas was re-evaluated in accordance with the second plan.

In addition to industrial expansion, the targets of the plan were extended to include the development of living spheres with an assumption that the first task was to increase the size of the GNP or the "pie".⁴⁾ Accordingly, the concept so-called "wider-area living spheres" in local areas was proposed and realized in terms of the Ministry of Construction as "Local Living Spheres" and of the Ministry of Internal Affairs as "Wider-Area Municipal Spheres". In 1971, a system of introducing manufacturing plants to rural areas was proposed to work for the balanced development of agriculture and industry as the basis of building wider-area living spheres. In 1972, a system for relocating manufacturing plants was initiated to accelerate and equalize industrial production throughout the nation. Under this system, some areas were designated as relocation promotion areas; they consist mostly of existing built-up areas within the National Capital Region, ac-



Source: Economic Planning Agency, 1969 Partly revised by the author.

Fig. 2. The New Comprehensive National Development Plan of 1969.

counting for only 0.7% of the total area, but have a population share of 20%. On the other hand, the areas to receive new manufacturing plants should be outside the spheres of the three major metropolitan areas and the two regional capitals of Sendai and Sapporo. These areas account for 89% of the national land, with a population share of 42%.

With the implementation of these measures, inter-regional income differentials began to decrease gradually. In 1960, there were eight prefectures in Tohoku and

Kyushu regions, the northern and southern fringes of the country, where average per capita income was less than 40%, but, in 1975, there existed only three prefectures which had less than 50% of Tokyo's level. (Ministry of Construction, 1978) In effect, for the first time since the end of World War II, a national plan in a non-western country adopted as its premise the idea of a national spatial system as the basis for development planning and policy-making; and, for the first time, sectorial planning was clearly relegated to a secondary role. (Ginsburg, 1975)

V. For the Sake of Society

In the Second Comprehensive National Development Plan, measures were taken for fostering the nodal system of development designated in the First Plan and for establishing a nation-wide network for the purpose of realizing a functional system of central management and commodity flow. In relation to this network, independent and efficient large-scale projects were established with consideration given to the characteristics of each individual region. These projects were aimed at the development of specific regions as well as the development of many other communities in the nation with the final goal of well-balanced land-use. However, the regional development measures to which the priority was given under the two comprehensive national development plans had to be revised, to a great extent, due to the Japanese economy's shift to stable growth in the early 1970's. The oil crisis in 1973 was the turning point.

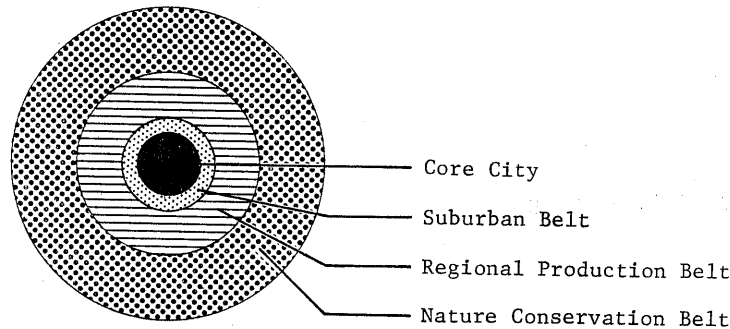
In 1977, the Third Comprehensive National Development Plan was approved by the Cabinet for the period of ten years as the target. In this plan, it was proposed to advocate an "Integrated Residence Policy" which aims at improvement and development of the environment for human habitation by controlling the over-concentration of population and industrial activities in large cities, while promoting local industries and countermeasures for depopulation and over-population problems. In addition, in order to establish a desirable environment for human habitation, environmental consideration should be given first priority. The plan also recognizes the fact, which geographers have long supported, that environments are created and moulded by men to meet specific societal needs. For the purpose of a securing stable habitat, the basic requirements are the development of employment opportunities, housing and facilities related to daily life of people, educational systems, cultural activities and medical services. Especially, priority should be

given to local cities and surrounding rural areas where the population is expected to increase more than in metropolitan areas.

Under this programme, the population throughout Japan in the year of 2000 is estimated to be 140 million. The concept of settled habitation or Teijū-ken, which is advocated in the Third Comprehensive National Development Plan, is for the establishment of new spheres of living, conservation, utilization and control of the natural environment, development and control of facilities for the living environment, and establishment and control of production facilities in an integrated fashion. The area in which the opinions of inhabitants may be reflected to the fullest extent in terms of planning is hypothesized as a sphere of settled habitation. (National Land Agency, 1979)

This sphere of settled habitation consists of 'areas of habitation' and 'areas of settled habitation' which may be explained as follows. The area of habitation is a rural hamlet or a borough which may serve as a unit of environmental preservation. It consists mainly of 50-100 families, and nation is made up of 300,000-500,000 such areas. The area of settled habitation is a collection of areas of habitation; it is based on the unit of the primary school district and as such is an area which forms the foundation of the community. The nation is made up of 20,000-30,000 such areas. The 'sphere of settled habitation' is a complex of settled habitation as well as cities and agricultural and fishing villages. The central thrust of the programme is the creation of employment opportunities for rural youth within commuting distance of their homes. The programme envisions the establishment of a nation-wide network of 200-300 such spheres with each one suitably structured to offer local employment, education, cultural activities and medical services. (Kawabe, 1980B)

The original idea of "Teijū-ken" dates back to 1972 when an architect named Nishiyama and his associates proposed more advanced, new ways of living. Rather than a uniform nation-wide urbanization focussed on a primate city, they assumed the existence of autonomous regions which would be a basic unit to organize living space and cultural development based on regional characteristics. This autonomous region is a self-governing unit as shown in Figure 3. At the centre, there is a city. Surrounding the core is a suburban belt comprising open space and low-density housing. Outside the suburban belt is a regional production belt which includes industrial complexes and collective farms. Outside this is a nature conservation belt which is reserved for out-door recreation and natural production.



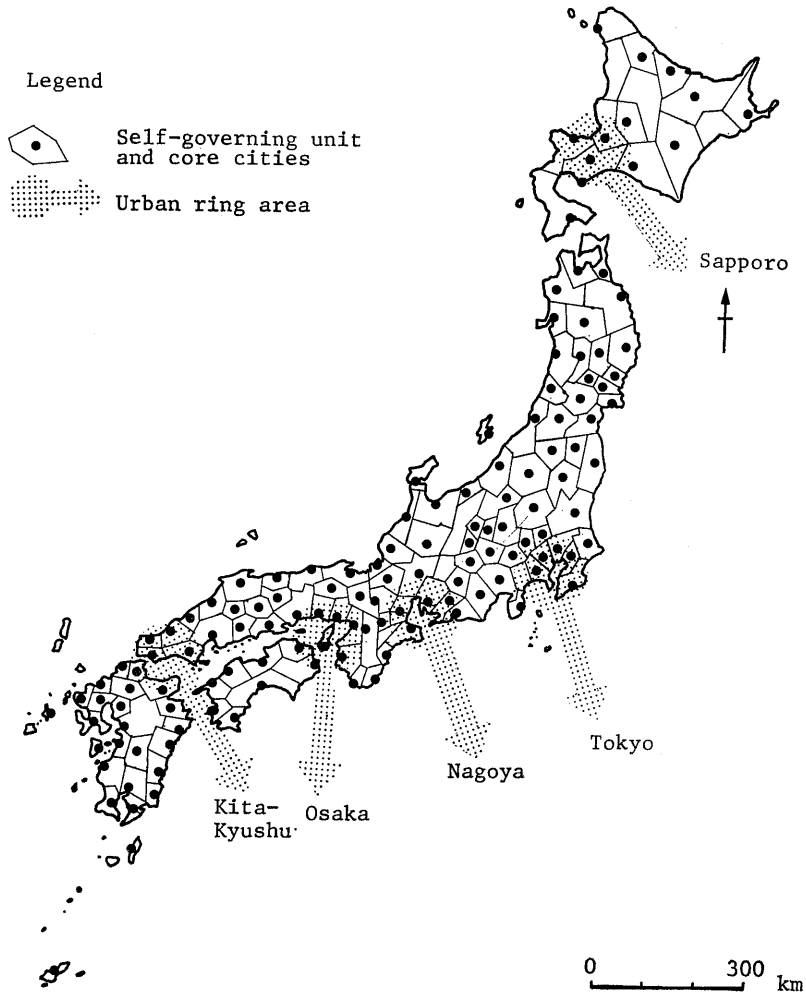
Source: Nishiyama, JCADR, 1972

Fig. 3. Structure of Self-governing Unit.

The autonomous regions had been investigated in terms of physical setting, historical background, and location of industry. (JCADR, 1972)

As a result of their thorough investigations, the country had been divided into 145 autonomous regions, shown in Figure 4. Each autonomous region is to have two basic functions; provision of the essential social services for the residents and operations and management for self-government in the region. Furthermore, each region is responsible for a portion of the regional division of labour, established by the region-wide allocation of industry, social organization, and culture in the nation. Three types of regions were devised and formed with consideration for urban functions in a national context. Thus, Sapporo, Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka and Kitakyushu metropolitan areas would act as the urban ring. These areas would span the nation like the trunk of a tree, and, from this information network, physical production networks would spread like its branches and nature conservation regions would be at the outer reaches of the branches like a tree's foliage.

The central aim of the Third Plan was to redistribute the population in order to alleviate the problems caused by the excessively high densities. Earlier development plans contributed somewhat to the increase of job opportunities in these areas, but did not fully realize their aims in this regard. However, it will not be easy to redistribute the population given the present economic circumstances. High rates of economic growth has brought the population from rural to the metropolitan areas and a corresponding period of growth in rural areas is totally needed. Therefore, in order to attain the aims of this development programme, government at all levels must find some new means of increasing job opportunities in the



Source: Nishiyama, JCADR, 1972. Partly revised by the author.

Fig. 4. Self-governing Area and Main Cities Region.

non-metropolitan areas, although the Japanese economy is likely to be characterized by lower growth rates for the foreseeable future. (Kawabe, 1980A)

In order to establish the Integrated Residence Policy, it is necessary to develop a way through which local communities will be able to participate more positively in the nation-wide plan through effective communication between the Third Comprehensive Development Plan and regional comprehensive development plans of local authorities. Therefore, the central government is expected to devise and

strengthen the various measures to develop and improve the spheres of settled habitation and pave a way for the realization of comprehensive policies for "Teijū-ken" by local government. How government at all levels will coordinate with each other and locate sites for habitation, as well as for economic activities, is a topic for the future. Meanwhile, a new incentive for development, aimed at upgrading the quality of life, must be studied over the course of time as the redistribution of population is going on. (Okita, 1979) This final point is important to consider since the urbanization trends of the 1970's and 1980's will be distinguished from those of the 1950's and 1960's.

VI. Between Policy and Reality

Postwar Japan has become an urban society and the character of the society has changed. In spite of this change, a pattern of economic growth solely for the purpose of enriching the nation has delayed the development of the institutions and facilities which this degree of urbanization may require. This tradition continued through the postwar period and led to a policy of letting urban expansion run its natural course. The production-first bias of government policy shown in the Comprehensive National Development Plan of 1962 permitted unplanned growth of urban areas. The lack of a rational land-use policy prevented the delimitation of areas in growing cities for open space.

Compared with the prewar period, the burden of military expenditure was vastly reduced. The government was able to concentrate on public investment to develop the productive base of the economy which brought rapid economic growth. The process of economic development spread from the Pacific Industrial Belt gave rise to new industrial cities, and set the guidelines for development plans throughout the country.

The overwhelming emphasis on production has created rapid economic growth, but the process of growth was so abnormal that distortions developed in due course of time. Consequently, the realization had grown that economic development would not take place without proper development of human abilities and the provision of appropriate social conditions. The promotion of social development was a necessary precondition for ensuring the continuance of economic development. Therefore, social development became a major preoccupation of Japan in the late 1960's when the New Comprehensive National Development Plan was prepared.

The basic purpose of the Third Comprehensive National Development Plan is to promote human welfare, but, under the capitalist system dominated by the logic of production, the development pattern is liable to be carefully suffused by the principle of private profit. The notion of social development based on the principle of welfare stands opposition to this principle of private profit, and decision must be made for the purpose of maintaining a balance between the two. If the welfare principle is ignored, the rationality of economic development becomes, in the long run, irrational. Accordingly, more emphasis must be given to equitable division of the "pie" rather than making the "pie" bigger. However, in reality, the emphasis was placed on raising the level of economic efficiency to increase international competitiveness,

The more the production-first approach brought prosperity and success, the more the accumulated contradictions deepened. The deficiencies of the environmental infrastructure became more evident as production levels rose. The 1970's were destined to be the period when people abandoned the easy assumption that, if only economic development were taken care of, social development would take care of itself at some specified time in the future.

In 1973 when the first year of the welfare state was declared, there came the "oil-shock", and almost immediately arguments for welfare plans had to be reconsidered. Thereafter, the growth rate decisively declined, and the diversion of funds to social development was forcibly curtailed.

The fact that Japan has emerged as an economic power among the advanced industrial countries is a matter of common knowledge, but if one looks closely at the reality, Japan is a great power with considerable problems. Even looking at the economy itself, high growth rates have failed to deal with the so-called "dualism" in industrial structure inherited from the prewar period. Ironically, this dual structure in industry is one of the contributing factors that make high growth rate possible. Although some of the extra proceeds of growth have been used to improve public welfare facilities, and levels of social security have been raised, the imbalance between production and consumption remain unaltered.

The inadequate provision of public facilities for living is a legacy of the "poverty" of modern Japan, but it is also a consequence of the fact that the Japanese people had become accustomed to such privation, and, even when they flocked to the cities, they did not press strongly for the means of collective consumption to be created. Making their work as the axis of their lives, and for the

rest of the time retreating to their so-called "my home", postwar urban Japanese have shown little concern with the neighbourhood society in which they live. (Fukutake, 1982)

The decline in the quality of community environments, both human and physical, has had a great impact on the lives of people. As a priority must be given to the protection of life, there is a need to regulate or control the growth of the economy for the sake of society. In recent years, national policy giving pre-eminence to the economy in association with regional development is becoming less persuasive. The Third Comprehensive National Development Plan, approved in 1977, is expected to give more emphasis on the protection of the environment within a framework of the national settlement system based on the integrated residence policy.

VII. Epilogue

The degree of concentration in population as well as in industry in the large metropolitan areas is remarkably high in Japan. According to information given by the National Land Agency, 63% of the nation's total bank deposits, 62% of the total wholesale value, 44% of the total industrial shipments, 69% of the college students and 73% of the computer equipments were concentrated in the two largest metropolitan areas of Tokyo and Osaka in the mid-1970's. Management functions composed of administrative, business and cultural activities constituted more than 60% of the national total. (National Land Agency, 1979) The agglomeration of management functions was a fundamental factor which brought about the population concentration in the two major metropolitan areas. Although manufacturing plants have been leaving due to the restriction on industrial sites, their head offices are still concentrated in the two largest cities, sharing locational advantages with other non-manufacturing functions.

Hino points out some facts concerning the hierarchical differentiation of cities in terms of the location of head and branch offices of large enterprises in Japan. The primate city is Tokyo which has almost 40 percent of all head offices of large companies with capital of over 100 million yen in the nation.⁵⁾ Osaka ranks the second and comprises approximately as much as one-fourth of those in Tokyo. The discrepancy in the degree of concentration of management functions between the two has widened especially since the end of World War II. (Hino, 1984)

Meanwhile, as the dominant first-order central place of the nation, the Tokyo metropolitan area continues to increase in population. On the other hand, Osaka, which used to be a first-order central place and for many years a close rival of Tokyo, now stands as a second-order central place for the southern half of the country. It seems likely that the concentration of population will continue in the Tokyo metropolitan area at the expense of other metropolitan areas within the nation. (Yamaguchi, 1983A)

According to the recent study done by Morikawa, the Japanese urban system presents a typical hierarchical structure following the Christaller's model. As long as the regional disparity between metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas continues, in contrast to some cases available in Western countries, the hierarchical structure of the national urban system dominated by Tokyo will be further strengthened, in a vertical way, without any significant inter-metropolitan migration. (Morikawa, 1985)

The Third Comprehensive National Development Plan of 1977 called for encouraging the relocation of industries as well as the relocation of educational, cultural and medical services out of the Tokyo metropolitan area. By the year 2000, the population of the Tokyo metropolitan area is expected to reach approximately 35 million in spite of reduced net in-migration. (Economic Planning Agency, 1983) In other words, the population is expected to increase by approximately eight million within the last quarter of the present century. Therefore, the problems facing Tokyo will become more serious in the future.

The redistribution of population to each local region by 2000, on the other hand, will not be an easy task, while increases in income, employment opportunity, and improvement of living conditions may be expected. The plan also requires reinforcement of the management functions in local regions as well as dispersion of those functions concentrated in Tokyo to other cities. Therefore, the most important national development policies in contemporary Japan are concerned with the questions of how to redistribute management functions which have caused the concentration of population in the Tokyo metropolitan area and how to provide an adequate level of infrastructure for local residents in each "Teijū-ken". Above all, the latter is currently being taken into reconsideration for the purpose of setting the guideline for the Fourth Comprehensive National Development Plan.

This paper is dedicated to celebrate the sixtieth birthday of Professor Dr.

Osamu Nishikawa who has devoted himself to the advancement of Japanese geography. (September 1, 1985)

Notes

- 1) Urbanism as a way of life is spreading all over Japan and influencing the lifestyles of those who are living in rural areas.
- 2) As a result, people are spread over the many districts within the swelling metropolitan areas and have few enjoyable advantages to live.
- 3) Even in prefectures where the population is declining, the prefectural seats are mostly expanding and population imbalances have been created not only on the national level but also on the prefectural level.
- 4) Originally, the official guideline was to make the "pie" bigger, that is, economic growth had to precede welfare and, unless the "pie" is big enough, the share for each would be too small.
- 5) Hino has given several reasons for the massive concentration of corporate headquarters in Tokyo as follows:

In Japan, the most important informations necessary for such decision makings as short- and long-range activities of corporations must be obtained from ministries of the central government as well as from financial and business institutions by means of personal "face-to-face" contacts rather than of telecommunication. Many Tokyo-based leading companies cited easier access to ministries of central government as one of the decisive factors for locating their headquarters in Tokyo. Furthermore, Tokyo's convenience for raising funds and international trade can also be cited as another important factor.

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