

English Draft of the Commentary put on the air by the Japan  
Broadcasting Corporation in Tokyo.

Hashimoto  
Current Affairs  
May 16, '62; Central America, Hawaii, Philippines  
May 17, '62; South Asia, Middle East  
Kyoto Conference of Scientists

We now bring you Current Affairs, a weekly commentary of  
radio Japan.

Today's talk, prepared by the commentator Mr. Shinjiro  
Tanaka, is on the recent Kyoto Conference of Scientists. . . . .

A dozen persons held a conference from May 7th to 9th at the  
tranquil Zen temple of Tenryuji in Kyoto.

It was not a meeting of Buddhist priests. The persons who  
participated in the conference included Nobel Prize-winning  
physicist Dr. Hideki Yukawa and other prominent Japanese physicists  
and scholars as well as the writer Jiro Osaragi.

This conference was initiated by Dr. Yukawa and two other  
internationally-known Japanese physicists, Dr. Shinichiro Tomonaga  
and Dr. Shoichi Sakata. All three have attended the Pugwash Conference.

The Pugwash Conference was started by Bertrand Russell and  
the late Dr. Albert Einstein who called on the physicists of the  
world to come together and discuss how nuclear war can be avoided.  
The first conference was held in 1957 at Pugwash, Nova Scotia,  
in Canada -- thus, the name Pugwash given to subsequent conferences.  
The second conference was held at Lac Beauport, Quebec, Canada;  
the third in the Austrian ski resort of Kitzbuhel and simultaneously  
at Vienna; the fourth again in Austria but this time at Baden;  
the fifth returned to Pugwash; the sixth was held in Moscow; the  
seventh and eighth at Stowe, Vermont, in the United States, and  
this year, the ninth and tenth conferences will be held at Cambridge  
and London, respectively.

The Pugwash Conference is private in nature. Thus, the  
participants attend the conference in private capacity. Many scholars  
from both the United States and Soviet Russia attend this conference.  
After free and earnest discussions, a statement is issued at the  
end of the conference. Disarmament is the main topic on this year's  
agenda.

Dr. Yukawa and his scientific colleagues believed that it was  
both necessary and useful to hold a meeting patterned on the  
spirit and objective of the Pugwash Conference in Japan.

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The conference was held in Kyoto for three days and a statement was issued on May 9th, the final day. The following is the content of the statement:

-- Science has contributed to mankind by discovering the truths existing in the world. Not all scientific discoveries are, however, desirable for mankind. All people should make incessant efforts to prevent the misuse or abuse of the achievements of science so that the truths discovered by science can be utilized only for the welfare of mankind and peace.

-- It is now recognized that war no longer can be the means of settling international problems. The United States-Soviet joint declaration of last fall recognized this fact. But there is still a deep-rooted belief that the possession of nuclear weapons contributes to the maintenance of peace. However, so long as a nuclear deterrent policy is maintained, the disputing parties will inevitably try to possess a greater retaliatory power than the other. The result will be an increasingly unstable military environment, which, in turn, would increase the possibility of war. A nuclear deterrent policy thus runs counter to the direction for abolition of war and thus we oppose it.

-- Nuclear weapons test explosions scatter large quantities of radioactive fallout, causing hereditary and physical hazards to mankind. Moreover, these tests will intensify the arms race and increase world tensions. Atmospheric and underwater nuclear tests can be detected and identified with relative ease; as their hazards to mankind and effect on the arms race are particularly big, they should be banned immediately. We also demand the earliest conclusion of an agreement outlawing all nuclear weapons tests.

-- It is encouraging that both the American and Soviet disarmament plans submitted to the Geneva disarmament conference contain many points which seem practical for the prevention of war. Of these proposals, it is desired in particular that the means of delivery of nuclear weapons would be renounced under strict and effective international control and that military bases on the soil of other nations would be speedily removed.

-- Disarmament should not be rejected on the argument that it would lead to economic depression. The problem should be tackled positively and a new way to economic prosperity found. There is no limit to the peaceful objectives that can be attained through the resources released by disarmament. It is admitted, however, that there are many problems involved in the structural switch of the world economy accompanying disarmament. From Japan's standpoint, a thorough study from the long-range view is necessary concerning disarmament and Japan's economy.

-- It is the great, historic task of all mankind to put an end to the age of war and arms race and to bring about instead an era of peace through general and complete disarmament. As this task is deeply tied in with politics, economy, science, ideology and religion, people from all walks of life should put their heads together to study this problem earnestly.

- 3 -

And that was the content of the statement issued at the end of the Kyoto conference of scientists.

The participants also exchanged views concerning the war-renouncing Article Nine of the Japanese Constitution. They believed that this article has assumed greater significance at this time when the danger of the annihilation of mankind in nuclear war is increasing than at the time of the Constitution's promulgation.

The scientists, in emphasizing the urgency of disarmament including nuclear weapons, asserted that the problem must be examined from new dimensions transcending the present all-importance given to sovereignty of the State. They said that in order to remove the national egoism as demonstrated in the nuclear arms race, the concepts of social morality and an accompanying new law and order must be examined from a broad outlook.

May in Japan, as in other countries of the northern hemisphere, is time of beautiful green foliage. The old and culture-steeped city of Kyoto, in particular, is crowded with tourists, including many from abroad. Kyoto shows a peaceful and beautiful Japan. But if a nuclear war should occur, all this would be reduced to ashes. Not only Japan, of course, but most of the northern hemisphere would turn to ashes too.

As the only nation in the world to have suffered the holocaust of the atom bomb used in war, Japan fervently hopes that no other nation in the world will ever have the same experience. The atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki today belong to the category of tactical nuclear weapons. Some of the hydrogen bombs of today have an explosive power several thousand times that of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki A-bombs. They are called strategic nuclear weapons. As a result of the amazing development of nuclear weapons and the vehicles of their delivery, mankind today has enough nuclear weapons to destroy itself.

To be sure, the realization of complete disarmament including the prohibition of nuclear arms is an extremely difficult task. The Japanese people hope, however, that determined and patient efforts will be made toward that goal. The scientists who gathered at Kyoto resolved to continue holding similar meetings in the future with that goal in mind. . . . .

And this concludes Current Affairs. Today's talk, prepared by the commentator Mr. Shinjiro Tanaka, was on the recent Kyoto Conference of Scientists.

This is Radio Japan, the overseas service of NHK, the Japan Broadcasting Corporation in Tokyo.