



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

Trends in the Diet

House of Representatives

In the Special Committee for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations of the House of Representatives (chaired by Mr. Hiroshi Nakai) held a questions and answers session with the government in a free discussion form from 13:40 p.m. to 15:10 p.m. on November 14, inviting Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Abe and Senior Vice-Minister Chuma of Land, Infrastructure and Transport.

Questions were asked concerning the basic attitude of the government for the relocation, the necessity of arousing public opinions, and the relationship between the structural reform and the relocation of the Diet and other organizations.

In the Special Committee, an opinion statement and questions and answers session was held from 15:00 p.m. to 17:30 p.m. on November 20, inviting Mr. Taichi Sakaiya (an author), Mr. Takashi Onishi (Professor of the Frontier Science and Technology Research Center, the University of Tokyo), Mr. Jitsuro Terashima (President of the Japan Comprehensive Research Institute), and Mr. Heita Kawakatsu (Professor of the Japan Culture Research Center) as witnesses.

Major opinion statements are described below.

Mr. Taichi Sakaiya

It is desired to disperse the Diet and other organizations to two or three locations separating them into the following categories to give up dependence upon the challenging information and to establish a communication information society:

- National Administration Functions: The planning and deliberation section of the legislative and administrative organizations, and departments and bureaus closely related with them.
- Infrastructure Functions: Departments and bureaus responsible for neutral, impartial, and long-term and stable businesses, such as basic survey, statistics, records, and social safety assurance, of the administrative organizations, and scientific research.
- Legislative Maintenance Functions: Departments and bureaus responsible for registration related to administration of justice and rights, intellectual property, and areas, in which long-term maintenance should be considered, such as digital archive editing and maintenance.

Mr. Takashi Onishi

I propose "dispersion-type decentralized capital" to separate the capital into the Diet city (the Diet plus central administrative functions), the judiciary city (the Supreme Court plus administrative functions related to judicature), and the administrative city (functions for implementation, statistics and survey of administration). More than one administrative city is allowed. Relocation should be considered with a scale of relocation being 177 thousand persons.

Mr. Jitsuro Terashima

Based on the background of the change of social and economical circumstances since the Diet resolution in 1990, the relocation of the Diet and other organizations is still necessary as a project to create a new paradigm for Japan in the twenty-first century. To clearly show foreign countries what kind of country we would create, the relocation of the Diet and other organizations should be promoted actively as a trigger for creating a new Japan. A package relocation is desirable, but realistically speaking, considering the impact caused by the relocation, step-by-step relocation could be allowed.

Mr. Heita Kawakatsu

Let us first divide Japan into four parts, "Forest Japan" (Hokkaido and Tohoku), "Plain Japan" (Kanto), "Mountain Japan" (Chubu), and "Ocean Japan" (Kinki, Chugoku, Shikoku, Kyushu). Capital functions related to domestic administration should be transferred to the four Japans. Implementing that transfer, functions to be implemented by the new capital are limited to diplomacy and national defense and becomes one fifth of the present administrative functions. The "Nasu-Abukuma Region," which is on the boundary between the "Forest Japan" and the "Plain Japan," is the most suitable for the relocation site of the new capital.

In the Special Committee, an opinion statement and questions and answers session was held from 13:00 p.m. to 15:00 p.m. on November 27 inviting Mr. Hideo Fukui (Professor of the Policy Research Graduate School University), Mr. Kazuo Hiramoto (Research Director of the Mitsubishi Research Institute Co. Ltd.), Mr. Hiroshi Ouchi (Professor of the Department of Architectural Engineering, the Faculty of Engineering of Shibaura Institute of Technology), and Mr. Hiroo Ichikawa (Professor of the Department of Politics and Economics of Meiji University) as witnesses.

Major opinion statements are listed below.

Mr. Hideo Fukui

The relocation of the Diet and other organizations is not justified if it just corrects monopolar concentration to Tokyo and augments the disaster response capability; the relocation must lead to the reform of the overall national administration. Relocation of the central administrative management functions, departments and bureaus responsible for public guidance services for foreign affairs is particularly significant. The relocation is also a "separation of the source of artificial concentration from Tokyo." It is expected to mitigate the authoritative leadership and dependence structure by keeping a distance between the government and the nation and between the country and locality. If a new city is constructed, a wide range of social experimentation is possible in the new systematic trials there.

Mr. Kazuo Hiramoto

The relocation of the Diet and other organizations is necessary to stably maintain functions as a control tower for operations, such as comprehensive support, coordination of relief and rescue activities in case of large-scale disaster, and strengthening Tokyo's disaster prevention capability utilizing the site left after the relocation. Construction of a political and administrative city suitable for easy emergency control and dispersion of economic centers are necessary from the viewpoint of overcoming fragility in emergency control.

Mr. Hiroshi Ouchi

Construction of a small Diet city at a distance far enough to prevent simultaneous disaster with Tokyo is desirable to protect the center of the political administration. Is it impossible to convene the Diet, borrowing some existing facility of a self-governing organization if construction of a new city is difficult? The Diet and other organizations should also be relocated to change the form and system of the country.

Mr. Hiroo Ichikawa

The argument for the relocation of the Diet and other organizations is not persuasive. Primarily, recovering Japan's national power utilizing the existing accumulations should be considered. We should put an end to the discussion by the Diet resolution to discontinue the relocation. We should cope with problems, that have been found in the long process of deliberation, such as quick preparation of the backup city for the capital.

* For further developments in the Special Committee for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations of the House of Representatives, please refer to "Trends in the Special Committee for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations" corner in the Special Committee for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations Homepage.

(Homepage Address: <http://www.shu-kokkaiiten.go.jp/index2.html>)

House of Councilors

In the Special Committee for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations of the House of Councilors (chaired by Mr. Soko Shimabukuro), an opinion statement and questions and answers session was held from 13:00 p.m. to 15:00 p.m. on November 20, inviting Mr. Hidemasa Yoshimura (Assistant Professor of the Engineering Research Course of the Graduate School of Osaka University) and Mr. Toru Hara (Councilor of the System Information Bureau, Bank of Japan) as witnesses.

Major opinion statements are described below.

Mr. Hidemasa Yoshimura

Consciousness of risks was degraded in Tokyo because seismic calm period happened to coincide with a high-growth period. If a great earthquake strikes Tokyo, it is anticipated that national functions would be suspended for a considerable amount of time. This could result in the failure of the national budget and cause a chain reaction in the international financial market. I think we should give priority in the future to public investment for mitigating risks due to monopolar concentration.

Mr. Toru Hara

The disaster prevention measures for the accounting system of the Bank of Japan (Nichigin Net) is to establish a backup center in Osaka in addition to the main center in Fuchu in Tokyo to provide data redundancy. This would enable business to continue by switching the system to the backup center in Osaka when the main center is damaged.

- * The above-mentioned major opinion statements by the witnesses in the Special Committees for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations of the House of Representatives and House of Councilors are compiled by the Capital Functions Relocation Planning Division of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport (MLIT).
- * Proceedings of the Special Committees for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations of the House of Representatives and the House of Councilors can be found on the Diet Proceeding Retrieval System (Homepage Address: <http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/>).

"On-Line Lecture Meetings" Being Held

On the MLIT Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations Homepage, lecture meetings have been held with forty-seven intellectuals in various disciplines, such as academic and economic sectors, making presentations. The following new lecture has been added. Please visit this web site:

(Homepage Address: <http://www.mlit.go.jp/kokudokeikaku/daishu/online/online-f.html>)

(Sorry, Japanese Only)

November Ms. Machiko Satonaka (a cartoonist)

Theme "New City Construction in the Future Learning from the History"

- Main Items:
- New city construction was necessary for constructing a country in ancient Japan.
 - The capital was relocated also in Egypt for national administration reform.
 - More discussion is needed for the capital functions relocation.
 - Information security should be strengthened.



★ Topics

News Materials Collected by an ROK Broadcasting Station

On December 2, Deputy Director Lee Tzung Hsin, Production Department of the News Reporting Bureau of the MBC Pusan Cultural Broadcasting Co., Ltd., in the Republic of Korea (ROK), visiting MLIT to collect materials about the relocation of the Diet and other organizations for producing 2003 New Year Special Program covering the decentralization and the relocation of the Diet and other organizations in Japan. Director-General for Policy Planning Kubono explained the circumstances and details of the relocation of the Diet and other organizations. Deputy Director Lee asked questions, including the one about the difference between the relocation in Japan and the administrative organization dispersion policy in the ROK.



★ Topics

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

On November 18, three students of Waseda University visited the MLIT Capital Functions Relocation Planning Division in preparation for reading their report about the relocation of the Diet and other organizations in a university seminar. The Division officials explained them the recent trends, significance, and effects of the relocation. The students asked pointed questions regarding the response to environmental problems, methods of utilizing the sites left after the relocation, the outlook for realizing the relocation, and others.



Chugoku District Board of Managing Directors of Chambers of Commerce and Industry

On November 27, a meeting of the Chugoku District Board of Managing Directors of Chambers of Commerce and Industry was held in Okayama City. The MLIT Director of the Capital Functions Relocation Division gave a forty-minute lecture on the past, significance, effects, and recent deliberation in the Diet concerning the relocation of the Diet and other organizations. After the lecture, questions were asked about the significance of the capital functions relocation, and the relationship between the relocation, and decentralization or the do-shu system.



Opinions and Impressions about "New Era" Solicited!!

We would like to thank you very much for your reading "New Era" regularly. In each issue of "New Era" delivered to readers, we have tried to communicate correct and timely information on various topics, on the status of deliberation of the House of Representatives and the House of Councilors in the Diet, public relations and research activities concerning the relocation of the Diet and other organizations by the country, local public organizations, and private organizations. The MLIT Capital Functions Relocation Planning Division intends to try to make "New Era" even more useful.

Therefore, if you have any ideas, themes, opinions, and/or impressions you would like in "New Era", please send them to the addressee at the bottom of this page.

We are waiting for your request, such as that you want to introduce the up-to-date environmental technology and research facilities and that you want in-print lectures of learned and well-known persons.

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Please report any changes in your working place addresses designated as the recipients of the "New Era" or your addresses to the addressee listed below. We will update our records with the changes so you will continue to receive your copy of "New Era".

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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