2.   Regenerating Communities

(1)   Proceedings   Yasushi Hioki, Mayor of Inabe

Today we will start by having a keynote speech by Professor Nawata, after which we would like to hear your opinions. So I would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Professor Nawata graduated from the University of Tokyo Faculty of Law in 1978, and then completed a doctoral course at the University of Tokyo in 1983. After working at Yokohama City University and Tokyo Metropolitan University, he was appointed as a professor at the Faculty of Law at Hosei University in 2005. His major fields of study are the sociology of law and community theory, and thus far he has visited Germany on numerous occasions to study the actual circumstances behind citizen participation and inner-city decentralization. In addition, he has held a series of positions that include serving as a member of the 29th Local Government System Research Council, the chairman of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications' Study Group on New Community Modalities, and as the chairman of various other councils.

And with that, I would like to turn the stage over to Professor Nawata.

(2)   Keynote Address   Yoshihiko Nawata, Professor at Hosei University

I would like to begin by making three comments, which will also serve as a self-introduction of sorts.

Currently, I am acting as chairman of the Japan Association for Community Policy. This year the Japan Association for Community Policy will mark our tenth convention. This is held every year in July with both individual and group members, and we would be delighted to have everyone here take part.

Next, I would like to introduce the book *Accounting for Beginners*. It is often said that there are not all that many people who can serve as executive officers for the various organizations that are active in communities, such as community councils, neighborhood associations, nonprofit organizations (NPOs), and so on. I think that one of the main reasons for this is because it is terribly difficult for people to perform precise accounting, or because they don't understand this that well. Therefore, at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications' Study Group on New Community Modalities that was just mentioned we were allowed to hold an off-the-record study session on accounting, which we turned into a book. Lots of people have shown a great deal of interest in this. And I think that there is definitely a need for it.

Thirdly, the recently mentioned Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications' Study Group on New Community Modalities has proposed ideas like "community cooperatives," for example. I believe that the mayors are possibly already working on these in some form or another in each of the municipalities, or are at least thinking about doing so. In addition, the group is also considering and proposing a variety of other points at issue. The actual report has been uploaded to the website, and so I encourage you all to refer to it.

I am truly grateful for having been invited here today. To be honest, when I received the invitation I personally did not associate the terms "national governmental institutions" and "community" with one another. But since I rarely have the opportunity to hold discussions with mayors I gladly accepted.

After the major earthquake occurred on March 11, my plans for things like speeches in municipalities and committees were canceled. Though this should have left me with a great deal of free time, mentally I felt like I had been worked over, and so I spent day after day not making much progress with my research.

During this time I began to seek out various lessons that I should take away from this massive earthquake as a community researcher. As far as the conclusions that I have now arrived at, I tend to think that this earthquake has hinted at the fact that the issue of national governmental institutions and that of community regeneration are directly connected. As I was doing this, today's address was drawing near, and as such I would like to share my personal views on this matter.

2

Postulates and Institutional Design for Community Region

1. Thoughts on the Great East Japan Earthquake: The Increasing Importance of Community Regeneration

- A rich civil society and inadequate government
- The local communities that have cultivated the perseverant and orderly Japanese people

2. Basic Conditions for Managing Communities Learned from Milton Kotler

(1) Milton Kotler and his era

(2) Communities deprived of the basic conditions for managing regions by mergers

- Officially demarcate the extent of their authority
- Corporate status
- Authority to levy taxes
- Authority to enact ordinances

(3) Restoring the four conditions (for neighborhood government) through private corporations (community development corporations)

3. How Have the Japanese Maintained the Conditions for Regional Management When Faced with Mergers?

Communities that have lost the conditions for regional management through mergers have been rehabilitated through the strength of just the private sector.
Community councils and neighborhood associations are great organizations for this.

4. Significance of the Institutionalization of Communities since the 1990s

(1) Weakening of and declining enrollment rates in community councils and neighborhood associations

(2) Policies to once again provide communities with an institutional framework have been attempted nationwide

(3) But their very structures are premised on the strength of private organizations

(4) Private regional organizations and private NPOs must be strengthened through initiatives for coordination

(5) Acute sensitivity to new movements such as community businesses

Thoughts on the Great East Japan Earthquake

I would like to start by discussing my thoughts on the Great East Japan Earthquake. I've mentioned how various different plans of mine were canceled following the earthquake, but my investigation in Germany proceeded as scheduled from the end of March to early April.

In reflecting back on the sequence of events from the earthquake through the beginning of the next fiscal year, there are two things that I find particularly striking.

The first is that, in the responses from other countries to this event many people have lauded the Japanese people with praise by asking how it is that the Japanese were able to act in such a patient and orderly manner. I dare say that most of the countries around the world had that impression. I think that such comments did not mean to imply that Japan is an odd country, but rather a wonderful one.

For example, Westerners may be prone to thinking that nothing exists below the basic community of the municipality. But in this great earthquake there were cases such as where town halls themselves were washed away, dealing a catastrophic blow to municipal functions. You would think that when something like that happens public order would be compromised and individuals would be reduced to a primitive state. Yet even though the expectation was that public order would be lost, the Japanese people did not attempt to enter the destroyed shops right in front of them to steal things, nor did looting and violence break out. This led them to believe that the Japanese people and residents of Japan are amazing.

Of course, you certainly hear about behavior like people secretly traveling to the regions stricken by the tsunami to steal from depositories, or arguing and competing for food at the shelters and so on, but for the most part there is none of the looting and violence that you would undoubtedly expect to see in other countries.

As a community researcher I feel compelled to offer a response to the question of why this is. In fact it is not the case that nothing exists below the municipalities, for as you all know there is a significant presence there. There are regional organizations, such as community councils and neighborhood associations, as well as organizations like joint community councils and neighborhood associations that consolidate these together. Elementary school districts roughly correspond to the zones for these joint community councils. I think that many cities carry out policies that create community structures with this as their aim. As this shows, in Japan's case there are solid mechanisms for managing local regions on the civilian side as well, even if they are not found in administrative or legal institutions-what would be called "civil society" if you were to put it in the stylish terminology. And these do not break down, even when municipal government buildings are swept away by a major earthquake. This is what creates order at the shelters without any intervention. Perhaps this is why the orderliness and forbearance of the residents of the Japanese islands that other countries find so surprising has persisted.

However, according to yesterday's newspaper, the question of whether the halted nuclear power plants can restart following periodic inspections has become an issue. It said that despite the fact that there are no legal provisions to this effect, the plants cannot restart unless the local people consent to this. But won't this course of events somehow sidestep conceptual arguments over the merits and demerits of nuclear power completely and lead to a rejection of nuclear power? Though the matter is probably not that simple, I gradually started to think that Japan just might be a country where such strange things can happen.

4

As opposed to this, what would it have been like in Germany, where I visited in April? I read German newspapers and magazines to see what the debate over nuclear power is like there. Up until now, Chancellor Angela Merkel has steered her administration toward overturning the anti-nuclear power policy that has been set forth by the former coalition government between the Green Party and the Social Democratic Party of Germany. Yet throughout her busy schedule during an international conference she kept following the situation in Fukushima, Japan the whole time, and then personally decided to make a break with nuclear power. When the top leader of the country identified it as a problem then the administration set its sights on abandoning nuclear power. In response to this, the public carried out a vigorous debate through the mass media.

When you witness this, then Japan's response concerning nuclear power appears feckless, as if it were somewhat half-baked or haphazard. Of course, they were dealing with an extremely difficult and unprecedented state of affairs, and so it is not my intention to speak critically of the individual responses by the current administration. But I do feel that at the very least this shows that there are considerable differences regarding how the governments themselves function both here and in Germany. Japan's style is not one where the top leaders clearly identify a problem and then the public at large holds a debate in response to this, rather it is more prone to leaving things up to chance. It is problematic when there is a rich civil society but politics is not enriched. Therefore, I feel that I would like for those in politics to learn from the richness found in Japan's civil society, private sector, and local communities.

When you think about it like this, it is essentially the top leaders in the municipalities who serve as the point of intersection between politics and local communities. On the one side mayors are also politicians. But they are also the top leaders in local government. They are situated at an important intersection that connects local communities with the political community. I think it is extremely important that there are meetings where such people can take an interest in these problems and expressly gather together despite their busy schedules.

So to that effect, I have candidly stated my thoughts on the earthquake, and hope that you will make use of it as subject matter in the discussions to follow.

When considered in these terms, the earthquake has served to strengthen my conviction in the belief that the theme of "community regeneration" will continue to grow in importance in the future. I would like to quickly run through what sorts of issues we should be thinking about in contemporary Japan for the sake of community regeneration from my own personal standpoint.

Basic Conditions for Managing Communities Learned from Milton Kotler

Did it make you uncomfortable when I used the term community to refer to municipalities a little ways back? The truth is that municipalities, which are to say basic local governments, were supposed to be communities in and of themselves. This is still the case even today in places like France, where anywhere with a population in the double digits is a commune (municipality). These communes have been vested with corporate status, as well as the authority to levy taxes and enact ordinances. If nothing else they have been set up so as to be able to manage their local communities without any institutional excesses or deficiencies. But this is not the case in Japan. Japan's municipalities have gone through three rounds of large-scale mergers. This problem is one that I would like to reconsider once more in line with the theories of the American Milton Kotler.

5

This Milton Kotler is not a scholar. If anything he would have to be called a social activist. He exemplified a certain school of thought in the civil rights movement in the United States in the 1960s, and thought that it was important for residents to independently manage their local communities. He claimed that communities in and of themselves are inherently local governments, or municipalities in other words, and have been vested with full-fledged institutional conditions. For example, they were able to decide on and enforce matters on their own, such as whether to enhance services for residents and how much tax to raise for this purpose, or measures to revitalize commercial districts and industrial location policies.

However, at a certain point the municipalities that served as communities were forced to merge with powerful major cities located nearby. Upon being merged they no longer received the benefits from the taxes that they themselves had paid. The reason for this is because these funds mainly started to be invested in the central areas, namely the downtown areas, of the major cities they were incorporated into. Wealth was being extracted from the periphery and invested in the center. For example, the result of pursuing policies that attempted to enhance port facilities in order to turn these cities into major cities that had an edge in national or global economic competition has been to place peripheral regions at a disadvantage. I would like to see them move in a direction of once again trying to make over their towns by themselves. If they fail to do so they will be swallowed whole by the major cities; commercial districts will decline, industry will go somewhere else, and their populations will desert them, leaving them nothing but a shadow of their former selves. I feel that this is decidedly real in contemporary Japan, but his analysis was that these peripheral areas had declined as a result of mergers based on reflections on the history of cities in 20th century America.

In response to this, he claimed that private corporations known as community development corporations should be established in the districts where there had once been independent municipalities, and these should once again take the lead in regional management. What he is talking about with these are the NPOs and community businesses that are all the rage at the moment. For the United States, the states would license the municipalities. In other words, local communities would become municipalities by drafting a charter, petitioning the state with this, and then receiving the state's approval for their charter. Therefore, the course he pursued was one in which private corporations in the form of community development corporations would be established in districts where municipalities had previously been incorporated and merged, which would go about building up their track record by engaging in regional development. Then, based on this track record they would petition the state with their intention to become a local municipality, and thereby gain approval. He called this "neighborhood government."

Basic Conditions for Managing Regions Deprived of Their Communities by Mergers

Kotler says that the following four points are important in order for residents to independently manage communities on their own.

First off, it is essential that they officially demarcate the extent of their jurisdiction. Article 5, Section 1 of Japan's Local Autonomy Act stipulates that, "The districts for ordinary local public bodies will depend on their former districts," but this must be properly officially demarcated in this manner.

Secondly, they must have corporate status. They must have corporate status in order to stand as the driving force behind original policies both internally and externally. For these, Article 2, Section 1 of the Local Autonomy Act stipulates that "Local public bodies are defined as corporations" in Japan.

6

Thirdly, in order to carry out policies they must have the authority to levy taxes in order to receive contributions of financial resources from everyone that are suited to each person's ability to contribute. If there is no institutional framework for this then all they can do is collect membership fees. But if the local community is recognized as a public corporation in the form of a local public body then it can secure financial resources through its authority to levy taxes.

Finally it must have the authority to establish ordinances. Kotler claims that if these four conditions are missing then it will not be almost impossible to engage in full-scale regional management through just the presence of the private sector.

But what about cases where these had already been merged and there was nothing they could do in the immediate future? As was mentioned a little ways back, Kotler sketched out the following idea for these: Private corporations-these would be comparable to a historical successor of the corporations that were called community development corporations (CDC) in the United States-would be created. Once they had been created they would once again seek permission from the state at some point as they went about amassing a track record with local management, thereby becoming neighborhood governments.

This is what Kotler said. When there are people who unreasonably refuse to cooperate on the grounds that regional management is difficult, then it would be problematic if there were no way to compulsorily get money from them through taxation, or to get them to follow the rules. For this reason there must be an institutional framework.

How Have the Japanese Maintained the Conditions for Regional Management When Faced with Mergers?

Well then, what about the situation in Japan? Mergers have continued throughout the great consolidations in the Meiji, Showa, and Heisei Eras. However, these have deprived these municipalities of the institutional footing they need to continue carrying out independent regional management, just like with the municipalities on the periphery of major cities in the United States that Kotler depicted.

However, this poses a problem to local regions as long as they are deprived of this. So what did they do about this? They were able to go about performing regional management based upon civil principals on their own account, which is a feat that is about as equally deserving of admiration as those for which foreign countries showed admiration for during the recent earthquake. This was done by the community councils and the neighborhood associations. In other words, even though the extent of their jurisdiction had not been officially established, they went about deciding from where to where their respective domains would extend by talking with the surrounding regions. In some cases this probably resulted in disputes.

What is more, even when corporate status is lacking, in Japan's case the doctrine of case law, wherein entities that lack corporate status are treated similar to those that do have it, developed quite early on.

Since then, because they lacked the authority to tax they have collected membership fees as financing for carrying out their activities.

And because they lack the authority to establish ordinances they make rules by passing resolutions at general meetings. I imagine that there are various other ways of making rules

aside from this, but they have pulled off an amazing feat in terms of engaging in regional management solely through civil principles based upon consensus like this.

By the way, the German word for ordinance is "saltzung," which also has the meaning of bylaws. Therefore, to a certain extent the same sorts of things can be accomplished by forming private non-governmental organizations as can be done with ordinances and bylaws, but as you are all no doubt already aware, ordinances carry legal enforceability. Penal regulations can be leveled in accordance with the Local Autonomy Act. Whereas the bylaws of private organizations lack such powers. I feel that these organizations are absolutely astounding for how they have engaged in regional management based solely on civil principles in the midst of nothing more than these sorts of fairly weak institutional guarantees.

As you may already be aware, one condition that is crucial for these community councils to make great contributions is that everyone who lives in the region must be a member. Because when that is not the case then membership fees are collected in lieu of taxes, and yet non-members will not pay these. Because of these familiar problems arise, like when people wonder, "Why is he allowed to travel under the crime prevention lights even though he didn't pay his membership fees?"

After that I mentioned that rules were made by council resolutions, since they lack the authority to establish ordinances. But if not everyone is a member then there will be problems like some people throwing litter wherever they please and claiming, "I'm not a member, so I wasn't aware of that rule."

Therefore, the community councils' enormous power proceeds from having everyone as a member, and when everyone is not a member then they grow proportionally weaker according to the extent of non-membership. In other words, what this means is that the lower their enrollment rates drop, the more the authority and power of the community councils and neighborhood associations wane. This is most likely a characteristic of regional management in Japan.

Communities since the 1990s

Though the data has yet to be fully collected on this, as far as I can see there has been a weakening of community councils and neighborhood associations, particularly in urban areas, since the beginning of this century. On this present topic I have their enrollment rates in mind as an indicator for how they are growing weaker, and it appears as if the speed with which these have declined has been accelerating since the 2000s. The strength of these community councils will conceivably fall off as a result of their falling enrollment rates. I mentioned this in my explanation of the aims at the outset, and I think that there is absolutely truth to this.

Municipal administrations must consider what sorts of measures they should take in response to this. This problem is one that has arisen by virtue of the fact that the consolidation of formerly independent municipalities, which is to say the consolidation of municipalities that were rejected by the Great Meiji and Showa Mergers, was somehow managed solely through civil capacity. Therefore, for municipal areas that once again disappeared through the Great Showa Consolidation-which is to say elementary school districts or joint community councils-at the very least it is essential to give such places some sort of institutional ranking once more. Naturally, as Milton Kotler has declared, vesting them with corporate status as well as the authority to levy taxes and enact ordinances is something that we cannot afford to do. It may be alright to vest them with these, but since doing so would lead to a situation in which the municipalities were once again dispersed then this is somewhat difficult to fathom.

There are some places that are using the local autonomous region system provided for by the Local Autonomy Act through the municipalities without going to such lengths.

Taking these matters into consideration, the Study Group on New Community Modalities mentioned a little while ago has been laying out the theoretical basis for the concept of "community cooperatives." This is not to imply that this will once again restore communities to their status as municipalities. But the process of giving them some sort of institutional framework and making it easy to work on community activities has been enthusiastically carried out, particularly since the 1990s.

That being the case, it appears as if this all follows quite coherently in a sort of scholarly sense. In other words, since until now civil organizations in Japan have been so amazing and civilians have set to work running the local communities close at hand, the government has been able to tread relatively lightly. Yet these civil organizations have been growing weaker. The reason for this is possibly because the government has done too much, as I mentioned in the explanation of the aims at the outset. If the civil organizations that have been running these regions weaken, then institutional frameworks will once again be set up there and regional management will expand through the strength of the official mechanisms. This consists of the community policies that the municipalities are currently working on. When described in this manner, it all appears to follow quite coherently.

Yet while incorporating communities into institutional frameworks once more and making it easy to work on regional management appears to follow in an extremely coherent manner, the fact of the matter is that it is not that simple. For example, since community councils and neighborhood associations have grown weaker, organizations with names like urban development councils and local community councils came to be created as official mechanisms. But when you pose the question of who is underpinning these, you find that it is of course the community councils and the neighborhood associations. Consequently, it is not enough to just create new community mechanisms. But rather, through these mechanisms policies must be managed so as to once again restore the dynamism of community councils, other regional organizations, or themed organizations such as NPOs. This is an important point. This could be said to be an opportunity for the mayors to show their stuff, and I think that you absolutely must do this by grabbing a hold staff who have a particularly firm sense of this and saying, "You, get it done."

It is often said that the private sector and local government will join forces to create a new public world, and this is what I believe is meant by "cooperation." The most important thing in all of this is to unearth the dynamism to regenerate communities. I feel that now it is incredibly important to proceed to once again revitalize local autonomy by creating a variety of institutional mechanisms, creating a setup where personnel are put in charge of communities, and through other such measures. The truth is that these things have continued to be important all throughout these past 20 or so years, but I feel that having experienced the aforementioned large earthquake has once again prompted an increased recognition of their importance.

Acute Sensitivity to New Movements like Community Businesses

There is one final thing I would like to mention. This is an issue that mayors may have varying levels of sensitivity to, but I would like for all of you to be acutely sensitive to new movements such as community businesses. I live in the city of Yokohama, where I also go about performing my various work and engaging in civic activities of my own accord. Seen from such a perspective, major cities tend to be more conservative. There is a stronger

9

recognition of the value of volunteer work since it is done for free in metropolitan areas more so than in rural villages. While it is certainly true that unpaid volunteer work is valuable, the way things now stand it cannot take care of everything. Rather, it is the people in rural districts that thoroughly recognize this, and they all make the claim that the region is not viable unless they earn money on their own. Generally speaking, this point is one that urban municipalities have been somewhat slow in recognizing. This notion of weathering difficult circumstances solely through unpaid volunteer work is still extremely prevalent, especially in major cities. Of course, I am not trying to deny the nobility and importance of doing unpaid volunteer work. I volunteer myself, and so I believe it to be important.

But nowadays when local governments are faced with so many difficulties and will have to restore the vitality of civil society and regional society, they must devise a variety of different schemes. But this is not as simple as just raising the rallying cry exhorting everyone to just do some unpaid volunteer work. Therefore, I would like to end by approaching this halfway from the standpoint of an activist and saying that it will be necessary to adopt an acute sensitivity to new movements such as community businesses when drafting policies.

So to give a quick recap of my speech, when the earthquake struck I initially felt like I had been worked over. But when I attempted to put things in order like this I became convinced that community regeneration is the most important thing; that one of the most significant domains of action in a policy sense by basic municipalities lies in community regeneration.

(3)   Exchanges of Opinions

○ I believe that not only unpaid volunteer work, but also paid volunteer work and community businesses will most certainly be needed in order to carry out volunteer work in an ongoing manner. Community businesses will be particularly important for provincial cities, seeing as how they lack financial leeway.

○ There is the New Regional Protection and Security Network found among all of the community councils, which consists of a network in which communities help one another out during emergencies.

○ (Professor Nawata) A great many of the municipalities are operating under an arrangement whereby they have created new community mechanisms and have been handing out comprehensive subsidies to these. The amount of the subsidies varies according to the municipality, with the issue of political decision-making being the logical justification for this. It is important to verify after the fact whether there have been any results in terms of community regeneration through these subsidies. Whether or not the local people are convinced of this is another matter, and since there are various different ways to convince them there is no single correct answer here. We should explore this in a practical manner given the actual circumstances in each municipal and region.

There are also problems with the use of subsidies, and there are some municipalities that have adopted a community opt-in system for this. So while it's not good to dangle money in front of them, initiatives for unearthing regional strengths are important.

○ The enrollment rates in the community councils have fallen off in my city as well. Moreover, the people operating the community councils are getting on in years, and they appear to be becoming more like the Roman Senate and like lobbying groups. So several years ago we formed urban development assemblies at the elementary school district level, and beginning in this current fiscal year two managers have been dispatched to each of these assemblies to undertake urban development together with the residents.

○ (Professor Nawata) A fairly large number of municipalities operate something like a system for proposing cooperative projects, but I feel that it is important to work out policies that will shine a light on those people who are lying dormant within the local regions.

○ I feel that the majority of the people are enrolled in their community council and pay their membership fees, but are not particularly active. Furthermore, the way things currently stand the younger generation does not have a real feel for the necessity and advantages of the community councils. But when it comes to modalities for regional local autonomy, this recent earthquake has had an impact of sorts on the elderly and the younger generation, and I get the feeling that an awareness in which people are questioning what they personally should be doing is taking root.

○ I think a number of different municipalities are struggling with creating mechanisms for once again providing communities with an institutional framework. Even if they were able to organize a new local autonomy centered around the community councils, would you be able to say that this represented the region as a whole? There is also a generation gap here as well.

11

○ One major point of view in my city focuses on initiatives that will somehow create regions centered around school zones by means of promoting regional autonomy by taking elementary school districts as the individual units for this. The thinking here is no doubt that mechanisms in the form of intergenerational, interpersonal networks in the region and institutional frameworks will come to take on a broad reach. This will be achieved by having parents and guardians in their 20s - 40s play leading roles, and will depend on how modalities for regional partnerships and cooperation and ways of involving the elderly are positioned within this.

○ (Professor Nawata) Municipalities should carry out activities that offer advantages that are visible to young people. I also feel that it will be crucial to create new community mechanisms, and to engage in activities that zero in on a single focal point with this.

One conceivable method for this would be to elicit and work to address regional challenges through the approach of regional welfare. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare urges each municipality to create plans for each district within the regional welfare plans that they draw up. Yokohama has already prepared district-specific plans in its regional welfare plan for each district with a joint community council. Subjects like how to get young people to continue to live there came up as part of the discussions when this was discussed.

○ Many people are averse to taking risks. This is especially true when money is involved. I think that this will be one reason why it will be extremely difficult to promote community businesses.

○ (Professor Nawata) With community businesses (recently social businesses have become common) the business owner essentially bears the risks. So the local government does not need to spend money on the process of providing information like referrals of case examples of initiatives. Rather, I tend to think that if assistance is provided from the very beginning then these are no longer social businesses.

○ Housing complexes are common, and in some of these places community council organizations have become quite firmly entrenched, and in some of these, such councils are nowhere to be found. So far, some of these have adopted a bottom-up approach, that is to say, they have adopted the reasoning that when the government is running a surplus it should create community organizations, although not much progress has been made with this. For this reason, I tend to think that there needs to be a configuration where the government provides encouragement to a certain extent. With disaster prevention plans five staff members are deployed to each disaster evacuation shelter in the city, so I would like to see the participation of these five staff members made mandatory and for them to lend a hand with creating community organizations in each elementary school district.

○ Apartment management associations that had frequently held events like forums on disasters completely failed to function, whereas the community councils were working at full capacity. This is thought to have been because even though the community councils have a low enrollment rate, they had built up a rather robust voluntary disaster prevention organization.

○ (Professor Nawata) Community councils and management associations are different. There are quite a few housing complexes that have both of these. At least that used to be the case for all of them a while back. Looking at these places, we can see that consensus building is adequately performed by the community councils, based on which formal decisions on

whether or not they should be made the district owners are resolved by general meetings of the management association.

Apartment management associations differ from the community councils, and I get the feeling that people think that the legal institution of these associations are not ill suited for tasks such as building amity and consensus with the region and identifying regional challenges. So I feel that cooperative bodies of residents are also necessary in addition to those of district owners for the sake of property management.

(4)   Conclusion   Yasushi Hioki, Mayor of Inabe

Today we have heard lots of invaluable opinions for our own urban development for the future.

There are a variety of different circumstances depending on the region, including places where urbanization is proceeding and places where local autonomy organizations are still robust, by way of example. We also heard the opinion that the community councils are turning into the Roman Senate, and if we end up just asserting that it's fine to keep things the way they were long ago then we will be hard-pressed to invigorate the younger generation. Having said that, large apartment complexes and the like still exert a strong pull over the younger generation no matter what we do. Perhaps what is now needed are initiatives that clearly lay out the opportunities and advantages in front of the younger generation so they are plain for them to see.

I also feel that in housing complexes not only management associations but also resident cooperatives should be created as well.

14

(5)   Proceedings   Hiroshi Aya, Mayor of Sakaide City

For the second half of our theme today on "Community Regeneration" we have asked if we can pose questions to Mayor Kurata of Ikeda City and Mayor Kikuchi of Izu City, and would like to move on to discussing the future.

I would like to begin by reading a message from Mayor Nagamine of Miyakonojo City. Mayor Nagamine was actually scheduled to attend today and pose questions, but due to the heavy rains the risk of landslides has arisen, and so he was unable to attend at the last minute.

> Makoto Nagamine, Mayor of Miyakonojo City. Greetings. I would like to express my heartfelt pleasure on the success of the 11th Meeting. I had planned to attend, but as there is the danger of a landslide disaster due to the heavy rains I am terribly sorry to say that I will not be able to make it.
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> The recent eruption of Mount Shinmoedake and the series of initiatives for landslide countermeasures that followed have made me realize the power of self-help and mutual cooperation all over again. The eruption of Mount Shinmoedake has produced a large quantity of volcanic ash, and just removing this volcanic ash from the roads will take one month, with just barely 10% of municipal roads passable. Just three days before the eruption we sent out letters to each of the community councils calling on the community councils and joint councils to try to move forward with the removal of the volcanic ash under their own efforts, without relying solely on the local government. Afterwards, we used the weekend to carry out simultaneous clean-up activities for each of the community councils, thanks to which we were able to restore the community roads over a short period of time. In addition, we had the heads of community councils in those districts that are at risk of landslides carry around disaster prevention and administration wireless devices in the aim of sharing information with the Disaster Countermeasures Headquarters in real time. What is more, we had them accurately determine information and convey instructions to all of the affected households, including those people in need of support. As the aging of our society advances and community council enrollment rates continue to drop, our city has had concerns over the continued survival of our communities. But it was deeply moving to see that they are solidly suffused with notions of self-help and mutual cooperation to a greater extent than we had imagined.
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> I saw community power demonstrated everywhere I looked during the Great East Japan Earthquake, and once again felt that this organization's awareness of the problems has brought about action. It is my ardent hope that today's meeting will be a great success, and that the growth of each city will lead to the regeneration of Japan.
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> In closing, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude for the physical and psychological support and cooperation that we received from all over the country at the time of the eruption of Mount Shinmoedake.

In spite of these trying times, I wanted to say thank you for all the messages we received.

And with that I would like to thank Mayor Kurata of Ikeda City for making a presentation.

(6)   Presentation   Kaoru Kurata, Mayor of Ikeda City

The organization rate for community councils in Ikeda currently stands at 38.96%. This is characterized by a psychological resignation that seems to imply that there is no need to work hard to raise the organization rate any further, that the final level for this will probably be around 30%. I would like to discuss why we built a new system upon reaching this psychological resignation, and the process surrounding this.

When I was first elected as a city council member in 1975 we were experiencing both advances in urbanization and a drop in the organization rate for community councils. Back then phrases like community promotion were being invoked. I remember conducting observations on the "community administrations" found in cities like Mitaka and Musashino. Community promotion structures had been created in city halls, but in my capacity as a council member I posed the question, "Isn't it strange that the heads of these community promotion structures have not joined the community councils?"

I became mayor in 1995, and up until that point I was not all that aware of the community council organization rate for the city of Ikeda. When I inquired after the community council organization rate again in 1998 I was told it was 50.2%. I was stumped.. But just how do you go about raising the community council organization rate? We planned to have the city dish out subsidiary aid to the community councils and set the advantages of joining the community councils in financial terms, or else distribute the city's public relations literature through their networks. These sorts of things were being carried out all around the country, but I thought that they probably wouldn't work that well in our city. Oddly enough, I thought that spending money would lead to serious problems in the distant future. However, this never came to pass because this came right at the height of the fiscal reforms.

Creation of the Regional Decentralization System in June 2007

While we were concerning ourselves with this issue at that stage, the national government was getting swept up by the second phase of decentralization reforms. As you are no doubt all aware, during the second phase of decentralization reforms people were loudly singing the praises of ideals like having residents develop their cities on their own and breaking away from entrusted democracy. And so here at last I was able to agree with what had previously been bothering me, and to match up the major trends by the national government with an ideal vision for the future in my own way.

Accordingly, during the election four years ago I asked the city residents the following question: "What can you do for your beloved Ikeda City? What can each of you do in your own way for your beloved Ikeda City?" As you're probably aware, this is a play on the famous speech by President Kennedy. As I was approaching my fourth election I was at long last able to defiantly pose this question to the residents. And upon doing so I went uncontested in the election.

As I was posing this question to them I also brought my desire to create a regional decentralization system in Ikeda to the attention of the residents there. My intention was to designate each school district as a single community, and to give each community authority for compiling and requesting a budget of 1% of municipal taxes. In Ikeda's case, its municipal tax revenue is approximately 7 billion yen, and so 1% of this would be 70 million yen. Dividing this up over 11 school districts would yield roughly 7 million yen on average for each school district. So in June 2007 we proposed to the council an ordinance saying that each community was free to make proposals to us on what was currently of high priority to them

16

and what they wanted to do in their own towns within this range. This motion was adopted unanimously by the council.

Throughout this course of events, this year marked the fourth year that we have requested that the communities compose their own budgets. Starting from this year we increased the limits on the composed budgets for each community to approximately 10 million yen. But it seems that when this grew to 10 million yen then it became a problem in terms of practical usability. They can make use of 50 million yen, but then they gradually get worn out when the amount of money increases. On the other side of this, since the communities have been given a certain budget, some of them consider it a loss if they fail to use this. But some of you have been saying that such thinking is wrong and it is a disgrace for municipalities to try to use up their budgets on road work at the end of the fiscal year, then turn around and say that it's a shame to let your hard-won budget go to waste by not using it up. This is no different from what you've been critical of in the past.

So we established a carry-over system for these budgets. For example, if a community only uses 4 million yen of its prepared budget of 6 million yen then it can carry over one half of the remaining 2 million yen. So therefore in the next fiscal year its budget will be 6 million yen plus 1 million yen for a total of 7 million yen. Yet even with the carry over they seem to get the feeling that they are losing out on that other half of 1 million dollars. So starting in its fourth year we made it so that the total amount can be carried over.

A fund ordinance that establishes funds in the names of the communities at the school district level was approved at the regular council meeting in March, and I feel that this has made some measure of progress.

Community Revitalization
(Its Necessity and Problems)

Kaoru Kurata, Mayor of Ikeda City

○ **Extension of Urbanization and Declining Organization Rate of Community Councils**

Community promotion structure (April 1976)

↓

Communication council enrollment rates broke 50% → 38.96% in FY2010

↓

New mechanisms are needed → meanwhile, the period of the second decentralization reforms

○ **Creation of a Decentralization System in June 2007**

Breaking away from entrusted democracy

Provided communities at the elementary school district level the authority to compile and request a budget within a limit of from 7 to 10 million yen

○ **Ikeda Municipal Ordinance on Becoming a World Renowned City for Safety and Security (April 2010)**

Establish voluntary disaster prevention organizations at the elementary school district level

<Occurrence of the Great East Japan Earthquake (March 11, 2011)>

○ **Cultivation of Regional Disaster Prevention Leaders**

Strangers who are closer than distant relatives = Less of an administration and more of a community

○ **Demands of the Mayor's Meeting on National Governmental Institutions and Communities**

Municipal Employee Supporters of the Community Promotion Committees

Roughly six or seven of our employees travel to the evening meetings of the community promotion committees in each elementary school district to serve as supporters. Whenever they do so the people on the councils say to them, "This must be great for you guys, since you're coming here to work I'll bet you're getting overtime pay." In response to this the employees' reply is, "No, we're doing this project on a voluntary basis, so we don't get any overtime pay." By saying this they are able to at last build rapport between themselves and the local people. When we held liaison conferences with the chairmen, one of the chairmen even said, "The employees that come to the committees are all doing a wonderful job." But it is also a fact that the number of municipal employee supporters has decreased slightly because they are sometimes yelled at and reproached.

18

Ikeda Municipal Ordinance on Becoming a World Renowned City for Safety and Security

Ikeda is a city of 100,000 people, where our catch phrase is: "Striving to make Ikeda nothing less than world renowned." We also strive to be a town that is renowned worldwide when it comes to safety and security, and so last year we enacted the Ikeda Municipal Ordinance on Becoming a World Renowned City for Safety and Security. As for why we chose to stress "world renowned," in Ikeda there was a case that occurred ten years ago involving Ikeda Elementary School Attached to Osaka Kyoiku University. It has been exactly ten years since Ikeda Elementary School was certified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as an international safe school. That is to say, the WHO certified it as being a school that is world renowned for its safety. However, even though the city itself was not certified as such, we thought it would be good to make the residents conscious of this. And so we decided to have a go at enacting the Ikeda Municipal Ordinance on Becoming a World Renowned City for Safety and Security.

This year marks the 16th year since the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake. Ikeda has already gone ahead and recruited Self-Defense Force veterans as crisis managers, while firefighters who were actively serving back then have been placed in our Crisis Management Department. What is more, since the Ikeda Elementary School case we have had veterans of the police force making the rounds within the city in four patrol cars. Starting in April of this year we recruited the former head of the Security Division at the Ikeda Police Station, who retired this spring, as a regular member with a term of office. This arrangement of making Self-Defense Force veterans crisis managers and police force veterans safety managers was set in place based upon this ordinance.

At the same time, as a disaster countermeasure, voluntary disaster prevention organizations were launched in all 11 school districts, and now these organizations total 31. Previously, newspaper reports had released figures to the effect that their organization rate was 60 - 70% in Ikeda. But this was the percentage of voluntary disaster prevention organizations that existed at the elementary school level. Currently there are voluntary disaster prevention organizations for all 11 districts, so this is 100%. But at that time there were some school districts that did not have such organizations, which accounts for these figures from back then. But I feel like this still isn't enough the way things are.

The Occurrence of the Great East Japan Earthquake and the Cultivation of Regional Disaster Prevention Leaders

Upon seeing the news of the Great East Japan Earthquake, our next step was to give consideration to cultivating regional disaster prevention leaders. In our supplementary budget from June we allocated a budget for holding training courses for these regional disaster prevention leaders. Over the course of this year we would like to authorize, certify, and appoint about 200 of these leaders.

When disasters strike and we are in our hour of need, it is not as simple as just asking whether the local government can start functioning again right away. Even amidst utter devastation where local leaders themselves and their families have perished, members of fire brigades must do the best they can at the scene of the disaster, regardless of whether their own loved one's are missing or not. In looking at such situations, our first thought was that we needed to clearly designate voluntary disaster prevention leaders in communities of a certain small size; people who could give orders in case anything happened. Authorization courses or short training courses were held to provide them with certification. This is the idea we have now.

19

We are thinking we'd like to start by holding authorization courses or short training courses for about 200 people this year. For the time being this would mainly focus on members of fire crews, then those people who have taken the leader training courses in voluntary disaster prevention organizations. And if there are ideas in any of the municipalities, then please let us know.

Demands of the Mayor's Meeting on National Governmental Institutions and Communities

A considerable length of time has passed since the first Mayor's Meeting on National Governmental Institutions and Communities was held, and after considering this from different angles I have finally struck upon what appears to be the raison d'être for this meeting.

When you look at the assistance to the regions recently stricken by this disaster, you see that throughout the network of wide-area cooperatives in Kansai counterparts are being designated in order to offer assistance, such as with Osaka and Wakayama Prefectures providing assistance to Iwate Prefecture. Osaka took Rikuzentakata and Otsuchi in particular as its partners and sent assistance to these places. I myself called and spoke with the Mayor of Rikuzentakata on numerous occasions. Yet while he would say things like, "Thank you, this is a big help," he would never issue requests regarding the specifics of what he wanted us to do. Perhaps one reason for this is that in the beginning the city was utterly devastated, but two months have already passed since the earthquake occurred.

So then why is this? If there are proposals that have been made by the prefecture that the basic municipalities find hard to swallow, then the Osaka Prefecture Mayor's Association candidly expresses its opinions about these. But it seems like this varies depending on the prefecture. The emphasis is on the prefecture's intentions. So for this reason even if there is an appeal from this end, if the prefecture surveys all of the sub-prefectural regions and find that there are sufficient supplies, they will say, "You already have enough supplies." But when you head to the actual site you get various different requests from people asking for mattresses, sewing equipment, or children's jerseys, for example.

Consequently, I feel that the heads of the basic municipalities, or at least the prefectural governors, should hold qualifications as Diet members. There may be problems with holding these dual posts from a constitutional perspective, but the system will never change unless the Mayor's Meeting on National Governmental Institutions and Communities gets the word out on such matters. I have humbly taken part today out of my desire to offer this recommendation.

(7)   Presentation   Yutaka Kikuchi, Mayor of Izu City

The Situation in the Afflicted Regions

An NPO in Izu planned a volunteer trip last Friday, and so I went up as a citizen. We departed on an overnight bus that arrived in the morning, volunteered for a day, and then went shopping in Sendai on the second day before returning home. To begin with, I would like to show you some of the photographs that I took up there.

This is a photograph that I took of the coast from the volunteer center (which shows mountains of rubble). How many years do you think it would take if they were to try to demarcate the boundaries here under the existing legal structures? When I saw the actual site I thought that the plan to temporarily have someone buy up tracts and give them a once over made perfect sense.

This is a clock that is about four or five times my own height that came to a halt as you see it now. Perhaps the tsunami came as far as this point.

The 36 volunteers that took part from Izu split up into six separate groups of six people each and were allocated work sites. My group spent about five hours cleaning up about five centimeters of a pitch-black sludge that seemed to be heavy oil that had pooled up inside an electronic appliance store in the town.

If six people can do it in a day then you might think that surely the family could have done it, but they couldn't work up the motivation. Even though two months had passed it had been left completely untouched. I got the feeling that because they had their own lives to worry about they never worked up the willpower to set to work on the shop.

I was a regimental commander in the Self-Defense Forces in Aomori from 2003 to 2005, and the thing that made me the most anxious was being dispatched on a disaster relief mission for an earthquake off the shore of Sendai-Shiogama. At the time I thought that the greatest threat to the Tohoku Region was not an invasion of Japan by Russia but an earthquake in Sendai-Shiogama, which is what actually happened. For this reason I didn't buy into the 87% probability of a Tokai earthquake occurring that was quoted publicly, because to my mind the probability was 100%. But I did not envision that it would be like anything on the scale of the Great East Japan Earthquake. I believe that this is truly a once in a 1,000-years occurrence. To put this another way, we bear the social and historical responsibility for bearing witness to a terrible catastrophe the likes of which only occur once every 1,000 years.

Precipitously Falling Birthrates and an Aging Population

In light of these problems, in Izu's case the city itself-and not just a community here or there-is in danger of collapsing. The number of new adults just turning 20 years old in Izu is roughly the same as in the neighboring city of Izunokuni at around 450 people, but its number of women giving birth is around 150 as opposed to 350 in Izunokuni. That is to say, in five years time there will be 150 first year elementary school students in Izu. There were 12 elementary schools within the city when I first became mayor three years ago. But now we are planning to regroup down to four schools by doing away with one school last year, two this year and next year, and three the year after next. By doing so, it will be difficult to create local communities at the elementary school district level as was discussed a little while ago.

In addition, Izu's population aging rate is 30%. This could be said to be a vision of what Japan has in store for it 20 years down the line. In particular, the former town of Toi already has an aging rate of 40%, and the rate is 60% in the southernmost coastal region of Toi. What is more, the region has the lowest marriage rate within the prefecture.

But we have an exceptionally large fire brigade at 655 people, which is even larger than the number of brigade members in Mishima, which has three times our population. But then there are quite a large number of municipal employees mixed in among them. As things now stand there is barely any regional capacity remaining in terms of fire brigades or district welfare officers.

In 2004 the city was merged and the population rose to 35,000 people, but there are still 128 administrative districts remaining. The Makinoko District of the former town of Shuzenjicho has 685 households and 1,776 people, but there are some districts that only have two households. When the size of the districts differs this drastically it is impossible to treat them all the same in their capacity as communities.

< Mayor's Meeting on National Governmental Institutions and Communities >

Overview of the Report entitled Strengthening Communities in Izu City

May 12, 2011
Mayor of Izu City

1.   Current Status

  (1) Rapid aging of the population combined with falling birthrates
       a.   Number of births in FY2010
             Izunokuni (343 people), Atami (170 people), Shimoda (152 people), Izu (158 people, lowest normal birthrate in the prefecture)
       b.   Population aging rate
             Izu (30%), Toi District (40%), Yonezaki, Toi District (60%)
       c.   Number of marriages
             3.3 people per 1,000 people (lowest in the prefecture)

  (2) Regional capacity
       a.   Number of fire brigade members
             Izunokuni (427 people), Atami (379 people), Shimoda (380 people), Izu (655 people, first place in the prefecture per 1,000 people)
       b.   Number of child welfare case workers
             105 people (district case workers = 97 people, commissioned child welfare case workers = 9 people)

  (3) Organizations following after cities
       a.   Continuance of former town units
             • Former town offices = city hall branch offices
             • Respect for the aged festival = each former town
       b.   Number and size of districts = 128 districts total
             Large scale: (1) Makinogo (685 households, 1,776 people)
                             (2) Shuzenjiekimae (621 households, 1,544 people)
                             (3) Kumasaka (508 households, 1,419 people)

Small scale: (1) Nikkatsu (2 households, 5 people)
(2) Okuno (2 households, 6 people)
(3) Ohatano (6 households, 10 people)

2. Ways of Overcoming Challenges

(1) Install a permanent disaster response headquarters at an early stage
Ensure and transfer communication equipment

(2) Overhaul disaster prevention plans
   a. Evacuation shelters
     • Reconsider sites that are suitable as evacuation shelters
     • Responsible parties must be clearly identified and vested with authority
     • Ensure privacy
   b. Strengthen tangible factors (levees) and intangible factors (evacuation drills)
     • Unease of kindergarten/preschool parents

(3) Urban development at the level of former elementary school districts = consider installing district councils
   • Reorganize districts, fire brigades, and voluntary disaster prevention councils • Main constituents for regional development
   • Coordinate with district welfare councils
   • Strength the activities of district welfare officers, health council officers, etc. (break away from the Act on the Protection of Personal Information)

(4) Information collection and emergency measures
   • Disaster agreements with construction industry unions and plumbing unions
   • Ensure independent means of communication
   • Install motorcycle units in each district

(5) Roles of the national government, stricken region (several prefectures), and municipalities
   • What if the national government is struck (Great Kanto Earthquake)?
   • What happens if prefectures are struck (interconnected Tokai earthquakes)?
   • What happens if cities are struck (same as above)?
   • Furnish Ground Defense Force Headquarters with the ability to coordinate with one another onsite

3. Pending Questions

(1) Balancing community utility and responsibilities
The younger generation feels that regional activities (firefighting brigade, dispatch work)

(2) Forming communities in resort areas
Forming communities in resort areas where the population has grown older is difficult

Policies to Preserve Communities

How should the city of Izu go about preserving its communities from the standpoint of today's theme of disaster prevention?

First off, from having been a member of the Self-Defense Forces I tend to view the initial response as being important no matter what, and so I modified the parking lot found on the first story of our three-story city hall to create a permanent disaster countermeasure headquarters. Right now we are developing large maps and plotting hospitals and fire stations on them. In the near future we would like to plot day-to-day conditions, such as which road conditions and which hospitals have what sort of patients on said day.

During the recent major earthquake a major tsunami warning was issued to Izu, due to which evacuation shelters were set up. But if you were to take a look at the evacuation shelters after nightfall, you would see a clear division between those places where everyone went home despite the warning still being in effect and those where everyone remained at the evacuation shelter. Residents remained at evacuation shelters staffed by municipal personnel, whereas the people at shelters that did not have such personnel just went home as they pleased. In other words, whether or not there is someone in charge at the scene is important. Since municipal personnel cannot be stationed at every evacuation shelter, this has made us keenly aware of the need to clearly delineate the authority of those in charge on the scene at the evacuation shelters and to vest voluntary disaster prevention councils or district officials with said authority.

With respect to the local community organizations that came up as a subject for debate a little while ago here today, over this year we intend to take into consideration the creation of Regional Welfare Committees for each district within the Social Welfare Council in Izu. As part of the creation of these local community organizations, we think it would be best to bring together various measures, such as the reorganization of the fire brigades and voluntary disaster prevention organizations for each of the 128 administrative districts and partnerships with the Regional Welfare Committees.

Ideal Role of the Self-Defense Forces during Disasters

As a former member of the Self-Defense Forces, I feel that it exists for times like these. Prefectures, cities, fire and police departments, and entities act on the premise of the legal institutions and infrastructure from when things are normal, but the Self-Defense Forces can function under any circumstances when there is nothing.

The Self-Defense Forces have one Division Headquarters for roughly every three or four prefectures underneath its Ground Defense Force Headquarters, but these Division Headquarters do not have sufficient capacity to coordinate with one another. The Ground Defense Force Headquarters is set up so that it normally conducts liaison and coordination with the Ground, Maritime, and Air Self-Defense Forces; the US armed forces; police and fire departments; and prefectural offices. In addition to this, the Division Headquarters have been vested with the authority to jointly coordinate volunteers. Before going up to the Tohoku Region, I thought that the government should provide political support.

But when I went to have a look on the ground I saw that this is not nearly enough. The Prime Minister went to the scene of the recent disaster five times, but instead he should have formed a governmental front-line headquarters, namely a forward headquarters, so that he does not have to go to such unnecessary lengths. I think that as things now stand the most effective way would be to have the Prime Minister stay at the Prime Minister's Official Residence and dispatch a political field commanding officer to the scene to serve as his representative. Once there, this person can form a forward headquarters for support activities and political

administration together with the Ground Self-Defense Forces' Ground Defense Force Headquarters.

Community Utility and Responsibilities

Finally I will turn to a pending problem for Izu, which is the question of why the number of children is decreasing so much. This is because parents in the working population who have children around elementary school age are all moving away. They are moving to areas with workplaces such as Mishima, Kannami, and Nagaizumi that offer a comfortable life and feature bullet train stations. But in fact, there is one other reason. Izu sometimes has its residents perform maintenance on agricultural roads, forest roads, and municipal roads by only supplying them with raw materials. By rights this should be done as part of municipal public works, but Izu lacks the budget for this. So people are moving away because they dislike doing this. As a result the working age population is decreasing, and so too are their children. We are concerned about how to strike a balance between community utility and responsibilities.

One other point has to do with resort regions. Izu has resort regions that contain hot springs from which visitors can see Mound Fuji and Suruga Bay. As such, while I would like to attract residents who are in the working population, perhaps active seniors will come to Izu without having to be lured here. If that is the case then how to go about forming communities there in the future will be an open question.

(8) Exchanges of Opinions

○ The aging of society is proceeding apace, and there are only about half the number of people in the junior baby boom generation as there were in the baby boom generation. Given this state of affairs, I'm inclined to think that it's alright if the organization rates for community councils are all over the place. The constituent members of the community councils are largely the same as those on the senior councils. Since there are some people who almost never turn up at community council meetings but frequently appear at senior councils, there shouldn't be any problems as long as there are opportunities to meet face to face.

○ Is it fair to have those people who have joined the community councils and those who have not received the same services? When someone joins a community council they are charged with all sorts of duties, but those who say they don't want to do this are exempted from having to join these councils. Unless we soundly debate just how essential a spirit of mutual cooperation is and discriminate against those who do not join the community councils in the sense that they do not provide any benefits, then such people will only continue to increase in number.

○ The creation of neighborhood registers is no longer carried out because of people over-rating the Act on the Protection of Personal Information, but does this not lead to the breakdown of communities?

○ I understand the sentiment behind discriminating between community council members and non-members, but community council non-members cannot be discriminated against when it comes to administrative services.

○ I think that problems over personal information can be resolved just by making extra ordinances and the like. The city of Ikeda has created the Ordinance on Safety Checks for the Elderly, under which district welfare officers and local welfare committee members check on the safety of all of the 23,000 elderly people who are 65 years old or older living in the city.

○ I feel like the Act on the Protection of Personal Information only focuses on the aspect of protecting personal information, and that it leaves out aspects on the valid use of such information.

○ I think there are some places where the people on the administration side have been put on guard against personal information problems.

○ The report of the Seminar on New Community Modalities also lays out problems related to the protection of personal information. The Act on the Protection of Personal Information defines business entities that handle more than 5,000 cases of personal information as being subject to the law, with community councils and the like being almost entirely exempt. I feel that they have the tendency to practice excessive self-restraint. Conversely, even if they are not subject to the Act on the Protection of Personal Information, governments that go about willfully collecting and providing personal information will lose the trust of their residents and will no longer be able to count on their cooperation. First of all, we should clearly define whether an act has been prohibited by the law. Moreover, even if something is not covered by the law, it must be soundly explained out of consideration for ensuring that the residents do not feel anxious about it.

○ In this current fiscal year we have started an initiative to work together with district welfare officers and officials from the voluntary disaster prevention organizations to list up people who would have trouble evacuating during an emergency. The city will then purchase locked vaults that it will lend out to each of the community councils, which will then manage these registers in the vaults. District welfare officers and officials from the voluntary disaster prevention organizations have already received thorough training in advance related to the handling of personal information from those in charge on the city side. Furthermore, we have received permission from the Information Disclosure and Personal Information Protection Review Board for the start of this initiative.

○ District welfare officers actually have real-time information on things like who is currently hospitalized, which hospital they have been taken to, and so on. The safety checks during disasters should make use of this sort of information.

○ Enrollment rates for the community councils are also falling every year in our city as well, and as was brought up for discussion a little while ago, I also feel that getting the younger generation to participate in this is a major challenge. On the other hand, we are at full capacity in terms of fire brigades and flood prevention corps. I think that young people will take part if they have a venue in which to actively participate.

○ I think that right now community councils are extremely important partners. Not only do they explain the budget to the city council, but as things now stand they also act as our partner in explaining the budget during the councils for joint meetings of the community councils prior to the announcement of the budget to reporters in March.

○ When we were merged, regional committees were created at the level of the former municipalities, on top of which there were district committees. But these just devolved into pointless redundancies, and so the regional committees were abolished because the vestiges of the former administration could not be cleared away with them there. Currently, a number of initiatives by the districts have been seen, such as forming NPOs to strive to revitalize under populated areas. For the future, I believe that questions like how should we go about preserving communities at a smaller level and how should we promote districts will be important.

○ In the past, cities had created international exchange associations and various other groups by folding them into their city halls via their secretariats. However, it was pointed out during audits that there were problems with municipal personnel running the secretariats while handing out subsidies, and so these were gradually phased out from all of the city halls. Examples where this has been successfully pulled off do not involve no-bid contracts, and thus result in competition. When we indicated that starting from the following fiscal year we would be recruiting these outsourcing projects and moved forward ahead with this, we saw renewed efforts being made by civil activities towards independence.

In the town of Nisekko, Hokkaido, the tourism bureau that was in the town hall was turned out and made into a public company, to which the city provides funding and is currently receiving dividends from. I feel that it is necessary to induce others to adopt such an approach.

○ With respect to the enrollment rates at community councils and neighborhood associations, as well as participation and non-participation in community activities, there are divisions between stand-alone houses and apartment buildings, by way of example. There is completely different logic at play depending on whether they are inclined to reside there

27

permanently, or whether they intend to reside their for a long time but not permanently, or whether they are only staying there temporarily. It is easier to induce people that have children to take part in community activities, but I feel like this is inordinately difficult to pull off with people before they have kids.

○ The demands that residents have of their neighborhood associations, that district residents have of their district governments, and that city dwellers have of the city government are 80% identical. What does differ here are the demands for medical care that the Tokyo Metropolitan Region has. Ultimately, I believe that the extent to which local people and local governments coordinate and cooperate with one another will be a challenge for municipal government management going forward in the 21st century.

○ Measures for people who live alone-especially for young people-are extremely difficult. The number of studio apartments has risen drastically, and we are coping with these by means such as partnering with schools.

○ Following the earthquake on March 11, people steadily streamed into our evacuation shelters from the so-called irradiated regions from around March 12 and 13. In the end we took in some 1,600 people. One day all of a sudden people were being sent over in independent private vehicles or buses in anything but a planned manner. Recently the 1,600 people who were there has fallen to about 120 people now. In short, they were not under any sort of control whatsoever, but were escaping in a loose and disparate fashion. For this reason the municipalities in question had not yet determined everyone's whereabouts, and for our part we were operating with absolutely no knowledge of just how many people would be coming.

○ When sending relief supplies, the rules call for these to be tentatively shipped by having the prefectures serve as the contact points, rather than the municipalities, and for the supplies to pass through the prefectures. But these supplies were not making it through the prefectures stipulated in the rules to reach the municipalities where they were in demand, and so this completely failed to work.

Meals for the evacuees were overseen by the prefecture, and each day 2,000 meals (one meal for one person contained two rice balls and two pieces of bread each), and 4,000 sets of rice balls and bread would arrive at the city hall all at once, and we would then distribute this. But even as the number of people increased the number of meals remained at 2,000. Since the meals would be made quite far from the people eating them and then brought in they would cool down. As such, since there are lunch vendors in the local area we persuaded the government by saying the people would be able to eat hot meals if we made use of those on the local side, thereby resolving the issue.

○ From our experience from the major earthquake it seems like we should be having an urgent debate in terms of national governmental institutions. This should encompass the roles of the national government and the prefectures, as well as whether this should even be done through the prefectures or, as I tend to think, it would be better to leave what can be entrusted to the municipalities up to us, which is to say those of us on site on the front lines.

○ When hundreds of people from different municipalities showed up and were packed into gymnasiums, leaders like local government organizations of sorts would emerge and so-called communities would arise to get everything under control and perform independent management. For example, they would tell us what sorts of things were

needed and what was missing even amongst the abundant relief supplies, which was information that our municipal personnel could not find out by asking.

○ In fact, a method known as direct aid was adopted at the time of the Great Sichuan Earthquake in China, whereby the disaster-stricken regions were identified and each municipality took responsibility for soundly supporting these stricken regions, which was enormously effective. The cities would independently perform on site surveys, and from there would go about providing meticulous assistance to a single city for an extended period of time. Cooperation began with the cities dispatching personnel as needed, the chambers of commerce and industry coordinating with partner chambers of commerce and industry, and with social welfare committees receiving volunteers. Since it turned into a long, drawn-out affair personnel were dispatched for long periods of time. Personally I feel that unless you do it this way then you will not be able to create effective support structures.

○ With respect to dispatching reinforcements for firefighting during major earthquakes, this is something that the mayor must make a decision on by considering the personal safety of the personnel.

○ Mayor's meetings play an important role when it comes to aid for the stricken regions.

(9) Conclusion   Hiroshi Aya, Mayor of Sakaide City

Thank you very much. As mayors I feel that we must be aware of legal grounds, the safety of the general public, and other such matters.

Every city does things differently in their own way, and I feel that this can be informative, especially for matters like handling personal information. Moreover, we also talked about not only how community council enrollment rates are declining, but also about how there are ways of compensating for this. This major earthquake has made us recognize once again how large the role of basic municipalities truly is.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.