

Let's Pay Tax to Tokyo to Support Senkaku Purchase

Koichi Endo

The Liberal Democratic Party's Secretary General Nobuteru Ishihara has postponed his China visit.

As his father, Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara, unveiled the Tokyo metropolitan government's plan to purchase the Senkaku Islands, a Shanghai university reportedly indicated its reluctance to accept a speech by the LDP secretary general. "I decided to postpone the visit as my stubborn father has got on a rampage," Nobuteru said on April 19, blaming the postponement on his father's action. But Nobuteru should have demonstrated his anger at the Chinese university's irrelevant action of the sudden refusal to accept him, instead of grumbling about his father. Such attitude should have represented the pride of the LDP secretary general.

Internet poll shows 90% supporting Gov. Ishihara

Since Ishihara unveiled the plan, most of Japanese media organizations have attempted to attract public attention to considerations to China and how to use tax revenues from Tokyo taxpayers. The Asahi Shimbun in its editorial on April 18 said: "China has reacted even to Japanese citizens' landing on the islands. The problem could be complicated further." "It is unreasonable for the Tokyo metropolitan government to do so," said The Mainichi Shimbun in its editorial on April 19.

But there should be no problem for the government of Tokyo to buy lands in Japan. Rather, it is unreasonable for China to make a lot of noise in reaction to the Ishihara move. Japan's extreme nervousness about and excessive considerations to China have complicated the problem.

Japanese citizens might have not been influenced by media organizations. An Internet poll, given on Yahoo! Japan's "Public Politics" at 14:00 on April 22, indicated the 90% of respondents supported the Ishihara plan. When Saitama Gov. Seiji Ueda described the Ishihara plan as "meaningless," more than 30 complaints against the remark reportedly came to the prefectural government.

In Kanagawa Prefecture where I live, Gov. Yuji Kuroiwa said: "A too hasty approach could lead to a conflict. I cannot immediately become supportive of (Ishihara)." His remark sounded like that of an Asahi editorial writer. I envy Tokyo residents. As a Kanagawa resident, I "cannot become supportive of" any governor like Kuroiwa.

Tokyo residents should be proud of how their tax being used

Residents in Japan's capital city of Tokyo should be proud of their local tax being spent on the Senkaku purchase. As a non-Tokyo resident, I would like to consider making contributions to the Tokyo metropolitan government by taking advantage of the tax transfer system where taxpayers can make contributions to local governments they choose. Such contributions are exempted from national income or local residential tax and can demonstrate support for Gov. Ishihara and protest against Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda or Gov. Kuroiwa.

Nobuteru easily postponed his China visit as told by a Chinese university. He should have proudly visited Shanghai and led Japanese and foreign media organizations to take photos of himself standing alone before a closed gate of the Chinese university in question.

In 1962, a half century ago, famed conductor Seiji Ozawa was boycotted by the NHK Symphony Orchestra. Then, photos of Ozawa standing alone on a podium were reported, leading citizens to criticize the orchestra and feel sympathy for Ozawa. Shintaro Ishihara was among those attempting to emphasize the then young conductor in this way. Shintaro's son Nobuteru should have made such performance in China.

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