Reaction of Japan to the Formation of Malaysia Reflected in Foreign Policy of Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda

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Preface

This paper is another supplement to the previous paper which the writer wrote in the Research and Annual Report of 1973. In this paper, he tries to analyze how Japan reacted to the formation of Malaysia under the Ikeda Administration between July 19, 1960 and November 9, 1964.

It is divided into three parts; firstly, what H. Ikeda as Prime Minister was going to do is discussed from the viewpoints of reconstruction and prosperity; secondly, his training in foreign affairs is examined from the standpoint of confidence; thirdly, his policy towards the Malaysian Dispute is studied from the point of view of mediation.

Hayato Ikeda as Prime Minister

When Hayato Ikeda succeeded Nobusuke Kishi as Prime Minister of Japan on July 19, 1960, Japan still remained confused and
disturbed in the aftermath of the anti-security-treaty demonstrations. Moreover the forced passage of the revised mutual Japan-U. S. security treaty bill through the Diet caused the anger of a great many Japanese and brought forth in their hearts serious distrust in the Government led by the Liberal-Democratic Party.

In the first interview immediately after Ikeda was nominated Prime Minister, he outlined his program.¹ He stated that he would make every effort to conduct the affairs of state with “tolerance and patience” in order to regain the confidence of the people in the Government.² He firmly believed that through the stabilization of domestic affairs, Japan would be able to become a nation to be trusted and respected in the world.

In order to carry out this program, he decided to adopt his pet economic plan. He proclaimed the so-called income-doubling policy on September 5, 1960. Indeed he predicted that the income of the Japanese people would be doubled in a decade or in 1960s.³ The plan was well received and applauded by the people and thus, their cooperation was ensured. They singlemindedly endeavored to complete it within the projected period and fulfilled it in a shorter time than ten years.

Even before the Prime Minister announced his income-doubling policy, the recovery of Japan’s economy was at such a rapid pace that the world soon witnessed Japan surpass its prewar highest level of economic production and blossom into an economic giant Japan had never experienced before. As a matter of fact, in the years from 1947 to 1952 the average annual rate of economic growth was 11.5 per cent. Even from 1954 on the gross national product of Japan grew by more than 10 per cent annually.⁴ This continuous
economic success was, therefore, due to the acumen of Ikeda, as Prime Minister as well as a Minister charged with economic matters in the past, to grasp an existing economic trend and his policy gave a new impetus to the trend.

The remarkable growth in the economic strength of Japan and the stabilization of its internal affairs gave the Japanese people as well as their leaders more than ever confidence in their power status among the nations of the world. The people began to urge their government to take a more positive and independent policy in diplomacy worthy of their power position. At the same time peoples of other countries came to expect Japan to play a more and more active role in world affairs in proportion its economic strength.


His Growth in Diplomacy

As far as diplomacy was concerned, Ikeda’s ability in this field had never been tested yet. Therefore, his approach, soon
after he became Prime Minister, was very cautious following his predecessor’s policy. It was, however, due to his trip to the United States and his talk with President J. F. Kennedy that Ikeda came to understand problems among nations from the global point of view.\(^1\) The conference covered various fields of current interest in common with the two countries. It ended with much success at least on the side of Japan. Both Japan and the United States agreed between themselves that a Joint Japan-America Economic Committee should be formed to meet regularly for the furtherance of trade between them and, moreover, the people of Okinawa should be allowed to hoist the flag of Japan for the first time since the war.\(^2\) Besides he made a speech in the House of Representatives in Washington to the effect that he was not there to request economic aid from the United States. The congressmen accorded a standing ovation to him.\(^3\) He must have felt elated considering that many visits to America had been heretofore made mainly in order to ask for a loan. He seemed to be convinced that Japan came to be highly esteemed internationally. Thus, the successful trip was to bolster his confidence.

In the middle of November 1961, Prime Minister Ikeda made his first visit to Pakistan, India, Burma and Thailand in this order. In each country he emphasized the merits of free economy stating that it had been of great service to the construction of modern Japan since the Meiji Restoration. At the same time he urged the leaders of those countries to modernize their economy and make their products more competitive in the international market.\(^4\)

Although, in the earlier trip to America, the Prime Minister had been on the side of learning, yet in this trip he was on the
side of teaching. Throughout Southeast Asia where he visited, he observed the poverty of these nations on the spot and realized how significant it would be for Japan to give its economic aid to them and buy their products lest they should accept aid from the People’s Republic of China. In this way, he began to form his much economic-oriented aid policy towards Southeast Asia which was fundamentally anti-communism so that those countries in the region might be retained in free world. In this sense, his policy was under the influence of the so-called cold war ideology.

One year later, Prime Minister Ikeda, at the invitations of western European countries, visited West Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Italy, the Vatican and the Netherlands. The main aim of this trip was to have the leaders of these countries understand that Japan as well as the United States and Europe was "one of the three columns" which were supposed to support the free world and, therefore, the relation between Japan and these countries should be further strengthened like the one between Japan and the United States.

Along this line, he asked each country to abolish its trade discrimination against Japan by means of invoking the Article 35 of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade; asked for its help for Japan to join the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; and wanted the European Economic Community not to be exclusive. His assertion was well accepted and his requests were almost allowed. The United Kingdom signed the long-pending Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation revoking the invocation of the Article 35 of the GATT against Japan. France and those countries of Benelux showed their favorable attitudes
to further their talks with Japan concerning this request. Each country expressed its support for Japan to join the OECD and declared the EEC would be not exclusive. 8)

In this way, his trip to Europe was also very much successful in convincing these European countries that Japan came to occupy an important place in the free world through its complete recovery and further expansion of economy. At the same time, Prime Minister Ikeda had gotten mastery of world affairs and had improved his diplomatic skill with each trip abroad. He seemed to have gained full confidence in his own ability to conduct foreign affairs as well as domestic affairs. With this self-confidence, the Prime Minister as one of leaders in the free world was to attempt his first but last mediation in the Malaysian dispute.

(1) Ito, op. cit., p. 129.
(2) Gaimusho, Waga Gaiko no Kinkyo, no. 6, 1962, pp. 102-105, and Ito, op. cit., p. 128.
(3) Ito, op. cit., p. 128.
(5) Ito, op. cit., 137-139.

His Policy towards the Malaysian Dispute 1)

On May 23, 1963, President A. Sukarno of Indonesia visited Japan and stayed until June 2. During his stay, he met Prime Minister Ikeda and Foreign Minister M. Ōhira for the purpose of
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talking about the Malaysian question as well as the acceleration of economic cooperation and the promotion of friendly and better relations between Indonesia and Japan. Moreover, he invited Premier T. A. Rahman of Malay to meet him at Tokyo for a talk about the Malaysian problem. Premier Rahman accepted the invitation and came to Japan on May 30, staying there until June 5. President Sukarno and Premier Rahman met at the official residence of Foreign Minister Ōhira on May 31 and June 1.

The meetings were held at friendly atmosphere, in which Premier Rahman explained to President Sukarno about the meaning of forming Malaysia for the first time and the President took deep interest in his explanation. In the end, they issued a joint-declaration to the effect that the differences between Malay and Indonesia should be settled in the spirit of friendship and goodwill and both countries should refrain from attacking and criticizing each other.

In the meanwhile, Premier Rahman called on Prime Minister Ikeda and Foreign Minister Ōhira to talk about the Malaysia's plan as well as the promotion of friendly and good relations between Malay and Japan. The attention of those countries which had been concerned with the dispute was focussed on the Tokyo conference. Some guessed that Prime Minister Ikeda had exerted favorable influence on President Sukarno for a meeting with Premier Rahman. Others denied that Japan had played its role in setting up the Tokyo meeting. It seems to the writer, however, that Japan did exercise its more or less influence over Indonesia for a consultation with Malay for the following reasons: firstly, President Sukarno came to Japan and called on Prime Minister Ikeda and Foreign Minister
Öhira; secondly, he invited Premier Rahman for a talk; thirdly, the meetings were held at the official residence of the Foreign Minister; fourthly, the Premier also called on the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister; finally, Indonesia had been economically connected with Japan.

It was reported that the Foreign Office of Japan welcomed a favorable turn of the situation through the conferences between the President and the Premier and expected Malaysia to come into being on the appointed date of August 31 without any conflict of forces in its process. Moreover, the Foreign Office called up to Tokyo its ambassadors and ministers from the Asian-Pacific area and held conferences from June 11 to 14 in order to analyze the current situation of the area and examine how to promote Japan’s economic cooperation effectively. Without doubt the Malaysian question must have been one of main agenda in the conferences.

The successful Tokyo meetings paved the way for the Manila conference which was held by the Foreign Ministers of Indonesia, the Philippines and Malay. This led finally to the summit conference which was held at Manila from July 30 to August 5. Through a series of meetings, Presidents Sukarno, D. Macapagal and Premier Rahman reached an agreement on the process of recognizing Malaysia. The Nippon Keizai Shinbun reported in its editorial that it was delightful for the stability of Asia that the Manila summit conference succeeded in solving the dispute concerning the formation of Malaysia.

From the beginning, Japan seemed to have been interested in the idea of forming Malaysia mainly due to economic and political reasons and have watched each step to the realization of Malaysia.
So when Malaysia was formally established on September 16, 1963, the Japanese Government gave its immediate recognition to Malaysia by sending Transport Minister K. Ayabe as ambassador extraordinary to participate in the ceremony of Malaysia Day.\(^{10}\)

No sooner had Malaysia come into being than Indonesia and the Philippines declared their flat refusal of recognizing it. Mob attacked the British and Malaysian embassies and consulates in Djakarta. On the following day, Premier Rahman severed diplomatic relations with both Indonesia and the Philippines. The Indonesian embassy at Kuala Lumpur was attacked by mob.\(^{11}\)

This situation posed a serious diplomatic dilemma for Japan since Japan came to renounce its self-imposed neutral attitude towards the Malaysian question by having recognized Malaysia which Indonesia and the Philippines refused to recognize. In order to solve this dilemma and to impress on the United States and European countries his leadership in Asia, Prime Minister Ikeda tried to make use of the already scheduled trip to the Philippines, Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand.

According to M. Ito, he was requested by Prime Minister H. Macmillan to influence President Sukarno not to interfere with the formation of Malaysia when he had visited the United Kingdom in the latter part of 1962. His “first motive” for another trip to Southeast Asia, therefore, originated from the very request of Premier Macmillan.\(^{12}\)

In the foreign press interview of September 19, Prime Minister Ikeda stated that it was very regrettable that diplomatic relations between Malaysia on one hand and Indonesia and the Philippines on the other were severed owing to the formation of Malaysia.
Further he indicated his willingness to mediate between them whether mediation was requested or not. In fact, Japan's mediation was asked by Indonesian Foreign Minister R. Subandrio when he dropped in Tokyo on his way to New York and met one of officials of the Foreign Office.

Encouraged by the Indonesian request, the Malaysian indication of welcoming Japan's mediation and the support of the press in Japan, Prime Minister Ikeda left Haneda for his first stop, Manila on September 23. On his way, he held a press interview in the plane and told the reporters that he would like to be of any service to the solution of the Malaysian question. Thus, he repeatedly showed his positive attitude towards mediation.

In Manila, however, his proposal of intercession was politely but frankly turned down by President Macapagal who had pointed out that the representatives of the three countries themselves were in process of talking about a peaceful settlement in the United Nations and, with its success, a summit conference would be held for it. Therefore, Prime Minister Ikeda only wished its success and did not give his concrete advice concerning the matter.

In Djakarta, he acted more actively than in Manila. Since President Sukarno had already accepted Japan's mediation, Prime Minister Ikeda talked with the President directly about concrete measures to settle the dispute. In the joint declaration, he expressed his ardent hope that the leaders of Maphilindo should consult one another in the spirit of the Manila conference for the purpose of contributing to regional stability, peace and mutual prosperity. At the same time, he succeeded in persuading the President to take a more friendly attitude to the United Kingdom.
by taking down an Indonesian flag hoisted in the British embassy. Further he invited the British ambassador to talk about his view of a peaceful settlement of the Malaysian conflict and asked that both the United Kingdom and Malaysia should act with prudence. Furthermore, he invited the American ambassador and explained to the Japanese view of a peaceful solution of the conflict.\(^{19}\)

In the press interview of September 28, Prime Minister Ikeda himself stated; "I think that the danger around Malaysia will be settled through a summit conference of the three countries, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines."\(^{20}\) As the result of his effort, the realization of a summit conference by the Maphilindo countries was reported to be very much possible in one of the following cities; Manila, Bangkok, and Tokyo.\(^{21}\)

In Canberra and Wellington, Prime Minister Ikeda met Premiers Sir R. Menzies and K. Holyoake and told them of his view on the Malaysian conflict as well as the course of his meetings with Presidents Sukarno and Macapagal. Further he asked that since those three countries tried to settle the dispute peacefully among themselves, they should kindly watch the process.\(^{22}\) Furthermore, he told the reporters that although the United States was reported to freeze its aid to Indonesia, Japan would advance its aid more and more to Indonesia.\(^{23}\)

As for Malaysia, the Prime Minister let the Japanese ambassador at Kuala Lumpur inform the Malaysian Government of Japan's hope of a peaceful settlement of the Malaysian dispute as well as the outcome of his meetings with Presidents Macapagal and Sukarno ---both of them had intentions of settling the conflict peacefully--- in the course of the trip.\(^{24}\)
The Asahi Shinbun evaluated it highly in its editorial that Prime Minister Ikeda had paved the way for a peaceful and voluntary solution to the Malaysian question through his trip. It further commented that his act could be said to have cast off the shell of traditional diplomacy of Japan since World War II, in which Japan had not held any concrete policy towards Southeast Asia except for that of reparation. In its editorial, the Nippon Keizai Shinbun also appreciated the effort of the Prime Minister to bring about peace between Malaysia on one hand and Indonesia and the Philippines on the other and hoped that the three countries should make terms with one another in the spirit of the Maphilindo.

Despite of his active diplomacy, however, Prime Minister Ikeda was not able to persuade the Maphilindo leaders to hold a summit conference immediately and came to leave it to them. After the trip, he adopted a wait-and-see policy towards the Malaysian dispute for the time being. At the same time he got much involved in domestic politics, that is to say, a dissolution of the Diet and a general election.

It was not until May 1964 when R. A. Butler, British Foreign Secretary visited Japan to attend the second periodical council that Japan had seriously taken up the Malaysian issue again. Foreign Minister Ohira and Foreign Secretary Butler were reported to discuss a formula for a peaceful solution of the Malaysian conflict, which resented Premier Rahman rather strongly. Prime Minister Ikeda displayed to the Foreign Secretary his hitherto unchanging-positive attitude towards the dispute.

In the earlier part of June, the Japanese Government was notified by Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia respectively
that they would like to hold the second Tokyo summit and request Japan to provide every convenience for it. Therefore, it informed them that it would welcome the summit and do them all the kind offices in its power.\(^29\)

In this way, the second Tokyo summit was held from June 18 to 21. In the meantime, Prime Minister Ikeda met the Maphilindo leaders one by one and made every effort to mediate between them. The summit, however, ended without producing any definite solution to the dispute. Instead, the Maphilindo leaders agreed to create a four-nation Afro-Asian Conciliation Commission whose counsel they would accept.\(^30\) Nonetheless, the Commission was never realized due to disputes over its conditions of reference.

The Japanese Government was disillusioned with President Sukarno after the failure of the second Tokyo summit of June and the following Indonesian troop landings on Malaya in August and September.\(^31\) The Japan Times reported on August 24:

Government leaders are disappointed and frustrated that economic help and diplomatic persuasion by this country have failed to bring about a sound redirection of Djakarta's foreign and domestic politics. The disappointment is reflected in the fact that the Government has given no new aid to Djakarta on a Government basis since the US\$12 million emergency commodity grant last October.

On November 9, 1964, Prime Minister Ikeda resigned due to his illness without fulfilling his last diplomatic ambitions which were to mediate in the Malaysian dispute and to establish an economic community in Southeast Asia like the European Economic Commu-
nity. Although the effort of mediation had been continued under the Satō Administration, yet it did not succeed.


(2) Gaimusho, Waga Gaiko no Kinkyo, no. 8, 1964, p. 96.


(4) Asahi Shinbun, June 1, 1963.

(5) Gaimusho, op. cit., p. 96.

(6) Foreign press and some scholars maintain that Japan played its role whereas the Government circles deny it.


(8) Nippon no Ushio, op. cit., p. 146.

(9) Nippon Keizai Shinbun, August 7, 1963.

(10) Gaimusho, op. cit., pp. 84-85.


(21) Ibid.

(22) Itō, op. cit., p. 207.
Conclusion

The writer maintains that Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda succeeded in reconstructing Japan into an economic giant which, in turn, had the Japanese people regain confidence in their Government. The prosperity and confidence led them to demand of the Government a more positive and independent policy worthy of its power status in foreign affairs.

He further believes that the diplomatic ability of the Prime Minister had been steadily developed through each trip abroad so marvelous that he had been able to have Japan trusted and respected among nations in the world, though the situation had been favorable towards Japan. This greatly bolstered up his confidence which prompted him to mediate in the Malaysian dispute.

Furthermore, he holds that even though Prime Minister Ikeda had not been successful in mediating in the Malaysian dispute and in establishing an economic community in Southeast Asia, yet he unfolded his positive and independent kind of diplomacy, which had
never been made before, as far as the Malaysian dispute was concerned. In this sense, he could be said to set an example for the following Prime Ministers to follow, though there are much pros and cons on his diplomacy in general.