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My Correspondence with Bertrand Russell on Peace (II)

Shigetoshi Iwamatsu

January 16, 1963

Dear Mr. Iwamatsu:

Thank you very much for your letter.

I am disgusted to learn of the Government’s bill outlawing the teaching and discussion of Marxism in universities and extending political control over faculties and individual teachers. I consider this a most grave indication of the onset of full-blown authoritarian militarism in Japan and I wish to make my own protest about it. If you care to make this letter publicly known please do not hesitate to do so.

Do inform me of further developments and if there is any reprisal against you, as you indicate, be assured that I shall raise the matter publicly in this country and elsewhere.

With good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Bertrand Russell

This is a letter which Russell wrote to me in answer to my letter of December 30, 1962.

In my letter to him, I referred to the University Superintendent Bill which was going to be presented to the Parliament by the government. Most professors and students were vigourously oppos-
ing this bill, which intended to strengthen the power of the Minister of Education and the presidents of universities over faculties and individual teachers.

The following letter, also, expressed his strong opposition to the bill.

February 9, 1963

Dear Professor Iwamatsu:
Thank you very much for your letter which I have read with interest. The Bill is truly appalling and it appears that nascent Facism is a danger in Japan. I am encouraged by your brave efforts and I earnestly hope the Bill will not be effected. I have resigned as President of the Committee of 100 to enable myself to do more writing, in which I am now engaged. The report about the "Women's Strike for Peace" is quite accurate.

With every good wish,

Yours sincerely,

Bertrand Russell

This is an answer to my letter of January 31, 1963, which follows:

Your Lordship:
Thank you very much for your kind letter, which I was pleased to receive.
Today, I want to tell you many things. First of all, I must express my sincerest thanks for your kind letter, in which you stated your strongest opposition to the University Superintendent Bill and your concern for my future.
I am glad, for the present, to inform you of good news.
The Government announced that it decided not to present the
Bill to the ordinary session of the Diet, which opened on
The Education Ministry declared, however, that it had not
abandoned the Bill but that it would bring the same before
the next National Diet. The Minister of Education is
interested in passing it without fail, differing from the Prime
Minister in opinion only slightly.
There are several points in this Bill which should be criticized.
One of them seems to be the same as the taxpayers' suit
brought by some Christians when you were appointed as
Professor of the College of the City of New York in 1940. The
government and the sympathizers (including some scholars)
acknowledge the liberty of learning and self-government of
universities, and still they say that universities are self­
satisfied in the name of self-government and do not reflect
the will of the people, and that they have no system which
is responsible to the people notwithstanding their spending the
national taxes. As their counter-measures, they insist that
they should legislate the responsibility of universities to the
people. Clarification of responsibility implies:
(1) the clarification of responsibility of government to the
administration of universities,
(2) the clarification of responsibility of administrative structure
in universities (the presidents of universities).
The Minister of Education affirms that he interprets he has
a veto power as the other side of an appointment power
on university teachers and that he wants to state his
interpretation as express provisions.

The Presidents of universities stand in subtle, intermediate positions. One of them, who was a strong leftist during his period as Professor, does not resist the Education Ministry. I heard him saying so. On the other hand, they are careful enough not to say before faculties what they do not like. The Association composed of Presidents, being supported by faculties, issued the statements expressing their opposition to the Bill and presented a plan for a Managing Conference, which intends to settle disputes between Education Ministry and universities or internal troubles without intervention of the Ministry.

The Education Ministry is trying to tempt the Presidents to cater to the wishes of the Ministry. It is going to promote, by another Bill, the seven Presidents of Old Imperial Universities to attestation officials, who are the Prime Minister’s appointees through the Emperor’s attestation, and to raise their salaries by about 40 or 50 thousand yen, which is by far more than my monthly salary.

Assistant professors and lecturers are going to be excluded from faculty meetings. Some professors, who have a sense of inferiority to young blood and assume an air of superiority, welcome this Bill in their hearts. They keep silence, but I know them.

I should like to add that the anti-democratic movement in universities is not an isolated phenomenon. My description will back up the propriety of your insight, which considers this Bill a most grave indication of the onset of militarism in Japan. After 1945, militarism and ultra-patriotism were
expelled from Japan. The education in primary, middle, and high schools became extremely democratic and pacifistic. But soon Japan became to play an important role as a fort of anti-communism. American policy toward Japan changed in 1948, the police reserve force was established just after the outbreak of Korean War in 1950, and the Japan-United States Security Treaty was concluded in 1951. At the same time, the education was converted to that of approving the rearrangement.

(1) Authorization of school-books by the Education Ministry became severer in 1956. The essays which are based on the spirit of outlawry of war and democracy have been ordered cut, and if the authors do not accept it the books are not authorized.

(2) The Board of Education by public election system, which was enforced since 1948, changed to Board by appointment system in 1956. The authorities of the Minister of Education and the chiefs of local self-governing bodies were strengthened. Old soldiers and conservative persons are appointed to be members of the Board rather than progressive persons.

(3) Two so-called Education Laws were established in 1954. One says that pacifistic education is a politically prejudiced one and that all education should be neutral, and the other forbids all political activities of school teachers.

(4) The enforcement of evaluation of teachers' work in primary, middle, and high schools was legislated in 1958. Headmasters of all schools began to evaluate the work performances, specific characters, abilities and so on of their subordinates. A great many persons opposed it, saying good
education would be lost, but in vain. A tourist party composed of Diet members knew that there was no evaluation system in Europe and that the American system in its open system differed from the Japanese system, but the conservatives pretended not to know.

It is the University Superintendent Bill that is the last step of reactionism in the education world. Militarist education is advancing more and more.

Newspapers of 11th and 12th January report through Reuter and UPI that you resigned as president of the "Committee of 100" on the 10th to do a different kind of work directed toward similar ends. "He would not say what his new work involved." I heartily hope you take good care of yourself.

The news organ of the Japanese Communist Party reports some members of "Women’s Strike for Peace" in U. S. A. have been summoned to appear in the House Committee on Un-American Activities. The other newspapers do not report the matter, so far as I know.

With all good wishes,
Very respectfully yours,
Shigetoshi Iwamatsu

For several months after February 9, 1963, the following small paper was always inserted in Russell’s letters.

"If you believe that Bertrand Russell’s work for peace is valuable, perhaps you would care to help to support it financially. Its continuation depends on such support. Kindly send your contribution, large or small, to Alastair Yule (afterwards Christopher Farley), Treasurer, The Bertrand Russell Peace Fund, 22 Argyll
Mansions, King’s Road, London, S. W. 3., England.

“This note is inserted quite unknown to Lord Russell by his secretary.”

This short paper suggested the first step to Russell’s advanced activities.

At that time, I did not know about his future plans. I did, however, begin to collect money for him at once. And soon I got a small sum of donations from some of my friends and intimates.

And I tried to send them to Mr. Alastair Yule. The main part of my letter to him is as follows:

April 10, 1963

Dear Mr. Alastair Yule:

In the letter from the Earl Bertrand Russell, O. M., F. R. S., which I received in February, a note was inserted by his secretary .............

Having read it, I decided at once to send some money to you. At the same time I had a mind to raise subscriptions from my intimate friends and acquaintances, who I presumed to be much concerned about the peace problem.

And I wrote out a prospectus, as follows: “Bertrand Russell, as you know, is the most eminent, the sincerest, and the most conscientious pacifist since World War I. I have received a note from his secretary. I want to contribute to the Russell Peace Fund. I believe the money collected will be used most effectively. If you demand world peace and if you believe that Russell’s work for peace is valuable, please contribute to the Fund.”

As the result of my appeal, I have collected contributions
which amount to 17,676 yen (£17-10-0).

Sincerely yours,

Shigetoshi Iwamatsu

June 7th, 1963

Dear Mr. Iwamatsu:
Thank you very much for your kind letter. I have read it with great interest. Your efforts in Japan are admirable and deserve the gratitude of all of us who are working for peace and against the calamity of nuclear war.
I am distressed to learn of the difficulties in your movement due to the failure of many Japanese to oppose all nuclear tests irrespective of those who author them. I should encourage you in your own efforts. It is not likely that I shall be able to come to Japan, although I should enjoy seeing your country again.
I am forwarding a copy of my recent book, Unarmed Victory, which I hope you will find of interest.

With good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Bertrand Russell

This letter indicates Russell's mingled feeling of joy and sorrow, and his friendship and thanks to Japan and Japanese people.

What did Russell feel delight in? It is in our peace-movement in Japan which were described in my following letter, dated May 7, 1963, that he had pleasure.
What did Russell have a heavy heart about? It is for the difficulties in the Japanese peace-movement owing to some objection among the peace-activists that Russell felt sorrow.

Russell referred to a plan of some Japanese scientists to invite him to Japan. Hearing about this plan, I was shocked at the recklessness and wildness of the plan, and I wondered what this truly intended. What we should have done is to give more care to Russell in order that he could devote his "valuable remaining short time of his life" to many important works. We should not have persuaded him to come to Japan "as a well-known person." The scientists who intended to invite him should have done their own work for peace without using him as a tool.

May 7, 1963

Dear Lord Bertrand Russell:

I am very sorry for my having neglected to write to you for three months.

I heartily celebrate your 91st birthday. I wish you many happy returns of this happy occasion. Your good health is the greatest asset to the world. On February 28, the day before Bikini Day, the executives of the Japan Council Against A. & H. Bombs (including Mr. Kaoru Yasui, the Chief Director) resigned at the meeting of standing directors. The cause of their resignation was that they failed to solve the vexed question since the last "World Conference"—whether they should oppose or accept the Russian nuclear testing, i. e., whether they should oppose any nuclear testing by every nation or only that by Western Imperialistic nations. Although the Council is based on the naive humanism of the whole nation, which opposes all nuclear testing, the antagonism
of ideology between Socialist Party and Communist Party makes it difficult to settle the subject. To this day there is no sign of agreement. The Nagasaki Council Against A. & H. Bombs, also, has scarcely been active since last summer, except for the Bikini day meeting and my writing letters to some Americans. Only ten days ago it got into an action and I have been busy writing a propaganda bill, appeal and declaration. On May 3, three religious men (Buddhist) started on peace-pilgrimage from Nagasaki to Hiroshima, appealing for the unity and reconstruction of the ban-the-Bomb movement. We had a send-off meeting on that day. I wrote a propaganda bill for the pilgrimage and Nagasaki Appeal, which expressed my idea that political parties worried about trifles before the huge problem of general and complete disarmament. I was very much surprised when I learned you had sent a message to this pilgrimage via Japan Council. Your message was read aloud before 500 persons. Thank you very much. At the same time I am ashamed that I did not let you know about it. Please forgive me for my not writing.

The largest political problem in Japan today is that of U. S. nuclear-powered submarines' calling at Japanese ports, which happened in your country long ago. Some of us are vigorously opposing them. U. S. demands Sasebo port as a first step. On March 24 we went to a protest meeting held in Sasebo by 12 buses. About 8,000 men and women gathered there from every part of Kyushu island. Most of the citizens of Sasebo seemed to know nothing about the danger of the submarines. By now, however, I suppose they know well about it.
This problem is under discussion in the Diet.

On April 19, "The Seven Committee of the World Peace Appeal" (composed of Dr. Hideki Yukawa and others) delivered a demand which expressed an opposition to the port call to Prime Minister.

Since March 27, nuclear physicists began to subscribe their names to a declaration against the call, and on April 22 the number of signatures reached 1,002, which was nearly equal to the number of all the nuclear physicists in Japan.

The Japan Science Council unanimously adopted, at the final day session of its 39th general convention on April 26, a draft statement expressing its opposition to the U. S. N-Sub. port call, encouraged by those signatures. The contents of the statement are not so strong, but the government began to examine the Council's action, because the former suspected the Council's action as illegal. The government says that, notwithstanding the Council is a national administrative organ which was established by law, it took a political action against the government.

On April 17, Mrs. Rhena Eckert, daughter of Dr. Albert Schweitzer, arrived in Japan for a 17-day lecture tour at the invitation of the Association of Japanese Friends of Dr. Schweitzer and on April 26 called on Nagasaki. Here she visited the epi-center of the A. Bomb and A. Bomb Hospital and gave a lecture in the evening.

During last month united local elections were held and most of the governors, majors, prefectural and municipal assembly-men were re-elected. The progressive influence has not increased and the predominance of the conservative one seems
not to be crumbled. But the communist party has greatly increased the number of prefectural and municipal assemblymen.

Japanese television, radio, and newspapers report the demonstration of the British ban-the-bomb marchers on Easter and a "crude" pamphlet prepared by a group calling itself "Spies for Peace". But the general public in Japan has not so much concern about it.

I have recently heard that eminent Japanese scholars, who held the Kyoto Conference of Scientists, called the Japanese Pugwash Conference, last year, are planning to hold the Pugwash Conference in Japan this year and to invite you to Japan by a special airplane. I remembered your talk to Mr. Hidaka, who translated your "Has Man a Future?" into Japanese, saying that it made no difference whether you worked hard for peace in Japan or in England. Of course, I shall be very glad to see you in Japan. I am sure that the Japanese people, who have a tendency to grovel before authority, would welcome you so enthusiastically that you would never take a sufficient rest. For my part I hope you work hard at a place most convenient for your activity. But I can say that the Japanese people will be encouraged about the peace campaign if they see you.

........................................

With all good wishes,

Very respectfully yours,

Shigetoshi Iwamatsu

July 9, 1963

My Lord:

The Japan Council Against A. & H. Bombs, at the 60th board of standing directors on June 21, after the deadlock of about 100 days, decided to hold the 9th World Conference against A. & H. Bombs in Hiroshima for several days before and after August 6. At the same time, it demanded to prepare for holding a conference in Nagasaki on August 9.

According to this decision, Nagasaki Council convened a board of directors on July 5, at which I was present, and began to prepare for the Conference.

I am going to take charge of information and publicity, like last year.

It was settled in Tokyo not to touch and to reserve the disputed point which had resulted in the split in the Council last year, whether we should oppose all the nuclear testing of every country or only the U. S. tests.

I would like to read your message at the Nagasaki Conference this year, too. I sincerely hope your opinion will influence the Japanese people much more. I shall be very happy if you write a brief description of your beliefs.

Today is the 8th anniversary of your announcement of the Russell-Einstein Manifesto. I am very glad that the spirit of this manifesto is pervading the whole world more and
The news organ of the Japanese Communist Party reported on June 29 that the "Nation" had inserted your letter protesting against the U. S. army's use of poison in the South Viet Nam. From your letter, I learned, for the first time, that the U. S. forces were using biological weapons.

A friend of mine, a Yugoslavian, having stayed in Japan for about 8 months and now staying in India, wrote me that you had sent two mediators to New Delhi for promoting peaceful negotiation and resolution of the dispute between India and China.

Oh June 23, the meetings opposing the U. S. N-Sub. port call were held at several places in Japan, and about 10,000 men and women, including me, gathered in Sasebo.

With all good wishes,

Very respectfully yours,

Shigetoshi Iwamatsu

Having read this letter, Bertrand Russell sent me the following letter.

July 31, 1963

Dear Mr. Iwamatsu:

Thank you for your letter of July 9. I have already sent a message to Professor Yasui of the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs. He had invited me to send a message for the Ninth World Conference in Hiroshima and the Commemoration Meeting in Nagasaki. I therefore enclose a copy of this message.

I am deeply disturbed to learn from your letter that the
Japan Council believes that it can continue its work without settling the matter in dispute, namely, opposition to Soviet nuclear tests. There can be no effective movement with integrity which does not maintain a comparable attitude to the testing of nuclear weapons by any nation. It is not possible for me to send a message which does not make it clear that I have opposed Soviet nuclear explosions as firmly as those of the Western powers. If it is decided to censor any reference to this matter, I should be shocked. I deeply hope that this will not be the case.

Yours sincerely,

Bertrand Russell

This letter gave me a great shock. I was deeply disturbed by the fact that Russell had been deeply disturbed by the Japan Council's attitude to the Soviet nuclear testing. This letter clearly expressed Russell's solid belief of pacifism, which the Japan Council decided to censor. His agony was so deep, because he had believed that he had joined hands with the Japan Council to fight for abolition of all nuclear-weapons.

It was in the evening of August 9 that I got and read this letter. At that time, I happened to go back to my home from a Nagasaki meeting broken-off because of the sharply divided opinions among the members. I hastened to read the letter and got a great shock from it, because I understood his agony came from the same antagonism.

I went to the meeting of "Talking with A. Bomb Sufferers at the centre" at night, and announced Russell's letter to the 300 or so people at the meeting. Most of them did not receive my
announcement with a clapping of hands. I clearly recognized the dominant influence of the Japan Council was the Japan Communist Party and its followers, for the party had consistently opposed the comparable attitude to the testing of nuclear weapons by any nation. The Japan Communist Party was, in short, set up in fierce opposition to Bertrand Russell.

Russell’s message which was sent to the World Conference Against A. & H. Bombs was as follows:

It is encouraging that the pressure of public opinion against the crime of nuclear bomb tests is at last achieving results. The three powers which have been the most notorious criminals in this respect, the United States, the Soviet Union and Great Britain, have been forced to recognise the strength of opinion which finds these experiments on human beings utterly repugnant. All those who have helped to bring about this change are to be congratulated on their achievement. They should take heart at this hopeful turn of events. This is, however, only the very beginning of the road. All nuclear tests everywhere must be stopped. At a time when the first nuclear powers are beginning to display a little caution and reason, the French Government is showing the grossest irresponsibility in disregarding this example and preparing to resume its fiendish experiments. We may expect comparable behaviour by all the second-class powers anxious to acquire these awesome weapons. There can be no end to all this until a world-wide treaty is accepted and that will not happen until China has been accepted into the community of nations. It is probable that the great powers do not have the need of nuclear tests which they had previously. The vast stockpiles
are already accumulated. The purpose of testing weapons is to perfect them for warfare, and nuclear war is fully prepared. There are now sufficient stockpiles of explosive material to destroy all human life on this planet several times over. It is against this terrible threat that we must struggle if man is to survive. I look to the strengthening of the movement in Japan against all nuclear war preparations everywhere, because the Japanese people have already suffered so horribly. This message, also, clearly showed his firm belief, which was antagonistic to the J. C. P.

Before receiving the letter of July 31, I wrote a letter to him on August 6, describing the latest development of the controversy in the Japan Council.

August 6, 1963

My Lord:
I am concerned for your welfare. I hope that you are only too busy to write a message to me. We are glad to know that a partial nuclear test ban treaty was agreed upon, although it is only a first step to our goal.

To my regret, I must inform you that the Ninth World Conference in Hiroshima was disunited and the Japan Council left the management of it to the Hiroshima Council yesterday. The Nagasaki Meeting, which was originally designed to be held as a link of the World Conference, will be held only as a national or a fractional, not as a world conference.

For these several days, all the mass communication media have reported the internal trouble of the Japan Council in detail.

The point of dispute is, as I already informed you, whether
we should oppose the nuclear testing of every country or only that of Imperialist countries.

Yesterday, the newsmen of the Nagasaki Branch of the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) came to see me and recorded my speech about you and the Japanese peace-movement. My recorded speech was broadcasted over the radio this morning. Tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, the same newsmen will come to see me in order to telebroadcast my speech and your pamphlet, which you wrote and sent to me last year. I shall have to talk about the way that the Japanese peace-movement should go.

I owe to you my best thanks.

With all good wishes,

Very respectfully yours,

Shigetoshi Iwamatsu

After the interruption of the World Conference because of the fierce opposition to the comparable attitude to the nuclear testing by any nation, I wrote a letter to Russell on August 13, in which I reported the situation of the Conference in detail.

August 13, 1963

My Lord:

Thank you very much for your kind letter of July 31 and a copy of your message, which I received on the evening of August 9th, I keenly felt the importance of my responsibility when I knew my letter had deeply disturbed your study.

I think, however, that even now it is not necessary to correct the statement in my last letter and yet I believe that the situation really substantiates it.
Although the Hiroshima Meeting was planned to be held from 2nd to 7th of August, it was impossible to open on the 2nd, owing to the antagonism between the Socialist and the Communist Parties concerning the matter in dispute, namely, opposition to the nuclear tests by any nation. On the 3rd, Dr. Yasui, chairman, proposed his compromise plan in order to save the situation and to hold the 9th Conference as scheduled. His plan is as follows:

1. We oppose nuclear weapons of all types and of all countries and try to bring about a total ban on nuclear weapons.
2. At the same time, we reveal various ends and backgrounds concerning nuclear tests and policies of nuclear powers together with the general public, because there are differences in the end and background between powers.
3. We push ahead the ban-the-bomb movement by staging various drives whenever circumstances require them.

The Communist Party is dead set against (1), and rather opposes (2), because the difference of meaning in the nuclear testing and weapons between imperialistic and socialistic countries is vague. The Socialist Party opposes (1), because it does not definitely express “opposing all nuclear tests by any country.” Therefore, this proposal failed to bring about an agreement on policy for the Conference.

After all, the Conference was opened on the 5th. But the Socialist Party and General Council of Japan Trade Unions did not participate in it, but held a separate meeting of their own. On the 7th, when the Conference in Hiroshima was closed, three resolutions were adopted. (1) A resolution concerning the united actions, (2) a resolution concerning medical and
economic aid for the A. Bomb victims and (3) a recommendation for a joint international movement which was drafted by foreign and Japanese delegates.

In (1), it is resolved that because we differ in opinion as to whether we should make it a rule of the movement to oppose all nuclear testing and weapons of all countries or not, we should continue to talk in the future and that we should make the concrete problems, in which we can agree with each other at once, opposing the N-Sub. port call, placement of F105D, and the base of Okinawa, establishment of a nuclear disarmament area in Asia, and demanding complete and general disarmament into our urgent aims.

In (3), it is pointed out that the nuclear war policy of U. S. leaders is the largest threat to world peace, and nothing is said about the limited nuclear test ban treaty.

The Nagasaki Meeting, August 9, was broken off owing to the antagonism between the Socialist and the Communist Parties.

I announced your kind letter on the night of the 9th before 300 peace workers, coming from every part of Japan, at a social gathering surrounding the victims. But my speech was supported only by about 10% of the people in attendance.

The most dominant idea in the Council Against A. & H. Bombs is as follows; the unity of the peace-movement is a supreme order, and in order to unite the movement, we should wait to settle the matter in dispute, namely, the nuclear testing by any nation. We should unify our activities in resolving the concrete problems in which we can agree with each other.
I have several criticisms on the present situation of the Council Against A. & H. Bombs, to which I do not refer here.

On the 10th, a newsman of the Asahi (one of the largest neutral newspapers in Japan) came to see me and collected data on your kind letter. The news was published in the issue of the 11th, which is enclosed here.

On 12th, a newsman of the Nagasaki Branch of Japan Broadcasting Corporation came to see me and recorded my commentary on your kind letter. I pointed out that according to your Manifesto we should think and act as members of the human race, not as members of this or that nation, creed, or political party. I explained that your ideas were different from the ideas of the dominant people in the peace campaign in Japan. My recorded speech was locally broadcasted by radio this morning.

My future activity will confront difficulties in the Council. But I will try to do my best according to your thought. I deeply hope that you will continue to study for peace in full vigor.

With all good wishes,

Very respectfully yours,

Shigetoshi Iwamatsu

In reply to my letter, Russell wrote a letter to me as follows:

August 21, 1963

Dear Mr. Iwamatsu:

Thank you for your letter. My own view is that of the Socialist Party. I oppose tests and nuclear weapons of any
country. Please make this publicly known.

With good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Bertrand Russell

This is a very short but important letter. I thought, having read this letter, that Russell felt relieved at information of one Japanese political party which had the same opinion of pacifism as his.

(March 12, 1976)