

Abe Administration's Reactionary Policies and People's Movement in Japan

AWC-Japan

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Preface

Under the rightwing and reactionary Abe administration, workers and people in Japan are facing reactionary offensives by the government and monopoly capitalists in many aspects. Coming several years will become very crucial period for Japanese people's movement.

The New Security Bills

On July 1, 2014 the Abe administration made a cabinet decision on the allowance of the Japan's exercising of the Collective Defense Right, which had been denied by past administrations, ignoring the large people's opposition. The purpose of this decision is to strengthen the commitment of the Japanese Self Defense Forces (SDF) toward the US-led war of aggression and to enable dispatch of the SDF overseas anytime and anywhere they need. Also, Foreign and Defense ministers both of the US and Japan signed the re-amendment of the Guideline of the US-Japanese Defense Cooperation on April 27, 2015. This aims to develop the US-Japanese joint operation plan in response to Japan's exercising of the Collective Defense Right.

The Abe administration plans to submit a package of security-related bills to ongoing parliament session (probably on the middle of coming May 2015). These bills are composed of amendment of the present 11 security-related laws and newly enacting of the 'Bill for Support of International Peace', which related to the SDF dispatch overseas. The package of the bills aims to provide legal basis of Japan's exercising of the Collective Defense Right. These maneuvers trample the article 9 of the Japanese Constitution declared 'renouncement of war', 'non-maintenance of war potential forces' and 'denial of the right of belligerency'. The Abe administration, however, tries to amend the article 9 itself completely.

People's campaign has already launched. From this spring to coming summer, struggling workers and people in Japan shall repeatedly surround the parliament building in order to junk the new security bills.

Building of the New US Base in Henoko, Okinawa and consolidation of the US Bases in Japan

The struggle to stop building of the new US base on offshore Henoko, Okinawa is in decisive phase now. Okinawan people have stopped the building of the new US Marine base since 1996, when the construction plan appeared. The Abe administration, however, intends to construct the base by force. It plans to launch the reclamation of the foreshore even on coming July 2015.

Right now, protest actions both on land and sea are held by people everyday. This struggle has become the one by all Okinawan people. An anti-base candidate won the overwhelming victory at the election on Okinawa prefectural governor on last December 2014. The newly elected governor, Takeshi Onaga, are confronting against Japanese government, representing of people's opinion. He also plans to join the massive anti-base rally that will be held in Naha-city, prefectural capital of Okinawa, on coming May 17, 2015.

It is very urgent agenda for people's movements in Japan to develop their commitment and support for protest action at Henoko, to organize protest actions against the US and Japanese governments and to expand solidarity works nationwide for the Okinawan people's anti-base struggle.

The US and Japanese governments have also promoted the consolidation of the US bases in Japan, including of massive reinforcement of the US Marine base in Iwakuni and newly building of the US X-band radar base in Kyotango, and further integrated both military forces of the US and Japan. In these places, people also continue to resist them.

Restarts of Idled Reactors

The struggle to stop the restarts of idled reactors is also very important and urgent agenda. The Fukushima nuclear disaster has still brought about serious damage to humankind and environment. No one can clearly confirm the real situation inside damaged reactors until now due to high level radiation. The continuing leaks of the contamination water into sea are also big problem. Around 120,000 Fukushima people are still evacuating. In addition, seriously, thyroid cancers increase among children in Fukushima.

Japan has 50 commercial reactors now but there are no online reactors since September 2013. Because the reactors need regular check and its operation is required agreement by local governments. Also, in most of the cases, additional measures for safety have been required for restarts of idled reactors.

The nuclear disaster in Fukushima showed again that humankind can not coexist with nuclear energy. Most of the people in Japan oppose the reactor restarts and demand the shut-down of all nuclear power station. The Abe administration, however, manages to restart these idled reactors for the interest of electric power monopolies. The first target of the restart is reactors in the Sendai Nuclear Power Station of Kagoshima Prefecture. The government and the Kyushu Electric Power Corporation, which manage the power station, aims to restart the reactors there within coming July 2015.

The Abe administration has also promoted the export of Japanese reactors to other countries. The government regards it as a key part of the 'growth strategy' on Japanese economy. At the same time, Japanese ruling class have sought for keeping Japan's own energy that enable them to carry out war and for maintenance potential ability for producing of nuclear weapons. This is one of the reasons why they have pursued the maintenance of reactors.

Revision of History

This year marks the 70th anniversary of Japan's defeat in its invasive war on Asia-Pacific. Regarding this, Prime Minister Sinzo Abe plan to release an remark on coming August 15. The aim of planned his remark is to deny the historical facts of Japan's aggression and colonization on the region, and revision of the history.

On his speech at the summit meeting for commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Bandung Conference at Jakarta, Indonesia on April 22, 2015, PM Sinzo Abe looked back on history but did never refer to Japan's 'aggression and colonization' At around same period in Japan, 4 Cabinet members and 106 lawmakers visit to the Yasukuni Shrine. It had been a spiritual backbone of Japanese Emperor's army that had carried out the war of aggression in Asia. It honors dead Japanese soldiers as 'spirits of the war dead'. The war criminals that were judged at the Tokyo Trials also are included within them.

The actual phrases of the so-called 'Abe's remark' are still not clear because the US have intervened this issue. The US is afraid of the expansion of friction among allied countries including South Korea. Even any actual phrases will appear, Abe's real intension is already clear.

We have fought against the Abe administration's historical revisionism, and demanded Japanese government's official apology and compensation to all victims of Japan's invasive war and colonization, including the victims of Japanese army's sexual slavery.

The TPP and Neoliberalism

The Abe administration has also pushed the negotiation of the Transpacific Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement. If it would conclude, Japanese farmers would suffer devastating damage and the right of workers would be deprived.

The Abe administration's promoting neoliberal policies have brought about expansion of the poverty and the gap between the rich and the poor. The number of non-regular workers exceeded over 20 million and reached 38 percent in total working force. PM Sinzo Abe said on his policy speech at February 28, 2013; 'We will aim to be the easiest country worldwide in which to do business.' This remark clearly shows the class character of the Abe administration.

We will further strengthen our struggle against neoliberal offensive by the government and monopoly capitalists, supporting the development of class-oriented labor movement.

The Struggle of AWC-Japan

We AWC-Japan are fighting against these reactionary policies with our full effort.

We, along with other organizations, are developing our struggle to stop the new security bills, and to bring down the Abe administration. We also promote unity and mutual development both anti-base movements in Okinawa and 'mainland' of Japan, expanding our solidarity works Okinawan people's anti-base struggle and supporting people's resist against construction/consolidation of the US bases in Iwakuni, Kyotango and other areas. We are also fighting to stop restarts of idled reactors. And, we struggle against the Abe administration's historical revisionism, confronting racist and chauvinistic propaganda.

We are fighting in solidarity with workers and people in the Asia-Pacific region and the rest of the world. We will develop international unity and joint struggle among workers and people through the regional network of the AWC and other international people's alliance including the ILPS. We will share the anti-APEC struggle in Manila, Philippines on coming November 2015, resisting neoliberal globalization and consolidation of the US-led military alliance in the region. We will also call for international joint action against the G7 summit meeting will be held in Japan on summer 2016. ###