

2nd Prize Essay

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The Ukraine Crisis: Divisions and the Need for Realism

In discussing the nature of nuclear weapons, we can divide the situation into two periods: before and after the Ukrainian crisis. That is how far this invasion has come to the Japanese public. In fact, the invasion of Ukraine had a great impact on Japanese people.

Especially the fact that Ukraine renounced the possession of nuclear weapons may have increased the number of Japanese who thought that if only Ukraine had nuclear weapons, the invasion could have been prevented and that Japan should also have nuclear weapons.

Those who say that Japan should have nuclear weapons consider themselves realists.

So, no matter how much I appeal to them about the damage done in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it is meaningless. They would rather argue that we should have nuclear weapons in order not to cause the same kind of damage as Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The Ukrainian crisis has divided us into two sides, the realists who believe that we should have nuclear weapons and the idealists who believe that nuclear weapons are a bad idea.

If the opinion that Japan should have nuclear weapons continues to spread, a future in which Japan actually has nuclear weapons may be realized.

In order to resolve this divide, it may be necessary for abolitionists to assert that "non-possession of nuclear weapon is the realism. "

The realism without nuclear weapons can be described from two perspectives: micro and macro.

◎The Japanese Nation's Perspective (Micro)

From a micro viewpoint, it is necessary to consider the disadvantages of possessing nuclear weapons and the advantages of not possessing nuclear weapons.

The greatest disadvantage of possessing nuclear weapons is the loss of confidence in Japan from the international community.

If Japan possesses nuclear weapons by itself, it would be a clear violation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and it would drive many alliances, including the Japan-US Alliance, into bankruptcy.

The world economic sanctions would reduce Japan's power and defense capability.

The disadvantages for Japan are too great.

I believe that the Japanese cannot go against the direction of the world's nuclear disarmament. There are those who are advocating that nuclear sharing should be discussed because it is too difficult to acquire nuclear weapons of its own.

The idea would have no advantage over the current nuclear umbrella because the U.S. has the right to decide on nuclear weapons.

If nuclear weapons are to be used, the U.S. would launch ICBMs or SLBMs from the U.S. and so there is no need to have nuclear weapons in Japan. No country has shared nuclear weapons since the NPT regime was established, and there is no need for international harassment.

◎Global Perspective (Macro)

From a macro perspective, why do we need to reduce nuclear weapons worldwide? The reason is that the more nuclear powers there are, the greater the risk of nuclear war.

Those, who believe that having nuclear weapons is realism, think that if we have nuclear weapons, nuclear weapons would be mutually repellent, and they would not be able to launch a nuclear weapon for fear of a counterattack. If this theory is correct, then all countries would have nuclear weapons, and they would not be able to launch nuclear weapons at each other.

This sounds right, but there is a major precondition.

However, there is a prerequisite: the leaders must have the ability to make sound judgments.

The more countries have nuclear weapons, the more likely it is that some of their leaders will make the decision to release them without thinking about a counterattack.

And once the nuclear weapons are released, both sides will try to minimize the damage.

Once nuclear weapons are released, both sides will fire them at each other to minimize the damage.

There are other factors, such as, "The more nuclear powers there are, the harder it will be to know which country has attacked us," or "there is more likelihood of mechanical errors".

As a result, the possibility of nuclear war will increase as the number of nuclear powers increases.

The NPT is an unfair system that allows only five countries to possess nuclear weapons: the U.S., France, the U.K., Russia, and China. However, in order not to expand the number of nuclear weapon countries and to minimize the nuclear risk, this might be a desperate measure.

Of course, this unfairness needs to be eliminated in the future, but this will not be done by allowing other countries to have nuclear weapons, but by eliminating nuclear weapons from the world.

The crisis in Ukraine may have made some people more positive about nuclear weapons.

However, Japan, as the A-bombed country, should appeal to the world as a country that is willing to abolish nuclear weapons, which will lead to national interest and peace. We need "a realism of not having nuclear weapons" against "realism of having nuclear weapons". This will lead to the future of nuclear abolition.