

JAPANESE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY – ALTERNATING STIMULUS AND ABSTINENCE

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1. INTRODUCTION

The outstanding feature of traditional environmental policies is their consistently reactive posture – more or less ineffective – in the face of gross manifestations of ecological destruction and environmental health hazards. In cases where pollutants exert an indirect toxicological impact on human beings and their surrounding environment, there is, as a rule, no reaction at all until significant damage is recorded and the cause-and-effect relationship between pollutant and problem are scientifically proven – often a difficult or even impossible feat to accomplish. Where direct intervention into the biological and socioeconomic components of living ecosystems has occurred in the form of construction or development projects, action based on such environmental policy has even less chance of successful damage control, or even damage avoidance.

In such cases, political strategies and corollary management concepts offer little, if any, hope for alleviation, let alone redress of the damages caused. One of the essential prerequisites for establishment of a comprehensive political concept for damage avoidance is the integration of the spatial-systemic and technical-chemical aspects of environmental protection into the institutional infrastructures for regional and development planning. In those countries where effective regional zoning and planning policies are in place, the inclusion of environmental questions in the planning process is common practice. At the same time, however, the integration of environmental protection into the halls of government – armed with the same administrative-legislative clout as other governmental agencies, for instance, those responsible for transportation, finance, social welfare, etc. – remains a distant goal.

In Japan there are practically no legally binding regulations on the regional planning process, not to mention on the environmental impact of planned projects. In fact, issues devolving on environmental protection and the safeguarding of public health are dealt with in an extremely peripheral manner. For this reason, one of the essential prerequisites for strengthening environmental protection and expanding the political influence of environmental thinking is a reform – both structurally and in

terms of content – of the instruments of regional planning and of the laws pertaining to regional ordering and planning. As mentioned above, environmental politics has dedicated itself almost exclusively to the toxicological and technical-chemical problems of environmental pollution. There was, after all, an urgent need to address these problems. So, although Japanese environmental policy has not been able to achieve the status of a potent political instrument with the commensurate breadth and depth of reach, in certain problem areas it has scored some impressive successes.

Even today, Japan's environmental protection apparatus remains highly fragmented. This is due in large part to the fact that the highly sectoral organization of the governmental-administrative system allows ministerial bodies to define the boundaries of institutional jurisdiction. What this means is that bureaucratic administrative bodies, as a rule, hold sway when it comes to determining the content of the political agenda and its administrative-institutional demarcations. In the context of this "bureaucratic primacy", other political groupings such as non-parliamentary interest groups, scientific and financial associations and representatives from the media and the cultural sphere, vie – more or less successfully – to influence the direction and the course of environmental policy (cf. Campbell 1989). That's why, in spite of what appears, for the moment, to be a relatively unanimous overlapping of interests among diverse social spheres with respect to ecological-economic questions, the current renaissance of environmental protection as an object of political concern will most certainly lead to basic controversies between the various interest groups. This is of particular significance in light of the intensive discussion currently focused on evolving a new orientation in international development policies. Meanwhile, a stronger emphasis on the environmental and social tolerability of the programs and measures advocated by these groups, along with international political measures in general, are seen as central pillars of regional and global political stability and security.

The influence exerted by the older, more tradition-bound ministries on environmental issues in Japan is reflected, among other things, in staffing practices and the institutional assignment of coordinating instruments. Even after the establishment of a National Environment Agency, bureaucrats throughout the government continued – and continue – to claim jurisdiction over issues of environmental protection and public health as it relates to the environment. Under these circumstances, the formulation and implementation of environmental policy, as one might expect, have taken – and continue to take – the form of jurisdictional wrangling between ministries and agencies, whereby the perceptions of one

bureaucratic group with respect to environmentally-related issues are often completely at odds with those of another.

Nonetheless, repeated cases of catastrophic environmental contamination caused by industrial pollution have succeeded in triggering a stormy phase of environmental innovations. It was during this period that a progressive and effective administrative infrastructure was created for the purpose of regulating and reducing industrial pollutants. The middle of the 70's is generally regarded as the end of this activist era. In the next 15–20 years, we discern a tendency towards more or less conspicuous cooperation between the environmental bureaucracy, on the one hand, and industry, business and the administrative structures servicing them, on the other. Since the late 80's, however, a new course is discernible. In the context of the intensifying globalization and internationalization of environmental issues and their ever stronger association with socio-economic questions, the environment has again taken a front row seat with respect to national and international political events.

2. THE POLITICAL RISE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES – THE FIRST PHASE

In order to be in a position to evaluate the essential political changes which took place in the late 60's and early 70's as well as Japan's present posture and reactions to global and domestic environmental issues, we need to take a look at the development of the environmental-political landscape and its infrastructure. This will include a look at the institutions and practices introduced during periods of environmental activism which were designed to lend an environmental orientation to administrative-bureaucratic processes and to carry out environmental policy decrees.

As mentioned above, there have been two periods in postwar Japanese history in which the environment, and the manner in which environmental issues are viewed, have become important political themes and objects of fundamental political decision-making. The first period culminated in 1970 when, after years of pointedly ignoring acute environmental and public health problems, the Japanese parliament issued strict ordinances regulating hazardous pollutants. The second phase ran more or less parallel to a period of steadily growing concern globally about environmental issues. This period reached its intermediate high point in the preparation phase for the world environmental conference, nicknamed "Earth Summit", convened in Rio de Janeiro. After a period of almost fifteen years of abstinence with respect to environmental policy, the environment has once again become an object worthy of political consideration.

In postwar Japan of the 50's and 60's, aspects of environmental protec-

tion, when examined at all, were viewed politically as issues of classic hygiene and public welfare. In other words, environmental poisoning caused by industrial waste was viewed primarily in terms of hygiene in the work place and daily hygiene. This was a far cry from the measures designed to protect vast tracts of land which were fast becoming the classic environmental protection response in the industrialized countries of the west. The disregard shown for the industrial poisoning of the environment by harmful air and water pollutants until whole communities were in the midst of environmental catastrophes, i.e., the poisoning of thousands of people with lifelong and/or fatal consequences, is now well documented in Japan. It was mirrored in the institutional infrastructures in place at the time. Although, until the middle of the 60's, the Ministry of Health and Welfare had a Section for Environmental Hygiene (*Kankyō Eisei Ka*) and a Section for National Parks (*Kokuritsu Kōen Ka*), neither had any jurisdiction with respect to industrial pollution of the environment.

The early postwar period in Japan is characterized by the single-minded concentration of the national government on economic reconstruction and catching up with the industrialized countries of the West. During the 50's and 60's, the government steadfastly refused to acknowledge, or take any responsibility at all for, the mercury poisonings in Minamata and Niigata, the cadmium poisonings in Toyama or the asthma cases in Yokkaichi. The prime motive for this posture appears to have been based on the fear that governmental regulations designed to safeguard the environment and public health could adversely impact economic growth (cf. Pharr and Badaracco 1986).

The disregard and the sheer proportions of the health hazards posed by toxic substances discharged into the environment by industrial processes, however, finally prompted the launch of grassroots environmental organizations. They demanded the cessation of the emissions responsible for the illnesses and irreparable damage to health along with compensation for the victims. The redress of grievances was to prove enormously difficult and prolonged. As the first news of appalling physical and neurological damage to human beings came to light, the victims, regarded publicly as cripples and lunatics, were ostracized by their own communities. People's ignorance of the real causes of these maladies can be viewed as the prime reason for this behavior. The prevailing attitude that industrial growth was something unequivocally positive – a conclusion never examined critically – and the compelling economic dependence of the affected communities on the companies responsible for the poisoning are also of decisive significance. But the rising number of victims, the rising number of critical voices in the affected communities and even the scientific proof of the cause-and-effect relationship between emissions

from local industry and the health condition of the victims¹ could not bring industrialists and politicians to face the catastrophe. They remained unshaken in their conviction that economic development and growth should remain their overarching common goals. After all, communal and prefectural governments had been trying for decades to lure industries into their areas. Now, although the promotion of unchecked economic growth had ruined the health of several thousand people, and although growing criticism was being voiced among the general populace, the policies of concealment and pacification continued unabated. Politicians and industrialists only began to react to the dire situation when the number of victims had risen into the thousands and public protest – buttressed by growing support from the international media – threatened to alienate the electorate from the established political parties.

The efforts of the victims and concerned parties to have their cause acknowledged, to receive compensation and to reject the prevailing politics of ecological and social ignorance would prove to be thorny and prolonged. That the damage to the natural environment and human health as a result of pollutants would gradually become an issue in political and business circles, growing finally into a political issue of the first order, is a product not only of the engaged efforts of concerned residents, but of critical attorneys and doctors, scientists and students, as well. The growing national interest in these cases was also very important. It helped bring necessary information on the cause-and-effect relationship between environmental factors and the diseases observed both to the victims and their uninjured neighbors, not to mention information on the course of their court battles. The growing interest in these cases among journalists

¹ A local Japanese newspaper reported as early as 1953 that over a hundred cats in one particular village in Kyūshū had displayed extreme behavioral disturbances and then died shortly thereafter. It was reported in 1957 that four patients had been sent to the Minamata Health Center with an unknown sickness and symptoms of brain damage. When it became known that several months before the patients' arrival at the hospital, their pet cats and the cats in the neighborhood had died after displaying the previously mentioned behavioral disturbances, the doctors at the Health Center began investigating the unknown sickness. They discovered that, by December of 1957, seventeen of the 54 patients who had displayed the same unknown symptoms had died.

In June of 1958 the Ministry for Health and Welfare named the Chisso Company as the source of the heavy metals which were the cause of Minamata Disease. In November of 1959 the same Ministry was informed that a particular form of organic mercury was the cause of Minamata Disease. At that time the Chisso chemical factory was the only possible source of mercury-containing effluents into the Bay of Minamata (cf. *The Japan Law Journal* Vol. 5 (1992), No. 4).

also had another effect. The plight of the injured parties in court was strengthened thanks to reporting by the foreign media, as already mentioned. It was this external influence, in particular, which ultimately convinced the victims that government and industry had ignored their situation for too long and that their only hope for redress was in the courts. Nonetheless, it took the victims of the Minamata catastrophe nearly twenty years of legal battles before they were officially recognized as such. Some cases are still pending even today and a large number of victims continue to wait for the legal recognition as 'victims of environmental pollution' that will entitle them to some form of compensation for their suffering. In 1982, two employees of Chisso company received two-year suspended sentences for the deaths of six victims of environmental poisoning which the court ruled to have been unnecessary and avoidable. The serious omissions in the course of decades of aggressive economic growth untempered by political regulation or public skepticism, let alone concern, have cast a huge shadow on the image of Japanese society.

Today, forty years after emissions of untreated industrial effluents were flushed into Minamata Bay in southwest Kyūshū, Japan remains burdened with the stigma of unconscionable levels of industrial pollution which have been officially sanctioned for a long time. To commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the legal acknowledgment of the Yokkaichi asthma patients as official pollution victims, the Twelfth Japanese Environmental Conference was convened in Yokkaichi. The conference afforded an opportunity to comprehensively reexamine the issue of industrial pollution in Japan and its development up to the present time. The significance of the four most important legal cases involving environmental pollution in Japan (the mercury poisoning case in Niigata Prefecture, the 'Itai-itai' case in Toyama Prefecture, the Yokkaichi asthma case in Mie Prefecture and the Minamata Disease case in Kumamoto Prefecture) and their impact on the basic tenets of Japanese environmental policy were thoroughly analyzed. It is amazing to note here that the administration of justice meted out in these cases made corporate Japan prosecutable and legally liable for causing environmental damage (cf. *The Greening of Japan* 1990). That the grassroots organizations launched by pollution victims forced to band together did not direct their effort at governmental bodies (local, regional or national), but appealed directly to the legal branch of government instead was a new strategy which proved highly effective. They had no choice, really. There was no other public forum that would take up the issue of the cause-and-effect relationship between pollution and the maladies of the victims or address the liability of polluters (cf. Ui 1975). The courts also provided an ideal forum for winning the attention and sympathy of the public. Not surprisingly, public protest was on the rise, and

with it, increasing public support for those struggling to win compensation. While these four large environmental court cases were being fought in the late 60's and early 70's, they were at the center of public interest.

With information on these serious cases of environmental poisoning being disseminated to wide sectors of the public and public concern mounting, those voices – both inside and outside governmental circles – appealing for fundamental legislative action on the environmental front became more and more influential. The first steps toward real legal reform were taken in 1963 when then Minister for Health and Welfare, Kobayashi, broached the topic of a comprehensive environmental protection law during a visit to Yokkaichi. In 1964, the Ministry for Health and Welfare established a department for *kōgai*² (cf. Kato, Kumamoto and Matthews 1981). In 1965, the Ministry set up a Deliberative Council on Pollution (*Kōgai Shingikai*), a commission of forty experts from academia, industry, government and the media. The Council presented its interim report to the government in August 1966 advocating – for the first time in Japan – a stringent legal framework to deal with the pollution problem. Alarmed by the potential far-reaching consequences for industry contained in the interim report, industry and MITI (Ministry for International Trade and Industry) launched a massive protest. This forced revision of a series of separate points contained in the report. However, when the Council submitted its Final Report in October 1966, the substance of the first set of proposals was still essentially intact (cf. Gresser, Fujikura and Morishima 1981: Chapters 1 and 2). In fact, the Council report served as the basis for the new “Standard Law for the Avoidance of Damage Caused by Environmental Pollution” which was enacted by the Japanese Parliament in July 1967. The legal framework created by the “Standard Law” is very general, indeed, affording a sketchy idea at best of how problems relating to air, water and noise pollution were to be handled in administrative-judicial terms (Interview with environmental bureaucrats). Furthermore, the law does not contain any emissions standards at all, nor any provisions to aid pollution victims. The so-called “harmony clause” safeguarding business interests comes up in two places in the language of the legislation.

² The term *kōgai* came into general use (at the latest) in the late 60's and early 70's to describe (industrial) environmental pollution and the human suffering associated with it. The Chinese characters that form the compound, *kō* meaning 'public' and *gai* meaning 'damage, disadvantage, suffering, injustice', indicate that the term *kōgai* has an even wider meaning than the English term 'pollution'. The term first came into use in Japanese at the end of the 19th century. At that time, it was applied in general to troubles or suffering borne by the public as a result of environmental problems – at that time presumably natural disasters such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

In Articles 1 and 9 we read, "[...] in harmony with a healthy economy." What these articles give us to understand is that the protection of the environment and public health has only relative priority and that it must in some cases be subordinated to economic and/or business interests. Ironically, Article 9 must also be viewed as the first critical step toward practical application of an environmental protection law. In this Article, we read, "The government shall set environmental quality objectives with respect to water, air and noise, as deemed desirable in the interests of safeguarding the environment and public health" (cf. Tsuru 1976; Nomura 1976).

In spite of all the lip service, of all the overly general and noncommittal directives and ordinances, and of the strenuous efforts of the administration to maintain its well-worn policy of maximum economic growth ("industry first"), the enactment of the Environmental Protection Law marks the beginning of an era of environment-oriented legislation. Nevertheless, several more years were to pass before environmental legislation would reach a point where it could no longer be ignored by industry or business. The harmony clause, in particular, left virtually no leeway for the application of serious and effective measures to protect the environment and public health. The "New National Development Plan" of 1969 was no exception to past precedents. Although this document for the first time explicitly mentions the need for comprehensive control of pollutants, the regulations in place to control and reduce industrial pollutants were on such shaky legal ground that they were wholly ineffective as an enforcement counterweight to prevailing practices in business and industry (cf. Utsunomiya 1981).

Meanwhile, industry clung to its habit of ecological ignorance and environmental quality continued to worsen. Ultimately, thanks to growing support by critical and progressive politicians in the face of inaction by business interests, environmental protection regulations were independently enacted by regional bodies (prefectures, cities and towns) (cf. Pempel 1982). As issues of environment and public health took on national proportions, the socialists and communists who had remained without much influence on the political process, along with independent grassroots organizations, saw their opportunity to draw more voters into their camps by coming down on the 'right side' of environmental issues. Election results in Tōkyō, Yokohama and other large cities confirmed this approach. The newly elected mayors and prefectural governors actually sought ways and means of converting their campaign promises into practical measures (cf. Barrett and Therivel 1991). Since the Japanese Communal Administration Law stipulates that regulations, including environmental protection regulations, enacted by local bodies cannot be

stricter than national laws, ways were sought to get around these legal barriers.

One practical solution employed by prefectural and/or communal authorities was to conclude special environmental protection agreements with separate industrial concerns. The first agreement of this type was concluded between the city of Yokohama and an electric company in 1964. In September 1968, the mayor of Tōkyō and the president of the Tokyo Electric Power Company, Japan's largest power company, forged an agreement aimed at reducing emissions in an as yet unconstructed power plant.

Among local governmental bodies pursuing this type of strategy, Tōkyō Prefecture is a real success story. Under the leadership of then-governor Minobe, a whole series of ordinances on the control and reduction of pollutants were set in place which were stricter than those set by the national government. It is thanks to the close cooperation between the authorities and grassroots organizations that increasing pressure could be exerted on business concerns and the central government alike. This strategy proved an effective means for creating a counterweight to the protective business policies of the central government (cf. Upham 1987). The government meanwhile attempted, in vain, to forestall the advances being made in Tōkyō. In the end, the national government saw itself compelled to officially acknowledge the right of regional and communal administrations to enact their own, stricter, environmental protection regulations. In response, the Environmental Protection Law of 1970 was amended. Tōkyō had risen nationally to the status of a trailblazer in the field of progressive environmental policy.

Above and beyond the growing pressure from a critical Japanese public, Japan saw itself increasingly exposed to international criticism. The Tōkyō symposium on environmental issues sponsored in 1970 by the International Council for the Social Sciences exerted a great deal of influence on policy and public opinion in Japan. The symposium received extensive news coverage and public attention. Of particular note is the resolution enacted on March 12, 1970 (the Tōkyō Resolution) enunciating the right of every person on the planet to an unspoiled natural environment. This pronouncement has since taken its place as a centerpiece in the vocabulary of the Japanese environmental protection movement. The resolution goes on to demand: "[the right to] an environment which will not harm human health or well-being and in which the natural environment, including its aesthetic value, will not be endangered. Our most important task is to work towards grounding these rights in a credible legal structure, thereby insuring that future generations will be able to enjoy an unspoiled nature" (cf. Tsuru and Weidner 1985).

The profound effect of the Symposium on the public and the increasing

weight of environmental issues overseas, particularly in the United States where a national Environmental Protection Act was enacted in 1969 and a national Environmental Protection Agency established in 1970, tended to put even more pressure on the Japanese government. In July 1970, an Advisory Council for Pollution Control (*Kōgai Taisaku Hombu*) was finally set up. In December of the same year, a ministerial conference was convened for the purpose of coordinating the policies and measures of the various ministries with respect to pollution control and the regulation of damages. The most significant act of this "pollution conference" was the deletion of the harmony clause from Articles 1 and 9 of the Environmental Protection Law. The year 1970 witnessed the enactment of 14 legislative proposals for environmental protection and the establishment in May of the following year of a national Environment Agency (*Kankyōchō*) (cf. Gresser, Fujikura and Morishima 1981).

This phase of political and judicial innovation did not, however, signal that the threat posed by chemical emissions to the environment and public health was over. The breakthroughs in the political and legal realms had only created a small base for more effective environmental policy. The road ahead would be one of consolidation and practical implementation of the recently created possibilities. With Tōkyō subjected to a smog catastrophe in July 1970, one of the first administrative tasks of the new Environment Agency was the determination of limits on nitrogen oxides (NO_x). Typically, Japanese NO_x standards came to be based on the so-called Muskie Bill in the United States – a set of standards which were, ironically, ultimately rejected by the United States Congress. With the enactment of these standards, Japan's NO_x regulations were the strictest in the world. As one might expect, the emissions standards published by the Japanese Environment Agency in October 1972 were more or less equivalent to those contained in the U.S. Clean Air Act.

In its first years of existence, the Environment Agency was quite successful in the creation and implementation of a number of substantial laws devised to protect human beings and the environment. The enactment of the Nature Protection Act in 1972, the Chemicals Act of 1973 and the Law for the Compensation of Persons Injured by Pollution in 1974 can be viewed as the centerpieces of this legislative activity. But even at the height of all this environmental policy innovation, the momentum was never sufficient to overcome the resistance in the pro-industrial camp towards legally mandating an environmental impact assessment system. In fact, shortly after its greatest successes, the victories for the plaintiffs in all four of the big environmental court cases, the environmental movement in Japan was destined to lose the better part of its elan and influence.

3. AN ERA OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY COMPROMISE – THE SECOND PHASE

The political-legislative changes wrought during the period of environmental *Sturm und Drang* and the accompanying requirements imposed on industry provoked growing frustration and resistance in business circles, pro-industry associations and among conservative politicians. This reaction was mirrored in the bureaucracy by the formation of separate environmental protection departments in the various ministries. The result is that today sixteen ministries and agencies are exerting a direct influence on the environmental decision-making process. The first ministry to jump on the environmental band wagon was MITI (Ministry for International Trade and Industry) in 1963. This heralds back to the bureaucratic effort, begun very early on, to integrate environmental policy instruments into existing political institutions. The bureaucrats' motive here was, of course, control. The issues were becoming more and more politicized and the potential for social conflict rising. Under these conditions, problem management would be preferable within established political-administrative structures. The widespread and constant worsening of environmental quality and the increasing number of persons injured by hazardous emissions, however, made the establishment of a central environmental agency absolutely necessary. Nevertheless, soon after its founding, the Environment Agency was to learn just how limited its decision-making jurisdiction was to be.

From the very start, the Agency was handicapped by a small operating budget and had difficulties performing the investigative work and data collection necessary to support Agency positions and decisions. Furthermore, data held by other ministries and agencies was, and is, frequently withheld from the Environment Agency. Industry has pursued an identical tactic. Industrial and manufacturing facilities are frequently in possession of data which is extremely relevant to the formulation of technical-chemical guidelines for environmental protection. In such cases, however, business interests feel more comfortable sharing the information with conservative ministries and agencies rather than the Environment Agency which is essentially an enforcement authority (Interview with environmental bureaucrats, 1991).

What we clearly observe here is the effort, mentioned above, to have the environmental regulatory process take place as much as possible within the framework of the established pro-industrial network made up of industry and political institutions. The tradition – still very much in practice – of "administrative guidance"³ is a strong indicator of the rigid

³ The concept of 'administrative guidance' (*gyōsei shidō*) is connected here with

structure of political decision-making in Japan. It immediately casts doubt on the possibility of environmental policy issues ever gaining real influence.

Nonetheless, the environmental bureaucracy itself has attempted to exploit Japanese administrative principles as a means of promoting its own interests and objectives. This has resulted in rather unconventional successes such as, for example, the unusual environmental protection agreements concluded between prefectural (or communal) agencies and individual corporations. It must be emphasized here that the environmental bureaucrats cooperated very closely with local grassroots organizations in this process and that energetic public support contributed significantly to the success of these political tactics. Be that as it may, the carrying through of environmental protection regulations on this basis has its potential weaknesses. If public support should give out, so-called administrative guidance could easily collapse (cf. Morishima 1981). In addition, this form of close cooperation between the political and business spheres, founded as it is on such a weak legal basis, has a tendency to deteriorate into an excessive quest for consensus between the concerned parties. This leads to cases where the authorities, in spite of clear violations of existing strict environmental protection regulations, make no effort to prosecute the perpetrator. The self-defined function of the bureaucrats seems to lie more in the area of providing technical advice and recommendations designed to aid the violator in complying with prescribed standards and in arranging advantageous financing to facilitate corporate compliance.

The fast and furious events of the 70's help to cast some light on this situation. The significant changes in administrative and legal structures in the early 70's were followed in the years ahead by constructive steps toward the implementation of regulatory and mediatory measures. Appropriate administrative-legislative developments were followed by reductions of the most hazardous pollutants. Indices of principle pollutants do indeed substantiate this general trend toward relief of the environment and reduction of health hazards (Environment Agency 1989). Then, in the second half of the 70's, we begin to observe the first unmistakable signs

the administrative handling of violations of environmental statutes. In practice, the control function of the overseeing authorities is such that, in spite of gross violations of the law, for instance, the Pollutant Control Law, it is extremely seldom that the authorities actually bring suit against the violator. In general, warnings are issued together with suggestions to aid in a constructive solution of the problem. At this point, the national or local government will frequently offer help in the form of credits, subsidies, tax relief, licensing grants, etc. The same procedure is applied the other way around.

of fatigue in the process. On the one hand, drastic emission reductions and the legal successes of pollution victims in winning compensation took the wind out of the sails of the grassroots organizations which had been so active up to that point. On the other hand, the environmental administration suddenly found itself exposed to energetic attacks launched by industrial and business lobbies. Paradoxically, it was the successes achieved by the environmental bureaucrats which now made it more difficult to defend their position and maintain their influence in the Japanese political-administrative system.

The waning of public support and the principle of administrative guidance – which had found its way increasingly into the sphere of environmental protection – frequently made the authority of the environmental administration the subject of two-way negotiations. But there is an even more important reason for the oncoming institutional crisis in environmental politics. This has to do with the fixation (mentioned earlier in this paper) of both the public and the “official” environmental movement on health hazards relating to technical-chemical problems. The diffusion of these extremely precarious issues led to a certain loss of orientation (cf. Utsunomiya 1981). The prime goal, namely the reduction of pollutants dangerous to human beings and the environment, seemed to have been accomplished for the most part. After all, limits – or at least guidelines – had been set for the major pollutants and measures implemented to allow for control and evaluation.

The emotional wave of political innovation provoked by environmental scandals seemed to have run its course. Although there might still have been a chance for the environmental movement to consolidate its influence in the social and political spheres, the oil crisis of the 70's, among other things, tended to shift the attention of the Japanese public back to mainly economic issues. Conservative political currents acted to deprive the progressive forces, basking in their new found but temporary political power, of their base of effective political influence. This was a green light for traditionally conservative ministries like MITI, the Ministry of Construction and the Ministry of Transport to put even more of a strangle hold on the environmental authorities. Their dwindling political fortunes were reflected, among other things, in the many failed attempts to put an environmental impact assessment system on a legal footing (cf. Hatakeyama and Shinkawa 1984).

The objections of other ministries to Environment Agency plans can be summarized in three main points. First, the available scientific means for carrying out the required measures were evaluated as being insufficient. In the case of large development projects, it was argued that legally mandated and obligatory environmental protection would be based on a

dubious evaluatory basis. Second, they registered their disapproval of the delays in development projects which would result in cases where an assessment of potential negative environmental effects was filed. And, third, they claimed that environmental legislation would promote the formation of "pseudo grassroots movements" composed of radical social elements who would exploit the right of appeal in order to spread propaganda hostile to the state (Interviews with environmental bureaucrats).

Another explanation for the setbacks experienced by the Environment Agency in its early existence can be found in staffing arrangements. The lion's share of the first generation of staff for the new Agency were bureaucrats transferred from the Ministry for Health and Welfare. The staff also included bureaucrats from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the Ministry of Finance and the Economic Planning Agency.⁴

The oil crisis and the economic recession served to strengthen the rising countercurrent against environmental protection. In the wake of the first oil crisis in early 1973, industry calls for economic relief, particularly from the automobile industry, were loud and clear. 'Relief', of course, included relief from environmental protection regulations, especially those in the form of limits on emissions. Encouraged by the decision of the U.S. government to postpone enforcement of the provisions of the Clean Air Act, the Japanese automobile industry urged the government to postpone or, better yet, cancel enforcement of limits on emissions (cf. Hatakeyama and Shinkawa 1984). In fact, the Environment Agency approved a recommendation by the Council for Environmental Issues to relax the mandated limits on NO_x emissions which were set to take effect in 1976. In 1975, a hastily worked out graduated plan was published which provided for a 1976 NO_x emission limit of 0.06 ppm with a postponement of the much more stringent 0.025 ppm limit until 1978.

This relaxation of limits on pollutants was pushed through in spite of intra-agency resistance and the strenuous opposition of various mayors. In the so-called 7-City Action of July 18, 1974, a council of mayors actually set up an adhoc committee assigned to study the emissions problem. The committee report published several months later concluded that the con-

⁴ The fact that the majority of new "environmental bureaucrats" were transferred from the Ministry for Health and Welfare helps explain the temporary lack of orientation in the environmental administration during the mid 70's. These bureaucrats tended to concern themselves exclusively with health-oriented environmental problems. Moreover, their scientific backgrounds hindered them for a long time from developing a definition of more comprehensive problem solving approaches to environmental problems.

troversial 0.025 ppm limit could easily have been realized in 1976 (Iijima 1979).

Ironically, at precisely the moment when an OECD report was optimistically reviewing the successes of Japanese environmental policy, the Japanese government was in the process of relaxing limits on NO₂ emissions. Whereas average daily emissions had previously been restricted to a maximum NO₂ concentration of 0.02 ppm, ceilings were to be revised to the 0.04–0.06 ppm level for a transition period of seven years. So, while 90% of the regions of the country had had NO₂ levels exceeding the emissions standard prior to relaxing the limits, a touch of the administrative wand now had 94% of the regions of the country within the required limits! The general political climate had changed, to say the least. In spite of the turning tide, however, we would still be obliged to describe Japanese environmental policy as relatively successful, at least insofar as the reduction of harmful technical-chemical pollutants is concerned. The next step, namely the establishment of an integrated environmental frame-of-reference to guide policy and action was not in the cards. A turning point had occurred in Japanese environmental policy (just as it had in other countries at the same time) before the notion of integrating ecological and development planning objectives into a comprehensive political management structure could materialize institutionally. For government and grassroots organizations, it was now necessary to develop a vision of a humane world and then demonstrate a feasible means for achieving that vision. A fact mentioned in the conclusion of the OECD report of 1977 (which official Japanese accounts generally gloss over) is that “although Japanese environmental policies largely succeeded in abating pollution, they did not succeed in eliminating environmental discontent, and that the real cause of environmental discontent was not – and is not – increasing pollution, but decreasing environmental quality” (OECD 1977: 87).

The time period between 1967 and 1973 is generally viewed as the *Sturm und Drang* phase of Japanese environmental policy and 1974 as the start of a turning point in environmental politics. This turning point is characterized by increasing levels of cooperation between the environmental bureaucracy, on the one hand, and business and industry on the other. In practice, this amounted to a greater willingness on the part of the environmental administration to accept compromise (cf. Pharr and Badaracco 1986). Besides the domestic dimension of environmental politics – the decline of the public’s interest in environmental pollution problems (larger and larger segments of the population were viewing these problems as solved), the disappearance of the grassroots organizations founded in the 60’s, a shift by regional and communal governments from the environment to other issues, and the trend to vote progressive

politicians out of office – the changes in the environmental political landscape in Japan occurring at this time are also due, in part, to influences from abroad. Though the extent of this foreign influence (*gaiatsu*) is difficult to gauge, it furnished the conservative countercurrent with welcome arguments in favor of ‘toning down’ environmental standards and ‘moderating’ environmental policies. So, while the ‘foreign factor’ had given steam to the Japanese environmental movement in years past (the U.S. Clean Air Act, the Stockholm Conference, in 1972, etc.), this influence now completely reversed itself. References were now being made to the grave competitive disadvantages to which Japanese business and industry were being subjected. The Japanese government was urged to follow the American example and dispense with policies of overly strict regulation of pollutants.

The sharp debates in the U.S. between the automobile industry and environmental authorities over standards for CO and NO_x had resulted time after time in the postponement of officially mandated enforcement deadlines. In the end, it would take ten years for the Clean Air Act of 1970 to finally be enforced. The image of the U.S. as environmental pacesetter, which had up to that point exerted a strong influence on the implementation of progressive environmental measures in Japan, now completely reversed itself. The caving in of the American environmental bureaucracy in the face of increasing pressure from business and industry strengthened the hand of Japanese opponents of progressive environmental policies in their demands for a relaxation of limits on pollutants (cf. Tsuru and Weidner 1989).

As already mentioned, the adoption of the very strict “Muskie Limits” – giving Japan the world’s most stringent carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon emissions standards – had aroused great displeasure in the Japanese automobile industry. The disgruntlement reached its climax in 1973 when legal enforcement of the air quality standards based on the proposed Muskie Bill was postponed in the United States for one year. The Japanese automobile industry suddenly saw the stiff regulations valid only in Japan as a threat to its competitiveness. The word was out that this turn of events was proof of an American political plot designed to weaken the competitiveness of the Japanese economy (as quoted above).

With the general change in the political climate, politicians and bureaucrats began devoting less and less attention to matters of environmental protection and public health. MITI and the Ministry of Transport, in particular, now saw themselves in a position where they could afford to deviate more and more from the official environmental political line without loss of face. The natural solidarity which developed with the representatives of business created a front against the implementation of

new measures to control pollutants and for the easing of existing regulations. In line with the precedent set on automobile emissions standards, the influence exerted on government positions relating to pollutant control and regulation was conspicuous. A good example of the new regimen was the establishment of a new pro-industry Subcommittee for the Avoidance of NO_x Pollution in June of 1976. This is generally chalked up as a success for automobile manufacturers and marks a reassertion of bureaucratic initiative and influence by MITI. In the case of subsequent decisions on the control of pollutants, business' position was undoubtedly strengthened. Although the situation within the automobile industry in the early 70's might be characterized as one of tensions and conflict, the entire industry was united in 1974 behind demands that NO_x standards be rescinded for a period of two years.

In fact, the growing resistance to official environmental and pollutant control policies, along with the widening discrepancy between problem assessments made by different ministries and agencies, compelled the government to undertake a decidedly more cooperative political strategy. The basis of this cooperation was – and is – the existence of a minimal consensus on the need for certain lowest common denominators with respect to pollutant control and environmental protection regulations.

The "Vinyl Chloride Crisis"⁵ is an oft-cited example used to illustrate the basic elements of this cooperative approach (cf. McKean 1981, among others). The cooperative relations in this instance are generally likened to a triangle. Representatives of government, of industry, and members of governmental advisory bodies each occupy one corner of the triangle. The power relations and the wielding of influence among the individual parties varies, naturally, depending on the interest of the concerned ministry

⁵ In January 1974, the B.F. Goodrich Company announced that within the past two years, three workers in its vinyl chloride (VC) plants had died of a rare and deadly cancer of the liver, angiosarcoma. After the announcement, the Japanese response took shape quickly. Within two weeks, representatives of all Japan's VC and PVC producers had met in Tōkyō and had received an official request from the Ministry of Labor for cooperation in solving the problem. By April of 1974, the Association had organized the Industrial Hygiene Committee to deal with the VC problem. The committee, and the Association itself, became the centerpiece of an informal network linking government officials, industry, and labor representatives through meetings, telephone conversations, and by exchange of studies, documents, and memos. By May 1974, the Industrial Hygiene Committee of the PVC Association had developed a temporary emergency standard for VC of 50 ppm. Less than a month later, the Ministry of Labor issued emergency technical guidelines that were virtually identical to those recommended by the PVC Association.

and the social status of the particular facts of the case (cf. Pempel 1977, among others). In the vinyl chloride case under discussion, industry assumed leadership of crisis management from the outset with its across-the-board, rapid response to the situation. In a number of comparable cases, however, it is the advisory bodies or committees made up of environmental authorities which have assumed an increasingly influential position. In a comparison of governmental political successes, the field of emissions standards stands out in particular.

After all that's said and done, the legal instrumentalities developed in the 60's and 70's form the basis today of a relatively strict policy of pollutant control. It was the economic experience acquired in the process of implementing these political instruments and measures that ultimately enabled the environmental bureaucracy to consolidate its influence. For instance, during the oil crises when a reduction of GNP occurred and many industrial sectors were burdened with massive financial problems, the general rise in prices and slack demand for certain goods stood in contrast to rising demand for pollutant control equipment and related peripheral services.⁶ Today there exists a general consensus that the measures undertaken to reduce and control pollutants have had an overall positive economic effect.

The combination of strict pollutant control measures and reduced energy consumption have led, moreover, to a rapid decline in the level of airborne pollutants, while the percentage of water tests which do not meet environmental hygiene standards has dropped by 98%. Furthermore, it has proved possible to maintain a large number of pollutants at low levels even with growing GNP. These improvements and the very effective application of the 'polluter pays' principle, whereby polluters have been made legally liable for emissions and any disease or damaged health caused by them, have won Japanese environmental policies worldwide recognition and respect. Japan now has the world's strictest emissions standards and employs state-of-the-art advanced technology to reduce and control industrial pollutants (Barrett and Therivel 1991).

But problems remain. In the areas of water and ground contamination which are more difficult to solve with purely technical strategies and concepts than air pollution, the situation in some localities may even be worsening. In other cases, many companies have simply geographically shifted environmental problems, by moving their technical-chemical production facilities off shore.

⁶ It is, to be sure, very difficult to differentiate between the economic effects of Japanese environmental policy and those of the oil crisis. This is particularly true in cases where various investigations produced controversial results.

With respect to environmental quality in Japan, the available data is reviewed in this paragraph. In terms of standards for human hygiene, water quality since the 70's has improved considerably. With respect to the national survey on water quality conducted in 1987, only 0.02% of all the analyzed samples taken from public waters exceeded the standards set for cadmium and other known harmful substances. However, various biological indices do display considerable deviations from established standards. In testing year 1986, for instance, approximately 30% of the water samples tested did not fulfill the established standards for BOD (biochemical oxygen demand) and COD (chemical oxygen demand). The pollution of lakes and reservoirs for drinking water is particularly striking; almost 60% of the samples tested exceeded the maximum levels judged harmless for a whole slew of substances (Environment Agency 1989). Ground contamination and noise pollution appear to be on the rise. Unfortunately, the data available for these categories is so fragmentary that no authoritative conclusions can be drawn (Environment Agency 1989). Pollution and damages caused by the proliferating construction of golf courses, the chemicals used to treat the grounds and the construction of other leisure and vacation facilities including ski areas and extended hotel and sports complexes are only sporadically factored into this evaluation (cf. yearly reports of the Environment Agency).

The list of tracts of protected land in Japan is equally impressive. All together over 5.3 million hectares (14% of the land area of Japan) have been placed under some form of protection. Of these, however, only 5,600 hectares are classified as 'wilderness' and less than 30,000 hectares as 'wildlife protection areas'. In legal terms, the status of these protected lands is generally not binding. Construction or other development projects (either local or regional) are, as a rule, hardly ever faced with legal or political hurdles. To use the example of resort development, the actual intent of many prefectural or local governments becomes clear, when they attempt to rezone scenically desirable tracts of land (often with high ecological and/or biological value) for development. The handling of large-scale public projects is equally radical in the disregard shown for ecological principles. However, it is precisely this type of behavior that has tended to inflame public opinion. In the context of current discussions on the enactment of a new environmental omnibus act and a legal basis for an environmental impact assessment system we can probably expect changes in this area in the near future.⁷

⁷ Both the Environment Agency and MITI assigned committees of experts to consult on the proposed legislation. Representatives of both ministries expressed their positions vis-a-vis the committee of the other ministry in October

Analysis of Japanese environmental policy reveals that the approaches taken to solve environmental problems are almost exclusively technical solutions with accompanying burdens both for individuals and society as a whole. Such technocratic environmental policies have the fatal weakness of ignoring the problem of the environmental destruction of large expanses of land caused by direct incursions, such as large-scale public or private projects or the realization of national infrastructure development plans (regionally or locally). This problem is a source of the growing discontent felt by many people that the quality of the environment around them is deteriorating, both microscopically – the area in which they actually live – and macroscopically – the surrounding country. Reported cases of the environmental destruction of vast tracts of land only tend to reinforce this widely held discontent. The issue of environmental quality at all levels is not amenable to solution by simply introducing new methods of pollution control or ppm standards. In contrast to dealing with harmful substances, environmental-political issues like “the public interest” and “environmental quality” are more difficult to translate into concrete policy and action.

The issue at hand here can be subsumed under the concept of ‘amenity’. We understand ‘amenity’ in this context to mean that quality of a spatial unit (a place, a section of a city, a landscape, etc.) which makes life there pleasant. The Oxford English Dictionary cites the meaning of ‘amenity’ as “the quality of being pleasant; of places, their situation, aspects, climate, etc.” Accordingly, the ‘amenity concept’ is not merely concerned with evaluation and implementation with respect to separate qualities, but directs itself at the whole, at a whole catalog of values and moral concepts, and their interaction with each other. In the context of environmental policy and the ‘amenity’ issue, we can identify three primary categories: pollution control, environmental improvement and conservation. More and more, Japanese environmental policy has come to proclaim this integrated concept as the basic operative framework for its preventive environmental policies. In reality, however, a great deal more effort will be needed in Japan to conceptually expand on and implement policy based on the notion of ‘amenity’ and an ecologically-oriented concept of socio-economic development (cf. Miyamoto 1983). The concept of ‘amenity’ truly wedded

1992. The central point of contention was the proposal to introduce an eco-tax, a plan championed by the Environment Agency and vehemently opposed by MITI. The enactment of a comprehensive environmental law, something which has become a standard demand of the international environmental policy scene, continues to be a major issue for the Environment Agency, while MITI never tires of cautioning against too hasty reactions (cf. *Asahi Shimbun* of September 29, 1992).

with the management of public space and development planning, should serve as a fundamental principle for the execution of administrative planning at local, regional and national levels. This principle, moreover, should be a key factor for consideration in land use planning and city planning, as well. A comprehensive environmental policy, therefore, must take into account the total environmental needs of man – ethical, aesthetic, physical, intellectual, economic, etc. – and then examine the demands these pose on the physical-biological environment as its basis for developing political guidelines and decision-making. The sobering shortcomings of Japanese environmental policy in this regard and public discontent – a product of the increasing sensory and mental stress caused by noise, vibration, and other forms of pollution – are compelling indicators which point up the need for a new orientation in environmental policy. A social policy founded on the principles enunciated above is an indispensable precondition for achieving sustainable (environmentally-friendly) development and, in the process, an improved quality of life for human beings.

Global environmental problems and pressure from the international environmental policy community may serve to push Japan forward on the search for this road or 'vision', if you will. But be that as it may, trail-blazing environmental law in Japan, and much of the relevant legislation which was to supplement it, were enacted in the 70's. Most of this legislation is now outdated and needs to be revised in terms of its framework and socio-political, ecological references. In addition, past environmental legislation in Japan has restricted itself exclusively to domestic affairs without proper consideration for the international and global dimensions of these issues.

4. THE JAPANESE APPROACH TO GLOBAL ISSUES AND INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES

Japan's domestic environmental authority was established to formulate and implement an integrated environmental policy with the goal of comprehensive damage prevention and control. Up to now, this goal has neither been achieved domestically nor internationally. The fact that the anticipated expansion of functions and greater scope of jurisdiction in environmental policy – let alone the establishment of the political-administrative instruments needed to realize those ends – have not been achieved is due, among other things, to the continuing influence of entrenched bureaucratic ressorts (such as MITI, the Ministry of Construction and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) on the environmental agenda and related decision-making.

Current discussion on a new comprehensive environment law underscores this fragmentation of jurisdiction in the field of environmental policy. A proposal worked out by environmental authorities in partnership with the Central Council for Environmental Pollution Control and the Nature Conservation Council is presently being evaluated by the Director of the Environment Agency and the other ministries. This particular proposal is the fruit of 12 meetings in which the original recommendations of the environmental authority were subjected to major revisions. Although the revised proposal still defines the general goal of the new law as the creation of an environmentally friendly socio-economic system, the call for a legally binding environmental impact assessment system as contained in the original version presented by environmental authorities has been omitted. What's more, the demand for an environment tax along with a clear definition of its purpose and realization were relegated to the status of a very general discussion paper (cf. *The Daily Yomiuri*, Dec. 2 1992 among others).⁸

In light of these developments, the expressed wish of Japanese bureaucrats and politicians to assume a leading role in the formulation and implementation of international environmental policies to solve global environmental problems appears rather cynical. Nevertheless, Japan is an active proponent in the international political arena of paying more attention to global and regional environmental problems. These problems, however, cannot simply be solved with clever financing and legislation to promote technological innovation. One of the essential prerequisites for developing a successful approach to solving these problems is critical reflection on existing socio-political and socio-economic values

⁸ The dilatory posture of the Japanese government with respect to the enactment of an environmental impact system and environmental tax is a further indication that the political mood in Japan is still light years away from actually carrying out fundamental steps and measures aimed at modifying the socio-economic system. A case in point is the discussion about enactment of a law mandating establishment of an environmental assessment (or impact) system which goes back to the 70's. The first attempt by the Environment Agency to set up an environmental assessment system goes back to as early as 1971. The bill, however, was rejected in the face of strong resistance from industry and business. Environmentalists in politics and administration see themselves confronted with similar problems in their present efforts to establish the legislative-administrative basis for an environment tax. The most prevalent counter-argument against levying taxes on industries (or plants) for environmentally damaging emissions and the consumption of limited raw materials is that the economic effects of such regulation have not been sufficiently evaluated. Without such data, we are told, it will be impossible to achieve the necessary consensus among the representatives of politics and industries.

(cf. Costanza, 1991; Miller 1991; Paehlke 1989; among others). Japanese politicians and bureaucrats along with the international environmental policy community would therefore do well to critically examine the Japanese portrayal of themselves as a model in the field of environmental policy and their claim to leadership here.

The blatant gap between theory and practice is much more than just an uncritical obsession of domestic Japanese politics with exclusively technological aspects of environmental protection. What is of even greater concern is Japan's intent to export this problem-solving approach to developing, partially-developed and newly industrialized countries. This invariably includes collective abandonment to the notion that the maintenance of an ecological balance in nature is merely a question of money and technology. This view stands in crass opposition to the goals of the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. It also runs counter to the demand for sustainable forms of development which take into account the national interests of the developing countries. The conference communique clearly underscores once again a point which has since become common sense: Environmental destruction and its resulting socio-economic problems, or vice versa, are caused by structural weaknesses within social systems (United Nations 1992). It is therefore more than questionable as to whether Japan's technocratic problem-solving approach qualifies Japan to assume a responsible leadership role in the political solution of global environmental and development problems. The multiple revisions and watering down of the original proposal for a new comprehensive environmental law described above only serve to strengthen the doubts raised here.

The UN Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm in 1972 is considered the beginning of an international (or global) environmental policy. The twenty years since this conference have indeed witnessed the formation of a worldwide environmental movement; thousands of grassroots environmental organizations have been founded and environmental legislation has been aided by a proliferation of environmental movements.

In the early 90's, as preparations for the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro reached their high point, there was hardly any international speech by a president or prime minister which did not refer in some form to urgent environmental problems and the need to solve them through international cooperation. The corporate world was likewise vehement in its emphasis on this theme which was exerting more and more influence on international politics. Dozens of multinational corporations published their own environmental manifestos pointing up

the necessity of improved cooperation between environmental protection and corporate action.

Laws and political declarations are frequently light years away from the realities of environmental policy. In spite of all the insights enunciated and the decisions taken in Stockholm twenty years ago, political practice continues to limp behind the rapidly deteriorating environment. The shift to environmentally friendly and ecologically sound social and economic policies has yet to evolve out of the conference stage. And Japan is no exception. As already pointed out in connection with the current discussion on a new comprehensive environment law, the gap between the claim and the reality is particularly large. Although there is a general consensus in political and business circles in Japan on the need for concrete measures to combat environmental problems, both domestically and internationally, a conception of the content and form of such measures and their implementation remain objects of general controversy.

This state of affairs is exacerbated by the top down structure of political decision-making and formation of informed opinion, which is characteristic of the environmental climate in Japan right now. Political measures and change are no longer occurring in response to grass roots pressure. Quite the contrary, the deciding factors today have more to do with the desire of the Japanese political establishment to improve its international image and exert more influence in the international arena. What's more, an increasing number of groups in the public and private sectors discern unmistakable mid- and long-term competitive advantages in stepped-up investment in the fields of environmental technology and environmentally friendly products, along with ecologically oriented business management as opposed to conventional management concepts (cf. Special Feature: Environmental Protection (1992), among others). The growing number of resolutions on environmental protection and sustainable development from politics and business along with the many national and international congresses and symposia convened on the subject in Japan in the last few years and months seem to indicate that some comprehensive changes, in fact, are in the offing. In spite of the fundamentally different underlying conditions and driving forces that exist today in comparison to the late 60's and early 70's, the political influence of such changes could positively affect the tide of events.

As milestones of this trend, we can point to the enactment of a "Global Environment Charta" by *Keidanren* (Japanese Federation of Economic Organizations) in April 1991 and the publication of "Recommendations on Measures to Apprehend Global Warming – Tasks to Undertake Now for the Sake of Future Generations" by the *Keizai Dōyūkai* (Japanese Associa-

tion of Corporate Executives) in June of the same year. The Keidanren Charta emphasizes the need for environmentally friendly business and challenges businesses to integrate such basic values into their corporate philosophy. These recommendations are expressed in the form of 11 general guidelines for environmentally conscious business activity. A list of ten points with rules of behavior for Japanese corporations operating abroad is also attached. In contrast to the general nature of the Keidanren exposition, the *Keizai Dōyūkai* document addresses global environmental problems such as global warming. In separate chapters for each, recommendations are laid out for private enterprise, the government and the public. The most striking attribute of both documents, aside from their noncommittal quality, is their contradictory quality: calling, on the one hand, to turn away from environmental policies which are concentrated primarily on the reduction and combating of industrial pollution, while, on the other hand, limiting Japan's contribution to the solution of international and global environmental problems essentially to policies focused on technology and industry. Moreover, the concessions to the need for a fundamental reorientation of the basic socio-economic values of the industrialized western countries made in opening statements, receive no further consideration in the rest of the explanation (cf. Japan Environment Monitor, 7/8: 91, among others).

Similar can be said of the political-administrative guidelines of the Japanese environmental authority (Environment Agency). Neither can we find an interweaving of political and physical-biological realities in their basic positions. Nor will we find anything more than general statements without reference to concrete solutions. As the environmental authorities and the government they represent see it, the following issues are deserving of special attention: 1) depletion of the ozone layer, 2) global warming, 3) acid rain, 4) transboundary movements of hazardous wastes, 5) marine pollution, 6) loss of biodiversity, 7) deforestation in the tropics, 8) desertification, and 9) pollution problems in the newly industrialized economies (NIEs).

The need for a global perspective with respect to the solution of environmental and developmental problems in the NIEs is particularly underscored. That's why the environmental authority sees one of its main tasks as being the expansion of international assistance programs.

In this context, repeated references are made to the complex nature of the problems and the need for linkage between global and international environmental policies on one hand, and national and local political interests on the other. However, in formulating and implementing measures to solve these problems, we are further reminded that the scientific proof of the interconnectedness of environmental problems remains insufficient.

In this way, concrete measures to cope with the actual socio-economic causes of environmental problems can be delayed. In terms of concrete strategies and measures, even the environmental bureaucracy has little or nothing to offer beyond the development and transfer of environmentally friendly technologies.

These are approaches which proved quite successful for the solution of domestic environmental problems in the late 60's and early 70's. The current slew of global and regional environmental problems, however, especially in the newly industrialized and developing countries, require far more comprehensive political measures which will touch the very foundations of our market-oriented societies.

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