



~ Think Together about the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations ~

Trends in the Diet

House of Councilors

The Special Committee for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations of the House of Councilors (chaired by Mr. Kiyoshi Nishikawa) held a free discussion session on May 8. After listening to opinions from governmental witnesses and Diet Staff members on the relocation of the Diet and other organizations, each member representing his party expressed his opinion and the committee discussed the significance and necessity of the relocation of the Diet and other organizations, such as disaster response capabilities, and procedures to reduce the number of candidate relocation sites.

Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations Homepage Renewed

The composition of the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations Homepage has been greatly improved to enable easy access to relevant information and an "Opinions Recruited!"

Send Your Opinion from Here" button has been provided at the central bottom of the top page to enable those who have opinions concerning the relocation of the Diet and other organizations to find contact address easily.

We intend to continue providing a variety of information concerning the relocation of the Diet and other organizations on the Homepage.

Please be sure to visit the web site

(at <http://www.mlit.go.jp/kokudokeikaku/daishu/English/english.htm>)

Image of the Top Page of the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations Homepage



Image of Notice

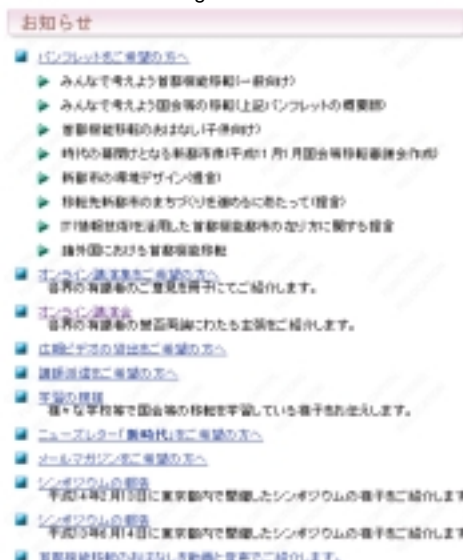


Image of Capital Functions Relocation in Foreign Countries



(Sorry, Japanese Only)

Roundtable Talk on the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations Held

A narrowing of candidate relocation sites of the Diet and other organizations is now being deliberated by the Special Committees for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations of the House of Councilors from a wide point of view. With this in mind, the "Roundtable Talk on the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations" was held on April 10 to acquire opinions from knowledgeable persons in various sectors to obtain useful information for this deliberation. The proceedings of the Roundtable Talk were published in the Sankei Newspaper dated April 22 (dated April 23 for the Western Head Office edition). The outlines of the Talk are introduced here.

- Participants
- Mr. Taichi Sakaiya: an Author
 - Mr. Hiroshi Ouchi: Professor of the Engineering Department, Shibaura Institute of Technology
 - Mr. Taskashi Onishi: Professor of the Frontier Science and Technology research Center, the University of Tokyo
 - Mr. Jitsuro Terashima: Director of the Strategic Research Institute, Mitsui & Co., Ltd.
 - Mr. Kazuo Hiramoto: Executive Director (in Charge of Research) of Mitsubishi Research Institute Co., Ltd.

< Significance of the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations >

Mr. Sakaiya "The world has changed remarkably since the late 1990s, from an era of standardized mass production to an era of diversified wisdom. This change began in the eighties in the USA and Europe and has also progressed rapidly in Japan since the late nineties. During such times, bureaucrat-led monopolar concentration yields enormous negative effects. Therefore, I think we should overcome the bureaucrat-led monopolar concentration now. In this sense, the importance and necessity of this problem increased when the basic law for the relocation of the Diet and other organizations was established."

Mr. Terashima "Speaking from a positive standpoint, I think that the problem of the capital functions relocation, has become very important as an opportunity to convert Japan paradigmatically in the twenty-first century. I think it might be the time for the modern Japan to cope with a highly experimental project by investing its accumulated technologies, human resources, and funds. I suppose that the terrorist incident in New York might have created a more miserable impact if New York and Washington, D.C. were concentrated in the same area, thus the significance of the relocation has further increased in this respect."

Mr. Hiramoto "I think future nations and cities should be very safe. A large population concentrated in Tokyo in the era of the bubble economy and the problem of the relocation of the Diet and other organizations was taken up then. Inflow of population further increased in 2001 and 2002, and it has now reached a level higher than in the era of the bubble economy. I am afraid that the relative status of Tokyo in our nation has been a reverse upgrade.

For example, Internet junction points are dispersed to a variety of locations in the USA but they are mainly concentrated in Tokyo in Japan. If they were affected by some terrorist incident like the one that occurred in New York, Japan's Internet capabilities would be destroyed. It is problematic that such concentration in a huge city like Tokyo has further weakened Japan. In addition, it is said that there is a high probability of a plate-type earthquake exceeding the Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in this area and such incidents like the simultaneous terrorist attacks in the USA could also occur in Japan. In contrast, we are taught that lands and cities that are dispersed, of low density, and blended with natural surroundings are very resistant to such possibilities."

Mr. Onishi "I think we were able to call the status in Japan a dipolar concentration when the capital functions relocation was decided in the Diet because the population of Nagoya was barely in an inflow condition, but the present condition has literally become a monopolar concentration because concen-

tration in Nagoya has been mitigated. It would be all right if everybody was happy with that condition, but I think a vision to see what the New Japan could be is necessary, as Mr. Terashima said. In short, that means to construct a country of rivalry between warlords. In addition to Tokyo, cities with their own advanced functions have already been formulated in Japan. Therefore, we should construct a country of rivalry between warlords utilizing their infrastructures. I think the capital functions relocation will offer a good opportunity to have such a national land structure."

Mr. Ouchi "I have given lectures on the capital functions relocation to students for the past six years. Seeing their reactions, they seem puzzled as to why I still keep discussing the relocation of Tokyo, or think that the capital functions relocation is for solving problems in Tokyo. I think that we must correct these misunderstandings.

I think there are two points of view for seeing the relocation. One is urgency and the other is importance. Seen from these two points of view, reform of the overall national administration, cited as the major good of the relocation can be given priority because of its very high importance, but how is it from the viewpoint of urgency? I understand that improvement of the earthquake and disaster response capability is of great concern from the emergency point of view. As it could easily be expected that we would be thrown into a panic with a great effects not only on the Diet but also on the



world economy if we had a serious earthquake at this point of time, I think it is necessary to prepare back-ups for pivotal functions however small their scale is from the safety assurance point of view

Concerning the other point, importance, I think that asking how the Diet should be from the people's viewpoint is highly

sensible. I think the capital functions relocation is a significant and important problem because the Diet will change simultaneously with the relocation."

Mr. Sakaiya "The problem of the capital functions relocation is taken up as a physical problem of the national land structure, but I think the cultural problem is more important. The city of Tokyo was constructed to implement beaurocrat-led standardized mass production. Not only politics and administration, but also economic activities, information transmission, and cultural creation were concentrated in Tokyo. This made Japan the most successful standardized mass producing and modern industrial country in the world. However, modern industrial countries have run their course and now have to be converted to intelligence-valued societies. The problem is whether Japan can be converted while leaving the capital functions in Tokyo.

Looking at Japanese history, eras are called by the names of the locations of the capital functions. After all, relocation of the capital functions always resulted in the change of an era in Japan. You may say that the era was changed without relocation of the capital functions in the Meiji Restoration. Strictly speaking, the 14th shogun Iemochi and his guardian, Yoshinobu who later become the 15th shogun, went to Kyoto in January 1863. Daimyos were also gathered to Kyoto. The capital functions were finally relocated completely to Kyoto, after all, and drastic reform was implemented during the succeeding five years. The capital was relocated to Tokyo again after the new Meiji government was established and they decided to construct a modern industrial country. The Meiji Restoration would never have been realized without these five years. From this historical fact, we can see how decisive effects on the culture and the society are created by the location of the capital functions. I think it would be very difficult to create a new society, economy, and culture and achieve real reform by making Japan an intelligence-valued society without this capital functions relocation."

(Continued to the next and the second next editions)

★ Topics

Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations Being Studied at Various Places



Otsu Rotary Club (Regular Meeting)

An MLIT official visited the regular meeting of the Otsu Rotary Club held on April 30 in Otsu City, Shiga Prefecture and gave a lecture on the recent status of the relocation of the Diet and other organizations utilizing pamphlets related to the relocation.

The Executive Committee of Kanto and Tokyo Department Stores Association

The Executive Committee of Kanto and Tokyo Department Stores Association held a meeting on April 19 in Tokyo. The members watched a public relations video prepared by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport (MLIT), and the Director of the MLIT Capital Functions Relocation Division gave a lecture utilizing a presentation with a personal computer. After the lecture, they exchanged opinions actively.



Recent Major Activities Related to the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations in Each Region

- April 16 The Tochigi Prefectural Residents' Council for Promoting the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations prepared special pamphlets for schoolchildren and distributed them to all fourth-grade pupils in Tochigi Prefecture and others.
- April 22 The Committee for the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of Osaka University of Economics Memorial Project and a large audience listened to a keynote speech by Member Masaaki Nakayama of the House of Representatives and a panel discussion by four knowledgeable persons.



Accessing Various Information

Various information concerning the capital functions relocation has been provided on the MLIT Homepage on the Internet. Please visit this web-site.

Also if you are interested in items in this leaflet and others, please let us know. We will pleasingly send related documents to you. We are awaiting your contact.

We are Waiting for Your Contact

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