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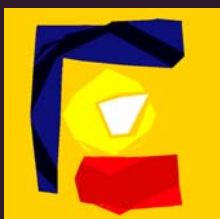
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**Where is the world order going?**

**--- What citizens can do to form a new world order**

**Takahiko TANAKA**

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## **Where is the world order going?**

### **--- What citizens can do to form a new world order**

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The situation in Iraq is still out of control. So far, it has been reported that more than nine thousand Iraqi civilians, including women and children, have died. The number of the fatalities grows daily. The cycle of violence involving civilians has continued unabated, and whenever news of the bloodshed is broadcast, which is almost daily, one cannot help but feel a sense of profound dread.

Meanwhile, the President of the United States, George Bush, the one who created this chaotic situation, made a round of visits in Europe last June to stem criticism emanating from home and abroad regarding his unilateral foreign policy and the messy occupation of Iraq. During his visit Bush spoke with the Pope, and while in France attended a ceremony to commemorate the anniversary of the landing at Normandy, where he made a display of his rekindled relations with French President Chirac, trying to paint a picture of himself as a figure that cares about what the international community thinks. At the United Nations, an institution which Bush has treated disdainfully, America succeeded in passing Security Council Resolution 1546 relating to a relief and recovery program for Iraq which it proposed with Great Britain.

At the Sea Island Summit Bush could be seen smiling and shaking the hands

of world leaders while trying to mend the cracks in relations with some members of the international community, as well as trying to portray himself to the American electorate as a president worthy of re-election. This feigned conciliation was offensive and ugly in itself. But what is far worse is not this shift from a policy of unilateralism.

Bush made the new Iraqi government, which is a mere puppet regime of America, agree to accept a multinational force. By controlling that force America puts Iraq under its control, and in doing so steers every practical aspect of Iraq's recovery. Also, the "justification" for the war in Iraq, i.e. the "democratization of Iraq", which has been crumbling, has gradually changed to something termed the "Greater Middle East Initiative". Here, we can transparently see how the Bush administration has hastily constructed a disguise of international cooperation and multilateralism, while at the same time has been continuing to pursue the unilateral policies it always has. This administration is clearly caught up in the vision and fantasy of "empire".

Here in Japan, Prime Minister Koizumi, also a prisoner of Bush's fantasy, was seen at the Summit shamelessly cuddling up right next to Bush, and has been an enthusiastic supporter of this deceitful farce of international cooperation. By aligning itself with Bush's foolishly misguided "fantasy of empire", the Koizumi administration is ever trying to pave the way to becoming an "ordinary nation", using this opportunity to send the Japanese Self-Defense Forces to participate in the war in Iraq. This symbolizes the true nature of the Koizumi regime.

Since the terrorist attack on September 11<sup>th</sup>, the Japanese government has blindly supported the Bush administration's "fantasy of empire". Japan has never

advised restraint or openly challenged the unilateral policies of the US, which in terms of economic and military might, or the material sources of strength, is now the only superpower in the world. Behind this stance, I believe, are two images: one of world order, and one of Japan.

The former is a vision of a world order in which the “American Empire” does not end in fantasy, but is entirely possible, and world order is only realizable based on a kind of pecking order determined according to proximity to the sources of strength. Moreover, concerning the second image, in this hierarchical pecking order, an image of Japan emerges as a nation belonging to the upper echelons, as a follower of America; and as a leading figure in the maintenance of that order, Japan will abandon its cautious stance toward taking military action and as an “ordinary nation” become an active member of international society. Are these images valid? I wonder if the reality of the world political structure and the direction in which it is changing would allow a world order to be built along these plotlines. When we look carefully at the history of world politics and the developments in Iraq, the scenario I just laid out is not only far from realistic, it is actually quite delusional.

To make this clear, for the purposes of this paper, the history of the Cold War must first be examined. What “force” ended the order of the Cold War? Moreover, how did this “force” come to be a leading factor in the formation of the post-Cold War order? In the following pages, after an examination of these issues, I shall attempt to analyze what the developments of the Iraq war suggest about the formation of a future world order. Finally, I would like to make some suggestions concerning what Japanese citizens can and should do in order to contribute to

the formation of an ideal world order.

### **The “leveling force” that ended the Cold War**

Some readers may wonder why we have to look back at the Cold War, which ended over ten years ago. Others may think that international politics have changed so drastically since September 11<sup>th</sup> that we are facing a world that does not bear the slightest resemblance to the polarized US- Soviet international political order of the Cold War.

However, we might ask slightly rhetorically, did not the “end of the Cold War” mean the “beginning of the post-Cold War period”? In other words, we could say that some of the many elements which contributed to the end the Cold War have also played a pivotal role in the formation of the new world order of the post-Cold War era. If so, in order to understand the current world political structure and what implications it has for the future world order it is absolutely essential that we deeply examine what kinds of forces brought and end to the Cold War and how they did so.

How did the Cold War order follow the path to its own destruction? Factors that were born out of world politics during the Cold War and major social transformations that were brewing in the depths of world politics from a time before the Cold War fused together to create a certain dynamism, or a “leveling force”, which eroded the supremely vertical and hierarchical order of the Cold War.

Before discussing the breakup process of the Cold War order, I would like to

first summarize what the Cold War order was. Simply put, the Cold War order was the hierarchically organized order of control where, with the nuclear superpowers America and the Soviet Union at the top of the pyramid, countries were ordered by their respective military capabilities. Although their means of control may have been different, both superpowers controlled their allies by possessing an overwhelming stockpile of nuclear weapons. Moreover, both tried to control politics, economies, and social networks, using the political ideologies behind the systems of the various players to distinguish between their friends and enemies. The capacity to unleash a nuclear arsenal at the push of a button was wielded by an elite few who were involved in politics and foreign affairs. Such an atrocious and undemocratic vertical order, where only a handful of people had the power to decide whether the people of the earth would live or die, was once the norm.

This vertical or hierarchical order is generally thought to have ended after the breakup of the Soviet Union. This line of thinking has it that the United States, as a result of its victory, put an end to the Cold War. However, when the process of the termination of the Cold War is analyzed from a broader point of view, and not just in light of the relationship between the two superpowers, a completely different historical reality can be seen.

First, when we say that the Cold War ended in 1989 when the declaration of its cessation was announced at the U.S.-Soviet Summit at Malta, we are forgetting that the collapse of the Soviet Union came after that declaration. Hence, the image of the “collapse of the Soviet Union” as the cause of the end of the Cold War is clearly an historical inaccuracy. Second, one of the most important

reasons why the Eastern Bloc collapsed, which went on to trigger the end of the Cold War, was that dissident citizens in Eastern European countries were vocally opposed to their own repressive regimes, and these citizens gradually overthrew their tightly controlled vertical systems. In other words, not just states, but citizens opposing this vertical and oppressive power played a significant role in bringing an end to the Cold War.

What is more important is the fact that citizens of the Eastern Bloc, using communication channels formed during the detente of the late 1970's, gained support from the anti-nuclear movements on the Western side ("Antinuclear movement – power, politics, and citizen", Mary Kaldor). In other words, we can draw an historical schematic where the vertical ruling order of the Cold War was destroyed by horizontal connections between transnational citizens.

Of course, one important factor is that both the American and the Soviet leaders realized the vulnerability and hazardous nature of their destabilized mutual deterrence system, which led to a formal political decision to end the Cold War. However, recent historical studies have shown that the anti-nuclear movement of the ordinary citizenry, having grown throughout the Cold War era---first becoming a force in the fifties and then dramatically gaining momentum throughout Europe in the eighties--- significantly influenced the political decision-making of the East and West.

Third, it is necessary to point out the influence of core social changes at the depths of world politics, which progressed slowly but steadily. For example, advances in communications such as the TV and the radio horizontally crippled the vertical "patriarchal" society centered on the father's authority, and gradually

eroded the government's ability to control. Moreover, the opportunity to obtain a higher education had drastically increased because of an "education revolution" seen all over the world, and large sections of the world's population had moved to urban centers. These changes, in addition to the social contradictions and oppressive nature of the Cold War itself, sharpened the senses of citizens and provided opportunities to many people to express dissatisfaction with the system through the power of words.

If an important prerequisite for stabilization of the Cold War order was the superpowers' and their respectively aligned countries' abilities to control their own societies (in accordance with the will of the superpowers in the case of the latter), then we can definitely say that these social changes weakened the governing ability of both superpowers and became a considerable element that shook the foundations of the Cold War order.

But that is not all. Fourth, to fight the Cold War economically---in other words, to reduce their own share of the burden---the American government at the beginning of the conflict aided the advanced, industrialized Western nations in their economic reconstruction and deepened mutual dependence. As a result, Western countries were able to form a more moderate and better-organized order than Eastern countries. Consequently, America succeeded in reducing the cost of controlling allied countries and was able to keep the Western alliance from breaking up without collapsing economically, unlike the Soviet Union. However, at the same time, the intensification of this mutual dependency made America more economically dependent upon the allied countries, and a mutually dependent world was produced in which it was difficult to control the allied



countries merely through the superiority of military and economic power. Here, the process of a mutually dependent relationship structure with a mechanism to form a more horizontal order corroding the hierarchical order based on the “sources of strength” had materialized.

When viewed in such a manner, it can be hypothesized that the Cold War order broke up due to a complexly functioning “horizontal power”, or “leveling power”, made up of lateral, trans-nationalistic associations among citizens, increased mutual dependency, and advances in communications, which eventually crippled that order.

We should note that this “horizontal power” did not disappear at the end of the Cold War, but instead intensified. This fact was made particularly evident in the Iraq war.

### **The historical significance of the Iraq war**

The historical developments in international politics related to the Iraq war, which happened 14 years after the end of the Cold War, strongly suggests that this horizontal power, which led to the end of the Cold War, is still playing an extremely important role. I would like to elucidate this using some examples.

First, the developments in international politics seen before the beginning of the war in Iraq showed that, at the level of material “sources of strength” mentioned above, there was a definite limit to the influence that the American government could exert over other countries. After the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attack, most leading countries in the world were faced with the extremely

arrogant ultimatum: declare yourself to be either a friend or enemy of the USA. Even so, many offered their cooperation and agreed to the attack on Afghanistan. In addition to reflecting the terrible shock of September 11<sup>th</sup>, this was also in part due to the fact that there were few leading countries that had critical interests in Afghanistan. Therefore, the American government was able to take action against Afghanistan as if it were an “empire”.

However, the situation in Iraq was completely different. France, Russia, and China each had a deep relationship with and interests in Iraq. Moreover, compared to the invasion of Afghanistan, it was extremely difficult to find persuasive and clear reasons to attack Iraq. As a result, many countries voiced their disapproval of the US plan.

In particular, both France and Germany were able to openly oppose the Anglo-American plans to attack Iraq, and it is worthy of note that America was unable to exact any substantial “reprisal” in response to this opposition. Even America, with its enormous “source of strength”, could not economically (and needless to say militarily) threaten other countries with which they had deep and mutually dependant relations. Even the singular superpower America was unable to fight this structural characteristic of mutual dependency. This situation became clearer from the fact that the American government did not receive support from even small non-permanent members of the Security Council, those much smaller than France and Germany.

Certainly, both France and Germany did oppose the attack on Iraq, but they could not deter America. However, one wonders what would have happened if the Japanese and British governments had clearly expressed their disapproval

and maintained their positions. Faced with the present situation where America has been isolated internationally, criticism inside America aimed at the Bush administration has been mounting. If Japan and Britain had clearly expressed their lack of support, people in America might have considered the risk of international isolation before the war in Iraq. Others surely share this sentiment.

Second, the stalemate resulting from the American occupation policies after the Iraq war has shown that the effectiveness of the exercise of military might is extremely limited. Specifically, the fact that America defeated the Hussein regime, which had ruled by oppression, but could not with all its military power capture the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people who had suffered under it, has been brought to light.

The American government shamelessly created various reasons to legitimize the invasion of Iraq, but America was not able to prove a connection between Al Qaeda and Hussein, nor was it able to find evidence of weapons of mass destruction. As a result, the objective has changed significantly since the beginning of the war: it has become the “democratization of Iraq and the Middle East”

However, that plan will doubtlessly also end in failure. That is to say that, while flexing its military might and dealing with civilian casualties as “collateral damage”, America cannot at the same time achieve democratization, and therefore America’s latest “just cause” has likewise turned out to be a fantasy. Putting this into perspective, although America has tried to form a democratic horizontal order based on the supremacy of its vertical power as manifested by the size of its military, this has proved to be not only counterproductive, but also

impossible. The reality is that the ability of the typical vertical means of control, such as the use of military power as a means of carrying out the systematic transformation of a nation, has certain limits.

Third, many may remember the fact that just before the Iraq war the largest anti-war movement in history was taking place on an unprecedented world-wide scale, and the Internet, as a mass horizontal communication tool, was its largest forum. One of the reasons these movements developed was that many people who witnessed the disaster of September 11<sup>th</sup> as it played out before their eyes shared a sense of awareness that such an assault upon humanity (the dignity of man) must be brought to an end. Needless to say, people harbored a deep resentment toward the Bush administration and its unilateral abuse of power.

However, more importantly, the nearly universal wave of democratization that was so prominent on a worldwide scale after the end of the Cold War holds an extremely significant position at the foundation of the anti-war movement. This movement promoting respect for the values of democracy has become prevalent in the world, something which began when democracy was instituted in the Eastern European satellite bloc just before the end of the Cold War. This has produced a sort of global identity among ordinary citizens and has contributed to the explosive growth of the anti-war movement.

It is true that because of this shared feeling of identity the anger toward the tyrannical government of Hussein was also shared by people the world over, and world opinion did vacillate in that it could not completely deny the legitimacy of using military force to topple Hussein. However, since America has chosen the path of unilateralism, and forcefully pressed for and conducted an invasion of

Iraq that has led to the death of countless innocent civilians, regardless of how loudly or eloquently America shouts “democratization of Iraq”, many people can only hear contradiction in that voice, which will lead to only more disillusionment and anger. In other words, the Bush administration has been appealing to the horizontal order of democracy, and at the same time it has been attempting to impose a vertical order based on military force. This contradiction has strongly antagonized democratic supporters both in America and abroad.

### **Citizens as agents for forming world order**

When one looks at the period around the end of the Cold War and the developments in world politics relating to the war in Iraq, it becomes obvious that the main impetus for change in the formation of the world order will not be provided by the vertical “imperial” control of a superpower.

Historically, the greatest changes in world order began to happen after the World Wars. The invested power relationship among sovereign states has changed because of wars. Moreover, countries which have gained economic and military superiority after wars have also gained the opportunities and abilities to form a new order in accordance with their own interests and ideologies. However, since the end of the Cold War, although America remains the sole superpower, if one considers the example of the war in Iraq, it is clear that the Bush administration’s attempt to reorganize the world order has resulted in failure. One wonders if this is not because the mechanism for deciding the formation of the world order has changed with the demise of the Cold War, and history is now on the side of this horizontal force.

Supposing for the moment that all of these assertions were true, this “horizontal power” has bright sides (such as the anti-war movement mentioned above) as well as dark sides. The ability of sovereign nations to control people has decreased due to the greater ease with which people can move beyond national boundaries. However, at the same time, violent organizations like Al Qaeda have also organized trans-nationally, and the transfer of funds to these organizations across international borders has also become easier. The darker aspects of this horizontal power can be seen in domestic society as well. As the vertical order in the family of a “patriarchal society” has collapsed, the social order has destabilized. The phenomenon of the increase in atrocious crimes by young people has something to do with this disturbance in social order. In other words, while “horizontal power” has the potential to fortify the association of a democratic and humanitarian citizenry beyond national boundaries and form a society of global citizens, it at the same time has the potential to break up the existing order and thus produce chaos.

People who cannot draw a blueprint of a new world order with this horizontal force, and therefore draw only a conservative and vertically ordered schematic, spend too much time looking at the darker part. Therefore, to control the darker part, a revived or renewed vertical order, which has gradually been collapsing, will be adopted. Actually, the regression to this vertical order conjures up the image of the neo-conservative power of the Bush administration maintaining an “empire illusion” with the ultimate aim of militarily ruling a mono-polar world. Even in Japan, this notion is connected with the movement which has tried to realize the reorganization of the social order centering on loyal sentiments

toward the “country”, symbolized by the national flag and anthem, and the movement toward an “ordinary nation”.

At present, we are in a period of transition where a new world order has to be constructed, and it is urgent that the government and the citizens be conscious about the bright part of this leveling force and refine this “horizontal power” so that it can be put into practice. Well then, what can we do specifically? I would like to make a proposal.

First, the Japanese government needs to formulate plans for a world order based on the current political reality of mutual dependency. With regard to the Bush administration, we must not continue to wear the same thin disguise of international cooperation. Japan should instead support the forces within America that are concerned about the growing isolation of America and take action on various levels to vocalize and emphasize the importance of true multilateralism.

In order to do that, within important multilateral organizations that even America cannot get out of, it is necessary to cooperate with other countries and keep the unilateralist activities of America in check. For example, from the end of last year to the beginning of the this year, the American government has unilaterally tried to use safeguards for the steel trade, but in the WTO (World Trade Organization), Japan and European countries, as a single body, opposed the United States. As a result, the Bush administration had to abandon its plan to apply such safeguards.

Moreover, with regard to regions and states that are possible sources of conflict or international concern, it is possible for Japan to take a leading role in

preventing conflicts before America takes unilateralist actions in these regions. We can see one recent example in which the EU, including Great Britain, has been involved in mediations among interested parties dealing with the investigation into possible nuclear development in Iran.

Granted, many readers may think that it is difficult to expect too much from the present Japanese government, a body which has supported the Bush administration's "delusion of empire". But we should not give up. If "horizontal power" were to gain enough ground in the formation of a new world order, as described above, it should be possible to strengthen the bright part of this force at the popular level. As an agent in the creation of the new world order, I believe that there has never been a time where the role of the everyday citizenry has become so important.

For instance, first, thanks to the Internet, we are able to strengthen the association of citizens transnationally to prevent the trampling of humanity. The important thing is to deepen the association between ourselves and sectors of the American public who oppose the Bush administration in order to appeal to them to accompany us in realizing the new horizontal world order. In American society, there is a sort of "self-purification capacity" such as that seen during the Vietnam anti-war movement in the sixties. However, expecting results from this mechanism only will not suffice. We will need to approach this more aggressively.

Second, it is just as important---or rather it is essential---to fortify the association with people suffering from an assault on humanity, such as Iraqi citizens. However, it seems that the object of the Iraqi people's hatred does not



stop at the “coalition of the willing” led by America; it seems they are also beginning to direct hatred at civilians from China and Russia. The risk of going to Iraq unprepared and unarmed has been clearly been revealed in the deaths of Mr. Shinsuke Hashida and Mr. Kotaro Ogawa. In such cases, what should we do?

This may sound ambiguous, but we have to “supervise” the Japanese government’s policy toward Iraq, and if the government tries to carry out a recovery policy that people in Iraq do not want, we should not hesitate to vocally challenge the Japanese government. By doing this, it is possible to convey the message through the media that we have an invisible link with the people of Iraq and of other countries. Now we have to reflect deeply on what we can do to assist Iraqi citizens, who have a sense of distrust toward any foreign power, and feel stifled with no way out.

What is necessary now is not an uncritical deference to a multinational force. It is important for people to show and exert an influential “intellectual presence”, not a military presence.