



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

Trends in the Diet

House of Representatives

The Special Committee for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations of the House of Representatives (chaired by Mr. Kentaro Ishihara) held a free discussion on May 31 and all members expressed their opinions, including those concerning how to reduce the number of candidate relocation sites. In closing the meeting, Chairman Ishihara expressed his intention to resign from his position.

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 an opinion and question and answer session on May 15 inviting Governor Shintaro Ishihara of the Metropolis of Tokyo and Mr. Taichi Sakaiya as witnesses. The major opinions are introduced here.

Governor Ishihara of the Metropolis of Tokyo

Facilities to achieve pivotal functioning of the country are now being renewed, but we must consider whether this renewal is compatible with relocating pivotal organizations of the country through the capital functions relocation. The true nature of the new civilization called the computer age is concentration and accumulation, and politics and economics are inseparable from the civilization engineering point of view.

Mr. Taichi Sakaiya

The capital functions relocation is a paradigmatic change and a grand cultural and social project, and must not be considered as a public undertaking. The concentration of population in Tokyo has greatly accelerated. However, expenditure for the capital functions relocation is low compared with the public investment in Tokyo, and will result in reducing Japan's financial burden.

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

The outlines of the Talk held on April 10 are introduced here following the last issue of this newsletter.

Participants

Mr. Taichi Sakaiya: an Author

Mr. Hiroshi Ouchi: Professor of the Engineering Department, Shibaura Institute of Technology

Mr. Takashi 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 the Mitsubishi Research Institute Co., Ltd.

< Towards Leadership in National Discussions >

Mr. Terashima I think there is a serious misunderstanding of the problem of the capital functions relocation. The problem may well be understood as promoting a project requiring huge public investment despite the present economic situation. We must dissipate this misunderstanding.

Another problem is how to inform the whole nation of this project. Such a discussion concerns a paradigmatic jump at present, and we can only envision a hypothetical tense solution. Leadership is necessary for overcoming this hypothetical idea. A consensus of opinion cannot be obtained unless persons, participating responsibly in the political planning of how the country should be, take up this problem seriously, express what they think, and show their leadership.

Mr. Onishi Previously, I sent out questionnaires to ordinary citizens and Diet members. The questionnaire results showed that the opposition to this problem tended to be caused by a lack of sufficient information and understanding. Therefore, I deem it very important to let the people know more about the contact significance and details of the capital functions relocation. I think it is important to clarify the situation so as to wipe out criticism resulting from the belief that the capital functions relocation is probably part of future public projects. Briefly speaking, there should be a very realistic and compact method of relocation. In a word, there must be a relocation method thoroughly utilizing the existing city of Tokyo. Politics and government can then be separated by the distance of location where the new Diet city is constructed, with most parts of the government remaining in Tokyo. This condition translates into quality, changing the relationship between politics and government.

Mr. Sakaiya Many people think that the capital functions relocation is rather expensive, but it is much faster for less expensive than remodeling Tokyo. Making Tokyo a safe city would cost more than 100 trillion yen even at the lowest estimate, but the relocation will only cost a level of two trillion yen.

Another factor is new technology and new way of thinking. In a departure from various restrictions and standards, new technology and new way of thinking come to Japan from all over the world, and their effects are significant. Japan has obtained method of frontier urban technology and urban management in such a way. Because of this, I would like to point out that the capital functions relocation is the most inexpensive and effective plan among all research and development and other projects. I think it is necessary to utilize popular media, such as television, to inform the nation about it.

However, it is regrettable that the popular media are not yet suitable for introducing the relocation.

Mr. Hiramoto I think the problem is that the media itself thinks that the relocation will be very expensive. There is an idea that the relocation of the capital functions result in the relocation of some 560 thousand people, but I think it would be more effective to construct only the central part of the new city and thus keep the people's movement to a minimum. A budget increase would not be necessary for doing this because an annual expenditure of 200 billion yen would be sufficient and can be secured as an active investment by changing allocations within the conventional budget frame.

< Void Tokyo Discussion >

Mr. Terashima There is the idea of Tokyo becoming a void among the opinions of people who oppose the relocation instinctively. They cling to a fixed idea and imagine that they would have difficulty if Tokyo became a void. However, what we should understand is that the relocation itself is surely a means of vitalizing Tokyo. For example, Tokyo has an official residence lot of 130 hectares, the site which would be left by the relocation. Utilizing this space for establishing an expanded living environment in Tokyo is an important key in the revitalization of Tokyo. I think it would be a concrete method to liven up the project if around one thousand young women with modern ideas were chosen from the new city and Tokyo to participate in revitalizing each city.



Mr. Onishi In constructing the new city, the initial settlement should be minimized. The relocation of a population of 100 thousand is planned, but a population of 20 thousand would be enough if construction was focused on opening the Diet. It would be done even when there were not so many buildings.

(Continued to the next edition)

★ Topics

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

Relocation of the Diet and Other Organization Studied in the Self-Study Session of a School Trip

Eighth-grade students of junior high schools in Aichi and Gifu Prefectures visited the Capital Functions Relocation Planning Division of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport (MLIT) to learn about the relocation of the Diet and other organizations, which was the theme of the self-study session of their school trip. They had prepared sufficiently in advance and engaged in active discussions with the Division officials.

The junior high school students who visited the Division and studied the relocation of the Diet and other organizations included five eighth-grade students from Toyota City Umetsubodai Junior High School in Aichi Prefecture, three eighth-grade students from Toyota City Ishino Junior High School in the same prefecture, and thirty eighth-grade students from Tajimi City Toto Junior High School in Gifu Prefecture.



Umetsubodai
Junior High School Students



Toto Junior High School Students



Ishino Junior High School Students

Faculty of Humanities and Sociology, Sapporo International University

On June 4, a MLIT official visited the Faculty of Humanities and Sociology, Sapporo International University, and gave a lecture on the relocation of the Diet and other organizations. Around twenty juniors attended the lecture, and they deepened their understanding on the significance and effects of the relocation and the image of the new city, relocation site, through a presentation using video and a personal computer. In this lecture, he answered questions asked by the students, such as disaster preparedness capabilities, processes of the candidate relocation site decision.

Faculty of Engineering, Hokkaido University

On June 5, an MLIT official visited the Faculty of Engineering, Hokkaido University, in Sapporo and gave a lecture on the relocation of the Diet and other organizations. Around forty seniors of the Department of Civil Engineering attended the lecture, and they deepened their understanding on the significance and effects of the relocation and the image of the new city, relocation site, through a presentation using video and a personal computer. After the lecture, he answered a lot of questions asked by the students, such as overall government reform, problems of excessive concentration of activities in Tokyo and processes of the candidate relocation site decision.



★ Topics

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

On May 29 and 30, public relations activities jointly sponsored by three candidate relocation sites of the Diet and other organizations were implemented at the Event Space at the Yaesu Central Entrance of the Japan Railway (JR) Tokyo Station.

Public relation activities on the significance and necessity of the relocation of the Diet and other organizations, distribution of the pamphlets jointly prepared by the three candidate relocation site regions for introducing candidate relocation sites, and display, screening, and distribution of the panels, video, and pamphlets prepared by MLIT and each candidate relocation site, were implemented to let as many people as possible understand the relocation of the Diet and other organizations.



Tochigi-Fukushima Region Corner



Gifu-Aichi Region Corner



Mie-Kio Region Corner



Display of Panels and Posters Prepared by MLIT

The "Opinion Exchange Space" in the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations Homepage

On the "Opinion Exchange Space" in the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations Homepage, opinions contributed by citizens are published and the space is free for anyone who wishes to submit their opinions. Please utilize this space.

(Sorry, Japanese Only)

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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