UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
SANTA CRUZ

THE SUNAGAWA STRUGGLE: A CENTURY OF ANTI-BASE PROTEST IN A TOKYO SUBURB

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in HISTORY

by

Dustin Wright

June 2015

The Dissertation of Dustin Wright is approved:

__________________________
Professor Alan Christy, chair

__________________________
Professor Noriko Aso

__________________________
Professor Alice Yang

__________________________
Tyrus Miller
Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies
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Abstract

The Sunagawa Struggle: A Century Of Anti-Base Protest In A Tokyo Suburb
By
Dustin Wright

This is a dissertation about a small community of ordinary Japanese citizens who were able to overcome and defeat the base construction plans of the U.S. military at the height of the Cold War. It focuses on the history of the Sunagawa Struggle, an anti-U.S. military base protest that came to shape postwar protest culture in Japan. The Sunagawa Struggle began in May 1955, when the U.S. military announced plans to expand the runway of Tachikawa Air Base, a move that threatened a community of farmers who were already experiencing the burden of an ever-increasing Tokyo megalopolis. As more people joined the Struggle, the scope of resistance expanded to include opposition to nuclear weapons, war, and the immense nationwide presence of American bases.

In the 1950s, Sunagawa was, like much of Tokyo, undergoing a process of rapid (sub)urbanization. This project reveals the dual-nature of land dispossession—from both urbanization and militarization—with which Sunagawa locals contended. To fight against the loss of their land, locals quickly formed the Sunagawa Anti-Base Expansion Alliance, which grew to include a wide number of members from labor unions, student groups, and representatives of leftist political parties. This project will also argue that the Sunagawa Struggle became a nightmare for the U.S. military and Japanese government, particularly when, in 1959, it forced Japanese courts to address the
contradictions revealed between America’s militarization of Japan’s topography and Article Nine, the “peace clause” of the Japanese constitution.

Finally, this project will explore the tension between the fact that, though the Sunagawa Struggle had an immense impact on the U.S. base complex in Japan, and on postwar Japanese social movements, it has largely been forgotten by the general public. This is due, in large part, to the wide shadow cast by the 1960 Anpo protests. Thus, this project attempts to resuscitate the Struggle in public memory and shine a spotlight on what many anti-base activists never forgot: the Sunagawa Struggle was the foundational moment for anti-base and anti-military activism in postwar Japan.
Acknowledgments

This dissertation, much like the Sunagawa Struggle, could not have been accomplished without a community of advocates and advisors who tirelessly offered their expertise and support along the way. At the University California, Santa Cruz, I was incredibly fortunate to land under the guidance of Alan Christy and Noriko Aso in the Department of History. Their close mentorship and training enriched my graduate school experience beyond measure. I will feel immense satisfaction if I can reproduce a fraction of the knowledge, commitment to our field, and work diligence that they bring to campus on a daily basis. Alice Yang has been a guiding light since I started at UCSC, and her co-taught course with Alan will forever serve as a model for my own teaching. Also at UCSC, I am deeply grateful to Gail Hershatter for her mentorship and counsel throughout my graduate program. I was fortunate to take a seminar with Hiroshi Fukurai in the Department of Sociology very early in my program, which was essential in helping me better understand the legal framework under which colonial spaces like military bases operate. I am indebted to Sakae Fujita for her language instruction and friendship.

I conducted dissertation research while affiliated with Waseda University, where I was warmly welcomed into Umemori Naoyuki’s and Sawai Keichi’s seminars on modern Japanese history and political thought. I could not have imagined a more enlightening or fruitful seminar experience than that which I experienced with these two professors and their exceptional community of
graduate students. I also spent many long hours at several archives and libraries throughout Tokyo and Okinawa. The staff at the Ōhara Institute for Social Research for Social Research were most helpful. Hirano Izumi at Rikkyō University’s Research Center for Cooperative Civil Societies introduced me to a fantastic collection of 1960s and 1970s activist materials and a wonderful group of Rikkyō’s graduate students and faculty. This archive is one of the great secrets of Tokyo.

The project could not have been completed without generous research support from the Department of Education’s Fulbright-Hays DDRA Fellowship, UCSC’s Institute for Humanities Research, and the Department of History. Additionally, language and research support from the Japan Foundation came at an important time, just as I was narrowing in on my dissertation topic. Language teachers, too often unappreciated for their role in research and academia, provided me with the tools and experience needed to pursue my present course. The language faculty and library staff at the Japan Foundation’s Kansai Center deserve special recognition for the long hours they spent towards bettering my Japanese language skills, but also for their role in helping me identify my research focus.

Research conducted in Okinawa in 2010 (the fruits of which will appear in other projects) would not have been possible without the support and advice that I received from Anthony Jenkins, Yoshida Kensei, and Chris Nelson. Many hours driving and walking around Okinawa with Chris remind me that I am truly
fortunate to be able to share the company of people who are passionate and deeply knowledgeable about their fields.

I was also aided by the opportunity to meet and learn much from helpful peers and mentors at several workshops, including the 2014 AAS-SSRC dissertation workshop in Philadelphia, the Triangle Center for Japanese Studies worship in Chapel Hill in 2014, and the University of California’s Humanities Research Institute’s Seminar on Experimental Critical Theory in Beirut in 2012.

Before pursuing a PhD, I was lucky to know several people who helped to put me on my current course. Countless conversations at the dinner table with my dear friends, Kozy Amemiya, the sociologist, and her partner, Thomas Royden, the avocado farmer, taught me much about the pleasures that come from a life of learning and exploring. At San Diego State University, I was fortunate to work with Michael Weiner, who continues to be a mentor and friend. Finally, it was in San Diego where I had the privilege of meeting Chalmers and Sheila Johnson, both of whom provided incredible support of my interest in American military bases in Japan. Chalmers was a profound mentor and it was many hours in his company that helped push me towards a doctorate. It will give me immense satisfaction if I can, in some small way, continue his work of shining a spotlight on imperialism in all its insidious forms. I continue to be grateful to Sheila as an unending source of friendship and advice.

My family, including Jim and Nancy Wright, Jamie and Kevin Macgregor, Yutaka and Hiroko Hashiba, Joe Wombacher, and Caitlin Wright, have all given
me much love and much humor, both essential in pursuing a PhD. My grandmother, Garee Bryant, deserves special recognition for instilling in me a burning demand for adventure and a belief that knowledge is something for which to strive, but which can never be fully attained. My partner in life, Erica Hashiba, has supported me at every point. I could not have completed this dissertation without her intelligence, laughter, and belief in my project.

I have only skimmed the surface of the community of people who helped me along the way with this dissertation. Over the last several years, I have had the good fortune of interviewing and befriending many anti-war and anti-base activists throughout Japan. While I am no longer surprised, I continue to be deeply appreciative of the generous time and resources they share with me. As meager recognition of their inspirational and tireless struggles, this dissertation is dedicated to the many Japanese communities who oppose militarism in all of its forms.

Regardless of the many voices pouring out of these pages, any errors in content or translation are entirely my own.
Introduction

Inoue Mori agreed to meet with me a few blocks away from Tachikawa Station on a drizzly day in June 2013. A father and husband, the thirty-something lives in Tachikawa where he runs a small in-home caregiver service. We spent the afternoon driving around the Tokyo suburbs of Tachikawa, Sunagawa, and Fussa, all communities with long historical ties to U.S. and Japanese military bases and all places that he knew well. Inoue is a staunch opponent of military bases and militarism in general, and has attended and helped to organize many opposition rallies in the Tachikawa area. A longtime member of the Tachikawa Anti-War villa (Tachikawa Hansen Bira), Inoue had kindly agreed to share his experience as an anti-base activist, as well as to drive with me around the areas of Tachikawa and western Tokyo that were so important to the anti-base movement.

A Tokyo native, Inoue first moved to western Tokyo to attend Hitotsubashi University in the late 1990s. At that time, the national government was in the process of relaxing some of the laws that were designed to restrain the Japanese Self-Defense Forces from conducting search and seizure operations in international waters. Inoue became concerned that the new laws allowed the SDF to operate more like any other nation’s military, which would, he feared, inevitably lead to greater Japanese cooperation with American militarism.¹

¹ Between 1997 and 1999, the Japanese Defense Agency created what it called ‘situations in areas surrounding Japan’ (SIASJ) and helped push for new laws that “stipulated that Japan cooperate in ship inspections to enforce economic sanctions based on UN Security Council
Like many people of his generation, Inoue had never heard of the Sunagawa Struggle until he came to Tachikawa and became involved with the anti-base movement. “At the time,” he said, “I was living in Kunitachi and I thought I should commit to an anti-war movement or anti-base movement here in the place that I live.” One day, Inoue made the short trip to Tachikawa and was immediately surprised by how brightly the stars shone in the night sky. “I wanted to see Tachikawa [the base], and discovered that, having grown up in Tokyo, I wasn’t used to seeing such dark skies like there were in Tachikawa.”

The windshield wipers were waving furiously as we drove through the streets of Tachikawa and looked at the immense department stores and shopping resolutions,” which was at the time geared towards monitoring and enforcing sanctions against North Korea. See Ikenberry, G. John. The U.S.-Japan Security Alliance: Regional Multilateralism. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. 107.
promenades that blocked out much of the night sky. Inoue laughed, “it isn’t like that now, of course.” Neither was the anti-base movement. In the 1950s and 1960s, Tachikawa as an American basetown like many others throughout the Pacific: polluted, crime-ridden, and dangerous. The severity of the anti-base protests was a reflection of the difficult living situations for locals at that time. It was this history that helped to invigorate Inoue’s interests:

“The history of the Sunagawa Struggle and Tachikawa is really interesting, really exciting. There were so many people fighting against the base, and in the end, though the base went away, the SDF came, and finally the Hirohito Memorial Park came, so it has a very complicated history. My interest was in that history. That is what I think is most interesting about the Tachikawa movement.”

Inoue came to Tachikawa with a growing concern about what he saw as increasing Japanese militarism. Once he had learned about the history of anti-base movements in the area, he realized that he had stumbled into the living spaces of the most important anti-base movement in Japan’s postwar history. He stayed and committed himself to Tachikawa’s anti-war movements.

In 2004, the administration of Koizumi Junichirō dispatched SDF troops to Iraq at the request of the United States, arousing deep opposition from many people in Japan. Activists like Inoue believed the SDF’s mission—the first time the SDF was ever sent to a warzone—was a violation of Article Nine of the Constitution. Inoue remarked, “At that time, I was thinking that if the Self-

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2 Author interview with Inoue Mori, June 13, 2013.
Defense Forces go to Iraq, a warzone, then Japan would also become a part of that warzone.” The Tent Villa held continuous rallies outside of the SDF’s Camp Tachikawa in opposition to the Iraq war and Japan’s involvement. One day in 2005, police raided the homes of many of the protestors (included Inoue) and accused of plotting violent action against the SDF, an experience that was understandably frightening, but also only offered confirmation that his activism was justified.3

![Image](image.png)

**Figure 2 The "Illegal" Children's Park in Sunagawa. Photo Credit: Dustin Wright**

We drove to Sunagawa, the small village that is the focus of this dissertation. In the mid-1950s, there were plans to extend to runway of the U.S. Tachikawa Air Base through the heart of Sunagawa, a plan that would have

dispossessed hundreds of families from their homes and farmland. Out of opposition to the U.S. military and its cozy relationship with the Japanese government, locals protested the plan and mounting the largest anti-base yet seen in Japan. Today, the government still technically owns much of the land, yet members of the local community, including Inoue, continue to plant and harvest crops. There is even a children’s park that was constructed as an additional act of resistance to the fact that the land was intended to be part of an American military base. Rather than empire, however, this space now produces radishes and picnics. When I told Inoue that I thought it was wonderful that something like a children’s park could be built on such a space, so close to what is still a military base and on land that was still owned by the government, he seemed pleased. “That’s exactly right! That’s exactly what we call the heritage (isan) of the Sunagawa Struggle. It was that kind of movement. You can’t build freaky things here. It’s different from the inside of the base, where it’s only freaky things.”
Earlier that same year, I met with Fukushima Kyoko, who owns and operates the Sunagawa Peace Plaza (Sunagawa Heiwa Hiroba) a stone’s throw away from Inoue’s farm plot. In 1955, Fukushima’s parents, Miyaoka Masao and Miyaoka Kinuko, were farmers raising young children when the Japanese government announced the runway expansion. Fukushima was in junior high school and remembers the immensity of the protests: thousands of people—riot police, student activists, reporters, politicians—descended on her small village and fought pitch battles in the streets and farms. Today, Fukushima runs the Peace Plaza as both an homage to her parents but also as a space for people to come and learn about the Sunagawa Struggle. Inside the small building is a film screening room and a larger exhibition room adorned with photographs, documents, and protest banners. She hosts school groups, Article Nine
preservation groups, as well as people who simply want to learn more about the Sunagawa Struggle.

This dissertation will focus on the history of the Sunagawa Struggle, a foundational anti-base protest that helped to define postwar activism in Japan and became the model for anti-base protest in the years that followed. It began in 1955, when the U.S. military announced plans to expand the runway of its base, a move that threatened a community of farmers who were already feeling the pressures of land that were experienced by many people living in the Tokyo megalopolis. With this in mind, one of the central goals of this project is to draw attention to the dual-nature of land dispossession—from both urbanization and militarization—that Sunagawa locals contended. In addition, this project will aim to demonstrate that though the Sunagawa Struggle had in immense impact on the US base complex in Japan, and on postwar Japanese social movements, it has been largely forgotten in the shadow of the 1960 Anpo protests. This project will place the Struggle back at the center of anti-base activism in Japan, a movement that is, like American militarism, ongoing.
Chapter One: The Making and Breaking of a Basetown, 1916-1945

This chapter situates the geographic regions of Tachikawa and Sunagawa within the larger spectrum of time and space in Tokyo. In doing so, it will be made clear that this region has long been a focal point for Japanese state-initiated economic, manufacturing, and military defense policies. The flat terrain in the western regions of Tokyo was an important geological characteristic for both the agricultural and flight industry. Just as important, this land was not in the center of Tokyo, but rather in the far outskirts, away from the centers of banking and finance, government, and conspicuous consumption. Recognizing this, it becomes possible to appreciate that the same geological features that made the land important for Tokugawa (1603-1868) government-led crop production also made the region ideal for Shōwa era (1926-1989) military use.

By focusing on the region of Tachikawa, we can recognize the shifts in time and space that have characterized places in which militarism could be understood to be the only constant. It was a region under constant state-driven making and remaking, often for the purposes of militarism, which created new demands and new values on both land and people. With an eye towards these themes, this chapter will begin by elucidating some of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that inform much of this dissertation.

Reflecting on the “politics of space,” the spatial theorist Henri Lefebvre argued that space is always political and ideological, because space, “which
seems homogeneous, which appears given as a whole in its objectivity, in its pure form, such as we determine it, is a social product.” Moreover, it is a socio-historical product, albeit a product that cannot be likened to the production of material goods. However, just as with the production of such commodities, “there are relations between the production of things and that of space.”

Perhaps the most visceral form of spatial production is that of planning, from which Lefebvre distinguishes three dimensions: material planning (quantifiable, originating in political economic matrices), financial planning (production costs), and spatiotemporal planning. While material and financial planning are clearly important, this chapter prioritizes the spatiotemporal dimension, which Lefebvre described as one that “assumes the establishment of localizations, the knowledge of networks of commerce, flow, the study of centers of production and consumption, on the terrain.”

Centuries of state planning in western Tokyo have consistently intersected with and periodically confronted local communities who were engaged in their own production of social spaces. I characterize spaces such as those found in Tachikawa and Sunagawa as militarized spaces, which I define as those spaces in which the productive capacities of the state are centered on reproducing the state’s capacity to exert military power or defend itself from attack. Just as the state’s capacity to promote and engage in war are limited, so

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5. Lefebvre, Ibid.
too is the reach of the state’s production of militarized spaces: they encompass the air and the environment around military bases; they bring with them the ideology of the state and its capacity to lay claim to the future of the spaces of its own creation; and they often demand that the material planning of a region is focused completely on reproducing militarism. Militarized spaces are not, however, constrained by material objects like fences or mountains, nor are they limited by politico-legal concepts like sovereignty, but are in fact capable of seeping into, attempting to monopolize, and demanding militarist production in any spaciomedicalily in which states operate.

The dispossession of land is often an integral part of the creation of militarized spaces, which was certainly the case in western Tokyo. However, regardless of the intense state-driven militarization of spaces, the example of Tachikawa will demonstrate that local communities often contested their place in state militarism. Despite the attempts to create militarized spaces in communities like Tachikawa and Sunagawa, the history of the region indicates that many locals have rejected military bases for a multitude of reasons. It is because of this that the term “basetown,” so often used to describe those communities around military bases, is problematic.

Within the fields of critical or cultural geography, multiple conceptions of landscapes also inform our understandings of space and place. In recent years, a person’s “right to landscape” has emerged to argue that landscape and human rights are indelibly intertwined; that is, we can think of landscape itself as a
relationship between land and the health and happiness of people. Jala Makhzoumi, Gloria Pungetti, and Shelley Egoz argued that, “while landscape is place, nature, and culture specific, the idea transcends nation-state boundaries and as such can be understood as a universal theoretical concept similar to the way in which human rights are perceived.” Thus, the “right to landscape” is conceived as “the place where the expansive definition of landscape, with its tangible and intangible definitions, overlaps with the tangible needs for survival and the intangible, spiritual, emotional and psychological needs that are quintessential to the human experience.” Their conceptions of a “right to landscape” are grounded within the other conceptions of human rights, particularly those rooted in modern institutional frameworks such as the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. I believe that this framework is also useful in understanding the relationship that the people of Tachikawa and Sunagawa had to their land during the militarized development of their communities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Recognizing that landscape is a relationship between land and people, we must also add another layer to our understanding of the role of militarism in altering this relationship. In the early twentieth century, Tachikawa, and indeed much of the Tama region, was becoming a militarized landscape. Though such landscapes escape a wholly authoritative definition, there have been recent efforts by some scholars to arrive at a useful definition. Chris Pearson, Peter A. Makhzoumi, Jala, Gloria Pungetti, and Shelley Egoz. The Right to Landscape: Contesting Landscape and Human Rights. Farnham, Surrey, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011. 5
Coates, and Tim Cole have argued that militarized landscapes are “simultaneously material and cultural sites that have been partially or fully mobilized to achieve military aims.”7 They are differentiated from battlefields or the other spaces of armed conflict—which are increasingly broad—in that militarized landscapes maintain a certain level of longevity and permanence over both geography and time. They can also be differentiated from militarized spaces, in that landscapes imply a firm grounding on the physical relationship to land, while theories of (militarized) spaces are often—though by no means solely—concerned with socio-political relationships. A militarized landscape is also imbued with a clear recognition of the relationship between people and the land. By this, we mean land that is cultivated by humans, and yet not simply a passive actor. The land itself has certain conditions that must be met before it can be made useful to people.

There is a another understanding of landscapes that informs this project; the satoyama landscape. Much of the geographic space of western Tokyo is referred to by many geographers and environmental scientists as satoyama, which “indicates a natural environment that is being managed and, therefore, its basic element can be represented as secondary nature,” which is itself “easily lost in the process of large-scale urban development but, on the other hand, if it remains untouched it will be thoroughly transformed by natural vegetation

succession.” Importantly, as the agricultural scientist Takeuchi Kazuhiko has argued, the secondary nature of the satoyama landscape represents “a consequence of a coexistence between nature and humans.” A satoyama landscape is this land-people relationship that is often found in “the middle part between mountainous areas and flatlands,” or precisely the type of landscape in which Tachikawa and Sunagawa are found, and also that which was a characteristic of much of the Kantō Plains during the Meiji era. It is not surprising that a place like Sunagawa in western Tokyo, where people have helped cultivate the land for a millennia, would be considered satoyama.

The shaping of the land for farming—one of the oldest forms of landscaping—is not a singular act, but a process that must be undertaken continually. The seasons determine which crops should be planted, and each crop necessitates different tilling methods. Monsoonal rains cause erosion and flooding, so fields and irrigation canals must be repaired. Drought and dry seasons require different tactics, such as tapping and pumping wells or diverting perennial water sources. The shaping of the land for modern military purposes, however, requires a shift in the anticipated outcome of such labor. No longer is the production of commodities—rice, cotton, fertilizer—the modus operandi. Instead, militarized landscapes have different contingencies regarding the relationship with the land, one that is not co-dependent on ecological and

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environmental factors. The relationship to the seasons, for example, differs greatly between a militarized and agrarian landscape. There is no longer a need for the natural environment to retain those productive capacities that make it appealing for agriculture: a paved runway need not be made fallow to ensure planes can fly the following year. As will be made clear in this chapter, the satoyama landscape was remade into a militarized landscape.

Recognizing the powerful dialectical relationships between people and land, and in particular, between people and militarized landscapes and spaces, it becomes clear that the term “basetown” is not entirely sufficient. Basetowns are typically described as communities that surround military bases and are economically dependent on both the industries engendered by the bases and the flow of capital that comes via base labor. But the term prioritizes the base as the fixed ideal, while the town serves as the supporting subject. In reality, however, within the militarized spaces like those found in western Tokyo, the multiple social spaces that intersperse these areas demand that we recognize that there are other productive forces and other ideologies that define the communities around military bases.

**Situating Tachikawa and Sunagawa Within Tokyo**

To appreciate the extent to which land and space are integral to the story of Sunagawa and Tachikawa, it is instructive to see its soil, smell the decaying foliage, feel the crunch of gravel under the feet, and see the rolling hills in the distance. If you want to feel that crunch in twenty-first century Tachikawa, it
takes a little effort. First, go west from any of the major hubs in Tokyo, like Shinjuku, for about twenty-eight kilometers (seventeen miles). You will most likely use the Chūo Line, taking the limited express from Ochanomizu, and stopping briefly at familiar stations like Nakano, Kōenji, Mitaka, Musashikoganei, Kokubunji, and Kunitachi, before finally arriving at Tachikawa Station. Walking through the turnstiles and turning north, beyond the bakeries, cafes and the ten-floor Lumine department store that sits atop the station, the space opens into a large promenade surrounded by more shopping centers connected by elevated pedestrian walkways. Rising above the promenade, an immense sculpture—two overlapping arches—is dwarfed by the banks and malls that rise even higher.

Continue to Sunagawa. If you want to take the bus, leave the elevated promenade, go down to the street, and wait for the 16 or 17 bus, being sure to give up your seat the one of the many elderly people who will likely already be waiting at the stop. Once on the bus, it is only a fifteen-minute ride. Otherwise, walk north on the elevated walkway, into the glass and steel canyon between the Mitsui Sumitomo Bank building and the Isetan Department Store tower, beyond the Tachikawa City Library and the Palace Hotel, essentially following the course of the Tama City Monorail. You could take the monorail, of course, but doing so would lead you slightly east and above the bureaucratic maze below, rather than into its physical insides. Still walking, an elevated walkway will deposit you a few yards before the end of this canyon of capitalism. In front of you lay open
fields of tall grass, although a fence surrounding them hints that these areas will soon be incorporated into the spaces of finance and consumption behind you.

You will immediately notice the flatness of the land. Heading northwest, along the four-lane Highway 153, you’ll pass the Tachikawa Fire Department, the Metropolitan Police Department, Tachikawa City Hall, and the Kanto Regional Development Bureau of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, beyond which sits the Self-Defense Forces’ Camp Tachikawa and the National Showa Memorial Park. All of the land that you see, all the government buildings and parks, all of the space you have traversed since exiting the train station, were once Tachikawa Air Field. Continuing north, government facilities give way to baseball diamonds, single-family homes, and small farm plots. At last, you have reached the Sunagawa District of Tachikawa, and it is here where you might still be able to feel the crunch of gravel beneath your feet.

Sunagawa’s northern border is the Kyōyama Hills (kyōyama kyūryō), which would be unexceptional in their height were it not for the fact that they are surrounded by the Musashino Plain. From northwest of these hills flows the Zanbori River, which continues south until it eventually reaches the Tama River. Today, the Zanbori River has been made into a canal that runs directly through the park, as it once did through the U.S. base (though now it has mostly been driven underground). Another even smaller river, the Sasunogawa, is all but gone. The “sasu” of the river’s name refers to the areas in pre-modern Japan in which farmers conducted swidden (yakibata, slash and burn) agriculture, which
had been typical of Sunagawa and the areas that later became the Tachikawa Air Base. The same geological features that made the land important for Tokugawa crop production also made the region ideal for Shōwa military use.

Flat and relatively free from a large river system, the Sunagawa/Tachikawa area was one of the oldest land reclamation areas of the Tokugawa period. The Sunagawa district (chiku) of “reclaimed land” (shindenku) was developed around 1596 to 1615 as one of the earliest planning and food development efforts of the Tokugawa government, with more serious investment from the years of 1624 to 1644. By 1727, the area was most often referred to as Sunagawa Village (mura) or the Sunagawa Reclamation District (shinden). According to the official village history, Sunagawa was divided into a shinden and previous reclamation (maeshinden) districts, the latter of which referred to areas in which reclamation had already been completed, though the nomenclature remained even after all reclamations were completed. The village was divided into ten relatively autonomous units (gumi). All of the units were, and continue to be, situated along the Itsukaichi Highway (Kaidō). Number One sat at the far western edge of Sunagawa, while Number Ten stretched to the

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east, towards Edo. Number Nine was considered *maeshinden*, while One through Eight were developed later, and constituted *shinden* areas. Even today, these same numbers refer to points along the paved Itsukaichi Highway and are most often associated with the correspondingly recognized bus stops. Sunagawa Number Seven, for example, is the station for the Tama City Monorail, which runs from Kamikitadai, just north of Sunagawa, south through Tachikawa Station, terminating at the Tama City center.

**Early-Modern and Modern Developments of Militarized Landscapes**

While this dissertation focuses primarily on the geographic region of Tachikawa and the Mitama region, it is instructive to situate the development of the militarized spaces of western Tokyo with other developments in the metropolis as well as other parts of the country. It is also important to recognize that late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries militarized spaces formed differently than was the case during the Tokugawa era. This was due in large part to changes in both class and urbanization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. By highlighting the different ways in which militarization shifted and remained during this time, we can begin to appreciate that anti-base struggles of the 1950s as both unique as well as representative of a long history of military-society relations in Tokyo.

Tokyo is the modern incarnation of Edo, which was the capital of the Tokugawa regime (*bakufu*) from 1603 to 1868, when the regime was overthrown, heralding in a new era of industrial modernization and
experimentations with representative governance. In this new era, Edo became Tokyo and the Emperor—long relegated to a purely symbolic role in the cultural capitol of Kyoto—was installed in Edo castle, now the Imperial Palace. The urban anthropologist Jinnai Hidenobu argued, “once we start to tease Edo out of Tokyo, to reconstruct its image, the lines of historical continuity between the two become vividly apparent.”13 This is also true of the military. As political regimes changed, Meiji-era Tokyo also underwent a series of spatial shifts that indicated new conceptions of what form a modern military would actually take in the new modern nation. Modern militarism in Japan, like that of other nations in the late nineteenth century, would take the form of a standing army made up of conscripted soldiers.

The basic form of Edo was in fact largely determined by the most obvious of premodern militarized spaces: the castle. Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616) had the good fortune to be aligned with the powerful shogun Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598), and together they would consolidate under one flag much of the archipelago, including the Kanto plain in the eastern part of the main island of Honshū. After Hideyoshi died, Ieyasu successfully fought off his potential heirs and, after winning the decisive battle of Sekigahara, was declared Shogun by imperial decree in 1603. Once shogun, he quickly went about constructing a heavily fortified castle complex. Though much of the Japanese archipelago had entered an era of relative political stability after a century of domainal warfare,

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Ieyasu nonetheless made sure that architectural defense strategies were a top priority: huge stones were brought from Izu to build the walls of his castle, which was surrounded by an impressive moat; a constant supply of water to the castle was ensured by a series of transportation and irrigation canals that were linked to Inokashira and Tameike ponds. Docks and lumberyards were constructed along the bay, which helped to ensure a steady flow of commodities to Edo.¹⁴

West of the castle, the Jōsai region warrior districts, defined by their proximity to the castle, were divided into three levels, delineated by rank in a series of concentric rings. There were military considerations to this arrangement, such as defending attack from the wide open flat lands that lay to the west of the new capitol. In Yotsuya and Ichigaya, for example, the lower ranking warrior groups had initially rushed to set up encampments in these vulnerable areas, from which they would later build their residences.¹⁵ Jinnai also described Edo-Tokyo as a city that was distinguished by high roads and low roads, which geographically distinguished the warrior classes from the commoners. These high ridge roads, including the Nakasendō, Kōshū-kaidō, and Atsugi-kaidō, were those along which the warrior classes built their extravagant manors with their opulent gardens. These provided a counterpoint to the low ridge roads, which went through the water lowlands and were where the

¹⁵ Jinnai, Tokyo, 40.
commoners—engaged in economies of small production—built shop fronts and modest houses.\footnote{16 Jinnai, \textit{Tokyo}, 14, 28.} The lower-class warriors (\textit{gokenin}), shogunal retainers who did not have the privilege of a direct audience with the shogun, lived in \textit{kumikayashi}, group residences with other low-ranking warriors built atop land borrowed from the shogunal government.\footnote{17 Jinnai, \textit{Tokyo}, 48-49.} The areas east of the castle were the most prestigious, reserved for the \textit{fudai daimyo}, “allied lords.” In the outermost rings, beyond those of the \textit{gokenin} and \textit{fudai daimyo}, were the Tokugawa bannermen and housemen (\textit{hatamoto}), who were meant to serve as the frontline defense in the strategically vulnerable regions of the Musashi plain, a decision that McLain and Merriman described as “no accident.” After all, these were “the families that could be counted upon to be the most loyal in the event of a military crisis” and, if an attack did come, it was likely to originate in the flat plains to the east (the place of Sunagawa).\footnote{18 Mclain, Merriman, Ugawa, \textit{Edo and Paris}, 21.} \textquote{In today's terms,} Jinnai argued, “these group residences would correspond to military barracks, or civil service housing in which families live together; in principle, no commoners were allowed to enter them.”\footnote{19 Jinnai, \textit{Tokyo}, 49.} By providing a “closed, independent, and settled space” for the bannerman, \textit{kumikayashi} shared many of the same functions as later military instillations in Tokyo, particularly when we consider that the U.S. military bases of the twentieth century, more than simply constituting spaces from which to
wage war, were also central to reproducing the family and providing a lived, communal space within a permanently militarized landscape.

But what exactly were the topographical landscapes onto which these Edo military-use lands were built? In Tachikawa and Sunagawa, and in much of Musashino Plateau (daichi) in general, communities were grounded, both in economy and in the imagination, in a history of agrarian production and intraregional trade. In fact, humans have inhabited the region since at least the Jōmōn era (14,000 BCE–300 BCE). Even today we can see the “traces of camp living standards” (kyanpu seikatsu teido) in places around the “fan-shaped plateau” of Ōme, just northwest of Tachikawa. Though much of the spring water quality on the Musashino Plateau was of poor quality and largely underdeveloped until the early-modern era, the areas around the terraced cliffs that run along the Tama River have flowed with utilizable springs since ancient times, supporting a wide range of agrarian practices, as well as production of the famous pots (doki) that are often the most recognizable of ancient Japanese artifacts.20

The decision to move the capital to Edo had a profound effect on the human development of the Musashino plateau, particularly because the Tama region was quickly absorbed into the nationwide trade regimes of the era. The Itsukaichi Kaidō (Itsukaichi Highway), the Tokugawa era trade route that was central to bringing wood, coal, and other commodities to the capitol, ran directly

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through Sunagawa and the western Santama region, converging in the present
day city of Itsukaichi. The town and the road were named for the market in
Itsukaichi ("Fifth Day Town") that traditionally operated on the fifth, fifteenth,
and twenty-fifth days of every month, when merchants would converge for
commerce as well as to "exchange information and opinions on various
matters." Aerial photographs from 1956 of Sunagawa lend visual testimony to
the importance of the Itsukaichi Kaidō in lending shape to the village: a dense
collection of farmhouses and trees follow the uneven contours of the road,
flowing through innumerable neatly cultivated fields, beyond which the
Okutama foothills defines the skyline.

In 1848, Sunagawa was comprised of 276 households with a population
of 1,732, nearly all of whom were engaged in either agricultural or some form of
charcoal production. Japanese oak and cedar were among the most prevalent
varieties of tree from which to produce charcoal. Interestingly, many farmers
chose to grow flowers such as kikyō (Chinese bellflower), ominaeshi (valerian),
and yamayuri (a golden rayed lily native to Japan), which were, like most
commodities, sold in Edo. As late as the 1930s, pines from the western edges of

22 Arai, I Was Born into a Sunagawa Farming Family, 6.
23 Sunagawa no rekishi, 87.
the airfield (today’s Nishitama), were used to make the New Year’s ornaments that adorned households throughout nearby cities.24

Irokawa Daikichi, one of the most prominent nativist historians within the people’s history (minshūshi) movement of the 1960s, wrote extensively on the history of the Tama region and became most well known when he helped to introduced the world to a Meiji-era “people’s constitution,” which he discovered in a Nishitama storehouse (the Fukazawa family dozō) in 1968.25 Written by a local village elementary school teacher named Chiba Takusaburō, the constitution had 240 articles that called for wide-ranging rights. “When compared to the prewar imperial constitution and the current new constitution,” Irokawa wrote in 1970, “the draft’s provision for people’s rights and power of legislation are by far closer to the spirit of the new constitution.” This region, decidedly beyond the boundaries of Edo/Tokyo, was nonetheless intimately linked to the metropole’s economic influence and political hegemony over the entire of the region. The distance between the metropole and the outlying regions was great enough for Irokawa to observe that the creation of the people’s constitution was part of a movement that was as firmly grounded in

25 The location of the fukuzawa-ka dozō is located today the city of Itsukaichi, nestled against the Okutama mountain range, about 18 kilometers west of Tachikawa.
place as it was in the intellectual milieu of Meiji Japan: “Modern Tama can be proud of the Freedom and People’s Rights movement throughout Japan.”

Irokawa recognized the important shifts in class that had occurred in the transition from feudalism towards a form of constitutional monarchism. Many people, like Chiba Takasaburō, realized that new political spaces had been created, opening opportunities for greater political freedoms and possibilities for representative governance. But the changes in understanding of class also had an effect on Japan’s military structure. The upsetting of Tokugawa class hierarchies—of which the samurai were the top—also required the Meiji state to adopt new, modern forms of military conscription and practice. After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, many of the new government’s first moves to modernize were fueled by national security concerns. Mandatory military conscription was instituted in 1873, which coincided with new appropriations of land for military-use. Conscription occurred, therefor, within only a few years of the disempowering of the military (samurai) class. In doing so, what had been a military class that was decidedly urban (living in either castle towns or in the capital), was spread like pollen to the wind throughout the rural and agrarian

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26 Irokawa, *Tama’s 5000 Years*, 196-197. It was not simply luck that had led Irokawa and his team to find Chiba’s now-famous draft constitution. Irokawa had long been involved in researching the history of the area, and his work on the premodern and modern history of the Tama region, and western Tokyo in general, is exceptional in its breadth. Irokawa is most well known in the West for *The Culture of the Meiji Period*, edited and translated by Marius B. Jansen (Princeton University Press, 1985). In addition to *Tama’s 5000 Years* and numerous articles on the Tama region, see Minshū kenpō no sōzō: umoreta tama no jinmyaku (*The Creation of the People’s Constitution: Tama’s Buried Network*), Irokawa, Daikichi; Ei, Hideo; Arai, Katsuhiro, eds. Tokyo: Hyōronsya, 1970 and Santama jiyū minka no undōshi (*The History of Santama’s Freedom and People’s Rights Movement*), Japan: Tama Bunka Kenkyûkai, 1961.
communities of Japan in the form of conscription. In some ways, this decentralization of the military made it less recognizable as an urban structure, and less visible as precisely because it was diluted.

Still, the new military, just like the old, needed land. The historian and social critic Arakawa Shōji has written extensively on Meiji-era Japan’s increasing focus on national security, including the rapid increase in military-use land (gunyōchi) throughout the Meiji era. In Military-Use Land and the City, People (gunyōchi to toshi-minshū), Arakawa argued that the construction of barracks, drilling grounds, parade grounds, workshops, air fields, bombing grounds, forts, gun batteries, garrison hospitals, military cemeteries, cavalry stables, state-run munitions factories, and storage facilities was part of two different processes of early militarization in the new Tokyo. In one process, state land was occupied with the specific aim of militarization. In the other process, the government acquired or borrowed private land that would be retained indefinitely, though not necessarily developed. Arakawa observed that from 1877 to 1888 45% of the areas under military jurisdiction (gunkanku) in Japan were concentrated in Tokyo. The Number One Garrison’s (“Tokyo Garrison”) regional domain included not only Tokyo-fu, but also eastern Ibaraki, northern Tochigi-Niigata, and western Nagano-Yamanashi-Shizuoka. In 1877, the total area of the Number One Garrison was 18.35 km2 (5,550,000 tsubo). By 1888,

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this number had increased over three-fold to 56.86 km² (17,200,000 tsubo).\textsuperscript{28}
While Tokyo had by far the biggest increase in the actual footprint of military-use land during this time, other garrisons also experienced exponentially heavy growth: Sendai’s military-use land, for example, increased from 3.89 km² (1,170,000 tsubo) to 27.54 km² (8,330,000 tsubo) and Osaka’s from 6.22 km² (1,880,000 tsubo) to 19.54 km² (5,910,000 tsubo).\textsuperscript{29} Regarding the bodies whose labor would help define these new militarized spaces, the earliest conscripts were made to serve as either imperial escorts and guards or sent to serve in one of the garrisons (chindai) in Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka, Hiroshima, Kumamoto, or Sendai.\textsuperscript{30}

The militarization of Japanese cities was, therefore, a both a modern process and one that was helped by such historical factors as castle-town planning and pre-modern war preparedness. Military conscription and the expansion of facilities staffed by a standing army were Meiji government initiatives, but as we have seen, the new city of Tokyo was also not unfamiliar with militarized spaces. At the same time, the building of modern infrastructure was also a process undertaken with the expansion of the Japanese empire into Taiwan and the Asian continent, a process that had as large an impact on the spatial development in Tokyo as it did in many cities in Taiwan, Manchuria, and

\textsuperscript{28} Arakawa, 6-7.
\textsuperscript{29} Arakawa, 7. Arakawa cites the Ministry of the Army Annual Statistics Report (rikugunsho tōkei nenpō), Number 2-11.
\textsuperscript{30} Arakawa, 6.
Korea. Military aerodomes in Tachikawa, for example, were quickly linked to those in Dairen (Dalian) and beyond.

Militarization was an integral part of Japanese modernity; modernity was an integral part of what became urban. Louise Young argued that Japan’s “total empire” was one that maintained a dialectical relationship with modernity and included a form of “social imperialism,” which she described as the exporting overseas the social discontents engendered by industrialization in the imperial metropole.\textsuperscript{31} For Young, imperialism was not simply a result of Japan’s modernity, but was in fact a central component to the process of modernization. In this way, because imperial authority enveloped both the colonial periphery and the metropole, imperialism abroad was not unlike the imperialism that occurred at home.\textsuperscript{32}

The construction of military garrisons and other forms of military-use land also represented a clear link between metropole (\textit{naichi}) and empire (\textit{gaichî}). The increase in military-use land in Japan, and in particular those areas under the jurisdiction of the Tokyo Garrison, was a process that occurred throughout Japan. The bases were the physical links, connected first by ship and later by plane, which allowed the materiality of empire to follow the imperial

\textsuperscript{31} Young, Louise. \textit{Japan’s Total Empire Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism}. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998. 11-12.

\textsuperscript{32} State and society were interlinked during the colonial era, and, for Young, this coupling was most evident within Japanese mass media’s attention to Manchukuo, which often rallied its consumers into jingoistic fervor with stories of Japanese victimization, while Japanese intellectuals (often from the Left) and capitalists eagerly went to the “jewel in the crown” to engage in ethnographic or commercial work. See Young, \textit{Japan’s Total Empire}, Chapter Three.
ambitions of the Meiji government. Just as the processes of modernity and imperialism “deposited more of Japan in Manchukuo and more of Manchukuo in Japan,” the colonial projects in Korea and Taiwan redefined what war meant for the homeland.33

That Wind: The New Tachikawa Airfield

Tachikawa’s flat terrain and relatively close proximity to Tokyo made it an ideal location for the construction of airfields, aircraft research and development facilities, and flight schools. Mita Tsurukichi’s The Story of Tachikawa Airfield (Tachikawa hikōjō monogatari) is a collection of memories and testimonials from Tachikawa locals who worked or lived near the airfield (though much of it is Mita’s own experience). Published in 1987, the three-volume collection contains the histories of individuals and events that span the entirety of the militarized space’s history, from its earliest moments in 1922, to the Sunagawa protests of the 1950s, to the return of the land to Japanese from American control in 1977. Mita wrote that Tachikawa Air Field’s “father” was the Kagamigahara Air Field in Gifu Prefecture, while its “grandfather” (constructed in 1911) was the nearby Tokorozawa Air Base in Saitama Prefecture.34 Mita invokes a familial genealogy that suggests an organic quality to military bases that appear to be “growing.” In 1909 government officials concluded, “Tokorozawa is optimal for an air balloon test station,” one of the earliest

33 Young, 14.
34 Mita, Volume 1, 17. Kagamigahara was originally built in 1876 as an army cavalry ground, was converted into an airfield in 1917, and is presently the JSDF’s Gifu Base. Tokorozawa Air Base was established in 1911.
examples of military aviation technology. Within a year, station developers had
acquired 75 hectares (185 acres) and paid 76,500 yen to owners, or 33 sen per
tsubo. Looking back on this moment, Mita mused, that kind of price “would seem
like a dream” (this chapter was originally written in 1980, when land prices in
the Tokyo area were uniformly exorbitant).35

Tachikawa Air Base was officially established in 1916, when the Army
Ministry bought 150 acres of land from nearly 100 local residents. This moment
was also the beginning of the tenant-farming dispute (kosaku sōgi) in
Tachikawa.36 The purchase of the land by the government was made only after
three or four meetings with local landowners, when a price of two yen fifty sen
was agreed for each tsubo of land. The purchase did not occur until 1921,
presumably because nearly 100 residents were unwilling to sell the land, as
evidenced by a continuous series of meetings that ended without
reconciliation.37 Mita cites Tanaka Shigeru’s Air Base and Tachikawa (Hikōjō to
Tachikawa) as evidence of disputes between local landowners and the tenant
farmers who would lose their livelihoods and become dispossessed of their
lands:

“40 or 50 people gathered in a representative’s home, held a
takidashi [potlucks that are common to activist meetings] and

35 Mita, Volume I, 17.
36 Mita, Volume I, 28. Nakajima (1895-1981), whom Mita referred to as the “peacemaker”
(chūsaiyaku) of these early tenant disputes, was an “honored citizen of Tachikawa City,” and had
served as a member of the Tachikawa village assembly and later as Tachikawa village mayor and
Tachikawa city mayor. Mita wrote that “this person’s history, this person’s remnants in
particular, are the history of modern Tachikawa.
vigorously advocated for their right to livelihood (seikatsuken)—
vigorously enough to warrant a warning from Fuchū Station—and
with Nakajima Shunji’s arbitration, the incident was settled on the
condition that three years of land rents be returned.”38

Nakajima, a local farmer who was politically active, was representative of
the early locals who leveled some form of opposition to the abrupt use of land by
the military. In 1870, Nakajima’s father, Jirō Hyōe, became the village mayor of
Shibasaki, Kanagawa Prefecture.39 (Until 1893, much of the present-day Tama
region, including Tachikawa, was located with Kanagawa Prefecture; Shibasaki is
known today as Shibasakichō (Shibasaki Town), located in the region south of
Tachikawa Station.) Jirō served as a labor headman and the last mayor of
Tachikawa village, eventually becoming a councilman in the Kita-Tama District
and a legislator in the Kanagawa prefectural assembly. “[Nakajima] Shūnji’s
father was physically weak,” wrote Mita, “so from a young age, Shūnji was
involved with councils and engaged in a lot of basic village administration, and
he was familiar with the circumstances going on at the time.”40

In 1980, Mita interviewed Shūnji (as Mita refers to him) and his wife,
Akiko. The interview (one year before Nakajima Shūnji passed away) revealed
that there was deep preexisting tensions within Tachikawa among landowners
and tenants, which played a role in the contentions that later resulted from the
Imperial Army’s decision to acquire the land for the airfield. Shūnji discussed

40 Mita, Volume I, P. 28.
how the land onto which the airfield eventually was built was part of eight hectares of scrub brush that his family had bought.

Shunji: The Sunagawa farmers swept in and defoliated the mountains [to make charcoal or fertilizer], and we had that compensation issue...⁴¹

The tenant-dispute discussions, often held at the Nakajima household, were focused on negotiating fair compensation to tenant-farmers who did not own land but whose labor gave the land its monetary value.

Akiko: At the time, my husband was going to city hall as a village council member. I had been a housewife for 5, 6 years, and so I had to firmly support my husband's thinking. It was really hard; everyone sat out on the veranda [for meetings].

Shunji: The beginning of the conversation about the construction of an airfield in Tachikawa—it was Taishō 9 (1920), if I recall—was when Miyazaki Eizaburō, the mayor of Kita-Tama, came to Ogawa Takayoshi, the Tachikawa village mayor, and gave support to the military's intentions. There wasn't anything like an official contract, but they did give their written consent (shōdakusho). The decision was made when the head of the Imperial Guards accounting division and several executive staff held an explanatory meeting at the elementary school (today, the Tachikawa Number One Elementary School) in Taishō 10 (1921).

Mita: How was the payment received?

Shunji: They gave us a Bank of Japan cash voucher, which I think was deposited at either Buyō Bank or Yasuda Bank. In Taishō 5 (1916) my house was 40 tsubo, and around here it was the best, built at a cost of 15,000 yen. At that time you could rent a house for 300 to 500 yen.

Though the land was increasingly valuable for military purposes, it was still home to hundreds of families, despite the often-harsh environment.

Akiko: Our oldest daughter, Kazuko, was born in Taisho 11 (1922). Just when I would put the baby to bed, the north wind would whirl

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up the dust and it would make the baby's face all red. All we had were sash and glass doors, so each time the wind blew it was really a pain in the neck. All of the trees would be uprooted; it would never end.

Mita: It was really difficult for a typical house, wasn't it? In Tachikawa and Sunagawa, it seems that some people disparagingly say that 'seeds get knocked off the household altar.'42 [In fact, the old adage was “the seeds fall from the household altar in places like Tachikawa and Sunagawa,” a reference to the popular agrarian practice of leaving crop seeds on the kamidana in order to bring luck and as an offering to ancestral farmers]. You were really plagued by light soil that is characteristic of this area.43

Akiko: I heard that the difference in the depth of the black soil between the north end and the south end of the airfield was 30 centimeters (isshoku).

Shunji: That’s right. I was an acquaintance of Mr. Ogawa Yū (former head of the Tachikawa City Council)—it was Shōwa 2 (1927), February 20 I think—and on the day of his son’s wedding ceremony wind from the airfield and turned his daughter-in-law’s face grey, which was a shame.

This interaction indicated that, even after nearly five decades, the tenant-dispute remained an important and deeply held memory of the pre-airfield days for the Nakajima family, who were personally affected by the process of militarization that was occurring in Tachikawa. These indications of early friction between land tenants and owners also suggest that many of the people who occupied the land were already living precariously before the military came. References to soil depth and composition indicate an attachment to the land typical of a farming couple that had lived the entirety of their lives in an agricultural landscape like that in Sunagawa, which had yet to be brought in to

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42 Mita, Volume I, 29-30.
43 Mita, Volume I, 29.
the urban landscape of Tachikawa, let alone Tokyo. Again, Mita quoted from Tanaka:

“Since the forested mountains were scrub brush interspersed with red pines, in the winter the fallen leaves became fuel and fertilizer. Rabbits were abundant and students would come from Tokyo to go rabbit hunting. They would stretch out something that looked like a tennis net and cry out in big voice and chase after them.”^44

The wind, continuous and unrelenting, plays a strong role in the memories of Sunagawa residents. The Tokugawa land reclamation projects (shingen kaihatsu) had been too successful: many of the woodlands and wetlands that had long surrounded older crop fields were ripped up so thoroughly that the region quickly became prone to mudslides and flooding. In 1666, officials issued new regulations that prevented the wholesale expansion of cropland into previously forested areas and riverbanks, but the changes to the landscape had taken their toll, and in Sunagawa, the forested areas would not be coming back. Even later efforts to construct windbreaks were often for naught: “Between February and April the wind is so strong and the land very dusty; pine trees planted as a wind break would be ripped up by their roots.”^45

The wind as irritant, and as periodic destroyer of crops and trees, was the result of the confluence of natural forces and human-driven landscaping. The rabbits. The soil. More wind. The dust that was blown from the ground, soil that had sifted through fingers for centuries, been slept on by settled communities for millennia, was now blasted into the sky, only to settle on a baby’s face and a

^44 Mita, Volume I, 24-25.
^45 Mita, Volume I, 25.
bride's kimono. In places like Sunagawa and Tachikawa, seeds fell from the household altar; the wind, divine or not, entered the home, shattered the peace, and even threatened the family's ancestral linkages.

In Sunagawa, the relationship to the land was at once intimate and foreboding. The soil quality did not allow for high-value crops like wetland rice, so farmers turned to dry-field rice, wheat, and potatoes. It could also be said that it was not a particularly beautiful setting, as compared to perhaps more pastoral and idyllic farming regions farther away from the cities. It might have therefore seemed curious to both the large landowners and the military as to why farmers were so reticent to leave land that was not considered high value. However, as I have argued by invoking militarized spaces and landscapes as important to our study, it is precisely the relationship to the land that informed the local far will to protest. It was during the early twentieth century, following the general expansion of military bases throughout the country, that the spaces inhabited by the people of Sunagawa were assigned a new relationship with the land, one that was also predicated on the same attributes that made it appealing for agriculture: flat, accessible, sparsely populated, and appropriable. The same fields that sent dust into the sky would soon send planes.

Substantial development of the Tachikawa Air Field occurred in 1922—four years after the end of World War I—but that was only the beginning of military creep on the part of the Army Air Fifth Battalion. The military continued to expand the size of the base significantly during the interwar period: in 1935,
1938, 1939, and 1941. It was in this interwar period that weapons grew in power and efficacy—a global phenomenon, but also a trend that was particularly evident in Japan, one of the allied victors of World War I.

**Everyday Lives and Military Bases**

“As source and as resource, nature obsesses us, as do childhood and spontaneity, via the filter of memory. Everyone wants to protect and save nature; nobody wants to stand in the way of an attempt to retrieve its authenticity. Yet at the same time everything conspires to harm it. The fact is that natural space will soon be lost to view. Anyone so inclined may look over their shoulder and see it sinking below the horizon behind us. Nature is also becoming lost to *thought*. For what is nature? How can we form a picture of it as it was before the intervention of humans with their ravaging tools? Even the powerful myth of nature is being transformed into a mere fiction, a negative utopia: nature is now seen as merely the raw material out of which the productive forces of a verity of social systems have forged their particular spaces. True, nature is resistant, and infinite in its depth, but it has been defeated, and now waits only for its ultimate voidance and destruction.”

Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*[^47]

For Henri Lefebvre, space as a concept was, like nature, infinite in its depth, capable of encompassing overlapping experiences, histories, and purposes. The concept of space, whether micro or macro, absolute or abstract, continues to be important precisely because it offers us the opportunity to explore the multitude of productive capacities that are built into the everyday lives of all people[^48].

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[^48]: For a current and compelling study in which “micro-spaces” are a central theoretical component, see Todd A. Henry’s *Assimilating Seoul: Japanese rule and the politics of public space in colonial Korea, 1910-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014). More broadly, the vibrant field of environmental history in Japan offers us much by way of exploring the
militarized, and as the landscape was drained of state recognition for local rights to that landscape (as articulated earlier in this chapter), the productive forces of the region were shifted from the production of agricultural commodities to the production of empire. We see that even in the space of a military base and its surrounding communities, the usual lenses through which we can recognize uneven power relations—labor and capital, gender, geography—can be articulated in such a way that we might free ourselves from the trope of linear historical development that shapes our lived environment. Instead, space, and for Lefebvre in particular, “social space,” highlights the relations of production (“divisions of labour and its organization in the form of hierarchical social functions”) that shape much of how we interact with other people and our lived environment.49

Chipping away at agricultural land, the Japanese military created new, modern, and above all, militarized spaces in Tachikawa in Sunagawa. Military aviation technology sought to overcome nature and tame its awesome power: wind would carry planes, the immensity of mountains and distance could be overcome by an airplane. A local Sunagawa farmer, Miyaoka Masao could not help but notice the shifting social spaces of Tachikawa and Sunagawa. Born in 1913, he was the sixteenth generation of his family to farm their plot of land in


49 Lefebvre, The Production of Space, 32-33.
Sunagawa, the same property on which his daughter, Fukushima Kyoko, and granddaughter live today. The 1,830 tsubo appropriated by the Tachikawa Number Five Flight Regiment in 1916 marked the first moment when land was reformed for military purposes. By 1921, the year of Miyaoka’s first memories of the Tachikawa airfield, the Fifth Regiment only occupied the eastern portion of the base, while the western portion was used by a private flight school. In his memoir, Miyaoka wrote,

“Unlike the American base, which is surrounded by a fence, at that time civilians could enter and leave from anywhere. Us kids would walk across the base to go fishing in the Tama River. I remember chasing big grasshoppers that could fly 100 meters over the wide tussock fields. Though, we couldn’t enter on the east side, which the army was using.”

Miyaoka was there in 1924, his third year of elementary school, standing amidst his Japanese-flag-waving peers, to see off the first Japanese plane ever to fly to Europe. Recalling the event in his later years, he marveled, “I seem to remember that from the Japanese archipelago he flew from Tachikawa to Abashiri in Hokkaidō [a small town which would later hold an infamous prison for Shōwa era political prisoners], then onto Europe via Siberia. But it wasn’t like today when you can fly from Haneda to Chitose [the main airport outside of

50 Miyaoka, Masao. Sunagawa Tōsō no kiroku [Record of the Sunagawa Struggle]. Tokyo: Ocha no mizu Publishers, 2005. 30. Thirty years later, Miyaka would become one of the first local farmers to organize and oppose the expansion of Tachikawa Air Base onto local farmland; he became one of the founders of the Sunagawa Struggle, to which we will return in Chapter Two.
Sapporo] in an hour and a half; instead it took days and days just to fly to Hokkaido and around a half year to complete the journey, I think.”51

It is Miyaoka’s everyday experience of the base that is of particular importance to this dissertation, for it is the everyday lives of people that are often set aside in other studies of militarized spaces, particularly the communities around military bases. The critic Tosaka Jun thought of everydayness (nichijyōsei) as a cycle where “we daily practice love, reflection, and planning under determinate conditions of a fixed society.” Everydayness, as Harry Harootunian described it, “had simply been taken for granted as unworthy of further reflection,” because “the commonsense understanding of everyday life saw it as simply ‘customary’ and ‘vulgar’.”52 In his reading of Tosaka, Harootunian argued that everydayness was “the materiality of the commonplace, the things colonizing the life of ordinary people, customs that were always changing.” Importantly, everydayness was lost “against the extra-mundane claims of the lofty and profound.”53 What, after all, could be more lofty and profound than state hubris with regards to militarization? As we will encounter throughout the remainder of this dissertation, reading the base through the lens

51 Miyaoka, 30.
of the everyday allows us the opportunity to move beyond the discourses of both the Japanese state and the U.S. military.\textsuperscript{54}

The Tachikawa Air Base quickly became the most important air base in Japan, a hub for aeronautical research and exchange with other nations that were also developing their aviation technologies, including France, Germany, and England. With this growth came the dangers inherent in military traffic: accidents were not uncommon. The French-made Nieuport 29C-1, a biplane that was often flown at Tachikawa, racked up about three hundred accidents around the country between the mid-1920s and 1932. In December 1923, another French import, the Salmson 2A2 reconnaissance plane, was brought down by Tachikawa’s high wind near the southern end of the airfield. On July 5, 1924, a pilot and his passenger, who was along for a joyride, both died when their plane crashed into a nearby mulberry field, and on December 19, 1927, two planes collided over a wheat field near Sunagawa Number Five, killing both pilots. The families of the two pilots erected a martyr’s memorial stone (\textit{junnanhi}) on the spot; local farmers recall seeing the pilots’ families come and visit the memorial. “It’s such a pity,” they heard them say.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{54} We will return to Lefebvre’s reading of everyday life later in this project. See also Certeau, Michel de, Luce Giard, and Pierre Mayol. \textit{The Practice of Everyday Life}. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998.

\textsuperscript{55} Mita, Tsurukichi. \textit{Tachikawa Hikōjō Monogatari [The Story of Tachikawa Air Base]}, Vol. 2. 3 vols. Tokyo: Keyaki Publishers, 1987. 106-108. Mita also observed “there are various reasons for airplane crashes—personal things like alcohol and lack of sleep, confidence and overconfidence, vanity, lack of proper application, and a potentially inadequate personality, and so forth—which are really without limit.”
This was far from the only time that planes crashed into farm fields in Sunagawa. Two years later, on August 14, 1929, a military plane took off and almost immediately crashed into a rice paddy, also located in Sunagawa Number Five, killing all eight people aboard. Just two months after that incident, on October 8, two reconnaissance planes took off from the Fifth Garrison’s airfield in Shimoshizu, Chiba Prefecture, but crashed en route to Tachikawa after a severe rainstorm caused the pilots to lose their course. For Mita, and for the people who appear in his three-volume collection of documents and stories on the Tachikawa Air Base, the militarism that underlay the very existence of the base does not appear to be of central concern. That within the span of only a few years military accidents could become so much a part of the everyday seems, to some of the Sunagawa locals at least, to be a natural result of a modern militarized space.

In 1927, Shimomura Kainan published an article in the journal *Gobancha* entitled “A Funeral at Tachikawa Airbase” (*Tachikawa hikōjō no chōhī*). Shimomura had served as the Secretary of State for the Taiwan Governor General and later as the president of both the Japan Sports Federation and Takushoku University. In his essay, Shimomura observed that the Buddhist funeral rites so ubiquitous in the ceremonies of previous generations seemed to be changing, becoming briefer and less reverential. The ceremony under discussion was for Gotō Yūkichi, a pilot from rural Nobeoka City in the Kyushu

56 Mita, *Volume II*, 189-190.
prefecture of Yamazaki. In 1924, Gōto gained fame as the first person to fly the entirety of the Japanese archipelago. After Charles Lindbergh crossed the Atlantic in 1927, Gotō publicly announced that he would become the first to cross the Pacific. However, a short time later he was killed in a training flight in Saga Prefecture. Shimomura was displeased with the funeral Gotō received in Tachikawa. “The world is busy,” he wrote, “and in the middle of that busyness people live and die. People nowadays have little faith and can’t even read the classic Chinese texts. The sutra sounds used to be long, but now they have become short acts of mercy.” In the military aviation town, Shimomura saw the world spinning faster, an understandable observation. By 1922, postal services were increasingly utilizing air routes, and young pilots like Gotō were flying mail throughout the country, linking cities as far removed as Kumamoto and Osaka, or Kasumigaura and Kanazawa. That the Buddhist rites appeared to be rushed was a source of pain and frustration for Shimomura, a fact that is not free from irony, given that the funeral was taking place in militarized space in which speed was a virtue. A young pilot’s life had been cut short by what had become the global desire to move about more quickly, cover greater distances, and collapse space into smaller and smaller increments. The push for speed that had propelled Gotō’s career in flight, and his ultimate death, similarly propelled the

57 (Gotō Hikōshi kinnen kyōkai) The Airman Gotō Memorial Society of Miyazaki City. (Gotō Hikōshi kinnen kyōkai) The Airman Gotō Memorial Society, 1929.
speed in which his funeral proceeded. For Shimomura, the result was that ceremonies had lost much of their power and relevance: “I want the complaints about the [length of] the sutras to stop.” For Shimomura, the hurried sutras reflected poorly on the people in attendance and were utterly distasteful for the deceased. He envisioned a more stately and respectful ceremony, perhaps like those of his youth, which went on for hours, regardless of the day, or the place—even if that place was a military airfield. Like Miyaoka, the boy who marveled at the speed with which someone could travel to Hokkaido via airplane, Shimomura sensed that a new rapidity had overcome daily experience. In Tachikawa and Sunagawa, the aircraft had changed how people thought of time. The planes came to symbolize both the condensing of great distances and the compressing of those experiences that recognized life as something worth acknowledging.

**Company Town**

On the beautifully purple Musashino Plain
Where hibiscus gallantly look up
Ideals set most high
While competing in the culture of flight
Heavy with my mission, I am Tachikawa Aircraft

The endlessly flowing Tama
Is as the infinity of human intellect
While polishing the best of science and Endeavoring for technologies of production
Burning with devotion, I am Tachikawa Aircraft

The rising sun shining over the whole world

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60 Shimomura, 312.
Silver wings brilliant and shining
Bringing order to the skies of East Asia
I have the blood of a war bird flowing
With one spirit, I am Tachikawa Aircraft

Tachikawa Aircraft Company song, 1941

The airplane manufacturing industry in Tachikawa began in the 1920s and became an integral part of the nation’s military production from the 1930s until 1945. The main manufacturing plants were all connected, either as a subsidiary or as a direct production facility, to the major zaibatsu of the era. The three biggest manufacturers were Tachikawa Airplane Manufacturing Company (originally established as the Ishikawajima Aircraft Industries facility), the Showa Aircraft Company, and the Hitachi Aircraft Company. The presence of this massive industry brought with it state-financed jobs through heavy construction and industrial production, which provided workers with salaries commensurate for a middle-class, consumerist population. Thanks to this industry, Tachikawa was, according to historian Mita, unaffected by the global recession of the prewar years. Together with the manufacturing facilities, flight schools and training facilities were also a central component of Tachikawa’s militarized development, helping sustain the local economy.

As a result of the heavy investment from the government, the area’s population exploded during this time. Between 1937 and 1940, the number of passengers who transited through Tachikawa station tripled, from 2.3 million to

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62 Mita, Volume II, 23.
7.9 million. Government-owned Japan Railways constructed the Showa-mae Station along the Ōme Line in 1937 in order to provide service for all of the new workers living and working in the area—many of whom were living in company houses (jūgyōin) near the factories that surrounded Tachikawa Air Base. The airplane industry brought together a wide spectrum of new consumers to the center of Tachikawa—officers, soldiers, factory workers, and researchers. While most of the workers who came to Tachikawa were factory laborers and soldiers, throughout the 1930s, many of Tokyo’s most prestigious institutions of higher learning, including Hōsei, Waseda, and Meiji Universities, conducted aeronautical experiments in Tachikawa, particularly under the auspices of Ishikawajima’s research facilities. These new consumers visited eateries that catered to the factory crowd, including restaurants, movie theaters, and small souvenir shops that sold “airplane sweet adzuki bean jelly,” “airplane crackers,” “airplane cider,” and the mysterious “airplane in the middle” (hikōnakama).

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63 Enomoto, 21.
64 Mita, Volume II, 39.
65 Enomoto, 25.
Of course, despite the sweet allure and selection of airplane-themed snacks, Tachikawa’s main purpose in the 1930s and 1940s was to dominate and terrorize the skies above Japan’s colonies or, as the Tachikawa Aircraft Company song went, to “bring order to the skies of East Asia.” Commissioned by the Imperial Army, Iwata Sentarō (1901-1974) captured the militaristic romanticism of the Tachikawa Airfield in his 1945 piece, “Special Attack Corps Setting Out From a Homeland Base II” (tokkōtai naichi kichi wo shinpatsu ni).\(^6\) In

the immense piece, suicide pilots stand in the middle of dry grassy field, their figures crisply defined against the ground and sky, between which there is little distinction. Iwata spent time sketching at Tachikawa airfield for the inspirations for his painting. There are no planes, no tarmacs, no buildings: only pilots, their bodies reduced to weapons of war, and sky, bleak and uninviting. Some look over attack plans, others steady their gazes towards the sky. Iwata’s depiction of the absence of military technology and industry in a space that was in actuality filled with the most modern war potential available provides visual affirmation to the lyrics of the Tachikawa Aircraft Company, which declared that the bodies of the base workers were themselves components of industry and empire (“I am Tachikawa Aircraft”).

Like Japan, most modern nations of the time were developing their military flight capabilities to the fullest. Aircraft development was a global industrial trend in the early twentieth century, and Japan was not alone in its desire to harness flight in order to project power. That the early planes flown at Tachikawa were nearly all of French origin speaks to the global reach of this industry. In 1927, the Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies published a general survey of the United Kingdom’s air forces, as well as recent developments in air travel and military aviation among several other nations, including the Netherlands, Italy, the United States, Yugoslavia, Germany, and
Japan. While the report focused heavily on the UK’s military assaults on targets in Iraq, there were references to Japan as well. The Japanese Empire in East Asia, like British Empire in the Middle East, was similarly becoming deeply linked to its colonial possessions and its projection of power via access to the latest in aviation technology. On Japan’s aviation advancements in 1927, the journal reported that new aerodromes were being constructed in order to service the Tokyo-Dairen and Osaka-Shanghai routes: “At Tokyo, the military aerodrome at Tachikawa will be used.” It had been five years since the Imperial Army had appropriated the Tachikawa Airfield and it was now becoming one of the central military air travel hubs linking the metropolis to its expanding empire in Manchukuo.

In 1929, the “88” reconnaissance plane was the first aircraft to roll off of the Tachikawa Aircraft Company’s assembly lines. Later, the company—which was technically privately owned but received considerable financing from state coffers—was charged with producing some of the aircraft most essential to the Japanese Imperial Army and Navy: the Tachikawa Ki-74, an army

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67 “Air Notes.” Journal of the Royal United Service Institution, no. 72 (1927). 673, 675. The survey of the UK’s own capabilities included a detailed account of Britain’s military “Penjvin Operations” in Iraq. “During the period under review,” the report states, “the situation generally has remained quiet, the only punitive air operations necessary being those against certain small villages in the Penjvin area.” The callousness of the language reflects the banality of violence when concerning military air operations, a relatively recent component to warfare and colonialism. When some “rebels” contested the “law and order” imposed by the British, “proclamations were dropped on a number of villages whose inhabitants had assisted in the attack on the column, ordering the headmen to report to Penjiv, failing which air action would be taken against them. The inhabitants, however, failed to comply, and in consequence the villages of Kölitan, Dolassur, Kaniqapla, Mulak, Sanjyiwx, Nangisar, Khirnuk, and Ban Banuk were subjected to air action.”

68 Ibid, 680.
reconnaissance bomber dubbed the “Patsy” by the Allied Forces; the Tachikawa Ki-54 army trainer plane dubbed the “Hickory”; and the Nakajima Ki-43, an army fighter nicknamed the “Oscar.” In May 1944, the Tachikawa factory employed 30,500 people, and produced 2,000 Patsys annually. Peak employment occurred in the final year of the war, January and February 1945, when an additional 150 soldiers and 2,600 students were also working at the facility.69 From January 1, 1941, until the end of the war, 6,645 planes were produced at the Tachikawa facility, which at nearly 61 buildings was by far the biggest owned by the company (though there were other production facilities and warehouses in the cities of Okayama and Kofu). The Tachikawa production facilities were spread between the southeast portion of the airfield and along its northern section, in the vicinity of Sunagawa.70 The Hitachi Aircraft Company, another major producer that was under Army contract for airplane engines, employed 13,896 people at its peak in September 1944. In April 1945, American air attacks, the focus of which will conclude this chapter, made this plant almost completely inoperable.71

“Gee, wasn’t Fuji San a beautiful sight?”

The “shining silver wings” of the 1920s and 1930s were followed by something different altogether; aircraft that wrought devastation and terror

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70 USSBS, Report 25.
71 Aircraft Division, United States Strategic Bombing Survey, Corporation Report Number VII. Date of survey November 1945 (February 1947). 4-5. Diet National Library.
visited the skies over Tachikawa during the spring and summer of 1945. By the late winter and early spring of 1945, the same aeronautical industry that had attracted workers and their families to Tachikawa was also responsible for inviting the attention of the American B-29 bombers that attacked Tachikawa Airfield and the surrounding factories on multiple occasions. The first attack occurred on a clear February 17, when US bombers attacked the Tachikawa Aircraft Company for the first time; other attacks came on April 4 and 24, and August 2.

The targets of the February 17 attack were the main engine assembly plants of the Tachikawa Aircraft Company, which operated the nearby Nakajima-Tama Mushashino engine plant, along with the Hitachi Aircraft Company. Writing about the target in the mission’s “action report,” one member of the USS Randolph’s bomber squadron observed that “It was the Nakajima Tama, creator of horsepower for Navy combat types, totaling up to nearly one tenth of all Japanese combat engine production. Twelve miles to the southeast and definitely not a military target was the Imperial Palace ground” (underline in the original). The fact that the Imperial Palace, and by extension the Emperor himself, was purposefully left unscathed by the American bombardment has been well documented. However, for the victims of the Tachikawa and Sunagawa air raids—including the people who would come to later oppose the creation of the Showa National Memorial Park in Tachikawa in 1983—Emperor Hirohito’s role

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in their suffering during the war, and his apparent amnesty from American bombers, remained an issue of consternation (we return to this in Chapter Five).

This attack was comprised of three different carrier groups, and nearly all of the American participants returned unharmed. The bombers dropped an immense payload on the Tachikawa engine assembly plant, essentially rendering it inoperable, while other U.S. fighter planes strafed trains and Japanese aircraft on the runway. Later photographic reconnaissance confirmed that the plant suffered heavy damage. The U.S. military’s Torpedo Squadron Twelve also took part in the attack, with one commanding officer reporting that “although significant anti-aircraft fire was encountered,” overall the mission was “very well planned and executed.”

73 Upon the return of the U.S. bombers, when the pilots were regaling one another with exploits from the mission, a certain Lieutenant Avery remarked “gee, wasn’t Fuji San a beautiful sight?”

74 The main engine production facility that was the target of the February 17 attack was located in the facility adjacent to Sunagawa village, where the Nakajima Ki-43 (Oscar) was produced. “About 40 percent of the wing spare jigs, 90 percent of the welding apparatus and 30 percent of the main wing assembly jibs were destroyed. Patsy [Tachikawa Ki-74] production was also delivered its

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74 Aircraft Action Report, VT-12 USS Randolph, February 17, 1945. VBG4 narrative, 4-5. Mt. Fuji appears in multiple written U.S. accounts of the attacks on Tachikawa. The famous conical and semi-dormant volcano was apparently often used as a potential direction marker for bombers en route to the Tokyo region: once one sees Mt. Fuji, the accounts often state, simple bear right and keep heading north.
death blow.” The confluence of crisp, clear winter skies, an immense show of force, and the seeming ineffectiveness of Japanese anti-aircraft guns all helped to deliver a successful mission to the Americans. Aside from occasional strafing of Japanese aircraft, there does not seem to have been an attempt by the Americans to target the airfield itself, deemed less important than the immense production facilities for which Tachikawa was famous.

Beginning in 1972, the records of the local experience of the air raids were compiled by the Tachikawa City Literary Club (Tachikawa-shi bungei dōkōkai) and later locally published in the 1982 three-volume collection entitled We Must Not Repeat This Sadness: (konokanashimi wo kurikaesenai). The survivor accounts detailed in the volumes are organized according to their geographic proximity to the Tachikawa Air Base, including people who lived near the Showa Aircraft production facility, as well as locals in Sunagawa Four, Five, and Six, who lived the nearest to the Tachikawa Aircraft Company.

When the February 17 attack occurred, Arai Sadao was twenty-nine years old and renting a company-owned home in the southern portion of Sunagawa. His house was only one among twelve others that were adjacent to the Number Two and Number Three dormitories of the Tachikawa Aircraft Company. “At the Hitachi plant,” Arai told an interviewer about the factory on the other side of the airfield, “88 people died. They were buried alive [under the rubble].”

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75 USSBS Report 25, 9.
attack occurred at just before nine in the morning, the first thing Arai saw was the American strafing of the nearby dormitories. As an aircraft factory worker himself, he could easily identify the Grumman F6F Hellcats, of which he counted at least fifty.\textsuperscript{77} Arai was initially able to get to an air raid shelter, but soon left in order to help to carry the injured to the factory hospital. When he was finally able to, he returned home to check on his mother, who had been too ill to hurry to the air raid shelter. The house was destroyed. “I don’t know if she died upstairs, or if she died downstairs. Her head had been skinned and her face blown off. The closet and the shelves were sticky; her teeth and jaw had flown ten meters. I was inconsolable, but no tears came. And you know, if I had a gun, I wouldn't have been able to even shoot it. Those planes that dropped the bombs...”\textsuperscript{78}

On the same day, forty-six-year-old Nakano Maiko had listened to air raid warnings all morning. An engineer from the gas company who was finishing a job at a nearby boarding house (presumably to make sure the gas lines were all turned off) told her, “Aunty, you’d better get out of here. This place might get bombed today.” Standing inside of an air raid shelter with her neighbors, she felt the ground shaking and heard repetitive thuds that reminded her of the noise the snow on her roof made when it slid off to the ground in immense clumps. Nakano’s house had suffered some damage, but it wasn’t completely destroyed, though a nearby mansion of 500 tsubo had three bombs land directly on it.

\textsuperscript{77} Bungeidōkōkai, Volume II. 31-32.
\textsuperscript{78} Bungeidōkōkai, Volume II, 33.
“According to a neighbor who was outside and saw it, a formation of *guraman* (Grumman) flew in from the direction of the gas company, when one of them turned around, flew back, and dropped another bomb.” Nakano recalled that the area around her house was the first in Sunagawa to suffer damage in the air raids. “Near my place,” she said, “there was an old silk manufacturer that used a waterwheel [for power], and the building had a roof the same size as the [aircraft] factory, so my place was targeted.”

Yet another American attack directed against the facilities nearest to Sunagawa was on August 2, less than two weeks before the Japanese government surrendered and only one week before the American nuclear attacks on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Masaoka Kinuko was twenty-five when the bombs fell; her husband, Masao, was the same person who as a boy ran across the grassy runways of the airfield, chasing grasshoppers. He was thirty-two years old in 1945 and sent to fight in the war. Kinuko took her children to Itsukaichi city where much of her family had lived for generations. It was there that she and her family found shelter when the bombs began to fall.

“From the air raid shelter, I could see the sky glowing red in the direction of my house.” As soon as the air raid sirens were quieted, Kinuko and her father rode a bicycle all the way back to Sunagawa. As they rode through the night, the sky of Sunagawa glowed red. “Around the area of Sunagawa Numbers Five and Six, along the Itsukaichi Kaidō, houses and trees were on fire, and there was so much

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79 Bungeidōkōkai, Volume II, 35-36.
stuff on the road that we couldn’t ride the bike any longer.” Kinuko’s sister’s house, despite efforts to fight the blaze, was lost. “Only later did the firefighting crews come to put out the fire, but by the time they came only the pillars were left.” The only things that remained were a few household goods that her sister’s family had managed to salvage.

It was only after he was demobilized from the Army that Masao learned that the home in which he had grown up had burned in the air raids. “In the area of Sunagawa Number Four, the only houses to burn were mine and Sano’s next door. Why was my house burned? I don’t really know. One thing is that the whole area of Sunagawa Numbers Four and Five are on the northern end of the north-south flowing runway of the Army’s Tachikawa Airfield.”

This chapter extended our view of anti-base protest to the years before the American occupation. In doing so, it becomes possible to recognize that opposition to militarism existed well before the American military took over Tachikawa Air Base in 1945. While we will begin to recognize a linearity of base opposition that began as soon as the Japanese government made plans for the air field in 1916, the following chapters will demonstrate that opposition to militarism and, in particular, military bases, were the result of a building litany of postwar base-related grievances. Still, events like the air raids and overall experience in war would inform the relationship that locals like the Miyaokas had with the state for the rest of their lives. It was clear that their home, burned

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80 Bungeidōkōkai, Volume II, 237.
81 Bungeidōkōkai, Volume II, 238-239.
nearly to the ground by warplanes, was targeted because of its proximity to
Japanese war production facilities. The northern end of the runway seemed to
take the shape of an arrow that pointed into the heart of Sunagawa. In 1955, that
same runway would again threatened to eliminate the Miyaoka home, though
not with dive-bombing B-29s, but rather bulldozers and cement trucks.

The history of Tokyo and its suburbs as militarized spaces did not end in
1945. In fact, despite the Allied Occupation’s rhetoric, demilitarization of Japan’s
landscape would not occur. To the contrary, it would increase exponentially
under the U.S. military. The military bases and militarized spaces built by the
Japanese Imperial Army would now take the form of colonial possession that
would engender to economies and new resistances. It is to the postwar
opposition to the American military base in Tachikawa that we now turn.
Chapter Two: Making a Basetown, Fomenting The Struggle

This chapter will set the stage for the 1955 Sunagawa Struggle by focusing on two themes. First, I will illustrate the basetown conditions in the post occupation years. To this end, I prioritize reports on base-related crime, sex work, pollution and accidents. The damaging aspects of the base are an important indicator of how the base presence was felt by the surrounding communities as a whole. By illustrating the damaging nature of the military presence in Tachikawa, my aim is to help explain the reasons why the most significant anti-base movement in Japanese history occurred in this place, at this time. Second, I will introduce many of the pivotal actors, mostly Sunagawa locals, who helped to give life to these protests. While the next chapter will focus on the bloodiest moments of the Sunagawa Struggle, the goal here is to demonstrate that resistance to the base was deeply rooted in local experience and local leadership.

It will become clear that the Sunagawa Struggle was the most important anti-base protest in postwar Japanese history. Before we turn to the dissection of everyday basetown life in Tachikawa, we will briefly recognize the immense impact the Struggle had on Japan in the mid-to-late 1950s. By doing so, the reader will be able to better appreciate that the basetown conditions to which we soon turn will eventually inform an anti-base struggle of historical importance.
Researchers at the Tokyo Metropolitan Labour Bureau’s Union Relations Division were quick to recognize the importance of the anti-base movement in Tachikawa. They recognized that the movement could potentially have wide-ranging implications for Japanese laborers on the bases, local economies, and land-use. The Struggle, as the Labor Bureau recognized, had deep historical roots.

“The development Sunagawa Town since the establishment of Tachikawa Airfield in 1916—in the midst of the town’s 350 years of history and agricultural production—the military has expanded the base ten times, in which 250 units of farmland were appropriated and 80 family households were forced to relocate. In addition, because of the disastrous war and the inadequacy of the postwar occupying army’s base expansions, with each rainfall the drainage washed away crops and crude oil seeped into the groundwater (among other things), so that over the years the people of Sunagawa have continued to live with the sorrows of war and a basetown.”

The above excerpt is a remarkable testament to the fact that, even the Labour Bureau, an office under the auspices of the immense Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, understood the historical and physical context that propelled the Sunagawa Struggle into national importance. The nearly 400-page report on the Struggle that the Labour Bureau published between 1956 and 1957 provided the most detailed account of the protests available and will be a major component of Chapter Three. For now, however, the excerpt is a useful

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illustration of the fact that, despite later charges that anti-base resistance was
simply one that was orchestrated by the Japanese Communist Party, a central
Japanese government agency like the Ministry of Health recognized the reality of
the situation. The Struggle was not simply an ideological battle between the Left
and the Right—a common Cold War trope—but was rather grounded in the
physical and material conditions of a militarized Tokyo suburb in the 1950s.
That the Labor Bureau poured such sweat and labor into documenting the
Struggle is also testament to the fact that they recognized its profound
importance in shaping how local communities would engage with national
politics in the postwar period. At the geopolitical level, too, the protests could
influence immense shifts in U.S. and Japanese security policy. Protracted and
locally-organized resistance against the Tachikawa base would articulate
broadly the surprisingly tenuous position of American bases in Japan, and
therefore also shine an even brighter spotlight American foreign policy in East
Asia. The protests had the potential to illuminate the contradictions raised by
the presence of the massive American military network in Japan and Article Nine
of the Japanese constitution, which ostensibly forbade offensive war potential.
The Union Relations Division was prescient in its 1956 and 1957 reports; all of
the potential political ramifications of the Sunagawa Struggle eventually did
come to fruition.

As will become clear in this and the next chapter, the Ampo protests
would have been something else entirely—or would simply not have occurred—
had the Sunagawa Struggle not come about in 1955. While the historical ramifications that the Struggle had in foregrounding the paradoxical relationship between the immense presence of the American military and the “peace clause” of the constitution has been acknowledged in legal-historiography of the postwar period, the actors in the Struggle, and the cultural and environmental milieu from which they originated, has been left aside. The forgetting of the Sunagawa Struggle—both in popular knowledge and in academic scholarship—can be attributed to two historical trends. The first concerns the effort to erase a moment that undermines narratives of a harmonious and economically even postwar development in Japan. The second reason was that the Struggle became lost in the shadow of the Ampo protests of 1960.

The end of the war did not bring an end to the militarization of western Tokyo. On the contrary, the capacity for war and the expansion of bases rapidly accelerated and became even further entrenched as urban planning policy rather than simply wartime necessity. When military bases are given historical agency, the often-cited ruptures of 1945 and 1952 no longer retain their overwhelming positions as epochal moments in modern Japanese history. Instead, our focus remains on the most enduring spaces—indeed timeless spaces—on the Japanese archipelago. Military bases in western Tokyo, as in many parts of Japan, have proven remarkably durable, maintaining shapes and structures unchanged over the decades of the twentieth century when it seemed that every populated region of the country was irrevocably changing. The military bases of the
occupation and postwar years were decidedly different militarized spaces than those of the prewar years. They became the sort of bases that Cynthia Enloe described as “artificial societies created out of unequal treaties between men and women of different races and classes.” The inequality of bases was so apparent in communities like Tachikawa and Sunagawa that, as will be detailed in the next chapter, even the children of Sunagawa came to recognize their place as little more than an American “colony.” Indeed, bases perpetuate colonial and semi-colonial relationships and projects, dividing territory and undermining contemporary notions of state sovereignty. Much like the semi-colonial concessions in 19th and 20th century Chinese cities like Shanghai and Guangzhou, or as in outright land appropriation as in the case of Hong Kong, bases operate under laws and values that differ from those of the surrounding community. Even when there was no war on the Japanese archipelago, military bases expanded in size, more locals were hired to work on the bases, and American soldiers roamed the streets of places like Tachikawa, patronizing the growing number of bars, brothels, and souvenir shops. When the U.S. military committed itself to total force on the Korean peninsula, Tachikawa Air Base was a central conduit for troops and equipment. In many ways, the war-making capacity proliferated with the American occupation and steady increase in military technology and potential for war.

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Japan’s rapid modernization had thrown many rural communities into a storm of abrupt transition, land dispossession, and population depletion as people went to the cities for work. Those communities on Tokyo’s periphery at the beginning of the twentieth century were in a unique position to still maintain agrarian economies at a time when urbanization was, quite literally, on the horizon. Apart from land dispossession and shifts away from agriculture, rural and suburban communities found their entire societies shifting from agriculture to industry. Sunagawa was, like many agrarian communities throughout Japan, still reeling from the triumph of bourgeois society which demanded a separation of leisure and work, the family and occupation. On the farm, the building blocks of everyday life—of production and reproduction—could not so easily split without ultimately undoing each other. This was something unique to farming communities, which helps to explain, in part, what set places like Sunagawa apart from industrialized regions of Tokyo. As Henri Lefebvre wrote of France in the 1950s,

“What distinguishes peasant life so profoundly from the life of industrial workers, even today, is precisely this inherence of productive activity in their life in its entirety. The workplace is all around the house; work is not separate from the everyday life of the family. Formerly the imperatives of the peasant community (the village) regulated not only the way work and domestic life were organized, but festivals as well. Thus up to a point a way of living which strictly speaking did not belong to any one individual, but more a group of men committed to the ties—and limits—of their community or guild, could be developed.”84

Bourgeois society, Lefebvre argued, overturned this, differentiating and fragmenting family life, labor, and leisure. As will be made clear in later chapters, the preservation of the agrarian lifestyle Sunagawa, along with the associated characteristics of peasant life—like strong community bonds—became a loud rallying cry from both locals and outside supporters. In fact, the motto of the Sunagawa Struggle was “you can stake our land but you can’t stake our spirits” (tochi ni kui ha utaretemo, kokoro ni kui ha utarenai). In this way, fighting against the base expansion was not simply a struggle against land dispossession, but one of reclaiming a sense of community and a connection to the land that was being lost in Tokyo’s rapid suburban expansion westward. Throughout the Struggle, supporters came from the cities with clear visions of saving farming families and farmland from aggressive land developers. Could there be a more aggressive land developer than the U.S. military? These visions were articulated in their journals and flyers, in the postcards they sent, and in the photographs they captured. Migrant workers and students, along with many others who felt alienated in postwar Tokyo, perhaps mourning the loss of their hometowns (furusato) throughout Japan, could take a short train or bus ride to Sunagawa and instantly become part of a movement that was viewed as one that sought to protect a close-nit community.

**Life in a Basetown**

By 1955, war had occupation had ensured that Tachikawa and Sunagawa were even more militarized than the prewar years, as attested by even the most
casual observers and not those necessarily “for” or “against” the base presence. While the years of the Sunagawa protests are significant for the size and scope of the anti-base movement, the 1950s were also a time of significant public interest in U.S. military bases as themselves useful objects of study. To this end, the presence of not only the base but also Japanese police training facilities, along with weapons and aircraft facilities in Tachikawa, were of interest to those outside of the realm of activism. For example, in a December 1956 edition of a Japanese medical journal, Aragaki Tsunemasa published an article entitled “Tachikawa Base Landscape,” in which he depicted the landscape (ふけい) around Tachikawa base as one filled “morning to night” with the sounds of explosions and jet engines. “To begin,” wrote Aragaki,

“directly south of the base, as if lying along a river line directly from the National Police Headquarters, is our own Tachikawa Hospital, with 120 inpatients and 360 outpatients who, along with the people engaged in medical treatment and diagnosis, and indeed with all of the citizens of Tachikawa, hear from morning to night the sounds of explosions, leaving us all with the same complex and strange expression.”

Aragaki considered whether or not this was perhaps some form of retribution for the war Japan had unleashed from this same militarized space, and opined that Japan’s membership in the United Nations—accomplished in December, 1956, the same month as the article—might provide one avenue for relief from American military bases: “Perhaps here in Santama [a common name for the region around Tachikawa], this land with a long history, what goes around comes around, and this sound will end only when the United Nations
remembers this aching in our hearts.” Aragaki believed that Tachikawa’s long history as a militarized space was informing the continuously destructive and dangerous nature of its militarized present. Other reports of the 1950s and 1960s detailed the adverse effects of warplane noise on not only the health of humans, but also the deleterious effects on milk and egg production in the areas around the base. These latter studies also indicated how important the agricultural industry remained prior to full urbanization within the Tokyo megalopolis.

The base was the defining feature of Tachikawa, so it should come as no surprise that its weight on the everyday lives of locals was significant. In defining “military economic geographies,” Rachel Woodward argued that military bases deliver both measurable and nonmeasurable impacts to surrounding communities. Measurable impacts include the number of people in the community who are employed on the base and the amount of money spent by soldiers in basetown establishments. Identifying measurable impacts is, as Woodward argues, “tricky business,” in part because of the political stakes and because it really is difficult to determine an accurate reading of a base’s impact on local economies. It might be possible, for example, to identity the importance

of the base for a bar or souvenir shop that primarily caters to soldiers. On the whole, however, such understandings of base economies are anecdotal at best. This was certainly the case for economic surveys of the base economy in Tachikawa, which are almost nonexistent. More important to understanding the economies of Tachikawa are the non-measurable impacts, which Woodward argued could include “trade in nonregulated markets (for example, unlicensed trade in commodities such as alcohol), and illegal economic activities such as the sale of drugs, gambling, and prostitution.”87 There can be no doubt, however, that the base was the defining economic generator of postwar Tachikawa. This circumstance could be said to confirm Woodward’s conclusion on the pros and cons of non-measurable impacts: “The employment opportunities brought by an overseas base may generate significant economic returns. The presence of an overseas base may be promoted through discourses of security and freedom for the economies of host countries, but the costs for local residents (particularly the vulnerable) may be horrendous in terms of enforced reliance on illegal or sexual economies.”88

There were other “economies” that circulated in Sunagawa and Tachikawa. The nature of the relationship that Japanese locals had with the base was predicated on their relationship with American soldiers. In other words, any economic incentive that can be gained by operating a business near a base—whether that business involves operating a bar or selling one’s sex—must be

88 Woodward, Military Geographies, 49.
mediated through U.S. soldiers, and it is for this reason that the nature of a soldier’s work, and indeed the pathologies of individual soldiers, cannot be ignored. Herein lies the difference between engaging in commercial activities with, for example, steel workers near a factory, or with students outside of a university. It is the violence that is taught, encouraged, and even demanded in soldiers (which increases exponentially in times of war) that must also be reckoned with in the marketplace outside of the base.

Sex workers, shop owners, taxi drivers, and every other person who worked in and around Tachikawa, were engaged in an affective economy, which Sarah Ahmed described as one in which “emotions work as a form of capital: affect does not reside positively in the sign or commodity, but is produced only as an effect of its circulation.”89 In this context, Ahmed argued, affect can be circulated like any other commodity, and can follow the same formulas of capital accumulation that produce surplus value (Money-Commodity-Money). “Affect,” she wrote, “does not reside in an object or sign, but is an effect of the circulation between objects and signs (=the accumulation of affective value over time).” That “signs” can increase in their value as they are circulated reveals a process that is analogous with commodity fetishism, which inscribes objects with “feelings” as it erases the histories of labor and exchange that created them. The value of the object and the history from which it is constituted becomes an integral part of the affective economy. These affective economies, Ahmed argued,

89 Ahmed, Sara. “Affective Economies.” Social Text, no. 79 (July 1, 2004): 117–39. 120.
“need to be seen as social and material, as well as psychic. The accumulation of affective value shapes the surfaces of bodies and worlds.”\textsuperscript{90} In this way, Ahmed offered a theory in which passion is the result of the accumulation of affect over time.

Though it is not part of her analysis (her focus is on the emotion of hate in an affective economy, particularly against people of color), it is useful to consider this affective economy, and the passions it engendered, within the militarized space of Tachikawa. This economy of Tachikawa operated with a mixture of fear, pity, anger, love, and contempt. All of these emotions could and did, in turn, circulate, which explains how they operated within an economic sphere. The nature of the violence that followed the American military into Japan was often of a sexual nature—perhaps considered a different sort of “crime of passion,” gendered towards women—but other crimes, equally informed by the militarized and affective economies of the area, also strained the wider community. At the same time, the affective economy was intertwined with one of the most important aspects of a basetown economy: sexwork. As Katharine H.S. Moon so brilliantly described of prostitution in Korean basetowns (kijichi’on), “with the establishment of these shantytowns in the 1950s and ’60s came an influx of not only poor women and war orphans but entrepreneurs and criminals

\textsuperscript{90} Ahmed, “Affective Economies,” 120-121.
seeking fortune off the U.S. dollar and anonymity from the law." 91 The same could be said of Tachikawa in the 1950s.

**Sex in a Basetown**

The lived conditions of basetowns have often been described as heavily informed by the sex work industry, and Tokyo and its suburb of Tachikawa were no different. There has been a considerable amount of literature devoted to sex workers during the occupation, including Sara Kovner’s recent *Occupying Power: Sex Workers and Servicemen in Postwar Japan* (2012). The Occupation (1945-1952) was a period in which both the state and society struggled with the competing legacies of military-sponsored prostitution and newly energized prostitution abolitionist movements. As Kovner and others have established, the Japanese government had long sought to regulate the sex industry, a trend that continued during the occupation out of fear that foreign forces would rape Japanese women, which led to the establishment of “comfort facilities” in the very early moments of the occupation. 92 Of course, despite the attempts by the Japanese government to mitigate American sex crimes, rapes by American soldiers occurred not long after the first American soldiers arrived at Atsugi Air Base in southwestern Tokyo on August 28, 1945. The U.S. navy entered Tokyo

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92 Susan Burns has recently argued that Japanese scientists during the early twentieth century were increasingly concerned with the relationship between male sexual “release” and mental and physical health, which led to scientific practices that informed the Japanese military’s establishment of the comfort women system throughout Asia. Talk delivered at “Bodies of Knowledge in the Japanese Empire,” November 7, 2014. University of California, Santa Cruz.
harbor on August 29 and landed at the Japanese Navy’s port on Yokosuka on August 30. That afternoon, the first sexual assault by American soldiers was reported in nearby Yokohama. After leaving a local residence in which they had been assigned to conduct a “search,” two American soldiers quickly returned, brandished a handgun and raped a 36-year old mother and her 17-year old daughter. Hours later, a caretaker at a Yokohama glass shop was also assaulted. These were not isolated incidents. In the days between August 30 and September 10 there were nine sexual assaults committed by the occupying forces in the Tokyo region, in addition to another six attempted assaults.93

In August 1946, one year after the occupation began, Japanese authorities reported that Americans had committed 29 sexual assaults, as well as 619 other incidents of crime. The following year, Americans were aware of 136 sexual assaults in the Japanese mainland (not including Okinawa), which resulted in 70 arrests and only a paltry 31 convictions.94 Sarah Kovner revealed that even these numbers might be underrepresented; in Kanagawa Prefecture alone there were 58 rapes among 1,900 crimes between August 1945 and January 1946.95

Despite these newspaper reports of sexual violence and crime in the early moments of the Occupation, most incidents of GI violence were not reported in the heavily censored press. Thus, what appeared to be a spike in the incidents of rape and other violent crimes in 1953 was actually likely a relaxation of the strong censorship policies employed under the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers. When the Occupation’s clamp on press freedoms was lifted in 1953, a new wave of analysis and reporting regarding the lived conditions around military bases emerged. In that year, Nishida Minoru published an ethnographic analysis of the sex workers who worked in and around Tachikawa. Nishida’s path to researching the lives and conditions of sex workers in Tachikawa was a circuitous one: he had been the author of children’s books before the war, but once fighting broke out he went to China as part of a campaign to abolish opium smoking. Upon his return to Japan, he spent five years (1947-1952) documenting the lives of “special women” in Tachikawa. “I became keenly aware,” he wrote in the preface to his 1953 *Women of the Base* (*Kichi no Onna*), “of the necessity for an awareness of ‘social-love/people-lovability’” that could “eradicate the social evils that emerged in the postwar, and to allow these women to escape from the darkness of corruption.”

There had been a discernable increase in the numbers of sex workers, which in turn had changed the social dynamics of Tachikawa. While the population of factory

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workers and soldiers increased during the war years, the postwar brought a new population boom. In 1946, there were approximately 600 women working in the sex trade under the legal designation of “special women” (tokushū jōsei). By 1952, there were 5000. Nishida took it upon himself to bear witness to this transformation from military aircraft industrial town to one under the dominion of a foreign military. Nishida wrote that unlike 1947, Tachikawa had become “the colonized Sin City of 1950 or ’51.” He continued, “I saw the women of the night who accompanied the soldiers of Tachikawa base—special women swarming around the city, showing the soldiers around with reckless abandon.” In Tachikawa, “the city of black markets and drugs,” the sex industry had grown to such an extent that brothels, cabarets, and bars, had become the primary establishments around the base, and women from around the war-ruined country were drawn to the region in to order provide the labor.

The later years of the Occupation did not bring a drawdown of American military capacity in Tachikawa. The outbreak of war on the Korean peninsula instead brought more militarization to bases throughout Japan, which included base expansion and greater numbers of troops transiting through the bases and their attendant Japanese communities. U.S. military bases were a vital link to for the supply chain of bodies and munitions to the Korean peninsula. American

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98 Nishida, Kichi no onna, 1.
99 Nishida, Kichi no onna, 8.
militarism famously proved a boon to the Japanese economy, which was still struggling in a postwar, occupied malaise. On June 25, 1950, violent skirmishes turned to total war as the North Korean army pushed south over the 38th Parallel. By August, the South Korean and U.S. armies were pushed all the way to the southern city of Pusan. The Americans, under the auspices of the United Nations, held considerably superior war technology, no more so demonstrated than in the fact that U.S. warplanes owned the skies over the Korean Peninsula.

This heavy militarization also ensured that the sex industry during the occupation would continue well into the 1950s. So it was that during the years of the Korean War (1950-1953), scenes in which “women of the night” gathered to send off soldiers bound for the front played out in basetowns around Japan, and the biggest basetown of them all, Tokyo, was no different. Nishida asked one onrii,100 “Girl C,” if the women had a different way of thinking about sending off the American soldiers to war than they did when they sent off their husbands and lovers during Japan’s own war in Asia. The question was too complicated to answer, Girl C responded, so she invited Nishida along to a send-off the following night. The two met at the entrance to the Fuchinobe Station (twenty kilometers south of Tachikawa) and waited for the soldier to arrive.101 As it grew dark, twenty or thirty women began to gather near the train entrance (“like locusts flying out of a grass field”), and began to wait. Soon enough, trucks began to

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100 “Onrii” is a Japanese transliteration of “only,” referring to female sex workers who engage in a long-term—though not necessarily exclusive—relationship with their clients.

101 Nishida, Kichi no Onna, 216.
arrive at the station, with soldiers jumping out, ushering a cacophony of name shouting as the “couples” attempted to find one another in the darkness.\textsuperscript{102}

Nishida describes the scene:

“It was a chaotic role-call with the sounds of men and women shouting out each other’s names. Once they recognized each other, the women of the night ran up to the guy, continuing to call his name. The uniformed soldiers greeted them with open arms. In an instant their two shadows become one. The women, striking a generally enthusiastic pose, did their best to one last time service the soldiers departing for Korea. The soldiers pulled personal belongings out of their pockets and gave them to the women. It was something that Japanese soldiers couldn’t have seen. They held handkerchiefs. They held Parker pens. They held billfolds (\textit{doruire}). They even tore off their wristwatches. Any product that could be separated from their bodies was most likely completely in the hands of the women. Those soldiers actions in this unusual place oozed with the complicated feelings of excitement they got from the women, half-mixed with desperation as they were shipping off to the Korean front.”\textsuperscript{103}

On several occasions, Nishida recognized the parallels between the women’s relationship with the America military and the previous Japanese Imperial Army. It was, as Girl C said, complicated. The transfer of Japanese military bases to the occupying forces involved much more than simply the changing of flags, or the direction in which cars on the bases should drive. New legal frameworks were imposed and new regimes for policing women’s bodies were enacted. New power relationships, grounded in Japan’s military loss and borne by Japanese civilians, were realized most prominently in the sex industry. While the bases and military facilities were handed over to the Americans, on the

\textsuperscript{102} Nishida, \textit{Kichi no Onna}, 217.
\textsuperscript{103} Nishida, \textit{Kichi no Onna}, 217.
level of the everyday, soldiers handed over their possessions to Japanese sex workers who, compared to the relative wealth of the soldiers, were economically destitute. The explosion of sex workers around bases was as indicative of the desperate poverty of the postwar years as it was of the U.S. military’s capacity to create huge sex work industries wherever it operated. And yet, at the same time that these big shifts occurred, very little had changed since the Pacific War. On the train ride back (Nishida to Tachikawa, Girl C to central Tokyo), Nishida overheard Girl C and another onnii talking to each other:

“Well, C-chan, once again we’re lonely for a little while.”
“Yeah, but I’m glad I got to see him. This time I really cried, which I didn’t expect.”
“Me, too. Though, I received five watches tonight. Selling only one I can make some good money.”

(Nishida) She then pulled a gold watch from her pocket, held it in her white palm, and showed it to Girl C. “C-chan, did you get a watch?”
“Me? Only three.”

(Nishida) These two women sat before me for over an hour; these two women who had wept and sent off soldiers who were going to the Korean front. So, that’s how it is. I can’t understand the complicated psychology—why we had to come here and see it together—just like Girl C said.104

Nishida’s conflicted reaction to the sending off ceremony highlights the complicated nature of sex work, which often sets it apart from other basetown commerce. The reportage depicts women who appear genuinely sad at parting, or at least a sense of pity for the grim futures that awaited many of the war bound soldiers. Yet the entire ceremony is predicated on economic exchange, for

104 Nishida, Kichi no Onna, 217. It is important to also recognize that we witness this interaction through the mediation of Nishida, a married man in his late thirties who took it upon himself to live in the one of the largest US military sex worker neighborhoods in Japan.
while the tears are flowing, commodities are exchanged, compared, and (mentally, at least) immediately assigned a monetary value.

But sending-off ceremonies were not always so sentimental. There is another account of a sending off ceremony that more clearly illustrates the often baldly violent and disempowering nature of sex work around American military bases. In a June 11, 1953 article of the *Heiwa Shinbun*, a photograph was published of three women standing on the tarmac at Tachikawa Air Base, surrounded by a group of jeering American soldiers. The photo caption reads, “GIs who were about to depart to Korea stripped Japanese women. Their clothes were ripped apart. They were ordered to stand up and raise their hands.”

But the eye-level photo depicts much more. It is a bright summer day and the sun casts deep shadows. This sexual violence did not occur in a bar or brothel, at night, but was rather in the middle of the day, in the open for all to see. The identities of the three women are hidden; their naked backsides face the camera (did they even know the picture was being taken?). Their arms are tightly wound across their chests with their knees locked together in an attempt to conceal as much of their bodies as possible as they face a crowd of uniformed, helmeted, and armed men who stand only a few feet away. Their clothes lay in rags at their feet. One woman turns her face and body away from the men, toward the direction of the camera, and it appears that a *Heiwa Shinbun* editor purposefully

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105 The photograph and caption are republished in the introductory pages of Kanzaki, Kiyoshi. *Yoru no Kichi [Base of the Night]*. Tokyo: Kawade Shobó, 1953. This incident is also recounted in Takeuchi Machiko’s PhD dissertation (2009), 146.
blurred her face to hide her identity. Two men hover very close; one appears to be pacing just behind them, while the other towers over them, his arms reaching to the sky as he encourages the women to do the same, for their disempowerment and humiliation were not yet totalized.

Figure 5 Image from the *Heiwa Shinbum*, June 11, 1953. The photo caption states that the soldiers are departing from Tachikawa en route to Korea. The women, whose clothes are at their feet, are being made to raise their arms. *Source:* Kanzaki, Kiyoshi. *Yoru no Kichi [Base of the Night]*. Tokyo: Kawade Shobó, 1953.

The violence captured in the *Heiwa Shinbun* photograph is all the more noteworthy because of the setting it captures. It is daylight, and the high midday sun casts small shadows. The Tachikawa base runway is clearly visible from many community neighborhoods around Tachikawa and Sunagawa, with only a barbed-wire fence separating Japanese families from U.S. soldiers. It is entirely
possible that this sending-off “ceremony” was visible to any number of Japanese who were going about their days outside of the base.

One Tachikawa local could have witnessed such scenes. The local historian Mita Tsurukichi’s nearly 900-page, three-volume history of Tachikawa Air Field is a compendium of individual and public histories of the “city of the sky” (sora no machi). Born in 1924 in the nearby town of Ōme, Mita’s own history is deeply linked to Tachikawa and its role as a basetown. As a 15 year-old student spending his days between school and the nearby training grounds, he could smell the fresh paint on the Tachikawa aircraft factory that was being constructed on the 10,000 tsubo that had recently been appropriated from Sunagawa. Around that same time, he joined the Tama Historical Society (Tama-shi dankai), developed a deep fascination with the Tama River, and under the mentorship of a local luminary, Uebayashi Hakusoukyo, learned to write haiku. “I was a youth raised to love literature," wrote Mita in the prologue, “different from that of the image of an aircraft factory worker.”106 Mita enrolled in the 8th Division’s Aviation Education Corp and at twenty-two became a member of the Pioneering Falcon Special Attack Corps (sakigake hayabasa tokubetsu kōgeki-tai), though, significantly, he did not write about his own war experience. After he was demobilized at the end of the war, Mita worked various jobs (polishing farming equipment at Showa Aircraft Company, calculating employee pay

accounts at various government offices) before eventually opening his own floristry in Tachikawa. Operating his own business afforded him the independence needed to cultivate his true passion: studying the customs and, interestingly, the bridges, of the Tama River region. Beginning in 1960, when the U.S. military began to return small portions of the base back to Tachikawa, Mita decided to begin compiling the history of the air base. First published in 1976 and drawing from a breadth of sources—the anecdotal to the official, rumors to government surveys—the volume features short chapters that cover topics ranging from personal accounts of early aeronautical engineering, to short biographies of notable military figures, to the European pilots who made stops on their global circumnavigations, to the joint Japanese-British flight trainings, to the firebombings, to the transformation from Tachikawa Air Field (Japanese control) to Tachikawa Base (American control). The volume was written by a person who was profoundly nostalgic for a basetown that was, as it had been during his lifetime, undergoing immense political and spatial transformations.

Though it is an invaluable resource for any study of Tachikawa (including this dissertation), women and their labor are nearly non-existent throughout the entirety of Mita’s collection. One exception, though brief, relates to the “women of the night” who worked in the basetown after the Americans took control. Clearly uneasy about the Air Base’s relationship with “women of the night,” Mita prefaced his volume’s brief section on sex work (which he categorized as under “Base Periphery Customs”) by describing prostitution in the following way:
In the long history of humankind, was the business of sex between men and women only for the purpose of leaving behind offspring? This is how it was since the development of the world’s living organisms, but once we became humans it was expected for emotion to enter sex. The business of sex has been around since the dawn of history and even Yanagita Kunio went so far as to say that people ‘played until the sun came up, rubbing the hair from their shins.’ When did it become possible to receive money compensation from this act? This was also from ancient times, and even in eras when there was no money it is not hard to imagine that other items were exchanged instead.

Compared to Western men who did the work of hunting, farming Easterners lived in a world of polygamous men where it was common [that women] were integral to helping with men’s work; the history of development is also comparatively older than the West. I think it is natural that the hunting-type and the farming-type are different, but is it so even with the issue of emotion?^{107}

In this passage he attempted to situate Tachikawa’s immense sex industry within a wider spectrum of the planet’s biological reproduction, a tactic of universalization that sought to decenter—or even naturalize—the prominence of the sex industry, and the spaces of sex work, that were a defining feature of postwar Tachikawa. For Mita, this attempt to place sex work into a context that decentered the time and space of a Japan—in a supposedly peaceful postwar period—that was heavily militarized, yet not unique. The transformation of his city during and after the American occupation, however, was certainly noticeable: “since the end of war, around 4,000 to 5,000 of the people known as ‘women of the night’ came to Tachikawa, though we cannot know the real number.” Mita rationalized that sex work took different forms in

^{107} Mita, Tachikawa Air Base V. III, 208.
the East. To be sure, as was the case in many places, the range of classes and
designations for sex work in Japan have long been extensive. *Mekake-san*
(concubines) were one designation, though they might have been referred to as
*omeka-san* around Tachikawa. Many of the other women working in the red light
districts (*yūkaku*) were referred to as *onrii*, though other distinctions included
“wives of that place” (*batsuma*), and short-term wives (*tanki tsu ma*).\(^\text{108}\) Mita
explained that “two or three years after the end of the war, the red light districts
of Tachikawa and Hachiōji, along with that of Fuchū, became playgrounds for
both U.S. soldiers and Japanese,” though even this is prefaced by the fact that it
was simply as if famous red light districts like Susagi and Yoshiwara had already
come to Tachikawa.\(^\text{109}\) Obviously, defining prostitutes and sex work is tricky
business. However, for the purposes of understanding the U.S. military’s
relationship with sex work, it is clear that the *onrii* and *pan-pan* (a common term
for prostitutes who solicited customers on the streets) were the most commonly
utilized distinctions.\(^\text{110}\)

Counter to Mita’s universalizing sentiments, Nishida Minoru’s 1956 *The
Onrii’s Chastity Belt: What Made Them Give Birth?*, placed the sex work of
Japanese women squarely at the heart of the patriarchal power and economic
disparity that epitomized Tachikawa in the 1950s. Far from being rooted firmly


\(^{110}\) See Takeuchi, Michiko. “Pan-Pan Girls Performing and Resisting Neocolonialism(s) in the
Pacific Theater: U.S. Military Prostitution in Occupied Japan (1945-1952).” In *Over There: Living
with the U.S. Military Empire from World War Two to the Present*, edited by Maria Höhn and
in Japanese history, or in the global history of sex work, Nishida’s reportage centers on a Tachikawa (“the Sin City”) that is firmly fixed in the intersecting spaces of American empire, women’s labor, and a burgeoning Tokyo suburbia. For Nishida, the most visceral and tangible product of the relationship between the base and the “special women” of Tachikawa were the many “mixed-blood children” who were born to onrii and the U.S. soldiers they serviced.\(^{111}\) It was not, moreover, the cold environment of simple economic exchange that Mita describes as part of the “base periphery customs.” It was more deeply inscribed with emotion and feeling and was, in many ways, a tragedy.

“August 3, 1952. That’s the day Kawakami Komako, a prostitute (\textit{machi no onna}) who had become the mother of a mixed-blood child, died. Fully 25 years-old, born in the year of the rabbit. Komako went by her alias Yuri among her prostitute circle of friends, who called her ‘Yurippe’ and ‘Yuri-chan’. Her friends also called her Scarlett Peony Yuri (\textit{Hibotan no Yuri}), because of the large tattoo of the flower on the inside of her left arm. She said that she graduated from high school, but she took to her grave the name of that school and the place where she was born. Komako’s grave is in a quiet place on a gradual slop opposite Hagoromo Town, along the Midori River on the eastern end of Tachikawa, where the explosive roaring of jets is unrelenting.”\(^{112}\)

Just as he had joined the onrii in their send-off ceremonies, Nishida tagged along with a group of people, all women, who went to visit Komako’s grave marker one year after she died. In attendance were several of Komako’s friends (other sex workers), her five-year-old half-Caucasian daughter, Kameriya, and Komako’s grandmother, referred to as Orin-obāsan. Her grave


\(^{112}\) Nishida, \textit{The Onrii’s Chastity Belt}, 15-16.
maker stands in the shade of a Japanese camellia, in a corner of the temple graveyard (Nishida assigned the temple the pseudonym “K”). Nishida recounts the following interaction in front of the grave marker, in which Orin-obāsan addressed her great-granddaughter, Kameriya.

Orin-obāsan: “Hey, Kameriya. Take a good luck. This is where your mama is going night-night. When you get bigger you have to come and pray here.”
(A friend): “Oh come on, no way. She’ll forget, won’t you, Kameriya?”
Kameriya, holding incense: “Mama went night-night here cuz she’s dead, huh?”
(friend) “That’s right.”
(Kameriya) “Night-night forever?”
(friend) “See? This! She still doesn’t understand. It’s so sad.”
(friend to the gravemarker) “Yurippe, you had a kid with a G.I...and then you died. That’s so sad for this little girl. If I had a child with a G.I., I would do anything to stay alive.”

Tachikawa was a cold place for sex workers, as was much of Japan during after the occupation. Indeed, John Dower’s seminal work on the occupation, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*, describes the immense system of prostitution that was initially institutionalized by both the Japanese government and the U.S. military in the early months of the Occupation. When prostitution was officially banned in January 1946, it obviously did not end, but rather shifted to an underground economy. Their ready access to foreign

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113 The biggest temple in Hagoromo-cho is Kosaiji (光西寺).
114 Nishida, The Onrii’s Chastity Belt, 16-17.
currency and foreign commodities through their relationships with U.S. soldiers made them vulnerable to predatory economic practices from other local Japanese. It is perhaps no surprise, then, that in the anonymous temple graveyard, an entire corner was set aside for local sex workers, whose bodies were themselves one of the most consumed commodities in the Tachikawa basetown. Though even in death, their gravesites, which attracted the visits and prayers of loved ones, were never free from militarism. The skies above the graveyard were filled morning to night with warplanes.

Nishida knew Komako (Yurippe) when she was alive, during a time when she herself bemoaned and felt sorry for a fellow onrii who gave birth to a child that had been fathered by a white soldier. Among the community of sex workers, Kotani Reiko was also Komako’s sempai, someone to who she looked for guidance and support. Komako never imagined that she would share her friend’s misfortune. Reiko’s life as a sex worker, tragic though it may have been, was probably not exceptional among the onrii who flooded Tachikawa at the end of the war. Like many of the women who engaged in sex work, she was

impoverished at the end of the war and left alone by the death of those closest to her. When the baby was nine months old, the father abruptly returned to the U.S., abandoning Reiko and condemning her to the struggles of a single-parent household. A foster family eventually took in Reiko, a common occurrence among onrii with children around Tachikawa. However, the intentions of these new families were not always benevolent. The physical deprivations of the Occupation era were such that, even with the child support payments and rations a mother could receive from the state, many women found that basic survival depended on their ability to access foreign goods (cigarettes, chocolate and other confectionaries) from soldiers for either sustenance or to sell on the black market. Many times, foster families like Reiko’s were simply using their relationship in order to benefit from the onrii’s ready access to foreign commodities, the sale of which could provide profits greater than those from child support payments or rations.\footnote{Nishida, \textit{The Onrii’s Chastity Belt}, 22-23} Onrii with children, almost always single-parents, needed the foster families to watch their children while they went out to earn money or foreign goods. The system exploited sex workers by taking advantage of their precarious position as single parents. “If women did not bring back foreign commodities,” Nishida wrote, “the foster parents would make clear their displeasure. Foster parents would try to expose the children to colds or induce stomachaches, call the mothers to give them a scare, and then make them
pay the fraudulent medical bills.” In this way, Reiko’s foster family were simultaneously her pimp and the people who held her child hostage.

Figure 6 Top right: “After the war, foreign soldiers were stationed in the capitol, along with women of the night who poured into the city.” Bottom right: “Mixed-blood children were abandoned by soldiers and left behind with onrii.” Top left: “Women carry the shrine around, shouting.” Bottom left: “Did the soldiers and young onrii going to 'Writing Town' expect to be this happy?” Source: Nishida, Minoru. Onri no teisotai : Nani ga kanjojotachi ni umasetaka [The Onri’s Chastity Belt: What Made Them Give Birth?. Tokyo: Daini Shobō, 1956.

Crime in a Basetown

Sexual violence was by no means the only form of violence and intimidation that the occupying forces visited upon their new territory. During
these same opening days of the occupation there were 513 incidents of robbery committed by military personnel.\textsuperscript{117} When Japanese authorities complained to the American forces, they were often told there was simply not enough evidence to prove that these crimes had been committed.\textsuperscript{118} Several of the crimes involved roving gangs of U.S. soldiers stealing watches (to give to onrii?) from Japanese individuals throughout Tokyo, including Ginza and Ōtemachi. Other incidents of crime range from petty to brutally violent: soldiers stole rationed whiskey from a distributor in Kyōbashi; in Ishikawa (just southwest of Tachikawa), four soldiers used a handgun to rob a person at a bus stop of fifty yen, a watch, and three ink pens; also in Kyōbashi, ten American soldiers entered a restaurant, ran to the owner’s residence on the third floor, stole eighteen bottles of beer—ten of which they guzzled on the spot in the middle of the family room—and, with the remaining eight bottles, absconded with two boxes of cigarettes and twenty yen.\textsuperscript{119} One of the more shocking examples of violence occurred in 1947, when five U.S. soldiers from Tachikawa drove a jeep through the streets of nearby Hachioji and wantonly clubbed to death five random Japanese and injured twenty others.\textsuperscript{120} This incident, shocking though it was, was not reported in the heavily censored Japanese language newspapers, in which disparaging or


\textsuperscript{118} Hayashi, \textit{Beigun}, 153.

\textsuperscript{119} “Fujoshi e no bôkô wa kaimu 2-kakan ni teito no shinchû jiko 29-ken,” Asahi Shinbun, September 11. 1945, 2.

incriminating stories related to the U.S. military were forbidden. However, more benign incidents related to soldiers and bases were allowed. This and a large number of less violent incidents resulted in many of the Tachikawa base’s surrounding towns passing resolutions that prohibited U.S. personnel from entering town limits.\textsuperscript{121} One final incident, nonviolent though likely psychologically terrifying, was the air raid siren that accidentally cried out from Tachikawa Air Base on February 27, 1952, which most likely sent chills down the spines of Sunagawa residents who had heard similar sirens only seven years prior.\textsuperscript{122}

**Accidents in a Basetown**

Accidents were another hazard for those living near the Tachikawa Air Base. In the early evening of June 18, 1953, a U.S. Air Force C-124 Globemaster fell out of the sky shortly after taking off from Tachikawa Air Base, killing all of the 129 Korea-bound passengers.\textsuperscript{123} The plane dropped into a watermelon field in the nearby village of Kodaira, where thirty-five year-old Kato Hiroji was farming with his wife, Kuni, and son, Kiyoshi. The three heard the sound of the plane, looked up, and saw it barreling towards them. They survived by sprinting in the opposite direction. Hiroji was hospitalized with burns caused from crash. Years later, Kiyoshi told an interviewer, “I feel like if we had only been 2-3 seconds slower [we would’ve all died].” The Kato family was lucky; they survived

\textsuperscript{121} *Yomiuri Shinbun*, October 7, 1953.
\textsuperscript{122} *Yomiuri Shinbun*, Morning Edition, February 27, 1952
\textsuperscript{123} “Beigun yusōki, tokani tsuiraku.” *Asahi Shinbun*. June 19, 1953
what was at the time the deadliest aviation accident in world history. Immediately after the wreck, gun-carrying American military personnel arrived and cordoned off the field, shooing away the many locals who had arrived to survey the scene. Baba Hideo was a second year elementary school student at the time of the crash. He was playing shōgi with a friend when, just as he was about to execute a decisive play, the game pieces began to scatter from the concussion of the crash. That night, he remembers a photographer stopping by his family’s home and asking them if they would hold his camera equipment for a while. Even under the heavy military presence around the crash site, the photographer had managed to snap three photos of the wreckage and was worried that his film and equipment would be confiscated. A few days later, the photographer returned and in gratitude gave the Baba family copies of his three photos. In one of the photos, Americans survey the wreckage, while a guard appears to be looking directly at and moving towards the camera, lending testimony to the photographer’s fear that either he/she or their equipment were in danger. Americans were perpetually on edge during the years of the Korean War, and indeed during the entirety of the cold war, afraid that the communities around U.S. military bases were hotbeds of communist activity. It is no surprise that the military police would hope to keep people away from the wreckage, lest any intelligence or material for anti-American propaganda fall into the wrong

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hands. But for Baba and the Kato family, or the other people who experienced the wreck and the military’s quick occupation of the scene, the militarization of their lived spaces was brought painfully and violently into even greater focus. In an instant, a rural watermelon field was transformed into a fiery disaster of the military’s making.

It was not simply a ripple of the violence from the Korean War. The Globemaster disaster was the Korean War in Kodaira, a Frankenstein brought violently to life in the everyday spaces of Japanese farmers. It was a reminder that, for an entire generation, Japan was at constant war. As discussed in Chapter One, aircraft accidents had created hazards for people in Tachikawa and Sunagawa since the earliest incarnations of the Tachikawa Air Base. But the expanding size of aircraft, as well as their capacity to carry heavier bomb payloads, exacerbated dangers for those who lived in the area.

It is difficult to find a memorial to the 1953 Globemaster accident today, though a commemoration marker used to stand near the site of the wreck: the watermelon field is long gone, having been paved over by the practice grounds of the Shintokyo Driving Academy. Thirteen at the time of the crash, Tanshō Isao still burns incense in his nearby farm plot for the spirits of the people who perished. In 2012 he told a documentary film crew that, “It would be nice if we asked the [current] landowners to build—maybe not a gravesite—but a
monument as a memorial for to those who died. If we don’t do that, everyone will forget, right?“

On September 20, 1955, as the Sunagawa Struggle was quickly escalating, another plane fell out of the sky in western Tokyo, this time in the suburb of Hachiōji, just a few short train stops from Tachikawa. The F-80 Shooting Star departed from Yokota Air Base, just eight kilometers west of Tachikawa, along the edge of western Sunagawa (Nishi Sunagawa). The F-80, part of the first generation of Air Force fighter jets, crashed into a farming neighborhood, destroying four houses, six other buildings, and burning a total area of 100 tsubo.

Pollution in a Basetown

Finally, in addition to crime and accidents, the industrial pollution that resulted from the presence of the military base caused considerable hardship among the local populations outside of the base. From 1947 until 1954, numerous contaminated water wells were uncovered in the vicinity of Tachikawa Base and the nearby Yokota base. In 1947, residents in the Takamatsuchō and Fushimichō districts of Tachikawa could not help but notice that their shallow water wells were becoming prone to spontaneous combustion. It turned out that their wells were contaminated with oil and gasoline that had seeped from the base into the groundwater, producing

“flaming well water” (*moeruidōsui*).126 Yoshimura Shinichi, who lived 300 hundred meters down the Ōme Line from Tachikawa Air Base, found that two of his wells had caught fire. A movie theater that faced the Midorigawa River, which flowed under the base and resurfaced near Tachikawa Station, caught fire when gasoline flowing in the nearby river ignited. In looking at a series of pollution incidents between April 1947 and June 1948, one study by the Tokyo Metropolitan Health Research Institute (today the Tokyo Metropolitan Institute of Public Health) determined that the majority of wells in the Takamatsuchō neighborhood, just east of the main entrance of Tachikawa Air Base, were unsuitable for consumption. In what became known as the First Pollution Incident, the study showed that 86% of the wells used by 150 households there were polluted with oil and gasoline. In April 1952, the Second Pollution Incident, it was found that gasoline from the base had mixed with well water throughout Fushimichō and had rapidly expanded to other areas just west of the main base entrance. Studies found that 3165 wells used by 6056 households and 26,767 residents in downtown Tachikawa were polluted so badly that “1/3 of the population lacks even one cup of drinking water.” It was rumored that some wells were so polluted with gasoline that soldiers from the base were using the wells to fill their automobiles.127

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Of course, in a vibrant and dynamic economic community like Tachikawa, it was not simply individual households that suffered from the base’s industrial pollution. For local businesses, the polluted water was disastrous: Laundromats reported that white clothes were coming out of the wash purple; people who used the local public bathhouses developed headaches after only five minutes in the bathtubs, which they learned were full of oil; tōfu shops and fishmongers, dependent on clean water, were forced to close; and even Mita, the local florist, noticed that as soon as flowers were given water, they lost their fragrance and began to stink.\textsuperscript{128} It was determined that the pollution resulted from both the ghost of the base past, the Japanese Imperial Army, which had buried oil drums throughout the base, and the ghost of base present, the U.S. Air Force, which was using corroded oil pipelines in its own facilities.

As would be expected, the incidents of flaming wells caused a major uproar that included demands that the U.S. fix leaks and pay compensation to the victims. Despite the clear link of the pollution to the base, the U.S. military maintained that the gasoline and oil was not originating from the base and denied any responsibility. In July 1954, the U.S. Air Force Far East Asia Command, based at Tachikawa, issued a report stating unequivocally that it bore no responsibility for the pollution and would therefore not pay any compensation to those affected.\textsuperscript{129} U.S. officials even refused to cooperate with Japanese officials in a joint scientific study of the pollution, stating that the U.S.

\textsuperscript{128} Mita, \textit{Vol. III}, 262-263. Here, Mita cites \textit{The History of Tachikawa Waterworks}.

\textsuperscript{129} Mita, \textit{Vol. III}, 293.
did not have any experts knowledgeable of the issue. The U.S. Air Force continued to deny responsibility until May 1956, though it had already been established that the gasoline in the wells was clearly of American production.  

Since it had not received any cooperation from the U.S. military, the local Tachikawa government appealed to Japan's central government in an attempt to bring attention to the hurdles that they faced in stopping the pollution on their own. In March 1954, to commemorate the pollution problem that was still unresolved, a six-meter tall memorial stone was erected outside of Tachikawa's Shibasaki Water Purification Plant. The stone, still standing today, reads: “In December 1952, 236 hectares in this area were polluted, victimizing over 22,000 people, and polluting roughly eighty percent of the wells (2,200 in number) in the city center. This city appeals our actual conditions to the central government.” Local Diet members eventually communicated the complaints of Tachikawa locals to the Yoshida administration, and while there were brief negotiations with American officials regarding financial compensation for pollution victims, the issue was never fully resolved. Thus, after years of continued refusal by the military to take any responsibility for the water contamination, it was made evident to basetown locals that pollution—much like prostitution, base-related crime, and military accidents—was a hardship.

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130 Shoop, 6.
131 An image of this commemoration stone is available at http://blog.goo.ne.jp/home-goo/e/ae2d7cb0fa500fafa22d3c56a4947e9ac. Accessed 2-16-2015.
132 Mita, Volume III, 264.
that they would, for the foreseeable future, be forced to endure without any recourse or compensation.

The pollution incidents were also emblematic of the wider problems that local city and village officials often faced when it came to their relationship with U.S. military bases. It was not simply the case that a local official could easily bring a claim to a U.S. military base official. Depending on the nature of the claim, a local U.S. official could refuse to listen to a complaint, or tell the disputant to take their issue to a Japanese official, which would invariably lead to even further complications: does one file their complaint with the city, the prefecture, or the national government? Which office handles a complaint for water pollution, and which office investigates sexual assaults? The mechanisms for voicing grievance or demanding recognition for suffering were not sufficient, or simply did not exist. The inability of Tachikawa officials to effectively bring to the desks of Tachikawa Air Base officials a claim of wrongdoing in the water contamination incidents is just one example in which victims of the base industry and environment were unable to navigate the immensely complicated legal and political terrain that many Japanese had to traverse. But even the concept of navigating this bureaucracy assumes that if Tachikawa officials were simply better equipped to understand the political-legal framework of the bases vis-à-vis their own city that they might have been able to win some form of redress. It is more likely, however, that there simply was no framework to understand, or legal obstacles to overcome. Such a framework did not exist. If
political leaders and public administrators could not so easily communicate effectively with the U.S. military, then it is easy to understand why the average Japanese person living near a base might understand that their own grievances with the military could not be addressed within an official legal framework. It is under such conditions that mass social protest often erupts.

**The New Mayor**

It was in this environment of accidents, crime, and sexual violence that Sunagawa and Tachikawa locals found themselves in 1955, the year in which the Sunagawa Struggle was born. The announcement of the runway expansion plan that sparked the protests occurred at a particularly politicized moment in Sunagawa. On April 30, 1955, townspeople elected Miyazaki Denzaemon (known to his friends as “Miyaden”) to the office of mayor. Just five days later, on the evening of May 4, a black car rolled up to the Sunagawa Town Hall (located between the number Four and number Five blocks) where locals had gathered to drink tea and celebrate his victory. The black car brought Kawabata Tsunao, director of the Tokyo Procurement Office wing at Tachikawa City Hall. Miyazaki Akira, Miyaden’s second oldest son and a junior high school at the time, initially thought that the official visit must have been an extension of Tachikawa City’s official congratulations to his father. Indeed many people who were attending the election victory party assumed the same. However, instead of congratulating the new mayor, Kawabata revealed that his visit was related to the business of procurement: “The truth is, Tachikawa Base is going to expand again and we
would really appreciate your cooperation in any way.” The base expansion would not only roll through farmland and houses, but would have also meant that the very town hall in which they were standing would also become tarmac. Only days into his tenure as mayor, Miyaden was faced with the prospect that Sunagawa would be irrevocably altered within just a few short months.

In many ways, the mayor was just the sort of person that Sunagawa locals needed to convey their opposition. Miyaden was known to be a forceful presence—unusually blunt and abrasive—and willing to make enemies. When dealing with the dispossession of their farmland and the process of converting their property to the base, a process that was firmly in the hands of the Tokyo city officials who had been sent at the behest of the American military, Miyaden was an ideal political leader for the anti-base movement, though not always appreciated by those closest to him. “From my viewpoint,” the younger Miyazaki wrote, “my father had a really frightening presence. For our mother, and for us kids, my father was an authoritarian whose presence wasn’t all that good. The moment he returned home from work he would talk to the family and acquaintances about the people he’d met that day or the things he did. As a child I had the impression that he wasn’t really a good father, shouting and yelling like crazy whenever anything happened. However, if you ever consulting with him about something, he would say that ‘when you are doing something, it’s good to make your own decisions and make your own mistakes because you’ll be careful

each and every time, so decide for yourself whatever it is that you want to do.’ While he had a frightening presence, I feel like he gave me freedom.”

The new mayor had reasons beyond simply his official position that compelled his opposition to the base. His own home, in fact, lay at the northwest portion of land that was to be appropriated. In fact, the region of Sunagawa Number Four was considered to be the center of Sunagawa. Nearby were Azusamiten Shrine, the town hall, the post office, and the village police station. Like other families, the Miyazaki’s depended on the Sunagawa irrigation network for their water. The family was also an institution in Sunagawa, long tied to the land both economically and affectively. For generations before the war, the Miyazaki’s had three hectares of land divided between crops and cattle pastureland. During the most intense periods of the war, most of the cattle escaped or were injured, which forced the family to sell off the remaining herd. By the end of the war, all that remained of the family business was a warehouse full of “Miyaden Milk” bottle caps.

While the Miyazaki’s had managed to retain their home, by 1955 the prospects of revitalizing the dairy or the farmland were increasingly unrealistic, as were such prospects for most farmers in Sunagawa. The base continued to expanded in size during the postwar years, a trend that continued from the years under Japanese administration (recall that the Japanese military continued to

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expand the size of the base significantly in 1935, 1938, 1939, and 1941).  
During the years of the war and occupation, the economy of the base and the attendant urbanization were concentrated at the southern end, within the city of Tachikawa and abutting the central Tachikawa Station. As a consequence, though Sunagawa was relatively unburdened by basetown urbanization, it had lost much of its productive capacity when its farmland was chiseled away for the base itself. Nevertheless, many farmers still continued to farm their land during the war and into the American occupation until the U.S. military began its own extensive base renovations and expansions.

At the behest of the American military, bulldozers ran roughshod over much of Sunagawa Town and property owners were dispossessed of their land without payment. On top of the already existing Tachikawa acreage of 317,000 tsubo, the U.S. military took an additional 16,500 tsubo and 54,425 tsubo in March and April 1946, respectively (totaling around 1.2 kilometers squared). From 1946 to 1953, the US military expanded the base no less than four times, appropriating nearly 96,000 tsubo. The following table illustrates the most significant land confiscations that occurred between the base’s origins in 1916 through 1953, before the Sunagawa Struggle began.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tsubo (1 tsubo = 3.95 square yards; 3.31 square meters)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>13,805 (Tachikawa Air Base)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>6,765 (Tachikawa Air Base)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>14,701 (Tachikawa Air Base)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>101,015 (Tachikawa Air Base)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>2,159 (Youth Airman Academy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>79,881 (Tachikawa Air Base)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>68,062 (Army Flight Examination Department [today’s Yokota Air Base])</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>160,908 (Tachikawa Air Base)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>69,216 (materials factory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>16,500 (Tachikawa Air Base)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>54,429 (Tachikawa Air Base)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>3,136 (Tachikawa Air Base)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>99,062 (Yokota Air Base)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>8,994 (Yokota Air Base)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>22,613 (Tachikawa Air Base)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>733,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 History of land confiscations for Tachikawa Air Base and surrounding military facilities. Source: Itō, Makio, Keizō Uchida, and Akira Nakajima. *Sunagawa-machi kassenroku [Battle Records of Sunagawa Town]*. Tokyo: Gendaisha, 1957. 22.

Mutō Gunichirō, professor emeritus from Kyushu University and a student activist during the Sunagawa Struggle, estimated that the 1953 appropriation was 21,613 tsubo, 1000 less than that reported in the above table. Regardless of the disparity, Mutō identified the 1953 land confiscation as significant in fomenting a culture of resistance among the people of Sunagawa. The compounding frustrations related to living near the base, including the crime and the cacophony of base-related noises that rattled the classrooms of the local elementary and middle schools, only added to a radical shift in public opinion. According to Mutō, the real struggle against the base in Sunagawa began in 1952 when, “the attitudes of the townspeople appeared to change as they
resisted, slowed, or held onto parts the land requisitions, or pulled out from the increased land compensation amount, which had grown fivefold.”

The Sunagawa Struggle occurred during Miyazaki Akira’s childhood years, between junior high and high school. At that time, his teacher would walk with his students to and from school, lest they get pulled into the raucous and violent movement that was going on all around them. Another local farmer, Miyaoka Masao, was in a “state of shock” when he heard about the runway expansion plan. “Whatever the opinion of other people,” he later wrote, “even if it meant my land would be taken without any compensation, I would absolutely oppose the plan. My ancestors had been protecting this land for 350 years and I was going to stand up for them.” Miyaoka’s home was one of the 140 residences that were to be bulldozed.

The population of Sunagawa increased continuously during and beyond the years of the war. From 1945 to 1955, the population increased from 8,900 to 12,638, an increase of 42 percent. At the same time, the number of households increased from 1,878 to 2,542, an increase of 35 percent. The steady increase in population and residences, and the increased pressure on the landscape of

139 Miyazaki only recently retired from a long career as a member of the Tachikawa City Council, affiliated with the Liberal Democratic Party and the Sunagawa-based Committee That Ties together the Government and Citizens. (Found on Google Earth)
140 Miyaoka, 49-50.
142 Miyaoka, 2005, 36.
Sunagawa, was another reason that the base expansion would have caused significant hardships for many locals.

On May 6, two days after Tachikawa City’s procurement office made the runway expansion announcement, affected families gathered at the Sunagawa Town Hall. Shinoda (no first name given), the Director of the General Affairs Division of the village, elbowed his way though the crowd and unrolled a large map of the area. The crowd poured over the map as Sunagawa officials detailed the base expansion. When the explanation was finished, the room burst into a cacophony as the assembled groups began to voice their opinions among each other. In Miyaoka’s memoir, Records of the Sunagawa Struggle (first published in 1970 and later republished by his daughter, Fukushima Kyoko, in 2005), the frustrations experienced by the farmers were illustrated as decidedly different from other people dispossessed of their land in Tokyo’s twentieth century. For farmers, it was not simply a problem of negotiating fair payment from the Procurement Office for the land they were going to lose. The loss of land would be an abrupt loss of livelihood: “The foremost problem to come out of our conversation was relocation. A farmer’s relocation is not some ordinary thing; it’s hard, impossible.”¹⁴³ But while farmers would singularly suffer the most from the immediate effects of the base expansion, other individuals and interest groups would find cause to rally behind the farmers. The outcome of this first meeting was the creation of the Sunagawa Anti-Base Expansion Alliance

¹⁴³ Miyaoka, 2005, 52.
(Sunagawa hantai kichi kakuchō dōmei—hereafter “Alliance”). In the coming weeks and months, the Alliance, initially comprised of mostly local residents and farmers, would rapidly expanded to include labor unions, student groups, and members and representatives of the Japanese Socialist Party.

In these early moments of anti-base opposition, the staunchly local character of the activist community cannot be overstated. It was local farmers and villagers who attended this first meeting, and it was these same locals who were there when the black car from the Procurement Office showed up unannounced to Miyaden’s inauguration party. On the one hand this seems unsurprising, since the locals had the greatest stake in the expansion plan: they were the ones who would lose their land, their homes, their way of life. At the same time, it is important to not lose sight of the fact that the local character and composition of the early protest movement was an important factor in driving and defining the movement during the years of tumult that follows. The activist community was loosely organized under the framework of the Sunagawa Town Council but was not dependent on local authorities for permission to take action. Recognizing the local character of the protest movement is important because it remained integral to the Sunagawa Struggle, which quickly grew to become a movement that would undermine Japan’s supposed postwar stability and economic improvement.

On May 8, locals held a rally and under the chairmanship of the local postmaster, Shimo Takeshi, and drafted a resolution against the base expansion
and the plan to prohibit the entry of locals into the proposed construction site.\textsuperscript{144}

On May 9, Director Kawabata of the Tachikawa Procurement Office and his superior, Deputy Director Yazaki of the Tokyo Procurement Office, met with Mayor Yamazaki ("Miyaden") with the aim of bringing about a quick resolution to the expansion issue. When they arrived at the Sunagawa City Hall, however, they were greeted by well over one hundred town citizens who stormed the meeting, holding placards that read “Absolute Opposition to the Base Expansion” and “Entry for Land Surveying is Prohibited.” Similar placards had gone up throughout Sunagawa, outside of the houses of those who opposed the base and on the farmland that was under threat. Farming locals had taken the radical step of posting signs that denied government officials the right to freely access the land and conduct the measurements needed to begin construction.

The meeting was held on the second floor of the Town Hall, and while the space was not large, the room was packed with farmers who, together with Miyaden, crowded around the two solitary government officials. At first, Miyaden refused to even consider the Procurement Office’s report on what it was willing to pay for the appropriated land, but Deputy Director Yazaki persisted: “The runway runs north-south and the area of Sunagawa Four and Five at the northern end of the runway is the base expansion land. I would like to

\textsuperscript{144} Tōkyōto rōdō-kyoku rōsei-to rōdō kumiai-ka [Tokyo Metropolitan Labor Bureau, Union Relations Division]. “Rōdō Jyōsei Shiryō: Sunagawa-Chō No Kichi Kakuchō Hantai Tōsō [Information on Labor Conditions: On Sunagawa’s Anti-Base Expansion Struggle].” Tokyo: Tōkyōto rōdō-kyoku rōsei-to rōdō kumiai-ka [Tokyo Metropolitan Labor Bureau, Union Relations Division], March 1956. 18. Waseda University Library.
begin to reach an understanding as soon as possible.” Yazaki reportedly appeared uneasy at the meeting, probably because of the less than welcome reception he received. Nonetheless, he offered the farmers a hard ultimatum. “Even if you all oppose the expansion plan, we are still going to take the land under the Land Expropriation Law. It goes without saying that if that happens there will be no land compensation. But, if you agree to the expansion, we’ll move the Sunagawa Junior High School that is near the planned expansion area to a place with a better environment.” The locals responded with such an uproarious objection that the panicked officials fled the Town Hall. If they were equivocal before, this was certainly no longer the case; the battle lines had been drawn. On May 12, three days after the procurement officers had been run out of town, twenty members of first plenary session of the Sunagawa City Council passed a resolution that absolutely opposed any base expansion plan that would destroy land and houses: “When the Tokyo Procurement Office [first] came here nine days ago and announced that they wanted to purchase roughly 50,000 tsubo, town authorities and involved locals of the anti-base alliance expressed

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146 The Land Expropriation Law (Act No. 219) of 1951 was enacted under Article 29, paragraph 3 of the Japanese Constitution. It is meant to be a "general statute concerning compulsory land acquisition for public purposes." In addition, “The main LEL procedure is known as ‘project confirmation’ and involves a determination by the Japanese Minister of Construction ‘that the project promotes the public interest.’” See Marissa L.L. Lum. “A Comparative Analysis: Legal And Cultural Aspects Of Land Condemnation In The Practice Of Eminent Domain In Japan And America.” Asian-Pacific Law & Policy Journal 8, no. 456 (Spring 2007). 461.
147 Miyaoka, 2005, 55.
strong opposition.” In attendance were residents of Sunagawa who were at risk of losing their homes, farmland, or both. Residents rationalized that the base expansion was simply too immense of a burden to bear.

The expansion would have also had a major impact on the long-term economic viability of Sunagawa. At the time of the expansion, Sunagawa’s annual budget was forty million yen, with twenty-five million of that budget drawn from local land tax revenue. Fifty-six percent (14,000,000) of the twenty-five million yen came from the Tachikawa Aircraft Company in South Sunagawa, which owned land along the eastern portion of the base and near the technical border with Tachikawa city. The company also lent land to the U.S. military, which was another source of income. However, if the runway expansion were to proceed and the runway cut through the Itsukaichi Highway, it was assumed that the jurisdiction of South Sunagawa would have simply been absorbed by the city of Tachikawa, taking with it the land tax revenue from Tachikawa Aircraft Company.

For several weeks representatives of Sunagawa continued to refuse to any presentations or reports from the Tachikawa and Tokyo Procurement Offices. By the end of June, increasingly thwarted by attempts at further in-person meetings with Miyaden, Deputy Director Yazaki told the city officials by phone that he simply would not wait any longer and would soon enforce the

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decision to conduct a land survey.\textsuperscript{150} As promised, land surveyors arrived at Sunagawa two days later, though this time the opposition was fiercer than expected. Surveyors were met with a scrum (\textit{sukuramu}), a mass of protestors with their arms interlinked, forming a human barrier that can move as one unit. The scrum surrounded the trucks that carried the twenty surveyors, preventing them from opening the doors and setting foot on the ground. Locals as well as supporters from affiliated labor unions took part in the action, which brought out an estimated 300 activists. In addition, three deputy representatives of the Japanese Socialist Party (JSP) took part in the protest. The participation of both political officials and labor unions demonstrated that, within a relatively short time, the Sunagawa Struggle had drawn the attention of a wide network of supporters. One of the Tokyo office representatives told the \textit{Asahi Shinbun} that, “we aren’t simply forcing through a request from the U.S. military; we want to create opportunities for cooperation with Sunagawa officials.”\textsuperscript{151} Instead the government’s heavy-handed response was creating an environment for cooperation among disparate opposition groups.

On August 5\textsuperscript{th}, the Japanese government took the unusual step of issuing a press release that argued the case for expanding runways throughout the country, including Tachikawa, Yokota, Kisarazu, and Niigata.\textsuperscript{152} Published on the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{150} “Kyōsei tachiiri o tsūkoku toka sunagawachō _ shōgai,” \textit{Asahi Shinbun}, June 30, 1955.
\item \textsuperscript{151} Sokuryō chūshi sunagawachōte-ichi mome: Tachikawa kichi kakuchō mondai. \textit{Asahi Shinbun}, July 2, 1955.
\item \textsuperscript{152} “Seifu seimei wo happyō saishōgen yamuwoe su: bōei-jō no hitsuyō sochi_kichi kakuchō mondai,” \textit{Asahi Shinbun}, August 5, 1955. See also “Tokyo Bids People Back U. S. Air Bases - Tokyo
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front pages of the major newspapers throughout the country, the statement illustrated in the broadest terms the necessity of the runway expansions in order to preserve peace and security throughout East Asia. The government reasoned that the base expansion was necessary because the global trend of aeronautical warfare was moving towards jet engine aircraft, and more specifically, that America’s new F-86 needed a longer runway than what was currently available. According to the statement, the runways of the U.S. bases in Japan were built for propeller aircraft, which made them unusable and even increased the possible of accidents, a threatening tone for those who lived in the vicinity of runways. The purpose of the expansion plan, the government argued, was fundamental to the U.S.-Japan Security Agreement and thus important for the defense of Japan. The government was quick to point out, however, that the motivation behind the base expansion was not for the purposes arming them with nuclear weapons. The costs of the base expansion would total 55 billion yen (USD $15 million), which would be borne entirely by the United States. The statement twice ensured the public that the Japanese government had a policy of paying landowners fairly. The U.S. military, the statement continued, had promised that it would only appropriate the bare minimum of land needed for the extension. In the end, the government reasoned that all of this was a good deal, since

eventually these bases with their new runways and facilities, funded by the Americans, would be returned back to Japanese sovereignty.\textsuperscript{153}

Despite the government’s promises that landowners would receive fair land payments, that a minimum of land would be appropriated, that the U.S. would bear responsibility for the costs of expansion, and even that the bases themselves would eventually return to Japanese sovereignty, the Sunagawa Anti-Base Expansion Alliance remained adamantly opposed. In a response to the government’s press statement, also printed on the same page front page of major newspapers, the Alliance indicated a move towards expanding their political opposition beyond a desire to protect land and economic livelihoods. “The entire town is resolved to win in order to protect the basic rights that are guaranteed by our Constitution. Our town won’t stop fighting, or change even slightly, until the government’s plan is canceled.”

Consistent with the American press’ unbridled fear of communism, \textit{The New York Times} reported that the Japanese government’s announcement was welcomed by the U.S. military, which saw it as “a refreshing departure from the recent trend, which had been to give the center of the stage in any controversy over Japan’s security agreement with the United States to the Opposition forces,

\textsuperscript{153} Left unsaid, of course, was the oft-forgotten fact that throughout the Occupation, the 1950s, and even into the 1960s, the Japanese government was forced to pay millions of dollars toward the U.S. government to cover the expenses the U.S. incurred as an occupying power after the war: while the U.S. was paying to have their bases’ runways expanded in 1955, the Japanese government was paying the U.S. for its own Occupation. See Solt, George. \textit{The Untold History of Ramen How Political Crisis in Japan Spawned a Global Food Craze}. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014.
particularly the Socialists.” It is noteworthy that the NYT published this article on August 6, 1955, the tenth anniversary of the U.S. military’s nuclear attack on the city of Hiroshima. The historical context in which base communities feared both the introduction of nuclear weapons to Japan, or their delivery from bases located there, indicated that anti-base expansion fears could not simply be dismissed as the campaign rhetoric of Japanese socialists. It was a tangible, visceral fear for many people throughout Japan, regardless of their political affiliation. We will be attentive to the broad fears of nuclear weapons when, in Chapter Four, the focus turns to the general anti-base milieu of the 1950s.

When the NYT reported that “the center of the stage in any controversy over Japan’s security agreement” had been given the Socialists, they were not being entirely hyperbolic. The mid-1950s mark a highpoint in the influence of the parties on the Left. The Japanese Socialist Party was the first political party to forcefully support the Sunagawa Struggle, partly because the birth of the Struggle coincided with a historical moment in which the JSP was particularly strong, having nearly become head of the ruling coalition in 1954. Both the left and right factions within the JSP helped to organize events both in Sunagawa and in places of greater visibility within Tokyo, including the U.S. embassy. On July 6, Kawakami Jōtarō, JSP chairman with the right faction, led a rally outside of the embassy. With him were members of Sunagawa’s Christian community, who

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chanted “From a Christian standpoint, won’t you stop the base expansion?” 155

Beyond simply appealing to what they believed were the U.S.’s inherent Christian sense of morality and fairness, the JSP had long sought to overturn the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, which they feared would eventually lead to Japan’s full remilitarization. In 1955, the JSP garnered nearly thirty percent of national parliamentary votes. That same year, in the face of a leftwing that was capable of forming a ruling coalition, the conservative Liberal and Democratic Parties merged to form the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), a moment that marks what some have referred to as the 1955 System. 156

The Japanese government’s front-page announcement was a testament to the fact that, within a relatively short time, the Alliance and its local constituency had become a major national force in anti-base activism. As the announcement indicated, the other bases that were being expanded had already succeeded in concluding their land surveys. The surveyors in Sunagawa, however, had been turned back during their first attempt on July 1. The growth of the anti-base movement in Sunagawa was particularly concerning for the central government because, unlike the other flashpoints of anti-base protests in Japan, this one was in a Tokyo suburb and had the potential for exponential growth and mobilization of a wide range of people who felt estranged from the supposed promise of postwar Japan. As it became clear to a growing number of Sunagawa locals, the

Struggle was becoming comprised of broader issues: the re-militarization of Japan a la nuclearization and deeper entrenchment of the U.S. military; the undermining of a constitution in which the government was subject to the will of the people; the ascendency of the a Hatoyama-led conservative consolidation of power; the precarious nature of work and the high levels of poverty that continued to gnaw at working class Japanese since the end of the war.

“Yesterday’s Friend Became Today’s Enemy”

Until now, we have focused on those who opposed the base expansion. The Alliance and those in opposition were certainly the first to demonstrate publicly their reaction to the Procurement Office’s announcement. In the weeks and months since the initial announcement, however, a trickle of voices of support for the U.S. military’s plan began to collect within the public spaces of Sunagawa. As both a basetown as well as a place that was undergoing a process of suburbanization, it is not surprising that there could emerge citizens who were either indifferent to the base plan or saw it as an opportunity towards economic advantage. For people who worked for the U.S. military, the base expansion was an expansion of the workplace. Moreover, many employees on the base moved to the area specifically for employment and therefore did not share with longtime locals the same affective connection to the place of Sunagawa.

Early support for the Alliance came from citizens in Kokubunji, to the east of Tachikawa and Sunagawa. There, the town council was the first to pass a
resolution in support of the anti-expansion movement. Town councils in nearby Tanashi, Koganei, and Kiyose, along with the faraway town of Kurume in Fukuoka Prefecture, similarly passed resolutions in support of Sunagawa. Other towns that were closer to Sunagawa, and thus deeply connected socially and economically to both of the U.S. airbases in Tachikawa and Yokota sent official petitions of protests to a large representation of government entities. These cities and towns included Tachikawa, Fussa, Akishima, Mizuho, and Maruyama; their councils were able to rally some support for Sunagawa, which they demonstrated by collecting petitions and sending them to Tokyo Metropolitan Government, the national government, and the Diet.157 On June 9, a joint petition from these towns was sent to every member of the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly. In that petition, local councilmembers argued that under Article 99 of the 1947 Local Autonomy Law, which ostensibly gave local public entities, like villages and towns, some rights over their own self-governance, local citizens could directly petition the Diet or a similar administrative agency to have the base expansion plan cancelled. The Law had been written as part of SCAP’s policy of decentralizing the government and allowing local entities to elect their own officials and determine their own budgets. It allowed local assemblies to force the resignation of local officials in cases of wrongdoing.158 However, the law also gave power to the national government in Tokyo to order local

157 Miyaoka, 56-57.
authorities to comply “in cases where lack of action by the governor to implement policies related to the authority of the national government creates clear and significant damage to the public interest.”

Despite the fact that assemblies in important cities like Tachikawa failed to pass resolutions against the base expansion during this early moment in the movement, a total of twelve towns and villages did manage to pass resolutions in support of Sunagawa. These towns and villages were, much like Sunagawa, suburbs of the Tokyo megalopolis and that were either adjacent to or within earshot of sometimes multiple U.S. military instillations. In only a few short weeks, the Sunagawa Struggle had expanded throughout much of the Tokyo megalopolis.

It should now be apparent that the anti-expansion movement was quickly building into something bigger altogether. Many Sunagawa locals did not simply want the runway plan to be abandoned, but rather called for the base itself to be closed. Miyaoka believed that many people were drawn to the side of Sunagawa locals because of their ethnic attachment to a nation that had lost the war but was now having its land even further taken away by the victorious United States. The majority of the people who came to support the Struggle, Miyaoka noted, probably did not have a direct connection to Tachikawa Air Base. Alliance members began to realize that their sentiment of total resistance was not built upon unanimous and outright rejection of the base expansion plan. The anti-base

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159 The Local Autonomy Law has long been a means through which both anti-base activists and the national government have sought to arbitrate their disagreements regarding military bases. Smith, Sheila A. Local Voices, National Issues: The Impact of Local Initiative in Japanese Policy-Making. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2000. 92.
coalition consisted of disparate groups of locals, some of whom wholly rejected the plan (“even if they were the last”), as well as those who rejected the plan until certain incentivizing conditions were met.
Figure 7 This image illustrates the land the proposed runway expansion area. The conditional faction owned 6,500 tsubo while the members of the Alliance owned a substantially greater 45,500 tsubo. Source: Tōkyōto rōdō-kyoku rōsei-to rōdō kumiai-ka [Tokyo Metropolitan Labor Bureau, Union Relations Division]. "Rōdō Jyōsei Shiryō: Sunagawa-Chō No Kichi Kakuchō Hantai Tōsō [Information on Labor Conditions: On Sunagawa’s Anti-Base Expansion Struggle].” Tokyo: Tōkyōto rōdō-kyoku rōsei-to rōdō kumiai-ka [Tokyo Metropolitan Labor Bureau, Union Relations Division], March 1956. Waseda University Library. 5.

For those who lived near the bases or who had a direct economic relationship with the base—either through employment or off-base commerce—
it was sometimes impossible to protest. Miyaoka wrote that, “There would be significant problems to actually eliminate the base with its uncompromising expansion when there was a direct interest in one’s own livelihood. It really hit home that even within the Sunagawa Struggle, there were people in the surrounding cities, towns, and villages who were in a situation where they could not so easily protest.”\(^{160}\) Protest leaders were not always met with friendly faces when they bumped into locals who supported the military’s plan. Landowners who supported the expansion received anywhere from 50,000 to 500,000 yen. Those who refused the land payments began to receive daily certified mail from the Japanese government, pleading with them to accept the plan and “cooperation honorarium.” Landowners who accepted the government’s payment were not the only Sunagawa locals who, at least conditionally, supported the base expansion. “Not thinking with common sense,” Miyaoka wrote, “people who worked on the bases were driven into a position in which they could not protest.”\(^{161}\) The major battle for the Alliance was not necessarily against the Procurement Office’s political power or its ability to offer financial conciliations. The first major battle for the activists within the Sunagawa Struggle was against those locals who—in whole or in part—supported the base expansion plan.

It needs to be acknowledged that the documentary evidence on the conditional faction is far outweighed by that of the opposition. This is likely do to

\(^{160}\) Miyaoka, 57.
\(^{161}\) Miyaoka, 58.
the fact that it was members of the Alliance who produced the sources that make mention of such a faction. It goes without saying that the Alliance and those other groups in opposition to the base would not have felt compelled to include detailed accounts of the conditional faction in their records; doing so could have indicated that the village of Sunagawa was not so unanimous in its opposition, which is sometimes the impression inculcated in some of the more romantically heroic accounts of the Struggle. At the same time, we should recognize that the conditional faction was essentially in agreement with the U.S. military and the Japanese government, and neither government could be considered unrepresented in discourse related to the Sunagawa Struggle. After all, when the Japanese government decided to send out a press release stating its reasons or agreeing to the base expansions, the release was immediately printed in full on the front pages of every major newspaper, a public relations blitz that would have been beyond the reach of a local opposition group such as the Alliance.

Initially, supporters of the base expansion did not make public the promises they had made to the Procurement Office to sell their land. Two or three months after the beginning of the Struggle, however, it became clear that some locals considered themselves members of a “conditional faction” (jyōken-ha) among landowners. The first person to comply with the demand to sell their land was Shinozaki Kūichi, a Sunagawa local who, perhaps not surprisingly, worked for the local branch of the Procurement Office. The initial group of conditional faction members included another eleven individuals, some of whom,
like Shinozaki, were also dependent on the Procurement Office for their employment. Miyaoka conveyed the sentiment felt by the Alliance—the “opposition faction”—as one of betrayal: “Yesterday's friend became today's enemy. Once the conditional faction revealed itself, people who until yesterday were in opposition were now justifying the conditional faction’s hostile view of the opposition faction, saying 'the base expansion is something that the government is doing, so those who disobey are enemies of the country.’” With the increasing size of their own faction, conditional locals were soon advising the Procurement Office on how they might be able to split the Alliance. The rapid collaboration between these two groups seemed to take members of the Alliance by surprise, though very quickly the differing viewpoints became a part of everyday life in Sunagawa. Those who opposed the base expansion stopped shopping in stores owned by members of the conditional faction. People no longer greeted their next-door neighbors.

The disruption of everyday lives was being realized outside of neighborly relations. While the community was being split by the Procurement Office’s financial incentives, the physical and spiritual landscape of Sunagawa was at risk. Farmland and houses—the spaces where livelihoods and reproductive labor collide—were most at risk, but so too was one of the most important cultural and historical markers of Sunagawa: the Tokugawa era Itsukaichi Highway.
The highway was a source of pride among locals, who felt
that its presence lent Sunagawa an important spot in both Tokugawa history and,
by extension, the history of Tokyo. By threatening the highway, the runway
became a dagger pointed at the heart of Sunagawa, ready to cut the town in half.
As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the highway was one of the most
important trade routes for merchants and consumers in Edo. Coal, silk, wood,
fertilizer, and a variety of foodstuffs passed through villages like Sunagawa,
which grew up along the highway and owed much of its existence to the
commerce and access to markets that the highway provided. In reflecting on the
potential severing of the highway, Miyazaki Akira characterized the
appropriation as a final straw: “On top of coming and taking land so many times,
when it came to the U.S. military’s land appropriation, the Itsukaichi Kaidō
would’ve been split through; the opposition was strong in our area and the
Sunagawa City Council declared as much.”

**Faces of the Struggle**

Together with Mayor Miyazaki (Miyaden) and Miyaoka Masao, the local
farmer who appeared in Chapter One, the Sunagawa Struggle was, from the very
beginning, centered on a core group of local figures. Like Miyaden, Ishino

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162 As Evelyn Nakano Glenn has famously written, “reproductive labor includes activities such as
purchasing household goods, preparing and serving food, laundering and repairing clothing,
maintaining furnishings and appliances, socializing children, providing care and emotional
support for adults, and maintaining kin and community ties.” Glenn, Evelyn Nakano. “From
Servitude to Service Work: Historical Continuities in the Racial Division of Paid Reproductive

163 Hoshi, 11.
Noboru had just been elected to local office when the Struggle began. Ishino was also a member of the Japan Telecommunications Worker’s Union, which, given his position as both a member of the town council and the Alliance, placed him from the very beginning in the position of helping to link labor unions with Sunagawa. Aoki Ichigorō was, like Miyaoka and most other Sunagawa adults, a survivor of the air raids. His home, just north of the air base and only a few blocks from Miyaden’s, had been shot at numerous times during the war. Just after the American military occupied the base at the end of the war in 1945, bulldozers began chipping at the land surrounding the base. Shortly thereafter, Aoki went to the base and delivered a letter of protests to the U.S. commander, and was at the time the only Sunagawan brave enough to challenge the U.S. military. Aoki, who would come to take the mantel of Captain of the Alliance, never forgot the many trees that were destroyed by the Americans: cherry, mulberry, and elm. From a long line a farmers, Aoki grew and sold mulberry seedlings, and raised silkworms, industries that had a long history in Sunagawa.

While the Miyaoka and Aoki families could be regarded as protest organizers as well as a prominent and respected local farmers, Mutō Gunchirō could be considered representative of many of the university students who decided to join the Sunagawa Struggle. Though he was born and raised in Kōchi

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164 Shoop, PhD Diss. 25. During his dissertation research, Shoop was able to interview Aoki Ichigorō.
165 Hoshi, 115-116.
Prefecture in Shikoku, he moved to Tokyo to attend the Agricultural and Industrial University. In 1955, he was hard-partying college student living in a student dormitory not far from Sunagawa. That he was studying agriculture as a profession led him sympathize with local farmers, who were also neighbors in danger of losing their land.\textsuperscript{166} In 1955, many student-activists were old enough to remember the war within the homeland, but too young to have been sent to actual combat. In addition to sympathizing with the farmers’ anti-base struggle, Mutō—like many other young activists—was deeply informed by his childhood experience with the war: the food shortages and starvation, “Emperor and military-centered fascism,” air raids, the sight of the dead and destroyed homes. One day towards the end of the war, when food shortages were a source of daily struggle for families, Mutō’s mother was able to procure *fukujinzuke* (a popular form of pickled vegetables) for his lunch box. Carrying it to the banks of a nearby river, Mutō was stopped by a group of Japanese soldiers who forced him to hand it over. “Since that time,” he recalled, “I’ve always thought of soldiers as monstrous [*shūakumamono*].”\textsuperscript{167}

For people like Miyazaki, Yanagisawa, Mutō, and Aoki, the Struggle held multiple, overlapping meanings. It was simultaneously a struggle for land, a manifestation of anti-base sentiment, and a recognition of the precariousness of Japan’s postwar democracy. As the previous chapter briefly addressed, anti-government sentiment in Sunagawa predated the war, when the Taishō state

\textsuperscript{166} Mutō, 96.  
\textsuperscript{167} Mutō, 16.
appropriated land for military facilities. Any frustration towards the military complex during the war was exacerbated by the critical connection between such military facilities and the subsequent American bombing campaigns. During the Occupation, many people in Sunagawa—certainly those who led the Struggle—had developed a deep mistrust of both the Japanese government and the U.S. military. The only reliable way that a family could sustain itself was by farming their own land and producing their own food. Miyazaki Akira, Miyaden’s son, summarized his community’s anti-base sentiment as one that was firmly grounded in the political context of not only 1950s Sunagawa, but Japan as a whole.

“The place called Sunagawa was one of barren land brought under cultivation, and though you couldn’t grow rice, you could grow a lot of vegetables and wheat—*satsuma* potatoes, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, eggplant, and cucumbers. We had a big incident called “the war” and when the war was over and food was really scarce my dad used to say ‘if all you have is land you could grow soybeans (or something else) and have enough to eat to survive.’ Though Tachikawa Air Field forcibly took land, the symbolic resistance of protecting the land became central to postwar democracy.”168

The Early Struggle in the Media

Reporters from the major national newspapers and press agencies came to Tachikawa to witness the protests. In 1957, three reporters published their account of the early years of the Struggle in *Battle Records of Sunagawa Town*. Itō Makio of *The Asahi Shinbum*, Uchida Yoshizō of *The Daily Yomiuri*, and Nakajima Akira of the *Kyōdo News Agency*, wrote detailed accounts of the Struggle as they

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168 Hoshi, 12.
witnessed it during the years 1955 to 1957, and were compelled to come to
Sunagawa after they heard the complaints of locals who bemoaned the lack of
reporters from Tokyo, and thus a lack of national coverage. Their account of
the Sunagawa Struggle indicated both an observant eye towards the conditions
and materiality of a basetown, as well as their own role as non-local journalists,
compelled to travel from Tokyo to report.

The national print press was in fact quite quick to report on the
Tachikawa runway expansion. Sunagawa’s proximity to the Tokyo headquarters
of the big newspapers, including the Asahi, the Mainichi, the Yomiuri, and the
Japanese Communist Party’s Akahata, made it relatively easy for reporters to
access the story. In particular, the Mainichi and Asahi followed the “Tachikawa
Base Expansion Issue” with particular attention in 1955, when it published
almost daily on the Sunagawa Struggle during the summer. In the earliest
months of the struggle, reporting tended to focus on Tachikawa as only one of
the five other bases that had been slated to have their runways extended. In
general, before Sunagawa locals began to protest the runway expansion in
earnest, the Asahi’s coverage focused on the political debates related to national
defense and Japan-U.S. relations that were occurring within the halls of the
national parliament (Diet). Even here, the content of the debate did not always
match that which was occurring at the local level in places like Sunagawa. The

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169 Itō had an illustrious career at the Asahi, going on to become the vice-chairman of the organization.
was widely understood that the runways were being expanded to make room for the bigger planes that were necessary to carry hydrogen bombs. On the same day that Deputy Director Yazaki and Director Kawabata were being run out of Sunagawa City Hall, members of the national parliament were hotly debating Japan’s defense posture vis-à-vis their American counterparts. Imazumi Kosamu, a member of parliament affiliated with the rightwing faction (Uha) within the Socialist Party, was grilling Shigemitsu Mamoru, Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the extent of Japan’s financial commitment to paying for U.S. runway expansions. Imazumi asked whether it was true that, during the previous year’s defense budget contribution negotiations with U.S. counterparts, the prime minister expressed any dissatisfaction about the 41 billion yen that Japan had been committed to pay for the runway expansions. “It is true,” Shigemitsu responded, “that we will be dissatisfied if we don’t make progress on the runway extensions.” The brazenness in which Shigemitsu spoke on the floors of parliament reflected the strength of the ruling conservative parties, a coalition helmed by the Liberal Democratic Party. It also called into question the government’s claim in the national press that the U.S. would be paying for the runway expansions. Exasperated, Imazami posed another question, hoping to embarrass Shigemitsu. “Does the Defense Agency’s 30-year plan including building new Self-Defense Force airfields throughout Japan?” Shigemitsu was unfazed: “There is a plan for three regions—Kantō, Kyūshū, and Tōhoku—but we’ve yet to decide on the
specific places." Importantly, there was not yet an indication that anti-base protests in Sunagawa were on the minds of Diet members.

This chapter argued that Tachikawa and Sunagawa were both areas that had long been primed for anti-base resistance. Years of land dispossession and base related violence coalesced in 1955 when the U.S. military sought to expand the main runway on its base. Though the violence and dispossession of the previous years did not produce such an outpouring of anti-base resistance, they did help to foment what AbdouMaliq Simone has referred to as “rehearsals” for social movements yet to fully materialize. That is, before the Sunagawa Struggle, anxiety over the precarious day-to-day existence of local Japanese—grounded in real experiences of violence, pollution, and dispossession—was absolutely in the air. This anxiety and fear, like the sediment in the Tama River, built up over many years and exploded in 1955 with such ferocity that even those involved were taken by surprise.

Outside of the base, a small town that once took several hours to reach from central Tokyo was now only an hour by train: Tachikawa had become a Tokyo suburb, fully integrated into both the spatial planning of the Tokyo megalopolis and the U.S. military. Henri Lefebvre argued that what gave France’s urban revolution such a monumental historical significance was that the modern capitalist state was now heavily concerned with “spatial planning” that

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171 Simone, AbdouMaliq. Presented at the University of California’s Institute for Humanities Research’s Seminar on Experimental Critical Theory, American University of Beirut, August 2012.
“increasingly penetrated into the recursive practices of everyday life.” If spatial planning had become formalized under the state, then the dual-nature of the state power in Sunagawa—under both the expanding Tokyo megalopolis and the U.S. military—was particularly heavy. Prewar militarization (the subject of the previous chapter) contributed to the rehearsals for the Sunagawa Struggle but, by 1955, the weight of the state had become unbearable.

The response of the people of Sunagawa to the base expansion was overwhelmingly one of opposition. Yet, this did not reflect the totality of farmers, some of whom favored selling their land, forever transforming their lives as farmers. It was a moment of rapid suburbanization in Tokyo, and perhaps they believed that their land would eventually become apartments or factories at some point, regardless of whether or not the base expanded. If the militarism of Sunagawa had many different impacts on the land, so too did it on the bodies of the people who lived there. Some of the women that Nishida encountered engaged in a commercial exchange with employees of the base and the military, making the most of the dire postwar economy. Others, such as those women who were sexually humiliated on the same base runway that was aimed at the heart of Sunagawa, more keenly experienced the uneven power dynamics between villagers and the military.

As we will see in the following chapters, the affective economy of base town like Tachikawa produced social movements that differed from other major

social movements of the postwar period, such as the strike at the Miike or the Sanrizuka Struggle against the construction of Narita Airport (to appear in Chapter Five).

The next chapter will detail the Struggle during the bloodiest years of pitch battles between Japanese police and anti-base protestors. In doing so, I play close attention to the plurality of participants—local farmers and their families, a broad spectrum of labor unions, political parties, student groups—that helped to lend both labor and discursive capital to the movement.
Chapter 3: Everyday Protest in Sunagawa

Building from the previous chapter, this chapter will focus on the networks of people and organizations that drove and maintained the Sunagawa Struggle from August 1955 until 1959. The Struggle, I will continue to argue, was the result of local resistance to the expansion of the runway on the U.S. military’s Tachikawa Air Base. By the fall of 1955, the Struggle was a national story, reported on by Japan’s major news outlets and a serious issue of concern for the U.S. military and the highest levels of the Japanese government. The first goal of this chapter will be to expand the cast of characters from local heads of farming households to their families and out of town supporters, which included labor unions and university students. In this way, I show how Sunagawa prefigured the Anpo protests of 1960, which have been remembered as a foundational moment for intersectional alliances in postwar Japan. The rapid expansion of the Struggle brought a surge of supporters from throughout the Tokyo megalopolis. These various groups—unionized laborers, university students, supporters of the Socialist and Communist parties—became temporary residents of Sunagawa, sleeping in fields and school auditoriums, cooking communal meals, organizing childcare, and generally weaving themselves into the fabric of everyday Sunagawa. Finally, this chapter pays close attention to the writings of women and children of Sunagawa. As will be evident, entire families were swept into the Struggle that enveloped their world.
Although the Sunagawa of 1955 was still mostly comprised of farming families, the composition of local labor was rapidly changing and the long history of the town as a predominantly farming community was clearly dissipating. The everyday lives of Sunagawa locals, where “the materiality of the commonplace, the things colonizing the life of ordinary people, customs that were always changing,” were becoming increasingly precarious under the dual processes of militarization and urbanization. It is only through the perspectives of the everyday lives of Sunagawa locals—women, children, laborers, teacher, etc—that we can claim to understand the local history of the Sunagawa Struggle.

As discussed in the previous chapter, from 1945 to 1955 the population increased from 8,900 to 12,638, while the number of households increased from 1,878 to 2,542. By 1965, the population would double to nearly 7,000 households with a population of over 25,000. Much of this growth can be attributed to new industries that were popping in the western suburbs of Tokyo, many of which were not directly related to American military bases. To the north of Sunagawa, the Prince Automobile Company (later known as the Nissan Motor Company) built a testing facility. Just north of the Itsukaichi Highway was the Maruyama National Hospital and several medium-sized factories.

**Everyday life on the base**

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173 As discussed in Chapter One.
On the outside of the base, workers from a variety of occupational backgrounds were organizing in support of the Alliance. Inside the barbed-wire fences, however, hundreds of Japanese employees went about their daily lives performing a wide variety of jobs. Japanese workers were translators, clerks, typists, landscapers, trash collectors, human resource administrators, bartenders, janitors, housekeepers and maids, maintenance personnel, to name only a few. The *Tachikawa Base Newspaper* (*Tachikawa Kichi Shinbun*) was a bi-weekly Japanese-language newspaper printed under the jurisdiction of Air Military Command, Base Information Office and distributed to these Japanese workers. The contents of the newspaper covered a wide spectrum of base activities, both related to daily base operations as well as what could be considered social and cultural activities.

The January 30, 1956 edition of *Tachikawa Kichi Shinbun* offered an example of the ways in which the Base Information Office hoped to engender a sense of community among base employees while also communicating an overall sense that U.S.-Japan relations were one of brotherly love and mutual respect. One article described the walnut-farming Johnson family from Morgan Hill, California, who decided to take their first trip abroad to see their son and his Japanese bride in Tachikawa. The Johnsons’ son, Roland, worked for the electric shop at the Northern Air Material-Pacific section of the base. Coming from a farming community in California, the Johnson’s visit to Tachikawa Air Base forced them to traverse a complex landscape of 1950s urban militarism. When
asked by the newspaper about their impression of Japan, the Morgan Hill couple responded, “Everything is small, as if it were a country for dolls. I felt that this was peculiar—small cars, three-wheeled trucks—but I understood that it was because of the narrow streets and huge population. Then I was totally surprised that textiles and clothes that would at first glance look like direct imports from the West were being manufactured and sold alongside oriental-looking merchandise that suggest an old history.” The tropes of a modern West and an ancient Orient were standard in many American narratives of Japan before, during, and long after the war. The Johnsons’ also described their impressions of the base as compared not only to their hometown, but also presumably to the Japan they experienced on the way to the base. For the walnut farmers, Tachikawa Air Base was a symbol of modernity: “We live in the countryside, so this is the first time that we’ve seen modern facilities like those on the base. I wouldn’t get tired spending three or four hours exploring places like J. Engine and the electric shop where my son works.”¹⁷⁶ The military base of the 1950s was the most technologically advanced place that they had ever encountered. Moreover, the experience of the Johnson’s reflects what Vernadette Vicuña Gonzales has articulated as the cold war relationship between tourism and militarism, which jointly enabled the “overlapping projects of colonialism, developmentalism, and neoliberalism.”¹⁷⁷

While the story of the Johnsons’ and their adventure traversing America’s imperial network across the Pacific centers on an American family, most of the stories in the newspaper appeared to center on Japanese workers, many of whom worked in some administrative capacity. In addition, outside of the announcements for new or departing American military base commanders or diplomatic personnel, stories that featured Americans almost always depicted them performing a task in cooperation with Japanese staff. Other stories marked milestones. An article in the February 13, 1956 issue introduced and acknowledged the long base careers of six employees, all men, who worked in some administrative capacity, including at the Installation Engineer Establishment (ICC) office of the nearby Showa Base. Photos with captions of the smiling men sitting at desks indicated that they were office personnel, though they also served dual roles in providing base security. That Tachikawa Base Newspaper was reporting on the accomplishments of workers at the nearby Showa base served as a reminder that Tachikawa Air Base was not the only major military establishment in the area, and some employees commuted between several workplaces. It is an indication that for Japanese workers, base employment could be found at any of these establishments, militarized islands amid everyday Japanese communities.

In the January 30 issue appeared an editorial that meant to look back at the ten years that the base (”kichijūnen furikaette”) had been under American
occupation. Despite the obvious shifts in the military power that controlled the space of Tachikawa, the most noticeable changes for the author, a maintenance worker, were the conditions of the runway and the types of uniforms that personnel wore on the job. Such banal readings of the heavily militarized space of Tachikawa Air Base indicate that for workers on the base, the critical political arguments that were spilling into the fields and streets outside of the fences in opposition to the base were simply not discussed in the official public communications on the base.

Rarely did the newspaper report on any aspects of the Cold War, which is notable given that the newspaper was written when the battle of words and propaganda was raging between communism and the “free West.” Instead, columns that frequently appeared in the newspaper gave advice on how to treat and prevent seasonal illnesses or food poisoning, or offered recipes like “Popietto do pouson furii,” which featured pan-fried sardines in a white sauce. Inter-base sports teams, usually segregated between American and Japanese players, were often the subjects of articles, lending voice to the newspaper’s overall intent of projecting an image of brotherly camaraderie.

Just as the Murayama Hospital union—which will be discussed later in this chapter—and other regional unions regularly collaborated with colleagues at other facilities, so too did Japanese employees at Tachikawa Air Base. They regularly made visits to nearby bases, such as Shōwa, Fuchū, and Yamato. Employees at those bases regularly made visits to Tachikawa as well. The visits
were mostly in efforts to develop and streamline material transfers and shipments, an important part of Tachikawa’s role as the main logistical military base in the region. In late February 1956, for example, the U.S. base in Kisarazu (across Tokyo Bay in Chiba Prefecture) made plans to transfer 230 of its supply office employees to Tachikawa, a move that indicates that Tachikawa was of such size and importance that it was used to absorb labor and services from other bases. While Kisarazu was another place where a runway was being expanding, this move is an important indication that, even after the Sunagawa Struggle began, Tachikawa Air Base showed little sign of decreasing the size of its workforce in early 1956.179

The editors of the newspaper sought to convey a sense that Tachikawa Air Base was the happiest of colonial towns: Japanese working comfortable office jobs, smartly dressed in clothes that suggested a middle-class income, receiving commendations from American military personnel, learning English, engaging in cross-cultural activities, playing friendly but segregated sports. In order to help illustrate the everyday camaraderie of the base, articles in the newspaper were often accompanied with photographs, many of which depicted either sports teams or a joint U.S. military and Japanese base employee meeting or conference.

Regardless of the paper’s rhetoric, the photographs of Japanese and American base employees and military officials maintained a clear

179 Tachikawa Kichi Shinbun, March 12, 1956.
understanding of the power hierarchy of the base. The military personnel are typically shown to be in some form of position of giving guidance, advice, or training as indicated by either pointing or gesturing. They might also be handing out an award for good service. The composition of the photographs was often the same: Japanese staff members are in the center, flanked by uniformed military personnel on either side. This technique of placing the enforcers of American empire on the outside of the photograph could be understood to metaphorically represent the actual power structure of the base as well as the understanding of base relations that the newspaper wished to convey. Americans were almost always in the photographs and always carried a powerful and militaristic presence (conveyed through the military panache), and yet were not the center of the image. While the Americans might not have been the focus of the photograph or article, the power structure on the base, based on obvious national and racial hierarchies, was always evident. In one way, this editorial style of decentering the clear object of power is similar to the overall strategy that the military put forth in pursuing the runway expansion plan, which was pursued through local Japanese officials, keeping the U.S. insulated from direct confrontation.

In the records and testimonies of the people involved in the Sunagawa Struggle, there are very few references to actual confrontations with Americans. At most, a Sunagawa protestor might see a soldier far on the other side of the barbed-wire fence (protestors often described such soldiers as “grinning”).
When the black car from the Procurement Office rolled into Sunagawa to announce the runway expansion, it was a Japanese official who delivered the message, not an American. However, regardless of who delivered the message, Sunagawa locals obviously knew who was really demanding a runway expansion. Like the Americans in the photographs, the Americans demanding the base expansion were always there, standing behind their Japanese emissaries.

It is perhaps unsurprising that the base newspaper did not report specifically on the Sunagawa Struggle, for giving attention to local opposition to the base would be diametrically opposed to the mandate of the newspaper, which was to illustrate a mutually beneficial, if not familial, relationship between Japanese and American base employees. Instead of reporting directly on opposition to the base expansion, it simply reported on the “necessity” of concluding the base survey and expanding the runway as quickly as possible, without addressing that the land surveys were made impossible by the protests.

According to one article, on February 10, 1956, members of the Japanese Diet, local mayors, and U.S. commanding officers on the base met to discuss the difficulties they were having in pushing the runway through Sunagawa. Part of their meeting included a “field trip” (migaku) in which all in attendance boarded a bus and drove to Gate Four of the base, the other side of which stood the banners and placards of the Sunagawa protesters (though this is not acknowledged). Undoubtedly, the participants observed the protestors (again,
not made explicit in the article), after which time the officials concluded their “field trip” and returned to the base offices together.¹⁸⁰

Figure 8 “Gathering at Sunagawa, Runway Field Trip” (*Sunagawa yori kassoro migaku*). This “field trip” included an invitation to a former Imperial Navy admiral to survey the base and, it seems, attempt to process the immense transformations in both facilities and war capabilities over the previous decade. In the photo, the Admiral Yamamoto (center) stands on the base-side of the fence opposite Sunagawa. Source: *Tachikawa Kichi Shinbun*, June 4, 1956.

On May 21, 1956, another “field trip” was made to barbed-wire fence that separated the base from Sunagawa. This time, Yamamoto Eisuke, a former admiral in the Imperial Navy of some esteem, was invited to visit the base to see facilities that included hangars, a fire station, maintenance supply facilities, and

the northern end of the runway. Part of the tour included Hangar Six, where the American commander of the base apparently regaled Yamamoto with the history of the already antiquated B-17 bombers that had visited much destruction on Japan. After the history lesson, Yamamoto was shown the site of the runway expansion while the base commander “explained that the expansion of the runway is necessary for the execution of the mission of the base.”

The *Asahi* journalist Itō Makio saw something quite different than the well-dressed personnel of the ICC office when he observed Tachikawa in the evening, as base employees streamed through the base gates and filled the town. In a piece written for a 1957 compilation of *Look at Japan (Nihon haiken)*, entitled "Basetown: Faces of people who work at the base" ("Kichi no machi: Kichi ni hataruku hitobito no kao"), Itō transmitted a sense of an exhausted town and population stagnating under military colonization. Tachikawa was a place peppered with bars adorned with bright neon-lit English-language signs. The city's main station, which Itō often transited through on his way to work, was “a dirty old building” and a place where khaki-wearing soldiers strolled while eating (an odd practice to many Japanese eyes), flirted with Japanese women, and were generally “running around helter-skelter in front of the station” (*uōsaōshiteiru*).

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181 Tachikawa Kichi Shinbun, June 4, 1956
Still, Itō could find enough stores around the station that were selling Japanese style clothing and geta that he was reassured that Tachikawa was still a Japanese town after all. He was also attentive to the Japanese workers on the base, particularly those in blue-collar labor who were not widely represented in the Tachikawa Base Newspaper. When he saw the faces of the workers as they left the base gates and the end of the workday, he thought that they seemed different from typical Japanese laborers and white-collar company workers.

Standing outside of gates, watching the landscapers, carpenters, monthly and day laborers wondering past him, he was reminded of the generation of those Japanese who had emigrated abroad. He wrote, “I thought that their faces seemed similar to the first generation of Japanese who emigrated to Hawaii and the American mainland. For some reason this gave me a bad taste.” Itō was recognizing that the bases, and their basetowns, were obviously foreign, and the Japanese who worked there had become immigrants in their own country.

Moreover, by comparing those base workers to Japanese who had emigrated to Hawaii and the United States, he linked the poverty that drove those earlier generations of immigrants to the poverty that he recognized must have also driven Japanese to work at Tachikawa Air Base. Lastly, Itō was also troubled by the young girls who worked on the base, and continued, “Women were waiting for payday; in order to survive, in order to provide for their families, in order to make kimonos, young girls were working in the cafeterias on the base.”

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183 Itō, Makio, “Kichi No Machi: Kichi Ni Hataruku Hitobito No Kao [Basetown: Faces of People
Similarly, there was one group of local Japanese that Itō believed epitomized base labor: sex workers (see Chapter Two).

**Sunagawa Women**

If the everydayness on the base was articulated in a self-consciously benign *Tachikawa Base Newspaper*, the protestors and residents on the Sunagawa-side of the fence rendered their everyday experience quite differently. In particular, a reading of the documents and records left behind by women and children in Sunagawa illustrates the extent to which the protests were, like the war, profoundly disruptive and inescapable for local families. In recognizing the totality of the Sunagawa Struggle on disrupting and informing the daily lives of locals, it might be instructive to consider the protests as similar in effect to total war. If the understanding of total war includes conflicts in which entire populations are mobilized for the state, and where the violence of war is visited upon civilians and soldiers alike, then total resistance can be understand in similar terms. It was not merely the inclusion of entire families in the protests that made the Struggle significant, but the reality that local housewives and children were key players in organizing and maintaining the conditions under which sustained protest were possible. The protests were inescapable for locals. At the same time, they offer us a window through which to understand how families in a Tokyo suburb navigated and resisted what they believed were un-

democratic and destructive state initiatives. These narratives also articulate that women and children were deeply connected to the land of Sunagawa.

In 1956, the Japan Federation of Women’s Organizations (Zen-nihon fujin dantai rengōkai, commonly abbreviated as “Fudanren”), the umbrella organization for dozens of left-leaning women’s activists groups, published a collection of individually authored essays in Even if the Wheat is Trampled: The Collected Writings of Sunagawa’s Mothers and Children. Women in Sunagawa expressed many reasons why they decided to oppose the base expansion. Shige Toyo, who was 45 years old in 1956, believed that “the biggest reason we housewives stood up—and it may be what you think—more than any reason or whatever, was that we had a conviction to protect our land no matter what. During the fighting, the lies of those trusting-people or government authorities were the beginning of our unity as housewives.” Those “trusting-people” were fellow Sunagawa locals whom Shige believed were being duped by the government’s dithering. “These are problems of life and death,” she wrote, “and yet so many times we’ve sent petitions to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, but they always quibble ‘we’re busy, we’re busy’ and never actually meet with us.” Shige expressed concern that during the next local elections the conservative parties would get support from the Procurement Office and win. She also accused Sunagawa’s previous mayor, who

185 Zennihon Fujin Dantai Rengōkai. 53.
was serving as a mediator between the factions, of aligning with the conditional faction (see previous chapter) because his land was not at all in danger of being appropriated. Shige fumed: “He opposes the will of the locals and is cooperating with the conditional faction. The All-Town Women’s Committee was doing the work of actively helping, but after [the former mayor] split the town council, we became extremely passive. Driven into desperation, it was for this reason that we women became gradually stronger, making the foundations of our coming together.”

Such opinions might seem surprising since Shige was herself a “civil servant’s housewife,” though her relationship to local civil government only emboldened her resolve. Shige was widely engaged with the minute details of local politics and outside supporters, which suggests that women and women’s organizations were just as central to the intellectual and political foundations of the Sunagawa Struggle as the largely male dominated labor unions, which were themselves “uninterested in changing normative gender roles.”

Miyaoka Taneko, married to Miyaoka Masao, performed multiple forms of labor during the Sunagawa Struggle. As the mother to three small children, her reproductive labor maintained the home; as a farmer, she was constantly maintaining those of her crops (mostly wheat and dry field rice) that weren’t

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186 Zennihon Fujin Dantai Rengōkai 1956.
under threat from the base land surveyors or the stomping feet of anti-base
activists. In a 1999 interview, Miyaoka described the extent to which she and
other women in Sunagawa participated in the everydayness of the protests:

“While we were doing farming production we had to stop and
jump up every time the fire alarm rang [a large bell at the top of a
tall wooden tower which notified residents that the police were
mobilizing]. Neighbors and company workers would participate
after they came home and on their days off, while retirees and self-
employed people also participated. Our children weren’t in
the vanguard, but people participated with their children at the sit-in.
“October 30, 1956 was the most intense day, awful, and the rain
had soaked the ground. From behind us, the police came through
our field and stepped on all of the crops. I grabbed hold of a stick
and told them ‘that’s our field so don’t enter it!’ It was a real
mess.”188

Sunagawa women like Miyaoka were at the forefront of the protest
movement. In December 1956, a women’s organization in Sunagawa published a
pamphlet entitled “Diary of Sunagawa Housewives.” The pamphlet detailed the
protest events that occurred throughout October when the Procurement Office
attempted to push through with yet another “forceful survey.”189 Close attention
to this housewives’ association publication offers a unique opportunity to
understand both the growing popularization of the Sunagawa Struggle for
leftists in Japan and the central role the women of Sunagawa played during this
time. It is also important to recognize that the self-organization of housewives
who fought to protect the land of Sunagawa, four years before the Anpo protests

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188 Hoshi, Kiichi, ed. Sunagawa Tōsō 50-Nen: Sorezorenoomoi [Sunagawa Struggle at Fifty: Our
Ōhara Institute for Social Research for Social Research. 78.
of 1960, was a central component of the Struggle. Unlike the Anpo protests, which were often fought by urban students, intellectuals, and (often) male laborers, the women of Sunagawa were firmly stationed on the frontlines of their protests.

For the first six days of that month, surveyors and the police attempted to enter Sunagawa, only to be met by throngs of housewives wearing banners across their heads that read “do or die” (kesshi) and “unity” (danketsu). The kesshi banners were particularly symbolic, as many people would have likely have been reminded of the kesshitai, the Japanese military suicide corps sent to their deaths during the war. In the first rally of October, held at the Azusami Shrine in Sunagawa, Sunagawa’s mayor, Miyaden, and Aoki Ichigorō, the head captain of the protest corps, energized the crowd by banging the shrine’s bell and shouting “alright everyone, let’s really demonstrate on the way to the town hall!” The from and structure of this rally, in which people gathered at the shrine, linked arms, and shouted “wasshōi, wasshōi” as they marched through the streets towards the Sunagawa town hall.¹⁹⁰

Compared to the previous year, the Housewife’s Association believed that the “opposition determination” was stronger in 1956. During the women’s sit-ins along the Itsukaichi Highway in 1955, the violence visited upon them by the police—grabbing their hair, twisting their arms, yanking them to their feet—hardened them for the protests that followed. Believing that their physical

¹⁹⁰“Wasshōi, wasshōi” is a common rallying cry at protests, sporting events, competitions, and so forth, akin to “let’s go, let’s go.”
suffering was the result of the riot police’s illegal tactics, housewives associations attempted to communicate their treatment to the various concerned legal associations that were monitoring the Struggle. By October 1, 1956, due in no small part to the outreach efforts of the housewives, two buses carrying 110 people, mostly professors, lawyers, and writers came to witness and join the Struggle. Referring to themselves delegates from the Intellectual Committee for Consultation with the Base Problem (Kichi mondai bunkajin sōdankai), the group included Kanzaki Kiyoshi (discussed in detail in Chapter Two), the avant-garde artist Okamoto Tarō (perhaps most famous for his “Tower of the Sun” instillation at the 1970 World Expo in Osaka), the actress Yamamoto Yasue, Hōsei University professor of international law Yasui Kaoru, and bestselling novelist Yuki Shigeko. Under a steady rain, Aoki escorted the group to the frontlines of the battle so that they could witness it for themselves. Later that afternoon, they went to the Sunagawa Junior High School for a meeting with housewives association and, after hearing of their experiences on the frontlines, the Intellectual's Committee passed a resolution declaring their cooperation and support with the people of Sunagawa.

The forced survey (kyōsei sakuryō) began on October 4. In anticipation of an early morning assault on Sunagawa, 600 university students had spent the night on the floors of the junior high school, sleeping on mats, futons, and straw sacks. At seven in the morning, the protesters assembled once again at the Azusami Shrine and waited for the surveyor and the riot police (whom the
protestors referred to as *sokuryōtai*, or Survey Team). At 10 am, the survey team spilled out of the base through the Sunagawa gate, which brought on the clanging of the protestor’s bell tower (*michōdai*). Socialist Party members of the Diet, including Matsui Asakichi (1906-1993) were adorned with red banners across their chests (*akadasuki*) that identified themselves and their positions. The Housewives’ Association reported that the Diet members were dragged onto the base and then on the Procurement Office in Tachikawa. Somewhat relieved when the surveyors left with the Diet members, the protestors decided to retire for lunch. They were surprised, then, when the surveyors suddenly charged through the Sunagawa gate again and drove a single measuring stake into the ground, which the protestors quickly plucked out. This tit for tat movement occurred throughout the day. The women later learned that the Diet members were beaten before they were eventually released several hours later. Scenes such as these occurred several times over the month, including October 12. On that day, Socialist Party committee chairman Suzuki Mosaburō (1893-1970) was grabbed by police and dragged away, a scene captured by the filmmaker Hamada Hideo, who later used the footage in his 1983 film anti-nuclear weapon documentary, *Kusa no ne no hitobito: Sunagawa tōsō no kiroku* (*Grassroots People: Records of the Sunagawa Struggle*).192

The Women’s Association expressed immense gratitude for the students who come to Sunagawa and protested during this time. The students helped to cook and deliver food for the throngs of protestors, while they themselves appeared to exhibit a heroic sense of selflessness, telling the housewives “we don’t want to impose on you,” despite the fact that the students themselves were subsisting on only “two or three onigiri (rice balls) and a little takuan (pickled radish).” University students, whose numbers would swell in the thousands, became important contributors to the reproduction of village life. Their presence was one of necessary intimacy, since they slept on the floors of the junior school, in the fields, and in locals’ homes, interacting with families on a daily bases. Moreover, the housewives wrote that “the students were all so wonderful, we really had to bow to them.” In activist records, as well as the testimonies written by Sunagawa’s children, the students were almost always presented in a positive, even altruistic light.

As will be discussed in Chapter Five, the involvement of the student protestors at Sunagawa became a tactic and characteristic of the protests that would occur against Narita International Airport in Sanrizuka a decade later.

**Sunagawa Children**

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For the families who lived in Sunagawa—those who most deeply felt the impact of the base expansion and the resistance it provoked—every aspect of everyday life was wholly permeated by the Struggle. Among these families were many children, the often forgotten but keenly observant informants of social and family life, who witnessed and recognized the impact of the Struggle on their small town. Yanagisawa Akira taught social studies and Japanese at the same Sunagawa Junior High School that Deputy Chief Yazaki had threatened to plow under to make room for the runway. Yanagisawa was in an ideal position to appreciate the insight children could bring to the Sunagawa Struggle and base issues in general. For Yanagisawa, the base issue was a political issue as well as a local issue. His position as a public school teacher put him into daily contact with a wide range of Sunagawa society, included those who supported and opposed the base expansion plan. Along with ten other educators, Yanagisawa formed the “Base and Education Research Club” at the school. As he told an interviewer, “There were farmers’ kids and non-farmers’ kids, and the parents of the non-farmers’ kids were by and large working at the U.S. Tachikawa Base. We also had a police department, so one or two of the kids were the children of police officers.” Yanagisawa’s task, then, was to manage what was a microcosm of the various village factions that had begun to emerge since the expansion announcement: the farmers, who were nearly unanimous in their opposition to the base expansion (the anti-base faction); base employees (conditional faction); and the police officers. It was in the educational space of the classroom,
Yanagisawa reckoned, where Sunagawa children would talk through and discuss the very political battle that was raging all around them. While it was noteworthy that the junior high school was itself threatened by the base expansion, there was another historical layer that gave the space additional meaning. A school that was once a Japanese army academy was now a space to discuss base problems.

From 1955 to 1957, Yanagisawa’s Base and Education Research Club published three editions of *Bunshū Sunagawa* (Sunagawa Collection), which was a collection of poems and short essays written by students at the Sunagawa Junior High School. Like the *Tachikawa Base Newspaper, Bunshū Sunagawa* captured a particular moment from the viewpoint of a very specific group of people: the children of Sunagawa. The stories and poems were collected over a period of three years, offering the opportunity to view some of the most memorable moments of the Sunagawa Struggle through the eyes of children, a far cry from the ways in which the protests were reported or narrated by either the main national newspapers or the Japanese government. Indeed, as expert witnesses in their homes and village, the children of Sunagawa, though mediated through the Base and Education Club, provide unique testimony of the Sunagawa Struggle. Paying considerable attention to these narratives allows us to understand both how children viewed the Struggle, but also how they conveyed and interpreted their parents’ and communities’ impressions and opinions.
The first volume, published in November 1955, was organized under subsections and the school year of the writers. For example: “Our Town (1st-3rd years),” “Forceful Survey (1st Years),” and “Various Standpoints and Opinions (1st years).” Aoki Hisashi, a first year student, was attuned to how much the near constant visits from the Procurement Office had altered daily life in Sunagawa.

“Around Sunagawa, there isn’t a time in the day when it’s quiet. Even on rainy days, my whole family is wondering when the Procurement Office is going to come, and looking outside even when we’re eating. Even at 3 o’clock tea, everyone’s talking. The conversation is always about the base. Around the water well, all of the aunties gossip about the base. When we see the little kids in my family mumble ‘Americans are stupid…taking our homes without paying…stupid…stupid’ when they see Americans, the tears roll down our cheeks. When my family comes home, sometimes I listen to the grown-ups conversations. I also sometimes listen to the shopkeepers talk in their stores. These various people are all talking about the base.”

When this first volume was published, the Procurement Office was, as Aoki witnessed, coming to Sunagawa on a near daily basis, trying to enter the expansion zone in order to take measurements, drive stakes into the ground, and evict those who had so far refused to leave. In the center of the village, a ladder ran up a tall tower that was topped with a bell (a fire alarm during normal times). Whenever someone saw land Procurement Office entourage approaching Sunagawa, they would, in Paul Revere fashion, scramble up the ladder and sound the alarm.

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Fukushima Shigeko, another first-year student wrote: “Our town used to be peaceful. But that one thing, those planes flying just over our heads, shaking the glass windows of our classroom, those jet blasts shattering the spirits of the people walking along the road near Number Five, made this peaceful town into one of unpleasantness.” The young girl’s sentiment is a compelling example of how the narratives of her family and the other adults around her may have informed her own understanding of the situation in Sunagawa. In all likelihood, she had only ever known Sunagawa to be a place where jets blasted just over her head day and night, since she was not old enough to recall the days when Tachikawa Air Base was a quiet grassy air field, unencumbered by barbed-wire fences.

In September 1955, a typical morning for a Sunagawa child like Fukushima would have mostly likely seemed chaotic. “The people in my house were busy so they couldn’t take breakfast,” she wrote. “Obviously, we couldn’t take bentō so I would go and buy bread. But I couldn’t get there because the police would be on the road [near the bakery], so the teacher would go and buy it for all of us.” Between September thirteenth and fourteenth, the attempts at a forced survey were particularly disruptive for the school. “There was a Yomiuri Shinbun helicopter in our schoolyard. Just like any other day there were planes taking off from the base. People who came from other places [reporters, protest supporters, etc.] were surprised by the jet blasts. It was dangerous to go out into
the streets, so we couldn’t take one step outside of the school.” After school was let out, the teacher escorted the children home for safety.

The blasts of the jet engines from the base were a constant source of stress and distraction for people of Sunagawa, including children. Many of the students’ narratives describe being awoken repeatedly throughout the nights to the sounds of jets taking off. When they were in class, the teacher had to stop talking when it became too loud, as it did throughout the day. Several students recalled how Japanese class (kokugo) was particularly difficult, since they were often called upon to read from the textbook in front of the class but, because they could not hear where the previous reader left off, they did not know from which point to begin reading. The yearning for a “peaceful town” that was expressed by so many children can be understood as a call for both a town that was free from the material potential for war, but also one where the sky was not the bearer of an oppressive cacophony of jets.

First-year Takahashi Chiyoko had two painful memories from what she witnessed during the forceful surveys of late August. The first was seeing the police physically tear apart the sit-in protest along the Itsukaichi Highway, grabbing the limbs of protesters and causing injuries. In the second, she and her friends actually confronted the police and shouted, “I thought you people were supposed to help Japanese, but outrageously you bully Japanese!” to which the

police, “with their horrible faces,” responded in laughter.\(^{198}\) In this instance, it is noteworthy that a young girl would think it would be possible to recognize the Japanese police as anything other than a bully, for during the war years, which were only a decade prior, it would have been remarkable to think of the police as anything but a brutal extension of the military government. Perhaps she believed that because there was a foreign presence, all Japanese, police included, would finally be able to unify against a common enemy. After the incident she described, however, she was likely quickly disabused of any sense of solidarity with the police.

Takahashi’s mother, like many other mothers in Sunagawa, was one of the women participating in the sit-in along the Itsukaichi Highway. Though the sit-it was not in front of the base gates or the runway expansion area, it was potentially one of the most dangerous areas to protest because it was purposefully placed in front of the direction from which police and surveyors were most like to come. On one particular day, after Takahashi’s teacher escorted her home at 6:00PM, she found that her mother was still at the sit-in and, as children under such circumstances might do, relished the freedom. She went and chatted with her neighborhood friends about the police, until her mother came home and told them that on that particular day 188 people were injured in the clashes. She wrote, “I was really surprised. The police hit them with their sticks and kicked them with their boots, but the unionists and

townspeople didn’t fight with their hands.” The violence exhibited by the police at peaceful organizers appeared to embolden Takahashi: “We will continue to the very end to keep our town from being taken away.”

Other students admitted that they had little understanding of the protests or the base expansion. One girl, a first-year, wrote that because she was not in a farming family she felt that she did not have any actual connection to the base expansion (“I know a little about it from the radio, newspaper, and talking with my friends”). While her friends were more deeply tied to the expansion plan, she acknowledged that she couldn’t help but cry after listening to a radio report of a “lady crying and saying ‘please stop, please stop!’.” Within families, opinions about the base expansion were not uniformly shared. Another first-year, Takahashi Hiromi wrote, “I have no idea whether to consider my home as in favor or opposed. But my older brother thinks that it isn’t really all that awful, so I said to him, ‘just as if it was your own body, whatever happened, you can’t just hand over this ancient land,’ and my uncle from Hokkaidō said ‘yeah, that’s right.’” Family life for the Takahashi children had become one in which relationships were being reimagined or redefined in relationship to the base expansion which was, at the time, an important lens through which to understand and interpret postwar politics.

While there were students who did not live in the expansion area and were thus less likely to personally experience dispossession of their homes, the vast majority of those students who submitted pieces for Sunagawa Bunshū faced eviction. Baba Kimiyo, a first-year student, would have lost everything. "If the base is expanded," she professed, "my home, the persimmon tree that produces sweet fruit every year, the graves of my grandmother and grandfather, all of it will be underneath the runway. Thinking about that is awful. But I cannot not think about it. Even now, an advertising truck [presumably adorned with anti-base slogans] is parked in my home's garden, getting rained on." A classmate, Nishino Yōko, appeared to have become exhausted by the way the base expansions plan seemed to monopolize daily life in Sunagawa, while also sensing a place for children within the protest:

"I haven’t been able to easily study since the beginning of the base expansion. Every single day everything is about the base. Whenever I go to school I cannot go outside. It’s as if we did something wrong and are trapped inside studying. While every single day my family and teachers look worried, all the uproar is becoming increasingly worse. The police are in front of our house. I think that we really do want to join the sit-in. They say that we are children, but we are the same as the adults. It is our Sunagawa town that is becoming so unpleasant. But this cannot be helped because Japan lost the war. Honestly, my father wants to protest, but he can’t because of his company relationship."

As the children’s testimonies revealed, the Struggle was the main topic of conversation both in and out of the home. Domestic life was drastically affected...

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when parents spent their days at sit-ins or rallies. With the heavy police presence, it became difficult for children to travel through around town unaccompanied by teachers or family members. It was clear to the children, as it was to their families, what the Sunagawa Struggle represented.

Among the many testimonials, Waji Nobuko, a second-year student, was particularly thoughtful in articulating the local issue of the base expansion within the larger framework of America’s global geopolitical presence. In addition, her contribution provided an intimate account of the ways in which her own quality of life was intimately tied to the rise and fall of Tachikawa’s life as a prosperous industrial town. Born in 1941, she recalled her early years as ones of comfort and relative affluence. Her father worked at the Tachikawa Aircraft Company and her family once lived in a nice house in the Takamatsuchō neighborhood near Tachikawa Station. “During Ōbon,” she wrote, “I would receive a mountain of gifts from the company people.” Though her father eventually lost his job with the wartime destruction of his company, and despite the food shortages of the war, Waji recognized that her family was luckier than many of the families in Tachikawa. “We heard the bombs landing around us,” she wrote, “but we were fortunately spared.” The closure of the factory was followed by a series of financial mishaps that nearly ruined the family. The Waji’s eventually lost their home and moved to Sunagawa, where Nobuko’s father built a house himself (though apparently without much skill; during the winter,

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Nobuko and her mother cried themselves to sleep from the cold. Eventually, their lives began to slowly improve once her father was able to get a job with the “occupying forces” (chūryū-gun).

“If I think about it, even though I’ve had hardships, I’ve been pretty lucky. [I think about] how much the people of Japan are suffering for that war, people with bad luck had their houses burned down, or were injured or killed. Even now, nine years after the war, there are still needy people. Also, the amount people living in constant hardship who are doing bad things is increasing. On top of that, it is like the land of Japan has become a colony. Even if you go to Tachikawa—Japanese land—you see a lot of Americans. While it’s Japanese land, it’s being used for America. This current problem isn’t just Sunagawa. In Japan, I don’t even know how many places are like Sunagawa. Sunagawa is representative of this problem. Also, fellow Japanese are fighting each other for America. I don’t want a Japan like this and want to quickly escape from this colonial-like condition. How wonderful Japan would become if it were no longer a colony! With our own land, living peacefully, we could brighten our lives. Oh, I want that soon.”

Some of the testimonies described the experiences of children and families who did not have the same intensely personal stakes in the base expansion. Yet, as should be evident, many children came to realize that the Struggle was a critical political issue that resonated far beyond the protection of farmland, and was in fact tied to the strength of Japan’s democracy as well as its place in America’s cold war system.

On January 31, 1956, the center-right Yomiuri Shinbun published an article about Sunagawa Bunshū, along with several of the students’ testimonies. Yanagisawa, the editor of the collection, was quoted as saying “The students

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204 Kyōshokuin kumiai Sunagawa chūbun-kai: kichi to kyōiku kenkyū sākuru. Bunshū Sunagawa. Vol. 2. 3 vols., 1956, 22. It is not clear why Waji describes 1956 as “near years after the war.”
really were free to write what they actually saw with their own eyes, what they felt. One point that I expected was that at least some of the students’ opinions would agree with the expansion, but only a fraction were neutral while all of the rest were opposed.” Unsurprisingly, the newspaper questioned why the testimonies appeared to be so ardently anti-base. The article, “Base children witness the Sunagawa dispute,” included testimonies that were critical of the resistance movement. One testimony, written by Takaishi Kimiko, a first-year student, bemoans that her father, a police officer, worked long hours because of the Sunagawa Struggle. “When he came home the other day,” the girl wrote, “my father said ‘last night I could only sleep about one and a half hours.’ Policemen like that don’t sleep and work very hard so that Japan can live in safety. I ask that people don’t slander the police.” Also published in the Yomiuri, Katō Miyoko, a second-year student, had a different impression of the police, whom she observed kicking and injuring ten local protestors in September of the previous year. It was around that time that Yasui Seiichirō, Governor of Tokyo, visited Sunagawa in the company of Deputy Director Fukushima of the Procurement Office. Katō wrote:

“I was really happy when Governor Yasui said ‘I’m a friend of the townspeople.’ But when the locals wanted to meet with Prime Minister Hatoyama, they were unfortunately not allowed. Since the war, Japan has been tied to America and the U.S.-Japan Security Agreement. I do not think that this agreement is necessarily advantageous for Japan under these conditions. Why does Japan have to support military bases for the United States? I also don’t

understand why the police have to violently conduct a survey, considering the local people’s opposition?"

Lastly, the Yomiuri ran an excerpt from the testimony of a first-year student, Saitō Kimie, whose home was aligned with the conditional faction of Sunagawa homeowners. The girl’s mother worked on base at the “Greenback Commissary in Mitaka,” though she had previously worked at the Feacom section of the air base. Saitō explained that her father died in the war, leaving her mother as the sole provider and so busy that “she does not have days off and cannot come to parent association meetings or other school events.”

The Yomiuri’s editorial choices provide a useful microcosm of the mainstream press’ reporting on the Sunagawa Struggle. Clearly, the article sought to demonstrate that Sunagawa Bunshū’s editor, Yanagisawa Akira, was not altogether accurate when he gave the impression that none of the students supported the base expansion. Of the three testimonies featured in the newspaper, only one expressed anti-base sentiment, while the other two implied that the police were simply there to provide safety or that the base provided jobs for those families living in postwar precarity.206 That two-thirds of the testimonies in the article were arguably pro-base indicated that the Yomiuri chose to highlight such sentiment in the face of overwhelming opposition. Indeed, the newspaper chose to highlight from among the very few of the pro-base testimonies that were published in Sunagawa Bunshū.

As is already evident, many of the student testimonies were heartbreaking, perhaps none more so that the eulogy for Danketsujīsan (Unity Grandpa), an elderly local and prominent protest fixture who died from natural causes in 1956. Nara Masao, a third-year student, wrote the following poem in remembrance of Danketsujīsan:

“I thought he would be here tomorrow,
But Grandpa went away with his white hair blowing.

The Unity Hut is lonely,
The good luck cards and pictures and slogans are still living.
Grandpa was a person of perseverance,
Known as the spirit of the Sunagawa townspeople...

That’s the kind of grandpa he was.” 207

Enter the Unions

By 1955, one-third of Sunagawa’s population was comprised of people who worked outside of agriculture, such as in business, public service, education, or other forms of labor. In addition, roughly 600 of Sunagawa’s residents worked on the base.208 One result of the expanding and increasingly specialized nature of work was that labor unions, which had played a strong role in Japanese civil society since the early twentieth century, also increased their presence in the

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207 Kyōshokuin kumiai Sunagawa chūbun-kai: kichi to kyōiku kenkyū sākuru. Bunshū Sunagawa. Vol. 3. 3 vols., 1957. 3. Unity Grandpa’s real name was Baba Genpachi. The Unity Hut was built along the Itsukaichi Highway as a gathering place for locals and a also a central point for the nearby sit-in. Locals would have likely walked past the Unity Hut and Danketsujīsan nearly everyday during the Struggle.

208 Nakamoto Takako, Sunagawa no hokori (The Pride of Sunagawa), Tokyo: Rōdōjunpōsha Publisher, 1969), 46.
Tama region of Tokyo, which included Tachikawa and Sunagawa. The number of non-farming laborers in Sunagawa was becoming significant.

On May 28, only three weeks after Deputy Director Kawabata announced the government’s intentions to split Sunagawa in half, the Santama Regional Association of Labor Unions (SRALU) announced that its 23,974 members were in support of the Sunagawa Struggle. The SRALU brought not only physical bodies to the Struggle, but also a significant amount of regional representation. It included labor groups from all geographic regions that immediately surrounded the base; Hachinan (Hachiōji), West Tama, Tachikawa, Fuchū, and Musashino. On June 13, the SRALU passed another resolution that made explicit its intention to join the front lines of the Struggle.²⁰⁹

There never appears to have been any question among local and regional labor unions as to whether they would join the Struggle. The ties between labor and the political Left in the 1950s were so much part of the fabric of postwar Japanese politics and civil society that it was all but certain that both entities were united in anti-base expansionism. However, the farming families of Sunagawa were by no means a monolithic political entity. In fact, it should come as no surprise that many Sunagawa farmers were politically conservative and for that very reason wary of government pronouncements and large-scale

initiatives. Many of the people in Sunagawa had lost homes and loved ones in a war that had been forced on them by a heavy-handed state, and this same state was now using seemingly undemocratic means to dispossess people of their land. It was this overarching distrust and suspicion of the central government that conveniently pushed labor unions and rural farmers to form coalitions.

Ishino Noboru, the local committee member of the powerful All Japanese Telecommunications Worker’s Union (Zendetsū) and a member of Sunagawa’s Town Council believed that it was important for his union to get involved because of the Procurement Office’s heavy-handed tactics (“tough measures, backed by the police”). After witnessing the blasé attitude of people like Deputy Director Kawabata, and the government’s willingness to keep sending land surveyors under armed guard, members of Zendetsū decided that had no choice but to form a united front with the Alliance. Pushing against the notion that the labor unions were simply parachuting into a politically charged environment for their own self-promotion, Ishino said that “there was not one time that the labor union requested a united front; our support came from a request that originated from the Alliance (hantai dōmei).”

Sekiguchi Kanobu was a member of the National Railway Workers’ Union and the head secretary of the SRALU. In 1953, Sekiguchi began working in the railway union’s office in nearby Hachiōji where he developed a keen sense that regional labor movements were just as important of those on the national scale.

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210 Hoshi, 2005, 14.
“At that time,” Sekiguchi told an interviewer, “the U.S. military and the
Procurement Office both ‘thought that an expansion wouldn’t be that difficult,’
because there had already been several other expansions in Sunagawa.”211 Like
Ishino, Sekiguchi objected to the idea that the government officials like
Kawabata could simply march into a suburb like Sunagawa and demand that
locals hand over their land.

Along with local branches of the railway and telecommunications unions,
other local and regional labor unions were quick to oppose the base expansion.
On August 24, 1955, the Murayama National Hospital, just north of Sunagawa,
published a “Progress Report” on the Tachikawa anti-base expansion struggle.212
The report was coauthored by a collective of medical professional labor unions,
which called themselves the Quadripartite Joint Struggle Committee (Yonsha
kyōsō kaigi), The report made clear its appeal to medical staff from around
Tokyo to lend their bodies to the frontlines of the Sunagawa Struggle. In
addition, the report illustrated the everyday struggle for local workers who may
not have had direct contact with the base but were nonetheless affected by base
expansion. Indeed, as expressed in the report, the everyday operations of the
base were profoundly detrimental to the workers at the hospital. The committee
expressed concerns that the base expansion would create an unhealthy
environment for hospital patients. Roughly 2.5 kilometers north of the runway,

211 Hoshi, 2005, 18.
212 Yonsha kyōsō kaigi [Quadrapartite Joint Struggle Committee], “Tachikawa Kichi Kakuchō
Hatai Tōsō—keika Hōkoku [Tachikawa Anti-Base Expansion Struggle: Progress Report].”
Kokuritsu Murayama ryōyōshō [Murayama National Hospital], August 24, 1955.
the hospital was constantly haunted by the planes that flew morning and night, which made sleep for the hospital’s patients impossible (an experience also recounted by Sunagawa’s children). “The intense blasts of the jets passing over the hospital,” the report read, “are constantly disrupting the rest and sleep of our patients, some of whom complain of impaired breathing [dyspnea], also creating a condition where it is impossible for the doctors to listen internally [auscultation] to those patients who pass through coughing up blood.” As it was, jets were already buzzing a mere 30-50 meters over the top of the hospital, and doctors feared that they would only be flying closer if the runway were to be extended.

The example of the hospital union is a reminder that unions not rooted in agricultural labor still found cause to join the Sunagawa Struggle. Like many individuals in Sunagawa, the writers of the report bemoaned the fact that the Itsukaichi Highway would be split, cutting the village in half. Murayama Union’s “progress report” listed all of the anti-base related actions that occurred between June 16 and August 25, including a total of forty-three actions. The numbers indicate, therefore, protest actions being organized multiple times throughout each week. The events that hospital staff chose to list on their progress report are also helpful to understanding how a hospital union might confront the militarization of their workplace and, in doing so, align with local farmers. Some events speak specifically to the work of medical staff. On July 6 and 7, hospital staff conducted measurements of the jet “blasts” (bakuon). On
August 12, Murayama union members held a meeting in which it was decided that they would support hospitals that were in the communities around Kisarazu Air Base in Chiba, which was, as already mentioned, also tapped for a runway expansion. Among these actions was a major rally of some 1,300 people that hospital workers and doctors joined on June 18, 1955, when battle plans were drawn for the upcoming land surveys.\(^{213}\) Other events were smaller in scale, but nonetheless notable. For example, during three consecutive days at the end of June, procurement officials attempted to conduct walk-thru surveys but were stopped each time by protesters, which included hospital staff.

Along with Kawabata and Yazaki, the Procurement Office sent Director-General Fukushima to push through land surveys. For hospital staff, the lines connecting the Sunagawa Struggle to national political debates were clear. On July 29, the hospital delivered a petition to all the major government agencies in Tokyo. The petition articulated the lack of support that the hospital, and particularly the patients, were receiving from the ruling conservative party. In comparison to what it identified as the support and encouragement it was receiving from members of the Socialist left faction, conservative leaders did not care “at all” about hospital patients. Conservative leaders had even suggested that it simply could not be helped that the hospital might need to be relocated.

Such a relocation would, obviously, create immense obstacles for Sunagawa

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\(^{213}\) “Tachikawa kichi kakuchō hatai tōsō—keika hōkoku” (“Tachikawa Anti-Base Expansion Struggle—Progress Report”) Yonsha kyōsō kaigi (Quadrapartite Joint Struggle Committee), Murayama National Hospital (Kokuritsu Murayama ryōyōshō), August 24, 1955. See also Miyaoka, Records, 226.
locals to receive the care that they had heretofore received uninterrupted for years. The petition bemoaned that the conservatives “cannot understand the standpoint of the patients, only the government’s policy.” Doctor Nawa, the local district director of the Japan National Hospital Workers’ Union (Zeniro) helped to present the petition and had the following exchange with procurement officer Fukushima:

Dr. Nawa: “We oppose the expansion because of the effects it will have on the patients.”
Director Fukushima: “If we don’t expand, it [the base] will no longer be useable, so if there is actual proof of bad things happening to the hospital, is the hospital going to move or is the base going to move? If the base is relocated a lot of people are going to be unemployed. Tachikawa is against relocation.”
Dr. Nawa: “We may be doctors but we don’t have a method for actual proof.”
Director Fukushima: “Well if doctors are going judge something is bad then it’s natural that they would have some proof.”
Dr. Nawa: “What about a letter? What if we submit it to the Ministry of Health and Welfare?”
Director Fukushima: “Ask the Ministry, if you can give them data on the tolerable [noise] limits of the patients, concretely documented, then you’ll have a grade A argument.”

The medical union could not readily meet, much less overcome, the bureaucratic logic that Fukushima demanded. It was a difficult situation for the doctors. It was obvious that hospital patients were not able to sleep or rest, that some were developing breathing problems, and that some even began to develop instances of coughing up blood. The everyday lives of their patients were not only uprooted by the base expansion, but even the most fundamental desires for

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214 “Tachikawa kichi kakuchō hatai tōsō—keika hōkoku” ("Tachikawa Anti-Base Expansion Struggle—Progress Report") Yonsha kyōsō kaigi (Quadrapartite Joint Struggle Committee), Murayama National Hospital (Kokuritsu Murayama ryōyōshō), August 24, 1955.
rest and recuperation were denied by the presence of the base. The burden of proof rested solely on the doctors to make a clear link the harmful effects of jet blasts. It is noteworthy that in such instances of government actions, vague proclamations regarding the benefits of the military bases—they provide security and peace in Asia—rarely necessitate “actual proof” in order for them to be pushed through. The state is allowed to employ ambiguous language in order to push its own agendas, and yet when those agendas meet resistance, the state demands specificity. The doctors and anti-base protestors needed an entire range of “documents,” verifiable proof, in order to even begin to consider approaching the Ministry of Health. We can think of this as the protestors’ burden of proof, which is, by design, meant to never actually succeed. It fell to the protestors to investigate, detail, and report on the deleterious effects of jet blasts on their patients. On top of this, they were expected to produce these results in a very short amount of time and, even if said results were found to be compelling, there was no guarantee, or even a hint, that the base expansion plan might be put on hold. The government’s Procurement Office, however, was not compelled to produce such evidence for the supposed benefits that were to come with the base expansion. The protestor’s burden of proof, fought against the unencumbered right of the state, is nearly impossible to effectively demonstrate.
Figure 9 “Tachikawa kichi kakuchō hatai tōsō—keika hōkoku” (“Tachikawa Anti-Base Expansion Struggle—Progress Report”) Yonsha kyōsō kaigi (Quadrapartite Joint Struggle Committee), Kokuritsu Murayama ryōyōshō (Murayama National Hospital), August 24, 1955.

The Murayama National Hospital’s willingness to play such an active role in the Sunagawa Struggle was not altogether unique, and in fact indicated the wide spectrum of interest groups that opposed the Tachikawa base expansion. Throughout the summer of 1955, Sunagawa was alive with boisterous rallies nearly every week, filled with a seemingly endless series of speakers. The rallies varied their locations primarily between four areas: a sit-in along the Itsukaichi
Highway, the farmland just opposite the barbed wire fence and runway on the base, the Azusamitengu Shrine, and the Sunagawa Town Hall.

On August 21 (around the same time that the hospital union was issuing its progress report), the Procurement Office issued a statement to the residents and farmers in the expansion zone. Because the previous inspections had to be postponed (due to the protestors), they would begin the new surveys on the August 24. In a coordinated strategy that would be replicated repeatedly during the Struggle, Sunagawa protestors were mobilizing against a series of attempted land surveys by the Procurement Office. The Alliance had divided its members into numbered “mobilization corps” (kōdōtai) that were assigned different locations from which to be prepared to block surveyors. On this particular day, the protesters included 50 members of the National Railway Hachiōji branch office. On other days, the numbers of people in the kōdōtai could reach into the thousands.

Student activists were an important in bringing a large number of bodies to the barricades of Sunagawa. On June 26, 1957, the Hōsei University All-Student Autonomous Joint Committee issued a pamphlet informing their members of the immense stakes behind the Struggle, arguing that the protests was not simply about Japan, but rather the entirety of world peace. Despite whatever rhetoric the Japanese and American governments promulgated to support their case for the new runway, the students argued that the base would
only become another “nuclear base,” and the nation’s newspapers were simply mouthpieces of the U.S. military.\footnote{Hôsei daigaku zengaku jiji kyōgikai. “Sunagawa Tōsō Ha Mitabi Yattekita!” Hôsei University, June 26, 1957. Ōhara Institute for Social Research for Social Research.}

**Conclusion**

As this chapter has argued, the Sunagawa Struggle brought together a large network of people who had engaged with the immensity of the protests at the level of the everyday. While the U.S. military attempted to communicate a sense of equitable camaraderie between the military and Japanese workers on the base, many of the people who lived in Sunagawa felt that the military and its base were oppressive and unconcerned with their quality of life. Sunagawa families did not all have the same stakes in the Struggle, but the records that activists produced during the Struggle indicated that the government’s heavy-handed police response was both frightening and enraging.

The totality of the protests meant that entire families were swept into the frontlines of the Struggle, the framework of which often depended on the labor of the local women who performed the Herculean feat of reproducing the home while also challenging the Japanese government and U.S. military. Women challenged both the geopolitical conditions that demanded the presence of bases, as well as the local Japanese bureaucrats and official whom they felt were neglecting their duties in representing local communities.

In the following chapter, we will expand our view to understand the relationship between Sunagawa and other anti-base and anti-military protests.
that were occurring the Kantō region during the same period. In doing so, we will also understand the significance and impact of the Sunagawa Incident on these movements.
Chapter Four: Protest Nation: Anti-Base Struggles in the Fields and Courts

The anti-base movement in Sunagawa did not occur in a political, social, or geographical vacuum. The runway expansion plan was part of a larger move by the U.S. military to extend the runways of several bases in Japan, including the nearby Yokota Air Base, as well as bases in Komaki City (Aichi Prefecture), Kisarazu (Chiba Prefecture), and Niigata City (Niigata Prefecture). While the Sunagawa Struggle was the biggest and most well known anti-base movement in the 1950s, there was resistance around many military bases, including those in Okinawa.

I begin this chapter with a brief look at the more well-studied and still vibrant case of anti-military base protest in Okinawa; however, my overall focus will remain on the anti-base protests in the Tokyo region. The Tokyo protests were not simply instances of the same as those in Okinawa. As this chapter will demonstrate, protests in and around Tokyo were conducted under entirely different legal regimes than those of colonized Okinawa. These legal and bureaucratic distinctions meant that there could not be a concentrated, unified movement against American militarism between the Japanese mainland and Okinawa.

An encyclopedic attempt to survey all of the anti-base protests throughout Japan during the 1950s and 1960s would be an immense undertaking. Instead, I will compare and contrast a select few examples, which
will allow me to elucidate the contours of experience of other examples of local resistance. Finally, this chapter will highlight the Sunagawa Incident—the important legal battle that came out of the Struggle—and the widely reported and discussed court challenges of the late 1950s that rankled the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty.

**Okinawan Contexts, Okinawan Protests**

Anti-base sentiment was rampant throughout those communities who endured the U.S. military’s “bulldozers and bayonets” during the island-wide 1950s base construction and expansion in Okinawa. Japan’s southernmost prefecture remained under U.S. military administration until 1972, leaving Okinawans without recourse in bringing their complaints to the Japanese government, which created a very different bureaucratic and legal environment that was not experienced elsewhere in Japan.⁴¹⁶

Okinawa was a military colony, and all rights and privileges granted or denied to Okinawans were at the prerogative of the U.S. military, which dictated everything from the direction of traffic flows (on the right-side, akin to the U.S. and unlike Japan) to the issuing of travel visas. The United States Civil Administration of the Ryūkyū Islands (USCAR) was, in some ways, a euphemism

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for what in actuality was an entirely military government in Okinawa. There was some level of nominal civil sovereignty within Okinawa that allowed for the elections of local officials as well as some level of town and prefectural governance, but the highest laws of the islands were those dictated by the U.S. military, not Okinawan or Japanese administrations. Importantly, this also meant that Okinawans were not able to bring their base-related grievances to a Japanese court in the way that the people of Sunagawa had their grievances aired in a Tokyo court. By any measure, Okinawa was not simply a military treaty port, as could be said about any of the bases on the mainland.

This difference in legal regimes created conditions that shaped Okinawan anti-base protests. During the 1950s, for example, farming families from the island of Iejima, an amoeba-shaped island just off of the west coast of the main island of Okinawa, were vocal opponents to the military’s appropriation of their farmland for use in the construction of what would become the Marine Corps’ Ie Shima Auxiliary Airfield. Ahagon Shōkō, an Iejima native, was a prominent figure in the anti-base movement, which reached its apex during the massive base-building program that overtook the island during the years after the Korean War. In 1955, after several years of fruitless efforts to file petitions and bring lawsuits against the U.S. military government, the farmers of Iejima embarked on a “beggars’ march (kojiki kōshin)” around much of the island in an attempt to gain
support for their cause. During many of the early negotiations [though, this term is not adequate, for it assumes a level of equality in the discussions] with the military, Iejima families would make the long and arduous trip from Iejima to the Okinawan capital of Naha. The farmers arrived at the military headquarters—many in ragged clothes, some barefoot—and were never taken seriously by the people who sought to evict them from their land. The American officials, rarely inviting the farming families into their offices for a formal meeting, would simply dismiss the group and tell them to come again another day, or file another tedious and legally alien round of paperwork. In an attempt to claim control over their appearance of destitution (that the military both created and reviled), Iejima’s farmers took their protests to the roads around Okinawa that led to Naha. The march was an important symbol of resistance, but also a poignant reminder that the undeniably colonial and military-legal structure in Okinawa did not allow for citizens to directly effect policy through democratic processes. Ultimately, the farmers on Iejima could not prevent the construction of the base, but this did not mean that anti-base struggle did not continue. Ahagon remained a vocal advocate for the anti-base movement in Okinawa until his death in 2002.

All of this is not to say that popular uprisings in Okinawa could not and did not bring about some recognition from the U.S. military. Throughout the Cold War, vocal and boisterous anti-base movement was of such concern to military officials in Okinawa that entire offices on some bases were staffed by local translators whose sole task was to read and translate the local press for the benefit of American officials. During the late 1960s, at the height of the Vietnam War, anti-base resistance was of such concern for USCAR that even the slightest hint of any base opposition provoked deep anxiety among base officials. By offering one brief glimpse of a U.S. base expansion project in Okinawa, we can recognize the different political and colonial context under which Okinawans contested American militarism.

In 1969, for example, base officials at the deeply unpopular Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma made plans to evict Okinawan farmers who had, until that time, been allowed to farm small plots of land within the base. Ginowan and Futenma, the towns abutting the base were, like Sunagawa, primarily farming villages that were undergoing a profoundly militarized urbanization. Okinawan towns were situated in a space that was often an uneasy composition of shrinking farmland, bars, brothels, family neighborhoods and, of course, sprawling military complexes that were serving as staging grounds for war. The sociologist Anthony D. King referred to these as “ideal type” colonial cities, which necessitated the presence of both an indigenous settlement—which might be “a small town or village which grew as a result of its proximity to the
incoming colonial power”—and the colonial settlement.\(^{\text{218}}\) Certainly, many towns and villages in Okinawa fell under such a rubric. Newspaper accounts of the ideal type towns of Ginowan and Futenma depict a space that appears both lawless and yet inundated with both military and local police, evoking images of a frontier between highly bureaucratized military governance and a precarious, local agrarian experience.

In this environment that was increasingly hostile towards longtime farming practices, the military planned to erect new communications antennae in the leased cropland. Officials worried that the eviction of the famers would ignite local opposition and were horrified, therefore, when one of the island’s main newspapers, the \textit{Ryūkyū Shimpō}, published an expansive article that carried the headline: “After May, don’t farm on permitted farmland in Ginowan City!” The subheading read, “Notice from the U.S. military: about 80,000 square meters to be made into recreational facilities, etc.”\(^{\text{219}}\) The article expressed frustration at the way in which Ginowan officials had received the information, writing with a certain exasperation that “they [the U.S. military] once again failed to shed light on the fundamental reasons behind the notification, but a party related to the base said that there are plans to construct barracks, family units, and a golf course on the farmland.” Thus, local city officials were receiving the information from a secondary source. The same day that the article appeared in


the Ryūkyū Shimpō, a “talking paper” entitled “Proposed Clearance of Crops at MCAF Futenma” was issued by the U.S. military’s Legal Affairs Department.\footnote{Marine Corps Air Field (MCAF) was later changed to the current MCAS. “Talking Paper: Proposal Clearance of Crops at MCAF Futenma”. “Futenma Antenna Site Clearance.” Record Group 260: Records of the United States Occupation Headquarters, World War II. The Economic Department: 130 of HCRI-EC, Folder No. 9. Cataloged by the National Diet Library Japan and the Okinawa Prefectural Archives.} The talking paper was a summary of a meeting between the military’s Community Affairs (CA) office and the office of the High Commander (HICOM) which read, in part: “As a result of informal coordination by MCAF personnel with the municipal officials of Ginowan City, a large article appeared in the morning edition (25 February) of the Ryūkyū Shimpō, stating that MCAF intended to clear all agricultural areas within their facility by the end of April 1969, for construction purposes.” The paper further summarized the newspaper article, stating that the crop removal plan was needed for construction that “consists of housing, barracks and a recreational area, including a golf course.” Officials expressed concern that “opposition to the proposed clearance requirement will gain momentum and will probably be picked up by opposition elements in their continual attack against the best interest of HICOM and US.” The memo continued: “To avoid unnecessary opposition, it is recommended that HICOM advise the Senior Military Commanders on the Island of the seriousness of all land matters, including the acquisition and clearance of crops and that informal discussions with municipal officials is damaging to U.S. interests on these islands unless handled in the proper manner and with the prior approval
of the HICOM.” Given the large number of such memos that were issued throughout the antennae construction plan, it can be assumed that the newspaper translators on the base office worked overtime, desperately trying to keep base officials informed about the potential storm of opposition that threatened to spring from among the surrounding communities if base constructions were not handled with the most delicate of hands.

One important reason why the U.S. military feared Okinawan protests was because unrest would require direct American response. Unlike on the mainland, where the Japanese government and its security forces were obligated to provide security for U.S. bases, it was the American military that would be called upon to quell anti-base violence in Okinawa. In other words, the thousands of Japanese riot police bused to Sunagawa would not similarly be available for the U.S. military in Okinawa, given that prefecture’s status as a colonial military state. USCAR could not afford to underestimate Okinawan opposition to militarism.

U.S. officials who orchestrated the Futenma crop clearance scheme were experienced with previous occasions of crop removals and land clearances, which led them to believe that they knew what to expect from the 1969 plan. In early 1967, for example, military officials evicted farmers during two other clearance campaigns. In one of the instances, the procured land was sold to the Ryukyu Domestic Water Corporation, which was under the jurisdiction of
USCAR.221 This clearance apparently did not encounter resistance from the evicted farmers. However, another clearance plan in 1958-59 met with “unyielding opposition in Futenma.”222 In Nakahara village, near the site of the 1969 crop clearance, “over 100 village families” were found to be “encroaching upon U.S. property.” American military “attempts to effect voluntary clearance” (a masterful euphemism) were unsuccessful and, in the end, the villagers were able to win support from local municipal officials. A portion of the land was spared as the U.S. military sought to avoid the potential ramifications they feared would occur had they employed violence.223 This victory for the people of Nakahara Village (which was part of Ginowan City) had demonstrated that the threat of potentially large protests could force the U.S. military Land Department to acquiesce, or at least change its plans. By and large, military officials learned that other actions around the Futenma base should not be conducted without at least tacit support from Ginowan City officials.

For the 1969 antennae construction plan, however, the military’s fears turned out to be unwarranted; there was no substantial opposition on this occasion. One reason for this was that local Ginowan city officials were able to reach a settlement with the Americans in which the U.S. military made other farmland available to those farmers that had been dispossessed of their land by antennae construction. Another possible reason that major protests did not

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221 “CONFIDENTIAL: Request for Clearance of Crops, Futenma Receiver Site (U),” Date not given, but written in response to another letter dated 19 September 1967.
222 Ibid.
223 Ibid.
erupt in this case was that local elections in Ginowan, which were occurring simultaneously with the antennae construction plan, allowed locals the opportunity to voice their grievances through local political processes.

Nonetheless, fearing island-wide movements such as those organized by Ahagon Shoko and the residents of Iejima, the military was right to pay attention to the islands’ press in order to better understand local sentiments.

**National Anti-Base Coalition**

On the mainland bases were resisted under a very different set of political and social circumstances. The struggle against militarization and urbanization in Tokyo’s suburbs, I have attempted to suggest, was experienced differently in Okinawa, precisely because its postwar context was so different. This is an important distinction because the legal framework for those protests in Tokyo allowed for grievances to be brought directly to Japanese officials who, unlike Okinawan officials, did have ultimate legal authority.

In addition, anti-base movements on the mainland were able to engender broad coalitions of activists from around the archipelago; urban student groups, intellectuals, and labor unions could travel to Sunagawa, Uchinada, Niigata, or Komaki City in order to join the front lines in solidarity. In other words, it was possible for thousands of protestors to board buses after they finished school or work and travel to Sunagawa for a day or two. Such a trip would have been impossible to Okinawa, not only because of the great distance from the mainland, but because the U.S. military greatly limited travel to and from Okinawa.
Therefore, while anti-base organizations on the mainland could support Okinawan struggle discursively and theoretically, it was incredibly difficult to do so with one's own physical presence.

As with the Sunagawa farmers and Tachikawa Air Base, locals near other military bases provided much of the impetus for anti-base movements and, as a result, produced a significant amount of textual sources, including newspapers, pamphlets, and personal testimonies. In addition to these sources, much of this chapter will draw from the records of the National Anti-Base Coalition (Zenkoku gunji kichi hantai renketsu kaigi), which was, as the name suggests, an umbrella organization for anti-base groups throughout Japan.

Headquartered in the Sōhyō Administration building in the Shibakoen neighborhood of Tokyo, the National Anti-Base Coalition (hereafter “Coalition”) was headed by senior Sōhyō officials and Socialist Party lawmakers. The Council held annual conferences that brought together anti-base groups from around the country and also produced its own newspaper, Kichi Shimpō, along with a handful of more expansive base studies. These publications provide an important lens through which to understand the wider anti-base struggle throughout the 1950s.

While Sunagawa was the most immense, other base protests in the Tokyo region demonstrated that citizen attempts to reimagine their own militarized spaces was a widespread occurrence in the years preceding the Ampo protests. During the 1950s, Japan’s place within the U.S. geopolitical sphere was a central
concern to Japanese politicians on both the Left and the Right. In September 1955, the Coalition held a major rally in Hibiya Park, long a venue for Japan's disenfranchised to boisterously demand government action. Hibiya Park was an important staging ground for Coalition protests, which were often attended by over one thousand representatives from around the country. On November 22, 1955, the Coalition published a report detailing the meeting held for its fourth annual convention of national anti-base representatives. The report included the names and contact information for the lead delegates from various organizations, which illustrated the geographical breadth of the attendees: Yamagata, Osaka, Chiba, Niigata, Yamanashi, and Kanagawa, to name a few. Some of the organizations were wholly focused on anti-base issues, like the Kansai Anti-Base Roundtable Conference (Kansai kichi hantai kondankai), while others, such as the Ginza District Peace Issues Social Gathering (Ginza chiku heiwa mondai konwakai), concerned themselves with a broad variety of peace related activities. In his opening statement to the conference, Oyama Yoshiharu, then president of Sōhyō’s government affairs, believed that the Procurement Office was expressing its own desperation on the Sunagawa expansion when it declared that surveyors had “finished the survey” at a time when it was clear to anyone in Sunagawa that protesters had prevented any such survey. The Procurement Office’s tactic appeared to be to suggest that any further protests

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would be gratuitous. Oyama struck a combative tone, instead suggesting that the Sunagawa Struggle was not only still continuing, but was “at the center of the nation’s base struggles, is become the struggle for all citizens.”

For the moment, Oyama suggested a five-fold approach to continuing and expanding the anti-base movement. Firstly, he encouraged people to travel to Niigata and Aichi in order to assist the locals with their own anti-base movement. Oyama suggested that the protest methods in other parts of the country should employ those that had thus far been successful in Sunagawa, particularly the inclusion of women's and youth organizations. To this effect, Oyama declared that the publication of Sunagawa Bunshū by Sunagawa Junior High School (detailed in Chapter Three) was an important contribution to spreading awareness. Second, Oyama suggested increasing signature campaigns, the results of which would be presented to both President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Hatoyama. This campaign would also require increasing the amount of publications (flyers, pamphlets) that the Coalition produced and distributed. Third, increase fundraising was necessary. Fourth, the movement needed to encourage intellectuals to join the movement, since they would be able to spread information through mass media. Finally, the Coalition should align itself with

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legal associations who could help to take the fight to the courts. It was clear that Oyama planned for the expansion of the anti-base movement throughout the latter half of the 1950s, which would be possible by broadening the geographic scope of the group’s activities, garnering allies who were connected with mass media, and, importantly, preparing for legal battles by identifying sympathetic lawyers.

**Unconditional Opposition: The SDF at North Fuji and Niijima**

Given that date of its November 1955 publication, it was not surprising that the Council referred to the Sunagawa Struggle as “the most important base issue,” though anti-base representatives clearly recognized that Sunagawa was not alone. Activists also expressed concern about the “Honest John” rockets that the U.S. military was using at the North Fuji Practice Range that straddled the border between Shizuoka and Yamanashi Prefectures, as well as the local protests against the U.S. base in the Otakane Village, now within the city of Murayama, Niigata Prefecture. Yoshida Hōsei, a left faction Socialist Party lawmaker, reported that he and representatives from the base communities in Sunagawa, Niigata, Komaki (Aichi Prefecture), Kisaradzu (Chiba Prefecture), and Itadzuke (Fukuoka Prefecture), had met with an official at the U.S. embassy and expressed their absolute opposition to all base expansion plans; a move that, not

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surprisingly, indicated the extent to which the Japanese Socialist Party supported anti-base movements well beyond those of Sunagawa.

The Coalition’s August 1959 magazine, “Confronting The Military Situation And The Base Struggle In The Age Of ICMBs [intercontinental ballistic missiles],” was published in the brief historical moment between the Date and Supreme Court rulings that brought some level of legal closure to the Sunagawa Struggle (to be detailed later in this chapter). With some satisfaction, Oyama prefaced the edition by reflecting that “We have obviously made many mistakes in our fight, but our difficult and steadfast struggle has stopped the U.S. military’s expansions and new construction, derailed the SDF’s defense plans, and now everyone in Japan can see the ‘Date Judgment’ [the Tokyo ruling that U.S. bases violated Article Nine] of Sunagawa as the understanding that ‘the stationing of the U.S. military is unconstitutional’; [the judgment] is becoming something for all citizens of Japan.”228 Oyama’s triumphant tone in response to the ruling was not altogether surprising; at the time, the Sunagawa Struggle appeared to have been largely successful. At the same time, Oyama hints that other base issues remain, including those related to Japan’s own military forces.

In the months before the Ampo protests fully erupted in late 1959 and through the summer of 1960, the major American bases that the Coalition focused its opposition against were listed in its magazine according to military

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228 Zenkoku Gunji kichi hantai renraku kaigi shiyakusho. ICMB Jidai No Tōmensuru Gunji Jōsei to Kichi Tōsō (Confronting The Military Situation And The Base Struggle In The Age Of ICMBs), August 20, 1959. 2. Ōhara Institute for Social Research for Social Research.
branch, which included the Navy (Yokosuka and Sasebo), the Marine Corps’ air bases (Atsugi and Iwakuni), the Air Force (Tachikawa, Yokota, Fuchū, Itadzuke, and Misawa), and the Army (Zama). At the same time, other bases, considerably smaller in scale, were also given attention, a reflection of both the breath of and scale of anti-base resentment in the region. While the industrial pollution, crime, and immense militarized urbanizations that occurred in these base communities is relatively simple to recognize, brief attention to some of the protests in more remote villages in Japan helps to demonstrate the anxieties of dispossession among other agrarian communities.

As it had been in 1955, the North Fuji Practice Range was still deeply opposed by locals, among whom three thousand households had formed their own alliance called the Mount Fuji Common Union (Fujisan Nyūkai Kumiai). Protestors near Mount Fuji were opposed to the use of the facilities by either the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF) or the American military, since the base was under joint administration. As had been the case with the farmers of Sunagawa, many of the locals living in the farmland at the base of Mount Fuji protested both the dangers inherent with living near a militarized space (a missile-firing practice ground, no less), but also the dispossession of their farmland. They demanded that, “after the U.S. military withdraws and returns the land to the farmers, they restore our various rights and interests that they unilaterally

229 Zenkoku Gunji kichi hantai renraku kaigi shiyakusho. ICMB Jidai No Tōmensuru Gunji Jōsei to Kichi Tōsō (Confronting The Military Situation And The Base Struggle In The Age Of ICMBs), August 20, 1959. 10. Ōhara Institute for Social Research for Social Research.
suspended.” This included the return of 5,800 tsubo of land that they argued had been taken from them.\textsuperscript{230} Despite the years-long struggle against the North Fuji Practice Range, the land in question was never returned and the SDF and the U.S. military still jointly operate the base today. Opposition continues as well in the form of peace rallies and sit-ins organized by the local community.\textsuperscript{231}

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\textsuperscript{230} Zenkoku Gunji kichi hantai renraku kaigi shiyakusho. \textit{ICMB Jidai No Tōmensuru Gunji Jōsei to Kichi Tōsō (Confronting The Military Situation And The Base Struggle In The Age Of ICMBs)}, August 20, 1959, 16-17. Ōhara Institute for Social Research for Social Research.

\textsuperscript{231} The biography of Amano Jūchi, a veteran of the struggle against the practice range, offers an intriguing glimpse into the women and men who spearheaded protests against the North Fuji Practice Range. Madarame, Shunichirō. \textit{Kita Fuji Enshū-jō to Amano Jū Chi No Yume: Nyūkai-Ken O Meguru Shinobugusa No Tataki [The North Fuji Practice Range and the Dream of Amano Jūchi: The Fight of Shibokusa’s Common Rights]}. Tokyo: Sairyūsha, 2005.
The members of the Common Union were not the only ones to oppose shared facilities, an important reminder that not all bases were built solely for the American military. Since 1954, the year that the Self-Defense Forces were officially establish under intense pressure from the U.S., the SDF had been growing and establishing larger and larger base footprints, often through dual
SDF-U.S. military bases.\textsuperscript{232} Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the SDF was also building and repurposing its own new militarized spaces throughout the region. On the island of Niijima, part of the seven islands that make up the Izu Archipelago that stretches southward from Tokyo (and under the jurisdiction of the Tokyo municipal government), residents opposed the construction of massive missile range in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Unlike Sunagawa, which could not escape the urban sprawl of Tokyo, but similar to those farmers living at the foot of Mount Fuji, the villagers on Niijima were still primarily economically dependent on farming and fishing. Given the relatively low costs of the wheat and potatoes grown (rather than rice) grown by Niijima farmers, it can be surmised that these communities were by no means financially wealthy and therefore completely dependent on their land for even the meager earning it produced.\textsuperscript{233} In March 1961, the Meeting Network of Japan Mothers (\textit{Nihon Haha Oya Taikai Renraku-kai}) and the Network of Tokyo Mothers (\textit{Tōkyō Haha Oya Renraku-kai}) jointly published a petition calling for the cancellation of the missile facility. The association argued that “the missile base in Niijima is the first step in the Self-Defense Force's [development of] nuclear weapons and, just like [what is happening] in West Germany, will threaten world peace.” As part of its effort to assuage local discontent, the Japanese government appeared willing


\textsuperscript{233} Niijima is particularly famous for its \textit{kusaya}, a malodorous fish that is popular in local cuisine.
to construct new ports and facilities that could also be utilized by locals, but this too was rejected. The petition flatly demanded that “the construction of ports and other places necessary for residents’ livelihoods will be carried out separately under the jurisdiction of local government” and that all construction of the missile facility be immediately halted. As was the case in Sunagawa, the villagers in Nijima were not wholly united in opposition to the plan, a community division that was detailed in the 1961 documentary film simply entitled *Nijima*. In an advertisement for the film, the “agreeing faction,” framed as the antagonists, thought that the compensation from the Japanese Defense Agency (Bōeichō) “was like a sweet dream,” which cast a foreboding and “difficult outlook” among the opposition, who clearly had to overcome considerable obstacles in order to prevent the base from appearing on their island.

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Despite the fact that a portion of Nijima’s residents supported the Defense Ministry’s plan to construct new roads and other facilities as part of the missile facility package, many residents and their outside supporters remained opposed. As was also the case in Sunagawa, the anti-base protest in Nijima was similarly initiated by locals, who were later supported by umbrella organizations like Sōhyō. Even though Nijima was an all-night ferry’s distance from Tokyo, its proximity to the city’s anti-base activists gave its opposition considerable support. In addition to the anti-base networks that were affiliated with Sōhyyo,
smaller groups from Niijima and the surround islands joined in support of the opposition. These included the Missile Firing Range Opposition Alliance (*Misairu Shisha-jiyō hantai domēi*), the Opposition Faction Village Committee (*Hantai-ha Mura Kaigiin*), whose members included residents of the even smaller island of Shikinejima (a short swim from Niijima’s southern shore), and the Society for the Protection of Land (*Tochi wo Mamoru Kai*).

The cases of Niijima and North Fuji indicate that anti-base sentiment was not completely contingent on a platform of anti-U.S. militarism. That both of these bases were either joint-use or designed primarily for SDF training created a significant difference from the colonial condition felt by many of the Sunagawa protestors, who could not help but recognize that the military-driven dispossession of their land and livelihoods was being directed by a foreign power. Despite this, anti-base movements against SDF bases were not uncommon around SDF facilities.²³⁶

Unlike in Sunagawa, the protestors were ultimately unable to keep the Defense Agency from building its facilities on Niijima. Today, the tiny island hosts a branch Ministry of Defense’s Air Systems Research Center, which the Ministry proudly proclaims carries out joint-research and testing with White Sands Missile Range in the United States.²³⁷


Opposition Yokota and Other Air Bases

Only a few kilometers northwest of Tachikawa, Yokota Air Base was another important air facility for the Air Force. Officials who represented Yokota Air Base announced their own runway expansion at the same time as that of Tachikawa. At Yokota, the runway was to be expanded 150,000 *tsubo* with an additional 50,000 *tsubo* to be leased from the nearby town of Mizuho. The plan was met with a similar local response of “absolute opposition.”238 The case of Yokota expansion bore other similarities to Tachikawa. In 1955, the town of Mizuho and the village of Sayama sat at the northern end of the Yokota runway and would be irrevocably changed with the runway expansion. However, unlike in Sunagawa, the base expansion at Yokota was successful in large part because local landowners agreed to the government’s compensation plan. In a July 5, 1956 edition of *Base News* (*Kichi Shimpō*), the Coalition brought its readers the latest in the negotiations between procurement officials and residents in the expansion area, detailing what exactly those “conditional residents” would receive. The government announced that the highest price it would pay for each *tan* of farmland (roughly 1000 square meters) was 340,000 yen, while land used for tea and mulberry would only receive 80,000 yen per *tan*. Landowners would also receive a “cooperation reward” (*kyōryoku sharei*) of anywhere between 50,000 to 350,000, depending on how much land they owned, which meant that the largest landowners had even greater incentives to relinquish their land to

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the military. On top of direct land payments, the government offered to move the Japan Railway Hachiko Line from outside of the expansion area and relocate the Mizuho Junior High School. In addition, the plan called for soundproofing the Mizuho Number Four Elementary School in an effort to combat jet noise pollution but was, in fact, an exercise in futility that would be repeated for decades in neighborhoods around Yokota.\footnote{1 \textit{tan} = 300 \textit{tsubo}. “Yokota Ni Hoshō Jōken Ni Dasu [Compensation Conditions given to Yokota].” \textit{Kichi Shinpō [Base News]}, July 5, 1956. Ōhara Institute for Social Research for Social Research.}

Fear that Yokota would similarly be turned into a base that harbored nuclear weapons was also a strong incubator of anti-base sentiment. The September 20, 1950 issue of \textit{Fujirōren}, the “home edition” bulletin published by the United Association of Nachi-Fujikoshi Labor Unions (\textit{Fujikoshi rōren kumiai rengō-kaï}), called on members to “oppose the expansion of nuclear bases” (\textit{genshi kichi}) and understand that “people can’t live when land is taken away.” In places like Yokota, “warmongers fight locals” over land that has been repeatedly been confiscated. Land had already been taken four times, the bulletin warned, and roughly one-fourth of the surrounding towns had been paved under and surrounded with barbed-wire. Like Sōhyō’s National Anti-Base Coalition, the workers at Nachi-Fujikoshi similarly expressed solidarity with those opposing base expansions in Komaki City, Niigata City, Kisaradzu, Tachikawa, all of which were feared to become “nuclear bases.”\footnote{\textit{Fuji Rōren}, September 20, 1950. Ōhara Institute for Social Research for Social Research.} While the base expansion plan at Tachikawa was eventually cancelled, and the other bases...
were turned over to the SDF, the base expansions at Yokota was fully realized, helping it become one of the largest American air bases in East Asia.

**Anti-Base Fodder: The Girard and Lucky Dragon Incidents**

Crimes and pollution that originated from American military spaces, as discussed in Chapter Three, were major contributors to the growing anti-base sentiment in the 1950s and 1960s. Outside of Sunagawa, two major events of the 1950s are consistently referenced by anti-base activists as important in understanding both the unequal nature of the Japan-U.S. relationship as well as the seeming unaccountability of the U.S. military to address the problems raised by its immense concentration of militarized spaces: the Lucky Dragon Incident and the Girard Incident.

The Lucky Dragon Incident, in which the fallout from an American hydrogen bomb test on the Bikini Atoll in March 1954 irradiated hundreds of Japanese tuna fishing boats, was widely viewed in Japan as a third nuclear incident (after those at Hiroshima and Nagasaki) and one that poisoned a major food source for a still desperate nation. The crew and catch aboard the Lucky Dragon became the first victims of the test, showing signs of radiation poisoning when they returned to their homeport in Shizuoka. Their tuna catch, along with hundreds of tons of irradiated tuna from other ships, where sent to markets throughout Japan before the radiation was discovered, spreading the fear of contamination into every town and village in Japan. The widespread fear of contamination and the mass media’s detailed and prolonged reportage on the
fishermen stricken with radiation poisoning had a profound effect on Japanese social movements. In a campaign organized largely by Japanese housewives associations, petitions calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons garnered nearly twenty million signatures. That this campaign was largely organized by housewives associations is an important indicator that women’s groups were, as the Sunagawa Struggle also demonstrated, immensely important to peace activism in 1950s, well before the Anpo protests. Along with the immense importance of women’s activism in the petition campaign, national memory certainly played a large role as well. The nuclear attacks on Nagasaki and Hiroshima occurred only nine years before the Lucky Dragon Incident, which led many Japanese to wonder why their nation was singled-out to suffer so heavily in the nuclear age.

In this environment in which nuclear testing in the Pacific was coinciding with military base expansion in Japan, freshly paved runways in Japan became directly linked to Lucky Dragon Incident, radiation, and the global potential for nuclear war. Throughout much of the literature and records on the Sunagawa Struggle, activists reference to the role of the Lucky Dragon Incident in prompting their motivations to join the movement against the base expansion. Specifically, activist pamphlets acknowledged fears about the expansion of the runway being used for the larger planes that were being designed with the specific intention of carrying hydrogen bombs. In 1954, the Committee on

Reporting Base Issues (Kichi Mondai Chōsa Inklai) summarized the teleology of Japan’s postwar experience as it was understood by many activists:

“Immediately after the end of the war, the American army occupied lands used by the former Japanese military, facilities were completely taken over, and—with what became the main point of the occupation of Japan—completed the expansion of bases equipped with atomic and hydrogen bombs in order to bomb and invade in the Korean War.” In order to further articulate the link between military bases and nuclear weapons, victims of the 1945 atomic attacks sometimes made public visits to movements around the country, including Sunagawa. According to Nakamoto Takako (1903-1991), who witnessed and wrote two books on the Sunagawa Struggle, hibakusha from Hiroshima travelled to Sunagawa in support of the protestors.

On January 20, 1957, Sakai Naka, a forty-six year-old farmer in Sōmagahara, Gunma Prefecture, was shot and killed as she collected empty shell casings near a firing range on a nearby American military base. At first, military officials reported that, unbeknownst to any of the soldiers firing that day, she had been hit by a stray bullet. Other farmers who were also collecting scrap metal said that, in fact, the soldier who fired the gun spoke directly to Sakai. William Girard, the soldier who shot Sakai, reportedly asked the dying woman, “Mama-san, daijyobu?” (“Mama, are you ok?”). It was later confirmed that Sakai

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had been shot with an empty casing grenade launcher, an indication that Girard was, as many witnesses claimed, simply “toying” with Sakai, purposefully shooting spent casings in the direction of scrap collectors. This would become an important factor in the court case that followed.

In 1958, one writer, Usui Yoshimi, felt that the Girard Incident exposed even more troubling truths beyond the violence and imperialism with which many Japanese associated American military bases. Usui wrote: “I think that biggest impression this incident left me with was the Japanization of U.S. military bases. It is true that U.S. bases have a strong impact on Japanese humanity and livelihood. Until now, in almost all cases, we have talked about and theorized how the U.S. occupational forces have impacted us Japanese. However, in the case of the Girard Incident, what we are told is the opposite.”

In other words, while there was much discussion of the positive and negative impacts American bases were having, the contemporary state of impoverishment and depredation in Japan had also had an impact on American bases.

According to Usui, on any given day, there were hundreds of people clamoring around the firing range, many of whom were not locals, but residents of more distant towns and villages who nonetheless came to the area to collect scrap metal. On the day that Sakai was killed, hundreds of people were running throughout the range in between firing sessions, competing with one another for bits of scrap metal. That day, Sakai had told her husband, a local town official,

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that she would not be going to the firing range (that the family of a village official was so destitute is also a telling reminder of the high poverty that remained in Japan’s rural areas throughout this period). However, the incentive of earning as much as 2,000 yen was too difficult to resist. Prior to her death, the American officials were aware of the dangers for people who came to the base to scavenge. There had been injuries and even one death prior to the Girard Incident, which led base officials to post “no entry” signs in the area. The punishment for trespassing was not serious enough to deter scavenging; no more than one year in prison or no more than 2,000 yen, roughly the same amount that a scrap collector could expect to earn in one day. Some of the soldiers, Usui wrote, were sympathetic to the hundreds of impoverished adults that visited the base and sometimes handed them handfuls of bullets and other metals. Other soldiers would purposefully tease the scavengers, purposefully shooting in their direction. Ultimately, it was the military’s disinclination to prosecute scavengers that encouraged people from all over Gunma to descend on the firing range. It was this “killing of the law” (kūbun ni kashiteita), with tacit approval of dangerous scrap collecting that was essentially an acknowledgment and accommodation of the poverty of people living in the base periphery. It was, therefore, the poverty of 1950s Japan that had crept over the “no entry” signs of the firing range, onto an American space that was relatively affluent, that led to the “Japanization” of U.S. military bases.\textsuperscript{245}

\textsuperscript{245} Usui, Yoshimi. “Jirādo Jiken No Oshieru Mono.” In Gendai Kyōyō Zenshū, edited by Yoshimi
The Girard Incident, like the Sunagawa Struggle, was also a national legal battle. The question for the courts was whether or not Girard would be tried in a Japanese court or face a U.S. military tribunal. The American side argued that because Gerard was on official duty at the time of the killing, the U.S. military was given jurisdiction under the Security Agreement. Facing a population that was growing increasingly resentful of the heavy U.S. military presence, the Japanese government argued that because Girard had been firing blanks (essentially “playing”), he was not on official duty at the time of the killing.

Girard had, as U.S. military policy tacitly allows, fled Japan back to his home in Illinois until the two governments came to a decision on Girard’s prosecution. Eventually, the U.S. military agreed to allow Girard’s case to be adjudicated in Japan, and while Girard appealed that decision to the American Supreme Court, the U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles intervened and Girard was sent back to Japan to stand trial. At the same time Prime Minister Ishibashi Tanzan fell ill, heralding in the Kishi Nobusuke administration that was keen to quickly reach a resolution and quiet the media storm surrounding the case. Girard was found guilty of inflicting of bodily injuries and, as is often the case with soldiers who are tried in Japanese courts, was handed a very lenient three-year suspended sentence, which meant that he was able to return to the U.S. immediately after the verdict.246

The next section interrogates the role of the Sunagawa protests in fomenting what became the strongest legal critique of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in postwar Japanese history. The legal framework through which the Sunagawa Struggle and the Girard Incident became crises for the U.S.-Japan alliance is an important reminder that the political system that allowed for the presence of bases on the mainland differed immensely from that of Okinawa. The difficulty that victims faced when trying to bring their base-related grievances to the courts in colonized Okinawa would have made it nearly impossible for a critical legal battle like that fought over the Girard Incident to occur there.

For the mainland, however, the Girard Incident and the Sunagawa Incident were both moments when the military bases themselves were discussed in depth within a courtroom, the Tokyo District court no less. In the final section of this chapter, it will become apparent that the protests in Sunagawa challenged at the local level Tachikawa Air Base and, at the national level, the legality of American bases throughout the archipelago.

**The Sunagawa Incident**

On the night of September 22, 1957, Mutō Gunichirō (the Tokyo Agricultural and Industrial University student mentioned in the previous...

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chapter) was fast asleep in the dormitory that he shared with dozens of other college students when he was suddenly awoken by several policemen and quickly dragged to a police station.\footnote{Mutō, Gunichirō. Sunakawa Tōsō No Ki: Aru Nō Gakuto No Seishun. Tokyo: Kadensha, 2010. 98-103.} It was a jarring experience at the time, but not completely unexpected. Months earlier, on July 8, Mūto was standing with thousands of other protestors, arms linked in an effort to block land surveyors and their police entourage. He was three rows behind the front line protestors, whose heads were getting cracked with police batons. In an instant, the scrum surged forward and, before he was aware of just how far he had advanced, he was standing inside of the base. It was certainly a chaotic scene: there were hundreds of people screaming all around him; arms and batons waving through the air, the injured dragged being dragged away. On the night Mutō was arrested, another twenty-two other people were also arrested and charged with trespassing onto the U.S. base, a moment which marks the actual beginning of what came to be known as the “Sunagawa Incident” (Sunagawa jiken).

Eventually, Mutō and six others were prosecuted by the Japanese government: Narita Shigeru (factory worker), Kanno Katsuyuki (factory worker), Takano Yasutarō (factory worker), Eda Fumio (student), Tsuchiya Gentarō (student), Mutō Gunichirō (student), and Shiino Tokuzō (national railway employee).\footnote{Along with Mutō, Narita and Tsuchiya also continue to be a vocal advocates for the protection of Article Nine. Even in recent years he has spoken at colloquia and other events.} It is noteworthy that none of those who were prosecuted were local farmers. Those arrested were charged with trespassing in the Tokyo
District Court, under which crimes committed (by people other than Americans, obviously) in Sunagawa and Tachikawa would be adjudicated.

By bringing the case to the Tokyo District Court, prosecutors were, perhaps unwittingly, codifying what had long been understood by many people in Tokyo; the city and the region were heavily militarized spaces. As discussed in Chapter One, the militarized spaces of Tachikawa did monopolize the spaces in which they operated, but were instead capable of seeping into every aspect of everyday life, so much so that militarism could be rendered invisible by its immensity. Throughout Tokyo, the presence of bases, military personnel, and war equipment haunting the surrounding skies and seas, was a part of the urban and suburban environment in the 1950s. It is then perhaps no surprise that it would be a Tokyo court that would be the first to call into question the immense American military presence in Japan.

More specifically, the defendants were charged under a law that was specially designed to criminalize unauthorized entry onto U.S. Bases. Article Two of the “Administrative Agreement” that served as an addendum to the Article Three of the Security Treaty stated that:

“Any person who, without due cause, enters any place the entrance of which is prohibited or does not leave any place when requested, within facilities or areas in use by the United States armed forces (facilities or areas as defined in paragraph 1, Article II of Administrative Agreement; hereinafter the same) shall be sentenced to penal servitude for not more than one year or a fine of not more than 2,000 yen or minor fine.”

249 The complete title of the law is “The Law For Special Measures Concerning Criminal Cases To Implement The Administrative Agreement Under Article III Of The Security Treaty Between
The 1951 U.S.-Japan Security Treaty (Nipponkoku to Amerikagasshūkoku to no aida no anzen hoshōjōyaku), signed immediately after Japan regained its nominal independence from the American occupation and entered into force April 28, 1952, was the guiding framework under which American bases were permitted to exist in Japan. Article One of the Security Treaty stated:

“Japan grants, and the United States of America accepts, the right, upon the coming into force of the Treaty of Peace and of this Treaty, to dispose United States land, air and sea forces in and about Japan. Such forces may be utilized to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East and to the security of Japan against armed attack from without, including assistance given at the express request of the Japanese Government to put down large-scale internal riots and disturbances in Japan, caused through instigation or intervention by an outside power or powers.”

There were several reasons that the Security Treaty made many Japanese uneasy, not the least of which was that Article One allowed for the United States to intervene domestically, which was a major contention point during the treaty revisions of 1960. From the perspective of both governments, this clause was immensely important. In the cold war climate of the 1950s, both the Japanese and American government felt immense, and not entirely unrealistic, fears of domestic communist disturbances or perhaps even an attempted coup d’état. For example, after a forced hiatus during the war years, May Day protests

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Japan And The United States Of America,” most referred to in Japanese as Keiji Tokubetsu-ho horitsudai 138-go. Signs posted on the barbed-wire fences of American bases often cite this law as their rationale for denying access and/or pursuing prosecution of trespassers.

returned to Tokyo’s streets in 1946, with 500,000 marching, an event that was followed by “Food May Day” and “Student May Day” events during the same year. Similar protests occurred throughout the late 1940s and into the 1950s. In 1953, for example, union workers protested layoffs at the Miike mine in Kyushu, a movement that would reoccur several times throughout the 1950s. Andrew Gordon argued that “an extraordinary surge of organizing and radical union actions characterized the immediate postwar era,” which was a very troubling prospect for American cold war policy, a central pillar of which was ensuring that newly independent nations like Japan remain committed to staunchly capitalist markets.

On top of the clause that permitted U.S. military intervention, the Security Treaty allowed for the U.S. military to launch attacks elsewhere without first consulting the Japanese government, which only added to the potential that America’s wars abroad could threaten to embroil Japan at any time. Considering the rights that the Security Treaty granted the U.S.—the right to intervene, the right to use the entire nation as essentially a giant forward operating base—it became clear that the treaty, and indeed the amicable postwar Japan-U.S.

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relationship, was premised on an limitless and widespread presence of U.S. bases.

It was for this reason, along with Tokyo’s own widespread and extremely divisive base footprint, that the question that the Tokyo District Court took upon itself to answer was whether or not the Security Treaty, which allowed for the continued presence of American bases, violated Article Nine of the 1947 Constitution. The “peace clause” stated:

“Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.”253

In his judgment, the presiding judge, Date Akio, wrote, “it cannot be said that the stationing of the United States armed forces in our country is permitted under the Constitution.” Military bases, Date argued, clearly constituted war potential, the prohibition of which is clearly stated under Paragraph Two of Article Nine. This was a monumental decision, which sent shockwaves throughout the highest levels of the Japanese government and the U.S. military. Far from sending a message about the Japanese government’s seriousness in prosecuting those who violently opposed the runway expansion, the Date ruling delivered a powerful blow to the central component of the U.S.-Japan Security

Treaty—the U.S. military’s militarization of Japan’s topography. Throughout 1959, the year before the famous Ampo Protests shook many towns and cities in Japan, the legality of America’s military footprint became a central concern for the highest court in Japan. The historian Arakawa Shōji has confirmed as much, writing “The intense anti-base movement of the Sunagawa Struggle became synergized with the political conflict that divided public opinion over the revision of the security treaty. When the security treaty became a issue for the court, the role and significance of Article 9 had to be interpreted in depth.”254

Again, it is significant that the court case was adjudicated by the Tokyo court. As we have seen, Tachikawa Air Base was far from being the only military base in the region. When we include offices, barracks, and other facilities, we can estimate that there were (as there are now) at least three-dozen U.S. military facilities scattered throughout the Tokyo megalopolis.255 One result of this was that the Tokyo region was dense with military bases, so it was not coincidence that it was the Tokyo Metropolitan Court, with Date Akio, as the one that voluntarily called into question the presence of American bases.

The Japanese government, headed by the conservative administration of Kishi Nobusuke, appealed the verdict through the Tokyo prosecutor, which sent

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254 Arakawa Shōji, Yutakasa he no katsubō: sen kyūhyaku gojyūgonen kara genzai (The Craving for Wealth: From 1955 to Today), (Shōgakukan Publishers, 2009), 70. For a history of the judges’ careers after the Sunagawa rulings, see Foote, Daniel H. Law in Japan: A Turning Point. University of Washington Press, 2011. 123, 124. Foote also researched the 1973 Naganuma case, similar to the Sunagawa case in that for the former, a Sapporo district court ruled that the Self-Defense Forces violated Article Nine. As with the Sunagawa case, the Supreme Court overruled that decision.

255 The Department of Defense’s “Base Structure Report” offers a helpful glimpse into the numbers of military facilities in Japan today, but does not list all facilities.
the Date Judgment to the Supreme Court. Nine months later, the highest court in Japan ruled that the bases were indeed constitutional, paving the way for the governments’ re-signing of the deeply unpopular security agreement during the famous Ampo protests of 1960. The Supreme Court’s decision to overturn the Date Judgment was, in part, due to the carefully crafted language of the security treaty.

“The Security Treaty was concluded on the same day as the Treaty of Peace with Japan (Treaty No. 5, 28 April 1952), and it maintains a very close and inseparable relationship with that treaty. That is to say, under the proviso contained in Article 6 (a) of the Treaty of Peace, it is stated that ‘Nothing in this provision shall, however, prevent the stationing or retention of foreign armed forces in Japanese territory under or in consequence of any bilateral or multilateral agreements which have been or may be made between one or more of the Allied Powers’, thus, recognizing the stationing of foreign troops within the territorial limits of Japan.”

In his supplementary opinion, Supreme Court Justice Tanaka Kōtarō argued that the Tokyo District Court “uselessly complicated” what was a simple case of criminal trespassing. “Even if there is a dispute as to the constitutionality of stationing of foreign troops,” he wrote, “or even going a step further and assuming that the presence of the troops is unconstitutional, as long as the presence of such troops is an actual reality, it behooves us to respect such presence.” In a somewhat lazy, if not completely mysterious exercise in logic, the justice argued that since the U.S. military was already stationed in Japan, it is not necessarily constructive to debate whether or not they were constitutional; for

now, the court need only recognize that the bases should be afforded protection against trespassing. For Tanaka, the bases should be afforded the same protection as, say, people unlawfully residing in Japan: “Take the simplest example at hand, the presence of illegal entrants, in Japan. As long as they remain within our country, their life, liberty, property and other rights must be protected.”

Still, the justices recognized that the case had been brought before them precisely because the Tokyo court had indeed “complicated” the issue by questioning the constitutionality of the bases. Ironically, it was precisely the foreignness of the U.S. military that made them legal—or gave them immunity—under the constitution. The court ruled that “these Security Forces are foreign troops, and naturally they are not a war potential for our country.” The Japanese government would have no ability to govern or direct these “Security Forces,” thus rendering them beyond the question of whether or not Japan could be accused of illegally maintaining a military. However, if one did want to make the argument that the presence of the U.S. military constituted Japanese war potential, the Supreme Court justices had an answer to that as well.

“These armed forces are stationed here in accordance with the principle set forth in the Preamble to the Security Treaty, and as stated in Article I of the Treaty, these forces are to be utilized to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East and to the security of Japan against armed attack from without, including assistance given at the express request of the Japanese Government to put down large-scale internal riots and disturbances in Japan caused through instigation of, or intervention by, an outside power or powers. Its objective is to
maintain the peace and security of Japan and the Far East, including Japan, and to insure that never again shall we be visited by the horrors of war.”

In other words, the court based its judgment on the Japan’s treaty obligations that (the court did not hesitate to repeat) also happened to maintain peace and security throughout Asia. But the legal rationality behind the bases was cloaked in ever further layers beyond those already mentioned. The Supreme Court never explicitly mentioned the base expansion plan, and therefore was never necessitated to prove the legality of said plan. If it did, however, the base expansion would have likely been ruled legal under the 1952 Law Concerning the Special Measures for the Establishment of Landed Farmers, which “enables land owned by Japanese citizens to be expropriated for US bases.”

The movement in Sunagawa also foreshadowed criticism that arose in the 1960s against the Local Autonomy Law—under the rubric set out by Chapter Eight of the Constitution—which in part guarantees the right of local entities to manage local government property. As was the case in many places throughout Japan in the 1950s, the law was also used by the Japanese government as a legal means through which to appropriate land that was deemed necessary for national purposes. According to the legal scholar Yoshida Yoshiaki, the tendency during the economic boom of the 1960s was for greater concentration of wealth,

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power [and thus the control of land] under the national government, which made it increasingly difficult for local and regional governments to contest national land directives.259

There were no specific bases mentioned in the Supreme Court judgment. However, as we have seen, the Tachikawa base expansion project and the resistance it provoked were issues of immense national, and indeed international, importance. If the unconstitutionality of U.S. bases had been allowed to stand, then America’s geopolitical strategy of using Japan’s geography as a bulwark against Asian communism would have been under serious threat. Perhaps the “Domino Theory” of the Eisenhower administration, which argued that communism would spread throughout Asia if not stopped by American military action, would have instead become a wave of U.S. base eradication movements—inspired by the legal precedent of the Date judgment—throughout other militarily occupied nations, such as South Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines.

Anpo

Following the precedents set by the protestors in Sunagawa and the Date court, a wide spectrum of activists groups and labor unions soon mobilized to oppose the resigning on the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty (Nichibei anzen hoshō

jōyaku, abbreviated as Anpo). The 1960 treaty was meant to serve as an extension of the original 1951 security treaty, signed five hours after Japan concluded its peace treaty with the U.S. and forty-eight other nations. The earlier security pact, written while Japan was still under American military occupation, was meant to bring Japan firmly into the fold of western capitalism and give the American military a monopolized right to maintain bases and troops in Japan. With the communist victory in China and the Soviet attainment of nuclear power status in 1949, along the supposed threat of a communist Korean peninsula in 1950, the American need for a military agreement with Japan was important. Along with the treaty with Japan, similar American agreements with New Zealand, the Philippines, and Australia were all meant to encircle the rising communist threat.

Critics had long decried the 1951 security treaty as unfavorable to Japan, since it gave the U.S. the right to station troops in Japan without an obligation to use them for Japan's defense, while also allowing the Japanese government to call upon American forces to quell internal dissent. Lastly, the earlier treaty did not require that American consultation with their Japanese counterparts before using Japan-based troops to launch operations and attack other countries. By the time the treaty negotiations had concluded and the document was signed on January 16, 1960, the Japanese government had been able to remove these egregiously one-sided terms, but that did not stop the anti-Ampo momentum.

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Throughout the spring of 1960, the largest leftist groups in Japan, including the JSP, Sōhyō (Nihon Rōdō Kumiai Sōhyōgikai; General Council of Trade Unions[featured in Chapter Three]), the JCP, the National Federation of Neutral Trade Unions, Zengakuren (Zen-Nihon Gakusei Jichikai Sōrengō; All Japan Federation of Student Self-Government Associations). Sōhyō alone reported that nearly six million union members participated in the protests, which shut down vast swaths of Tokyo, prevented a visit from American president Dwight Eisenhower, and included nearly 100,000 men and women laying siege to the National Diet building on May 20, 1960. Even this, however, was not enough to stop the treaty from being signed.

Like Sunagawa, the Anpo protests were a media spectacle. Newspapers followed the story intensely and helicopter cameraman filmed the throngs of protesters jostling with police throughout the capital. When Kanba Michiko, a twenty-two year old Tokyo University student died during a round of violent struggles outside of the National Diet building on June 15, 1960, her death became a national sensation. Her death was a cause célèbre for the movement, particularly Zengakuren, who enshrined her place of death and asked that everyone remember that “a female college student has died.” To further commemorate her death, they asked that members “offer prayers for her sacrifice.” It was also an excuse to raise the level of militancy, as protesters

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began chanting “Capture the iron helmets [of the police]!” and “Police wearing iron helmets are still human: grab them!”

It is not an exaggeration to say that the Anpo Struggle was, for many people, a social movement and a historical moment that helped to define their generation. In some ways, the legacies of the Sunagawa Struggle were either erased from the memory of—or folded into—the historical legacies of the Anpo Struggle. In large part, this dissertation has been an attempt to resuscitate the Sunagawa Struggle and demonstrate that, while we can recognize the significance of the Anpo Struggle, we must also understand that without Sunagawa, the Anpo that is recognized as a significant historical moment would have been something else entirely.

As this chapter has demonstrated, the Sunagawa Struggle, the Date judgment, and the Supreme Court’s counter-ruling were all occurring as a wave of base resistance washed over Japan, particularly in and around the Tokyo region. When the Anpo protests began in earnest during the early moments of 1960, it bears remembering that it had only been a few short weeks since the Supreme Court issued its damning rebuttal to the Date Judgment. In order to better understand the actual (rather than hypothetical) implications of the Sunagawa Struggle for anti-base movements in the 1960s and beyond, the next and final chapter will return to a post-Date judgment and post-Anpo Tachikawa.

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Chapter Five: The Sunagawa Struggle as Memory

The Sunagawa Struggle inspired Takada Kōji, a playwright who produced several postwar yakuza and period films and was the lead writer behind the popular early 1960s television drama, “One-Eyed Jūbei” (Katame no jūbei). By invoking enemies that were often comprised of black-clad ninjas, the playwright wanted to “draw on the fear of dealing with faceless enemies,” a concept that came directly from his own experience in the violent protests during the Sunagawa Struggle: “Buzzing just above my head, those U.S. military warplanes gave me incredible fear, like they were threatening me. The riot police beat me, but I didn’t bleed for nothing.”263

In 2014, Takada told an Asahi Shinbun reporter that during the 1960s “fans started to get bored with star-studded period dramas. At the same time, that monster we call ‘television’ was emerging in living rooms. It was in this contest of ideas that I thought I would do new-era dramas.” For Takada, these new-era dramas, though still grounded in familiar tropes that involved wandering samurai, became known as assassin dramas (shūdan kūsō), of which One-Eyed Jūbei was among the most popular. The U.S. warplanes blasting over the skies of Tachikawa and Sunagawa in the 1950s inspired dagger-throwing faceless ninjas in a 1960s drama.

Well after the Anpo protests and the Sunagawa court judgments, the Struggle continued to inform and inspire anti-base and anti-military movements.

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263 Asahi Shinbun, 10-28-2014. P.5
in Tachikawa and beyond. This chapter will focus on the afterlife of the Struggle, particularly in Tachikawa and the wider western Tokyo region of Tama. The main sources in this chapter will include the writings, newsletters, and activist brochures produced by various local organizations that continued to oppose militarism in western Tokyo. Many of these writings will indicate the central role played by Shimada Seisaku—a former Tachikawa City Councilmember and a longtime anti-base activist—in continuing to utilize the Struggle’s moment to propel Tokyo’s peace movements in the decades that followed.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, as the U.S. military slowly released its grip on Tachikawa Air Base and began to signal a handover to the SDF, local sentiment for those who opposed the base altogether seemed to gradually change from cautiously optimistic to one of exhausted resignation. As the records produced by Shimada, veterans of the Struggle, and other local activists indicate, opposition to militarism in western Tokyo never disappeared. The Sunagawa protesters did not stop their protests in the post-struggle years. In fact, the years of the 1960s and 1970s—the boom years of the Japanese economy, the humbling years for American military imperialism—should also be remembered for some of the most contentious and active anti-base movements in western Tokyo.

**Sunagawa Struggle to Anpo, Anpo to Prosperity and Precarity**
For Takada, it was not the famous Ampo protests of 1960 that served as the creative inspirations his television program, nor were they the transformative experience that compelled his political and creative awakening. Instead, it was the Sunagawa Struggle that inspired the motif of ninjas. Behind a phalanx of thousands of helmeted Japanese police and a barbed-wire fence, the U.S. military were ninjas, enemies that operated in darkness, outside of civilized society and beyond reproach of law and order. The playwright also witnessed the shifts in family life and overall domestic consumption patterns that emerged in the 1960s. It would be fair to say that many of the Sunagawa and Tachikawa families that were supported by wage-earning fathers and mothers in the burgeoning factories of western Tokyo were just the type of demographic that Takada sought to reach. They were, after all, likely spending evenings gathered around recently purchased television sets, made affordable by Fordist patterns of production that included rising incomes throughout many industries in Japan and greater accessibility to household electronics.

Historians have long recognized the booming economy of the 1960s and 1970s as a central hallmark of Japan's postwar history. Koji Taira wrote that the famous Income Doubling Plan of the 1960s proved to be more successful than its original intention. A major policy of the Ikeda Hayato administration, the government's push to increase the gross national product (GNP) went beyond expectations and soared by an average of nearly ten percent each year during that decade. Even by 1963, real GNP was over three times higher than the
prewar years.\textsuperscript{264} Ikeda’s strategy was, in part, an effort to assuage the anti-government public sentiment that had supposedly reached a crescendo when the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty was passed by the Diet on June 19, 1959, despite widespread public opposition.

When Kishi Nobusuke was forced to resign in the aftermath of Anpo, his successor sought to quickly shift national attention from the clearly incendiary U.S.-Japan alliance towards a concerted domestic policy geared towards raising middle-class incomes. More specifically, the Ikeda administration was determined to increase GNP under the assumption that doing so would also increase per capita wages. But even this increase in wealth, Taira argued, carried with it serious social and environmental problems, creating a “dialectic of economic growth.” Part of this dialectic was the serious destruction of the natural environment that was produced by rapid economic growth. Japanese companies were freed of already minimal pollution regulations, so that a “policy of ‘unbundling’ complex technology allowed producers to set up the minimum technological core necessary for a quick, cheap start of operations,” unfettered by restraint regarding the impact on the environment.\textsuperscript{265}

It was under such conditions that the Japanese environment reached crisis point levels of pollution, leading to a degradation of the land that was not


\textsuperscript{265} Ibid, 171.
unlike those experienced in and around military bases. Human-driven pressures on the landscape, along with dispossession of land through both environmental degradation and corporate takeover (though the Local Autonomy Law addressed in the previous chapter), added to the pressures of urbanization and militarization that were felt by people throughout the Tokyo region, specifically in basetowns like Tachikawa and Sunagawa.

After the Date Judgment and Supreme Court rulings of 1959, the U.S. military quietly made plans to cancel the runway extension plan. However, it was not until December 1968, at the height of the American military’s carpet-bombing campaign of North Vietnam, that the military formally announced both the runway cancellation and its plan to revert the base back to Japanese sovereignty. That same year, Aoshima Shōsuke and Shida Chūji wrote The History of Base Struggle (Kichi Tōsō-shi), a compendium of the many base issues that continued to plague Japan in the post-Sunagawa Struggle and post-Anpo years. Their study focused as much on the individual protest movements (many of which were also the subject of Chapter Four) as on the legal issues that seemed to never be fully settled in the courts, at least not towards an end that was satisfactory to those who opposed American bases in Japan. The History of Base Struggle recognized that the Vietnam War, much like the Korean War the decade before, had an immense impact on bases in Japan and the communities around them. The new generations of jets were even noisier than their

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predecessors, which led some residents in the neighborhoods around Yokata and Tachikawa Air Bases to file lawsuits against the noise pollution.\textsuperscript{267}

In addition, Aoshima and Shida argued that the technology that delivered nuclear weaponry was rapidly changing and indeed accelerating, making the use of such weapons dangerously convenient. Anti-nuke activists in Japan recognized that this technology also allowed for the bases themselves, rather than the airplanes that departed from their runways, to send off nuclear missiles via land-based missile silos. The sea, too, could deliver nuclear weapons: Yokosuka and Sasebo, bases with major ports, were home to nuclear equipped ships. The Air Force’s F105, the primary attack jet used during the Vietnam War, was put into full use at Yokota. In fact, when the U.S. military began to consolidate some of its air bases in the late 1960s and early 1970s, many of those operations were simply transferred to Yokota. This meant that F105s from the U.S. air base in Itadzuke, Fukuoka, for example, were simply transferred for use at Yokota.\textsuperscript{268} Once transit zones for the dead and dying from the Korean War, military bases in western Tokyo were now part of America’s nuclear arsenal and invasion of Vietnam.

The clear expansion of nuclear weapons delivery technology within the U.S. military in Japan created a troubling and potentially disastrous paradox. On the one hand, the Ikeda administration, like its successors, was more than willing


to sit under America’s “nuclear umbrella.” At the same time, popular opposition to nuclear weapons—born from the national furor that followed the Lucky Dragon incident detailed in the previous chapter—was a deeply held conviction by many people, particularly those who lived near “nuclear bases.” Under the constitution, Japan was clearly not legally permitted to maintain nuclear weapons (though, pro-nuclear hawks could have argued that per the Supreme Court’s 1959 ruling, U.S. bases did not violate Article Nine and therefore nuclear weapons should not either). Nevertheless, in the late 1960s the Japanese government did commit itself to the provisions that would eventually be enshrined in the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which banned signatories from obtaining nuclear weapons (unless, of course, they already had them).

**Sunagawa as Pilgrimage and Practice**

Thus, for anti-base activists, the 1960s base landscape had certainly changed, though not at all for the better. In fact, given the proliferation of nuclear weaponry, the re-signing of the Security Treaty, the Supreme Court’s affirmation on the constitutionality of American bases, the use of these bases for an aggressive war in Vietnam—to say nothing of the continuous land disposessions that had plagued base communities throughout the postwar period—the 1960s and 1970s seemed to be an environment of even higher stakes for base opposition activists. It was for these reasons that the Sunagawa Struggle not only retained its position as an epochal victory for anti-base
activists, but had also become a moment of overall historical importance in Japan. As Aoshima and Shida recognized, the Sunagawa Struggle, though perhaps no longer fought between thousands of people along the northern edge of Tachikawa Air Base, was still ongoing in many respects.

One way that the Struggle retained importance was through the continuous presence of old and new activists. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s various anti-war and anti-military activist groups went to the site of the Struggle, a pilgrimage meant to demonstrate recognition for the importance of the Struggle for activists from around Japan. It also allowed activists to, like other pilgrims, claim authenticity in their own right. People become pilgrims, wrote Frédéric Gros, “to augment devotion, to bear witness to one’s faith.” They were “visiting a sanctuary,” a designation which the site of the Struggle certainly deserved within the realm of anti-base spaces. Writing for a 1968 report entitled Anti-War Movements and Ideas (Hansen no undo to shisō), Nakamura Ryōmi wrote that “Over ten years later, the name ‘Anti-War Plaza’ [Hansen hirōba] is the name written at the area of the Sunagawa base expansion plan. From time to time there are conventions, and on Local Anti-Base Alliance Days, various activists meet there to confirm their intentions to fight, including members of the Anti-War Youth Committee, the helmeted members of the student movement, the men and women of the citizens anti-war movement,

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those who oppose the U.S.S. Enterprise at Sasebo, or the Ōji Field Hospital, or any number of other struggles.”

One way to commemorate the Struggle was through the observance of “Sunagawa Days” on the fifteenth of every month, a tradition among anti-base groups throughout the 1960s. These were initially created in order to observe the bloody battles that occurred in October of 1956, but later became moments to organize for other anti-base activities. In 1967, Aoki Ichigori and Miyaoka Masao, the local farmers-turned-captains of the Sunagawa protest corps, attended several JCP rallies in order to help attract attention to the continuing anti-base movement and perhaps stem the flow of people leaving the Alliance. Miyaoka’s and Aoki’s speeches at these rallies were not unusual.

During the 1960s and 1970s, many people wanted to visit the actual site of the Struggle. Once at the small farming plots, now with a healthy supply of crops un-trampled by thousands of feet, pilgrims might raise a banner for their cause and talk with the locals who continued to remain on alert for any whiff of another base expansion. Along the base’s northern fence, JCP and JSP flags and banners continued to billow in the Tama region’s famous wind. In addition to the locals who were on hand to discuss their own experiences with the Struggle and

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270 Many locals opposed the stationing of the nuclear powered U.S.S. Enterprise at the naval port in Sasebo. The Ōji Field Hospital (Ōji Yasen Byōin) was a Tokyo facility that was used to treat American military casualties from their war in Vietnam. The hospital became one of the many sites where Japanese vocalized their opposition to that conflict.

their own ongoing efforts to get rid of the base completely, longer-lasting monuments also maintained an important presence over the site. Two large *kinenhi*, the stone obelisks that are often erected at sites of commemoration, as well as a gravestone, sit on the farmland that was the site of the Struggle. The first *kinenhi* was built by the New Buddhist sect, Nipponzan-Myōhōji, several years before the Struggle ever began. In fact, there used to be a small hermitage hut (*an*) that sat in front of the stone, which Nipponzan-Myōhōji actually refers to as a *hōtō*, a shrine or pagoda.\(^{272}\) The second obelisk, the “Stone of Peace” (*Heiwa no hi*), was erected on Miyaoka Masao’s land in 1975 with funds that were raised by the Alliance from activists from throughout Japan.\(^{273}\) On the rear of Stone of Peace (the side facing away from the runway), is etched a timeline of the main events of the Sunagawa Struggle. The third memorial is a gravestone for Baba Genpachi, otherwise known as Unity Grandfather (Danketsu Jiisan), the elderly Sunagawa local and activist who passed away in 1956.

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\(^{272}\) Information from a small description that was taped to the side of the monument during author’s visit in January 2012.

Despite evidence that the Sunagawa Struggle had become an important symbol for anti-base activists, there were some fears that the momentum created by the movement was forgotten in the 1960s. Aoshima and Shiida argued that the Sunagawa Struggle had mostly taken the form of a symbol for a national struggle against the bases that would be fought in the courts. But in some ways, the Struggle was not all finished. In 1963 there were further attempts by the Tokyo Expropriation Commission (Tōkyō tochi shūyō iinkai, then the latest manifestation of the Procurement Office) to buy the land from some of
the members of the Alliance. After two more aircraft crashes occurred in the area the year before, nine members of the Alliance determined that the continued danger of living in the proximity of the base was simply not worth the risk, dropped out (datsuraku) of the movement, and relocated elsewhere.

Referring to the current state of the Alliance, the now hardened protest veterans (and for Miyakoa, also a war veteran) told the crowds that “all that is left is all that is left,” stirring an ominous tone that suggested that the movement was at risk of falling apart. The message could be understood to be a bit hyperbolic, for by 1967 it was clear to many that the runway plan would not likely ever be pushed through. Even so, demonstrations of absolute opposition remained important. On January 7th of that year, three hundred members of Zengakuren held a rally at the end of the runway, which Miyaoka proudly noted was one “that had for over twelve years needed to be 4,000 meters long but was stopped at 2,000 meters.” Nevertheless, Miyaoka and Aoki warned that “U.S. attack planes are taking off to invade Vietnam” from Tachikawa. The message was clear: we are still protesting, we still need support, and the U.S. military is attacking Vietnam from our front yards.

Similar to his public statements in 1968, Miyaoka published the essay “From Sunagawa” in a compendium of various intellectuals and activists entitled

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“Thoughts on Peace” (*Heiwa no Shisō*). In it, he again expressed worry that “dropout factions” had, for multifarious reasons, seemed to be increasing among the local communities around bases in Japan. These factions effectively gave up their claims to the land and, most likely, let the waves of suburbanization wash over them and sold their land in order to move closer to the cities for factory or office work. In the twelve years since the Struggle began, he said, he had never seen such large numbers of people leaving the locale and thus the anti-base movement. Though some of his essay was a reminder that bases still needed to be opposed, perhaps now more than ever, Miyaoka’s main focus was to bring the Sunagawa Struggle, and the Sunagawa Incident, to the awareness of a younger generation. He clearly articulated the history of the Struggle, from its founding in 1955 to the important court judgements in 1959, in an introductory tone that indicated that Miyaoka sensed that the passage of time might have eroded readers’ memories.

He also wrote about the Eniwa Incident, which was to the SDF what the Sunagawa Incident was to the U.S. military. Like the tention between the locals and the SDF in Niijama and North Fuji, the SDF in Eniwa pitted Japanese militarism against Japanese opposition. In 1962, two dairy farming brothers from the Nozaki family in the town of Eniwa, between Chitose and Sapporo, Hokkaido, cut the communications lines that ran to a nearby SDF base. Their family believed that the live-fire training at the base was causing deleterious

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effects on the health of their cows. They were charged with violating Article 121 of the Self-Defense Forces Act, which stated that “those who break or damage the weapons, ammunition, aircraft, and other defense equipment owned by the SDF shall be subject to imprisonment for five years or less, or a maximum fine of 50,000 yen.” In the trial, the defense argued that the very existence of the SDF was illegal because it violated Article Nine. Miyaoka remarked that another difference with the Eniwa case was that it had been a single family that had to reach out for a larger support network (which it received), while in Sunagawa there was at least an entire community of residents who were part of the initial movement. Still, Miyaoka prophesized that Eniwa would eventually become a “mass movement” like Sunagawa (which would not be the case at all). The brothers were eventually found not guilty of their crime. Instead the court found that since it could not be said that communications lines were solely SDF property, it could not be said that Article 121 had been violated. As historian Sasaki Tomoyuki argued, “This verdict offered no solution to the Nozaki brothers’ fundamental predicament. The central issue of the trial had been the constitutionality of the SDF, and the defense team had designed their arguments accordingly. But the court disregarded this. The implication was that the SDF

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could continue carrying out its maneuvers (and it did), and the brothers’ right to live in peace would continue to be threatened.” Writing as he was in 1967, before the verdict for the Eniwa case was delivered, perhaps Miyaoka felt a stronger sense of optimism than the actual verdict would deliver for Japan’s anti-war movements.

Miyaoka had other concerns as well. The 1960s post-Anpo moment was characterized by fracturing from within leftist organizations. Miyaoka observed that the ideological struggles occurring within the Japanese Left, particularly among student groups, were not helping anti-base movements like those in Sunagawa. Zengakuren, the largest of the student groups, was by now divided into three factions. Other groups included those with some form of affiliation to the JCP, such as the Revolutionary Marxist Faction (Kakumaruha) of the Japanese Revolutionary Communist League (Kawakyōdō), as well as the Trotskyist Violent Force Group (Torotsuki bōryoku shūdan) whose stance, as the name suggests, was anti-Stalinist and also in favor of violent action when deemed necessary. The Trotskyists, as well as the infighting from the various student factions, repelled more mainstream activist groups from attending Sunagawa Days and other rallies. At a February 26, 1967 rally at the northern end of the Tachikawa base runway, for example, the mainstream Tokyo Peace

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Committee (Tōkyō Heiwa linkai) refused to come if the violent anti-base groups were also in attendance. The Santama Regional Youth Anti-War Committee (Santamachiku Hansen shonen iinkai), another important local anti-base group, told Miyaoka that they could not accept an alliance with a group that supported violent action, like Zengakuren. This created, in Miyaoka’s own words, “a difficult situation.” In September of that year, another rally seemed to indicate that some of the ideological strife was abating. He continued, “From beginning to end, the Anti-Base Alliance opposed expansion, the blocking of which was the point of action that unified us with the joint movement, and it was finally during the Sunagawa Supporters Liaison Conference that I started to see us overcoming our difficulty.” If the disparate groups on of the anti-war left could maintain focus, they might have a chance, Miyoaka rationalized.

However, as far as Sunagawa locals were concerned (and Miyaoka was very much considered a spokesperson for this community), questions of ideological practice did not register as of timely importance. As suggested in Chapter Three, many Sunagawa farming families did not consider themselves to be politically radical or even committed to the ideals of the postwar left. In fact, a common sentiment was that as farmers, with a supposedly more “traditional” lifestyle, they recognized themselves as conservative by many measurements. Yet, they were entirely open to the support they quickly received from labor

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unions, student groups, and peace activists, who were instrumental during the years of battles with the police and land surveyors. As we have seen, however, the twelve years since the Struggle began had brought about entirely different contexts for protests and alliances.

**Shimada Seisaku and the Tachikawa Anti-War Citizen Alliance**

While the Alliance was slowly becoming saddled with the seemingly trivial ideological arguments that were fracturing many radical social movements in the 1960s and 1970s, a new movement with a clearer sense of purpose and comparatively simple goal was emerging under the leadership of Shimada Seisaku a Tachikawa City Councilmember and longtime activist in Sunagawa. As a child in Nishimiya, Hyōgō Prefecture, Shimada’s memories including running from incendiary bombs that rained down from American planes during the war, an experience that served as the core of his staunch anti-war activism. Later, the news footage he saw of the Korean War, for which American planes departed from Japan, and the American test of a hydrogen bomb at the Bikini Atoll in March 1954 (which lead to the Lucky Dragon Incident discussed in Chapter Four), hardened his anti-war resolve.

In 1955, Shimada was a high school student who was deeply interested in issues of peace. That year, he was even able to go to Warsaw, Poland, as a delegate to the World Festival of Youths and Students, a massive festival that was organized as a component of the Soviet Union’s soft power diplomacy.
throughout the cold war. Shimada’s participation turned out to be a transformative experience. His first time to Sunagawa was most likely as a high school student, when he was knocking on the doors of various schools around Tokyo in an attempt to raise funds to travel to Poland. In fact, he was gone during the first attempted surveys in September 1955, as well as those in 1956, but watched the news with trepidation from afar. By 1957, however, he was a student at Tokyo University of the Arts. Like many students throughout Tokyo, once classes had finished in the evening, he would travel to Sunagawa and spend the night at the community center or junior high school campus. During the day, Shimada would often go the front lines near Aoki Ichigorō’s residence, where instead of incendiary bombs, it was police batons rained down on him.

After the Anpo protests ended, Shimada left university early and went to Niijima to support the anti-base protests occurring there (detailed in the previous chapter), staying for a year and a half before returning to western Tokyo to work as a secretary for the Santama Labor Council. In 1966, he was elected as a JSP member to the Tachikawa City Council, a seat that he kept for over three decades until 1998, a striking testament to the popularity of a virulently anti-base politician in a basetown like Tachikawa.

During his first years as a councilmember, he also maintained affiliation with the Tachikawa Youth Anti-War Committee (Tachikawa Hansen Shōnen

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linkai), but at reaching the age of thirty, decided that he was no longer a youth and set out to found the Tachikawa Anti-War Citizens Alliance (Tachikawa Hansen Shimin Rengō). Still, it is worth noting that despite his relatively young age, he had, like many of his generation, participated in anti-war and anti-base movements of immense national and global significance, and had even spent time as a youth delegate abroad. Recognizing that there were other people in Tachikawa who shared similar experiences, he sought to create an intellectual space where anti-base activism could continue.

The Tachikawa Anti-War Citizens Alliance (TAWCA) wrote and published prolifically (though often through the sole authorship of Shimada). In addition, the group held rallies throughout Tachikawa, including near the main train station, outside of the main gates of the base itself, and along the fence the divided Sunagawa from the runway. Their mandate included preventing the resuming of the 1970 U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, opposing the Vietnam War, and preventing Tachikawa Air Base from transferred into a SDF base once the Americans departed.

Early in his political career, Shimada made clear the antipathy towards military bases that had driven his ideological position since childhood. In his 1970 political manifesto, *The Security Treaty System and Tachikawa City Administration* (which ran 130 pages) he identified “three evils” that he wished to eradicate from Tachikawa’s political and physical landscape: bases, bicycle
racing, and corruption. In many ways, the three evils exemplified much of the opprobrium that the Japanese Left felt towards the postwar government. Bases were clearly a focus of concern, and the government’s close relationships with industry—at the expense of a fairer form of popular democracy—were often seen as tantamount to corruption.

Before returning to the issue of military bases in Tachikawa, however, the “evil” of bicycle racing should probably be elucidated. The form of bicycle racing that Shimada hoped to eradicate was “keirin,” in which racers compete against one another on a paved circular racecourse, similar to a horseracing or dogracing track. Racers wearing brightly colored outfits and numbers speed around the track, their feet bolted to the pedals, their bicycles made even lighter by the absence of brakes. Like these other forms of racing, keirin also involved gambling by allowing spectators to place bets on racers.

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Figure 11 Shimada Seisaku, 30, during his 1966 campaign under the slogan “Send Young Power to the City Council! [wakai chikara wo shikaigi he].” Source: Shimada, Seisaku. Anpo Taisei to Tachikawa Shisei [The Security Treaty System and Tachikawa City Administration]. Tachikawa: Fujimi Shinpōsha, 1970.

It might initially seem that there could be little relation between gambling on bicycle races and the problems associated with military bases. However, Shimada believed that the problems associated with keirin paralleled many of
the problems found in basetowns. Shimada believed that both velodromes (the arenas where cycling races are held) and bases were premised on the exploitation of local labor, particularly those living on precarious daily labor. Like the base, Shimada opposed not simply the business of *keirin*, but the presence of the Tachikawa Velodrome (*Tachikawa Keirinjyō*), which was (and still is) located to the east of the base's main entrance. Like other forms of gambling, Shimada argued that *keirin* preyed on working class laborers, and that a government that allowed such exploitation did not “truly respect people.” In addition, despite the widespread belief that per capita taxes would increase in Tachikawa without the revenue generated by the velodrome, Shimada argued otherwise. “It could not be like *akudaikan* [evil bailiff/tax collector] of the Tokugawa Era, charging an illegally high tax rate on the citizens,” he argued. “If the tax rate gets too high, citizen power could make the mayor quit office.”

Obviously, another reason that Shimada believed people supported *keirin* was because of the jobs the industry created. “I often hear that people oppose *keirin* abolition because of the laborers working there. *Keirin* laborers are side-by-side with the tragedy of base laborers, and are certainly the most oppressed workers.” These workers, like base workers, found that the postwar economic slump (*fukeiki*) particularly affected single-mothers and women who were the heads of their households. They had no choice but to take jobs at bases and

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velodromes, which created a cycle of precarious employment that had not yet abated, despite the supposed gains made during the 1960 boom years. Part of Shimada’s solution to replacing keirin jobs included greater local government investment in new job training programs, a policy that would similarly translate as relevant for workers at bases that were purported to be shutting down.

While dealing with corruption was another major platform, it was the complete dismantling of the base that was the number one priority for Shimada. Under the slogan of “It’s better to live in a city without a base” (kichinakushite wo sumiyoi machi wo), many of Shimada’s reasons for wanting the military out of Tachikawa were not dissimilar to those of the previous generation of anti-base activists. Perhaps the most serious incident occurred in the middle of the night on September 12, 1966. In what was an almost unbelievable coincidence, this was also the day of Shimada’s first appearance as a member of the Tachikawa city council. That night, a military plane arriving from the U.S. base in Wake Island crashed at the northern end of the runway, setting fire to 102 acres of dry-field (upland, okabo) rice. Though nobody was killed, the crash unsurprisingly caused a major panic among Sunagawa locals, who fled to refuge in the Sunagawa community center. For several days, transportation through Sunagawa was halted as wreckage was cleared from the Itsukaichi Highway.

Recall from Chapters One and Two that military accidents were a constant problem in the towns and villages around Tachikawa Air Base. These accidents and base-related dangers persisted throughout the 1960s. There was
the June 1968 crash of a F4C Phantom onto the playground at a shrine in the nearby town of Akishima. It was pure chance that the accident occurred at lunchtime, when there were no children on the playground. In January 1969, a warplane from Yokota clipped a power line and cut the electricity to 10,000 households in Akishima and Tachikawa. There were other accidents that involved more than the dangers inherent with aircraft. In January 1964, a train that was transporting aircraft fuel to Tachikawa Air Base exploded at Nishi-Tachikawa Station, creating an immense fireball that consumed several nearby shops. Finally, at lunchtime on May 14, 1969, stray bullets pelted an ultrasonic equipment factory in Sunagawa. The bullets were fired from a pistol shooting range on the base. Shimada lamented the fact that the shooting range was a mere ten meters from the base fence-line, visibly close to public housing blocks and factories. One afternoon, Shimada joined some of the factory workers on a walk around the streets surrounding the factory, during which they found several bullets that had been fired from the base. After they filed a formal complaint, the base commander brought a bottle of whiskey to the factor and offered what Shimada described as a “vague apology.”

In his expansive 1970 manifesto, Shimada also took the opportunity to lambast the conservative faction of the city council, whom he felt were overly

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and embarrassingly obsequious towards the U.S. military. Even in the face of dramatic and continuous base-related accidents, a large number of councilmembers were unwilling to use their office to seek appropriate redress or public condemnation of military incompetence. Shimada was especially troubled at the way the conservative faction councilmembers reacted when Aoki Ichigorō spoke in front of the city council after the 1966 accident. After that accident, the U.S. military had offered some insignificant platitude to the victims, though it was not made clear what exactly this entailed. According to Shimada, Aoki told the council “there is no way that we can retreat because of one scrap of an apology. We request the complete removal of the base,” to which the conservative council responded, “we’ll pass a resolution asking them [the U.S. military] to not allow any more accidents.” It was, Shimada wrote, a “humiliating resolution.”

“Ant-War, Anti-Security Treaty—Block the Movement of Tachikawa Base to the SDF”

The plan to revert Tachikawa Air Base to the SDF had been set into high gear during the 1970 U.S.-Japan Security Treaty discussions. In January 1973, the U.S. military went on to announce that its Kantō realignment plan would be centered on sending the Fifth Air Division to Yokota, which would require even

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more expansion at that facility. It was a quiet announcement, just as the 1968 announcement regarding the cancelling of Sunagawa runway plan appeared to be little more than an afterthought for the U.S. military. However, activists groups in Tachikawa continued to keep their ears to the wind for the momentous administrative and spatial shifts that were soon to come.

The TAWCA remained an important resource for activism in Tachikawa throughout the 1970s and 1980s. During that time, the organization published the semimonthly newsletter, Shimin Rengō (Citizens Association), which championed the causes that were central to Shimada’s political platform, along with other issues of general importance in the peace and anti-base movements throughout Japan. In the mid-1970s, the planned handover of the base to the SDF was a common theme. In the January 1976 edition of Shimin Rengō, the TAWCA demanded that instead of reverting the land of the base to the SDF, it should instead be “given back to the hands of the people.” Shimada reported that as stipulated by the government, the base reversion plan did not necessarily involve a drawing down of the base functions, but actually included the construction of new facilities. He also wrote that the base runways might actually remain under joint operation. After describing in further detail the reversion plan (which by this point had been under discussion for at least five years), Shimada cautioned supporters that there was still an incredible uphill

battle to fight in order to rid Tachikawa of its base. “Before we think about how to use [the land] once we get rid of the base, it is necessary to have a movement that thinks about how to get rid of the U.S. military AND the SDF. In 1976, let’s work hard together in order to make the dream of removing the base a reality.“

By October 1976, if there had ever been any doubts that the SDF would be moving in, those doubts were rapidly evaporating. Much of the American presence at Tachikawa had already left for Yokota, and already new complaints against the jet blasts were being heard in neighborhoods near that base. However, by this time, the American military had already fled Vietnam entirely, which for anti-base activists in Japan was certainly a victory for which they could be proud. In his newsletter, Shimada wrote that “the victory of the Vietnamese people’s war against American imperialism is linked to the U.S. military and Japanese government’s giving up on expansion. We have to widen this victory until we realize the removal of Tachikawa Base in its entirety.”

There were wider repercussions beyond Tachikawa and Yokota with regard to the base relocation plan. For much of the Tokyo Left, Tachikawa Air Base could just as easily be relocated to any one of the many military bases that already existed in the greater Tokyo megalopolis. In the March 1972 edition of the JCP monthly publication Zen’ei (Vanguard), Miyahara Fumio wrote an article entitled “The Important Meaning of the Anti-Tachikawa Base Struggle”

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Miyahara wrote that the city council in Akishima City, adjacent to Tachikawa, had unanimously voted to oppose the SDF’s appropriation of the base. The political leaders of Hino City, just south of Tachikawa, similarly opposed any government plan that would allow jets to continue to blast over their neighborhoods. The dominoes need only fall in favor of complete rejection of the base by every district in Tokyo.

In addition to *Shimin Rengō*, the TAWCA also published several more expansive pamphlets, including the 27-page 1978 pamphlet entitled, “What is Tachikawa to do? Citizens Apparently Absent from Base, Bicycle Racing City-Permits” (Figure 3). Like many of the publications credited to or edited by Shimada, his picture graced the cover of nearly issue, an indication that his public profile as both an activist and councilmember was an important part of the TAWCA’s engagement with the community. The 1978 pamphlet was mostly a compendium of various back issues of *Shimin Rengō*, though it also included an introductory essay written by Shimada entitled, “My Claim” (Wastashi no Shuchō).


In “My Claim,” Shimada reiterated his “three evils” and also recognized the “victories” he had been part of as a young 27-year-old activist involved in the anti-war/base and labor movements. By and large, however, he recognized that those evils remained in one form or another. In 1974, his slogan had changed from “send young power to the city council!” to “Anti-war/anti-security treaty—against the SDF staying, put the base in the hands of the citizens” and in 1977 he...
was elected to his third term in office. He reiterated his claim that the base was “issue number one” in Tachikawa. Shimada wrote,

“Last fall [1977], Tachikawa base was handed from the U.S. military to the Japanese government. But the government did not open the base up for citizens, instead approving the SDF for continued use, along with the Shōwa Emperor Fifty-Year Reign Memorial Park (Tenno zaii gojyūnen shūnen kinen Shōwa kōen). Meanwhile, according to the U.S. military’s Kantō base concentration plan, the Fifth Air Division command will be located at Yokota Base which will become the biggest on the mainland, and the center of the U.S.-Japan-Korean military structure.

Remove the SDF Tachikawa base and the U.S. Air Force Yokota Base, stop the three-part paid disposal [payments to landowners for the Yokota Base expansion] and the Emperor Park plan; we must realize the citizen’s use [of this land].”

Shimada and the TAWCA could not feel much comfort in knowing that the U.S. military was concentrating their forces at Yokota Air Base, a mere eight kilometers northwest of Tachikawa. After all, those same planes would be haunting the skies and crashing into the same neighborhoods. For a JSP councilmember, it was particularly hard to swallow that any relief the base closure at Tachikawa brought would be increased burden for neighbors in the nearby towns and cities.

Still, the handover was a momentous moment in Tachikawa’s history. On November 30, 1977, thirty-two years after the U.S. military occupation began, Tachikawa Air Base was officially handed back to Japanese sovereignty. On that day, during a ceremony on the grounds of the base, the Stars and Stripes were

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replaced with the Rising Sun. While 456 hectares were handed back to the Japanese government on that day, since 1970, the U.S. had been handing back small increments of base land as it moved its facilities and offices to other air force bases throughout Japan, including mostly Yokota, but also Misawa in Aomori Prefecture and Kadena in Okinawa. That the handover would occur had been public knowledge since the U.S. military made the announcement in 1968. However, the handover was, much like the Sunagawa Struggle, a bittersweet victory.

While the Struggle had succeeded in preventing the runway from being expanded, the base and the heavy hand of the State never went away. As Shimada told his readers, the space would also be converted into a national park meant to honor Emperor Hirohito. Similarly, while the departure of the American military (seen by many Tachikawa locals as an imperialist force that only wrought devastation on Asian countries) was a victory, the snatching of the baton by the SDF did not bring comfort to those activists that opposed militarism in any form.

It was anti-militarism that also compelled the TAWCA to oppose to construction of national park that would commemorate the Shōwa Emperor, the man in whose name much of Asia had been ravaged. He was also the person that many Japanese believed caused the suffering that had been delivered to Japan’s own shores. He does not mention, however, that in addition to the SDF base and

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the park, there were also plans to construct the Tachikawa Disaster Prevention Area (Tachikawa kōiki bōsai kichi), which would serve as both a disaster recovery planning facility and a refuge for Tokyo residents in case of a major disaster. The Japanese government’s plans did not end there. There were also plans to construct police cadet training facilities, a major metropolitan police station, and a second residence for the prime minister (most likely for use in an emergency). That all of these substantial national facilities, a park, and a SDF base could squeeze into area that would be emptied by the U.S. Air Force is a testament to the size of the base that the people of Tachikawa and Sunagawa had endured for over thirty years.

What would eventually be named the Showa Commemorative National Government Park (Kokuei Shōwa Kinen Kōen) was opposed by the TAWCA from the beginning of its construction to the day when Emperor Hirohito visited the park in 1983 for grand opening celebrations. In October 1983, the TAWCA and a group called the Convention Against the Opening of the Shōwa Commemoration Park that Praises the Emperor System (Tennō-sei sanbi no shōwa kinen kōen kaien hantai shūkai) organized a series of rallies meant to precede the park’s official opening on October 26. They asked, “why would we celebrate war crimes?” with regard to the Hirohito’s role in Japanese military’s wartime actions in Asia. They also argued that any celebration of him or the imperial system was another step that would “once again lead Japan down the road to war.” The
week’s protest activities also included several rallies outside of Tachikawa Station.\textsuperscript{298}

![Cartoon](image)

Figure 13 At top, “The True Form of the Base” (kōen to kichi no honto no sugata). On the left, “Whoa! The Town is being Crushed” (uwaa! Machi gatsubusareru). Emperor Hirohito is lifting his hat, while Prime Minister Nakason Yasuhiro sits on the other wing. This cartoon appeared on a pamphlet that was written to advertise a 1983 protest against the founding of the newly completed Showa Commemorative National Government Park (\textit{Kokuei Shōwa Kinen Kōen}). Source: Shimada, Seisaku. \textit{Shimin Rengō}, October 1, 1983. Rikkyo University Research Center for Cooperative Civil Societies.

It is important at this point to also recognize that anti-base organizations in Tachikawa were also concerned about state-led land disposessions

\textsuperscript{298} Shimada, Seisaku. \textit{Shimin Rengō}, October 1, 1983. Rikkyo University Research Center for Cooperative Civil Societies.
throughout Japan, with perhaps the most famous example of such solidarity found at the small village of Sanrizuka, Chiba Prefecture. It was there that beginning in the mid-1960s the Japanese government was attempting to build Tokyo's new Narita International Airport, a project that would displace a large number of farming families. Much like the local farmers in Sunagawa, farmers in Sanrizuka ran the risk of losing their sole source of income with the construction of an airfield. It should, therefore, not be surprising that the Struggle in Sanrizuka looked very similar to that of Sunagawa: entire farming families were thrust into a militarized frontline where they clashed with police who had been sent in to evict residents. In order to better monitor the policy, protestors constructed lookout towers just as they had done in Sunagawa. Importantly, the activist networks that were formed in Sunagawa between labor unions, student groups, anti-base activists, and JSP representatives, were also employed in Sanrizuka. By 1967, the protests grew particularly violent as Sunagawa “veterans” like Zengakuren travelled to Sanrizuka to challenge police violence.299

The TAWCA issued a call for a rally to support the Sanrizuka villagers on July 8, 1976. The rally was held at the Tachikawa Public Auditorium (Tachikawa Kōminkan) and included reports from activists from the Sanrizuka-Shibayama Connection Anti-Airport Alliance (Sanrizuka-Shibayama Renai hankūkō dōmei), as well as a screening of Ogawa Shinsuke's documentary film on the protests, 

simply titled Sanrizuka.\textsuperscript{300} In another TAWCA action that was announced in the January 31, 1977 edition of Shimin Rengō, organizers announced that on February 6 a bus was leaving from Tachikawa City Hall for Sanrizuka to join a series of massive protests that were being planned by the Anti-Airport Alliance.\textsuperscript{301} Other actions and information sessions occurred in Tachikawa throughout 1977, including the sending of another busload of TAWCA supporters to Sanrizuka on April 14. On that occasion the rallying cry explicitly called upon its members to “smash the airport, protect the iron towers,” a reference to the tall lookout towers that protesters had constructed on their farms (protest grounds). These towers, which served the same purpose as those constructed twenty years before at Sunagawa, were favorite targets of the police who were called in to clear the land of farming families. For this day’s actions, TAWCA participants were asked to pay 2,500 yen, which included a bentō lunch, and had the option of being picked up from three different bus locations around Tachikawa.\textsuperscript{302}

While Shimada’s Tachikawa Anti-War Citizens Alliance was at the forefront of anti-base struggle during the years leading up to the transfer of the base to the SDF, the Sunagawa Anti-Base Expansion Alliance, the first

\textsuperscript{300} Tachikawa hansen shimin rengō. “7-8 Sanrizuka Tōsō Ni Rentai Suru Santama Shūkai (7-8 Band Together with Sanrizuka Struggle at the Santama Meeting).” July 8, 1976. Rikkyo University Research Center for Cooperative Civil Societies.


\textsuperscript{302} Shimada, Seisaku. “Kūkō Funsai, Testutō Bōei: 4-17 Sanrizuka Shūkai He! [Demolish the Airport, Protect the Iron Towers: Go to the Sanrizuka Meeting on 4-17!!].” Shimin Rengō, April 10, 1977, 26 edition. Rikkyo University Research Center for Cooperative Civil Societies.
organization to form in response to the 1955 base expansion plan, did not disappear altogether, despite the infighting that occurred from among many of its supporting organizations. Until his death in 1982, Miyaoka Masao continued to oppose the existence of the base under any circumstance or under any administration. During the brief moments in the late 1970s after the U.S. military had departed and the SDF had yet to fully remilitarize the base, Miyaoka was a representative for the Citizen’s Committee Against the Use Of Tachikawa Base By The SDF (Tachikawa Kichi No Jietai Shiyou Ni Hantaisuru no Shiminkaigi), which sought to keep local citizens informed about the latest developments regarding base land. It was a moment when, for as long as most people in Sunagawa could remember, there were not constantly jets rattling the windows of their homes and schools. “The entirety of Tachikawa Base occupies 6,080,000 tsubo, which is around 23.5% of Tachikawa City. If we use this immense land for the betterment of the lived environment of citizens, Tachikawa would definitely become a nice town to live in.” There was a high level of optimism at this moment, though even this was qualified. The headline of Miyaoka’s pamphlet perhaps best captured the mood of temporary optimism that was likely shared by many of his neighbors: “Finally, Tachikawa is quiet, but once again jet blasts...”303 As a pillar of the Sunagawa Struggle, Miyaoka also wrote articles on the history of the Sunagawa Struggle for Nobi, a monthly newsletter published by the Santama

Branch of the Socialist Workers Committee, as well as continued to self-publish announcements for the Alliance about the latest developments and protest actions related to the base restructuring plan.304

Finally, it should be acknowledged that the TAWCA and the Alliance were not the only Tachikawa-based groups that were active during the 1970s when the base was being reverted back to Japanese sovereignty. The Tachikawa Self-Defense Forces Monitoring Tent Village (Tachikawa jieitai kanshi tento mura) was focused specifically on opposition to the handover of the base to the SDF and later, after the handover occurred, continued to oppose the base. Like the TAWCA, they published newsletters and pamphlets throughout the 1970s and 1980s, as well as organized rallies and other events in Tachikawa. The Tent Village’s main publications were Bodokomu and Tento Mura Tsūshin, both of which were published with regularity well after the SDF and the Showa Memorial Park were already established. The Tent Village, however, did not have a central figure or members with official credentials like Shimada Seisaku. Instead, they were more loosely organized among younger members of the Tachikawa community, who likely did not have personal experience with the Sunagawa Struggle but nonetheless made claims towards a experiential solidarity with the protest’s legacy.

The Sunagawa Struggle and the American Indian Movement

It is by design that this dissertation has focused on the lives and experiences of those who lived outside of the barbed-wire fences. The basetown conditions for Japanese people in places like Tachikawa have yet to fully register as historically significant within studies of postwar Japan, which is in part why the narratives of the U.S. military and their employees were not a focus of this project. However, while it is clear that the Sunagawa Struggle had a profound impact on the lives of people like the screenwriter Takada Kōji (with whom we began this chapter) and longtime activists and politicians like Miyaoka Masao and Shimada Seisaku, there was at least one major twentieth century figure who took the legacy of the Sunagawa Struggle back to the United States.

Dennis Banks, a Native American from the Ojibwa tribe in northern Minnesota, was a U.S. Air Force aerial photographer stationed at Yokota Air Base in 1956. In his 2004 biography, Ojibwa Warrior, Banks wrote at length about the formative years he spent first in Osaka and later at Yokota. In particular he recalled the Japanese wife and child he left behind when he his job brought him back to the United States. However, by sheer circumstance, he also had a major role to play in the Sunagawa Struggle.

For several days in 1956, his superiors had been telling him and his fellow soldiers that they were to prepare for “full 24-hour alert with combat readiness. At three o’clock one morning, Banks and several busloads of other airmen were awoken, loaded onto buses, and brought to Tachikawa Air Base where they were
ordered to stand at attention, fully armed, for the next two or three days as
protests continued to build throughout Sunagawa. Once on duty, they were told
to that their job was to defend the base from protesters who were “rioting” on
the other side of the barbed-wire fences and, if the protesters came over the
fence, the soldiers were to shoot to kill. As he recalled, the protesters were
peaceful, supported by a huge phalanx of elderly nuns and monks who were
chanting and beating drums:

“There we stood in opposition to these people, us holding our M-
16s and sergeant with his BAR, his Browning automatic rifle, fed
by a belt of ammo. All of the sudden a commotion broke out way
over to the right. Then the yelling and screaming began, coming
closer and closer. We had seen students moving toward the fence
when the police suddenly charged them with weapons and heavy
sticks. The Buddhist monks and nuns305 sitting still on the ground
in front of us were chanting when the police rushed them in a
frenzy and started cracking skulls with a terrible sound as if they
were striking coconuts.

I felt sick at what I had seen and ashamed of the uniform I was
wearing. I remembered Sergeant Johnson firing and yelling for the
beating to stop—I had looked past the Japanese Defense Forces
then and could clearly see the monks who were trying to help the
injured. They were carrying them away to safety. That terrible
scene remained with me all these years. I shall never forget those
demonstrators were peaceful people literally being beaten to
death. Since that time, during my struggles in the American Indian
Movement, I have seen BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs] police wield
their clubs at Indians like that. Each time my memory flashed back
to what I saw that day in Japan.”306

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305 These monks and nuns that Banks describes are most likely members of the Nipponzan-
Myōhōji new Buddhist sect who erected the memorial stone as described earlier in this chapter.
306 Banks, Dennis, and Richard Erdoes. Ojibwa Warrior: Dennis Banks and the Rise of the American
When he returned to the U.S., Banks would go on to co-found with Russell Means the radical American Indian Movement, which organized several powerful protests throughout the 1970s, including the takeover of a BIA office and a months-long standoff with police at Wounded Knee. In the 2011 documentary film, *A Good Day To Die*, footage shows Banks’ recent visit back to the site of the Sunagawa Struggle at the invitation of local Japanese activists who were aware of his historical connection to the area, a trip that was also reported in the *Tokyo Shinbun*.\(^{307}\) It may very well be that Banks was one of the “faceless enemies” that inspired Takada’s ninja dramas of the 1960s.

For Banks, the struggle against American militarism in Japan was not unlike the struggle Native Americans had endured as they were often violently dispossessed of their own land. Banks’ experience is an important indicator that the Sunagawa Struggle had fantastically wide ripples, only the surface of which this chapter has addressed. The recognition of the Struggle as a foundational moment resonates for many activists in Tachikawa (and beyond) today as well.

**Conclusion**

This dissertation began by introducing the reader to Mori Inoue, the caregiver and anti-base activist who continues to oppose the base in 2015. For Inoue, and the generations Tachikawa and Sunagawa activists who came before him, the Sunagawa Struggle was the foundational anti-base, anti-militarist, and

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anti-U.S. imperialist movement of postwar Japanese history. The introduction also featured Fukushima Kyōko, the daughter of Miyaoka and Kinuko Masao, two of founders of the Sunagawa Anti-Base Expansion Alliance and central figures in organizing the Sunagawa Struggle. The stories of the Sunagawa farmers and their supporters, I have argued, complicates the Anpo narrative, which often compels historians to rely on the familiar trope that all postwar activism was based largely on the 1960 protests that ultimately failed to bring an end to the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. The monopoly of Anpo has left historians with an understanding of the arc of postwar activism that has until now failed to recognize the central place of Sunagawa.

However, by focusing on the Sunagawa Struggle, we can recognize that Anpo was simply one moment during a much wider spectrum of anti-base protest that has, as was discussed in Chapter One, existed in places like Tachikawa and Sunagawa since the Taishō era. During the 1950s and 1960s, the years of economic recovery, farming families in places like Sanrizuka and Niijima were, like the farmers of Sunagawa, living precariously as the state and industry (including the military) required more and more land for both sprawling metropolises as well as military facilities. Certainly, the form of the protests in all of these places looked remarkably similar. In Sunagawa, Sanrizuka, Niijima, and the other places of resistance detailed in Chapter Four, arming families initiated and propelled the protests through to their conclusions. Women’s groups were instrumental in organizing the protests, disseminating information, battling
police and land surveying crews, all while simultaneously maintaining the home and family.

Still, while land was the central concern for the Alliance in the early days of the Struggle, the movement quickly snowballed into wider critiques of American-centered cold war geopolitics. Even the children of Sunagawa, whose writing was discussed in detail in Chapter Three, recognized the troubling sociopolitical environment in which they were living. Living under the flight path of American warplanes, dodging police battalions on their way to and from school, Sunagawa’s children knew all too well the militarized dangers of a Tokyo suburb in the 1950s. One child even referred to Japan as a “colony” under the conditions imposed by the Security Treaty. Such radical critiques of the U.S. and its military did not originate from among student activists or urban intellectuals. They emerged from, among others, the children of farming families in a Tokyo suburb.

Also recall that in the summer of 1955, as detailed in Chapter Two, four and half years before the Anpo protests rocked the streets of Tokyo, the Alliance issued a public rebuttal to the Japanese government’s base expansions plans. Published in every major paper in the country, the Alliance wrote, “The entire town is resolved to win in order to protect the basic rights that are guaranteed by our Constitution. Our town won’t stop fighting, or change even slightly, until the government’s plan is canceled.” Sunagawa farmers recognized that their
struggle for land was also a struggle for society’s relationship to the state and to the veracity of postwar Japan’s democratic institutions.

Finally, as also recognized in the Introduction, the role of the Sunagawa Struggle in defining and confronting military bases is still being examined. In many ways, the militarized spaces detailed in this dissertation are still very much a part of the Tokyo experience today. Given the immense changes in the Tokyo landscape since the 1950s, military bases are even more invisible than they once were.

One afternoon in 2012, I set off to explore the area around the Akasaka Heliport, a U.S. military base in the middle of Tokyo’s expensive Roppongi district. Having explored the environs of many militarized landscapes in Japan, I did not think it would be difficult to find, so I did not feel the need to bring detailed directions. After exiting the metro, I consulted the station map to find my approximate distance from the base. According to the map, however, the spot where I believed the base to be was simply an unnamed green space, which looked like a public park. I walked for some time, searching the skies for helicopters and scouring the streets for any sign of the characteristic barbed-wire fences. I found nothing. Exasperated, I asked a young man clearing tables at an outdoor café if he could be so kind as to point me to the U.S. base. He apologized and said that he did not know about a base in the area. I then asked if he ever saw helicopters landing in the area. He then pointed me to the end of the street, where he had indeed seen and heard helicopters from time to time. The
base was there, of course, only a block away from the café and yet rendered invisible. Looking through and beyond the barbed-wire fence, the impressive Mori Building, the architectural center of Roppongi, was visible. The base itself—a helicopter landing pad, the office of the *Stars and Stripes*, and a singly barracks—was small by the standards of American bases in Japan. Yet here it was, this rusting cold war relic, in the center of arguably the most expensive real estate in the world.

As this dissertation has shown, the military bases in Tokyo are not entirely invisible. As long as the U.S. military’s immense base complex remains a fixture of the Japanese landscape, and as long as people continue to oppose the cozy relationship the Japanese state maintains with American imperialism, activists will continue to look to the lessons of the Sunagawa Struggle.
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