

The Amami Reversion Movement: Its Origins, Activities, Impact, and Meaning¹⁾

ryuri no hibi wa owatta ... imazo sokoku ni kaeru
(the days of trial are over now we return to our homeland)
Izumi Horo, “Imazo Sokoku e”

Robert D. Eldridge

Introduction

Although little known or studied, territory in addition to Okinawa was separated from Japan at the time of the San Francisco Peace Conference in 1951. The Amami Islands, comprising the northern half of the same Nansei Island chain, were also detached as per Article 3 of the Treaty of Peace with Japan, to the great disappointment of the Japanese government as well of course as the 219,000 islanders and 200,000 Amami residents on the Japanese mainland in the Kyushu, Osaka, and Tokyo areas.²⁾

Lying between 27 and 29 degrees North Latitude, the Amami Islands were separated from Japan politically and administratively in January 1946 and, unlike the rest of the country, were placed along with Okinawa under direct U. S. military government. At one minute after midnight on December 25, 1953, however, the islands were returned to Japanese administration in what was called at the time a “Christmas Present,” after nearly 8 years of occupation — to the satisfaction and relief of the participants in the active and well-organized Amami reversion movement, or *Amami Fukki Undō*.

Despite being an important event in postwar Japanese history and U. S.-Japan relations, as well as having a great impact on America’s post-treaty Okinawa policy as a whole, the return of the Amami Islands has remained for the most part unexamined. Likewise little research exists on the Amami reversion movement itself, despite its having had an impact on the policy-making decisions of both the Japanese and U. S. governments.

Fortunately, original documents from the reversion movement are preserved in Naze City and several volumes of memoirs and remembrances, written by participants in the movement, also exist, shedding light on the activities of the various reversion groups. Moreover, adding to the different and sometimes colorful viewpoints, these accounts were written by individuals in local Amami-based groups as well as support groups on the mainland, by those of conservative as well as progressive and Communist political persuasion, by those who identified themselves closely with mainland Japanese as well as those who felt themselves to be more Okinawan, and finally, leader and follower alike. However, because these accounts did not access documents on the U. S. side, the movement’s impact has

remained unknown. With recent declassification of U. S. government and Japanese Foreign Ministry documents, this task has now been made easier.

The purpose of this paper therefore is to introduce the origins and activities of the Amami reversion movement, clarifying where necessary the different trains of thought, and suggesting what the meaning, significance, and impact of the movement was. In addition to being a chapter in the political and diplomatic history of postwar U. S.-Japan relations (and the author would add a positive one at that in that the islands were returned peacefully within the framework of U. S.-Japan cooperation), the reversion of the Amami Islands, specifically the reversion movement itself, offers several hints with regard to historical and recent social movements in Japan, such as the first-ever prefectural referendum held in Okinawa in September 1996, and may serve as an interesting case study of a successful movement in postwar Japan. Moreover, for those interested in social history, there is a rich source of materials from the occupation period waiting to be uncovered. Likewise, for those interested in postwar Okinawan history, there are rich comparisons to be made with the military occupation, political, economic, social and cultural environment at the time, and reversion process of the Amami Islands.

The Origins and Activities of the Reversion Movement

The First Stage of the Reversion Movement, 1945-1950

The Amami Islands, historically a part of Kagoshima Prefecture (and the Satsuma feudal domain since 1609 in pre-modern days), did not experience the invasion and horrific land battle that befell Okinawa in the spring of 1945.³⁾ However, as mentioned above, in late January 1946, Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers General Douglas MacArthur announced that Japanese political and administrative control over areas south of 30° North Latitude would end, effective immediately.⁴⁾ This was announced locally on February 2, and became known in Amami as the “2-2 Sengen.” Administration for the Amami Islands thus fell under the U. S. military command based in Okinawa when representatives of the military command arrived in March to begin the small-scale occupation of the islands. Regrettably, the economic and social situation in the islands deteriorated rapidly with economic and cultural intercourse cut off from mainland Japan, creating grievances that would only grow stronger against the U. S. occupation and in favor of reversion to Japan.⁵⁾

The following year, with movements toward a peace treaty following MacArthur’s March 17, 1947 press conference calling for the conclusion of an early peace, Foreign Minister Ashida Hitoshi in early June stated that Japan would request to be allowed to keep the Ryukyu and Kurile Islands.⁶⁾ However, Allied reaction was strongly critical of Ashida’s statement because Japan as a defeated nation, they argued, had no right to comment on the contents of a future peace treaty or express its wishes. MacArthur, in what was likely meant as a rebuff to Ashida’s comments, went so far as to state in an interview with visiting American correspondents that “there was no Japanese opposition to the United States holding Okinawa since the Okinawans are not Japanese.”⁷⁾ Locally, Major Fred M. Lubley, commander of the Military Government of the Northern Ryukyus, in early August

warned the two local newspapers, the *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun* and the *Amami Taimusu*, against spreading false rumors about reversion and “expressing private desires that are baseless.”⁸⁾

As movements toward a peace treaty continued at the international level, local speculation on the territorial disposition of the islands did not stop with Lubley’s warning to the press. At a rally held on September 7 to listen to a report by a 20-member committee appointed (during an island-wide rally held on August 19) to discuss the public election of the governor, the application of the new Japanese Constitution to the islands, and other issues of democracy with the local commander, governor, and mayor, several of the organizers of the rally publicly called for reversion, although avoiding the word “fukki,” which means “revert,” and using the less inflammatory word “kizoku (belonging to)” instead.⁹⁾ A few days later at a meeting of the *Shichōsonchōkai* (Association of the Heads of Cities, Towns, and Villages) on September 10, attended by Amami Guntō Governor Toyoshima Itaru, the discussion focussed on the reversion issue and a unanimous resolution was subsequently adopted stating that “The interest of the people of Oshima in the territorial issue is very large and it is the earnest wish and desire of the people to return to Japan.”¹⁰⁾ The following day, after being told of the resolution, Lubley decided to crack down, announcing (in Proclamation No. 13) that he was withdrawing the rights of free assembly, speech, publishing, beliefs, peaceful association, and labor unions that had been approved the previous year (June 4, 1946) as Proclamation No. 5. Although Lubley was replaced shortly after this and his order withdrawn, open activities critical of the military government and in favor of reversion were still not permitted. With this, the reversion movement died down until 1950, although dissatisfaction with the military government’s political and economic policies remained strong throughout the islands as the occupation continued and Japan awaited a peace treaty.

The Second Stage of the Reversion Movement, 1950-1952

With movements by the Allies toward a peace treaty beginning again in late 1949, discussion increased in Japan about the shape of the future treaty and disposition of its territory — news that was watched carefully in Okinawa and the Amami Islands. At the end of January 1950, Kawakami Yoshimi, an Upper House member from the opposition *Ryokufūkai* (Green Breeze Society), asked Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru about the fate of the Amami Islands, pointing out that “for historical, administrative, economic, and ethnic reasons, the islands should be returned to Japan” and deploring the situation in which the islands were cut off administratively from Japan forbidding normal commerce and exchange.¹¹⁾ Yoshida responded that he “believed the Allies, which had the right to make a final decision, would take into consideration the various relations, such as historical and ethnic, that the islands had with Japan.”¹²⁾ Upper House member Ito Ryūji, a former diplomat who had been Ashida’s Administrative Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs (and later would become a House of Representatives member from the district including Amami Oshima), followed up by asking Yoshida in a session of the Upper House Foreign Affairs Committee “just how in fact the question of the

return of the Amami Islands problem was to be resolved.”¹³⁾ Yoshida, who was also Foreign Minister, responded that “it was all right that the Japanese people expressed their hopes and opinions. It was natural for Japan to call for the return of the Amami Islands. Go ahead and call for the return of the islands.” Yoshida’s comments were given big play in the national media as well as in local newspapers and would have the effect of encouraging those calling for the reversion of the islands.

During this debate, Kagoshima Governor Shigenari Tadasu, who took a strong interest in the reversion movement (as Amami had been a part of Kagoshima Prefecture), was in Tokyo. Returning to Kagoshima on February 6, he called upon the people from Amami “to put more effort into seeking the reversion of the islands, as it would be hard for the central government to do so [alone].”¹⁴⁾ A month after Governor Shigenari’s return, 11 members of the Kagoshima Prefectural Assembly submitted the motion “Regarding the Return of Amami Oshima [Amami Oshima Fukki ni Kansuru Ken]” which stated that the Amami Islands “were historically a part of Japan and had never been fought over with another country” and furthermore “the islands could not exist economically independent of Japan.”¹⁵⁾ The motion, adopted unanimously on March 28, also called on the members to make appeals to the Government and the leaders of both Houses to seek the return of the islands at the time of a peace conference.¹⁶⁾

Locally, the Naze City Federation of Youth Groups (*Nazesshi Rengō Seinendan*), a Communist-led organization that had been reconstituted the previous summer, responded by holding a youth rally (*Seinen Kekki Shūkai*) on March 24 on the grounds of Naze Elementary School at which the focus was the reversion issue.¹⁷⁾ The following day, the federation began its movements for reversion but on March 27, in what became known as the “Amami Communist Party Incident (*Amami Kyōsantō Jiken*)” in which some 20 of its leaders were arrested for having communist materials, in effect putting a temporary stop to overt reversion activities.¹⁸⁾

During the spring of 1950, movements were seen once again in the U. S. government and among the Allies for a treaty of peace with Japan, symbolized by the appointment on May 18 of John Foster Dulles, an advisor to Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson, to be in charge of arranging a peace treaty and his subsequent trip to Japan in June. Despite the outbreak of the Korean War nearby, President Harry S. Truman announced on September 14 that the United States would go ahead with consultations with the governments of the member countries of the Far Eastern Commission, and by November an official version of the “Seven Principles” of the future Japanese peace treaty was released, of which point three stated that “Japan would agree to U.N. trusteeship, with the U. S. as administering authority, of the Ryukyu and Bonin Islands.”¹⁹⁾

Because the geographical definition of the Ryukyu Islands had been loosely used in the past by the United States, it was unclear to the Japanese government as a whole and the residents of Amami in particular what in fact was meant by the “Ryukyu Islands.” Due to this concern, the president of the Federation of Amami Islanders’ Associations in Japan (*Zenkoku Amami Rengō Sōhonbu*, hereafter *Amami Rengō*), Dr. Nobori Naotaka, and (soon-to-be Supreme Court Justice) Tanimura

Tadaichirō, chairman of the Amami Oshima Islanders' Association in Tokyo (*Zenkoku Amami Rengō Tokyoto Honbu Inukai*), and Kamimura Kiyonobu and Seta Ryōichi, chairmen respectively of the Saitama and Kanagawa prefectural chapters of the federation, decided to petition MacArthur. On November 15, the federation wrote to the Supreme Commander noting that "to see an early reunion of the Island Group of Amami Oshima with Japan proper is indeed an ardent desire on the part not only of the 400,000 islanders [in Amami as well as on the mainland] but also of the entire people of Japan," and calling for his "sympathetic understanding" and requesting that he "see to it that [the] islands are reunited with Japan proper as soon as practicable."²⁰⁾ The four-page petition added that the permanent separation of the islands from Japan proper would be "tantamount to a death-blow for them (*seimei o zettaru no omoi*)." ²¹⁾ Importantly, as a show of support for their position, Nobori included in their petition a list of names gathered during a signature drive in Tokyo and said that gathering "many more thousands of hundreds of signatures" would be "easy" were more time allowed.

Nobori's claim was not mere boasting. Amami Rengō, which was formed on December 8, 1946, had thousands of members and, being a well-established, influential, and nation-wide organization, was able, along with its Tokyo Chapter, to play a crucial role in directing the reversion movement.²²⁾ There are several reasons for this. Most obviously, being located in the capital city, the center of politics, administration, and diplomacy, it was the best location from which to work. Moreover, the forerunner to this organization, *Tokyo Amami Kai*, was the oldest and most well organized of the existing associations, and thus its members had an important network already established. Most importantly is the fact that many members of *Tokyo Amami Kai* were highly educated, well connected, and highly respected in their respective fields. For example, several were lawyers, scholars, former members of the Diet, judges, and diplomats. With this impressive membership, and using their connections, the *Tokyo Honbu* was able, as is discussed below, to gain valuable information and exert continuous pressure on the government to do more for the islands.

Importantly, in addition to this role, leaders from the federation encouraged the creation of a reversion movement within the islands themselves, the first real attempt of which was the suggestion by Kanai Masao, a lawyer and former member of the Diet (who had just been de-purged), to local leaders in late 1950 that they initiate a signature drive showing their desire for reversion.²³⁾ However, as Kanai recalled, "an open reversion movement was still impossible at the time apparently."

This was still true to some extent going into 1951 although expectations were high regarding the likelihood of a treaty. Starting off 1951 was Prime Minister Yoshida's January 5 statement to the first meeting of the Cabinet in the new year expressing the hope that "the Ryukyu Islands eventually would be restored to Japanese sovereignty because they have been Japanese territory for a long time and were not taken through invasion," a report that drew considerably large attention in the local newspapers.²⁴⁾ Dulles' follow-up trip to Japan for consultations later that month and the first half of February also received considerable attention as the territorial issue was seen understandably as one of the most "delicate" parts of the

treaty.²⁵⁾ Amid a great deal of speculation, it became apparent however during the Dulles-Yoshida talks that Japan's desires to keep the Nansei and Nanpō Islands under full sovereignty and administrative control were not going to be realized, and that the United States was given the right to seek a trusteeship arrangement for the islands.²⁶⁾

Reaction in the Amami Islands was swift and strong and could no longer be kept under the surface. Following the appearance of Nobori and Tanimura as witnesses (*sankōnin*) in an open hearing of the Upper House's Foreign Affairs Committee on February 6 in which they stated that it was "natural that the islands should be returned," the *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun* editorialized the following in its February 8th edition:

Debate on the territorial issue of the Ryukyus has increased dramatically in recent days. The argument that because the people of the Ryukyus are the same as in Japan proper and therefore the islands should be returned to Japan is convincing. Ryukyu Islanders in Japan have been working in concert in gathering signatures expressing the desire to see the islands returned. Yet, in the critical local scene, such a movement has not yet appeared. That locally a curious business-as-usual attitude is being preserved can may be said to be out of fear of bothering America, but as long as America's attitude toward the Ryukyus is decided is firm, this concern is absolutely unnecessary. In other words, if the Ryukyus believe in America as a guiding state, cooperates with America in its leadership role, faithfully tries to be America's friend, there is no reason that the islands should be separated from Japan because these ideas are also held by Japan itself. Therefore because the expression of the desire of the Ryukyus to return to Japan are in line with the views of Japan and are not meant to be in opposition to America, the people of the Ryukyus should be allowed to express their views freely. It seems in general that expressing the desire to return to Japan is something bad to America. What should be most feared by America and the Ryukyus is not this but covering truth in deceit. If the Ryukyus hide their desire to return to Japan for fear of upsetting America, the future generations of both countries will find themselves in a tragedy from which they can not be rescued.²⁷⁾

The author and first president of the *Nankai Nichinichi*, Murayama Iekuni, later recalled that he expected "call for the desire to return to Japan be made clear" to be censored and was surprised that his "outburst" was allowed to go to print.²⁸⁾

Less than one week later local leaders answered his call when the Amami Oshima Social Democratic Party (Amami Oshima Shakai Minshutō) organized the *Kizoku Mondai Taisaku Kyōgikai* (Council on Measures for the Reversion Problem), holding its first meeting on February 13 at the meeting room of the Naze City Office.²⁹⁾ There, some 70 people from 30 organizations participated in discussions lasting five hours. In the end, representatives from 14 of the above civic, labor, and youth groups decided to form the *Amami Oshima Nihon Fukki Kyōgikai* (Council for the Reversion of Amami Oshima to Japan), later known by its abbreviated form

Fukkyō.³⁰⁾ *Fukkyō* as a result came into being the next day, February 14 and would play a crucial role in realizing the reversion of the islands to Japan by its numerous actions and petitions. Izumi Horo, a former educator and poet who became Chairman of the local Social Democratic Party the previous December and who would become the leading figure of the reversion movement, was chosen as its leader by unanimous vote.³¹⁾ *Fukkyō*'s goals were seen in the declaration it adopted that day:

We believe that the reversion of our homeland, Amami Oshima, to Japan should be realized because of our ethnic, historic, and cultural relations with Japan proper, which the more than 200,000 residents of the islands have earnestly desired since the end of the war.

On the eve of the peace treaty, we have a good chance to make our views known now in some way to the entire world and the various international organizations that it is the strong desire of we, the inhabitants of these islands, to return to Japan.

At this important time, we, the numerous groups represented, in forming on our own a peaceful "Council for the Reversion of Amami Oshima to Japan," have confidence in the fairness of the world's democratic Allied Powers when deciding the territorial problems as based on the Cairo and Potsdam declarations, and will work hard to make the desires and true ethnic feelings of the more than 200,000 of our compatriots realized.³²⁾

Their first action became the collecting of signatures of all the residents over the age of 14 calling for the return of the islands to Japan. Beginning on February 19 and ending in early April, they collected 139,348 signatures of those who supported the early return to Japan.³³⁾ These results were sent to Dulles who had arrived in Japan on April 16 for his third visit to calm Japanese fears about MacArthur's firing by President Truman.³⁴⁾ They were also sent to MacArthur's replacement, Lt. Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway, the Far Eastern Commission (located in Washington, D.C.), the Allied Council for Japan (located in Tokyo), Prime Minister Yoshida, and the presidents of the Upper and Lower Houses of the Japanese Diet, the Secretary General of the United Nations.

In the middle of this effort, shortly after the United States released to the public its March 12 draft of the peace treaty (which had the islands south of 29 degrees North Latitude to be placed under trusteeship), the 13-member Amami Legislature (*Amami Guntō Kaigi*) passed a unanimous resolution on March 27 calling for the return to Japan, followed by the Naze City Assembly (*Naze Shi Gikai*) on April 4 and the assemblies of other towns and villages throughout Amami.³⁵⁾ These local resolutions were sent to many of the same individuals and organizations listed above.

A week later, the final count of the signatures was made showing that some 99.8 percent of the population over the age of 14 desired the return of the islands to Japan. In addition to sending the results to the eight individuals and organizations named above, the leaders decided to make a special appeal to the Diet and mass

media in an attempt to expand the movement from a local one to a national one. On May 8, the petition and signatures were placed on a Yokohama-bound boat the *Shirokumo Maru* reaching there in the early morning of May 13. Upon their receipt by Kanai Masao, who had become Vice-President of the Federation of Amami Islanders' Association in Japan on April 14, and other former residents of Amami, the petition and signatures were brought to the Diet on May 16 and shown directly to the presidents of both houses and 10 Diet members from Kagoshima, being officially received by the Lower House that day.³⁶⁾

With the help of Lower House member Tokonami Tokuji, who introduced a "Resolution Concerning Territory (Ryōdo ni Kansuru Ketsugi)," on June 2, the Lower House passed the resolution which requested the goodwill of the Allies when deciding the territorial arrangements and called upon the government to see that the desires of the residents were heard.³⁷⁾ A similar resolution was passed by the Upper House that same day. Subsequently, however, in early July the final version of the draft Treaty of Peace with Japan was reported in the news, causing great concern in Amami, due to the related clause's contents which had the islands separated from Japan and potentially to be placed under a trusteeship arrangement, an outcome that "completely disappointed" *Fukkyō*'s chairman, Izumi.³⁸⁾

Believing that their appeals were not being heard, *Fukkyō* leaders in Amami organized a citizens' rally (*Shimin Sōkekki Taikai*) in Naze City on July 13.³⁹⁾ Initially the rally, attended by some 10,000 people, was ordered to be broken up (being illegal under Ordinance 32 of the Military Government); however organizers eventually were able to go ahead with the rally.⁴⁰⁾ A second larger rally, called the "Mass Meeting of all the People in Favour of Reversion to Japan," was held the following week in the late afternoon of July 19.⁴¹⁾ Importantly, the rally was also attended by Lower House member Nikaidō Susumu from Kagoshima, who had stopped in Naze on his return from an inspection trip of the Ryukyu Islands and would take up the territorial problem in the Diet in late August following Yoshida's appearance to explain the treaty.⁴²⁾ The rally eventually adopted the following three resolutions: 1) to send a resolution calling for reversion to Prime Minister Yoshida; 2) to send a delegation to Japan to appeal; 3) to conduct a hunger strike. Symbolic of the last resolution, a hunger strike, the movement, desperate and agitated, began to radicalize.

In August and September, one hunger strike after another followed, led personally by the charismatic Izumi. The first one began on August 1 on the grounds of the Takachiho Shrine in Naze being conducted until August 5.⁴³⁾ This was followed by a second one on August 16, after Yoshida spoke regarding the treaty, and a third one on September 5, the eve of the peace conference. In the meantime, the movement had decided to send representatives to the mainland to present their case. However, as leaving Amami without permission was illegal, these 12 representatives had to be smuggled out (on August 5). In the end, their efforts at bringing attention came to naught, and only seemed to aggravate the situation for in San Francisco, Dulles vented his anger at Yoshida for what he described as "demonstrative movements" in the Amami Islands and elsewhere, feeling "it shocking that there is a hunger strike when it has already been said that

the islands would be considered as part of Japanese territory. America is to administer the Nansei Islands because of their strategic necessity they are not to become our territory. It is exactly as I have often told you.”⁴⁴⁾

Dulles’ frustration was a reflection of the difficult task he had in negotiating the peace treaty as a whole, and in particular the Article 3 territorial clause. Dulles had to balance the views of Japan with those of the U. S. military, which strongly desired the annexation of the Ryukyu Islands, or at a minimum, the placing of them under a trusteeship administered by the U. S., as well as the differing views of the State Department, the Defense Department, and the Allies. On the eve of Dulles’ trip to Japan in January, for example, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Omar N. Bradley, had told him that the islands should be kept under U. S. strategic control and Japanese sovereignty “not restored.”⁴⁵⁾ MacArthur felt even more strongly about it:

Leaving the Ryukyus under Japan’s sovereignty is highly objectionable from a military point of view. The Japanese are fully resigned to the loss of these areas as a penalty for waging war. They form a vital segment of our lateral defense line and our control thereof is formally established and universally recognized. It would be unthinkable to surrender control and render our use of these areas, fortified at United States expense, subject to treaty arrangement under Japanese administration. It would but be to transform strength to weakness without the slightest moral or legal reason for so doing.⁴⁶⁾

MacArthur expressed these same views to Dulles upon the latter’s arrival in Japan. He recommended that Dulles tell Yoshida the question of the territorial disposition of the Ryukyu Islands “simply was not open for discussion.”⁴⁷⁾ However, as the author’s *The Origins of the Bilateral Okinawa Problem* demonstrates, while Dulles told Yoshida in their talks on February 1 that the question was not open for discussion, he in fact was very concerned about the issue and continuously sought a compromise that would allow Japan to keep sovereignty and a framework in which the islands could be reverted peacefully.⁴⁸⁾ The result was the “residual sovereignty” formula. While the words did not appear in the Article 3 clause, Dulles used this phrase when explaining the contents of the clause to the assembled delegations at the San Francisco peace conference.

It was the efforts of Yoshida and officials from the Japanese government, as well as those of the political parties and Amami/Okinawa associations calling for the islands’ retention that greatly impressed Dulles and his assistants. Likewise, within the State Department (which sought the return of the Nansei Islands to Japan), officials were particularly impressed by appeals from Amami, as the following memorandum written in early August by Douglas Overton shows:

While it is obvious that many of the 139,348 persons who signed the petition have little active interest in political problems, there can be no doubt that the overwhelming majority of Amamians strongly desire that Amami Gunto be returned to Japan. Irredentist sentiment is, of course, strong throughout the

Nansei Shoto; however, it is especially strong in the north, where geographical propinquity, intermarriage, and trade have operated to bind Amami Gunto closely to the Japanese mainland. On this basis I believe that a special case can be made for the return of Amami Gunto to Japan.⁴⁹⁾

While the treaty signed the following month did not state that the islands would be returned, the record shows that Dulles and the State Department continued to study the issue and seek a way for the reversion of the islands. Publicly, however, Dulles sought Japan's acquiescence in the treaty clause, hoping to buy time to negotiate further with the military, and thus was quite annoyed by the reversion movement's agitation of the issue.

The reversion movement itself did not give up following the peace treaty conference, and in fact, unanimously decided to continue the movement, stepping up its efforts as Japan and the other signatories deliberated the treaty in order to ratify it.⁵⁰⁾ With the fate of the islands still unknown, Izumi petitioned Dulles once again on October 15. Dulles' response came in the middle of December, during his visit to Japan to secure agreement with the Japanese Government over the question of the recognition of China. Dulles, in his reply, called attention to a speech he gave at a joint meeting of the American Chamber of Commerce and the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in which he stated "We hope and believe that a future administration of these islands can be worked out in a friendly way which will combine the natural desires of the inhabitants with the requirements of international peace and security."⁵¹⁾ Dulles added that Izumi's concerns would "receive careful consideration."⁵²⁾ Indeed, the State Department continued with its policy review regarding the Nansei Islands, but a final decision on their return was not reached as Japan prepared for independence again in April 1952.

The Third Stage of the Reversion Movement, 1952-1953

With the peace treaty coming into force and Japan rejoining the international community in the spring of 1952, debate over whether to call for the abrogation of Article 3 or not became quite intense within the reversion movement. Such discussion, framed in terms of opposing the trusteeship arrangement, had existed before following the announcement of the draft treaty and in the wake of the Peace Conference in San Francisco, with the moderate Amami Federated Teachers Union (*Amami Rengō Kyōshokuin Kumiai*), which argued that outright opposition to the trusteeship would damage the movement, challenging the long-standing policy of the movement as supported by the radical Amami Youth League and Government Employees Labor Union (*Kankōchō Shokuin Kumiai*) which argued for the need to continue with outright opposition to a trusteeship and an immediate and complete return to Japan.⁵³⁾ In the end *Fukkyō*, after two days of heated debate, reconfirmed on September 23 the traditional policy of opposing trusteeship and calling for a complete return to Japan.⁵⁴⁾ While this was a temporary victory for the radical wing of the movement, it would not last as events below show.

During the summer of the previous year, Kanai and others from the Tokyo-based Amami groups, encouraged by the distinction between the renunciation of

territories in Article 2 (Taiwan, Korea, etc.) and Article 3, which did not require renunciation of the Ryukyus, began to doubt whether in fact the U. S. Government would place the Nansei Islands under a trusteeship, having consulted with Foreign Ministry officials (who in turn were in regular contact with the sympathetic Office of the Political Advisor at GHQ, led by William J. Sebald). On August 19, Kanai, having concluded (correctly) that the islands would not be placed under trusteeship, sent a telegram to Izumi in Naze stating that “America will not go ahead with a trusteeship. It looks like after two or three years like this [the islands] will be returned.”⁵⁵⁾ The return of the very northern part of the Nansei Islands later that year seemed to confirm this analysis.

However, the movement sought in late June to make its intentions clearer at its first mass rally after the treaty came into effect. At the June 28 rally, the following demands were passed: 1) The abrogation of Article 3 and the complete return to Japan, and 2) the abrogation of all military government laws and the introduction of Japanese laws.⁵⁶⁾ The following day, *Fukkyō* called another special meeting of its leadership and decided to initiate a second signature drive beginning in July which included the new policy of calling for the abolition of Article 3.

By November, some 99.9% of Amami residents over the age of 14 had signed their names in favor of reversion and on November 24, Izumi, who had since been elected Mayor of Naze City, Murayama, and Haraguchi Sumiji, Director of the Amami Branch of the Commerce and Industry Bureau of the Government of the Ryukyus, left for Tokyo as representatives of *Fukkyō* to deliver the latest signatures to government officials and members of the Diet. Stopping first in Kagoshima, Izumi and his group sought to raise consciousness there regarding Amami before departing for Tokyo (on November 27).⁵⁷⁾ The first several days in Tokyo were spent coordinating their efforts with the Tokyo-based groups and then meeting with Diet members, government officials, Ogata Taketora, then Vice-Premier, Foreign Minister Okazaki Katsuo, and eventually Ambassador Murphy and Prime Minister Yoshida.

Initially the appointment with Murphy was scheduled for only 5 minutes, however Murphy, intrigued by the discussion likely because he was at this very point recommending to Washington the return of the islands, eventually gave the group some 40 minutes.⁵⁸⁾ Izumi and his associates went into a long explanation of Amami’s history and situation, using maps and the collection of signatures they brought with them. According to Murayama’s account of the meeting, it appeared to be the first time Murphy heard this “incomprehensible history.” Ending the interview by stating the “international situation made it necessary,” Murphy told the group that he would do his best to see that their wishes were fulfilled.

The group next wanted to meet with Prime Minister Yoshida, a task that proved difficult but was made possible through the intervention of Kagoshima Governor Shigenari, who had recently returned from a trip to Amami in late October.⁵⁹⁾ Finally able to meet with Yoshida on the 23rd, Yoshida requested that only Shigenari and two of the representatives come to the Prime Minister’s residence. Despite having set up the *Sōrifu Nanpō Renraku Jimukyoku* (Prime Minister’s Office Liaison Bureau for the Southern Areas) with an office in Naze that summer,

Yoshida, according to Murayama's account, was completely in the dark about the situation in Amami like Murphy.⁶⁰⁾ After expressing their thanks for remarks by Yoshida on November 24 at the 15th Session of the Diet that he would work hard to realize the return of Amami, the group opened up the same map that they used with Murphy and then launched into an explanation of the situation in Amami. Yoshida, according to Murayama, "sat in his Japanese-style outfit with his famous cigar, looking incredulous and asking a lot of questions."⁶¹⁾ Yoshida explained the difficulty he had at the signing of the peace treaty saying that "from the beginning, reversion has been a question of time I thought that being under the control of a first class country like America, people would be living a much better life than on the mainland, but America seems to be doing some terrible things there, it is now time that the islands be returned. I will try to speed up the negotiations." Yoshida then added, "From the beginning of negotiations with Dulles, I have been emphasizing Amami. With the exception of the military, American leaders understand. The problem is military. There is a fear of spies. Care has to be taken that the movement does not become anti-American. I want to give full consideration to your requests that a special disposition agency be set up." On leaving, Yoshida added that with the U. S. government changing the following year (to that of Dwight D. Eisenhower), a new path in the negotiations could open up. Yoshida was correct; as is explained below, a new path indeed was opening up.

One final hurdle was waiting for the group while in Tokyo. That was seeing that the Diet approve a resolution regarding the islands. On December 12, the group had met in the office of Representative Tokonami with other leaders from the Tokyo-based Amami Rengo to discuss the contents of a resolution and the timing.⁶²⁾ After gaining the concurrence of the leadership of the ruling Liberal Party and other parties, the resolution, entitled "Proposed Resolution Regarding Amami Oshima (Amami Oshima ni Kansuru Ketsugi An)," was introduced on the agenda on December 25 and passed unanimously that same day.⁶³⁾ Calling upon the government to take the necessary measures to see that the "people of Oshima County in Kagoshima Prefecture" have the same access to lifestyle, education, transportation, welfare, etc. as those on the mainland, the resolution sought a "*de facto* reversion," and, of note, was the first one that focussed exclusively on the Amami Islands.⁶⁴⁾

It was around the same time in Amami that a similar debate was bringing to the surface the divisions that existed within the reversion movement as highlighted in a clash that took place on December 24 at the meeting room of the Naze City Office.⁶⁵⁾ Moderates in the movement were bothered by the radicalism of the Communist members and feared that the movement was being used to serve the agenda of the Communist Party and not the other way around, and because of this, would expose the movement to criticism and suppression. The moderates, in favor of a "*de facto* reversion," moreover felt that as long as the movement continued to call for the abolition of Article 3 in the Peace Treaty which was an international agreement reversion would be nearly impossible. A final decision on the movement's future direction was put off until the New Year when Izumi was expected to return from Tokyo. At the next meeting on January 15, the day after

his return from the mainland, Izumi reported on the delegation's trip and activities. Following this, discussions moved to the question sponsored by the *Amami Oshima Nihon Fukki Kyōgikai Kakushin Dōshikai* (Progressive Brotherhood for the Return of Amami Oshima to Japan), a group formed at the end of the previous year within the movement to block the influence of the Communists, of whether to ban "political parties," specifically the local Communist Party, from the movement. After heated debate, the Communist members left the meeting, in effect being purged from the movement. Discussions continued over the coming weeks and months to work out a compromise but in the meantime, as will be discussed below, other events outpaced them in Washington and Tokyo.

Despite the (temporary) division in the movement (efforts were made by Izumi later to bring the parties together again), *Fukkyō* continued with its appeals and rallies in the new year. Symbolizing that their appeals were being heard, during a rally held on February 28, *Fukkyō* received a telegram from Prime Minister Yoshida stating that the government was aware of the situation and doing its best to realize the return of the islands.⁶⁶⁾ Leaders in the Tokyo-based group were also actively pressing their requests, as seen for example by the new Chairman of the National Committee on Emergency Measures for the Reversion of Amami Oshima to Japan, Okuyama Hachirō, meeting with John J. Conroy, First Secretary of the U. S. Embassy, on May 9 to relay the desire for both a de facto as well as a de jure reversion.⁶⁷⁾ A few weeks later on May 31, Kagoshima Governor Shigenari met with former U. S. First Lady, Eleanor M. Roosevelt during her trip to Japan as Chairwoman of the International Committee for the Preservation of Human Rights and presented to her a 22-page "Petition for Return of the Amami Oshima Islands."⁶⁸⁾ Roosevelt responded that she would be sure to inform the new Ambassador, John M. Allison, of its contents. Little did she, Shigenari, or the reversion movement know but it was at this very moment that the U. S. government was reaching a decision on the return of the islands. Continuing its appeals, the reversion movement awaited anxiously for a response. It would come, somewhat unexpectedly, later that summer.

The Impact of the Reversion Movement on Japanese and U. S. Policy

The shift in U. S. policy, or perhaps better put, the clarification of U. S. policy toward the islands, came about in many ways through Japan's persistent calls for the return of the Nansei Islands. The Japanese government, in turn, was constantly met with calls the islands return by leaders of the reversion movement, as described above.

Shortly after the the group's meetings with Murphy and Yoshida, Foreign Minister Okazaki visited Murphy and handed him a petition dated November 20 that he had received from the National Council of Superintendents of Education calling for the "realization of [the] reunion of the Amami-Oshima Islands with Japan at the earliest possible moment" and asked again that consideration be given for the return of the islands.⁶⁹⁾ With no response forthcoming, Yoshida and Okazaki decided to try harder.

In March, Okazaki began to more actively push the issue in his meetings with

Murphy. After a lunch session between the two on March 23 in which Okazaki raised the issue again, Murphy informed Robert J. G. McClurkin, Deputy Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs, that “Okazaki has mentioned the matter to me three times in the past week [and] urges that some encouraging word be said at this time. He obviously wishes to demonstrate that the Japanese Foreign Office is not being negligent or dilatory regarding this important question. Quite apart from the electoral campaign the issue is an important one in the eyes of the Japanese. It will undoubtedly be agitated persistently.”⁷⁰⁾ Murphy lamented that he could not help with a final decision not forthcoming from Washington: “As much as I would like to be helpful to him in view of the apparently adamant position of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I am at a loss to suggest what we could do. In my conversations with Okazaki I am merely passing the buck to you gentlemen in the Department.”

The politicizing of the issue in order to benefit in the upcoming Lower House elections scheduled for April 19 increased over the next weeks. On March 24, the same day Murphy wrote to the State Department, Yoshida wrote to Murphy requesting that consideration be given to the reversion of Japanese administration over the Nansei Islands.⁷¹⁾ Yoshida raised this issue with Murphy again over lunch at Yoshida’s home in Oiso, Kanagawa Prefecture on April 2, handing him a copy of a “confidential *aide-memoire*.” Regarding the Nansei Islands, Yoshida requested consideration of the following three points:

1. Return of civil administrative jurisdiction is desired over the entire archipelago, including Okinawa and Amami Oshima.
2. If this is difficult of realization (sic), we ask that the civil administration of the Amami Oshima Group be turned over as the first step to (sic) that direction.
3. As for Okinawa, we earnestly hope for the return of educational jurisdiction (for carrying on language instruction).⁷²⁾

Yoshida also directed his Ambassador to the United States, Araki Eikichi, to raise the same question directly with the State Department. On April 9, Araki met with Assistant Secretary of State, Walter S. Robertson, who had officially assumed his position the day before.⁷³⁾ Araki handed him a copy of the aide-memoire given to Murphy (and General Mark W. Clark) on April 2. After introducing the contents of the memorandum Araki read a prepared statement which said that “the question of Amami Oshima and [the] other Nansei Islands should not be left long unsolved. Petitions have been pouring in from the inhabitants who are in a quandary about the future of their status and dissatisfied with the present administration. It is obvious that this dissatisfaction will stronger as days go by.”⁷⁴⁾ Acting Secretary of State W. Bedell Smith replied that the U. S. government “would do everything it could to expedite” the requests of Japan.

Indeed, that is precisely what was occurring in Washington at the time. With the advent of a new administration under Eisenhower, the State Department reviewed policy toward Japan, and in particular U. S. policy regarding Japanese territories under Article 3, which was stalemated since the treaty went into effect the previous April. On March 18, then Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs

Allison, who shortly was to become Ambassador to Japan, completed a memorandum that recommended that “the Amami group should be returned to Japan at an early date, after agreement with Japan on the necessary rights there for military purposes, the precise timing to be determined with a view to obtaining the greatest political advantage.”⁷⁵⁾ Dulles, who had become Secretary of State in the Eisenhower Administration, agreed with Allison’s recommendation. With this approval, Allison and his staff immediately began working on a position paper. Allison’s successor, Walter Robertson, subsequently completed it and gained Dulles’ approval in early June, in time for the June 25 National Security Council meeting. In submitting the paper to the NSC, Robertson pointed out that:

The NSC is presented with a basic difference in political judgment. Nothing in the Defense paper indicates that the Amami group has any strategic importance which could not be adequately protected by securing appropriate base rights from the Japanese. The Defense case is therefore predicated upon the theory that relinquishing control over the Amami group would whet the enthusiasm of the Japanese to regain control over the rest of the islands and would increase irredentist sentiment among the islanders. Our own judgment is that we can ease a serious and increasing source of friction by relinquishing control over the Amami group. The Japanese Government desires reversion of the islands and formally told us so. They know that the strategic case for our retention of Amami is weak, whereas the strategic case for the retention of the other islands is strong. In order to enable us, without alienating the Japanese, to retain control over the islands where we need it for our strategic interest, we should relinquish the control we do not need.

At the subsequent meeting of the NSC, heated debate was heard between Dulles and Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson. Toward the end of the discussion, Eisenhower intervened, explaining that it was necessary to recognize that Japan and its potential strength was of “vital importance to our own security interests.”⁷⁶⁾ Accordingly,” he continued, “to insist [as the military had done to date] on controlling this little group of islands, which obviously meant a lot to Japan, amounted to risking the loss of our main objective, which was to assure ourselves of Japan’s friendship and loyalty over the long run.” This was “silly” Eisenhower said, adding that “the Army was taking a little too narrow view if its opposition to the return of these islands was only to secure a radar station” and that “he could see no objections to turning over the small Amami group.” The President and NSC subsequently agreed to return the islands, with the announcement being made by Dulles on August 8, during a stopover in Tokyo, on his return from attending the Korean cease-fire ceremony. Symbolic of the gratitude felt by the Amami residents’ groups, a delegation led by Okuyama, went to Haneda Airport to see off Dulles, yelling out “Amami Oshima Island, Thank You!” and handing a somewhat startled Dulles a bouquet of roses.⁷⁷⁾ Upon arriving in Washington, Dulles told the reporters gathered that “the thing that left the greatest impression in Tokyo was the group of dozens of people from the Amami Islands who saw me off with flowers

and signs with their gratitude written on them expressing their happiness and deep gratitude for the return of the islands to Japan.” In what was called a “Christmas Present,” the islands were subsequently returned on December 25 after four months of negotiations, establishing an important precedent for the future return of the Ogasawara Islands and the remainder of the Ryukyu Islands, including Okinawa.

Conclusions

In conclusion, while President Eisenhower’s decision was not based solely on the pleas of *Fukkyō* or *Amami Rengō*, it is clear that the movement acted to keep the pressure on the Japanese Government and influenced America’s policy toward the islands, and in this, the true meaning or significance of the movement can be found.

The Amami reversion movement, which was actually two movements one in Tokyo (mainland) and the other in Amami working together was successful because of the unity maintained throughout *most* of movement in seeking above all the return of the islands, the high motivation of its members, the high level of organization, and, in the case of the Tokyo-based Amami Rengō, the influential social standing and degree of contacts possessed by its members in the Diet, Government, academia, legal, and media-publishing world, and due to the presence of forward-looking moderate leaders like Nobori and Izumi. Moreover, the reversion movement had the support of the people and Governor of Kagoshima Prefecture, as the islands had been a part of the prefecture since the prefecture was established in 1871. Of note, the movement itself would also have an impact on the reversion movement in Okinawa, which until then was not as strong nor as well organized as that of the Amami Islands, and would show that reversion could take place without abrogating Article 3 and within the framework of a cooperative U. S.-Japan relationship.

Notes

- 1) This paper is based on fieldwork and interviews conducted in Amami, as well as several research trips to Kagoshima, Tokyo, and Washington, D. C., while the author was a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Suntory Foundation. He is grateful to the Suntory Foundation for its financial support. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Fourth Asian Studies Conference Japan at Sophia University in Tokyo on June 25, 2000. The author would like to express his gratitude to participants in the conference for their comments, as well as to Shigemura Akira and Murayama Michio of the *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun*, Hayashi Sokio and Takanari Osamu of the Naze City Amami Museum, Professor Nishimura Tomiaki of Kagoshima Kenritsu Tanki Daigaku, Nobori Amiko, Yamashita Fumitake, Kusuda Toyoharu, Sakida Saneyoshi, Yamaoka Hidetsugu, Satake Kyōko, and Migita Shōshin for their generous assistance in this project and numerous insights on Amami’s history and political culture.
- 2) Article 3 reads: “Japan will concur in any proposal of the United States to the United Nations to place under its trusteeship system, with the United States as the sole administering authority, Nansei Shotō south of 29 degrees north latitude (including the Ryukyu Islands and the Daitō Islands), Nanpō Shotō south of Sofu Gan (including the Bonin Islands, Rosario Island and the Volcano Islands) and Parece Vela and Marcus Island. Pending the making of such a proposal and affirmative action thereon, the United States will have the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants of these islands,

- including their territorial waters.” The Nansei Islands represent the entire island chain south of the main island of Kyushu in western Japan. The Ryukyu Islands are technically those islands south of 27 degrees North Latitude (with the Amami Gunto or Islands being those north of that parallel).
- 3) The islands, which housed numerous Imperial Naval facilities, did experience aerial attacks in October 1944 that increased in frequency as preparations for the Battle of Okinawa began.
 - 4) On MacArthur’s decision to administratively separate the islands, see Amakawa Akira, “Nihon Hondo no Senryo to Okinawa no Senryō,” *Yokohama Kokusai Keizai Hōgaku*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 1-33. Also see Kagoshima Kenritsu Tanki Daigaku Chiiki Kenkyūsho, ed., *Amami Guntō no Keizai Shakai no Henyō* (Kagoshima Shi: Kagoshima Kenritsu Tanki Daigaku Chiiki Kenkyūsho, 1999), pp. 75-98.
 - 5) During this desperate time, islanders relied on the black market and smugglers (*mikkō*) to bring products and passengers to and from the islands. For an oral history of the smugglers and beneficiaries, see “Amami no Sengoshi: Mikkō,” *Sanenbana*, No. 3 (March 1995), pp. 10-59.
 - 6) “Okinawa, Kuriles Asked by Japan, Ashida Declares,” *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, June 6, 1947; “Ryukyu no Ichibu Henkan Yōkyū,” *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun*, June 8, 1947.
 - 7) “General MacArthur Foresees Japan Peace Within 18 Months,” *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, June 29, 1947. This was reported locally in the *Uruma Shimpō* (predecessor to the *Ryukyu Shimpō*) as “Beikoku no Okinawa Senryo ni Nihon wa Hantai Sezu, Ryukyujin wa Nihonjin ni wa Arazu,” *Uruma Shimpō*, July 4, 1947.
 - 8) Kaitei Nazeshishi Hensan Iinkai, *Kaitei Nazeshishi*, Vol. 1 (Naze Shi: Naze-Shiyakusho, 1996), pp. 780-781.
 - 9) Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun 50 Nenshi Hensan Iinkai, ed., *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun Gojūnenshi* (Naze Shi: Nankai Nichinichi Shimbunsha, 1997), p. 117.
 - 10) *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118.
 - 11) *Ibid.*, pp. 123-124.
 - 12) “Amami Oshima no Kizoku Mondai Rekishi, Jinshu o Kangeru Daro,” *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun*, February 2, 1950.
 - 13) *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun Gojūnenshi*, p. 124.
 - 14) *Ibid.*, p. 124.
 - 15) *Ibid.*, p. 126.
 - 16) Murayama Iekuni, *Amami Fukkishi* (Naze Shi: Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun, 1971), p. 219. A similar resolution was passed by the Miyazaki Prefectural Assembly around this time.
 - 17) For a history of the group and its relationship with the Communist Party, see Sakida Saneyoshi, “Kanzen Sokoku Fukki e no Michi: Jōyaku Sanjo Teppai no Hata o Agete,” in Amami Kyōdō Kenkyūkai, ed., *Gunseika no Amami: Nihon Fukki Sanjū Shūnen Kinenshi* (Naze Shi: Amami Kyōdō Kenkyūkai, 1983), pp. 285-287. Also see Sakida’s memoirs, *Beigunsei no Teppeki o Koete* (Naze Shi: Amami Rurikakesu no Kai, 1997), pp. 26-58.
 - 18) On this incident, see Sakida, *Beigunsei*, pp. 53-58 and Nakamura Yasutarō, *Sokoku e no Michi: Kobei 8 Nen Amami no Fukki Undōshi* (Kyoto Shi: Bunrikaku, 1984), pp. 223-259. Also see Nihon Kyōsantō Amami Chiku Iinkai, ed., *Amami no Noroshi: Amami Kyōsantōshi, 1947-1953* (Naze Shi: Nihon Kyōsantō Amami Chiku Iinkai, 1984), pp. 83-90.
 - 19) “Unsigned Memorandum Prepared in the Department of State (September 11, 1950),” *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1950, Vol. 6, East Asia and the Pacific* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976), pp. 1296-1297.
 - 20) “Petition [to MacArthur] for the Reunion of the Island Group of Amami O-shima With Japan Proper (November 15, 1950),” to be found in a large collection of materials prepared by Matsuda Kiyoshi in 1968 known *Amami Oshima Nihon Fukki Undō Shiryō* donated to the Amami Branch of the Kagoshima Prefectural Library, Naze City, Amami County, Kagoshima Prefecture. (Matsuda is the author of *Amami Shakai Undōshi* [Tokyo: JCA Shuppan, 1979]). For a Japanese language version of the petition, see Murayama, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-221. Nobori sent a similar, but shorter, petition to Dulles the following February prior to the latter’s leaving Japan. See “Petition for the Reunion of the Island Group of Amami O-shima with Japan Proper (February 8, 1951),” *Fukki*

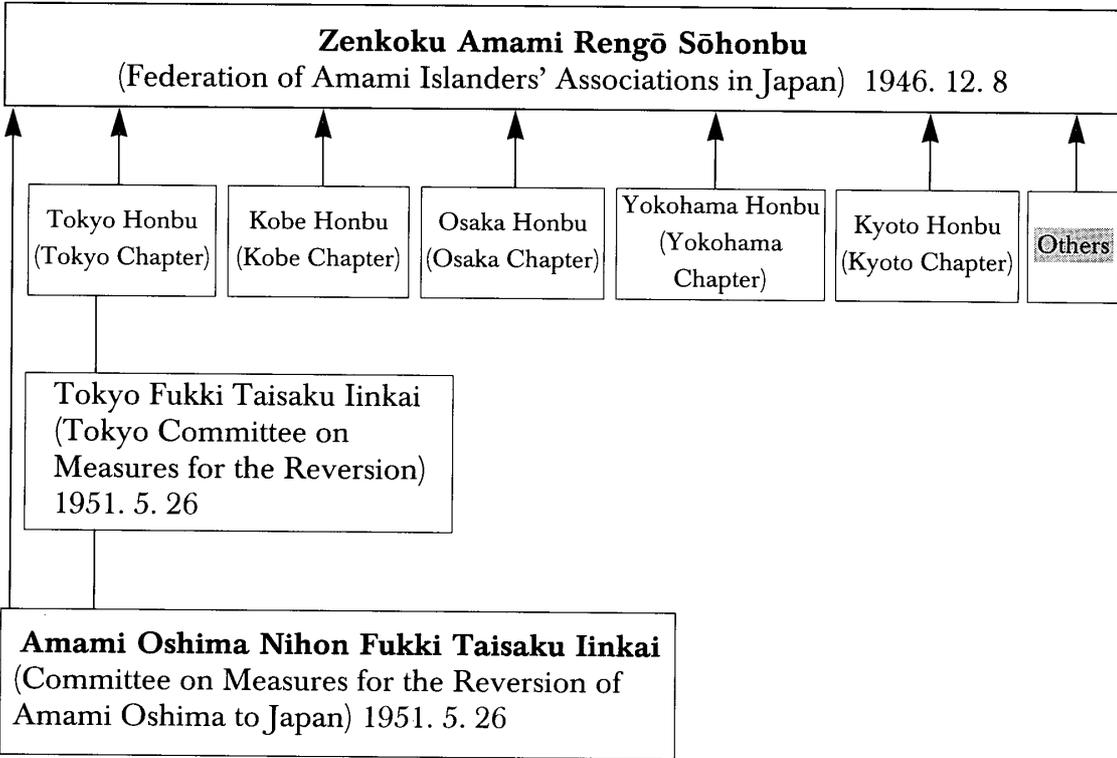
- Undō Shiryō*, Kagoshima Prefectural Library, Amami Branch.
- 21) “Petition [to MacArthur] for the Reunion of the Island Group of Amami O-shima With Japan Proper (November 15, 1950),” *op. cit.*
 - 22) The federation was actually the successor to the *Tokyo Amami Kai* (Amami Association of Tokyo), which had been in existence 45 years at the time of the end of the Pacific War. In the immediate aftermath of the war and the subsequent separation of the islands from Japan, *Tokyo Amami Kai* spent a great deal of time, energy, and money to assist fellow islanders stranded on the mainland in matters of housing, health, finance, and legal questions, such as travel permits. This type of support was repeated throughout the country by similar organizations in Osaka, Kobe, Miyazaki, Kagoshima, and elsewhere. However, the help these organizations were able to give was scattered and haphazard due to the confusion of the times. Recognizing the need for a more unified effort, 76 members of the *Tokyo Amami Kai* called for the creation of a nation-wide organization, with the result being the creation of Amami Rengo with chapters organized throughout the country. As Diagram 1 shows, within *Amami Rengō*, the *Amami Rengō Tokyo Honbu*, or Tokyo Chapter, was established, and this *Tokyo Honbu* would play a central, if not key, role in the movement. On the history of the federation, and the Tokyo Amami Kai, see Tokyo Amami Kai 100 Shunen Kinenshi Henshu Iinkai, ed., *Tokyo Amami Kai 100 Nen no Ayumi* (Tokyo: Tokyo Amami Kai, 1999), pp. 69-159. Also see Tokyo Amami Kai 80 Nenshi Hensan Iinkai, ed., *Tokyo Amami Kai 80 Nenshi* (Tokyo: Tokyo Amami Kai, 1984), pp. 307-392.
 - 23) Kanai Masao, “Amami Oshima no Sokoku Fukki Naru,” in Terebi Tokyo, ed., *Shōgen: Watashino Shōwashi*, Vol. 6. (Tokyo: Gakugei Shorin, 1969), p. 220.
 - 24) “Ryukyu wa Mukashi Kara Nihonryō,” *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun*, January 7, 1950. For U. S. interest in the statement, see “Despatch 936, Territorial Provisions of the Japanese Peace Treaty (January 15, 1951),” Central Decimal File, 1950-1954 (694.001/1-1551), Record Group 59, National Archives II, College Park, Maryland. Also see Robert D. Eldridge, *The Origins of the Bilateral Okinawa Problem: Okinawa in Postwar U. S.-Japan Relations, 1945-1952* (New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 300.
 - 25) “Islands Seen Delicate Point in Treaty Work,” *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, January 23, 1951.
 - 26) “Ryōdo Yōkyū wa Muri,” *Asahi Shimbun*, February 1, 1951. Japan’s efforts to seek retention of the islands in fact were crucial to convincing the United States to permit it to retain “residual sovereignty.” See Eldridge, *op. cit.*, particularly Chapter 7.
 - 27) “Kizoku Mondai ni Tsuite,” *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun*, February 8, 1951.
 - 28) Murayama Iekuni, “Fukkyō Hossoku no Zengo,” in *Kaitei Nazeshishi*, p. 863.
 - 29) Murayama, *Amami Fukkishi*, p. 234. The Social Democratic Party was formed on August 23, 1950, with Izumi Horo, later leader of the reversion movement in Amami, as one of its founders and head. The Amami Communist Party (*Amami Kyōsantō*), was formed on April 10, 1947 as an underground organization and operated in a number of labor and youth organizations, which often became subjected to surveillance and searches. Realizing the need to operate in a legitimate organization if the reversion of the islands were to be realized, it helped to form the Amami Social Democratic Party. According to Nakamura Yasutaro, a Communist member of the Ryukyu Legislature, there were three reasons why Izumi was named chairman: “First and foremost, he was not a communist. As a pro-American, he would not be subject to pressure from America. Second, he was a poet who was not dirtied. He was strong in his determination, not vulnerable to the prevailing winds, and possessed a deep love for his country and people that went to the heart of his being. Finally, having had long experience in the education world, he was trusted by the people of the entire island. To be able to bring together all of the people of the Amami Islands was the most important condition [for leadership].” Cited in *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun Gojūnenshi*, p. 131. See Diagram 3 for the political parties in Amami at this time.
 - 30) Murayama, *Amami Fukkishi*, pp. 235-236. A list of the founding groups appears in Diagram 2.
 - 31) *Ibid.*, p. 234.
 - 32) Translated from Murayama, *Amami Fukkishi*, p. 236. The declaration was prepared by Nakamura Yasutaro. See *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun Gojūnenshi*, p. 131.
 - 33) Murayama, *Amami Fukkishi*, p. 248. This figure reportedly represented 99% of the “entire” island

- population “except for those outside of the islands and the 56 who refused to sign”—a figure that, while exaggerated, nevertheless shows the large extent to which the residents desired the return of the islands to Japan. Nishimura provides a chart with a breakdown by community of the number of those signing the petition. See Nishimura Tomiaki, *Amami Guntō no Kingendaishi: Meiji Ikō no Amami Seisaku* (Osaka Shi: Kifusha, 1993), p. 292.
- 34) Murayama, *Amami Fukkishi*, p. 249.
 - 35) *Ibid.*, p. 245.
 - 36) Kanai Masao, ed., *Amami Oshima Fukki Undō Kaikoroku*, (Tokyo Sangensha, 1966), p. 222. Following this successful petition, Amami Rengo the *Tokyo Fukki Taisaku Inukai* (Tokyo Emergency Measures Committee for the Reversion of Amami Oshima to Japan) on May 26, with Kanai becoming Chairman. The following month on June 24, at a national meeting of the Amami Federation groups, a new organization was created within the Federation with Nobori as Chair, *Amami Oshima Nihon Fukki Taisaku Inukai* (Committee on Emergency Measures for the Reversion of Amami Oshima to Japan). For the membership of both of these groups, see Murayama, *Amami Fukkishi*, p. 257. These committees appear in Diagram 1.
 - 37) Murayama, *Amami Fukkishi*, p. 254. According to Murayama, there were four different drafts prepared of the resolution. The first one was entitled “Resolution Concerning the Return of the Amami Islands.” The second one was “Resolution Concerning the Return of Territory,” and the third one was “Resolution Concerning the Reversion of Territory.” The fourth one, “Resolution on the Territorial Problem” was the one finally adopted after discussions with Foreign Ministry Officials. Because the territorial issue was a “delicate” one, Amami was not listed by name.
 - 38) *Ibid.*, p. 261.
 - 39) *Ibid.*, pp. 263-264.
 - 40) In what was known as the “Placard Incident,” the rally was allowed to continue but the signs (placards) had to be lowered and gathered in one part of the grounds. Izumi apparently warned the local Chief of the Amami Civil Administration Team, Colonel Raymond C. Barrow, that he “imagined the movement would turn anti-American if the rally were not allowed to continue.” See *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun Gojūnenshi*, p. 135.
 - 41) “Memorandum from Izumi Horo to Chief, Amami Civil Administration Team on Report of the Opening of Mass Meeting of all the People in Favour of Reversion to Japan (July 13, 1951),” *Fukki Undō Shiryō*, Kagoshima Prefectural Library, Amami Branch. Also see *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun Gojūnenshi*, p. 136.
 - 42) Kanai, *Amami Oshima Fukki*, pp. 177-180. According to Kanai, who includes the full record of the proceedings, originally a resolution was planned calling for the restoration of territories, but as the Diet session was called to recognize the contents of the draft treaty, a passing of the resolution at that point would conflict with the later procedures to ratify the treaty and thus have the effect of restricting the Diet. After discussions between the Liberal Party and the opposition Democratic and Left and Right Socialist parties, a *kinkyū shitsumon*, or “emergency question,” format was adopted whereby Nikaidō presented questions on the issue.
 - 43) *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun Gojūnenshi*, pp. 136-137.
 - 44) Nishimura Kumao, *Nihon Gaikōshi, Vol. 27 San Furanshisuko Heiwa Jōyaku*, (Tokyo, Kajima Heiwa Kenkyūjo, 1971), pp. 190-191.
 - 45) “The Secretary of State to Sebald (January 3, 1951),” *FRUS 1951, Vol. 6, Asia and the Pacific (Part 1)*, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1977), pp. 778-779.
 - 46) “The Commander in Chief, Far East (MacArthur) to the Department of the Army (December 28, 1950),” *FRUS, 1950*, p. 1384.
 - 47) “Memorandum of Conversation by Fearey (January 27, 1951),” *FRUS, 1951*, p. 821.
 - 48) See Eldridge, *op. cit.*, pp. 320-380.
 - 49) “Memorandum from Johnson to Rusk on Petition for the Return of Amami Gunto to Japan (August 10, 1951),” Roll 6, Microfilm C0044, ONA Records, RG 59.
 - 50) *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun Gojūnenshi*, p. 141.
 - 51) “Letter from Dulles to Izumi Horo (December 18, 1951),” JFD-JMA Chronological Series, Eisenhower Library. Dulles’ letter, received by Izumi on January 21, 1952, was published in the

- Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun* on January 22.
- 52) Shortly before Dulles' December trip to Japan, the northern part of the Amami Islands comprising Jitosen and seven other islands north of 29 degrees North Latitude were returned to Japanese administration, news that encouraged Izumi and the movement .
 - 53) *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun Gojūnenshi*, pp. 141-142.
 - 54) Murayama, *Amami Fukkishi*, pp. 296-297.
 - 55) Kanai, "Amami Oshima no Sokoku Fukki Naru," p. 225. For a fuller discussion of the "Kanai Shokan [Kanai Letter]," see Kanai, *Amami Oshima Fukki*, pp. 183-185; and Murayama, *Amami Fukkishi*, pp. 298-300.
 - 56) *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun Gojūnenshi*, p. 146.
 - 57) Murayama, *Amami Fukkishi*, pp. 411-415.
 - 58) *Ibid.*, pp. 423-424.
 - 59) *Ibid.*, p. 425. Also see "People of Amami-Oshima Cry For Return to Japan Gov. Shigenari Coveys Islanders Feeling," *The Mainichi*, November 18, 1952.
 - 60) Murayama, *Amami Fukkishi*, pp. 411-415.
 - 61) *Ibid.*, p. 426.
 - 62) *Ibid.*, p. 427.
 - 63) *Ibid.* The resolution can be found on page 428.
 - 64) *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun Gojūnenshi*, p. 150.
 - 65) "Zengun Daigiinkai Gijiroku (December 24, 1952)," *Fukki Undō Shiryō*, Kagoshima Library, Amami Branch. Also see Sakida, "Kanzen Sokoku Fukki e no Michi," pp. 293-295.
 - 66) Murayama, *Amami Fukkishi*, p. 585.
 - 67) *Nankai Nichinichi Shimbun Gojūnenshi*, p. 158. Okuyama had replaced Nobori the previous summer due to the latter's illness.
 - 68) *Ibid.*, pp. 159-160. Also see "Petition for Return of the Amami Oshima Islands," in Foreign Ministry collection, DRO-MOFA.
 - 69) "Amami Guntō Henkan Keii," p. 0018, DRO-MOFA.
 - 70) "Letter from Murphy to McClurkin (March 24, 1953)," Office of Northeast Asian Affairs-Records Relating to Foreign Policy Decisions, 1950-1956, Microfilm C-0044, RG 59.
 - 71) "Letter from Murphy to the Director of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs Young (April 5, 1953)," *FRUS 1952-1954, Vol. 14, China and Japan (in two parts) Part 2 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1985)*, p. 1405.
 - 72) "Copy of the Letter Handed on April 2, 1953, to Mr. Robert D. Murphy, Ambassador of the United States, and General Mark W. Clark, Commander in Chief of the American Security Forces in Japan," Tab D to "Memorandum of Conversation with Ambassador Araki on Various Matters Relating to Japan (May 14, 1953)," Box 5, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, Miscellaneous Subject Files, 1953, RG 59.
 - 73) See fn. 1, *FRUS 1952-1954*, p. 1409.
 - 74) "Statement of Ambassador Araki Regarding Letter of April 2, 1953 from Prime Minister Yoshida to Ambassador Murphy (undated)," attachment to "Memorandum of Conversation with Ambassador Araki on Various Matters Relating to Japan (May 14, 1953)," *op. cit.*
 - 75) "Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs Allison to the Secretary of State (March 18, 1953)," *FRUS, 1952-1954*, p. 1398.
 - 76) "Memorandum of Discussion at the 151st Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington, June 25, 1953," *FRUS, 1952-1954*, pp. 1438-1445.
 - 77) Murayama, *op. cit.*, p. 473.

Amami Oshima Nihon Fukki Kyōgikai
(Council for the Reversion of Amami Oshima To Japan) 1951. 2. 14

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Amami Shakai Minshutō
Amami Seinen Rengō
Naze Shi Seinen Rengōdan
Fujin Seikatsu Yōgokai
ZenKan Kōchō Shokuin Kumiai
Naze Shi Yuya Kumiai
Daiko Ichibu Jichikai
Daiko Nibu Jichikai
Daiko Sanbu Jichikai
Daisho Jinkai
Shihō Daisho Jinkai
Sakurakai
Amami Taimusu Sha
Amami Hyōron Sha
Shinseinen</p> | <p>Amami Oshima Kyōshokuin Kumiai
Naze Shi Fujinkai
Oshima Gun Ishikai
Oshima Gun Shika Ishikai
Hokubu Oshima Shika Ishikai
Oshima Dengyōsho
Shakuchi Shakuya Jinkai
Chōsen Jinkai
Inshokuten Kumiai
Bunka Kyōkai
Amami Bungeika Kyōkai
Nankai Nichinichi Shimbunsha
Jiyū Sha
Bunmei Sha</p> |
|--|--|



Amami Political Parties, 1945-1953

L

R

