

Report of the Council for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations

December 20,1999

Preface

The Council for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations (referred to herein as “the Council”) was established in accordance with the Act for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations (referred to herein as “the Relocation Act”). On December 19, 1996, the Council received a request for advice from the Prime Minister on the selection of candidate sites for the relocation of the Diet and other organizations, and on other related subjects in accordance with the provision of Paragraph 1, Article 13 of the Relocation Act.

In the request, the Prime Minister asked the Council for its opinion regarding candidate sites for the relocation of the Diet and other organizations (referred to herein as “candidate sites for the relocation”) as set forth in Article 1 of the Relocation Act, specifically, the core functions of the three powers of government (legislative, administrative, and judicial) comprising the Diet, the Cabinet, the central governmental offices, and the Supreme Court. The relocation of the Diet and other organizations or the relocation of the capital functions means the relocation of the above-mentioned functions.

In November 1990, when the Diet observed its one-hundredth anniversary, the House of Representatives and the House of Councillors passed a resolution calling for the relocation of the Diet and other organizations. In December 1992, the Diet passed the Relocation Act and established the Investigating Committee for the Relocation of the Diet and Other Organizations (referred to herein as “the Investigating Committee”). In December 1995, the Investigating Committee presented a report (referred to herein as “the Investigating Committee Report”) to clarify the fundamental aspects of this policy, including the significance of the relocation of the capital functions and the criteria for selecting candidate sites for the relocation. In June 1996, the Relocation Act was partially amended to establish the Council. With this amendment, the process of relocating the capital functions had advanced to a new stage.

The Relocation Act (Article 23) specifies that the decision for a new city site be the result of a new law passed by the Diet with respect for the report of the Council. Based

on the Relocation Act, the role of the Council is to conduct inquiries and deliberations from a special and neutral standpoint and to present a report on the selection of candidate sites for relocation and related subjects to help the Diet decide on the new city site (Articles 13 and 14 of the Relocation Act).

Since its establishment, the Council has worked for about three years. In accordance with the criteria presented in the Investigating Committee Report and other criteria, the Council first chose the regions requiring more detailed investigation, and then conducted inquiries and deliberations regarding these regions from diverse viewpoints. The council held 31 meetings. This report is based on the results of these inquiries and deliberations.

Chapter 1: Historical Significance of the Relocation of the Capital Functions

When the Meiji government looked for a site for its capital, it chose Tokyo. It aimed to establish a strong centralized system to modernize the nation under the close cooperation of the politicians, the bureaucrats, and the people. This basic policy has remained to date despite the tremendous changes the nation has experienced in its political structure and social environment. After successful reconstruction subsequent to the devastation caused by the Second World War, the efforts directed by this policy greatly contributed to Japan's evolution into one of the world's leading economic powers.

Tokyo has been inundated with a myriad of companies and individuals seeking information and economic success. This tendency became stronger during the postwar period, resulting in a concentration of political, administrative, economic, and cultural functions as well as others.

The excessive concentration of activities in Tokyo has lowered the level of similar activities in local communities around the nation and has caused the stereotyping of information and culture. An increasing number of people began to point out the detrimental effects of excessive concentration.

Since the late 1950s, when Tokyo's overcrowding reached the point that the detrimental effects were conspicuous, scholars, researchers, and others concerned have offered many proposals for relocating the functions of the capital. In 1977, the government issued the Third National Comprehensive Development Plan and, in 1987, published the Fourth National Comprehensive Development Plan. In both of these plans, the government positioned relocation of the functions of the capital as a significant issue in the government's national land policy. In 1990, the Diet passed a resolution stating that the Diet and other functions of government should be relocated as a basic response to rectify the bias in overall national land use, to eliminate excessive centralization in Tokyo and to establish political and administrative functions that would be more appropriate for the 21st century.

The 1995 earthquake in Kobe wreaked havoc in this region. It forced us to realize the catastrophic effects that such a great disaster could have on a large city and the importance of preventing simultaneous damage to both the core functions of the capital and the centralized economic and other critical functions located in Tokyo. In June 1996, the Relocation Act was revised in response to the issuance of the Investigating Committee Report. The preamble to the revised Relocation Act states

that the unprecedented damage from the Kobe earthquake had prompted a renewed awareness of the necessity of maintaining core functions even in the event of a major disaster as a means of disaster preparedness.

When we review Japan's history, we cannot but notice that this nation usually reformed its political structure by relocating its center of politics during periods of major historical transformations as a means of satisfying the demands imposed from the surroundings at the time. At the end of the Nara era, the system of government based on Ritsuryo legal codes began to decline. The ruling class moved the nation's capital from Heijokyo (Nara) to Heiankyo (Kyoto) to free itself from all that was wrong with the old system. This relocation led to successful reform. Next, the samurai class began to supersede the aristocratic class, which ruled the nation during the Heian era. The center of politics then moved to Kamakura, where the basis for a samurai-ruled nation was formed. At the time of the Meiji Restoration, the ruling class chose Edo rather than Kyoto, where old traditions and customs remain influential, as the capital of the nation that they wished to build. They renamed Edo as Tokyo and there established a centralized regime, endeavoring to achieve rapid modernization under the slogan of "Enrich the Country and Strengthen the Military." The foundation for today's prosperity was thus begun.

Five decades have passed since the end of the Second World War. The environment inside and outside the country is completely different, and Japan has reached an important turning point. To cope with the problems involved in this turning point, every effort is being made to implement a historical reform of the nation's entire structure, including the decentralization, deregulation, and restructuring of national governmental offices. Directing these efforts toward the correct goal and building a strong foundation for a new age requires a thorough review of the current systems that have continued since the Meiji era while having a clear vision of the future as it could and should be. The subject of this review must include Tokyo, the city that has remained the center of political and administrative activities for about four centuries since the beginning of the Tokugawa regime. The review must be made from the standpoint of devising a solution to the problems brought about by Tokyo's excessive concentration of activities as well as the enhancement of the means of disaster preparedness.

As mentioned before, when confronted with a historical turning point, Japan relocated its capital in an attempt to reform the political system, thereby inspiring the people to prepare themselves for a new age. Considering both the internal and external conditions of today, it is time for Japan to take a historical turn.

The Council conducted its inquiries and deliberations based on the recognition that the relocation of the capital functions is extremely important and must be studied from the view that the results will last over a period of centuries, and that any decision is deeply concerned with the nation's future and will greatly influence how and what the nation will be. This report is the result of these inquiries and deliberations.

Chapter 2: Selection of Candidate Sites

1. Candidate sites

The selected candidate sites are the Tochigi-Fukushima area in the Hokuto region and the Gifu-Aichi area in the Tokai region.

The Ibaraki area has a number of advantages, including safety from natural disasters. For this reason, the Ibaraki area is expected to link with the Tochigi-Fukushima area to support and supplement it.

The Mie-Kio area has advantages that neither of the other two candidate areas has. If an infrastructure consisting of a high-speed transportation network were to be built here, this area could be added as a third candidate site.

Capital functions would not operate very well from the beginning without a wide-range of cooperative efforts, not only from large cities, such as Tokyo, Sendai, Nagoya, Kyoto, and Osaka, but also from other areas in the same regions for investigation.

2. Process of selecting candidate sites

When making inquiries and deliberating to select the candidate sites, the Council emphasized objectiveness and fairness.

In Phase 1, the Council conducted a broad general survey based on the selection criteria presented in the Investigating Committee Report and chose three regions, the Hokuto, Tokai, and Mie-Kio regions, as regions requiring more detailed study.

The Hokuto region begins in southern Miyagi prefecture, includes Fukushima prefecture, and extends to the middle and northern parts of Tochigi prefecture and the middle and northern parts of Ibaraki prefecture. This area extends along the route of the Tohoku Shinkansen and other major transportation lines.

The Tokai region begins in southeastern Gifu prefecture, includes the Nishimikawa area of Aichi prefecture, and extends to western Shizuoka prefecture.

The Mie-Kio region consists of the central Ise plain in Mie prefecture and extends across the area to the boundaries of Mie, Shiga, Kyoto, and Nara prefectures.

In Phase 2, the Council asked many experts to closely examine the above regions in terms of 16 characteristics. The Council also conducted hearings from representatives of the prefectures involved and dispatched Council members for on-site surveys, holding public hearings at nine locations.

In Phase 3, to proceed with a closer examination of the candidate sites, the Council considered the locations of available airports, roads, railroads, and other transportation facilities, and the extent to which these transportation facilities had been improved. The attitudes of the people of each of the prefecture involved were also considered. For regions that span more than one prefecture, also considered were the historical, cultural, and topographical factors of each area and how people in each area related with people in other areas. From these three regions, the Council finally chose ten areas to be subjected to comprehensive evaluation for the selection of an area where the new city could be built.

The ten areas selected for comprehensive evaluation are:

Hokuto region

- Miyagi area: southern Miyagi prefecture
- Tochigi-Fukushima area: Nasu area in Tochigi prefecture and Abukuma area in Fukushima prefecture
- Tochigi area: Nasu area in Tochigi prefecture
- Fukushima area: Abukuma area in Fukushima prefecture
- Ibaraki area: middle northern area of Ibaraki prefecture

Tokai region

- Gifu-Aichi area: Tono area in Gifu prefecture and northern Nishimikawa area in Aichi prefecture
- Shizuoka-Aichi area: western Shizuoka prefecture and southern Higashimikawa area in Aichi prefecture

Mie-Kio region

- Mie-Kio area: area around base of Mt. Suzuka in Mie prefecture and area near boundaries of Mie, Shiga, Kyoto, and Nara prefectures
- Mie area: area around base of Mt. Suzuka in Mie prefecture
- Kio area: area near boundaries of Mie, Shiga, Kyoto, and Nara prefectures

According to the results of the detailed investigations conducted for each of the characteristics during Phase 2, some of the characteristics were divided or combined. The result was the selection of 16 characteristics as comprehensive evaluation items. At the same time, the Council compared the features required for the relocation of the capital functions with the features of each of the three target regions.

In conducting the comprehensive evaluation of the regions, the Council made great efforts to apply multiple techniques with an emphasis on objectivity. The Council also decided to use a weighting method, which is beneficial in that it respects global judgments made by the Council members, combines this global judgment with the results of the evaluations of the characteristics by many experts, and also clearly explains the process used to reach a conclusion.

With an emphasis on objectivity, the comprehensive evaluation was conducted as follows. Experts in each field evaluated each area for suitability as the new city in terms of each of the 16 characteristics and assigned a numeric value representing the results of the evaluation. The Council members assigned a weight (degree of importance) to each characteristic. These two methods were integrated to yield numeric scores for each of the ten candidate areas.

Based on these results, the Council continued to review the selected candidate sites through further multilateral investigations from several angles.

The 16 characteristics that were used for evaluation are:

- Geographical conditions for building construction (alleviation of excessive concentration of activities in Tokyo as evaluated by companies invited to cities other than Tokyo)
- Suitability for cultural activities
- Ease of response to building new information networks (as reflected in next generation)
- Information exchange and transportation between new city and major cities in the event of major disaster
- Accessibility from foreign countries
- Accessibility from Tokyo
- Accessibility from/throughout Japan
- Scenic beauty
- Possibility of earthquakes
- Possibility of volcanic disasters
- Ease of land acquisition

- Topographical advantages
- Possibility of floods and/or landslides
- Stability of water supply
- Good relationships with existing cities (probability of avoiding urban sprawl and ease of tying up with regional core cities)
- Harmony with the environment (probability of achieving harmony with natural environment in terms of environmental conservation and preservation and possibility of reducing environmental load)

3. Selection results

(1) Features of the relocation of capital functions to the three regions

The Hokuto, Tokai, and Mie-Kio regions have their own distinct historical, cultural, and topographical features. The nature of the new city would vary considerably depending on which region is selected.

Hokuto region

The Hokuto region is advantageous in its links with Tokyo because of the Tohoku Shinkansen, the Tohoku Expressway, and other access routes. The relocation of capital functions to this region would proceed in close cooperation with Tokyo and through the exploitation of a concentration of urban functions that has already reached a high level. A stepwise relocation with a relatively high degree of flexibility could be achieved. The new city and Tokyo could have close ties and relationships and could be assigned respective roles under various conditions, including the occurrence of a major disaster.

People both inside and outside the country would be impressed with the efforts for the national revitalization characterized by cities and lifestyles that are in harmony with the natural environment.

Tokai region

The Tokai region is located near the center of Japan and is easily accessible from all over the country. The relocation of the capital functions to this region and the building of the new city would proceed in close cooperation with Nagoya together with efforts to improve functions for conducting international activities. The new city would be centered on an urban area that is relatively independent of Tokyo. This characteristic would give rise to multiple centers of activity and encourage people in many locations to increase their relationships with people in other locations.

People inside and outside Japan would be impressed with the efforts at building an

active nation that is advancing toward further development against a background of the existing combination of state-of-the-art industrial technology and traditional crafts.

Mie-Kio region

The Mie-Kio region includes part of the Kansai and Chukyo areas. This means that its location is advantageous with its links with Kyoto, Osaka, and other major cities in the area. The relocation of capital functions to this region would proceed through efforts for restoring capital functions near the Kinai area, which has long played a central role in creating and inheriting traditional Japanese culture, while acting to rejuvenate the Kansai area. The new city would be centered on an urban area that is relatively independent of Tokyo. This would add to the number of centers of activity and help change the existing social structure that is dependent on Tokyo.

The Mie-Kio region includes part of the Kansai and Chukyo areas. This means that its location is advantageous with its links with Kyoto, Osaka, and other major cities in the area. The relocation of capital functions to this region would proceed through efforts for restoring capital functions near the Kinai area, which has long played a central role in creating and inheriting traditional Japanese culture, while acting to rejuvenate the Kansai area. The new city would be centered on an urban area that is relatively independent of Tokyo. This would add to the number of centers of activity and help change the existing social structure that is dependent on Tokyo.

(2) Advantages and disadvantages of ten candidate areas

As previously stated, to accelerate the process of selecting candidate sites, the Council chose ten areas to be subjected to comprehensive evaluation from within the three candidate regions. During this task, the Council considered how and to what extent the transportation systems have been improved in each area, what features each area has, and what potential each area has for the spreading of urban areas. Through the hearings in the prefectures concerned during Phase 2, the advantages and disadvantages of each area were identified from the on-site surveys and detailed investigations in terms of the 16 characteristics, and through the evaluation of the 16 characteristics during Phase 3.

Miyagi area

The Miyagi area is on the key Tohoku axis—the Tohoku Shinkansen and Tohoku Expressway—enabling it to connect with areas on the Sea of Japan via the Yamagata Expressway. It can easily have wide-area links with Sendai, Fukushima, Yamagata, and other large cities.

It is easy to make good use of the urban functions already present in Sendai. In this area, transportation facilities exist and/or are being improved. The combination of these urban functions and transportation facilities would help build a networked group of cities, including the new city, Fukushima, and Yamagata, covering a wide area through which the key Tohoku axis passes. The area also has a pastoral setting that faces the Zao Mountains, the Abukuma River, and other natural features. People in this area could develop a lifestyle that makes use of the activities and convenience of the city, Sendai, in harmony with the relaxing atmosphere produced by the pastoral environment.

The water supply is stable. Even if a major disaster were to occur, it would be easy to keep traffic and information flowing between the new city and other major cities.

Conversely, a disadvantage of this area may be that it is situated at a greater distance from the Pacific Belt, where the population and many existing functions have already accumulated. It is also necessary to improve international airline services at Sendai Airport and pay special consideration to the topographical and other conditions of certain nearby areas. This area contains a few conspicuous active earthquake faults.

Tochigi-Fukushima area

The Tochigi-Fukushima area is located on the key Tohoku axis—the Tohoku Shinkansen and Tohoku Expressway—and between the Kitakanto and Ban-etsu Expressways, which run across the country. For this reason, the area is tied not only with Tokyo and Sendai, but also with areas on the Sea of Japan and western areas of the country. A noteworthy advantage is that it has a strong link with Tokyo. During the period of relocation, when some capital functions are assigned to the new city while others remain in Tokyo, satisfactory cooperation between the two cities could easily be achieved in a flexible manner.

This area combines the Tochigi area, centered on the Nasunogahara plain, and the Fukushima area, home of Fukushima Airport. It thus has the advantages of these two areas.

The area features a high degree of harmony with the natural environment, superior scenic and topographical conditions, and the possibility of utilizing public land. The area is virtually free of earthquakes. Should a major earthquake occur in the Tokyo area, the Tochigi-Fukushima area could quickly prepare a first-aid system.

Conversely, the use of New Tokyo International Airport at Narita would be required for international air traffic, although Fukushima Airport is near the area. In addition, since

the current accumulation of urban functions in this area is inadequate, building and improving life- and business-related functions supporting the new city would be required.

Tochigi area

The Tochigi area is located to the south of the Tochigi-Fukushima area on the key Tohoku axis.

This area includes a broad, flat plain, Nasunogahara, with the grand Nasu Mountains in the background; the picturesque scenery would make a wonderful setting for the new city. Efforts for assuring harmony with the natural environment and conditions for agricultural conservation would form a new city that is a blend of urban and idyllic elements, creating a lifestyle that emphasizes an exemplary relationship between humans and nature.

This area has essentially the same advantages and disadvantages as the Tochigi-Fukushima area. The building of protection against volcanic disasters would be required. This area contains a few conspicuous active earthquake faults. At present, it has no airport.

Fukushima area

The Fukushima area is located to the northeast of the Tochigi-Fukushima area. It is near the intersection of the key Tohoku axis and the Banetsu Expressway, which is a key route running across the country.

The new city would be a combination of small cities in a topographical area that is characterized by intricate small ridges and valleys and includes Fukushima Airport at its center. Such an area is expected to promote a lifestyle that respects forest resources and emphasizes a harmonious relationship between humans and nature.

This area has essentially the same advantages and disadvantages as the Tochigi-Fukushima area. It includes a great deal of privately owned land, which would cause problems in land acquisition. Also, the ridges in the area around Fukushima Airport are relatively narrow, adding to any expenses involved in attempting to change the surrounding topography.

Ibaraki area

The Ibaraki area is located on the key Joban axis that runs from Tokyo to Sendai. It is relatively near the Tokyo area and includes Hitachinaka Seaport, which provides

access from the Pacific Ocean. It is located at the intersection of the Kitakanto and Higashikanto Expressways, which are ring-like routes interconnecting the cities surrounding the metropolitan area, and radial routes that run from Tokyo and pass through Tsukuba. The area is advantageous in its links with Tokyo. During the period of relocation, when some capital functions are assigned to the new city while others remain in Tokyo, satisfactory cooperation between the two cities can easily be achieved in a flexible manner.

The new city would have several advantages, including close cooperation with urban functions of Tokyo; easy access to New Tokyo International Airport at Narita; the use of Hyakuri Airport, which is now a military airport, but will become a commercial airport as well; Hitachinaka Seaport; and Tsukuba Science City, with its world-renowned scientific research facilities. These advantages would give the new city a highly international flavor. In addition, since the new city would be at the east end of the ring route that runs at a distance of 100 kilometers from the metropolitan area, it is expected to function as the base for reforming the structure of the metropolitan area.

The area has encountered few major disasters from earthquakes or volcanoes. It includes a relatively large amount of public land. It is also topographically suitable for building a city. If a major earthquake occurs in the Tokyo area, the Ibaraki area could quickly prepare a first-aid system.

Conversely, of all the candidate areas, this area is the closest to Tokyo. This means it is much more likely to be under the influence of Tokyo and to simply add to the expansion of the Tokyo area, counteracting any attempts to solve the problem of excessive concentration of activities in Tokyo. An adequate water supply and other utilities are also a problem in this area. In some of the southern areas, consideration would have to be given to the water quality of Lake Kasumigaura.

Gifu-Aichi area

The Gifu-Aichi area is located near the center of Japan. Multiple key axes pass through this area. The area can easily link with Tokyo, Kansai, and areas on the Sea of Japan via key transportation routes including the Tomei Expressway, Second Tomei Expressway, Tokai-Hokuriku Expressway, Chuo Expressway, and Tokaido Shinkansen.

The new city would have strong ties with Nagoya via the Tokai Loop Expressway, which runs in a loop around Nagoya. Its advantages include the accumulation of advanced industrial technology and traditional crafts of the Chukyo area. Against

these advantages, the new city is expected to create a lifestyle that can make good use of the urban activity and convenience of Nagoya and that is in harmony with the natural environment. The 2005 World Exposition will be held near this area. Because of that, even greater efforts would be made to build a new city that places high importance on ecology.

The area has satisfactory facilities for transportation to other areas both in Japan and overseas. It is free from the threats of floods, landslides, and volcanic eruptions. The utilization of large areas of public land is expected.

Conversely, the local vegetation is weak, and extraordinary efforts would be required for environmental protection. The transportation system to Tokyo would also require a great deal of improvement. A major earthquake would cause considerable shaking in some locations, if not significant damage. The area also includes many relatively conspicuous active earthquake faults.

Shizuoka-Aichi area

The Shizuoka-Aichi area is located on the key Tokyo-Nagoya axis—the Tokaido Shinkansen, Tomei Expressway, and Second Tomei Expressway. It is near the Chukyo area and could relatively easily be linked with Tokyo and Nagoya. The western end of the area is at the intersection of the Tokyo-Nagoya axis and the Sanen-Nanshin Expressway, which is part of the axis running across the country.

This area is expected to include a graceful new city that is enriched by the scenery of the Enshu Sea and Lake Hamana and that is adequately equipped to avoid misfortunes caused by disasters such as Tokai earthquakes. The urban functions of Hamamatsu and Toyohashi could easily be utilized. People in the new city would enjoy many different lifestyles enabling them to have abundant opportunities to make direct contact with nature.

The climate is mild. The area has superior access to areas throughout Japan and to overseas points because of its proximity to a high-speed transportation network as well as Shizuoka Airport in the east and Chubu International Airport in the west.

Conversely, the area is near a tectonic plate subduction boundary necessitating the resolutions of problems concerning safety in the event of an earthquake and how to protect and maintain traffic and information routes between the new city and major cities. In addition, there is already a high percentage of land use, adversely affecting land acquisition. Consideration would also have to be given to the quality of the water in Lake Hamana.

Mie-Kio area

The Mie-Kio area is located near the center of Japan. Multiple key axes (including the Meishin and Second Meishin Expressways) pass through the area for relatively easy links with the Kansai area, Chukyo area, areas on the Sea of Japan, and areas in west Japan. The area also has good access to two international airports—Chubu International Airport and Kansai International Airport.

This area combines the Mie and Kio areas and thus has the advantages of both areas.

The area is independent of Tokyo and would be expected to alleviate the problems caused by the excessive concentration of activities in Tokyo. It has satisfactory facilities for transportation to many major areas of Japan. Assuming the addition of facilities for marine transportation to Chubu International Airport, the area at the base of Mt. Suzuka would offer good access to countries outside Japan. The area is considered free of volcanic eruptions.

Conversely, one of the disadvantages of this area that would have to be resolved is the amount of time required to travel to Tokyo. If a major earthquake occurs in the area, some parts could be severely affected. The area also includes many relatively conspicuous active faults. Consideration would also have to be given to other factors, including protection of the natural environment.

Mie area

The Mie area consists of the eastern half of the Mie-Kio area and is located to the west of the Chukyo area.

The area is near Nagoya, Tsu, Yokkaichi, and other cities, is between the Suzuka Mountains and Ise Bay, and is open to the ocean. These conditions would help in the creation of a new city that would have few environmental loads by making good use of nearby facilities for global environmental protection. In addition, the new city would promote lifestyles in which the populace would be able to enjoy the benefits of both advanced industrial technology and the traditional crafts of the Chukyo area as well as from nature including the sea and mountains.

The Mie area has almost the same advantages and disadvantages as the Mie-Kio area. The climate is mild and the water supply is stable. The topographical conditions are good. There would be some difficulty in land acquisition.

Kio area

The Kio area consists of the western half of the Mie-Kio area and is located to the east of the Kansai area. The building of a new city here would be combined with rejuvenation of the Kansai area.

The area is adjacent to Kinai, thought to be the source of Japanese traditional culture. This area is assumed to be suitable in helping create a new culture for the 21st century. The new city would have few environmental loads by making good use of nearby facilities for global environmental protection. The area would promote lifestyles in which the populace would be able to enjoy the benefits of nature by visiting a number of natural parks and appreciating traditional culture.

The Kio area has almost the same advantages and disadvantages as the Mie-Kio area. There is a great amount of public land near the boundaries among the prefectures. The water supply would have to be upgraded.

(3) Results of comprehensive evaluation using weighting method

For its comprehensive evaluation, the Council held meetings so that experts in the specific relevant fields could conduct detailed quantitative examinations of the ten candidate areas in terms of the 16 characteristics initially decided upon. At some meetings, more than one characteristic was discussed. A total of more than 70 experts attended 14 such meetings.

The Council members had conducted a separate study to work out a plan for weighting each characteristic. Three meetings were held for designing the weighting plan as discussions at the evaluation meetings proceeded. During this process, the Council members were able to increase their shared understanding of the characteristics.

The results from these two types of studies were integrated to obtain a comprehensive evaluation score for each area. During this process, the Council respected the variety of members' judgments and summarized the rating data by using several methods instead of only relying on the averages of all the members.

It was revealed that the ranking of the evaluations of the areas that had relatively high scores did not vary with the method used for summarization. The Council has concluded that the scores were objective and should be highly respected.

The results of the comprehensive evaluation using the weighting method indicated that there was no significant difference in the absolute values of the scores of the areas. Nonetheless, the Tochigi-Fukushima area in the Hokuto region had the highest score, followed by the Gifu-Aichi area in the Tokai region. These two areas have different features. The Ibaraki area ranked third.

(4) Multilateral investigation

By a conducting comprehensive evaluation using a weighting method, the Council obtained valuable information that represented the numeric scores gained by the candidate areas. However, before final candidate sites for the new city can be selected, multilateral investigations must be conducted to rate, among others, the wide-ranging features of each area, links of the new city with other areas, ability to withstand earthquakes and other natural disasters, future improvement of transportation facilities, and problems involved in building a new city.

From the point of view discussed above, the Council conducted a multilateral investigation of the Tochigi-Fukushima area and the Gifu-Aichi area, both of which had high scores in the comprehensive evaluation. The Council also attempted to learn whether other candidate sites exist.

Tochigi-Fukushima area

The Tochigi-Fukushima area is located on the key Tohoku axis, where the main routes in the Hokuto region can be accessed. Therefore, it can easily link with Tokyo and Sendai and is expected to have close social and business relationships for support and cooperation with Utsunomiya, Koriyama, and other cities. It can also easily link with areas on the Sea of Japan. By maintaining smooth links with the Ibaraki area on the key Joban axis, the Tochigi-Fukushima area would become even more suitable as the location of the new city. The results of the multilateral investigation did not affect the superior rating of this area.

The Miyagi area, located on the key Tohoku axis, together with Sendai, is expected to function as a link and support base for the new city.

If Mt. Nasudake were to erupt, considerable damage would be inflicted on the Nasu area along the Naka River. Therefore, the design of the new city would have to include consideration of the arrangement of urban functions and preparations for handling major disasters.

Gifu-Aichi area

The new city would be part of the Chukyo area, which can easily link with Tokyo and Nagoya. Functions necessary to support the city are expected to be built not only on the Tomei axis, but also on the axis leading to Chubu International Airport. The Tokai and Hokuriku Expressways would considerably strengthen the links to areas on the Sea of Japan. The results of the multilateral investigation did not affect the superior rating of this area.

In the future, when Chubu International Airport opens and a high-speed transportation network is completed to include this area, the travel time to Tokyo and Osaka will be significantly reduced. With these links, the new city and Nagoya would greatly expand its scope, including international activities.

The Shizuoka-Aichi area would function as the link and support base for the new city by making use of its convenient traffic situation.

This area could be subject to interplate earthquakes. If a major earthquake were to occur, certain areas would be considerably affected. It is therefore urgent to study the layout of urban functions, the means of disaster preparedness, and the methods for maintaining traffic and information paths.

Ibaraki area

The Ibaraki area is located on the key Joban axis, which runs from Tokyo to Sendai, passing through Tsukuba and Mito. The area is near Hitachinaka Seaport, which would be a base for marine transportation. It also offers good access to New Tokyo International Airport via the Higashi-Kanto Expressway. The topographical conditions are favorable and highly immune to natural disasters.

Considering the conditions of the high-speed transportation networks, the key Tohoku axis in the Hokuto region remains superior. The Ibaraki area should link with the Tochigi-Fukushima area to support and supplement this area in terms of international functions by making use of the benefits provided by the key Tohoku axis.

Mie-Kio area

The comprehensive evaluation score of the Mie-Kio area is not very high.

Nevertheless, this area includes part of the Kansai and Chukyo areas and is located near Kinai, which has played a central role in creating and passing on Japanese traditional culture. It also has a long history. Since it is located on the narrow portion of

Japan's Honshu Island, it can easily link with areas on the Sea of Japan. Many functions and cultural resources are present in Kyoto, Nara, and Osaka. The Kansai National Diet Library and the Kyoto Japanese-Style Guesthouse would contribute their own special effects. These features make this area unique.

If a new high-speed transportation network were to be built through this area, time taken to reach Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, and other large cities would be shortened. This would also facilitate use of Chubu International Airport and Kansai International Airport, linking to large cities in the Chukyo and Kansai areas. If this condition is met and the Kansai area is rejuvenated, the rank of this area would increase, making it a likely candidate for the new city.

This area could be subject to interplate earthquakes. If a major earthquake occurs, certain areas would be considerably affected. It is therefore urgent to study the layout of urban functions, the means of disaster preparedness, and the methods for maintaining traffic and information paths.

(5) Results of selection process

Respecting the results of the above inquiries and deliberations, the Council selected the Tochigi-Fukushima area and the Gifu-Aichi area as candidate sites for the new city. The Ibaraki area has the advantage of being relatively safe in terms of natural disasters. This area is expected to link with the Tochigi-Fukushima area for support and supplementary functions. The Mie-Kio area has features that the other areas do not have. If it were to have easy access to a high-speed transportation network, it could also become a candidate site.

Initially, it would be difficult for any area to adequately operate the functions of the capital by itself. Wide-ranging links would be required with not only Tokyo, Sendai, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka, and/or other major cities, but also with areas within the same region.

Chapter 3: Essential Elements of New City

The new city is expected to represent those elements that symbolize the direction of Japan's advancement. Therefore, the design of the new city would have to be given due consideration related to the items listed below so that it would benefit the 21st century.

(1) Building new information network systems

The new city would have to be built as a city that is, from its very beginning, furnished with an information infrastructure based on state-of-the-art information technology suitable for the information age. This information infrastructure is necessary in order to build a new horizontal information network system that is shared not only by central government offices, but also by local government offices. This horizontal system would replace existing vertical information systems, each of which is used exclusively by one central government office and its subordinate offices. The horizontal system would provide a wide variety of information, which could be shared and mutually utilized, bringing about a vast improvement in the operations of the organizations that are responsible for capital functions. This improvement would include increased policy-planning capabilities and greater administrative efficiency. The relationships among legislators, bureaucrats, and ordinary citizens would advance to a stage appropriate for an age of decentralization and networked computerization, and would lead to improvements in the administrative services available to the public. The nation would strengthen its preparation for and handling of man-made and natural disasters. The new city is thus expected to be the core of an information network system, as seen from both inside and outside the country and to function as a base for encouraging intellectual activities and exchanging a wide variety of information on a world-wide basis.

Information and communication technology is rapidly advancing, but its future cannot easily be predicted. When building and improving the information infrastructure, a major requirement is to endow the infrastructure with as high a degree of flexibility as possible so that it can easily accommodate advancements in technology.

(2) Consideration of the environment

The design and construction of the new city would have to take into account the reality that people are a part of nature. Every effort should be made to introduce diverse types of knowledge and technology to protect the positive elements of our present natural environment and to improve the environment whenever possible. These efforts should ensure the harmony of the new city with the environment while setting

an example for the world in the possibilities of incorporating ecological concerns in government policy. The new city should also demonstrate the abilities of conserving energy, recycling waste, and minimizing environmental loads in its own area while contributing to reductions in the environmental loads of other areas and actively attempting to solve global environmental problems.

(3) Functions of city related to international political activities

The relocation of capital functions is also extremely important for Japan as it sets out to serve as a responsible member of international society. The new city would have to be equipped with facilities and functions appropriate for an international political center. Some of these facilities and functions include those required for airport transportation, international political conferences, guesthouses, and an embassy street, which facilitate the mixing of cultures from all over the world.

(4) Majestic scenery

The new city should represent both the roots of traditional Japanese culture as well as what we want Japan to become. It should be a city that all of Japan can be proud of and that would give overseas visitors an opportunity to become interested in Japan and appreciate its many fine points. As the center of a nation's political activities, the new city should include majestic scenery. As a place for political and administrative activities open to the people, it should have familiar and attractive scenery. Combined with its natural surroundings, the new city should provide scenery worthy of the entrance to a great nation.

Chapter 4: Significance and Effects of the Relocation of Capital Functions

1. Significance and effects of the relocation of capital functions

In parallel with the process of selecting candidate sites, the Council reviewed the Investigating Committee Report to conducted further inquiries and deliberations on the significance and effects of the relocation of capital functions. The long-term significance and effects of the relocation of capital functions are discussed below.

(1) Overall reform of government

The overall reform of the government has just begun. An effective stimulus is needed to accelerate the reform process. The relocation of the capital functions would serve as an effective stimulus for promoting the review of the nation's government in its entirety by extending the target of the investigation to the roots from which the present government grew. The relocation of the capital functions would be combined with other reforms into a comprehensive program for simultaneous implementation, and so the processes for reforms would be accelerated and lead to their satisfactory implementation. The result would be to produce more efficient administrative organizations and to help the nation achieve substantial decentralization. The relocation of the capital functions would separate the center of political activities from the center of economic activities, thereby giving birth to a set of new relationships among politicians, bureaucrats, and the people. Another effect of relocation is the building of a nation-wide information network that interconnects central and local government offices. This information network would help the government develop policies in the true interest of the people.

(2) Alleviation of excessive concentration of activities in Tokyo

Population concentration in the Tokyo area has temporarily lessened during the recent period of economic recession. Nevertheless, the concentration of the functions and information in the area is still inordinate. No significant changes have been made to these trends toward excessive concentrations of activities in Tokyo and to the extreme overcrowding there. If only the crowded commuter trains and the frequent traffic jams were taken as examples, the pains caused by these are far beyond tolerable in most societies. If the relocation of the capital functions is combined with overall government reforms, people would be able to free themselves from the obsession that Tokyo is at the top of the hierarchy that governs all that exists in the nation. At the same time, local communities would become more aware of the importance of self-support and would be likely to develop and nurture their own cultures. Companies would no longer

be unwilling to locate their home offices outside the Tokyo area. Once Tokyo is freed of its functions as the capital, it would revive as an active, but calmer, city of business and culture. The new Tokyo would continue to be an international cosmopolitan city with even more splendor than it has now.

(3) Strengthening disaster preparedness capabilities

If a major earthquake were to occur in Tokyo, it would cause a tremendous disaster because of its excessive concentration of activities. It would also cause the cessation of core functions all over the country, resulting in a crisis so serious that it would affect not only Japan, but also countries outside Japan. At present, the central government in Tokyo could not properly function as a control tower for managing the crisis. It is said that the personnel of the government would not even be able to get to their offices for work if such an emergency occurred. The relocation of capital functions would eliminate the possibility of simultaneous damage to all the nations' centers, including those for politics, governmental administration, business, and culture. If the control tower function that should work in the event of disaster were to be relocated to a site that is immune to major disasters, Japan's disaster preparedness capabilities would be considerably strengthened. In addition, Tokyo would be able to improve its own disaster preparedness capabilities by drawing up an appropriate plan for utilizing the areas that are now occupied for capital functions. Even if a disaster were to occur in Tokyo, the extent of damage would be greatly reduced.

(4) Miscellaneous considerations

Some Council members stated that selecting candidate sites at this point is premature because the discussions held thus far are still inadequate. However, as a whole, the Council concluded that it had the responsibility of presenting this report as specified by the Relocation Act, expecting that the report would further expand discussions of the subject.

2. Considerations to be made after presentation of the report

The Relocation Act states that further study should be conducted on relocation after the release of the report, through comparison of Tokyo and the candidate sites, and while considering the public's views on the relocation as well as social and economic conditions (Article 22). After the Council presents its report, these subjects should be considered by the Diet when it makes a final decision. However, since certain subjects are deeply related to the significance and effects of the relocation of the capital functions, the Council decided to include a summary of the subjects.

(1) Status of agreement among the people on the relocation

According to the polls conducted by several organizations and the public hearings held by the Council, the number of citizens that approve of the relocation is generally higher than the number not approving of it in most areas of the country. A recent questionnaire addressed to the people of Tokyo, however, found that the number of responses not approving of the relocation to be much higher. In spite of the polls, public hearings, and questionnaire, the report of the Council clearly states specific candidate sites. The report will certainly provoke discussions of the relocation of capital functions to a level extending to practical and specific details. These discussions will lead to people's recognition that relocation will no longer be a far-off dream, but an ambitious plan useful for the future of Japan. Understanding that the relocation is an extremely important project that would not be a simple undertaking, but that would continue for many years, the Council hopes that each and every citizen will gain an understanding of the significance of the project and be eager to participate in its support.

(2) Social and economic conditions

Some people have remarked that such a project should only be approved when the nation's economy is good and should not be promoted at present. However, the relocation of the capital functions must be considered from a long-term view as the country's century-long program. This is a high-quality program that would contribute to the creation of Japan's future and play a leading role in affecting extensive areas of Japan. Considering the present trends of a lower birthrate and an aging society, the project should be implemented while the nation can afford the necessary investment.

The Council calculated the reasonable cost of the relocation. The calculation showed that the public expense prior to the relocation of the Diet would average two hundred and fifty billion yen per year for ten years, that is, about 2% of the nation's budget for public works. When implementing the relocation of capital functions, it would be necessary to make every effort to reduce increases of the public expenses needed for the project and related activities, while considering economic and other conditions, and to draw up detailed plans for the relocation.

(3) Comparison with Tokyo

Using documents containing information about the advantages and disadvantages of the two cases, the Council discussed two options—that capital functions be left in Tokyo and that capital functions be relocated to a new city. Selecting either of the two options is related to several options—how to reform the government overall, how to alleviate the excessive concentration of activities in Tokyo, and how to strengthen

disaster preparedness. Choosing the best of these options for Japan's future seems to be the equivalent of choosing one of two options—to reform the government overall while changing Tokyo or using the relocation as an opportunity for reforming the government and converting Tokyo into a truly cosmopolitan city.

Chapter 5: Considerations for Candidate Sites

The following items must be considered for the selected candidate sites.

(1) Need for measures to prevent land speculation

Since the relocation of capital functions is a national project that Japan would undertake for the first time in modern times, land speculators are likely to concentrate their efforts on the selected candidate sites. This could lead to inflated land prices. If such increases occur, the smooth acquisition of the land needed for building the new city would be greatly impeded. In the worse case, it would even be difficult to use the land appropriately on the candidate site.

It is therefore necessary to decisively preclude speculative land transactions and sudden increases in land prices on the candidate sites. The Council strongly requests the government and local municipal agencies make every effort to prevent land price increases by all available means, including the designation of areas to be monitored.

(2) Requests addressed to local government offices

The relocation of the capital functions would be implemented in a gradual stepwise manner for a prolonged period, beginning with the initial relocation of the minimum functions needed for operating the project itself. The local government would assume part of the responsibility in terms of money, people, and physical resources for buildings and improvements.

The Council expects the local government to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it. This responsibility includes efforts for implementing plans for the new land acquisition policy and for resolving problems involved in the current local government systems. Excessive expectations for benefits resulting from the relocation should be avoided and a degree of calm is highly recommended.

Expectations and Acknowledgments

The Council knows that the relocation cannot be completed in a short period and that the relocation should be overseen by those responsible for a long time. It hopes that this report provides an opportunity for people to deepen their understanding of the relocation of the capital functions and that a consensus can be reached. The Council members heartily hope that the development of the new city would represent the will of all the people.

The Council would like the Diet, the supreme legislative organization, which has led the investigations of the relocation of capital functions, to receive this report as the fruit of our earnest efforts, to study the future of Japan from a global perspective, and to reach an appropriate conclusion that can resist criticism from both inside and outside Japan.

The Council would also expect the national government to study the systems and procedures required for the relocation of the capital functions while observing and respecting the examination processes in progress at the Diet.

As discussed several times here, the relocation of capital functions is a huge, trans-century project that would greatly influence Japan's future. Vast amounts of documents and legwork were needed to conduct the Council inquiries and deliberations. The Council would like to thank all the organizations and individuals who cooperated in these inquiries and deliberations.

In particular, the individuals from the candidate regions were considerably helpful. They presented documents containing information about the region and valuable statements about how the relocation of the capital functions should be considered. The Council believes that this huge project has been conceived and promoted as a plan of national significance not only by the people from the few candidate sites chosen, but also through the concerted efforts of the people from the areas related to the candidate sites. We offer them our deep respect and gratitude.