



# NUMBER 1 SHIMBUN

THE FOREIGN  
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OF JAPAN  
日本外國記者會

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**“The independence of the press is facing serious threats: a weak system of legal protection, persistent exploitation of a media professional lacking in solidarity...”**

David Kaye, UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression, 2016



THE GOVERNMENT  
AND ITS VARIOUS  
DISAGREEMENTS  
WITH THE UN

Linda Linda:  
from FCCJ to TV,  
a star from the 1950s

Kazunori Takada:  
the Bloomberg  
bureau chief profiled

Ping pong redux:  
when table tennis  
served up a scoop

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> GLOBAL PIONEER

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**To Improve Int'l Ties Still Remains Role**

**An early issue of the Japan Times**

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**From the  
President**

I WOULD LIKE TO thank the FCCJ members for their active participation in the 2017 elections and their voting for continuity and stability as the Club is sailing through high waves.

The "old-new" Board welcomes new board members from the Regular Member ranks, Yoichi Yabe and Greg Clark, and new and returning board members from the Associate ranks.

Yabe is a photojournalist. Greg Clark, who will serve as second vice president, almost needs no introduction, as he is a prolific writer and true Japan and Asia hand.

On the Associate side, we welcome Willem Kortekaas, a veteran financial expert to serve as treasurer, and Mary Corbett, who was reserve director on the previous board, to serve as secretary.

Returning board members will be Anthony Rowley and Peter Langan, two veteran correspondents. Anthony will serve as first vice president.

Bob Whiting, who served as FCCJ Treasurer for two years and was instrumental in his relentless efforts to fix the FCCJ financial situation – especially related to the move project – and led the negotiation to make the best deal with our outsourcing partners, will stay on board as a director. Milton Isa will also remain on board providing his outstanding expertise in business and management.

With a high sense of respect and appreciation I would like to thank the three departing board members, Todd Crowell, Said Carlson and Yuchi Otsuka.

Todd is a veteran journalist and expert writer on military affairs. Said helped the dinosaurs on the board, myself included, see our profession through a young journalist's eyes as we move into new media and high technology. Otsuka helped with the management, especially in the HR Committee.

I would also like to thank David Satterwhite, the Club's outgoing secretary, and hope that David will continue to serve the Club as chair of the scholarship committee.

And special thanks to our parliamentarian, Bradley Martin, who helped us navigate, in style and with a great performance, our way through Robert's rules.

Ahead of us we face another challenging year to tackle issues including the move, the outsourcing, IT and publications, some structural reforms and the need to introduce more journalist members. The board needs your help.

And I assure you that we have an open-door policy. Please contact any one of us if you have any issues you would like the FCCJ Board of Directors to address.

In the words of Thomas Babington Macaulay more than 150 years ago, we all want the FCCJ, with your support, to "remain the gallery in which the reporters sit and become a fourth estate of the realm."

– **Khaldon Azhari**

ELECTION RESULTS

## THE 2017-18 FCCJ BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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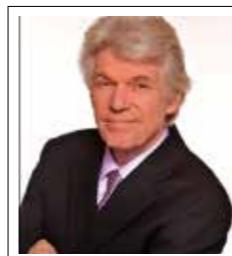
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**Makoto Honjo,**  
Associate Member

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

## JAPAN'S FAVORITE OPTIMIST



**Ezra Vogel, Chairman of Harvard University's Council on East Asian Studies, spoke to Club Members on Aug. 16, 1977. This followed his participation in an FCCJ seminar a year earlier in his previous post as director of Harvard's East Asia Research Center and preceded by almost two years the publication of his controversial book, *Japan As Number One: Lessons for America in 1979*. *Japan as Number One* made him famous, with the Japanese version becoming a non-fiction best seller, and ensured a huge turnout for his next professional luncheon in January of 1980. Seated to Vogel's left, pen in hand, is CBS News' Bruce Dunning, noted for his coverage two years earlier of the Danang evacuation during the Vietnam war. (Bruce suffered fatal injuries from a fall in his New Jersey apartment and died in August 2013 at the age of 73.)**

Born in Ohio in 1930, Ezra Vogel earned a Ph.D. in social science from Harvard University in 1958 before traveling to Japan, where he carried out research for two years before returning to Harvard. There, he became an assistant professor, while expanding his studies to include China and the Chinese language. He became a tenured professor in 1968, and in 1972 became the director of Harvard's East Asia Research Center, a position that led to his participation in the FCCJ professional seminar in 1976. It had long been Vogel's practice to make annual trips to Japan and other countries in East Asia, which was why – following his move to chairmanship of Harvard's Council for East Asian Studies—he was invited to speak at the FCCJ on East Asian affairs. When he next appeared at the Club on Jan. 7, 1980, to discuss *Japan As Number One* some eight months after its publication, his appearance attracted a wall-to-wall crowd.

Ezra Vogel went on in 1980 to become Harvard's director of the Program on U.S.-Japan Relations at the Center for International Affairs, a post he held for seven years. Additionally, he chaired a group for undergraduate East Asian Studies (1972-1991), twice served as Director of the Fairbank Center for East Asian Studies (1973-1975 and 1995-1999), and became the first director of the Asia Center (1997-1999). He retired from teaching in 2000, the same year he revisited his earlier theme with a follow-up entitled *Is Japan Still Number One?* After retirement, he wrote another book, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*, a reminder that the focus of much of his past work had been on China as well as Japan.

— **Charles Pomeroy,**

editor of Foreign Correspondents in Japan, a history of the Club that is available at the front desk

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# Best frenemies: Japan vs. the UN

*Unlike countries that tend to bury unwelcome reports from the international body, the Japanese government takes them personally.*

by DAVID MCNEILL

**B**laring headlines seem to follow David Kaye. Earlier this year, on April 21, the UN's special rapporteur for freedom of expression got a roasting in the British tabloids for warning that age verification for online porn could violate international laws on freedom of speech. "Meddling UN chiefs attack measures to protect kids from sick online filth," screamed the *Sun*.

The response to Kaye's report on Japan's media was barely more measured. Days before he arrived in Tokyo to brief the government, a draft of the report was leaked to the *Sankei Shimbun*, a newspaper that also takes a dim view of finger wagging by meddling foreigners. Kaye's report was shoddy and biased, it said. That was but a warm-up for June 14, when the newspaper called him a liar.

A group of elderly university professors said Kaye's alarm should be directed toward his own country: America. The Academics' Alliance for Correcting Groundless Criticisms of Japan said in a May 2 statement that the rapporteur had jumped to conclusions after being led around by the nose for a week by journalists "who were chosen based on 'political considerations and expediencies'" – code for lefties. "Professor Kaye's alarmist language is sharply at odds with the actual situation in Japan, where freedom of expression is fully guaranteed by law and custom and fully enjoyed and practiced on a daily basis throughout all sectors of Japanese society," they fumed. Instead, there were "great challenges from big countries lacking freedom of opinion and expression," such as Russia and China.

Kaye, who talked to 100 journalists, editors and civil rights experts in Japan, emerged more bemused than bruised at his reception. Sanae Takaichi, the communications minister, repeatedly declined to meet him, saying she was "busy"; Koichi Hagiuda, the deputy chief cabinet secretary, said the rapporteur's findings were based on "hearsay." All par for the course, says Kaye, though he calls the *Sankei* leak by someone inside the government "surprising."

"Usually the draft report is sent to the government to



**He says/she says**

Above, a statue in Korea to commemorate "comfort women:" the UN and the Japanese government disagree over what they agree on about the women. Opposite, David Kaye, UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression at the FCCJ.

check for factual errors, to give us a chance to correct and the government to make its counter statement," he says. "That playing of the rapporteur struck me as unusual in the context of a democratic country and it politicized the issue. The report is restrained and technical and the response overstates how political it is. They could have just said that the proposal deserves study, then bury it."

AP PHOTO/LEE JIN-WAN

**SUCH IS OFTEN THE** fate of UN reports elsewhere. Britain, which has in recent years fallen foul of several UN rapporteurs, shrugged off Kaye's warning that age checks would facilitate cyber-snooping by the state. "This government is proud to be putting in place robust measures to keep children safe from net porn," said a mandarin at the department for culture, media and sport, "There is no question of the government collecting data on viewing habits."

That's the way to do it – with just enough polite bureaucratic disdain to muffle the sound of the report dropping into the dustbin. Instead, Japan bristles. A letter in May by Joseph Cannataci, a UN-commissioned expert on the right to privacy, questioning the merits of a new conspiracy bill, sparked a blistering row. Cannataci's assessment was "extremely unbalanced," thundered Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, and "hardly that of an objective expert."

Two years ago, the government angrily challenged a rapporteur's dubious claim that many Japanese schoolgirls had engaged in amateur prostitution. A year before that it publicly swatted away censure of its stingy system for asylum seekers: UN High

Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres said the system was rigid and restrictive. It was hardly controversial: in the decade to 2013, Japan gave asylum to just over 300 refugees.

Then there was the odd spat in June over the government's claim that the UN secretary general endorsed its 2015 deal on Korean "comfort women," herded into Japanese wartime military brothels. Antonio Guterres said so when he met Abe in Italy, insisted Yoshihide Suga, the government's top spokesman. No he didn't, said Guterres' spokesman, Stephane Dujarric. "The truth is what the Japan side has announced," retorted Suga, unconvincingly.

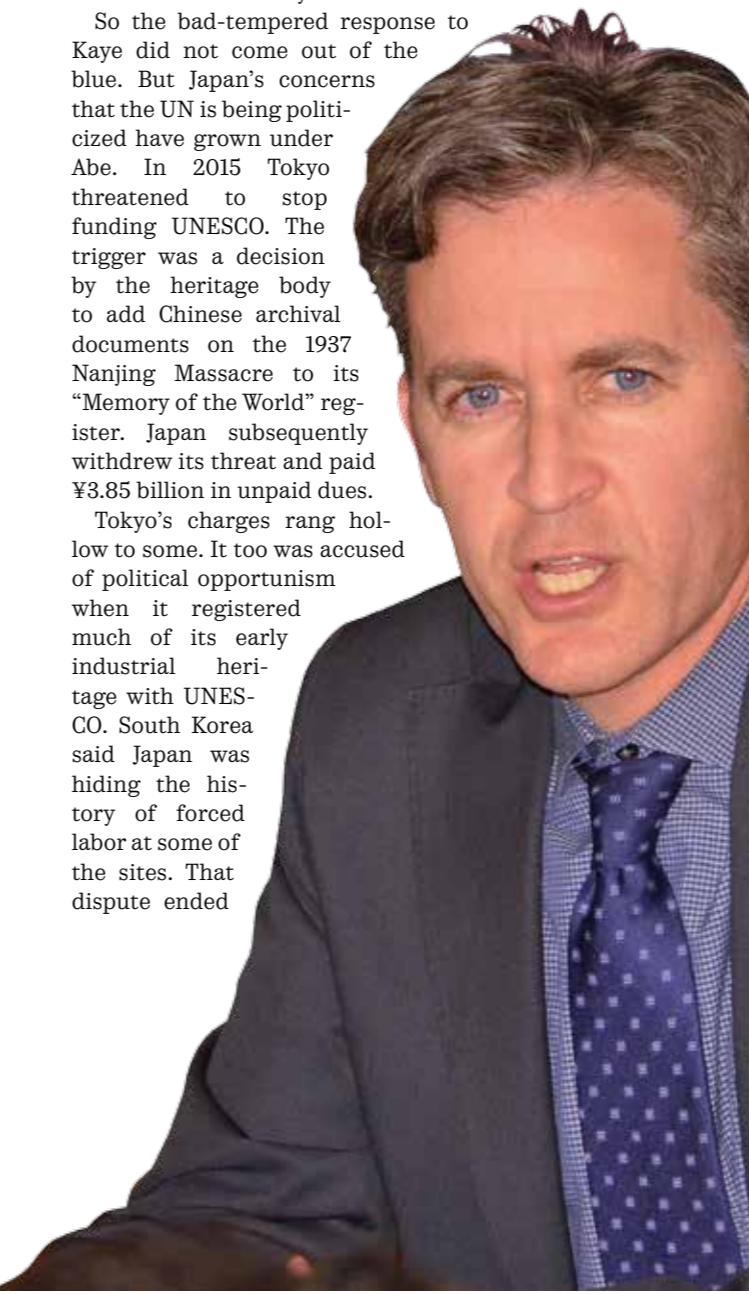
Japan's reluctance to rise above UN slights, despite its huge financial contribution to the organization, smacks of a national inferiority complex, says Kaori Hayashi of the University of Tokyo. The government insists that foreigners are ignorant of how things work here but is hopeless at explaining why, she says. "They feel very insulted about these people who are now aware of Japanese culture. What do they know about Japan?"

"Government ministers don't know what to do about such criticism," Hayashi says. "They don't know how to react and they don't want to spend time on it. They don't discuss things intellectually – it's not a value in this system. It doesn't belong to politics. In the Western tradition, freedom of expression is situated in the core of political values; in Japan it is far less so."

**THIS MAY HELP DRIVE** the longstanding hostility to a 1996 UN report on the wartime military brothels. Radhika Coomaraswamy, a special rapporteur on violence against women, called for an apology and compensation for comfort women. Japan has repeatedly tried and failed to have the report pulled, even dispatching its human rights' ambassador to try to directly talk to Coomaraswamy.

So the bad-tempered response to Kaye did not come out of the blue. But Japan's concerns that the UN is being politicized have grown under Abe. In 2015 Tokyo threatened to stop funding UNESCO. The trigger was a decision by the heritage body to add Chinese archival documents on the 1937 Nanjing Massacre to its "Memory of the World" register. Japan subsequently withdrew its threat and paid ¥3.85 billion in unpaid dues.

Tokyo's charges rang hollow to some. It too was accused of political opportunism when it registered much of its early industrial heritage with UNESCO. South Korea said Japan was hiding the history of forced labor at some of the sites. That dispute ended



**David McNeill** writes for the *Independent*, the *Economist* and other publications. He has been based in Tokyo since 2000.

with a compromise in which Japan agreed to explain that Koreans had been taken to some sites and "forced to work under harsh conditions."

The UN seal of approval – or disapproval – is important to patriots like the professors who make up the Academic Alliance. Because of its association with the United Nations, the Coomaraswamy report with its "grave errors" has come into currency throughout the world, and "the dignity of Japan . . . in the international community has been immensely damaged for more than two decades." Only a fresh UN special rapporteur and a "new report free from factual error" will put things to rights. The best of luck with that.

As the UK and Japanese reaction shows, tension is inevitable in the relationship between governments and rapporteurs, insists Kaye. "It's a problem if there isn't." The mistake, he says, is assuming their reports are hostile instead of opportunities for public debate. The 46 professors who signed that statement accusing him of "unfair and biased views" preferred to shoot from the sidelines, he says. If they felt so strongly, they could have met him face-to-face. ❶

## WHAT'S IN THE REPORT

**David Kaye** is one of over 50 human rights rapporteurs for the Human Rights Council, which replaced the discredited Commission on Human Rights in 2006. The unpaid position consists of three tasks: Communicating directly with governments around the world; conducting country visits (Kaye covers Japan, Tajikistan and Turkey) and writing thematic reports.

The council has come under fire, and not just in Japan. One of the most frequent criticisms is that it is disproportionately concerned with problems in liberal democracies while failing to bring gross human rights violators elsewhere to book. America has threatened to leave. Yet, concludes a recent review by the *Economist*, the organization is improving and "helps make the world a better place."

Kaye was at pains to stress what Japan got right. His report said there is a strong legal framework that protects freedom of expression, on the net and elsewhere. **"But we must always be vigilant to protect that framework. My report identifies areas that I think should raise concerns for all people in Japan who believe in democracy and the institutions that protect human rights."**

Media independence was his key concern. The government should create an independent broadcast regulator, he said, pointing out that Japan did have one, but the first post-Occupation government in the 1950s abolished it. Now broadcasting is under the control of the minister of communications. "Article 174 of the Broadcast Act hangs like a Sword of Damocles over the head of the media in the event that they do some report that the government doesn't like," Kaye said.

Kaye's other concern was the lack of solidarity among media companies. "Journalists are loyal to their companies rather than journalism itself. Journalists see pressure in their day-to-day work not to cover issues that could be sensitive. That creates an atmosphere where media independence is difficult to establish."

These observations were based, he said, on his experience of comparing other democratic systems. **"My hope is that they become part of public debate."** The report was submitted to the Human Rights Council in June. After that, it is in the hands of the Japanese public to decide if the recommendations are worth pursuing."



## “I love Linda”

*A chance encounter in the press club’s dining room led to TV stardom for a woman whose husband was a Pulitzer Prize-winning correspondent.*

**L**ooking back on the FCCJ’s history of over seven decades, many stories can be found of people whose lives were changed by chance encounters at the Club. One of them was the mother of two young boys, who arrived in Japan in the 1950s as the wife of an American correspondent, before going on to stardom in a Japanese TV comedy drama. In tempestuous times when anti-American sentiments were on the rise in the country, she was referred to by some – in one case, by an American correspondent – as “the best ambassador.”

Linda Corley Mangelsdorf was born in Boston, Massachusetts in April 1925. When she was three, her family relocated to Honolulu, where her father was employed as a geneticist for the sugar-cane growers. There, she picked up a smattering of Japanese language from the family’s maid, a Japanese-American *nisei*.

On the morning of Dec. 7, 1941, Linda, who had stayed overnight at a friend’s house, heard the roar of aircraft flying overhead, followed by explosions. She saw low-flying aircraft whose wings bore the red circle of the Japanese Hinomaru headed in the direction of the Pearl Harbor naval base. At the age of 16 she became one of the American civilians bearing witness to the Japanese attack on the U.S.

Linda first attended Stevens College in Columbia, Missouri, and later transferred to the University of Hawaii, where she

received her degree. In 1949, she came to Tokyo as an industry labor relations analyst for Supreme Command Allied Powers. She made the acquaintance of Keyes Beech, a correspondent for the *Chicago Daily News*. Beech had worked as a war correspondent in the Pacific Theater, and was well known for his acts of derring-do, having been the first correspondent to reach the summit of Mt. Suribachi during the battle of Iwo Jima. He served as FCCJ president from July 1948 to June 1949, and later received a Pulitzer Prize for his reporting on the Korean War.

Linda had intended to pursue graduate studies in Asian Philosophy, but became engaged to Keyes and the two married in June 1951. She once was heard to remark laconically, “I never got my master’s degree but I got a husband.” The couple returned to the U.S. but came back to Japan in 1955, and Linda had settled down to a mundane existence as the mother of Keyes Jr. and Barnaby. Then one day, while eating lunch in the dining room of the Tokyo Correspondents’ Club (forerunner to the FCCJ), she struck up a conversation with a Japanese TV director.

**TELEVISION BROADCASTING IN JAPAN** began in the 1950s with NHK programming, which was then followed by several commercial TV networks. At the time, the biggest problem facing the broadcasters was the shortage of content. The gap was filled by popular American programs, such as *I Love Lucy*,

*The Lone Ranger*, *Highway Patrol* and others, all of which were overdubbed in Japanese. One station had come up with the idea of producing a drama based on *I Love Lucy*, and they were seeking an American female who could speak Japanese. After overhearing Linda ordering dishes in Japanese at the press club, one of the directors involved with the show promptly approached her about appearing on the program.

Linda agreed, and on April 6, 1958, at the Sunday evening prime time of 7 p.m., she made her debut on JOKR-TV (now TBS), in the first episode of “*Aoi Me No Tokyo Nikki*” (*Blue Eyes’ Tokyo Diary*). The sponsor was Snow Brand Milk Products, and the director was Takanori Yamamoto.

Linda portrayed Shirley, wife of George Parker, the Tokyo correspondent for a fictitious U.S. magazine called *Slick*. Her hubby George was played by Ken Nilsson, a disc jockey who had studied Japanese at the Military Language Institute in Monterey, California. The couple’s American friend was played by George Furness, an attorney who had defended Class-A war criminals during the International Military Tribunal for the Far East.

There was some striking irony in the make-up of the production staff. Near the war’s end Yamamoto, at that time a university student, had been conscripted into the military and trained, as a would-be Kamikaze pilot, to crash an aircraft armed with a single 250kg-bomb into a U.S. naval vessel. Now, only six years after the San Francisco Peace Treaty came into effect, ending the occupation of Japan, Linda was performing in a TV situation comedy made with the cooperation of a defense attorney for accused war criminals and a former would-be Kamikaze pilot.

The basic story plot was that the young American couple would go out to run down stories about things they encountered in Japan. For example, one day George explained to Linda that only men could attend geisha parties. She and her friend discuss the matter and decide to disguise themselves as geisha girls and entertain their husbands.

**THOUGH LINDA COULD CONVERSE** in Japanese, she was unable to read it, so the program’s entire script was written in the romaji, which she would memorize before each broadcast. (American actress Charlotte Kate Fox, who starred in the NHK drama *Massan* three years ago, also memorized her lines from an alphabetized script, so Linda can be regarded as her predecessor.)

With the popularity of TV just beginning to take off in Japan, the *Blue-Eyes* saga became a hit sensation. The sheer novelty of a blonde-haired, blue-eyed American female speaking Japanese was enthusiastically received by TV viewers, and when Linda went on shopping expeditions at Ginza department stores, people lined up to ask for her autograph. The weekly U.S. magazine *The Saturday Evening Post* was to eventually feature an article by Linda’s real-life husband – correspondent Keyes Beech – titled, “I Lost My Wife to Tokyo TV.”

Linda once was ticketed by a traffic cop for exceeding the speed limit. As the story goes, when she appeared in traffic court, the judge, who turned out to be a fan of her show, made the other offenders wait, holding up the “court for an hour while he discussed in detail practically every show in which Linda had appeared. Then he apologetically fined her the equivalent of \$4.18 and let her go.”

Linda received similarly deferential treatment in the media. As Keyes Beech recalled in a self-deprecating tone, “Ten years

ago I shook hands with Emperor Hirohito. But when Crown Prince Akihito’s engagement to commoner Michiko Shoda was announced, did the Tokyo papers ask me for comment? No, they asked my wife.” Her celebrity status reached the point that in the press club bar, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and former Press Club president Keyes Beech was jokingly referred to by a colleague as “Mr. Linda Beech.”

In 1960, when then-Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi – grandfather of the current Prime Minister Shinzo Abe – revised the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, anti-U.S. sentiment boiled over. When Jim Hagerty, President Dwight Eisenhower’s press secretary, arrived at Haneda Airport he was besieged by hostile demonstrators, requiring him to be evacuated by a U.S. Marine Corps helicopter.

### After overhearing Linda ordering dishes in Japanese, one of the directors approached her about appearing on the program.

**ACCORDING TO AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT** Terry Turner, when the marchers in an anti-U.S. demonstration happened to spot Linda passing by, they cheered and rushed forward to grasp her hand, shouting, “Linda, Linda-san!” Then they returned to their “zig-zag” snake dance and resumed chanting “Down with America!” Observing this, Turner described her as “the best ambassador this country had in that beleaguered city.”

Around the same time, Nippon Columbia issued a disc titled “*I Love Tokyo*,” marking Linda’s debut as a vocalist. She also appeared as a model on Sapporo Beer promotional posters. In a matter of two years, Linda had truly blossomed into Japan’s most popular foreign celebrity.

In his article in *The Saturday Evening Post*, Keyes Beech included an interview with director Yamamoto, in which he was quoted as saying, “We thought about all the outstanding differences between East and West and how to transfer Western humor into Japanese and vice versa. Then we made an important discovery. We discovered that while Americans and Japanese live differently, they will laugh at the same things. What’s funny to one is funny to the other. The strength of the show rests on common humanity.”

Keyes supposed that the show’s viewers were probably mostly adolescents but believed it appealed to all ages, leading him to conclude, “Young Japanese like it because it brings a modern young American couple into their living rooms. Older Japanese like it because they see a pair of Americans trying to live up to old and disappearing customs that they cherish.”

“*Tokyo Blue Eyes* has had an unexpected result,” he wrote. “Although calculated to sell cheese, it has also helped sell America, in that it has brought Americans and Japanese closer together. And it hasn’t cost the United States taxpayer one cent.”

While *Blue Eyes Tokyo Diary* was to forever change the life of one American woman from Hawaii, it also turned out to serve as the ultimate in “soft power” – enhancing the image of Americans in Japan. It was, no doubt, not the first, and certainly not the last time that the hand of fate moved across a table over lunch at the press club dining room.

The Beeches were to eventually depart Japan, and the couple later divorced. Linda earned a doctorate in psychology and worked in the mental health field. She passed away at age 86 on Jan. 5, 2012. Her ashes were scattered at the panoramic Waipio Valley beach, at the northern tip of the Big Island of Hawaii. ▀

**Eiichiro Tokumoto**, a former Reuters correspondent, is an author and investigative journalist.

# Kazunori Takada

by JUSTIN McCURRY

If half the job of great reporting is simply being in the right place at the right time, then Kazunori Takada can justifiably claim to have struck gold.

His appointment in 2011 as deputy head of Reuters' bureau in Shanghai came just before relations between Japan and China went into a steep dive following the decision by the then prime minister Yoshihiko Noda to nationalize the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islands. Demonstrators took to the streets of several Chinese cities, and some Japanese businesses were forced to temporarily shutter their premises.

Takada had conflicting emotions. He was excited to be in the thick of a major international news story, but concerned about his family's safety. During one protest, a stone was thrown at the kindergarten attended by his two-year-old daughter. "When the island protest blew up it was pretty frightening," says Takada. "To see hundreds of people marching down the street chanting anti-Japan slogans and carrying banners makes you aware that you're in a foreign country surrounded by people who don't have very positive feelings towards your country."

If it hadn't been for a tricky Japanese-language test, the 40-year-old Yokohama native might never have pursued a career in journalism that late last year saw him propelled to become Bloomberg's Tokyo bureau chief, where he oversees a team of around 140 reporters and editors.

**AFTER GRADUATING FROM THE** International Christian University in Tokyo with a degree in international relations, he was hired by a major Japanese bank as a graduate trainee, but lasted just seven months. "The tasks that are given to grad trainees are just mind-boggling," he says of a job he quickly grew to loathe.

His route out of the financial industry and into journalism came after he failed a test in which he was asked to write the names of all of the bank's domestic branches in kanji. He was offered the chance to retake, but the test had convinced him that it was time for a change. "I thought about what I enjoyed doing most, and realized it was writing," he says.

After joining Reuters in Tokyo in 1999, Takada spent the next two years on the general news desk, covering everything from floods in Nagoya to the final days of the premiership of Keizo Obuchi. The announcement that Obuchi had fallen into a coma after suffering a stroke brought home the pressures of being a wire reporter. "I was so shocked that I froze, although I was supposed to send headlines live," Takada recalls. Around him he could hear other reporters yell-

**"I thought about what I enjoyed doing most, and realized it was writing."**



ing details of Obuchi's condition down their phones. "I realized that's what it takes to be to be a journalist. You have to detach yourself from the news in a way. It's not easy, but that was a learning experience.

"As Wyatt Earp said: fast is fine, but accuracy is everything. You can shoot fast, but if you miss there's no point, you're going to get shot. It's the same thing with the wires. You can be fast, but if you're wrong, then it just causes more damage than being slow. But if you're fast and you're accurate then that's bingo – and that's what we're after."

**AS THE HEAD OF** a major international bureau, Takada finds much of his time is taken up performing managerial duties and attending internal meetings, but he still tries to find the time to file. "A full-time manager will never be respected in the newsroom. You have to be in the trenches with the journalists, and that's my approach. It's easy to say, 'Let's interview so-and-so,' or 'Get this quote,' but you forget how difficult that can be at times."

After two years on the Reuters general news desk, Takada spent three and a half years covering Asian markets – an arrangement that allowed him to combine his love of writing with his background in finance. "I was initially skeptical, but as it turns out – and this goes back to why I got into journalism in the first place – I just enjoyed writing, and with markets I had more chances to write. I was able to get an understanding of financial journalism, and looking back that probably decided my career path for the next 16 or 17 years and eventually brought me to Bloomberg."

The shift in the global media focus to China is a common lament among Tokyo-based journalists. Takada, too, recognizes that the environment for Japan-based news organizations is tough, but he is confident that there will always be an appetite for Bloomberg's brand of journalism.

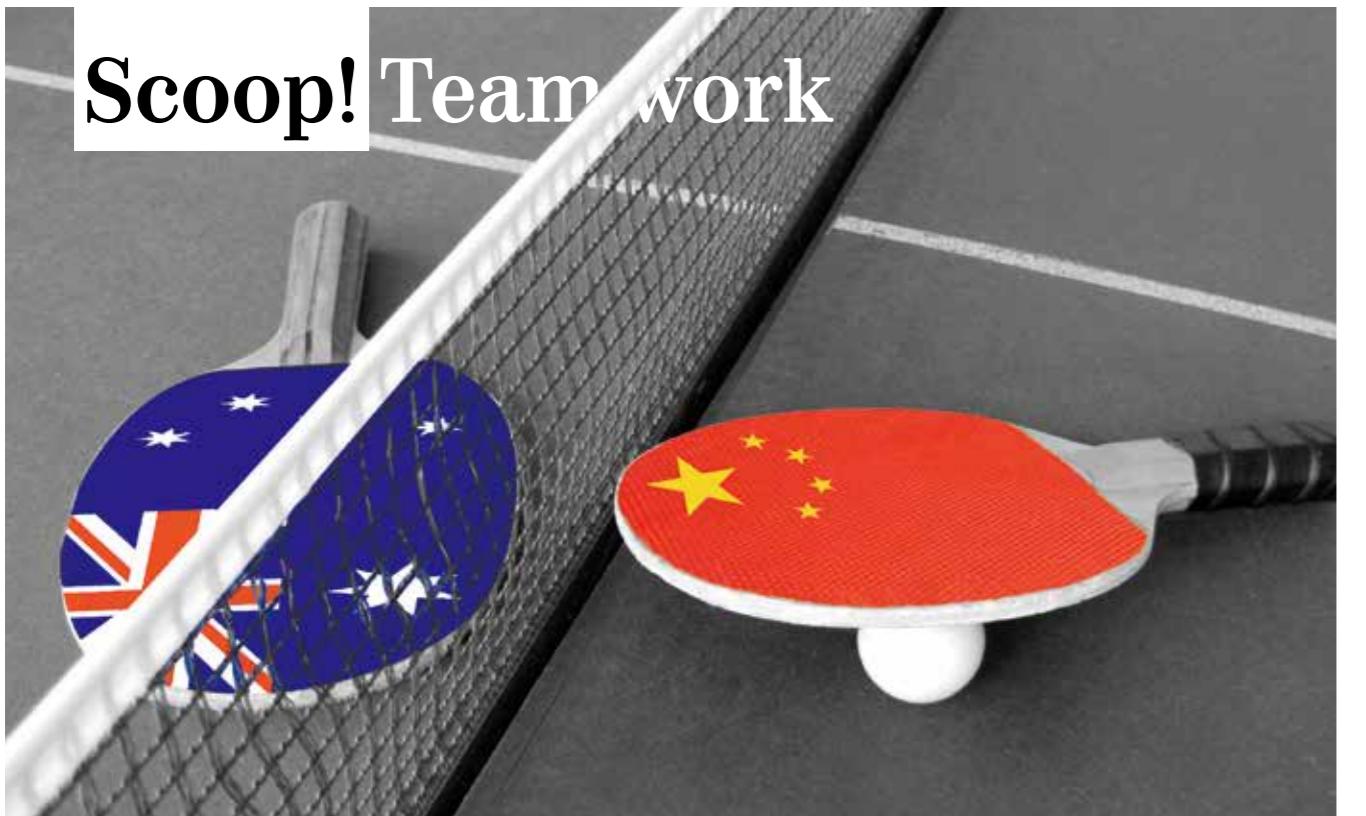
Takada's peripatetic career has also included stints for Reuters in Singapore and Wellington, New Zealand – where, inevitably, he caught the rugby bug – but it is his five years in Shanghai that have left the biggest impression, along with his education at an ultra-liberal elementary school in San Francisco.

While Takada would not be drawn into discussing his plans to expand Bloomberg's coverage, he is keen to mine the rich seam of stories revolving around China and Japan, and to offer an antidote to the one-dimensional coverage their relationship receives in sections of the Japanese and international media.

"There are a lot of untold stories that need to be told – about the fact that on the surface it looks pretty bad, but when you look beneath the surface there are strong ties between the two countries. Not everything is doom and gloom." ■

**ANDREW POTHECARY**  
Justin McCurry is Tokyo correspondent for the *Guardian* and *Observer* newspapers in London and writes for the *Lancet* medical journal. He also reports on Japan and South Korea for France 24 TV.





## Scoop! Team work

**How a chance call to Nagoya and an aversion to tatami mats led to a major change in Australia's China policy.**

by GREGORY CLARK

**M**y scoop begins back in the cold, wet spring of 1971. The world table tennis championships were underway in Nagoya, when we discovered that all the participating teams were invited to visit China after the tournament. Even the Americans have been invited. But the Australians, it seems, have been ignored.

I urgently set out to contact Dr. John Jackson, the Australian team manager, whom my office finds visiting a factory outside Nagoya. When asked why the team won't be going to China, Jackson simply says that for some reason there was no invite for the Australian team. In any case, he says, his team had already planned on more training in Japan, followed by a visit to Taiwan.

I assume that Australia has been ignored because its anti-Beijing policies are even more strident than Washington's. Still, I suggest he call me if he visits Tokyo.

A week later he rings, asking for help with a place to stay. I give him a ryokan address, but an hour later he calls back. They are insisting he has to sleep on straw mats. He wants a hotel, he says, not a horse stable.

It is early evening, and finding somewhere cheap to stay in Tokyo on a rainy night will not be easy. Reluctantly, I say he and the team member traveling with him can stay at my place. I'll let them use my bed in the bedroom, and I will sleep on straw mats in the tatami room.

Over the next few days, we meet occasionally over breakfast. Four days later, I tell him what a pity it was he did not get the invitation to go to China, and pass him that morning's *Japan Times*. Splashed across the front page is a photo of the U.S. team in Beijing, shaking hands with Premier Zhou Enlai

in the Great Hall of the People. He and his team could have been part of the global sensation, I tell him.

**HIS EYES NARROW.** "TO tell the truth, Greg," he says, "we were invited to China. But the Australian government insisted that we visit Taiwan after Nagoya. They even organized the visas for us."

I ask if he would like to go to China and be famous. He agrees, and I head to the local post office to send a cable in his name to the Beijing sports authorities saying he now wants to accept their earlier invitation. I add a request for permission for one journalist, Gregory Clark, to cover the visit.

Beijing replies immediately with an invitation, and Clark is invited to come along. But there are problems facing Dr. Jackson: one, much of his team has scattered; two, while there are members still training in Tokyo, he doesn't know how to contact them; and three, even if he puts a team together, they have no money to get to the Hong Kong and Lo Wu border post - the only entry point to China.

A frantic telephone search of Tokyo's dingy training halls finds three team members. With Jackson and his friend that makes five; hopefully enough of a "team" to warrant a Chinese welcome.

In deep secrecy, I tell my newspaper, the *Australian*, that if they can cough up the fares to Hong Kong for our "team," I can deliver a world-shattering scoop - or, at least, an Australia-shattering one. Sydney comes back very quickly saying yes.

But the three players we tracked down want to continue training in Japan, and are reluctant to go to China. Then I remember that Japan's table tennis association chief, Ichiro

Ogimura, is famous for all he has done to promote sporting ties with China. I contact him and he agrees to push the Australian players into stopping their training, and make the trip. One remains adamantly opposed, so I find myself a mere 24 hours later heading for Hong Kong with my now four-member team.

**THE NEXT MORNING,** THE group, which includes myself and another Australian journalist from the very conservative, anti-communist *Melbourne Herald*, are standing at the Lo Wu crossing, waiting to get into China. He, rather than someone from the less rightwing Sydney-based Fairfax group, has been invited because Melbourne hosts the minuscule pro-Beijing faction of the minuscule Australian Communist Party.

But for some reason, after handing over our documents, we find ourselves standing for hours in the hot sun at the Lo Wu frontier. Eventually a stern-faced guard emerges to tell us that we cannot enter China because the players all have unused Taiwanese visas in their passports. And I have a used visa from Taiwan.

I insist that our mission is important for China and the world, and - after numerous calls back and forth with the responsible Hong Kong office, we are finally allowed to board the one daily train to Guangzhou. My relief is considerable.

At Guangzhou we are met by a small delegation of boilerplate communist officials. Fortunately, it includes Mr. Yu - a youngish, sophisticated official sent down from Beijing by the Chinese Foreign Ministry to look after us. He takes us to the famous Dongfang Hotel - the city's main hotel for welcoming foreign guests. But our euphoria is brief: we find that Beijing has not yet organized our press accreditation cards. So if I want to cable the story my newspaper wants so badly - "First Australian Journalist into China since 1949" - it will cost one U.S. dollar a word, and I have to pay before midnight.

Lacking funds for an in-depth report, all I can do is file a brief story saying that we are all in China, and that the first breach in the wall of traditional Australian hostility to China has been made. The *Herald* man is much more aggressive. He sends a 3,000-word opus on the welcome we have been receiving - that the girls look nice beneath their Mao costumes, that the food is splendid and the beer tastes good.

Unfortunately, he does not have the \$3,000 needed to send all this back to Melbourne. He tells the cable office he will pay later, and heads for the room that we are sharing. We are both exhausted. I have hardly slept for three days.

**AT EXACTLY MIDNIGHT,** NOT long after we've stretched out in the sticky south China heat, there is a frantic knocking at the door. We open it to find that a group of angry young radicals want to know why the *Herald* man has not paid his cable bill.

Since my colleague does not speak Chinese, I try to explain. I also tell them that Chairman Mao has instructed young radicals to serve the people, and they clearly are not doing anything to serve my prostrate colleague. The radicals are not impressed, and march out swearing vengeance.

At breakfast the next morning the meet-and-greet friendliness of the night before has evaporated. I am now being viewed with intense loathing and silence by the staff, and when Mr. Yu shows up, the radical students are with him. Mr. Yu is looking very worried. He takes me aside and tells me that



**Australia-China relations**

The author meets Premier Zhou Enlai.

the young radicals had come to him, demanding my immediate expulsion from China for unacceptable behavior - particularly the defamation of Chairman Mao.

Only after six hours of all-night debate was he finally able to persuade the fanatics to allow me to stay - on one condition: that I must make an apology. I take stock for a moment. I have spent years learning Chinese and studying China's policies without prejudice. I have defied my own government and single-handedly organized the skeleton of a ping pong team that Beijing wants so badly to visit.

And when I finally get to China, I discover that there are some people here who want me expelled on my very first evening. So I stomach my pride and do what Mr. Yu says; I am allowed to stay.

After an exhibition match in Guangzhou we head for Shanghai. Mr. Yu interrupts yet another boring ping pong marathon, saying he has some good news. A fellow Australian journalist will be joining us from Tokyo.

It is a Mr. Ssss . . . (Yu's Shanghai accent is not helping). But he needs say no more since I have already guessed that Mr. Sss . . . is Max Suich, the Fairfax man in Tokyo. The highly-competitive Suich has been on the phone to Beijing daily, demanding a visa. Beijing has relented, but only after a week of constant calls (as I am told later by the FCCJ front desk).

**WHEN SUICH DOES GET** the visa, he flies direct to Beijing, arriving a day before us. He even tries to scoop me. He sends off a story telling the world that he is the first Australian journalist to arrive in the Chinese capital since the 1949 revolution.

Upon arrival in Beijing, we are given the welcome usually reserved for potentates from friendly African countries. There is a large official banquet, and the next day we are taken to the Great Hall of the People to meet none other than Premier Zhou Enlai.

I still have a photo of the head of the Australian ping pong "team" being welcomed by the prime minister of the world's largest nation. I also have a rather faded photo of myself meeting Zhou. He is looking straight at me. I am bowing slightly, Japanese style. I come away from the meeting with two lasting impressions. One is that there are cracks in the hastily built Great Hall. The other is Zhou's extraordinarily magnetic presence.

Ping pong matches over, Suich and I ask for a formal briefing on China-Australia relations, at which we are told that Canberra's hostile attitude to China could lead to a major reduction in wheat purchases from Australia.

Our reports create a furor back in Ozland, and encourage the head of the opposition Labor party, Gough Whitlam, to visit China at the moment Henry Kissinger is making his secret visit on behalf of the U.S. President Nixon. The kudos helps Whitlam storm to victory at the next election in 1972, immediately giving Beijing the official recognition it wants.

A perfect example of scoop power! ①

**Gregory Clark** was Tokyo Bureau chief for the *Australian*, 1969-74, and is now a frequent contributor to the *Japan Times*.  
[www.gregoryclark.net](http://www.gregoryclark.net)

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Shortly after its 120th birthday and a complete design redo, Japan's oldest paper gets a new, little-known proprietor with no news background.

## A new owner for the Japan Times



**Owned by Nifco since the early 1980s, the Japan Times was bought by News2u last month.**

Daimon, noting that the newspaper was a pioneer in creating a web experience that adapts to user devices. "This is an exciting opportunity for the *JT* to better engage with our readers in the digital era and widen our reach."

**THE JT RECENTLY CELEBRATED** its 120th anniversary with an extensive revamp. First published on March 22, 1897, the newspaper has been around almost as long as modern Japan itself and has survived while English versions of leading broadsheets *Asahi Shimbun* and *Mainichi Shimbun* have not. Having changed its name and absorbed other papers during the 20th century, the *JT* was brought under Nifco's control in the early 1980s and purchased outright in 1996, not long after circulation hit 75,000 copies. That has plunged over 40 percent to 44,000 today, echoing declines in other developed countries, though online readers and a growing international audience have shored up the drop. Insiders said it was a good time for the property to start fresh under a new owner.

"The *Japan Times* had a great run under Nifco over many years, through thick and thin," says William Saito, an entrepreneur who served on the paper's advisory board. "I think the sale is less a commentary on the state of Japan and the growing interest among a global audience than a clear indication of how technological progress is changing the face of news media."

Nifco had grappled with the rapidly changing media landscape while trying to cut costs. The *JT* teamed up with the

*International New York Times* in 2013 and included more wire copy in its print edition, but that hasn't halted the drop in circulation. Nifco's latest financial report shows its "other" business segment, consisting mainly of the newspaper, eked out a small operating profit of ¥8 million in fiscal 2016. Income had been improving after an ad-revenue slump, but operating losses continued for years. Rumors of a sale or closure had long swirled. The clincher was the death of Nifco Chairman Toshiaki Ogasawara late last year.

"Shareholders have been very unhappy about the fact that *JT* was eroding Nifco's profit and becoming more like a liability, and there has been always pressure to sell it, I've heard," said one former employee of the newspaper, who had hoped a major brand like Rakuten would pick it up. "But Chairman Ogasawara defended *JT* as it was like a crown to him."

**THE JT'S NEW OWNER** is an unknown in Japan's English-media circles. It was established in 2001 to distribute press releases, but also creates websites and other media. CEO Minako Kambara Suematsu is a Gakushuin University-educated scion of the Hiroshima-based Kambara family, whose ancestor Katsutaro Kambara established Kambara Kisen shipping company in 1903. Aside from her media enterprises, she's senior managing director of the family's Tsuneishi Holdings, a ¥200 billion concern with businesses in shipbuilding, logistics, energy and leisure.

It's unclear exactly why Kambara was interested in the *JT*. News2u declined an interview request and did not answer questions. In a Japanese-language blog post put up after news of the sale, Kambara noted the paper's solid reporting as well as the need for trustworthy information in the era of fake news. She also insisted News2u is not a PR firm.

"I am convinced that the ability to access primary information and the ability to send it in English has great potential by using the internet," she wrote. "I want to think about creating an information platform vital for readers by digitally informing the world about Japan while maintaining the independence of the *Japan Times*." **•**

**Tim Hornyak** is a freelance writer who has worked for IDG News, CNET News, Lonely Planet and other media. He is the author of *Loving the Machine: The Art and Science of Japanese Robots*.

by TIM HORNYAK

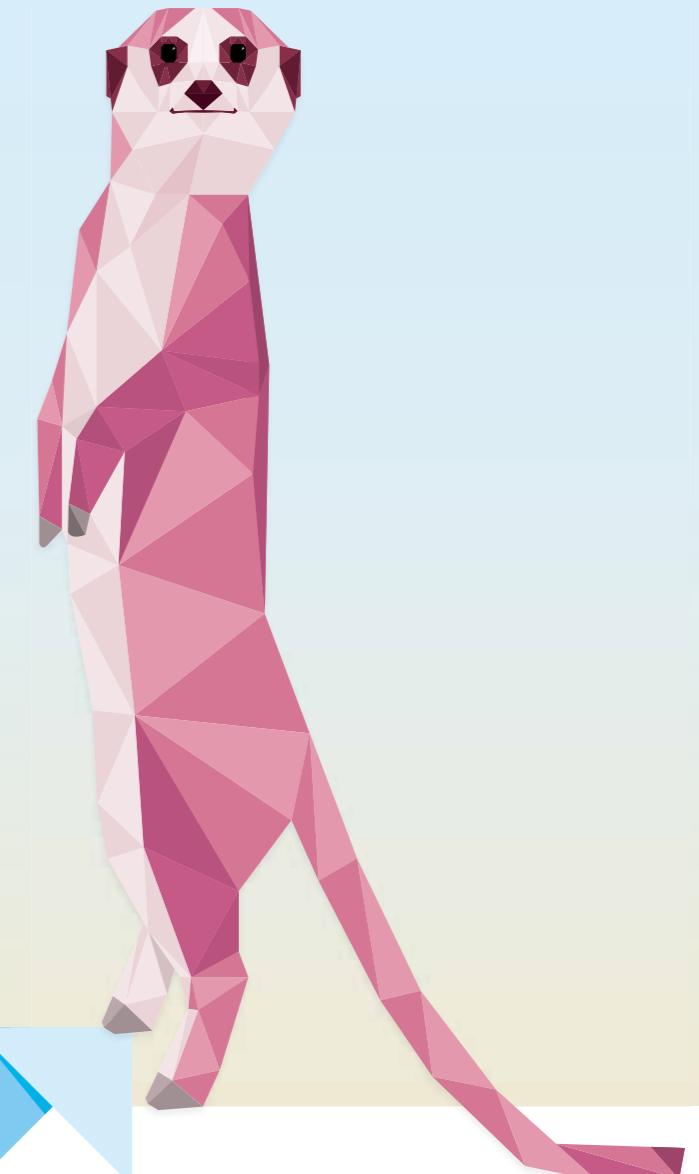
**TWITTERATI EYEBROWS SHOT UP** in June when news broke that the *Japan Times*, the country's oldest and largest English-language newspaper, had been sold. Parent company Nifco, the plastic components maker that has controlled the paper for over 30 years, announced it had sold it to News2u Holdings, a Tokyo media firm that distributes news releases. One Twitter user, @taroy3yen, was quick to post a photoshopped version of the paper's June 12 edition with "The Japan Press Release" as the new masthead.

(Full disclosure: I am a contributor to the *Japan Times*.)

In a brief release, the *JT* said that as a 100-percent-owned subsidiary of News2u, it would continue as a newspaper with its mission of "reporting the news on Japan and the world to both its domestic and international audiences." It said the new owner's resources would give it a bigger online presence and make it more useful to readers. Financial details of the deal were not disclosed.

"We hope to enhance our digital capabilities and reach using News2U's expertise and know-how in those areas," says *JT* managing editor Sayuri

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## FCCJ EXHIBITION

**Agion Oros Athos** Photographs by Hirohito Nakanishi

IN NORTHERN GREECE LIES a place shrouded in mystery and registered as a World Heritage site. Agion Oros Athos is a peninsula and mountain sacred to worshipers of the Greek Orthodox Church, and while it is Greek territory, it is also recognized as an independent and autonomous religious nation.

According to legend, Mary (the mother of Christ) walked ashore on this beautiful peninsula after encountering a storm while at sea. It is also said that St. Athanasios built his monastery on Mt. Athos after finding a rich vein of fresh water on the mountain. The monastery hosts 2,000 monks who live and pray there, and women have been forbidden to enter since 1406. Tourists are limited to only 10 people per day.

The monks continue many other traditions, such as using the Julian calendar, which is 13 days behind the modern one and counting six o'clock in the evening as midnight.

I worked in close contact with the monks after receiving special permission to photograph inside the monastery. ❶



**Hirohito Nakanishi** was born in 1979 in Tokyo. His photography, focusing on culture, entertainment, fashion and beauty, as appeared in magazines, books, advertising and websites. In 2014, he began photographing Agion Oros Athos, and has been back four times. Photographs from this project have appeared at the Canon Gallery, and in many magazines, including *National Geographic Japan*, *Bungei Shunju*, *Geijutsu Shincho*. Another show is planned for the Canon Gallery from September.

## IN MEMORIAM: THE DEAN OF JAPANESE BASEBALL

FAMILY, FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES gathered at the FCCJ on May 20, to honor and remember long-time baseball journalist **Wayne Graczyk**, who helped to make the national game easier to understand and appreciate for generations of fans and players alike.

Tributes came from both Japanese professional baseball and Major League Baseball representatives, sports media, as well as current and former baseball greats, including Sadaharu Oh. Colleagues, such as the *Japan Times'* Jason Coskrey, told stories of how Wayne helped them to raise their reporting games, always with a constructive good humor and passion to tell the best story possible.

Friends including Marty Kuehnert, Bob Whiting and MLB's Jim Small, relayed the many moments of Wayne's unsolicited help and unflappable positive attitude, as well as his



unrelenting search for a good cheeseburger. Bobby Valentine, former manager of the Chiba Lotte Marines, was also there.

The memorial event was concluded by a touching video retrospective by son Randy, and words of remembrance from wife Yoshiko. And, as Wayne would have it on a beautiful Saturday afternoon, baseball, with the Yomiuri Giants playing the Yokohama BayStars, in a replay of their 2016 Climax Series donnybrook. The BayStars defeated the Giants 6-4, with Utsumi taking the loss for Yomiuri and Lopez with a big blast for Yokohama.

- Dan Sloan

COURTESY OF THE GRACZYK FAMILY

## JOIN THE FILM COMMITTEE...



...at 19:00 on Thursday, July 27 for a sneak preview of the internationally acclaimed *Out of My Hand*, a searing drama set in Liberia and New York City, directed by Takeshi Fukunaga. His award-winning debut marks just the second time a foreign crew has shot a film in Liberia, and features powerful performances from several first-time actors. Cisco (Bishop Blay, in a raw, commanding debut) is a rubber plantation worker in the Liberian countryside with a loving wife, two small daughters, and a group of friends who stick up for each other. But he's smart enough to know they're all expendable. When his union calls a strike that proves disastrous, he seizes the chance to escape his crippling poverty and follows his cousin to New York City. There, he finds a job as a taxi driver, a welcoming community of fellow Liberians, and a life that's not so different from back home. For a time, he avoids interactions, fearing any hint of trouble. But then a ghost from the past rises up to haunt him. Jacob (David Roberts), a former child soldier with a burning rage, is the one person who can unleash Cisco's own demons. Writer-director Fukunaga will join us for a Q&A session following the screening. (USA/Liberia, 2015; 88 minutes; English with English/Japanese subtitles.)

- Karen Severs

## SPC TOUR TO TOKYO IMMIGRATION BUREAU

AFTER MEDIA REPORTS OF "hunger strike" protests by foreign detainees against conditions at the Tokyo Detention Center of the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau of the Justice Ministry, the FCCJ Special Projects Committee organized a visit on June 7 to investigate the situation. The reports also included the forceful removal of a few detainees who had refused to return to their quarters.

Shigeo Ogata, Public Liaison Officer at the Detention Center, explained to the four FCCJ Regular-Member participants that six detainees had been taken to the Center's hospital, but five of them were released on the same day. Only one remained in the hospital for a few days as he had swallowed the edge of an electric shaver.

According to Ogata, the total number of detainees as of

June 5 was 551 men and 177 women; of the total, 77 detainees were Chinese nationals. A request to inspect a vacant detainee room was rejected for privacy reasons. He also stated that nurses and doctors provide regular health checks, and halal and vegetarian dishes are offered to those who have religious dietary restrictions.

Under Japan's immigration and refugee laws, 13,361 people from 108 countries and regions were ordered to leave Japan during 2016.

- Haruko Watanabe

**Below, left**, Li Miao (with camera) and Aki Miyazaki interview Public Liaison Officer Shigeo Ogata (left) and Public Relations Officer Atsushi Sakai (right). Right, Shigeo Ogata, briefs Aki Miyazaki, Li Miao and Khaldon Azhari.



**REINSTATEMENT (REGULAR MEMBERS)**

**AKIRA SAITO** graduated from Waseda University in 1966. He later attended the University of California at Berkeley where he got a Master's Degree in Journalism in 1968, and joined the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, where he served in New York and Washington D.C. He returned to the Tokyo office in 1970 as a Foreign News Department staffer and was later posted to the city desk. In 1976, he returned to Washington, covering two widely-publicized scandals – Lockheed and Korea-gate – as well as two presidential elections, later becoming Washington bureau chief until 1996. Although he has "semi-officially" retired, he still considers himself an "active journalist" despite his age.



**YOSUKE WATANABE** is a senior feature and editorial writer at Kyodo News. Watanabe studied at Sophia University in Tokyo and Holy Cross College in Worcester, Mass. U.S. as a Rotary scholar. He joined Kyodo News in 1983, and has been stationed in Washington D.C., Shanghai and Hong Kong. Watanabe was twice the Beijing bureau chief, from 2004-2008 and 2013-2016, where he held posts on the board of the Foreign Correspondents' Club of China.

**PROFESSIONAL/JOURNALIST****ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

Brian Covert, Freelance

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

Yasuyuki Abe, Hutchison Whampoa Japan Limited

Kazuhiro Bai, Reitaku University  
Kiyotake Hara, STEM PLUS JAPAN  
Masahiro Ishikawa, System Soft

Masatoshi Sakane, JETRO  
Hidenori Takei, Mitsubishi Corporation

"The independence of the press is facing serious threats: a weak legal system of protection, persistent exploitation, lacking in solidarity..."

Linda Lingle: from FCCJ to TV  
Kazunori Takada: the Bloomberg bureau chief profiled  
Ping pong redux: when table tennis served up a scoop

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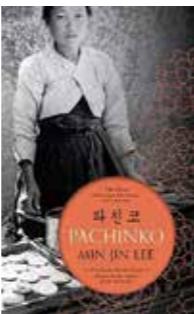
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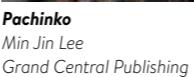
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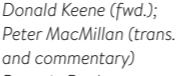
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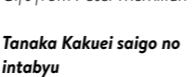
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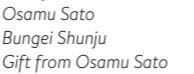
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# Growing crops and character in the Fuji foothills: The Ichimura Nature School



See, we've  
all got  
dirty  
fingernails!



What's a high-tech outfit like Ricoh doing down on the farm, using traditional, low-tech methods to grow vegetables? Letting kids experience the joys (and frustrations!) of growing food from seed to harvest. It's the Ichimura Nature School Kanto, an educational non-profit organization established by Ricoh in 2002 to mark the birth centenary of Kiyoshi Ichimura, our founder.

Located at Ashigarakami, near the foothills of Mount Fuji, the Nature School runs throughout the March-November growing season, giving children a chance to "learn how to live from Mother Nature."

Every other week, from Friday after school until Sunday afternoon, 28 boys and 28 girls come to spend the weekend working the fields and growing 40 varieties of vegetables. In step with the plants, what grows over the nine-month program is the youngsters' self-reliance, teamwork and leadership skills. The aim is to "develop yourself by thinking together, using each other's ideas, and doing field work together with the blessing of nature."

Since 2002 almost 800 kids have gone through the program, which has won awards from the Japan Philanthropic Association and Japan's education ministry. Meanwhile, alumni groups are spontaneously organizing summer camps and other farming activities. After 15 years it's clear the nature school has been a seed well planted.

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**“Foreign journalists are particularly affected by the strict observance of Kisha club rules. They are typically excluded from Kisha clubs and thus from the press conferences that are fundamental to the system of access to information. The Special Rapporteur received reports of foreign journalists who abandoned potentially tough-minded investigative stories to avoid being excluded from Kisha groups.”**

David Kaye,  
Report of the Special  
Rapporteur on the  
promotion and  
protection of the right  
to freedom of opinion  
and expression,  
May 29, 2017  
“Media Independence,”  
1:3:36