

## **The Current Stage of the Municipal Reform Movement: Conservatism and Innovation in Urban Policy**

Conversation between

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Annotation by T. Taguchi: Akira Tamura and Masayasu Narumi are both executive advisors for mayor Ichio Asukata of Yokohama city government. Although Asukata belongs to the Japan Socialist Party, Tamura and Narumi are independent persons who advise the management of the city administration regardless of political backgrounds. Narumi has become an advisor in political aspects since Asukata was elected for the first time in 1963. Tamura joins the city administration from April 1968 to implement all the projects that he proposed to the city in 1964 as a planning consultant. Regarding the development and land use control, he forged an innovative regulation, as new planning tool by initiative of local government, over housing developments and publicizes it from August 1968. The relationship between Asukata and them is very friendly and intimate. They frankly discuss all aspects of the city management and sometimes criticize Asukata's political decisions.

### **The Position of Innovation in Urban Policy**

#### **Editor**

In the July issue of Sekai (World) magazine, Mr. Minobe (Ryokichi Minobe, Governor of Tokyo) wrote an article entitled "My Theory of Innovative Metropolitan Government," in which he stated that innovative parties in Japan have no concrete urban policies, making it difficult for them to demonstrate effective leadership on municipal issues.

In a sense, the field of urban issues, one of the fundamental issues of our time, is one of the main arenas in which innovative parties should demonstrate their true potential, but in reality, the reality is that there is a significant gap between their perception of urban issues and the reality of urban policy. The Socialist Party suffered a heavy defeat in the recent Upper House election, and I think that the retreat was particularly noticeable in the huge urban areas. As Mr. Minobe's criticism suggests, the insensitivity to urban issues and the lagging behind in urban policy may have been one of the causes of this situation.

So, first of all, I would like to ask those of you who are actually involved in urban administration what you think about the attitude and policies toward urban issues of the innovative political parties on a daily basis.

#### **Tamura:**

I don't know if it is because of the influence of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) urban policy, but the Socialist Party and other opposition parties have recently announced their own urban policies. I still have my doubts about whether the innovative parties have really begun to take urban issues seriously, but I think it is a step forward and very positive that they have taken up urban policies.

There are many aspects to urban issues, but I think there are two main aspects. The first aspect is a problem that directly affects the residents' bodies. The basic premise of urban problems is how to better and more efficiently meet the daily needs of urban residents, such as water supply, sewerage, human waste disposal, childcare and education, and firefighting.

Another aspect is that we must view and solve contemporary urban problems and the problematic nature of the age of urbanization from the perspective of the history of civilization, so to speak. Urban life is said to have a history of 5,000 years, and has continued in the great flow of civilization, and will

continue as long as human civilization exists. Cities as the accumulation of civilizations are naturally regulated by the conditions of the civilization of the time, but changes in the conditions of civilization can only be observed from a long-term perspective. Japanese cities are undergoing rapid transformation in a short period of time, but if we look at foreign cities, we can see that they have been changing over a period of about 100 years. For example, the Champs-Élysées in Paris was planned about 100 years ago and is still alive today, playing a certain role even in the age of motorization. In light of this, there are two aspects to urban policy: one is that it must consider what to do 100 years from now, and the other is that it must consider what contribution it can make to humanity at that time. There are many issues in between these two extremes.

The first, which is very close to home, is something that someone, whether conservative or innovative, has to do, but the traditional conservative parties have not been able to focus on this minimum task, which is the administration in contact with citizens. Instead, the focus has shifted to those who benefit from the use of the city. However, just because we are a conservative party does not mean that we should not do this at all. There will be a lot of complaints from citizens, so to some extent they will have to do it. However, they will only do so to the extent that it is necessary and unavoidable. Therefore, I believe that the first point of contact with urban issues from the innovative parties is to seriously address the administration that comes into contact with the public. This is a matter of course for urban administration, and without it there would be no urban administration at all. This is not so much an issue of innovation, but it is the most important thing for an innovative party to actually approach the basic issues of urban administration. At the same time, this is desirable for the day-to-day activities of innovative parties, and of course it is necessary to have such an angle when conducting urban administration.

The second point is how to respond to the inter-urban problem, a problem that has existed throughout the history of human civilization. Various urban policies have been proposed by various political parties, but none of them addresses this issue. The LDP's policies are somewhat detailed, but they only focus on contemporary technical urban administration and do not have such a big vision or outlook. However, someone really needs to come up with an answer to the question of how urban civilization should be in the long run, and to implement it. If the innovative parties were in a position to look ahead to a new era and create a new society, they would be able to provide the best answer to urban civilization, but this is not necessarily the case in their current urban policies. This is precisely the point that the urban policies of the innovative forces should be addressing.

### **Urban Policies of Political Parties**

#### **Narumi:**

Each political party has announced its urban policy using the Upper House election as a bridge to the future, but the LDP and the Socialist Party seem to have spent a certain amount of time and mobilized their scofflaws.

The idea of taking up urban policy as a political party had existed in both the LDP and the Socialist Party for quite some time, but the LDP created the Urban Problems Investigation Committee (Tanaka Committee), and the Socialist Party materialized this idea by creating the Special Committee on Urban Problems. The first reason for this was the objective situation in which cities were no longer able to fulfill their original functions as cities and rural areas were no longer able to fulfill their original functions as rural areas, due to the current overcrowding in large cities and depopulation problems in the rural areas. Second, each political party had its own circumstances based on this situation. As Kakuei Tanaka and other LDP New Right members had said at the time the Tanaka Committee was formed, the number of LDP votes in the vicinity of large cities and in areas where urbanization was progressing was declining, in other words, the LDP's base of support was declining in the cities. There is a population outflow from rural areas to large cities, and at the same time, rural areas are becoming more innovative, as seen in Tohoku and Hokkaido, due to a sense of crisis caused by depopulation. The so-called "multi-party" phenomenon is beginning to appear in rural areas as well. The sense of crisis that the LDP is losing its foundation both in large cities and in rural areas has given rise to the

idea that the LDP has no choice but to address urban issues, and that it cannot become a modern conservative party unless it does so.

As for the Socialist Party, its party constitution is actually the reverse of that of the LDP, and as was evident in the recent lower house election and the upper house election before that, the Socialist Party's vote has been declining in the Tokaido region, especially in areas that are becoming more urbanized and around large cities. In this respect, the Socialist Party is actually in a more critical situation than the LDP. In this sense, the Socialist Party is actually in a more critical situation than the LDP.

Thus, Japan's largest conservative party and the largest opposition party are actually in crisis under the same conditions. And in the big cities, Komei Party is making inroads and the Communist Party is organizing in the gaps between the two. So, in fact, the reason why both the Liberal Democratic Party and the Socialist Party have taken up urban policy in earnest is because of the old constitution shared by the two major political parties in Japan. This is probably the reason why the two parties had to share the same ideas and starting point.

**Tamura:**

In the case of the Tanaka Research Association, it plans to make huge investments in social infrastructure over the next several decades. There are various projects, such as building a 7500-km expressway in a rural area, but even if this is a big plan today, it will be realized in a relatively easy way. In the end, the only place where future capital will be intensively invested and utilized is in the cities. And when I say cities, I mean urban areas, including the current cities and a fairly large area of the Pacific Belt region. It is my understanding that a considerable amount of large-scale investment will be made in these areas. In the case of the Tanaka Research Group, we are clearly aware of the issues and crises involved in taking measures and initiatives to address these issues, as well as how to absorb the funds from these investments. Mr. Tanaka's background in the construction industry and his experience as Minister of Finance and Secretary-General of the Cabinet make him well-positioned to consider these issues in earnest. He is also bright in the construction industry and in the financial sector. Therefore, the "Three Banks of Urban Development" are mentioned in the policy, and the combination of financial restructuring with urban policy as a lever is well thought out. In this way, they are trying to make urban policies their own medicine. In contrast, the Socialist Party's proposal seems to have been issued in haste after seeing the LDP's proposal, and I wonder to what extent they had a clear sense of crisis. Frankly speaking, I think Mr. Tanaka is much more strategic in his interrogative. Even if the LDP loses votes in the cities, it is still not a big deal in terms of overall votes. They will have to make up for this, of course, but the main aim is to take the initiative on the huge amount of money involved in urban policies, to put it simply. The Socialist Party has been reflexive, but its awareness of the problem is unclear. It does not have the same strategic significance as the LDP.

**Narumi:**

Comparing the urban policies of the five parties (LDP, Socialist Party, Democratic Socialist Party, Komei Party, and Communist Party), there are three major categories. One is the LDP, which, to put it very simply, takes the position that the restoration of urban functions can be solved through the use of private funds. In some respects, this is closer to industrial policy than to urban policy. In contrast is the Communist Party, which is too clear-cut in its anti-imperialist and anti-monopoly struggle, saying that there can be no solution to urban problems without the establishment of people's power. Sandwiched between these two parties are the Socialist Party, the Democratic Socialist Party, and the Komei Party, forming a single group. The Komei Party is about the welfare state, and the Democratic Socialist Party is not clear on its image, but it is roughly similar to the Socialist Party. In other words, they are concerned with how to protect the lives of citizens in the city, and what the corrective measures should be in the context of capitalism. Especially on the issue of civil rights, as far as I have seen, there is almost a common ground with the exception of the Communist Party. Even though there are differences in nuance, it seems that almost all parties are in agreement on the issue of limiting private rights to land to some extent, expanding public land ownership, and reforming the legal and taxation systems to deal with these issues.

**Tamura:**

The only difference in the background is that what the LDP has put forward is quite groundbreaking for the LDP. It came from the point of view that the total capital efficiency of industrial capital has declined so much due to the land problem that it must be somehow overcome. However, the LDP's structure is not entirely supported by industrial capital; rather, it is now mainly composed of rural members. Therefore, for the LDP, it can be said that this is a measure to improve its constitution with a view to the future. In other words, until now, the LDP's foundation has been the interests directly attached to the land. However, the LDP's future foundation cannot be built on this basis, so it is necessary to build a foundation from a political perspective and strengthen the financial base that will accompany this foundation. The LDP is now trying to shift its policies in the direction of how to focus on the huge amount of construction funds that will be directed to the city in the future. However, not all of the LDP's structure has changed, and there are still many old forces that are still in the US-oriented camp. Since Mr. Tanaka is also the chairman of the party's rice price survey committee, there has been considerable debate within the LDP, and I do not think it will be a rapid process. In any case, however, he is doing this with a very political mindset. The other thing is that there are requests from industrial capital. This is a policy that seeks to improve the LDP's structure and financial situation by making good use of these demands.

The Socialist Party's is, to take it to the extreme, just a rephrasing of the generally accepted urban policies. So, although they are similar in content, there is a considerable difference in their strategic sense of purpose. The Socialist Party does not have a set strategy for what it is trying to achieve or what it is trying to do by formulating such an urban policy. The content is along the lines of what we have been saying for some time: expanding public ownership of land, limiting private rights to land, controlling land prices, etc., all of which are fine, but shouldn't there be a more fundamental awareness of the issues involved? It seems to be a bit of a sticking point voiced by the LDP. The content is somewhat similar, but there is little awareness of the interstitial issues and a lack of proactive thinking typical of the Socialist Party.

**Urban Policy Strategies and Tactics**

**Editor:**

Could you please explain a little more about your basic awareness of the issues and your strategic perspective?

**Tamura:**

First of all, I mentioned the two aspects of urban issues out of the blue, but in fact, neither the LDP nor the Socialist Party have responded very well to this. What the Tanaka Committee has put forward is a policy that falls somewhere between the two, and is based on a technical judgment of the city. In that sense, it is only an answer to what should be called the "hardware" of the city. And the Socialist Party is somewhat caught up in that policy. Therefore, instead of aligning ourselves with the same base, we should focus on two issues: the issues closer to home and a larger vision. I think this will bring out the flavor of innovation. At the moment, I get the impression that they are following mere technological theory. The Communist Party's approach is in a sense more open, because it does everything in a snap. Even if the LDP is fine with technical theory, I think the other parties should start from a non-technical point of view.

**Editor:**

Mr. Narumi, what did you mean when you said earlier that the LDP's policies have an aspect of criticism of the bureaucracy?

**Narumi:**

That is what Mr. Tanaka is saying. In other words, in terms of the fact that the political parties themselves have embarked on policy making, this time the urban policy has a certain significance, including the Communist Party. Of course, the bureaucrats' support was also obtained, especially in

the Tanaka Committee, but up to now, whether it was the Socialist Party or the LDP, we have been following the bureaucrats' scripts. So it is significant that a political party has taken the initiative in policymaking. I believe that Mr. Tanaka was motivated by his awareness that he could not leave urban problems to the current bureaucracy to solve, but rather that urban problems had become confusing because he had left them to the bureaucrats.

**Tamura**

That may be true. However, from the results of the project, I feel that the concept of the National Land Development Agency and the Three Urban Banks is a product of the bureaucratic power. So in that sense, it is an ambition with the bureaucratic forces. However, it is meaningful in that the way of formulating policies has become more technologically developed than in the U.S. and Europe.

**Narumi**

That is correct. It will be very interesting to see how the political parties, especially Mr. Tanaka and others who are part of the LDP, will use the technocrats in government offices in the future. The Eda Committee of the Socialist Party, which I mentioned earlier, seemed to be thinking of technological solutions to urban problems when it was first established. In other words, as a conditioned reflex to the Tanaka Committee, our party was also thinking about it. At that time, the Tanaka Committee was conducting hearings from all sources, including the central ministries, local organizations, and the business world, and was gathering a lot of data. The Socialist Party was not to be outdone, and we began to work on land policy. There was a movement to counter the Tanaka Committee by creating a land policy outline and proposing it to the Diet on the initiative of the Socialist Party. However, it was natural that they could not compete with the Tanaka Committee. After some confusion at last year's party congress, the first part of the party's platform, as you can see in the new charter, is the "Citizens' Council for Urban Reconstruction," which is a movement and an organization for the reconstruction of the city of Tokyo. As you can see, the first part of the platform is a movement theory and organizational theory called the Citizens' Council for Urban Reconstruction. The second part deals with the technical problems of the city and how to solve them. This is a movement to solve urban problems with the participation of the people and citizens, which is very characteristic of the Socialist Party. I think this is because it is based on the idea of using this as a clue to change the constitution of the Socialist Party. In terms of technical urban issues, or the second part of the concept, the Socialist Party does not yet have a vision or strategic goals for urban policy, so it has only come up with very abstract slogans such as "People are being marginalized in cities" and "Green, Sun, and Space" that are used everywhere. And when it comes to the evaluation of specific issues and methodologies, they are the same as those of the LDP. As Mr. Tamura said, without a strategic concept of national land planning and concrete policies for Japan as a whole, we can only come up with an abstract image of urban issues.

**Tamura**

When I said earlier that it would be better to play a non-technical game, I did not mean that we should abandon technological theory forever. Urban issues have a fairly technical aspect. I applaud the Socialist Party for taking up such issues, and by touching on the two basic points of urban problems as I mentioned earlier, the Socialist Party should have a more technical theory than the LDP. We should rethink these aspects from a different angle and then do a technical discussion. This will require a considerable number of staff members, but I think we should go that far. Therefore, we should present the new Urban Reconstruction Program in the form of Part I, and clearly state that we will develop technical discussions later on. I still think that tactic is also mistaken. In the end, I feel that the Socialist Party is categorized as a group of others and lacks clarity as an innovative party.

**Narumi**

Except for the Communist Party, if we were to draw a picture of a city based on the urban policies of the four parties, from the LDP to the Komei Party, they would all look the same. So, for example, the Socialist Party does not have an image that makes people feel that it is the policy of the Socialist Party.

Compared to that, Komei Party's urban policy is still focused on housing policy, which is easier to appeal to the public. Komei Party's urban policy is focused solely on public housing, and it says that solving the housing shortage is an urban issue, which is understandable in its own way.

## **Urban Policy and Municipal Reform**

### **Narumi**

After the Socialist Party's urban policy came out, I heard about the National Conference of Innovative Mayors. There, Mr. Eda gave me an outline of the policy and we discussed it. I thought that there would be a lot of technical discussions because the head of a municipality is in charge of the most concrete area of contact with citizens, but that was not the case. Many mayors expressed their opinions on the land issue, saying, "Why don't you just say nationalization?" In response, Mr. Eda said that he could not go that far yet because it would mean promoting solutions to urban problems within the current capitalist system. Among the mayors, he said, "There is also dissatisfaction about technical issues. But what is needed now is a policy that appeals to the people's image as a socialist party. The lack of such a policy makes us uneasy in the concrete day-to-day administration. The land issue is a difficult one, but it is necessary to set a major goal of nationalization and clarify what to do at this stage in the process."

The next issue is that the vision and process of urban development are very important. Not just in terms of legal procedures, but how to follow democratic procedures among citizens, especially in the case of the Socialist Party, must be emphasized. Even today, there is a Local City Planning Council, which is supposed to listen to the opinions of residents, but in reality it has become a formalized process, and the route for citizen participation and reflection of citizen will is closed. I would like to see the innovative parties come up with concrete ways to open up these channels. The Socialist Party has consolidated this in the form of the Urban Reconstruction Council, but I wanted them to clarify not only that kind of movement theory, but also administrative techniques. For example, this is not necessarily a good idea, but Mayor Lindsay of New York City held a public referendum to decide on road investments for the next five years in New York City. Lindsey went around to citizens to explain the necessity of the road plan and finally got their approval. In Japan, if we introduce a system that reflects the opinions of citizens, and not just the City Planning Council, citizens will become more familiar with urban planning, and innovative political parties will be able to play a greater role in this process.

Another issue I would like to emphasize is the relationship between urban policy and municipal reform. The LDP's urban policy is based on industrial policy, and its specific methodology is to provide full financial and legal assistance to private developers as its main focus, whereas the Socialist Party seeks to have local governments and citizens take the lead in urban construction. In contrast, the Socialist Party calls for local governments and citizens to take the initiative in urban development. Therefore, if we really want to solve the problem of democracy in urban development in a practical way, we cannot separate the issue of municipal reform from the issue of urban policy. However, when we look at the Socialist Party's urban platform, we find that the issue of municipal reform is omitted. Yet, it still says that local governments and citizens are the main actors in urban policy. In general, the issue and awareness of the problem of municipal reform came to be placed at the base of the national movement for the first time by the Socialist Party after the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty of 1960, and it was finally recognized as a key point for reversing the bad structure of the Socialist Party. However, there are still some objections within the Socialist Party to placing the issue of municipal reform at the center of the national movement. One part of the Socialist Party is of the opinion that an innovative mayor would be a burden to the party's class line. It goes without saying that the interests of citizens differ with respect to a single project, but this cannot be addressed only in the field of urban planning. In this respect, the upcoming urban planning conference will be a great opportunity to discuss the issue of democratization. In this respect, the new city charter (of the Socialist Party) does not express the idea of municipal reform, but rather focuses mainly on urban technology and citizen movements, dropping the issue of democratization of local government, which should serve as a mediator between the two.

## **Urban Planning and Democracy**

### **Editor**

You have made an important point. In relation to this point, I would like you to touch on the issue of the relationship between planning and democracy in urban planning.

### **Narumi**

There is a question as to what kind of difference there would be if a person with a socialist ideology and a person with a conservative ideology were to implement so-called urban hardware, such as constructing bridges, buildings, and ports. For example, in Kushiro of Hokkaido, where a person named Mr. Yamaguchi is innovative mayor, the issue of expanding Kushiro Port has been raised. The local labor unions and the Communist Party oppose the construction of the port because it is a service for industrial materials and trees. However, even from the standpoint of an innovative mayor, the actual city manager cannot simply do the work that directly affects the lives of citizens, regardless of what happens to the industrial economy. Therefore, the construction of a new port must be considered. This is where the workers of the employees' union, which supports the innovative city administration, are unsure. Under the guidance of the local government workers' union, they have been taught the theory that all regional development will only be used by monopoly capital, and they cannot effectively refute the Communist Party's argument. They are torn between whether the construction of the port is a bad thing in order to promote an innovative city government, or whether it is unavoidable in order to protect an innovative city government. Even in an innovative city, the mayor's job is about the community as a whole, not just the garbage or the road in front of him. He must also consider the proper economic development of the community. That is the demand of small businesses and farmers, and it should also be the demand of the workers there. But that does not mean we can do regional development in the same way as the LDP mayor. What I mean is that we must value the process of organizing a discussion among citizens about the construction of a port, absorbing their opinions, and deciding on the need for a port in the course of civil discussion. I believe that the process of negotiating with local capital and the bureaucrats of the Ministry of Transportation, while having such a civic background, can add some civic meaning to the finished product. I think there may be an innovative approach in this direction, but I have yet to see it put into practice. Innovative city governments need to take the initiative in creating such new rules.

### **Tamura**

I think that there must be some differences at the planning stage. First, I mentioned that there are two points that are most important for the daily lives of citizens, but in fact they are being neglected. Therefore, there is always the question of what should be done about such issues. In the case of conservatism, we tend to focus on the technological theory of industrial capital. It is the innovative forces that must be able to think about putting down roots in this area. As I mentioned earlier, a city should be considered from a long-term perspective as an agglomeration of civilizations. However, from the standpoint of industrial capital, such a long-suffering attitude is unacceptable. From the standpoint of the profit of capital, the time frame is inevitably five or ten years. In order to assist in this, recently there has been an idea to take a slightly longer viewpoint by introducing social capital and maintaining the efficiency of industrial capital through social indirect capital. However, we still have to calculate efficiency in terms of short-term capital gains. On the other hand, if we consider the city as an accumulation of civilizations and think about what kind of investment is necessary, it may happen to coincide with a 10- or 20-year perspective. However, a longer viewpoint can only be obtained from a perspective that is truly innovative, or one that is removed from the direct profit of capital. In the current calculation of national income, cost-value analysis, which measures the amount of profit relative to the cost of capital, has been studied in terms of capital efficiency, and McNamara and others have used this method in warfare. However, when we look at the actual figures for urban development, we see only the value that is currently being calculated. In other words, it is not more than the profit of capital. The ripple effects on the residents are not calculated. We are making efforts to take a longer view while covering technical issues. However, I believe that only an innovative approach can provide an answer in the long run by introducing another value other than the current

standard of calculation. This is because I believe that only those who can foresee the social form that will continue to exist 50 years from now will be able to evaluate the value. It is possible that this will happen to coincide with current methods. However, it is always necessary to have a clear standard of calculation that is not only based on the current standard of calculation. It is not impossible to establish this as a technical theory. It is not the profit-centered urban policy of the conservative forces that can produce it. Even if it happens to coincide with such a policy, there are many areas where it does not. From this point of view, there is a possibility that there will even be an argument that it is okay to build a port in Kushiro, or rather, that it should be built in larger quantities.

### **Narumi**

Because the Socialist Party is allergic to the Communist Party, people often raise the question of choosing between a regional development or a daycare center, or between an expressway or the pavement of the road in front of us. This is a way of turning an essential issue into a policy of easy-to-understand two-party choice, drawing the conclusion that all regional development is profit-seeking, that highways are a monopoly capital service, and that daycare centers and the pavement in front of them are truly innovative urban policies. But it is not so. We need highways, and we need daycare centers. As Mr. Tamura said, such discussions are not possible without an overall vision of what is needed now and what kind of vision is needed to create such facilities. If we are discussing only the two options, we will not be able to come up with a plan for the future construction of socialism in Japan. We need to change that kind of simplistic thinking. Therefore, when developing highways, ports, and regional development, even if the results are the same, it is important to take a different approach in the method, follow democratic procedures, and reflect the results in the policy, so that leadership as a new policy can be demonstrated in the next stage of construction. I believe that the leadership of the new policy will be the key to the next stage of construction.

### **Tamura**

How do we develop such a policy mechanism? The LDP may be more efficient in terms of 20-year perspective, but the Socialist Party is better in terms of human life 30 to 40 years down the road. It is also necessary to form the framework of the nation's land. By developing such a framework, people can truly enjoy a better quality of life. It is possible to make a small profit through the urban policy of the LDP. However, I think it is necessary for the urban policy of a truly innovative political party to show the framework of what the national land should be like 50 to 100 years from now. If the LDP is planning to build 10 berths of ports, the Socialist Party could build 30 berths.

## **Deficiencies in Japanese Urban Planning**

### **Editor**

By the way, what do you think are the major flaws in urban planning in Japan?

### **Tamura**

Urban planning can be divided into three aspects: the technical aspect of planning itself, the decision-making aspect of actually creating the plan, and the implementation aspect. The first problem is the lack of a land policy. In Europe, all major cities have had a land fund for about 100 years, and the local government has land without a clear daily target, which is used for development. The use of land is strictly regulated, and although the land is privately owned, it cannot be used without permission. There is also the concept that development profits are public property. They had such a clear land policy. However, the problem is that it is now on the verge of collapse. In the case of Japan, we do not have a land policy at all and we are going bankrupt, so it is not a problem. The way of thinking about land is fundamentally different. This is the biggest problem in terms of implementation.

The second problem is at the decision-making and planning stage. This too was dragged down by some stakeholders, and a mechanism to make decisions that benefit the citizens as a whole was not well realized. In the case of Japan, it is the planning of the top. As is evident in Tokyo's ordinances for revising city districts, the first step in urban planning, the priority was placed on industry, with the development of ports and harbors as the first priority. The city is now in a position where the top is given the right to come down and the bottom is expected to follow. Although the current laws have

changed in content, these tones still linger. Thirdly, on the subject of technology, there is no urban planning, or rather, there is no concept of planning. Until now, there was no one who specialized in planning. Planning is not merely the collection of individual technologies, but the integration of these technologies in accordance with a single goal, a goal that goes beyond individual technologies. It is necessary to train such planners and use them in actual planning.

#### **Editor**

From this perspective, I would like you to raise some of the problems with the City Planning Law and the Urban Redevelopment Law....

#### **Tamura**

There are many problems, but the basic point is the regulation of land use. However, at this stage, the law has only been enacted, but the method of implementation has not been specified. There may be a government ordinance in the future, but it is unlikely that anything significant will come out of it. In other words, the Buddha has been created, but there is a lack of authority and finances to provide the basis for how the soul of the Buddha is to be put into practice. In terms of land regulations, we end up thinking of a uniform system for the entire country. It is almost impossible to define the same urban planning area in a detailed law, and the only way to do so is to narrow it down to the greatest common denominator possible. In this way, only one-size-fits-all measures can be taken. Therefore, laws should be written in a manner that defines the scope of the project to some extent, and then delegate the responsibility for implementation to local ordinances, since conditions differ from district to district. It would be good to allow local governments to make various decisions within the bounds of the law based on the will of local residents. Another problem is that Japan does not have cities that are truly self-governing. This is why we end up with centrally-controlled urban planning. It appears that authority has been transferred to local governments, but mainly at the prefectural level. The prefectural level of local government is completely under the control of the central government, and the minister of construction is only formally appointed as governor. The governor is elected as the head of the local government, but the director of the Public Works Department, who is in charge of the local city planning councils, is a Ministry of Construction personnel, and the governor is completely unaware of this. Therefore, the major question is to what extent the transfer of authority to the prefectures respects the will of the local governments, but rather the central organization has entered into the local governments to control them.

#### **Urban Issues and Labor Unions**

##### **Editor**

You have just criticized the example of the Kushiro union, and there is the issue of the role of labor unions in the local government reform movement. The General Council of Trade Unions has taken up the issue of pollution in its campaign policy for this year, and I think that urban and municipal issues are inevitably coming up in the labor movement.

##### **Narumi**

It is the nature of Japanese labor unions and the corporate consciousness that is the backbone of the labor movement that prevents labor unions from taking up the interests of citizens from a national standpoint. One of the reasons why concrete solutions to urban problems have been delayed in Japan is that labor unions, which are supposed to be the allies of citizens, have been sloppy in this respect. The larger the company, the more it uses its in-house welfare facilities to solve its problems. Whether it is land issues, recreational facilities, or any other welfare facilities, the labor unions in large companies focus their demands on these facilities, and the companies accept them to a certain extent from the standpoint of preserving the workforce. What is left are the unorganized workers, mainly in small and medium-sized enterprises. In the housing problem, too, the limits of individual solutions are obvious, but the reason why there has been no revolutionary explosion in the housing problem is that people can afford to try to solve it within their own companies or to spend their own retirement money to solve it. This is the reason why there is no revolutionary explosion in the housing issue. The same is true for the daycare issue. The lack of public facilities in the city is covered by such human solutions,

such as day-care centers in companies or the fact that high-income earners are willing to pay 10,000 yen to take care of their children. Workers also rely on such solutions because it is easy to resolve their demands in this direction. Therefore, the idea of solving problems socially has traditionally been weak in Japanese labor unions, even those led by the General Council of Trade Unions. The fact that the General Council has taken up the issue of pollution and is gradually moving in this direction is not so much a policy shift by the General Council, but rather a sign that urban problems are beginning to exceed the limits of individual solutions. We have reached the stage where the labor unions have no choice but to think of ways to solve social problems. Therefore, if the Socialist Party and the General Council of Trade Unions had properly grasped the issues and brought them to the attention of the public based on such a concept from a long time ago, the postwar restoration plan would have been much different.

**Tamura** There is nothing more inhuman than corporate housing complexes. Before the war, company housing was limited for miners and dormitories were for female factory workers. Nowadays, they are found in large cities such as Tokyo and Yokohama. Those who live there are not satisfied so much even though they are provided with housing economically. However, they are in a halfway state, as if they have no choice but to live there because it is economically beneficial for them. This is a kind of alienation phenomenon, and I feel that the lukewarm state is being reversed, as if the tax exemption for wages in kind is being used as a policy tool to reverse the situation. This is a very negative thing, and we should take the attitude of dismantling this issue within the community and addressing it as a local problem. There is a demand for this, but it is not being absorbed properly. There is an atmosphere of wanting to somehow change this kind of situation on the part of the providers. For those who live in company housing, there is a sincere desire to have a more free life, notwithstanding the economic benefits, but such a life is unbearable. I mentioned earlier the vision of what a city should look like 50 years from now, and that is a city where people are free to live freely, and where they can enjoy the city. A town with company housing is the opposite of such a town. The appearance of such things in a city is a very negative aspect of urban development from the standpoint of the history of civilization.

### **The Idea of Urban Policy**

#### **Editor**

You mentioned the challenge of civilization-historical issues as an aspect of urban policy, but I think this will eventually lead to the issue of the ideology of urban policy or urban planning. I think that this is not clear at the moment. However, how do we reconcile the contradiction and conflict between the two, and what form is most desirable as a living space for human beings? What form of human living space is most desirable?

#### **Tamura**

That is an issue that will be considered through many discussions in the future. Anyway, if you look at it in the next half century, urbanization will continue. However, we do not know what will happen in the next half century. This is a contradiction. The city of half a century from now will probably be very fluid. People will gradually lose their anchorage. Not only will they be fluid domestically, but they will also be fluid internationally. Cities must become more accommodating to such a fluid citizenry. At the same time, however, a city must be a place where one can feel as if he or she has lived there for 30 years after just one day's stay. These are contradictory demands. I think that is what the city will probably be like 50 years from now. But 100 years from now, even that will probably be dismantled. Cities used to be trading cities, and after the Industrial Revolution, they were industrial cities. They produced goods there. However, this is not the case these days. Cities have become towns of tertiary industry. The tertiary industry is a rough term, but it concentrates in the administrative center of the industry. However, it is not a question of whether these management centers must be located in the city or not. It is enough if it is located in a place where it is easy to receive information. Unlike objects or people, information can go anywhere, and it does not have to be in a city. Therefore, the function of an administrative center is not a permanent condition for a city. What used to be a trading town, a production town, and an information hub will all become a thing of the past. What will remain then? It is a kind of modern-day plaza where people gather. The state in which people gather

and do something will remain in the city. To be more specific, the character of a town centering on daily life will remain. In other words, life itself is the city.