

# The Establishment of the National Park System in Japan

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## Introduction

National parks policy, in any country, experiences the tug of two competing goals: preservation and use. During the past 80 years, Japan's national park policies have not kept a coherent course, but walked a zigzag between preservation and use. Japan used to favor use above preservation in its approach to its natural reserves, basically because policy-makers have given priority to economic growth. They believed this course was the right one to enrich the nation and improve its welfare, the basic goal the Japanese people desired to reach. Recently, however, due to the dominance of biodiversity conservation, Japan has favored preservation over use in its approach to its natural reserves. As a result, local populace have suffered economically due to strict control of land utilization, and they no longer welcome designation of their land as national parks. The problem of the lack of balance between the two goals is due to lack of public understanding of the role politics plays in national parks policy. Thus, this study attempts to clarify the Japan's park philosophy by reviewing the history of its establishment.

## The National Park Movement Prior to 1921

During the Meiji period (1868-1912), the national park concept was introduced in Japan by the Japanese who had studied in the U.S. and Canada; and the movement for the establishment of a national park system was initiated by those who needed local parks for different reasons. It was first discussed in the Diet in 1911 <sup>(1)</sup>, but was not legislated in this year, neither during the Taisho period (1912-1926). It ultimately enacted in 1931. There are several reasons for this delay.

The main reason is that the Meiji Emperor died on July 30, 1912, and the petition for the Establishment of a Grand Park and other petitions related to the World Fair and the 50<sup>th</sup> Commemoration of the Meiji Emperor were no longer necessary.

Secondarily, there were several movements which stressed the preservation of nature rather than the dual goals of a national park: preservation and recreational use. During the Meiji period,

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preservation movement for historic and natural monuments arose for the results of government-promoted destruction of the feudal system and reaction against excessive Westernization. There was also another preservation movement of scholars as a result of land development after the Sino-Japanese War. This merged with the movement of nationalism. As a result, the majority of people who were right wing conservatives: the emperor and the royal family, loyalists, and nationalistic scholars, had promoted the movement for preservation of historic and natural monuments rather than the national park movement. Thus, national park bills and petitions were incorporated into Law for the Preservation of Historic, Scenic, and Natural Monuments (PHSNM) then being submitted by four members of the House of Peers. The Law for the PHSNM was promulgated in 1919.

In 1921 (Taisho 9), however, the national park issue finally reemerged in the Diet. In the 44<sup>th</sup> Imperial Diet session, a new petition by Kyohachiro Nomoto for the Establishment of a National Park at Mt. Fuji in commemoration of the Meiji Emperor was approved, and at the same time on the question of the establishment of a national park in Nikko was raised by Shunzo Matsuoka, a member of the House of Representatives from Tochigi prefecture <sup>(2)</sup>. As is obvious from its title, “the petition for the Establishment of a National Park at Mt. Fuji in commemoration of the Meiji Emperor” was not intended purely to further preservation, but rather to show reverence for the Emperor. Kyohachiro Nomoto was a great admirer of the Meiji Emperor and is known to have expressed his reverence in newspapers and leaflets, which he published and circulated at his own expense <sup>(3)</sup>. When Nomoto first submitted his petition for the establishment of the grand park in commemoration of the Meiji Emperor in 1911, it seemed an unrealistic proposal; he wanted to construct a separate golden palace at Mt. Fuji as accession to the throne<sup>(4)</sup>. However, with the Meiji Emperor's death and the Taisho Emperor's succession in 1912, the public wished to pay honor to the former, and many projects, such as the construction of the Meiji shrine and gardens, were begun in his memory <sup>(5)</sup>. Consequently Nomoto's petition had become an appropriate project for consideration.

Meanwhile, at the budgetary committee meeting on February 9, 1921, Shunzo Matsuoka, the Diet member from Tochigi prefecture, reported: “Nikko has now become well-known to the world, and in the last few years the number of tourists per year has been about 40 thousand, 13 percent of whom are foreigners. Moreover, the money tourists spent in Nikko is more than 4 million yen per year, 23 percent by foreigners. Unfortunately the road between Lake Chuzenji and Yumoto has been so badly damaged that cars can not pass.” Matsuoka then inquired if the government had any plan to designate Nikko as a national park <sup>(6)</sup>.

Responding to the question, Itta Kobashi, Vice-Minister of Home Affairs, said that the government had already begun an investigation of national parks in terms of both the preservation of historic, scenic and natural monuments and of park administration <sup>(7)</sup>. In fact, in 1920, a year before Matsuoka's inquiry in the Diet, the Geography Section had already started an investigation of possible sites for preserving historic, scenic and natural monuments under the Law for the

Preservation of Historic, Scenic, and Natural Monuments. At the same time, it had translated and published "American National Parks" and begun to research the idea for national parks as an extension of nature reserves designated by the Forest Law<sup>(8)</sup>. The Public Health Section in the Bureau of Sanitation had also started reviewing procedures for park administration based on a resolution made by the Research Council for Public Health<sup>(9)</sup>. Thus, when the national park issue was raised in the Diet, both sections began an open disputes over which agency should take charge of the National Park System<sup>(10)</sup>.

## Governmental Disputes

Initially, the Geography Section had more influence than the Public Health Section because it had great monetary, personnel, and research resources and more supporters in the Diet, where the Law for the PHSNM had passed with unanimous approval of both Houses in the previous year<sup>(11)</sup>. Fifteen thousand yen were allocated for the investigation, and the president of the Research Council for the preservation of historic, scenic, and natural monuments was the Minister of Home Affairs, whose ministry was the parent agency of both sections<sup>(12)</sup>. In addition, many members of the Association for the PHNM who supported the Geography Section were also members of the House of Peers. Thus, the political environment was supportive of the Geography Section. Furthermore, the staff of the Research Council were all eminent scholars from a variety of fields; their reports were reliable, persuasive, and influential. Basically, the idea of the national park defined by the Geography Section stressed nature preservation and excluded recreational use. In contrast, while the Geography Section together with the Research Council for the PHSNM had already started a field survey in 1920, the Public Health Section in the Sanitary Bureau was only just starting its research and, in fact, did not begin its field work until 1921<sup>(13)</sup>.

Although the Public Health Section had long handled the administration of urban and regional parks, its main work remained public health. Only one report, entitled Research on Parks, was made by this section during the Meiji period, when the Dajokan Decree ordered local governments to register some of their playgrounds as parks<sup>(14)</sup>. There were many technical experts from the field of medicine in the Public Health Section, but few or no experts on parks<sup>(15)</sup>. Hence, Michio Yusawa, section chief, hired Tsuyoshi Tamura, Ph.D. in forestry and also a landscape architect, as a part-time worker in 1920, and assigned him to study foreign park systems in order to strengthen and develop the park system of Japan<sup>(16)</sup>. Since the concept of the national park system established in the Meiji period was for the promotion of public health, obviously the Public Health Section emphasized the recreational use of national parks<sup>(17)</sup>. It is not clear why the Public Health Section started in 1920 to review the existing park system and the possibility of expanding it, but the cause may have been related to government territorial disputes. While the Public Health Section was battling with the Geography Section on this issue, it was also fighting to protect its park program against encroachment of the City Planning Section in the Ministry's secretariat, a

newly organized agency.

In 1918, Shimpei Goto, the Home Minister, used his influence to create the Research Council for City Planning within his Ministry; the following year, he pushed through a City Planning Law, and on its basis began a reform of the urban environment<sup>(18)</sup>. Consequently control of urban parks and green spaces should have been transferred to the newly created City Planning Section. But this new section encroached on the territory of the Public Health Section, which until then had handled the entire park system of Japan. Although park management had been a secondary mission for the Public Health Section and one to which they had never given much attention, they now, to maintain this authority, established a research project to review not only the urban park but the national park system as well. The reason is clear. If the urban park system were to be transferred to the City Planning Section, it would have been a drastic setback for the power of the Public Health Section. Furthermore, had the national park issue been usurped by the Geography Section, the Public Health Section would have totally lost face; thus, the Public Health Section desperately desired to control the national park administration.

Though tardily, the Public Health Section also began to take the investigation of national parks more seriously. Using his skills as a scholar, Tamura began his work by concentrating on collecting foreign materials and documents through channels in the Foreign Ministry and academic circles<sup>(19)</sup>. On the basis of these documents, he started advocating the concept of national parks on behalf of the Bureau of Sanitation. At the same time, with Nobutoyo Nakakoshi, another bureaucrat, he began investigating possible sites for national parks, spending some of the funds allocated for public health research<sup>(20)</sup>. This was in 1921, a year after the start of the Geography Section's field survey.

The field survey done by the Public Health Section lasted 24 days from June 8 to July 2 1921, and was conducted in Kamikochi, which contained the most popular mountain among alpinists. Following this, the Hakubadake and Unzen-Aso regions were surveyed in August, and the Nikko area in September<sup>(21)</sup>. Having finished the first field survey of possible sites for national parks, Tsuyoshi Tamura published his views serially, in six parts between September 20 and 25, in the Osaka Asahi, a national newspaper. They created a great sensation<sup>(22)</sup>.

Tamura's basic idea of national parks was that they should be magnificent natural landscapes including mountains, lakes, valleys, and savannas, to be set aside, first as symbols of national pride, and in time, as areas for public enjoyment. Thus, they required adequate facilities, including spas, golf courses, tennis courts, clubs, theaters, hotels and cabins. Tamura wanted national parks to be distributed all over Japan, varying in from 5,000 to 30,000 *chobu*, with an average of 10,000<sup>(23)</sup>. Unlike the Geography Section's pure preservationist concept of national parks, Tamura's concept appealed to utilitarian preservationists who were pursuing economic interests. Stimulated by Tamura's views, debates on the national park concept arose and spread across the nation. Some people strongly opposed the creation of national parks; others defended it but with modification.

Some scholars criticized Tamura's lack of a precise definition of a national park.

For example, Rokuichi Sugita opposed Tamura on the ground that all the land in Japan was so beautiful that all should be protected; it was not going far enough to designate some for national parks <sup>(24)</sup>. On September 1921, very shortly after Tamura's article in *Osaka Asahi*, Reijo Oya, a city planner, criticized Tamura's plan from another perspective. The Public Health Section, he argued, had more urgent tasks than to start such an uncertain project as national parks. The urban environment, he complained, had been severely contaminated by the rapid growth of heavy industry and dense crowding of migrating workers, and the Public Health Section had not solved these crucial problems yet. According to a newspaper report, in Osaka where Reijo Oya lived, smog from factories was so bad that children believed that tree leaves were not green but grey, yet were forced to stay there to earn a living. Why was the Public Health Section so eager to engage in this park project when it had performed its own primary mission so poorly <sup>(25)</sup>?

Furthermore, many preservationists, most of whom were members of the Association for the Preservation of Historic, Scenic and Natural Monuments, also disagreed with Tamura. Particularly, Manabu Miyoshi, a contributor to the preservation law of 1919, reasoned that a national park was equivalent to a natural monument, which was already protected; therefore it was unnecessary to name these areas national parks. Miyoshi, like other pure preservationists, disapproved of the destruction of natural monuments by the stresses and strains of recreational use. He believed that preservation should take precedence over economic goals <sup>(26)</sup>.

On November 9, 1921, the Geography Section and the Association for the PHSNM gave a public lecture in Hiroshima to advocate their concept of national parks to the public. Like Manabu Miyoshi, lecturers such as Kotaro Shirai and Yoshinosuke Inouye insisted upon absolute preservation <sup>(27)</sup>. These scholars interpreted the idea of a national park as a natural monument like a virgin forest or wilderness, and advocated Keeping them so. Also in October, 1922, Marquis Yorimichi Tokugawa published an article on national parks from the preservationists' point of view in *Shiseki Meisho Tennen Kinenbutsu* (Bulletin of the Japan Society for Preserving Landscapes and Historic and Natural Monuments) <sup>(28)</sup>. The preservationists' insistence on pure preservation left little room for compromise.

Meanwhile, Keiji Uehara, another scholar in forestry as well as a landscape architect, believed that national parks should have double goals; 1) national recreational use, and 2) scientific research and enjoyment for the educational benefit of present and future generations. Both goals should be the concern of government. However, under present circumstances, he stressed, the latter seemed preferable. Uehara did not wish to deny the use of parks to the public, but to limit the use of rural, scenic areas to educational purposes, as opposed to the use of urban parks for recreation. In his view, Tamura's national park was not a national park at all, but a "nation's park," meaning "people's park"<sup>(29)</sup>. Uehara was very whole-hearted in his beliefs. He had visited American and Canadian national parks in 1920, and in July of that year had also heard the story of the efforts to

establish the National Park Service in the United States from Stephan M. Mather and Horace Albright. Without hesitation, he accused Tamura of lack of experience; Tamura, he added, should have reported on foreign national parks only after actually visiting some of them. Furthermore, Uehara pointed out the danger of intergovernmental sectionalism. "It is strange that the preservation of natural monuments and care of the national parks were not assigned to a single bureau," he said. "If national parks projects are being used as pawns in intergovernmental conflicts, we must correct this misbehavior." It would be essential to learn from America; "The U.S. had bitter experiences. I heard from the Director, Stephan Mather, that a lot of mistakes were made in the past. Now our country is making exactly the same mistakes such as government misconduct, exaggerated campaigns by local politicians for their own vested interests, skyrocketing land values, party politicians' lobbying, etc." Furthermore, "the Public Health Section intends to manage urban parks too. Not so long has passed since the City Planning Section was established within the Home Ministry. Why does the Public Health Section interfere with the urban park system?"<sup>(30)</sup> Uehara's words clearly reveal administrative in-fighting and political exploitation of the national park issue. The debate between Tamura and Uehara is now known as the most emotional battle in the history of the national park movement in Japan.

Both Tamura and Uehara had been students of Seiroku Honda, the first Japanese scholar in the field of parks, a professor of Forestry at Tokyo Imperial University, and later leader of the national park movement in key organizations<sup>(31)</sup>. Thus, through the influence of their professor, both agreed with the creation of the national park system, but Tamura emphasized recreational use and Uehara preservation. Their rivalry seems to have spilled over into areas of scholarship as well.

### **The Attitude of Utilitarian Preservationists**

While this debate continued in academic circles, the public grew excited about the issue for different reasons. When newspapers began to report local field surveys extensively, opinions and thoughts of leading political figures about the national park concept were also introduced in newspapers, stimulating interest in the creation of a national park system<sup>(32)</sup>. In fact, the role of the newspapers should not be overlooked. Their coverage of the field surveys motivated many Diet members from districts in which national parks were under consideration to attempt to create legislation in order to satisfy their constituents. These Diet members did not, in fact, know what a national park was, or what restrictions should or might be imposed on land, if it was designated as such. They merely believed that the creation of a national park might be honorable and profitable for their region<sup>(33)</sup>. The concept of parks was thus fixed in the minds of the populace, and raised expectations for the establishment of a national park in their area. The campaign which they launched was not actually for the creation of a national park system, but rather for a national park to be located in their own particular region<sup>(34)</sup>. Some prefectures tried to cultivate support by asking eminent scholars to stress the historic or scientific importance of their areas<sup>(35)</sup>. Needless to say, there was a wide gap between Tamura's two goals and public understanding of the issues.

Keeping pace with the Public Health Section, the Geography Section continued its own research. Sometimes, investigators from both sections surveyed the same site and reported different views in the newspapers. This caused confusion. Needless to say, the local people supported the Public Health Section rather than the Geography Section, since the former was more interested in development for recreational use<sup>(36)</sup>.

In 1922, the Geography Section went ahead and designated its first nine scenic places: Mihono-Matsubara, Nara Park, Amanohashidate, Tsukigase, Osawa Pond, Kenrokuen, Korakuen, Ritsurin Park, and Kintaibashi. Some were Daimyo gardens and three were selected as outstanding Japanese landscapes<sup>(37)</sup>. Regardless of these efforts, however, preservation was no longer the public's chief concern and the setback of the Geography Section was noticeable.

In June, 1922, Hisayoshi Takeda, an alpinist who could not bear to stand by as a mere spectator, satirized the fever for the creation of national parks. "In order to select sites, the concept of a national park must be clearly defined. How many people really know what it is? I doubt if the government knows; They have never officially stated it." He continued, "It's strange that the Public Health Section expects to be in charge of national parks. In Japan, the word 'park' is so ambiguous that people confuse it with places of amusement, recreational grounds, and public gardens." He worried also because people had the illusion that a national park could be easily established if highways, hotels, and temples were constructed by the sacrifice of trees in forests and mountains<sup>(38)</sup>. His comments were very accurate.

In spite of these scholars' worries and criticism, their advocacy of preservation was only a drop in the bucket compared to the overwhelming public support of recreational use. In 1921, the previous year, in the 45<sup>th</sup> Imperial Diet session, only six petitions for the creation of national parks were submitted. At the 46<sup>th</sup> Imperial Diet session, 27 were submitted, most of which requested designation of national parks in particular regions which would attract tourists<sup>(39)</sup>. The increase in the number of petitions surprised the government. The Bureau Chief of Sanitation, Sukenari Yokoyama, told reporters so<sup>(40)</sup>.

*Honestly speaking, it seems that the public already believe that the creation of national parks has begun and has started its own campaign for designation of national parks in their regions before the government has even made a decision about the project. To my surprise, in one session, 5 petitions from one single political party ( the Seiyukai Party) were submitted. Diet members from the same districts organized groups to unite and urge the government to attain assurance of designation of national parks in their regions. There is no doubt that the national park issue is being used by politicians to satisfy their constituents with an eye to the next election<sup>(41)</sup>.*

As the result of this active campaign by Diet members and the pressure of public awareness



through the mass media, the Commission for Petitions finally discussed the national park issue at six different sessions and recommended setting up the Research Council of National Parks. Meanwhile, the government promised to continue its investigation as to both preservation and recreational use. It even announced its consideration of joint management of national parks with local governments or other organizations <sup>(42)</sup>.

## **The Great Kanto Earthquake and the Park Movement**

When it seemed that national park establishment was only a question of time, the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923 devastated the entire Kanto area and damaged the Japanese economy so badly that the government was forced to ignore any cultural projects <sup>(43)</sup>. The loss by earthquake damage was more than 70 billion yen; more than 3,500,000 people were injured and 100,000 were killed. Eight-eight percent of the main banks and 72 percent of the branch banks in Tokyo were burned to the ground. The earthquake not only did physical destruction, but also had a heavy social impact. Laborers and farmers particularly suffered severely. Finances were very tight and Japanese business as a whole went into a slump. Budgetary reform depleted the administrative structure. As a result, many people were laid off temporarily or permanently. Labor disputes increased and labor unions were reorganized and gained strength. Farmers were also organized in a peasant union and claimed their rights. While the number of unions was 1,114 in 1922, it grew to 2,337 in 1924. Peasant disputes increased dramatically. These movements also influenced the movement for universal male suffrage, and eventually had great impact on the political process. Thus, by the time Tamura returned from abroad after visiting foreign park systems in 1923, the stance of the national park movement within the government was completely changed. The Chief of the Bureau of Sanitation, Junjiro Yamada, would not even listen to Tamura, and to make matters worse, Tamura was shortly forced to resign <sup>(44)</sup>.

Meanwhile, due to the impact of the Great Kanto Earthquake, the 47<sup>th</sup> and 48<sup>th</sup> Imperial Diet sessions, received no petitions in 1923 regarding the creation of national parks <sup>(45)</sup>. In the 49<sup>th</sup> session, starting on June 25, 1924, one such petition was submitted, and gradually, the movement once again remerged <sup>(46)</sup>. At the 50<sup>th</sup> Imperial diet session in December, 1924, 15 petitions were received. Newspapers reported cynically that Diet members were abusing this issue for their own vested interests. For example, the Tokyo Asahi reported that if the government established National parks on all 52 sites adopted at the Diet session, it would use up the entire budget of the government. Despite this, petitions for the establishment of national parks continued to increase in number at every Diet session, and by the end of the Taisho Period, more than 90 petitions had been received.

## **Economic Recessions and Tourism**

Since WWI, the economy had remained in a chronic state of depression. Japan attempted to



expand her industrial development in Manchuria and China, but due to the increase in imports and the sharp decline in exports the international balance of payments showed a huge deficit. Recovery was made even more difficult by the Great Kanto Earthquake; reconstruction required even more imports and the government had to spend the stock of specie preserved during the war. In 1927, the Wakatsuki Cabinet resigned, and the Tanaka Cabinet replaced it <sup>(47)</sup>.

In the same year the Tanaka Cabinet appointed the Economic Research Council, an advisory body to set up measures for economic recovery <sup>(48)</sup>. In April, 1927, the Council reported on the international balance of payments. The report suggested the promotion of international tourism as one means to obtain foreign currency.

Paralleling the new policy, on April 9, 1927, the Osaka Mainichi and the *Tokyo Nichinichi* newspapers held a contest to select outstanding Japanese landscapes, and this again stirred public interest in national park establishment <sup>(49)</sup>. Some prefectures organized groups to encourage people to vote. Sometimes, newspapers published headlines such as “Expression of love for one's native land,” or “Let's vote for our native land,” etc., which aroused the public <sup>(50)</sup>. The influence of this contest on the national park movement cannot be overlooked. It is said that Kenzo Adachi, nicknamed “the God of Election,” took note of the national park as a potentially powerful political issue due to the unexpected response of so many people to the contest <sup>(51)</sup>.

As a result, Mount Unzen, Lake Towada, the River Kiso, Beppu hot spring, the Muroto peninsula, Kamikochi valley, the Kegon Fall, and Karikachi Pass were selected as eight outstanding Japanese landscapes. The significance of the contest was the emphasis on natural beauty rather than historical scenery as a criterion of selection. This was a remarkable change in valuing landscapes. Instead of choosing one spot to be viewed from one point of view like a garden, people selected large-scale natural surroundings into which they could enter and be a part. This view resembled the American view of natural beauty <sup>(52)</sup>. This conceptual change definitely influenced the national park movement. Private transport companies such as Nihon Yusen and Osaka Shosen supported the contest in order to promote their own industry <sup>(53)</sup>.

For the national park movement, the moment of government interest and public awareness seemed finally to have come. In July of this year, Tamura was rehired by the Bureau of Sanitation, and he wrote a book titled *Kokuritsu Koen* (National Parks), published by the Garden Society of Japan <sup>(54)</sup>. In 1928, the government decided to investigate possible sites of national parks in Taiwan, and Tamura was sent there to survey Arisan (Mt. Ari) and Niitakayama (Mt. Niitaka) <sup>(55)</sup>.

At the 56<sup>th</sup> Imperial Diet session in March, 1929, a petition for setting up a central administrative body to attract foreign tourists was passed, inducing an even more favorable climate for the creation of national parks <sup>(56)</sup>. Consequently, the government set up within the Japan Tourist Bureau a “Committee for Promotion of Tourism from the U.S.” This Committee was to cooperate with the private sector in Japan. The government also set up an “Executive

Committee” in New York, which would work there to promote tourism by advertizing Japanese scenery in American newspapers and magazines <sup>(57)</sup>.

In July of 1929, when Osachi Hamaguchi became Premier, replacing Giichi Tanaka, national park establishment began to be more seriously discussed in the government in terms of measures to secure international loans, since the Hamaguchi Cabinet had to face many economic problems accumulated from nine years of depression. Thus, national park establishment was seriously considered a means of promoting tourism.

When the Great Depression occurred, after the collapse of the New York Stock Exchange in October 1929, Japan had already decided to lift the gold embargo and this action was taken on November 21, 1929 <sup>(58)</sup>. In October, 1929, the Japan Chamber of Commerce submitted a petition on attracting foreign tourists in which the establishment of national parks and a Tourist Board was proposed. As a result, the government established the Board of the International Tourist Industry on April 24, 1930.

Meanwhile, in January, 1929, the National Park Association was finally organized. Marquis Moritatsu Hosokawa was elected president and Seiroku Honda and Keinosuke Ushio, director of the Bureau of Sanitation, vice-presidents. Many other executives were also selected from the Public Health Section of the Home Ministry. In March, the National Park Association of Japan published the first issue of its journal, *Kokuritsu Koen* (National Parks), to spread the idea of national parks <sup>(59)</sup>. Moreover, cooperating with the Japan Tourist Bureau and the *Tokyo Nichinichi* newspaper, the Association organized tour groups to introduce to the public selected sites for national parks such as Mt. Fuji, Lake Towada and Kamikochi. In addition, an exhibit of national parks and a symposium of lectures and films on world landscapes were also given in Tokyo.

In February, 1931, the draft of the National Parks bill was sent to the Legislative Bureau and, after its approval, it was finally submitted to the plenary session of the House of Representatives in the 59<sup>th</sup> Imperial Diet on February 24, 1931 <sup>(60)</sup>. Some members of the Seiyukai opposition party accused Kenzo Adachi and his Minseito ruling party of exploiting the national park issue in order to gain votes in the coming prefectural assembly election in September. Basically however, the Seiyukai opposition party agreed with this bill for another reason. Tatsuya Fujii, a member of the Seiyukai opposition party, said, “Now many dangerous thoughts are coming into our country from Russia... If the government submits this bill to the Diet because of its responsibility for repelling those thoughts, I certainly understand and support the government.” That is, national parks, he and his party believed, would protect the Japanese people from dangerous ideas.

The bill came up for final discussion in the plenary session of the House of Representatives on March 10, 1931, and on March 11 it was submitted to the House of Peers plenary session. They referred it to the Special Committee, where, after three examinations, it was approved in its original form <sup>(61)</sup>. At the Committee meetings, there was no strong objection to the creation of

national parks. The committee members agreed with it, basically because in their view, a park would help in building sound minds in the public. At the committee meeting of the House of Peers, Eigoro Kanasugi, a Diet member, quoted from the American President, Theodore Roosevelt, who claimed that public health was closely related to national prosperity. Roosevelt felt that health and a sound mind made citizens more dynamic and active, which fostered their country's productivity and efficiency and increased its GNP<sup>(62)</sup>. In order to construct a strong military, moreover, the Japanese government hoped the national parks might improve physical strength of men who later to become soldiers, by helping to promote health by exercise<sup>(63)</sup>. Shojiro Nakayama said, "All we need now is *Thought control* over the public. Currently, communism is spreading very rapidly. Under these circumstances, spiritual education is most important. Hence, the Ministry of Education and other scholars should be consulted and involved with the park administration, since it may be too burdensome for the Bureau of Hygiene alone to carry out the task of park administration<sup>(64)</sup>. After Imperial sanction, it was promulgated into Law No. 36 on April 1, 1931, and an attached decree for enforcement was passed on October, 1931<sup>(65)</sup>.

## Conclusion

In summary, the national park movement between 1921 and 1931 coincided with dramatic developments in Japan: Japanese society encountered a series of economic depressions following WWI, the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923, the economic panic of 1927; and the Great Depression in the US in 1929. These conditions enormously increased social and economic strains among the lower classes. People were despirited, inactive, and even decadent and violent from undergoing long-term economic suffering. During this period, farmers' riots, labor disputes, and the socialist movement, all intensified. Hence, the government as one means of aiding the nation's economic recovery created a national park system and hoped that it would also foster sound health and sound mind to rehabilitate the public mentality and repel dangerous thoughts (communism) which were spreading during this period.

## Footnotes

- [1] Tsuyoshi Tamura, *Nihon no Kokuritsu Koen* (Japan's National Parks) (Tokyo: Kokuritsu Koen Kyokai, 1951), p.23.
- [2] Masahiro Tanaka, *Nihon no Shizen Koen* (Natural Parks in Japan) (Tokyo: Sagami Shobo, 1981), pp.202-203.
- [3] Masahiro Tanaka, "Seifu o ugokashita Seigan to Kengi," (Petitions and Bills manipulating the Government) *Kokuritsu Koen*, No. 345/346 (1978), pp.1-7.
- [4] Ibid.
- [5] Usaburo Nakajima, "Soritsu 25 Shunen no Kaiko," (The Memoir of 25 Year Anniversary) *Kokuritsu Koen*, No. 82/83 (1956), pp.96-98.
- [6] Tanaka, *Nihon no Shizen Koen*, pp.202-203.
- [7] Ibid.
- [8] In the first page of the book, it is emphasized that national parks and natural monuments are equivalent as *Naturshutzgebiet*, Tsuyoshi Tamura, *Nihon no Kokuritsu Koen*, p.25.
- [9] Tanaka, *Nihon no Shizen Koen*, pp.221-222.

- [10] Tsuyoshi Tamura speaking at, "Zadankai: Kokuritsu Koenseido no Utsurikawari (I)," (The Round-table Discussion for the Development of Japan's National Park System (I) ) *Kokuritsu Koen* No. 200 (1966), pp.4-11.
- [11] The great supporter of the Law for the Preservation of Historic, Scenic and Natural Monuments was Marquis Yorimichi Tokugawa.
- [12] Tanaka, *Nihon no Shizen Koen*, p.203.
- [13] Tamura, p.26.
- [14] Shunkichi Kodera, "Koen Kankei no Hibaikankobutsu ni tsuite," (Regarding publications issued by both central and local governments) *Teiyen to Fukei*, 11. 1(1929), pp.14-17.
- [15] Yoshio Miura, "Kokuritsu Koen 25nen no Kaiko to Shorai no Kibo," (The Memory of Twenty-five Year History of National Parks and Our Wishes for Their Future) *Kokuritsu Koen*, No.82/83 (1956), pp.4-9.
- [16] Tamura, p.26.
- [17] See Shugin (The House of Representatives), Special Committee on Kokusetsu Dai-koen Secchi ni kansuru Kengian Inkaikai Giroku (The Petition for the Establishment of a State Grand Park), 27<sup>th</sup> Diet, 1911, *Shugin Kokusetsu Dai-koen Secchi ni kansuru Kengian Inkaikai Giroku Sokki* (Stenographic Records of the Minutes of Proceedings at the Special Committee of Petitions in the House of Representatives) 6:15, pp.3-7.
- [18] Shiro Suematsu, *Tokyo no Koentsushi* (The History of Parks in Tokyo) (Tokyo: Kyogakusha, 1981), pp.14-22.
- [19] Yoshio Miura speaking at, "Zadankai: Kokuritsu Koen Seido no Utsurikawari (I)," (The Round-table Discussion for the Development of Japan's National Park System (I) ) *Kokuritsu Koen*, No.200 (1966), pp.4-11.
- [20] Tamura, p.26.
- [21] Ibid.
- [22] *Tokyo Asahi*, pp.20-25 September 1921.
- [23] 1 chobu = about 1 hectare
- [24] Tamura, p.26.
- [25] Tanaka, *Nihon no Shizen Koen*, pp.250-251.
- [26] Manabu Miyoshi, "Obei Kakkoku ni okeru Tennen Kinenbutsu Hozonjigyo Shisatsudan," (The Comment on Preservation of Natural Monuments in the US and European Nations) *Shiseki Meisho Tennen Kinenbutsu* (Bulletin of the Japan Society for Preserving Landscapes and Historic and Natural Monuments), 5.9 (1914), pp.3-4.
- [27] Kotaro Shirai, "Itsukushima no Shokubutsu Hozon," (The Preservation of Aesthetic Values of Plants in Itsukushima) *Shiseki Meisho Tennen Kinenbutsu*, 5.9 (1922), pp.97-99.
- [28] Yorimichi Tokugawa, "Kokusetsu Koen to Minshukoen," (National Parks and Nation's Parks) *Shiseki Meisho Tennen Kinenbutsu*, 5.10 (1922), pp.109-110.
- [29] Keiji Uehara, "Kokuritsu Koen no Shinigi," (The Real Meaning of National Parks) *Shiseki Meisho Tennen Kinenbutsu*, 5.9 (1922), pp.100-102.
- [30] Idem, "Shizen Koen" (Natural Parks), vol. 4 of *Zoen Taikei* (Landscape Architecture), 8 vols. (Tokyo: Kashima Shoten, 1978), pp.7-41.
- [31] See an autobiography of Honda Seiroku. Seiroku Honda, *Honda Seiroku Taiken 85-nen* (The 85 Year Experience of Honda Seiroku) (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1952).
- [32] Uehara, *Shizen Koen*, pp.7-41.
- [33] Interview with Keiji Uehara, Tokyo Nogyo Daigaku, Tokyo, 8 October, 1981.
- [34] Ibid.
- [35] Idem, *Shizen Koen*, pp.220-221.
- [36] Tanaka, *Nihon no Shizen Koen*, pp.220-221.
- [37] Ibid., p.220.
- [38] Hisayoshi Takeda, "Kokuritsu Koen to Sangaku," (National Parks and Mountains), Tokyo Asahi, June 1922, as cited by K. Uehara, *Shizen Koen* (Tokyo: Kashima Shoten, 1978), pp.9-12.
- [39] Nobutoyo Nakakoshi, "Wagakuni ni okeru Kokuritsu Koenundo," (National Parks Movement in Japan) *Teien to Fukei* 9.8 (1927), pp.4-7.
- [40] *Chugai Shogyo*, 27 January 1923.
- [41] Ibid.
- [42] Nakakoshi, pp.4-7.
- [43] Tamura, pp.27-28.
- [44] Keiji Nagahara, *Nihon Keizaishi* (Japan's Economic History) (Tokyo Yuhikaku, 1970), pp.280-281.
- [45] Nakakoshi, pp.4-7.
- [46] Ibid.
- [47] William W. Lockwood, *The Economic Development of Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), pp.55-64.
- [48] Sorifu Shingishitsu (The Prime Minister's Office), *Kanko Gyosei 100-nen to Kanko Seisaku Shingikai 30-nen no*

- Ayumi* (100 Year History of Tourism Administration and the Progress of the Research Council on Tourist Policy) (Tokyo: Gyosei, 1980), p.18.
- [49] Tamura, p.29.
- [50] Tanaka, *Nihon no Shizen Koen*, pp.124-131.
- [51] Tamura, p.29.
- [52] Akira Yamamoto, "Shakai Seikatsu no Henka to Taisho Bunka" (Change in Social Life and Mass Culture), in *Kindai 6*, Vol.19 of *Nihon Rekishi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1976), pp.302-336.
- [53] Tanaka, *Nihon no Shizen Koen*, pp.124-131.
- [54] Tamura, *Nihon no Kokuritsu Koen*, p.28.
- [55] Ibid.
- [56] Sorifu Shingishitsu (the Prime Minister's Office), p.17.
- [57] Ibid.
- [58] Masanori Nakamura, "Daikyoko to Noson Mondai" (Great Depression and Farm Village), in *Kindai 6* Vol.19 of *Nihon Rekishi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1976), p.136.
- [59] Shizen Hogokyoukai, *Kokuritsu Koen Kyokai Ryakunenpyo*, pp.44-58.
- [60] Takehiko Ito, "Kokuritsu Koenho Kaisetsu, (The Explanation of the National Parks Law) *Kokuritsu Koen* Vol. III No. 7 (1931), pp.10-15.
- [61] Ibid.
- [62] Kizokuin, *Kokuritsu Koenhoan Tokubetsu Inukai* (3), pp.209-210.
- [63] Ibid.
- [64] Kizokuin (the House of Peers), *Kokuritsu Koenhoan Tokubetsu Inukai Giji Sokkiroku* 1-2, (Stenographic Records of the Minutes of Proceedings at the Special Committee on National Parks Law), 59<sup>th</sup> Imperial Diet, 1931, pp.4-18.
- [65] Itoh, pp.10-15.

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