

Sports, Nationalism and Democracy

The recent Asian Cup soccer tournament in China has developed into a political game: the Chinese nationalism vs. Japan + the Beijing regime. In the final China vs. Japan championship on August 7 in Beijing, the Beijing regime had to mobilize 47 thousand police forces to protect the Japanese team and their cheering watchers [1]. It was reported that Zeng Qinghong, Vice President of PRC, cancelled his attendance for fearing his own citizens during the final match. If you replace "nationalism" with "Islam", "Japan" with "Western powers", this becomes a similar picture of Middle Eastern politics.

The Japanese, governmental or non-governmental [2], blame the Chinese fans utilizing sports for politics. They are only half right: it is the Japanese government to first utilize sports for politics. Japan's PM Koizumi continues to visit to Yusukuni shrine to worship the war criminals; the Japanese government legalized and sanctioned Hinomaru and Kimigayo as Japan's national flag and anthem. Not only they force the Japanese people to pay respect to these symbols,, the also utilize sports to request Asian people (through their regimes) to do so. When the Chinese fans jeered Hinomaru during the play of Kimigayo, Japan's Ambassador to China Anan immediately protested to the Chinese high officials (State Council Member Chen, Sports Minister Yuan and Mayor Wang) at the studio. The Japanese government was demanding the Beijing regime to force the Chinese people to stand up paying respect for the Japanese flag and song under which millions of Chinese people were butchered. Think of this: if the German soccer team uses the Nazi flag and song to play a game in Moscow, how can you request the Russians don't politicize sports? [3]

For the Beijing regime, economic growth becomes the legitimacy to stay at power, so they need investment from Japan and other Western powers. Western powers need a regime in Beijing to protect their interest in China. They need the Beijing regime to act as regimes in Egypt, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Suharto's Indonesia, Pinochet's Chile, Jiang Jieshi's Taiwan, Marcos' Philippines. Any regimes failing to perform this duty on behalf of foreign powers (such as Saddam Hussein's Iraq, Taliban's Afghanistan, Chavez's Venezuela) will not be tolerated. Japan's fascist/racist policy pressing the Beijing regime against ordinary Chinese people is the best example to know what Japan demands the Beijing regime to do.

As observed from an American historian: [4]

“Primarily because failure to appreciate Japan's past actions makes meaningful rapprochement with other Asian states, most especially China, virtually impossible.”

“This struck me most forcefully in the repeated demands by Japanese officials at various levels for the Chinese government to restrain its people from making anti-Japanese statements or otherwise displaying their anger at Japan or Japanese symbols. To me this was eerily reminiscent of the repeated demands

made on the part of, among others, Kwantung Army officers that various Chinese governments, including the Nationalists, should crack down on "anti-Japanese activities" in areas within Japan's so-called sphere of influence. One sees these calls being issued from the end of the 19th century through the end of World War Two."

"The most disturbing parallel is not that these demands might serve as a provocation for future action, but rather that they betray a fundamental inability on the part of the people making the demands to understand that this anti-Japanese sentiment is a true and honest expression of Chinese feelings and is based, at least in part, on legitimate concerns which need to be addressed."

During the Asian Cup week, I also experienced how the Japanese government mistreats a small business owner of China origin in Silicon Valley doing business with Japan.

Two years ago, after I was laid off by Adobe Systems, I started my small business to support US-Japan-China Comparative Policy Research Institute by exporting American industrial tools to Asia, mainly from my friends in Japan. Naturally, I need to visit Japan to meet old and new possible clients. I called the Japanese San Francisco Consulate. A woman, without knowing my China origin, kindly told me how to apply for a business trip visa. I prepared what she told me and brought the necessary documents to the Japanese Consulate on August 2.

However, when the woman in the Japanese Consulate visa section saw my application form and know my China origin, she requested many documents beyond reason and possibility. During the process, the visa section woman left the window several times to ask instructions from her boss, Consul General Makoto Yamanaka. She requested a valid Chinese passport, which I don't have; she requested the original letter from INS granting my political asylum status, even though I showed her my refugee travel document and my permanent residential card, which clearly indicate my asylum status. I also showed her my business bank statement in the last three months but she then requested my tax form. I showed her the invitation letters from my Japanese client firms, but she said "I don't know these company" so she requested to provide more documents from my client companies such things as guarantee letter and even client list, which would expel any Japanese clients away from my business.

Finally, I asked why they did not mention these extra arbitrary requirements in the phone, she answered: "You did not say you are from China."

If a Japanese small business is treated so either in the U.S. or in China, how would the Japanese government respond? The fact is that the Beijing regime opens China for Japanese citizens to enter free without visa for 15 days! The unlikely alliance between the Beijing regime and foreign powers to oppress and exploit the ordinary Chinese people makes Asia and the world more turbulent.

The Chinese nationalism, without democratization, pushes China to another direction of Iran or Iraq. Certainly, China's scale is different from that of a Iran or Iraq, which makes China next Germany in the current world disorder. As I

iterated everywhere, only China's democratization can bring peace to Asia and the world.

Notes

[1] The number is cited from Asahi Shinbum, August 9, 2004. The Chinese Ambassador to Japan Wu Dawei apologized again to the Japanese Foreign Minister Kawaguchi. Other cited news in this essay are also from Asahi online.

[2] Even the pro-Beijing Japan-China Friendship Association denounced the Chinese fans without mentioning the cause from Japan's side.

[3] This is precisely designed by the U.S. since the end of the WWII. And the U.S. now is granting the Tokyo regime to remove the No. nine item of the Japanese Constitution. The U.S. precisely know that any Japanese (from sports teams, business corporations, to Self-defense Force troops) under Hinomaru and Kimigayo will never be accepted by Asian people.

[4] Paul Dunscomb of University of Alaska Anchorage <PDunscomb@aol.com>, H-Japan (E): H-US-Japan: Historical lessons from Asian Cup, August 11, 2004.

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Comparative Policy Review, August 2004



Comparative Policy Review