

## Chapter 3

# A New Role as a God of Wealth: From Motorboat Racing to Philanthropy

### I

**S**ASAKAWA RYOICHI emerged from Sugamo Prison in the autumn of 1948 with hardly a penny, and little to declare but his genius at making money. A book published in 1951 sums him up:

Sasakawa had been detained as a war criminal (suspect) immediately after the war, but he conducted himself admirably while in prison. Even after his release he did so much to help those still in detention that there is not a soul in Sugamo even today who does not know his name. At fifty-two, he is in the prime of life, and based upon his rich experience to date, he is ready to make a fresh start. He will electrify the world.<sup>1</sup>

The forecast proved right. But that's hindsight. When he came out of Sugamo, it was not a hospitable world that awaited him. Japan was flat on its back. The Allied bombing of Japan had destroyed the main cities, the nerve centers of the nation, especially Tokyo. Hardly a single building stood in 1945, at least in the center of the city. Three years later, the worst of the winter famines was past, but the nation was still struggling to get to its feet, and was being battered by hyperinflation.

In addition, Sasakawa himself and his wife, Shizue, had another battle on their hands. He had owned a fair amount of property in the city; these were holdings that he had built up before World War Two. Almost all of these real estate holdings had been blown away, mostly by asset depreciation due to the postwar inflation, but also because his subordinates in the PPP had helped themselves to them. This was particularly true in Tokyo. Most of the land there had been sold off to cover liv-

ing expenses and to help friends of the PPP. Shizue recalled: "Those were hard times. We had no money, just one big idea."<sup>2</sup>

We shall come to that "idea." Meanwhile, the one blessing was that his real estate holdings in the Kansai, the Osaka region, had survived. So he had something to start up with again. Thanks to his business acumen Sasakawa again amassed an enormous fortune in stocks in a short period of time. The Tokyo Stock Exchange was getting back to its stride, and enormous profits could be made there, not least by one with contacts and personal acquaintances at the top in business.

### Teru's stand

Not that money sufficed to command respect, then or now, in Japan. And Sasakawa had an image problem. To have been a war criminal suspect carried a social stigma, especially in those days. Such was the way Japanese society worked. To be accused of a crime in this culture is to be guilty. For most Japanese there was no difference between an actual convicted war criminal and a suspect. Sasakawa was released from prison without indictment, so his friends knew, but most people were unaware of the distinction. To have been found guilty or not guilty did not come into the equation for him, because "not guilty" was a status that could only be acquired after going through a legal process. As we have seen, he never stood trial. This vague status led to a situation where the public regarded him as one of those reprehensible war criminals. In other words, he was a social outcast.<sup>3</sup>

The gravity of his situation was compounded by the purge order issued by the Allied forces. This meant that he could not accept public office or engage in any activity that met the public eye. On top of this, the fact that he led a right-wing organization before the war made matters worse.

Personal circumstances combined to hem him in within his family as well as in the world outside. His mother, Teru, told Sasakawa, when he emerged from Sugamo: "Son, you are not to go into politics. Your first job is to win the release of all war criminals. I will be sure to make my daily homage at the shrine."<sup>4</sup>

He respected his strict mother and kept his word to her, to concentrate on helping those actually convicted, and still held in Sugamo, to get out of prison; and to alleviate their sufferings until this happened. We have seen, in the previous chapter, the enormous efforts he put into such activities. His promise to his mother, the strongest influence in his life, meant that he had no choice but to obey. He could not consider entering politics, even after the Occupation purge was lifted.

### On turning the pages of *Life* magazine

Given his irrepressible nature, Sasakawa was not daunted. He committed himself passionately to finding ways to support those detained in Sugamo. At the same time he looked for ways and means of embarking on a new business venture that was to be in money terms the biggest project of his life. Conditions were bad in Japan. The economy was not in working order, shortages existed on all sides, and daily life was hard.

Yet those were also times when dynamic new business ventures sprang up. An entrepreneurial mood gripped Japan. In short, it was a wonderful time to launch a great new idea. Sasakawa had one. He had found an inspiration that would bring him untold wealth, and at the same time allow him to pursue his passions in the decades to come — the reconstruction and development of Japan, and world peace. His idea? It was to create a new “public sport,” motorboat racing, to be legalized for betting, thereby to attract the general public in swarms, like horse racing.

This idea came to Sasakawa, while he was in prison; he was in his cell one day browsing through a copy of *Life* magazine when he came across an image that grabbed his attention. It was a photograph of a motorboat. The article set bells ringing in his head:

It was stated that over there (in America) motorboat owners enjoyed a higher status than owners of automobiles. Just at that time Lieutenant Admiral Fukudome Shigeru, one of the Class B war criminals held in Sugamo, recounted how he witnessed a test in Leyte Bay in the Philippines during the early stages of the war. Some weapons researchers had frontloaded a small motorboat with explosives, set the steering, switched on the engine, and sent the boat shooting into an obstacle. It exploded noisily. Fukudome took this idea to the Navy Ministry, but they had no time for it. It was the heyday of the big guns and mammoth battleships. If only he had had his way, the admiral said, the Battle of the Philippines could have taken a different course. That story was the first seed of the vision of motorboat racing that now began to develop in Sasakawa's mind.<sup>5</sup>

When Sasakawa was released from Sugamo Prison in the winter of 1948, the copy of *Life* magazine was among his few possessions.

### A new sport is born

Motorboats interested him, for reasons that are now obvious. In occupied Japan (1945-52) the airplane industry, his old passion, was ruled out for anyone Japanese. The United States had put the aircraft industry off limits in the hope that Japan would never again rise as a military power. Island country that it is, Japan still needed access to the world in order to live. The Americans controlled all air routes. That left the sea as the sole channel of communication with the rest of the world. Thus, the development of the nation's maritime industry became an overriding priority and a linchpin of the postwar reconstruction of the country. Shipbuilding technology held the key. Motorboat racing could contribute to its advancement by pushing engine development. This was to be Sasakawa's mission and destiny.

He wasted no time once he had earned his freedom. In less than two months beginning in February 1949 he made contact with the major political parties, with central government ministries in Tokyo, and with individuals who knew about legalized gambling. Legislation was required. The main thing was to establish a motorboat racing law.

Without legislation, nothing could be done. That was why he contacted the political parties first of all. Politicians and civil servants would determine the outcome.

### An après-guerre phenomenon

At the time, motorboat racing did not exist as a professional sport in Japan, or anywhere in the world. Sasakawa was proposing a new departure. The idea of racing identical-looking small, high-powered boats around a closed circuit, with spectators in the stands and bets placed simply had not occurred to anyone else in the world as far as we know. It was therefore difficult not to be skeptical about its future prospects.

Sasakawa, however, had a strong hunch about the potential success of the uncharted venture, and he acted on it. His reasoning was not difficult to follow and he explained it, as he made the rounds in Tokyo, calling on politicians and civil servants and friends, or receiving their visits. In postwar Japan, there had to be entertainment on offer, as anyone could observe, watching the way public bicycle, horse, and auto races were all of a sudden boom pastimes. This après-guerre need for fun broke into the open very quickly after peacetime conditions were restored. As early as October 1946, when a large part of the population was living below the poverty line and facing the prospect of a bitter winter, Sasakawa learned while still in prison that horse racing (*keiba*) had started up again and had caught the popular imagination. The public was starving for diversion.

### **A bicycle race in Kokura**

When horse racing caught on, reasoned some in Tokyo with an eye out for new business opportunities, could other “public sports” managed by local governments be far behind?

As money was involved, and the lure to the public was the dream of winning a fortune, there were certain requirements even in the newly flexible postwar era. Such activities had to be regulated in the interests of the general public and civic order. This meant, as noted, that new laws had to be introduced for the new public sports.

In August 1948, just months before Sasakawa was released from Sugamo, a bicycle race law was enacted. There can be little doubt that this event served to focus his mind as he prepared himself for new ventures. This new law qualified competitive bicycling as a public sport, with appropriately high-minded and worthy objectives in mind. One objective was the “promotion of the bicycle industry,” another was the need to get the economy going. A third objective was to buttress local government finances with a portion of the proceeds.

Local government finance, like the cities themselves, was in ruins. In November 1948, with the new law in place, the first bicycle race was held amid great public enthusiasm in Kokura city in Kyushu. The success of the Kokura event was immediately noticed around the country. A fad was born. Local governments, mainly at the prefectural and big city levels, competed to attract bicycling industry aficionados and investors to hold races.<sup>6</sup> Stadiums had to be constructed. Officials had to be hired. All this became possible after the new law was enacted. The Kokura race, it may be noted, was held just one month before Sasakawa emerged from Sugamo.

### **A fiesta in Zushi**

Meanwhile, in May 1950, right in the middle of Golden Week (the holiday season that precedes the summer), a Japan-US Motorboat Racing Competition was held in Zushi, a seaside town about seventy minutes by train from Tokyo. Attracting up to one hundred thousand visitors, the event proved a great success.

Most of the spectators had never seen a motorboat racing competition. Such frivolities had taken place before in Japan but not in wartime, not since 1939.

### **Peace shattered, but...**

[A month after the Zushi event war broke on the Korean peninsula. Japanese industry, in support of American involvement in the war (though

technically part of United Nations forces) surged. Orders poured into Japan for matériel, for trucks, for food, and even beverage supplies. Companies that had been starved of business for five years following the end of World War Two suddenly found their order books filling up overnight. Money flowed into Japan and Japanese pockets. The US Occupation, which continued, would place no obstacles in the way of holding further events like the motorboat competition in Zushi.] A second Japan-US Motorboat racing competition was held, this time on the Edogawa River in Tokyo. Once again, the event drew immense crowds.<sup>7</sup>

Amateur motorboat racing, from that point on, was sure of a future in Japan. The two events, in Zushi and Tokyo, had shown there was a community of fans.

Sasakawa and those working with him on the motorboat-racing project went into top gear. He and his team wrote a draft law modeled after the *Bicycle Race Law* and took it to the Ministry of Transport. He went there with two companions of long standing, Yatsugi Kazuo and Fukushima Yone, a friend who knew all about motorboats and loved them. This trio, bowing deeply, requested the ministry to shape their draft into a well-phrased bill, spiced with all the appropriate civil servants' jargon, and place it before the Diet. Sasakawa, for his part, worked on ruling party politicians.

It was how one got things done in Japan — by making a parallel approach to the civil service and to leaders of the ruling Liberal Party. Sasakawa's bill reached the floor in the winter of 1950-51 and was submitted to the Transport Committee of the House in March. It was to all intents and purposes his, though it was in fact sponsored jointly by interested members of the three major parties, Liberal, Democrat, and Socialist. The bill declared three objectives, couched in high-flown rhetoric to convey good intentions:

1. To build a maritime industry, to serve as the foundation of the Japanese economy...to encourage technological innovation in the shipbuilding industry, and to improve the performance of ships' engines.
2. To disseminate maritime science, to focus attention on the importance of the sea, and to promote tourism.
3. To contribute to local government revenues through the distribution of a proportion of the proceeds from betting.<sup>8</sup>

### **Cogent objections raised**

Sasakawa may have thought that the bill would sail through, given the support of members of the three main political parties. However this was not the case. The bill hit choppy water immediately. A number of co-

gent objections were raised by vigilant and outspoken members of parliament, based in part on prior experience with bicycle racing. Some members expressed opposition to legal gambling, noting that while bicycle racing had proved immensely popular, the placing of unsuccessful bets had broken up some families, arousing public opinion against these events. The public worried about opening new doors to the passion for gambling, or so some MPs said. To stir up trouble by tempting more breadwinners to the races was highly undesirable, said critics.

Was it proper, asked others, that national and local finance become dependent on revenues from gambling? Wasn't this wholly inappropriate? A nation should not become one of official gamblers, trumpeted some.

Kikukawa Takao, a Diet member, was one of those who spoke against the proposed bill. He noted: "Setting aside for now whether motorboat racing is more or less harmful than horse racing and cycling, one should not forget that local race meetings like these have come under fire from thoughtful citizens, precisely because they are connected with gambling."

Kikukawa maintained that rather than increasing these types of gambling, an opposite course of action was desirable; they should be curtailed:

If the government endorses this gambling, there will be no end to it. Already, a dog-racing bill has been submitted to the Agriculture and Forestry Ministry for deliberation; and according to rumors a plan is underway to submit a bill legalizing bullfighting. Indeed, I hear that there are people who are preparing a cock-fighting bill as well.<sup>9</sup>

Objections were raised on other grounds in a general atmosphere of skepticism. Some critics claimed that motorboat racing lacked excitement and appeal, because the outcome was predicated merely on the performance of the boats, though this flew in the face of the fact that two events already held had drawn huge crowds. Sasakawa was unhappy. Some just spoke out without any basis, he considered. What did non-experts know of the skills of racing drivers at the wheels of high-speed boats? The criticisms did not stop. Some theorized that the sport would be vulnerable to fixing and to the rigging of results, and was therefore the least desirable form of public gambling.

Would not the boat with the best engine always win, asked Suzuki Naoto, one of the skeptical Diet members. That wouldn't be any fun at all. So could an upset result or some kind of fake accident not be arranged? That would, of course, be cheating. But who would know? More than one Diet member, Nadao Kimikatsu among them, spoke out about

“fixing” as a possibility. Engine failure, he said, could ensure that a participant was defeated, but spectators would be unable to tell if the failure was genuine or faked. That could arouse the public. There could be agitation. There could be protests even worse than those seen at bicycle races, where fixing was suspected. There was a still greater chance of skullduggery when it came to motorboats. Or so it was said.<sup>10</sup>

This was not an end of the torrent of criticism. Skeptics said that this odd sport could never possibly break even, let alone make a decent profit. Diet member Kozakai Yoshio said that he had taken soundings, and had established, albeit tentatively, that motorboat racing was unlikely to have a future. It wasn’t based on a strong business plan.<sup>11</sup>

There seemed, at first, to be no end to the objections lodged by the elected representatives of the people. Some doubted, openly, whether this new sport could make any difference, good or bad, in the realm of shipbuilding technology. What had little boats, such as these racers, to do with ocean-going vessels? They belonged to different worlds. Diet member Okada Nobutsugu raised this point. He had another criticism: it would be hard or impossible to find suitable venues. Then, he said, there were still other issues. How would the races proceed given the unpredictability of the weather? Would this not restrict the number of occasions when they could be held?<sup>12</sup>

There seemed no end to the chorus of doubts. Some raised the specter of intervention by organized crime. What would happen if *yakuza* (gangsters) appeared on the scene? Surely this new form of gambling would be attractive to them. All in all, that would have “negative educational impact” and “awful consequences brought about by the undesirable involvement of local bosses.”

Diet member Tamaoki Shin’ichi mentioned the “negative experience” encountered in bicycle racing, which as everybody knew, “had an extremely bad effect on public morals.” National newspapers and the media had exposed “the involvement of unsavory characters,” meaning petty hoods, and other race goers bent on mischief.<sup>13</sup> Diet member Kosakai Yoshio said he shared such concern. He had heard that a certain “boss” or don of the shady variety — he preferred not to mention his name — had a grip on bicycle racing, and he feared that such a person might extend his territory to the new sport.<sup>14</sup>

### Sending in the warhorse “Fuji”

In short, Sasakawa ran into heavy legislative weather. He experienced a major frustration. “His” motorboat-racing bill passed the House of Representatives, but then foundered. The House of Councilors, the upper chamber in Japan’s bicameral system, threw out the bill, rejecting it at

the last stage, after the draft had just struggled through the Transport Committee of the Upper House.

This reversal, however, served to put Sasakawa on his mettle. In the face of this rude rebuff he was suddenly very cheerful. Instinct told him that all would be well. Thereupon he instructed his man Fuji Yoshio, the veteran of the PPP from prewar days, to go directly and “negotiate” with Hirokawa Kozen, a pillar of the political world, who served as the secretary general of the Liberal Party, a very senior position in politics.

Fuji and Hirokawa, as it happened, were old friends and cronies, having known each other when serving in the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly before the war. The outcome of this encounter, given their personal friendship, the indispensable glue in Japanese politics, was in itself fairly predictable. The “Sasakawa” bill was revived, with a little judicious rephrasing, and it was reintroduced to the House of Representatives and voted on for a second time. Now sailing before a fair wind to the very last stage, the controversial bill became the law of the land.

I can only conjecture that Sasakawa must have invested an enormous amount of time and resources in achieving this feat. Be that as it may, the *Motorboat Racing Law* had at last passed. This, however, was nothing more than a prelude to the main battle, as we shall see, of having the new law implemented.

## II

With that somewhat vexing and messy start, it was perhaps to be expected that there would be further frustration. Sasakawa had obtained his *Motorboat Racing Law* and in theory the racing could begin, subject to prudent decisions on matters such as where, when and how, but in practice there was a lot more work to be done in building a legal foundation for the new sport. In fact, according to Shizue, “every day there was some new problem.”<sup>15</sup>

### Another crucial piece of legislation

Writing the bill into law had not erased the opposition to motorboat racing among some powerful politicians. To such people, the venture was itself essentially a gamble. Yet somehow, these opponents failed to constitute an immovable obstacle to the promoters of gambling of all kinds. A veritable sea change was in the making, as political leaders came to see what was at stake. This became apparent when a law calling for “Ad Hoc Special Measures concerning Bicycle Racing, et al.” was enacted in June 1954.

This absolutely crucial piece of legislation changed the procedure regarding the handling of gambling proceeds. It was vital for that reason; it set a template to be followed in other “public sports” involving gambling.

Three percent of the take was no longer to be paid to the state, the ad hoc measures said, but to sports bodies that were under the all-observing eyes of the state. To be specific, the 3 percent of the gross proceeds from public races previously paid into the National Treasury would henceforth be paid into the accounts of these bodies (horse racing was dealt with separately):

The Federation of Bicycle Industry Associations.

The Federation of Small Car Racing Associations.

The National Federation of Motorboat Racing Associations.

The use of these potentially huge amounts of money was assigned to a body called the Central Depository of the Commerce and Industry Cooperatives, which in turn received its instructions from the ministries responsible. Each “public sport” was the purview of a different ministry: horse racing came under the powerful Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MOA); bicycle racing was the province of the very influential Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI); and motorboat racing was the responsibility of the Ministry of Transport (MOT).<sup>16</sup>

This all-embracing change was made upon the recommendation of C.S. Shoup (1902- ) an American fiscal pundit, who had been appointed by the Occupation authorities in 1949 to head a committee looking into and investigating the workings of the Japanese tax system. He strongly believed that the national budget should depend on direct taxes for revenues, and thought that it was wrong to put gambling money directly into the coffers of the state.

### **The Upper House weighs in**

The topic of gambling in fact raised apprehensions that were not easily laid to rest. Thus, the Upper House Commerce and Industry Committee adopted a “supplementary resolution” with the intention of making two things clear. First, that gambling was antisocial and not something to be encouraged. But, second, that under existing circumstances the government chose to make it possible. Exemptions were being offered for a period of one year for certain gambling activities, even while, as a rule, gambling was wrong!

The main points of the Upper House supplementary resolution were:

1. Exemptions were being offered to allow bicycle racing and betting thereon, and other such sports. This was because the funds thus created helped to boost industrial development.

However, the exemptions were still essentially “improper.” “The Government should promptly take action to remedy the situation.” In other words, gambling on these sports was treated as liable to be halted, when the situation permitted. Bans were under consideration. The activities had no guaranteed future.

2. The Government was urged to strengthen “supervision and improve the management of the Bicycle Industry Racing Association and other such bodies, as there were “not a few unsatisfactory points.”
3. The *Bicycle Racing Law* and other such legislation had been put in place during the abnormal times that prevailed immediately after the war, and “should be abolished as greater stability is achieved in society and in the economy.” The government should therefore “observe the degree of social stability, and as soon as possible take appropriate steps.”<sup>17</sup>

The supplementary resolution fell short of clearly stating the Diet’s view that public gambling was undesirable. But still the stigma was there, from Sasakawa’s point of view. The effect of this was that motorboat racing and the other sports had a provisional air to them. The *Motorboat Racing Law* was not a time-limited legislation, but the temporary nature of the exemption, in law, had a comparable impact to making the *Motorboat Racing Law* and others into time-limited legislation. To be sure, at every deadline in the years to come, the exemption was extended to keep legalized gambling going, but people concerned were constantly under the pressure of uncertainty. The revisions made to the regulations governing their operation under time-limited legislation imposed restrictions including the number of days available for motorboat racing.

### Kono speaks

Evidently, public feeling ran fairly high on this topic. One could see that from the fact that big shots in the world of politics involved themselves in the details. Thus, Kono Ichiro, one of the most powerful men in conservative politics and then minister of agriculture and forestry, announced his support for a rule that there should be horse racing only on Saturdays, Sundays, and public holidays. He made his position known in January 1955.

Kono’s thinking was no doubt typical of the times. He said that it was reasonable to restrict horse racing to weekends and holidays given “the general economic pressure, as it affects people’s livelihood and the need for them to work hard.” He added: “This is appropriate to the new

lifestyle.” He went on to say that he planned to speak to the Minister of International Trade and Industry, to let the minister give his support to similar restrictions on bicycle racing. The Cabinet duly decided to introduce administrative measures with the effect of law to suppress all weekday gambling. There were no such restrictions on motorboat racing at the time. The sense was that there should be limits.

What then was the position of the Ministry of Transport, which had responsibility for motorboat racing? They had to do something, but not much, it turned out.... In due course, the ministry issued a “notification” regarding what was called “voluntary restraint” by those responsible: (1) motorboat racing should be held on three consecutive days including Saturday and Sunday plus a day before or after the weekend, or four days including the weekend, (2) holidays shall include local holidays, and (3) racing on weekdays shall be in the afternoon.<sup>18</sup>

### Tanaka vs. Narita

Public concern over public sports gaming continued to weigh on politicians down the years. A decade later, in the 1960s, the high and mighty in the land were still under pressure on this topic.

This is a matter of public record. Thus, on 30 May 1966 two of the top politicians in the country, Tanaka Kakuei, secretary general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and a future prime minister, and Narita Tomomi, the secretary general of the opposition Socialist Party, faced off in a TV debate shown live nationwide. Narita took the lead. He called for an early and total abolition of public gambling for four reasons:

1. It was grossly contradictory for the government to prohibit gambling by law, on the one hand, and to enact another law citing self-serving reasons to condone it in certain designated places.
2. Some said gambling was a human instinct, but it was a big mistake to say that public sports gambling was necessary on that account.
3. As ever, irregularities and fixing in horse and bicycle racing had been repeatedly exposed, and such unwholesome activities should be discontinued as soon as possible.
4. To begin with, these special cases of public gambling had been condoned with the full knowledge of their evil nature, for the benefit of postwar reconstruction and financing of local governments. That period was a thing of the past, given the progress of the Japanese economy.

Tanaka, sounding cautious, responded by declining to condemn public sports as “unhealthy and socially unacceptable,” but he did not

consider them as desirable either. He therefore did not think it right that public sports gambling should take place everyday. The ideal would be to abolish public gaming, but he wanted horse racing to continue as an exception. He argued there were few irregularities in horse racing and that it had “a special nature and mission” compared to bicycle, boat, and car racing. The latter, however, as Narita said, had been set up for the avowed purpose of rebuilding shattered postwar Japan.<sup>19</sup>

### **A committee on “public sports”**

Responding to an undercurrent of criticism, the government found it prudent to go through the motions of self-criticism. Accordingly, it set up a committee under the chairmanship of a veteran Finance Ministry official, Naganuma Hiroki, to consider the future of public sports.

The committee, which was appointed in February 1961, duly made a report, which added very little. Its anodyne introduction stated:

Public sports are the target of much criticism, not least because of certain socially undesirable situations that their present forms of operation cause. On the other hand, one cannot ignore the role they are playing by providing subsidies to related industries and social welfare projects, and by promoting and contributing to local government revenues as well as by furnishing popular entertainment. Furthermore, it cannot be denied that the public aspect of the sports contributes somewhat to preventing greater harm.

The committee is, therefore, of the view that, without providing alternative sources of revenue and programs for job relocation for those concerned, the total abolition of public sports would have enormous and unfavorable consequences, not least by opening the way to secret gambling. For these reasons the committee reached a decision to approve of their continuation, but basically not to increase the scope and frequency of these sports, more than at present, and to devise measures to prevent any resulting harm.<sup>20</sup>

The report was a realistic one trying to keep a balance between criticisms hurled at public gambling on one hand and the roles its proceeds are playing on the other as well as the danger that abolition of public sports would merely encourage more corruptible forms of private gambling. As we shall see, it turned out to be of epochal importance.

### No rocking of the powerboat

There was in fact a powerful constituency in favor of legalized gambling in public sports. The shipbuilding and related industries saw motorboat racing as their savior. Said one expert:

Things were at their worst in the early years, when motorboat racing was introduced in the 1950s. No bank was willing to make loans for the necessary improvements and innovation. In fact, the support of motorboat racing saved the situation.... Shipbuilding and its related industries contributed to Japan's recovery by building the world's best ships.<sup>21</sup>

Another top MOT official noted:

Cash-poor "related industries" [parts suppliers] were able to go over the head of the shipbuilding industry and make their presence felt in the world. In cases where the Japan Development Bank refused to lend to them, the motorboat racing fraternity stepped in with a helping hand. This funding came from the races.<sup>22</sup>

Powerful politicians, Kono, Tanaka, and Narita represented the overwhelmingly negative climate against public sports at the time. The publishing of the compromise report reflected the realistic demands of the war-devastated industries. It is more than likely that Sasakawa pulled strings behind the scenes, too.

Sasakawa commented:

No man is born without an urge to gamble....  
If motorboat racing is evil, then what about *pachinko* [pinball]?  
Most of the proceeds from motorboat racing are farmed back to society, but pachinko does nothing. The industry takes all. It does not make sense for *pachinko* to be allowed, and not bicycle, horse, car, and motorboat racing.

These were his points. He was aware of the criticism that public gambling broke up marriages and destroyed family life, but those were the consequences, more than anything else, of "weak will," he said. On the other hand, Sasakawa was realistic enough to accept that people could be led astray. He therefore wished to dilute the gambling factor, so that fans would enjoy the racing itself more than gambling. Races must enrich their lives, as entertainment. He noted the downside of racing and he encouraged those around him to humbly face criticism and put things right.<sup>23</sup>

His son Yohei put it this way:

Human beings are not all pure and spotless. They have their good sides as well as their bad. When they are blended into a harmonious whole, life is a pleasure.<sup>24</sup>

### **What the JSIF achieved (I)**

Earlier, we noted how the “Ad Hoc Special Measures” of June 1954, as laid down for bicycling races, established a pattern for motorboat racing as well, according to which the gross proceeds were divided up and 3 percent of the funds were allocated to the National Federation of Motorboat Racing Associations. These funds, which were to grow to extraordinary proportions with the explosive growth of motorboat racing, accrued to the JSIF run by Sasakawa Ryoichi.

How were these funds utilized? As stated, their principal use was to fund the growth of Japan’s shipbuilding industry, as it grew dramatically in the 1960s to establish itself as the world leader.

One may cite Ishii Yasunosuke, chairman of Mitsui Shipbuilding and a doyen of the industry in which he was associated from 1950:

Japan’s shipbuilding industry has seen splendid times, sailing along ever since the 1950s...but a ship requires an enormous capital investment and a high degree of technical precision. We started by improving engine performance, then we focused on energy saving, and then on container ships, and automobile and other carriers. With purpose-built ships we were able to avoid waste and improve efficiency. Speed was improved as well. Large carriers crisscross the Pacific today at the speed of a naval cruiser.

Japan led in technology and in innovation in this field. The leadership all came from Japan. Our ship owners expected as much. Our shipping companies were world leaders. In every field we owed so much for basic research to the JSIF. It is no exaggeration to say that the Foundation was involved in every major technological development and breakthrough.”<sup>25</sup>

### **What the JSIF achieved (II)**

Author Tsurumaki Yasuo gathered together materials for a study of the JSIF, in which he quotes the remarks of Ninomiya Toshimichi, senior managing director of the Japan Small Vessel Industry Associa-

tion, a key executive on the smaller shipping side, relevant to the JSIF contribution:

Our main work was to organize small ship manufacturers into groups. By pulling together we saved on management resources. Thus, firms were able to stay in business. Low-interest loans were immensely helpful in bridging operating and building funds and capital investment. Firms needed money to pay their people. Frankly, most of the money came from the JSIF. To begin with we needed 800 million yen in endowment funding to start our association. This money came from the JSIF in its entirety. Basically the association had to run its projects on its own responsibility, but there was always a shortfall, and every year the JSIF generously provided grants and subsidies. Their sum total in the last twenty-six years comes to 2,901 billion yen. In addition we received a subsidy of one billion yen for technological development programs.

All told, without the JSIF there would have been no Small Vessel Industry Association. We would not have survived, and we will not survive without them.

Japan is surrounded by the sea. Its flatland is only 30 percent of its landmass. There is a limit to land transport, no matter how many expressways are built. More trucks mean more carbon dioxide, more congestion, and a shortage of drivers...maritime transportation is the answer. In particular, coastal shipping. Japan needs small vessels. Without its coastal and ocean-going shipping it would not last a month.

The small vessel shipyards have inferior equipment compared to large-sized shipyards. Their technology is behind. This has to be rectified somehow. We must improve working conditions as well as the working environment to attract the best people. Without them the industry has no future.

For this purpose low-interest loans were provided through the banks. Many small and medium shipyards escaped bankruptcy by having access to this money, to cope with their immediate need of operating funds or for upgrading facilities. This sort of funding should be borne by the government or by local autonomous bodies, but they said they did not have the money and refused to help.

Well, the JSIF almost single-handedly provided us with funds to cover our needs. We were probably too naïve to these facts.<sup>26</sup>

### Ginza vs. Kabuki

One at a time, Sasakawa addressed the problems that reared up in his path down the years. For him, it seemed, the sailing could never be as smooth as for the shipbuilding industry itself. Very early on, there was a battle for leadership in the motorboat-racing field. Sasakawa was the man who had succeeded in getting the *Motorboat Racing Law* enacted, as everyone knew, but he had a rival.<sup>27</sup>

Maeda Takashi, chairman of the House of Representatives Transport Committee at the time of the passage of the bill, was an old friend. He had even visited Sugamo Prison to comfort detainees with Sasakawa. But Maeda wanted to control motorboat racing as soon as he saw its possibilities. He had an office near the main Kabuki theatre in downtown Tokyo, while Sasakawa continued to work at his prewar office in the Ginza, and the ongoing strife between the two of them became known as the battle of the “Ginza” vs. the “Kabuki” factions.<sup>28</sup>

This feud came to a head very early on. The original *Motorboat Racing Law* of 1952, it may be noted, provided for the establishment of a National Federation of Motorboat Racing Associations, a key body for the industry. But this body was in fact not set up until 19 October 1952, four months after the enactment. The delay in establishing the Federation was said at the time to have been caused by internal feuding and the need to coordinate the two warring parties.<sup>29</sup>

Sasakawa had been prevented by the purge from taking any public office. And he had scruples about taking a front seat in the Federation, having played a central role in the enactment of the law. So others had to take the main posts when the new body started off. The first chair was Adachi Tadashi, president of the Japan Chamber of Commerce, a very prestigious post, and its president was Takiyama Toshio, the first director general of the Ships Bureau of the Ministry of Transport. The executive committee chairman was Yatsugi Kazuo. The latter individual was responsible for the actual management, and belonged to the “Ginza faction.” He was a Sasakawa loyalist, and he worked with him closely.

Thus Sasakawa ensured that he was in charge. However, for years he refrained from letting his name go forward for a top position. He accepted the position of “racing chairman” when it was created later. He also became vice-chairman of the Federation only in 1953, some time after he had been officially “de-purged” with the coming into force of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in April 1952. He then served as “acting chairman,” and in the following year he was de facto chairman. However, he waited until 1955 before formally taking the title *kaicho*.

His strength of character, and his experience in dealing with rough diamonds, was needed at times. As one might surmise, the power struggle within the newly created motorboat racing industry had come to the

attention of organized crime — of gangster groups with an interest in gambling. According to Kageyama Yukio who was an employee of the Federation from the very beginning, there were times when he felt his life was in danger. But Sasakawa skillfully settled such undesirable relationships.<sup>30</sup> Along with his commitment to rule out any suspicion of fixing, Sasakawa made a considerable contribution to the development of motorboat racing as healthy entertainment.

### III

Motorboat racing, contrary to Sasakawa's expectations, did not have a smooth start in business terms. Far from it, in fact. The first race meet, held in the Omura arena in Nagasaki in April 1952, did not meet the sponsor's expectations either as regards the take or the number of spectators.<sup>31</sup>

In fact, right up to 1957, the sport was in the red. Far from contributing to local finances, it took losses. Those in the line of duty were distressed. There were local operators, notably in prefectural governments, who suggested scrapping the whole enterprise, as they seemed to be spending money rather than earning it. A fiasco threatened.<sup>32</sup>

To compound the difficulty, most of the local governments with a large population base and an interest in public sports were operating bicycle or car races, and had taken on these commitments ahead of motorboat racing. This was a very difficult situation, according to the same source.

There really was no need to take a risk with the unfamiliar sport of motorboat racing.... Therefore, apart from the well-endowed regions or municipalities, say with a large lake or a calm bay, only relatively small towns and villages, lacking a minimum population base of 30,000, were interested in serving as sponsors. They, of course, hardly had the capacity to scrape up funds to build racing arenas.<sup>33</sup>

### Minoo City

Sasakawa stepped forward. He took on the unenviable job of visiting local governments to persuade them to continue sponsoring motorboat races. He even promised to pay out of his own pocket if they incurred losses. Nakai Buhei, the mayor of Minoo City, Sasakawa's birthplace, worked assiduously for motorboat racing, and he remembers:

There were two opposing factions on the City Council. One group wanted to scrap the plan, and one supported its continu-

ation.... Sasakawa told the Council he would reimburse the city if it incurred losses. If there were profits from this venture, such gains would belong to Minoo City. When it came to a vote as to whether or not to continue the races, the motion to continue carried by one vote.<sup>34</sup>

Sasakawa helped some self-governing bodies raise funds needed to build racing arenas by providing personal guarantees on the loans.<sup>35</sup> As already mentioned Sasakawa had amassed huge assets of his own through stock and commodity trading, and he used these resources to get motorboat racing going.

Other difficulties that had to be overcome were public outcries against foul play, clumsy management from inexperience, and frequent premature starts due to the lack of training of competitors. The latter, in particular, agitated the crowd. In the face of this situation Sasakawa devoted all his energies to improving the skills of both racing drivers and referees, and in strengthening their commitment to ethical principles. He did everything to eliminate the unsavory influence of local *yakuza*. For him, the fans came first.

Sasakawa had this to say to those involved in the sport professionally:

The important thing is to be aware that we are entrusted with the precious money of 100 million people. Most of the proceeds are used for social welfare. Ours is a noble mission, including for those of us who are working in the background to raise the needed resources. I want you to have pride in what you do, and to do your utmost to brush up your skills and enjoy fair competition.<sup>36</sup>

### **More thoughts of Sasakawa Ryoichi**

The principle that operates in our world is survival of the fittest.... The gambling world solemnly represents that principle. Referring to motorboat racing, we have set a strict rule to prevent fixing. Any sibling or parent of a driver or any of us associated with racing will be punished if we purchase a betting ticket. But if you compete fairly and win you are rewarded with big prize money.<sup>37</sup>

In motorboat racing, we had the smallest number of incidents of fixed races compared to other public sports, and the lowest number of fatal accidents to drivers. Out of some 10 million or more racers fifteen have been killed in competition in the last twenty-seven years, the lowest figure among public sports. This

is a result of successfully inculcating throughout the sport the stern truism that “human rights mean above all respect for life.” The results speak for themselves. “Violation of human rights” in our sport cannot be compared with other sports. We have strict rules. Drivers are forbidden to talk to outsiders, even on the phone, during the last twenty-four hours prior to a race. Their friends and acquaintances are watched, and drivers must not drink. They must turn out their lights at a fixed time. Our way is stricter than the prewar military. There are criticisms against this “disregard of human rights,” naturally. Well, I took a decisive step in favor of “respect for human life” at the risk of a “disregard of human rights.” This resulted in solemn discipline, with no room for cheating and wrongdoing. Above all, please note, we reduced the number of fatal accidents to drivers.<sup>38</sup>

### **A training center on Lake Biwa**

Training racing drivers proved to be challenging, both technically and spiritually. In the beginning, the training arenas were located in Omura, Wakamatsu, and Ashiya. Immediately following the enactment of the *Motorboat Racing Law* in August 1951 Sasakawa opened an International Training Center for Motorboat Racing Drivers and Referees on Lake Biwa.

Whenever regular training sessions took place, Sasakawa was there preparing drivers for their jobs and breathing into them the required spirit. He had a powerful appeal, according to Aki Yoshiharu, one of the early trainees. He was a successful racer, who entered the field early on, in 1952, and served as chair of the Japan Motorboat Drivers Association. Sasakawa’s two-hour lectures were laden with an unsparing and severe but caring message, so much so that Aki never felt the sessions were long.<sup>39</sup>

### **A notice to all drivers**

In June 1952, the Federation put out a “notice to drivers” in what may have seemed somewhat old-fashioned language to some among them. It encouraged racers to act as models among their peers — “to be leaders, to be international sportsmen with a boatman’s pride, and to be gentlemen at all times.” The notice admonished each driver to be law-abiding, to be cooperative, and to study. “Be above all a sportsman who wins respect.” It explained the position of the motorboat industry in many respects and urged each athlete to be fully prepared for the challenges ahead.<sup>40</sup>

The notice to drivers was put out many times. Picking up some more admonitions from among only the earlier ones clearly brings out Sasakawa's philosophy. "Motorboat racing means a lifetime of hard training" (July 1952). "Do not disgrace a boatman's honor" (September 1952). "Apply yourself unremittingly" (September 1953). "There is more to racing than just winning and losing" (April 1954). "Take care to avoid pileups" (August 1958). "Behave yourself in private life" (September 1960). "Be accountable for your actions" (March 1964). "Learn from your errors (bad navigation) as drivers" (August 1967).<sup>41</sup>

### Troublesome rumors arise

In spite of these efforts there were continuous rumors of irregularities in motorboat racing. In June 1952, the Federation set up an inspection office headed by Fuji Yoshio to give guidance, and to carry out investigations. As a consequence it was learned that:

The rumors about foul play by drivers were not unfounded, certainly in some instances. At that point all could see that the future of motorboat racing depended on taking appropriate countermeasures.... A regular drivers' course was established for this purpose, and the first course was held on 20 January 1953 at Omi Shinto shrine near Lake Biwa. The training, which centered on spiritual education, was carried out in groups of fifty at a time. From early in the morning to late at night.... The drivers' lecture course was later made compulsory, and served as the base of the strong solidarity of those engaged in the motorboat racing industry.<sup>42</sup>

Furthermore, a Self-disciplinary Study Group was organized in December of the same year, to counter ugly rumors concerning racers' unruly behavior. Leading drivers, selected by the Federation and the Athletes' Association, took part in a study of what is truly expected of a motorboat racer. At the outset the Federation made a presentation on the background of the *Racing Law*, the responsibility of the Federation and the status of drivers.

This was followed by free discussion among the drivers, and frank exchange of views with the Federation directors to define the next steps. The drivers returned to their respective regional associations, and called ad hoc general meetings to report on the decisions taken at the study group. All drivers were asked to take the issue to heart and to commit themselves to a collective improvement where discipline was called for. They agreed to work with the next group of drivers to participate in the

second study group to keep up the momentum, and to raise the level of collective awareness.<sup>43</sup>

### **They must be gentlemen**

This continued for years. Then, on New Year's Day 1957, the Federation made public its core program. This centered on a commitment "to make gentlemen out of motorboat drivers." The gist of the "Principles of Motorboat Drivers" announced at that time was as follows:

The Federation will provide proper guidance to drivers whose racing attitudes, aptitude, character, and daily behavior leave much to be desired.

The Federation will conduct special training to improve skills of those drivers who have high accident rates and poor results.

Drivers who fail to attain the required standards will be disqualified as having impeded the objectives of motorboat racing.<sup>44</sup>

The Principles were strictly enforced. As a result, the number of absentee racers increased, as some, for example, avoided difficult courses set up in order to avoid accidents. The Federation was quick to point this out in one of its messages to racers. The notice deplored rash and self-serving behavior and pronounced it unacceptable.<sup>45</sup>

To become a professional driver a candidate had to pass the Federation's registration test. Sasakawa decided to have this test rigorously conducted. In other words, the maximum standard under the regulations was applied. As a result, out of seventy-six candidates who took the thirty-fifth registration test in September 1956 only twenty-seven passed the written examination. Seven of these failed the physical examination that followed. The first stage of the exams left twenty applicants in the running.

The candidates were then subjected to tests of practical skills including steering, maintenance, and repairs, all the while considering their suitability for group living. Fifteen passed this stage and were then put through five days of aptitude tests. Four were eliminated, leaving just eleven successful final candidates.<sup>46</sup>

The drivers' training period was originally two months long. But it was extended to three months in 1960, then five in 1965, and finally to a full year in 1970. Originally, the drivers paid for the training, but to go without any earnings for a year and paying out of their pockets was too heavy a burden. The Federation therefore decided to bear all necessary

costs of training. A full-fledged training arena was opened at the Motosu Center in 1966, and contributed in no small measure to the drivers' qualitative improvement.

One of Sasakawa's great aims was to make certain that all irregularities were eliminated from the sport. To this end, "He packed drivers into dormitories during races, prohibited contacts with the outside world, and forbade drinking and mahjong."<sup>47</sup> These efforts worked and incidents of irregularities plummeted. It is no longer a problem today.

I noted earlier how in a 1966 TV debate with Tanaka Kakuei, the ruling party's powerful personality, Socialist Party Secretary General Narita spoke in favor of the total abolition of public gambling, citing the frequency of fixing as a major problem in horse racing and bicycle racing. By then the proceeds from motorboat racing had shot up and exceeded those from horse racing as operated by the Japan Racing Association, but still lagged behind cycling revenues. Narita's neglect to mention motorboat racing as an example of fixing is unlikely to have been an accidental omission or simple forgetfulness on his part.

### **World-class drivers**

A lot of hard work went into bringing about these results. For example, Sasakawa improved the rewards to racing drivers. Accident compensation was institutionalized in 1953, and winning drivers were given a sharp increase in award money as well as in retirement allowances, starting in 1959.

These measures helped to give the world-class drivers they were aiming to produce a handsome income, in addition to the development they sought in the motorboat racing industry in general. In 1976 one motorboat athlete earned in excess of 60 million yen, the highest income in all public sports. Today it is not rare for a relatively young athlete to earn 100 million yen a year. The combination of better treatment and strict punishment for irregularities has been effective in eradicating foul play in motorboat racing. Aki Yoshiharu, chair of the Motorboat Drivers' Association told me:

If foul play was discovered a driver lost his qualification, found himself without a job and forsook his retirement benefit. From a purely economic point of view foul playing was not worth it.<sup>48</sup>

### **Building wholesome personalities**

Those who were associated with boat racing at the time invariably referred to the strictness and thoroughness of Sasakawa's guidance to drivers and trainees. Tsuboi Kurotsuna said the success in eradicating

foul play was thanks to “Mr. Sasakawa’s commitment to disallowing irregularities.” Amari Koichi pointed out that, “In addition to masterful management Mr. Sasakawa’s other achievement was fostering drivers. There are no problems with the drivers in motorboat racing. That is because his training covered not just practical skills but character building.”<sup>49</sup>

Not only did the Federation impose strict training and discipline on drivers but it spared no efforts in improving the quality of inspectors who were in charge of maintenance and inspection of the boats. During the first two years of operations, unlike referees, there was no registration system or certification for inspectors. The Federation initiated a system to certify inspectors in 1953 and at the same time created a rule that two inspectors were needed at each race.

Inspector applicants were tested for general knowledge, practical maintenance skills, and boat operation, and by oral examination:

Practical skill tests required an applicant to reassemble the parts of a Mercury-type boat, install them, and operate the boat once around the racing circuit. Unlike today, when there are ample opportunities to play with engines, this was a high-level examination, and those without experience would be sure to fail.<sup>50</sup>

#### IV

Motorboat racing started its life in adversity, and in the beginning the sale of admission tickets and gross revenues did not increase all that much. But the high economic growth of the 1960s had a positive impact on revenues, which then grew at an astounding pace of 30 to 40 percent a year. The number of spectators increased as well. In 1975 motorboat racing overtook bicycle racing in yearly revenue. It had become the number one public sport.

This success had at last earned recognition for the sport from the society at large. In June 1955, it was granted a two-year extension beyond the first legal deadline. In 1957 it earned a further three-year extension.<sup>51</sup>

Finally, in April 1959, the wording of the *Motorboat Racing Law* was changed so that assistance from racing proceeds could now be given to the shipbuilding industry at large. To be specific, assistance might be provided to improve “motorboats and other vessels,” rather than the former narrowly defined “improvements to motorboats, ship engines, and ship gear and export promotion.”<sup>52</sup>

In August 1960, the Federation also received an extension of an extra year to the privilege of receiving part of the proceeds of races in grant form, set in 1957 for a period of three years. When the deadline came the following year it was then extended for a further year.<sup>53</sup>

### 1962: The law is revised

The most dramatic change to the *Motorboat Racing Law* was brought about with its revision in April 1962. This took place at the recommendation of the Naganuma Investigating Committee organized the previous year. Its main point was to remove the time limit placed on the grant receivable by the Federation. The motorboat industry was at last liberated from the threat of discontinuation, and able thereafter to devise a long-term business plan.<sup>54</sup>

The second major change was that the sport was allowed thereafter to give grants, in addition to conventional purposes, for “physical training and promotion of other enterprises that have as their objective development of the public good.”<sup>55</sup> The third change was that the grant-receiving body was changed from the conventional recipient — the Federation of Prefectural Associations of Motorboat Racing — to the newly established JSIF.<sup>56</sup> The Naganuma Committee report,

initially intended a “special-status corporation” to be the new recipient.... But Chairman Sasakawa took the strong view that a government corporation with special status meant that rigid management would prevail instead of flexible methods. He preferred to make the recipient body an organization infused with private sector vitality. In the end that body was defined in the wording of the law as a “public-service foundation” or a “legally incorporated foundation.”<sup>57</sup>

### The JSIF

Thus, whereas grants from the proceeds of horse, bicycle, and car racing are distributed by special-status corporations under the control of the relevant ministries, the motorboat racing proceeds are distributed by a private, therefore, freer organization, the JSIF. “Deregulation” and “privatization” have become household words in Japan today, but at the time this was done setting up a private organization for the purpose of distributing grants was a novel idea.

Sasakawa was twenty years ahead of his time. In Japan deregulation and privatization became buzzwords in the 1980s, as experts faced the consequences of the government’s mismanagement of the economy and the ballooning of public debt, not yet in the 1960s. An ad hoc committee was set up under the chairmanship of Doko Toshiwo, a leading businessman, to consider the situation. Meanwhile, as a result of the second major change in the law, the beneficiaries of the motorboat racing grants were no longer limited to the shipbuilding industry and to maritime interests. Had Sasakawa not insisted on getting his way, there

would have been a special-status corporation in receipt of the huge grants; and had he not also pushed to get the scope of potential beneficiaries expanded we would not see today that philanthropic body now known as the Nippon Foundation.

Sasakawa Yohei sees “1962 as our second birthday, if 1951 was our first.”<sup>58</sup> It was indeed a milestone year in as much as time-restriction was removed for good. In that same year, the vision of Sasakawa Ryoichi ensured that the use of the grant was diversified, and meanwhile the grant monies were to be distributed not by a special-status corporation, but a foundation. As a result, the second “birthday” became a springboard for a dramatic leap.

### **Watch out for “migrating birds”**

A special-status corporation has tax and other advantages. But its downside is its tendency to encourage excessive dependence on the government. The Ad Hoc Administrative Reform Council’s avowed intention was to surgically operate on that very point as special-status corporations are retirement destinations for high-ranking bureaucrats. Every year the Public Workers Union publishes the number of bureaucrats who “descend from heaven” to eighty-one such corporations. As of October 1984, of a total of 480 directors, 379 or 79 percent were ex-bureaucrats. These privileged former high-ranking civil servants again receive enormous retirement bonuses (20 to 40 million yen) after short periods of service.

They then go on to other organizations like migrating birds. I knew that if our organization became a special-status corporation this would happen. If the top executive posts were occupied by retired bureaucrats as representatives of vested interests wasting their time until they were replaced by another lot, employees would have no incentive to work hard.

Emerging from the ashes of the war it was the private sector volunteers who built the motorboat racing enterprise. They should, therefore, be left to manage it. Indeed I wanted to see how different we can be compared to the bureaucrats, and that is why I chose to set up a juridical foundation based on civil law.<sup>59</sup>

### **A de facto lifetime chairman**

In those days Sasakawa was criticized for allegedly misappropriating JSIF resources. Ino Kenji, for example, had this to say:

Horse racing, bicycle racing, and auto racing were all organized into special-status corporations. For example, the president, vice president, executive manager, and members of the operating committee of the Horse Racing Association were all appointed by the minister of agriculture and forestry for a maximum term of eight years exclusively, and forbidden to hold other jobs.

Ino observed critically that the JSIF alone was a juridical foundation and that this allowed Sasakawa to use the grant money at will as a *de facto* lifetime chairman.<sup>60</sup>

### **Not a single yen for the chairman**

This point was brought up in a tête-à-tête with Miki Yonosuke in 1983. He asked Sasakawa:

The Second Administrative Reform Council's efforts have provided an opportunity to focus on special-status corporations, and they had come under fire as a result. That does not apply to Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation because it is in a separate bracket as an incorporated foundation. As its chairman, what thoughts do you have?

Sasakawa replied:

We have no misgivings at all. We are all for "administrative reform." In fact, I encouraged Doko Toshiwo, the Council's chairman to go all the way, not half way. I said I will cooperate with him with all my strength if he was prepared to stake his whole life on the reform. I can say this because our foundation has in a sense graduated from the administrative reform. Our accounting and books are as transparent as a glass house and are open to the public. People too often misunderstand how our grant money is used because they do not know how the mechanism works.

Actually I could not get a single yen for myself, even if I wanted to. In other words, the distribution of the grant monies must go through an exhaustive investigation process by the examination department, and then the advisory committee makes the final decision. The organization is managed strictly on six principles: justice ("encourage the good and punish evil"); survival of the fittest ("the superior wins and inferior loses"); punishment and reward ("reward good conduct and you will

punish evil doing”); simplification and rationalization; management by a select few; and the right man in the right place.

There, Sasakawa broke out laughing.<sup>61</sup>

### **A lean craft**

In fact, even today, the management of the JSIF, generally known as the Nippon Foundation, is extremely simple and flexible compared to that of other grant managing organizations such as the Horse Race Association and the Bicycle Industry Association. While proceeds from motorboat and bicycle races are about the same, the Nippon Foundation has a staff of eighty-nine, with its chairman and president serving without remuneration and with only a few of its directors paid. By contrast, the Bicycle Industry Association has a staff of two hundred and twenty.

The Horse Race Association has almost double the proceeds of both motorboat and bicycle racing, and has a staff of nineteen hundred. Its chairman, president and directors receive high honoraria. Needless to say, most of them are former government officials who have parachuted from the ministry responsible for monitoring the Horse Race Association, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. Moreover, as special-status corporations whose expenditures are set by annual budgets, they are incapable of responding flexibly and promptly to unforeseen incidents, unlike the Nippon Foundation. In other words, rather than being a full-fledged private grant-giving organization they are no more than auxiliaries of the ministries that preside over them.<sup>62</sup>

That said, it cannot be denied that Sasakawa Ryoichi had a large impact on the disbursement of the grants. It probably was not easy for others in the organization to oppose his initiative given their boss’s vision, insight, flair, and exuberant personality — and the central role he played in the evolution of the motorboat race enterprise. To be sure, outsiders have equated the Foundation with a “Sasakawa Empire,” no doubt because of the inevitable and excessive loyalty that he has attracted.

### **Jimmy Carter testifies**

Still, he was no tyrant. He had no autocratic authority over the disbursement of grant monies. The foundation’s decision-making system, as described by Sasakawa to his interviewer Miki, was not a mere formality. Former president Jimmy Carter, a friend of Sasakawa who worked with him in fighting famine in Africa (under the Sasakawa Global 2000 Project), told me: “Because of the opposition of other members of the

[board of the] foundation, not all of what we [Sasakawa and Carter] wanted to do was realized.”<sup>63</sup>

The JSIF structure did not allow Sasakawa to move even a single yen at his whim. Certainly, its system of management is open and transparent. Yet, generally speaking the existence of a charismatic leader can infect others and lead them to support him without question. It is often hard to distinguish between the will of the leader and those working under him, particularly when his performance has almost always proven successful. Perhaps it was unavoidable that people had the impression that the Foundation had been hijacked by Sasakawa.

For his part he was convinced that:

No one is readier to listen to the staff more than I, to share their thoughts with the board, and to have them adopted as the decisions of the organization. This is the secret of the success of everything I undertake.<sup>64</sup>

Interestingly, Sasakawa’s subordinates endorsed this principle.

The problem, however, lay in the fact that his employees’ interests were from the beginning identical with Sasakawa’s. They seemed to align themselves automatically. It may be added that there is little clear distinction between free and flexible management and an arbitrary one under a charismatic leader such as Sasakawa. The question was whether or not the performance was up as a result; and also, how much the outcome contributed to the public good. On both scores the result was the yardstick; in both respects the JSIF passed with flying colors.

### **How to avoid corruption**

In fact, Sasakawa himself was fully aware of the fine line between a flexible management style and an arbitrary one. And he was clear on how managers should avoid being corrupted.

Human beings are weak. On the one hand, we are troubled by our conscience but on the other we want to make a profit. This exposes one to the risk of corruption. It is a risk anyone could face in business. I am faithful to the principles that keep me away from temptations and on the right track. I must be clear whom I am working for and what I am living for. The work I do today is for the company. So if I am approached by people I should know that they are interested in my position and the power it represents.

It is clear that I must not usurp that power. If I am clear that I owe what I am to my family, then I cannot possibly do things

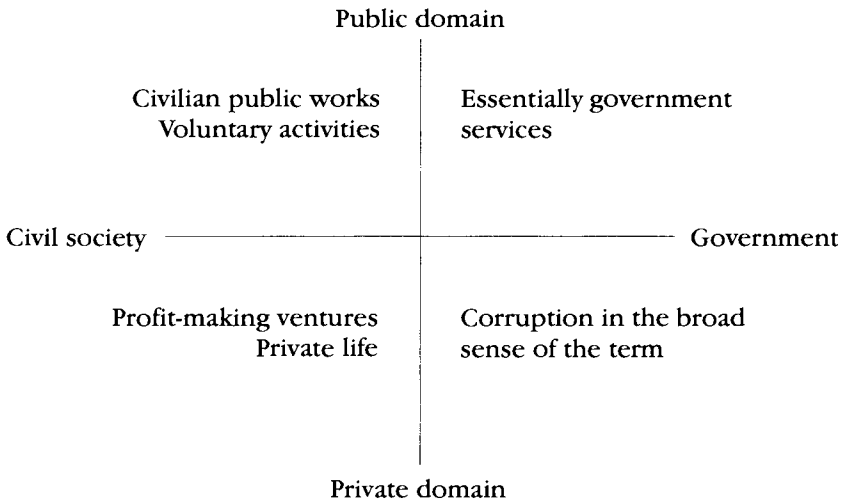
that will make my parents or wife and children unhappy. The higher one climbs on the corporate ladder and the greater the success and responsibility one enjoys, the greater in turn are one's power and authority — and as a corollary of that, the greater the risk of corruption. To escape this trap and fulfill one's responsibilities, one must constantly keep in mind how one should relate to society, and to whom one owes one's existence. For this purpose I should earnestly pursue a virtuous life.<sup>65</sup>

### Unfortunate conventions

The JSIF was also criticized for its “arbitrary management,” simply because it was controlled less by the ministry concerned compared to other grant-giving public sports organizations. Such criticism was the product of the unfortunate Japanese custom of making much of government and little of the people. At the base of such thinking was that public works should be left to the public domain since the private sector was only concerned with profit-making and not in promoting the public interest.

In order to understand things properly, it is helpful to independently consider the two opposing concepts of government versus civil society and the public versus private domains. A simple figure may be useful.

Figure 1. Relationship of government, civil society, public, and public domains.



There are four categories in the figure to show how government and civil society and the public and private domains relate to each other. In postwar Japan, until quite recently, the dominant pattern was for the government and the public sector to occupy the same sphere while the civil society and the private sector occupied another, excluding, as a consequence, other types of relationships. In fact, any other combinations were discouraged or forbidden.<sup>66</sup>

Frequent bribe taking by politicians and the corruption of officials stemmed from the unduly close relations between government and business. A bureaucrat is a private individual, but a government organization must remain in the public domain. This does not mean that civil society naturally inhabits only the private domain. These days, the emphasis given to the topic of “the corporate social responsibility” is based on the notion that private enterprise should not pursue merely its profit-making mandate but also endeavor to enhance the public interest. The emergence in Japan in the 1990s of nonprofit organizations (NPOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) providing public services suggests diversification of the patterns of relations between the four domains shown in the figure have reached a new level. In this, Sasakawa was a pioneer. The JSIF is a forerunner of today’s NPOs and NGOs in Japan and is still today the largest in the field.

### Parasites heaven

Sasakawa was convinced of the need to break with the unenviable Japanese convention of accepting the dominance of bureaucrats over private individuals and slighting the people:

Japan is a heaven for government officials. Notwithstanding that the sovereignty of the people, equality, and justice are guaranteed under the Constitution, the lamentable custom persists of putting government above the people. The public is disgusted with our politicians — these *sensei* [an honorific meaning literally teachers] who look down on the voters, and with government officials who abuse their authority. In the field of the economy our “Japan, Inc.” model of the past still persists. What we have is an industrial structure headed and led by government departments, bloated with officials who “parachute” into the private sector. In Japan there is a preponderant economic regime under which bureaucrats are the dominant players. This system is reflected in the people’s persistence in revering officials at the expense of themselves....

How do we rid ourselves of this conventional way of think-

ing? The first priority is for the civil society to wean itself away from immature dependence on government. Unless we sever our dependence on politicians and on those bureaucrats in times of need, we have no right to censure government officials for their unreasonableness or to lament their haughty behavior toward people.<sup>67</sup>

### **Keep them out**

“Let’s not be ruled by those weird government officials,” Sasakawa told Doko Toshiwo, the veteran business leader formerly with Toshiba, who served as head of the Second Administrative Reform Council, “and let us go right ahead and do what we can.”<sup>68</sup>

### **Follow the JSIF**

Sasakawa asserted that other public sports corporations, with comparable responsibilities for dispensing large grants, should follow the example of the JSIF and subsidize not just their specific field of industry, but diverse social services. For that purpose, he was convinced revision of the present legislation was necessary:

Horse racing is supervised by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, bicycle and auto racing by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, and motorboat racing by the Ministry of Transportation. The three ministries should align their respective policies on public sports. Right now, the law restricts the use of proceeds from horse racing: almost all proceeds have to go directly to the livestock industry. The other three public sports can make donations to public services. Subsidies by bicycle and auto racing associations may be restricted by regulation to a maximum of 50 percent of the project budgets of their beneficiaries. In contrast, the motorboat racing associations can give up to 80 percent of beneficiary-project budgets. That is why we [JSIF] are swamped with approaches from sports and welfare organizations.

I propose that this imbalance be corrected, and that the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry revise its relevant laws and regulations so that proceeds from horse racing can be donated, as much as ours, for social causes, physical education, and other public projects.<sup>69</sup>

### Gathering of five thousand barbers

Here, we may look back and note how it was that Sasakawa pledged a great part of his active life to motorboat racing and philanthropy, when earlier a career in politics had beckoned.

When the Occupation came to an end in 1952 and purges of senior Japanese, decreed under the Occupation, were ended, Sasakawa was approached by many people urging him to return to public life, i.e., to politics. Sasakawa made his personal position clear in a letter to Shigemitsu Mamoru dated 6 May 1952, soon after the San Francisco Peace Treaty went into force, ending the Occupation.

I have at the moment three offers from people who want me to present my candidacy, but I have turned them all down. I have explained my position: I will not stand in any election until there is a definite schedule for the release of all war criminals from prison. As a result of taking this position I have earned a reputation that I take my responsibilities seriously. And that meant that more people asked me to return to politics and stand for office. On 12 May the governor of Osaka, the mayor of Osaka and I have been asked to speak at the city's main public hall to address a convention, attended by no fewer than five thousand barbers. I have been told that people want to hear a frank talk from me and not just formal speeches from the top officials such as the governor and the mayor. I will be appearing on a public platform for the first time in seven years.<sup>70</sup>

### Opting out of politics

Sasakawa had no intention of returning to politics until everyone had been freed from jail. Those convicted at the War Crimes Tribunals were then still detained in Sugamo. He had made a promise to his mother Teru not to run for public office until such time as every last war criminal had been released. Years later in May 1958, the last of those detained had completed their sentences, including those on parole. At that point Sasakawa was in still greater demand. He thereupon expressed his intention to stand in the House of Councilor's election in 1959 from the national constituency.

However, there was a problem. The situation surrounding the motorboat racing industry was at that time still precarious — meaning that at least in theory the public sport of motorboat racing could be abolished at any time. Reflecting on this and reconsidering his position,

Sasakawa withdrew his candidacy, thinking it would be irresponsible of him, after all, to fight an election campaign under such circumstances.<sup>71</sup>

In effect, Sasakawa decided to opt out of politics as it happened, forever, and to give his all to the development of motorboat racing. "I stake my life on fostering the public sport of motorboat racing, and managing this as an enterprise," he liked to say. This was no mere conceit.<sup>72</sup>

## V

Motorboat racing had won a permanent place as a popular pastime in Japan, ensuring the JSIF's financial base. The proceeds skyrocketed. And Sasakawa's interests expanded from promoting the development of the brilliantly successful shipbuilding industry to spreading sound maritime thinking and to preventing disasters at sea — and later to health, hygiene, fire prevention, and firefighting. In due course he widened his horizons to international philanthropy, to help in eradicating famine and combating disease and promoting international goodwill. Japan's shipbuilding industry had by then set the world's top standards in both technology and in scale, but Sasakawa remained strongly interested in shipbuilding and related industries. The JSIF did not relinquish its support of shipbuilding.

By the 1970s, however, the motorboat racing industry seemed to hit a plateau after leapfrogging upward for many years. Sasakawa was alarmed. He proposed that 1981, the thirtieth anniversary of the start of motorboat racing, be treated as the first year of a new era. He warned his associates that the next thirty years should not be an extension of the previous thirty years. He called for a change in mindset and a new policy. Sasakawa could not take his eyes off his motorboat racing enterprise — well, not yet.<sup>73</sup>

### Going forward

To devote his life to others, and to society, was his consistent commitment throughout his life. This was the motive behind Sasakawa's devotion to the motorboat racing industry. To expand the sphere of activities of the Foundation was a preordained step toward his final objective. Here, it is hardly possible to describe, in concrete detail, the large-scale and colorful activities of Sasakawa himself and the Foundation.

By the 1980s the JSIF had overtaken the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, hitherto considered the largest in the field, in terms of operating funds. The JSIF had grown to be the world's largest grant-giving private foundation providing grants and subsidies larger than those of the two American foundations combined. It had abundant funds to support a great range of immensely varied activities. For details of JSIF activ-

ities the reader is kindly referred to the *Thirty-Year History of the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation* (Nihon Senpaku Shinko-kai Sanjūnen no Ayumi) and to Tsurumaki Yasuo's most informative book, titled *Undisclosed JSIF's Real Image* (Daremo Kakanakatta Nihon Senpaku Shinko-kai no Jitsuzo) and *The Foundation's Economics* (Zaidan no Keizai-gaku).

### **Giving Carter a hand**

I shall use the pages remaining here to describe the outstanding features running through Sasakawa's activities in new fields.

First and foremost, Sasakawa dedicated himself, with his disinterest in either praise or blame, to serving the most unfortunate. In the United States it has become a practice for retired presidents to raise money to establish a memorial center or a library. President Jimmy Carter, too, visited Japan after his retirement to raise money for the Carter Center. Japanese politicians and businessmen who paid respect to him during his time in office turned a cold shoulder after his crushing defeat in the election.

When Sasakawa learned of this he volunteered to cover part of the construction cost:

We Japanese keep our word. Those who promised you support must have reasons for not having been able to do so today. Please do not hold it against them. I will help you in their place.<sup>74</sup>

By Jimmy Carter's own account:

Sasakawa Ryoichi visited me at my home in Georgia. As he stepped in, the first words he uttered were: "How is it that a man who served as president lives in such a simple home!" Right then and there he pledged half a million dollars for the Carter Center. I had been busy collecting ten dollars here and a hundred dollars there until then. It was the first large donation.<sup>75</sup>

### **A leaning gatepost**

Incidentally, according to Sasakawa, Carter asked to stay with Sasakawa when he was visiting Japan and offered his home in turn when the latter was in the United States. Sasakawa recalled:

I declined the offer because my home is, unlike what many think, unsuited to putting up guests. Mr. Carter seemed to take

it that I did not like the whole idea. He asked if I would at least invite him to lunch. Mr. Carter visited us in July 1983. He was surprised to find that while the neighbors on either side of us had huge homes, ours had a leaning gatepost and the house itself was shabby. "How many villas did I own?" he asked.

He expected me to be spending weekends in the country, away from the city as many American politicians do. I replied. "Up to today, at eighty-four, I have never had one. There are too many unfortunate people in the world who have no food to eat or home to sleep in, and if they fall ill they die because of the lack of treatment. When I think of them I cannot afford luxury. I live very simply to avoid malnutrition, and as a result I need no reading glasses and enjoy health and long life." My answer seemed to satisfy Mr. Carter.<sup>76</sup>

### Helping the WHO

Sasakawa gave assistance to the needy on a worldwide basis. Among such programs the most successful were the eradication of smallpox and relief for Hansenite patients. At its May 1980 General Assembly, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that smallpox had been eradicated. Humankind was liberated from one of the most feared diseases. The JSIF had donated a total of \$2,861,880 dollars to WHO's smallpox eradication program from 1975 to 1979. It was the largest donation by a private organization.

At the same General Assembly, WHO Secretary General Halfdan T. Mahler sent a special invitation to Sasakawa to honor him with a certificate of appreciation. "It is a happy occasion that we are able to declare smallpox eradicated," Mahler told the assembled guests and delegates.

In particular, the cooperation of the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation, and the leadership of its chairman Sasakawa, have been a great light of hope for smallpox eradication. The assistance provided by the Shipbuilding Industry Foundation was given at the most crucial period of the eradication, and was timely and truly effective.<sup>77</sup>

As the secretary general pointed out, the large donation for smallpox eradication starting in 1975 was indeed significant in its timing. At the time smallpox had more or less died down, even in Africa. This meant, however, that at the same time an increasing number of people did not have immunity or resistance to smallpox. In other words, if smallpox recurred at that stage, there was a high danger of another ex-

plosive epidemic, given the poor state of public health in the countries of Africa. Essential to the total eradication of an epidemic was the final massive push. In that sense the Foundation's assistance was most timely.

### **The memory of a beautiful girl**

Hansen's disease had long been considered an incurable disease requiring the social isolation of patients. In his childhood Sasakawa had a terrible memory of a beautiful girl in his neighborhood from a family one of whose members had been afflicted. She could not marry a man she loved, and she had run away in despair. All his life Sasakawa had pondered ways to eradicate leprosy.<sup>78</sup> It happened that the WHO tropical disease special research group had developed a leprosy vaccine reagent in 1961.

Sasakawa volunteered that year-end to be the first subject to be vaccinated, to prove its safety. Said he: "I want to show the world the vaccine is safe, and ensure its smooth distribution."<sup>79</sup> Vaccination meant implanting diluted pathogen in one's body. Agreeing to be the first person to be vaccinated against leprosy took courage, hardly an act of self-advertisement.

In 1974 for the purpose of improving leprosy vaccine, Sasakawa established a Memorial Health Foundation in his name, and became its chairman. He visited Hansenite hospitals in Japan and in developing countries as much as he could. He took meals with patients and went to their bedsides to shake hands and talk with them.

One patient who had lost his fingers to the disease shared a meal with Sasakawa, shed tears of joy, and told him:

It's been forty years since I was stricken. Many people have come with presents. But you are the first person who ate with me. I had my best meal today.<sup>80</sup>

### **"I want to shake your hand"**

When Sasakawa extended his hand, most patients hesitated to take it. Sasakawa patiently waited, his hand extended, smiling into the eyes of the patient.

I say, "I want to shake your hand." At first suspicious, the patient gives in and timidly puts out his. I take his hand with a firm grip. "At last we are friends," I say, and he returns the grip. Tears streak down his cheek and I can hear him saying thank you in so slight a murmur.<sup>81</sup>

This was not a matter of putting on a bold face or his philanthropic spirit. He had studied leprosy and knew it well. He never tired of saying:

Leprosy has a latent period of fifteen to twenty years, but with modern medicine the infectious disease can be treated fully in half a year. Patients under treatment do not transmit the disease, and there is no danger of contagion. People who are afraid are simply caught in an archaic convention and groundless discrimination. There is no need to fear once one learns the truth.<sup>82</sup>

His idealism was underpinned by scientific knowledge.

### **One hundred Chinese students a year**

Medicine was an area of particular interest to Sasakawa. He started a project in 1987 to host annual visits by one hundred Chinese students to study in Japanese medical schools. To date, one thousand Chinese medical students have received training in medical schools, hospitals, and research institutes in Japan, and contributed to advancing the level of medicine in China and greatly improved relations between the two countries. Sasakawa and the JSIF provided assistance to a broad range of research fields, making a large donation to the Cancer Research Group (Gan Kenkyu Kai), a representative cancer research institution in Japan; he made grants to build and donate ships with medical facilities on board, to make rounds between distant islands in Japan; he offered support to fighting AIDs worldwide; he constructed welfare facilities for senior citizens and mentally and physically challenged people; and he supported the training of health and welfare services providers.

### **For those with nothing to eat**

Relief to refugees displaced by famine and wars was one of the major projects of Sasakawa and the JSIF. Between 1984 and 1985 Ethiopia was struck by a devastating famine, leading to mass starvation and an outpouring of refugees. Sasakawa and the JSIF embarked on efforts to resolve food problems in Africa. He explained, "We were convinced that we should make it an objective to help Africans help themselves to fight hunger by increasing food production and winning independence from foreign assistance."<sup>83</sup>

To start with, three men — Jimmy Carter, Dr. Norman Borlaug, a University of Texas agricultural specialist who worked for the Green Revolution in Asia and Central and South America; and Sasakawa — organized a World Famine Conference in Switzerland, bringing together concerned persons from around the world. Most of the expenses were

covered by the Foundation. A decision was made at the conference to target Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia, and Ghana for an African Green Revolution. This was known as the Sasakawa Global 2000 (SG 2000) project.<sup>84</sup>

Details of the Green Revolution in Africa are provided in Yamamoto Eiichi's book. Here I will simply state that a straightforward reform in agricultural technology doubled the average harvest of maize in Ghana from 1.2 tons a hectare to 2.5 tons and that of sorghum from 0.5 tons to 2.5 tons.<sup>84</sup> The Green Revolution yielded remarkable harvests in other African countries as well.<sup>85</sup>

According to Agriculture Minister Steve G. Obimpeh of Ghana:

Japan's official development assistance (ODA) has made a huge contribution. SG2000 and ODA from Japan have played complementary roles. If the Japanese government had not provided chemical fertilizer to farmers, SG 2000 would not have escaped having an adverse impact.

It was possible that the project would have been unable to follow the guidance of the field instructors. Without ODA pesticides and spraying machines, locusts and clouds of grasshoppers could have stopped the project itself. However, official assistance alone could not have yielded such a result. We were able to increase production because the SG 2000 project was already in place.<sup>86</sup>

### **“We are not Santa Claus”**

Indeed SG 2000 worked well, guided by the spirit of helping farmers to help themselves. Ku Jeng Un, a Korean researcher under Norman Borlaug, who headed the SG 2000 project as the regional director, knew where to draw a line. When a Ghanaian village head requested funds for him to purchase a tractor, fertilizer, and seeds, Ku had this to say:

We are not Santa Claus. We are not here to give you presents. I want you to please understand this point. We have seen too many projects ultimately fail when they were just about providing machinery and equipment. What we are here for is to work with you and perspire with you. We believe the best assistance and cooperation is to help you make your country stand on its own feet.<sup>87</sup>

The international press has covered some of this work. *The Financial Times* carried an article on 2 March 1998 by Michela Long, covering projects in Ethiopia. The piece, headed “A Big Dream and Plan for Farmers,” started by observing that once steady progress was achieved

against famine, even the impact of an El Niño was just a hiccup by comparison. After describing a food production program in Ethiopia the writer continued that staff working on the Sasakawa project demonstrated that with the right combination of chemical fertilizer, new seeds, pesticides, and agro-technology the harvest could be dramatically increased. Some 583,000 farmers were working on the project and the number was expected to increase within a year to some 2 to 3 million.

### **“Energetically crisscrossing the desert”**

Yamamoto Eiichi, a writer for the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Japan’s largest daily with a circulation of over 10 million, penned a vivid and moving description of what he saw in the field:

I am not an agro-expert but I ended up recording the activities of a nongovernmental organization working at the grassroots on the Green Revolution in Africa. I happened to be at a harvest festival in a Ghanaian village. I was greeted by cheerful farmers who shared with me their happiness at being able to live a decent life. When they learned I was a journalist from Japan they asked me to relay their gratitude to my country.

Their unaffected manner touched me. I was also interested in recording the efforts of the late Sasakawa Ryoichi, a Japanese who made a great contribution. I saw him marching about in Africa, already past his ninetieth birthday, energetically crisscrossing the scorching desert of South West Africa in work clothes, talking with farmers, negotiating with supervisors and calmly questioning national leaders. I saw in him a man who had outgrown Japan.

During the “Pacific War” he served as a non-government-sponsored member of parliament representing his silent constituency and consistently upholding his commitment to defend constitutional government. After the war he faced the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal and was detained as a Class A war criminal suspect but was never indicted. It is said that he volunteered to go to prison to urge other Class A war criminal suspects not to implicate the emperor in responsibility for the war.

Later he worked hard as the creator of motorboat racing in Japan. He established JSIF in the service of world philanthropy, true to his belief that “The World Is One Family, and Human Beings Are All Brothers and Sisters.”

Large-minded and unaffected, true to his guiding principles of life, making no bones about small matters, self-possessed at

all times, and thorough in planning, he was a perfect personification of the Meiji man.

It is said that a man's worth is settled only when he is laid to rest. The fortune he left was much smaller than what was generally expected, and did not even compare with what a man of business or property might have left. It spoke vividly of his indifference to wealth.

It must have been this probity that made him pursue the grail of bringing the Green Revolution to Africa.

The revolution aroused the hopes and dreams of the poorest of the world's farmers. The late Sasakawa Ryoichi pondered ways and means to realize humankind's long-cherished yearning, advocated it, brought together collaborators, and opened the way to achieving the goal of doubling food production.<sup>88</sup>

## VI

Sasakawa and the JSIF undertook numerous projects that had foresight and vision. Typical were the establishment in 1973 of the Blue Sea and Green Land Foundation (B and G Foundation) and the opening in 1974 of the Museum of Maritime Science. B and G Foundation built training facilities for young people on "blue sea and green land" with the object of helping them develop healthy bodies and minds. To that end the Foundation built local marine centers throughout the country; by March 1998 there were a total of 416. The B and G Foundation operated a passenger ship that provided youth with the broadening experience of foreign travel. There were also yachting, canoeing, and swimming classes, and every year a sports day was held for young people to test the success of their training.<sup>89</sup>

### The museum with an upper deck

The Museum of Maritime Science is a unique museum built on reclaimed land along Tokyo Bay. It was a bold idea that many people regarded as reckless at the time. Today, however, the area is a fast developing, popular Tokyo waterfront. It was another case of Sasakawa's foresight. The Maritime Museum is a six-story concrete building built like a 60,000-ton passenger liner that is equipped with an upper deck, a simulated bridge, and a navigation and control room, just like a real ship. The museum display tells the history of ships, and devotes a large space to showing how they may evolve in the future, in such a way as to excite interest in marine development and navigation technology.

According to museum president Kamiyama Eiichi, Sasakawa's vision called for 20 percent of the space to cover the past, 30 percent to deal with the present, and 50 percent with the future.<sup>90</sup> The construction cost of the museum was borne by the Foundation, and Sasakawa also contributed 25 million yen from his own resources. A similar reference is found in *Novel: The Maritime Museum*.

In 1978 and 1979, Sasakawa and the JSIF also put together a Space-ship Science Exposition on Lot 13 at Ariake on Tokyo Bay centered on the Museum of Maritime Science. The exhibition was titled "Space — Hopes and Dreams of Humankind" [Uchu; Jinrui no Yume to Kibo] and featured the mammoth Saturn V rocket used in the Apollo and Gemini spaceships that predated the Lunar module. It also contained the Apollo moon landing vehicle and pieces of lunar rock, all furnished thanks to the cooperation of the US National Aeronautics and Space Agency and the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum. This was the first time those exhibits left the United States for an exhibition abroad. A Space and Science Exposition Association was established for the grand project with Sasakawa as its chairman. The expenses were absorbed by the JSIF.

### **The bridge over the river Kwai**

In addition to these mega projects Sasakawa and the Foundation were involved in smaller but visionary programs. One such program was built on Sasakawa's dream of a reconciliation of Japanese and British soldiers who had served in Burma during World War II. He hoped to see them shake hands one day on the old battlefield. Gruesome battles in the Pacific War and the ill treatment of Allied prisoners of war in Japanese-run camps were still then causes of bitter enmity. In the hope of putting Japan-UK relations back on track with reconciliation in mind Sasakawa established a Great Britain-Sasakawa Foundation in 1985.

Sasakawa contacted the All Burma Veterans Liaison Conference on the Japanese side and the Burma Campaign Fellowship Group in Britain to arrange for their respective representatives to travel to Burma for reconciliation, and he supported the project.<sup>91</sup> John Nunneley, the editor of a book of reminiscences on the Burma campaign, commented that the project was a "strikingly imaginative" idea to bring together former avowed enemies as pioneers of a new friendship between Britain and Japan. Japanese television broadcast the moving scene of veterans shaking hands and hugging each other on the bridge over the river Kwai.

The introduction to the book concludes with a poem titled "Yesterday's Foe Is Today's Friend." It could well be the English translation of Sasakawa's own poem.

All honour to him, friend or foe,  
 Who fought and died for his country.  
 May the tragedy of his supreme  
 Sacrifice bring to us, the living  
 Enlightenment and inspiration.  
 Fill us with ever-mounting zeal  
 For the all-compelling quest of peace  
 World Peace and universal brotherhood.<sup>92</sup>

### Good investment?

Sasakawa kept his private and public life religiously apart, but when necessary he did not hesitate to invest his own money in a public enterprise. "I am not a money worshipper," Sasakawa would say. "But without it, it would be difficult to carry out one's work."<sup>93</sup> He was strict in the use of public money under JSIF, for example, but generous in the use of his own money.

As noted earlier in this text, Sasakawa offered to compensate the operators in the event the fledgling motorboat racing arenas incurred losses. In addition, he offered his own property as security, offering surety jointly when operators took out a bank loan. Other such cases arose throughout the years.

For example, when a circus was organized with support from associated organizations worldwide as the very first event of the leprosy relief year, and then ran at a loss of one billion yen over three months due to poor attendance, Sasakawa made up the loss. It was a loss, but if the children who saw the fearless acrobats work their wonders gained courage to take on come what may in life, then it was well worthwhile, Sasakawa thought.

If as a result even one child is given courage not to run away or take his own life because he has been scolded at home or in school the loss of money has been worth it, he said.<sup>94</sup>

### The *Nahimov* (I)

On occasion, his generosity took unexpected forms. A Russian battleship called the *Nahimov* had sunk on the high seas not far from the Japanese coast during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5. For a long time it had been rumored that it had a vast treasure on board. Hearing of this, Sasakawa embarked on a quest "to solve a problem that no one else dares to tackle." The project cost a small fortune but he put up 3 billion yen (roughly \$25 million) of his own money to recover the ship. Ori-

ginally, the cost was estimated at 3 billion yen, but it was said that he ended up pouring 5 billion or even 10 billion yen into the project.

Sasakawa explained:

If we succeed in recovering a huge treasure, we might be able to spend one trillion yen a year for twenty years on combating leprosy, two trillion yen a year for twenty years on the eradication of parasitic worms, and even two trillion yen for twenty years on bringing to an end forever war and to its incalculable losses.

I put up 3 billion yen. If it is lost, it is entirely my loss. If there is a profit to be had let it all be used for the benefit of humankind in addition to the purposes mentioned above. I have no intention of taking a single yen for myself. Even if I lose that 3 billion yen, that's just seventy cents a head given the global population of 4.4 billion. If I fail to pull up a treasure horde from the ship, we can all have a good laugh! Laughter brings luck and your circulation will benefit. It is a good investment.<sup>95</sup>

### The *Nahimov* (II)

This was not the whole story, however. There was another reason for Sasakawa to have spent heavily on the recovery of the *Nahimov*. And here he briefly reentered the realm of politics and statecraft, or tried to. His idea was to encourage the return to Japan of “the northern territories,” the four small islands off the coast of Hokkaido seized by the Soviet Union in 1945 at the end of World War Two. Rightly or wrongly, foolishly or otherwise, Sasakawa is said to have believed that the territorial question should be settled, both as a matter of historical justice and to improve Japan-Soviet relations. Sasakawa was passionately interested in having the “northern territories” returned, and in his mind perhaps, naively, the salvage of the ship could be a good step toward getting these islands back.

“What must be done to unify national opinion and focus the world’s gaze on the return of the ‘northern territories?’” Sasakawa asked.

I believe that the *Nahimov* provides a golden opportunity. But if all goes well with the salvage operation and we succeed in recovering the treasure, the Soviets will most certainly insist that it belonged to them and demand its return.

Sasakawa had thought of an answer to that. “The *Nahimov* is considered a trophy of the Russo-Japanese War,” he said, noting that the Soviets had made no claim at the time of an earlier attempt at salvage by

prewar politician and financier Kuhara Fusanosuke (1869-1965) and others.” Sasakawa was prepared to negotiate on a quid pro quo basis.

The *Nabimov* reputedly carried a vast cargo of gold ingots to cover the Russian Grand Fleet’s costs while sailing round the world from the Baltic to challenge Japan. If we are able to recover its treasures I would be happy to present them to our Soviet “brothers and sisters” to help in solving their food problems. In exchange, I would urge the return of the “northern territories” they took from us in 1945.

Sasakawa believed that the salvage of the *Nabimov* would bring the Soviets to the bargaining table, and invested his own resources to start the project.<sup>96</sup>

### The anchor that cost billions

As regards Sasakawa’s motivation, it is difficult to fathom which explanation is true. Both interpretations may serve to illustrate Sasakawa’s romantic nationalism and at the same time his ultimate lack of interest in amassing personal wealth. He was scrupulous in the matter of public funds. But, by contrast, he was careless when it came to his own money, and it seems that some who sought his influence cheated him. In the end, the salvage venture failed and apparently all he could recover was a rusted anchor. This item, “the anchor that cost Sasakawa billions of yen,” is exhibited in the Museum of Maritime Science. In sum, the *Nabimov* venture was a rare illustration of Sasakawa’s sometimes ill-conceived intentions.

Those who worked with Sasakawa for a long time almost without fail pointed out that on occasion he was cheated.<sup>97</sup> In fact, there was no one more prone than he to being cheated. It was not just a matter of the *Nabimov*, according to his staff.

Sasakawa, according to Yamamoto Eiichi, in spite of his reputation for being a man of immense wealth, left very little property when he died. In fact, mainly as a result of the unsuccessful *Nabimov* salvage operation, the family was left not with property but enormous unpaid debts. Ironically enough, I think, Sasakawa’s generous use of his own money for the public interest became a cause for suspicion. It may well be beyond anyone’s comprehension that an individual would spend billions of yen for the public good and expect nothing in return, and pick up all losses to boot. It is perhaps understandable that they drew the conclusion, however mistakenly, that Sasakawa was abusing his access to JSIF funds.

## VII

A question remains. Why, despite the broad range of contributions he made to society and the great gratitude expressed to him by those who benefited from his actions do so few people know of his life and achievements? The mass media and intellectuals in this country are extremely critical of him to this day. Why is this so? This hostility is an undeniable fact. I have attempted to elucidate its causes. It is perhaps worth pursuing the issue further.

Sasakawa was an idealist who believed in a world where “human beings are all brothers and sisters,” but he was at the same time a realist who saw that there are very few people who can be trusted in life.<sup>98</sup> Or, as his son Yohei put it, human beings are a mixture of good and bad after all, life is a tapestry of anomalies. As an example, Sasakawa felt not the slightest compunction about using the proceeds from public gambling for philanthropic ventures.

Sasakawa observed human foibles with amusement. Take, for example, something that he wrote apropos Yasuoka Masahiro, a scholar of the Wang Yang-ming school of Confucianism, who served as an adviser to successive prime ministers in Japan. Yasuoka fell in love in his latter years with a much younger woman. The media picked up on his scandalous passion, and his followers grieved that their teacher suffered from senility — how could a prudent person, such as he, have suddenly become so irresponsible? Sasakawa took a different position: a man who had led a quiet and exemplary life for decades should be congratulated on finding a person to love! When asked to contribute to a posthumous publication devoted to Yasuoka, Sasakawa wrote:

Yasuoka made news by getting married at an advanced age, but why make a fuss about it? Unlike me, he was an impeccable person of good conduct — it is silly to denounce him for falling in love. Without this love affair to end it, his life would have lacked something.<sup>99</sup>

### Transformed by the war

Sasakawa lived it up in his youth, but the war transformed him. From 1945 on he gave all his time, energy, and money to good causes.

I do not waste my time playing golf or going to parties, because that would mean stealing my precious time and energy. I mean time and energy that I should be using for my mission to better the world. I do not smoke. I drink a little at dinner for health reasons. I work nonstop. I never ease up, unless heaven sends me

repose and I am sick, and that seldom occurs.

Nowadays, I have an annual medical examination, and that is about the only time I pause for breath. At the same time, I make it a point to offer myself as a guinea pig for medical science. I ask my physician, Dr. Hinohara Shigeaki [chair of the International Society of Internal Medicine], to use my old body in any way for research. So, in the course of my examination, my cardiogram is taken and kept at the health center.<sup>100</sup>

### **Saving money on an actor**

He relished a disciplined way of life. To most people he came in contact with it was far too austere. Yet there was another side to him. Sasakawa was not one to apologize for his existence. He enjoyed himself making his notorious TV commercials, appearing with crowds of African children to portray the Green Revolution in action. His critics might shake their heads, but what did he care?

A recent work of literature may serve to illustrate Sasakawa's life. Hoshi Shinichi wrote a masterly short story with the title of "God of Fortune." It is the story of an ambitious man bent on becoming very rich, who signs a contract with a "god of fortune" who promises to bring him longevity and an unimaginable wealth. He sells his soul. He allows himself to be possessed by the god who takes control of him, forcing him to work day in, day out without rest or recreation, neither drinking nor smoking, nor watching TV, nor listening to the radio. If he enjoys himself this may hinder his drive to riches. In the end, the hero of the tale can bear it no longer. He breaks down and begs the god to allow him to eat well occasionally, if only for his health. The god, however, will not listen to him except for keeping his promise to let him live out his natural span of life in good health. "What have I done?" he laments.<sup>100</sup>

The life of the hero of the tale and that of Sasakawa are remarkably similar. The difference is that while the man in "God of Fortune" was forced to live an austere life, as dictated by the deity, in the case of Sasakawa, this was a life of his choosing. An austere lifestyle was right for him. He himself was a God of Fortune.

Sasakawa extended his thinking to everyone. He regarded it as ideal to live an austere life, and he made it a point to rebuff any criticism. "I have no fear of being exposed," he said.

I do nothing against my conscience.... We must all become world citizens who live for great causes and have the bigness of heart to support good deeds regardless of who initiates or sponsors them.

He challenged his opponents to be better caretakers of the planet.<sup>102</sup>

Sasakawa asked an audacious question: “Who created Shakyamuni or Christ?” According to him these founders of religion were “created by their jealous opponents.” He took pity on those who slandered him, he said, because he knew that those who despised the saints and men of virtue went down in history as nobodies. “Saints and men of virtue are not made by themselves,” he said.

I was once arrested and thrown into prison for three years in Osaka before the war, after jealous men wrote anonymous letters to the authorities denouncing me. I am what I am today because I met misfortune with a firm resolve... Those who have the spirit to survive adversity — and serve their fellow human beings — may become today’s saints, by leaving behind them memories that remain long after they die.<sup>103</sup>

### On missing martyrdom

Did Sasakawa set himself on a pedestal with the founders of Buddhism and of the Christian religion? There is no doubt he saw himself as a man of virtue, which is attested to by his numerous remarks along the lines above. Perhaps his biggest setback, one may say, was his failure to die a martyr’s death in Sugamo. After all, he had volunteered to be arrested with the aim of being indicted as a Class A war criminal, and he had prepared his own tomb in advance. Consciously or not he does seem to have had something of a martyrdom complex.

Sasakawa’s life after his release in 1948 may have seemed a bit of a letdown in his own eyes. Week after week, in the 1970s and 1980s, television viewers saw Sasakawa repeat the slogans, “One good deed a day,” “Respect your mother and father,” “The world is one family, and human beings are all brothers and sisters. Let’s all be friends,” “Do a big cleanup once a week” and “Lock your door and watch out for fire.” They are fine principles but may well have given the impression of somehow lacking punch after years of repetition. He was saved, largely because he remained a private citizen. But had he decided to reenter politics or to occupy a high government post, he could have incurred far crueler criticism than he experienced. Understandably, all too often his words were received with skepticism, as so much high-sounding hypocrisy.

In fact, Sasakawa led an ascetic life and was preoccupied with serving the peoples of the world as best he could. At the same time, he made a great success of his secular life. Especially in the postwar years, he was spiritually aloof from worldly matters such as building a fortune. Such a person is usually not successful in business. In other words, anyone who is a success soils his hands and cannot transcend secularity. People

respect ascetics for this reason. It is only human for intellectuals to suspect anyone who proclaims, as did Sasakawa, that he had “not told a single lie” since he was scolded by his parents during his first year at school.

Given that Sasakawa was using proceeds from public gambling on motorboat racing to fund his huge philanthropic initiatives even he could not have been completely free from the burden of living in both the secular and ascetic worlds. Living daily with this dilemma Sasakawa still managed to keep his hands clean. His resolve may have been reinforced by his decision not to return to politics after the war. As Max Weber put it, one who enters politics signs a contract with the devil. No wonder then that observers had mixed feelings about Sasakawa.

### **A novelist wonders**

Endo Shusaku (1923-96), a well-known Catholic novelist with a worldwide reputation, once suggested that Sasakawa’s fine deeds were not known about despite his frequent appearances on television commercials, sometimes wearing a naval captain’s uniform or waving the national flag. He thought that clowning of that type easily backfired in Japan. Sasakawa agreed with him, and in a recorded dialogue he told Endo that he realized people were perhaps jealous of him. Shrewdly, Endo said he did not think the problem was jealousy but something else. “People think there must be more to you than meets the eye. Some even suspect your whole life is an exercise in self-advertisement. Surely there must be a better way for you to communicate your goodwill.”<sup>104</sup>

Sasakawa seemed to invoke a sense of self-induced guilt in people around him. That he was selfless and uncompromisingly virtuous was almost a fault. Wise as he was in many ways, Sasakawa failed to understand this. Even the most humble prophet is unwelcome in his hometown and rejected in his time, Jesus had said. In the end Jesus died on the cross, betrayed by one of the twelve disciples. It took some time for his teachings to be widely followed.

In worldly terms Jesus was a failure, his short life a defeat. But his death made his transcendent spirit manifest. Sasakawa died at the ripe age of ninety-six crowned with worldly success (though he may have thought it premature having publicly declared he would live to be two hundred). It will probably take time for Sasakawa to be given fitting recognition in Japan.

Tsurumaki Yasuo who had conducted interviews with fourteen famous personalities including Sasakawa, wrote, “It is probable that few know the real Sasakawa.”<sup>105</sup> While this judgment is correct the fundamental cause of this failure lies not in Sasakawa’s negligence nor in the bias of the people (though this exists). For ordinary folk, and intellectu-

als in particular, seeking to understand Sasakawa leaves them feeling confused and uncomfortable.

Lastly, let us see what grounds there are for the many slanders Sasakawa suffered. To start with, that he was a Class A war criminal. Certainly, he was suspected of war crimes but was freed without ever having been formerly indicted. It is simply inconsistent for liberal intellectuals to accuse him while preaching that no one should be presumed guilty or punished on the grounds of mere suspicion.

Again, there is no substance to the belief that Sasakawa was a mastermind of the right wing. As I have written, he appeared a somewhat flamboyant figure in the prewar right wing movement but his People's Patriotic Party had never been in the mainstream. There is little evidence that he engaged in right-wing activities after the war. A certain political critic once asked Sasakawa to support an anticommunist campaign radio program. Sasakawa declined. "You know," he said, "some of our motorboat racing customers are members of the Communist Party."<sup>106</sup> Sasakawa was not one to support something just because it bore an anticommunist label.

The author of *Dai Uyoku Shi* [the Great History of the Right Wing], the most systematic catalogue of the right-wing movement from the Meiji Restoration to the postwar period, lists in his acknowledgments the names of many right-wing leaders. Fuji Yoshio's name appears but no where is Sasakawa's to be found. Ino Kenji, a biographer of Kodama Yoshio, cites from Nago Urataro's *Nihon no Uyoku* [Japan's Rightwing], published by Sanichi Shobo, a passage stating that no one would object to naming Yasuoka Masahiro, Miura Yoshikazu, and Kodama Yoshio as three main leaders of the postwar right-wing movement.<sup>107</sup> The only exception may have been Sasakawa's brief involvement with the International Anti-communist League (Kokusai Shokyo Rengo) until unconvinced, he parted from Sun Myung Moon.

It is not clear what is meant by Japan's kuromaku (masterminds) and dons, or what they actually do. It is even difficult to know to what extent such activities apply to Sasakawa. By custom kuromaku is someone powerful who stays behind the scenes, and a don a person who exercises dominant influence in a certain field. Both kuromaku and dons are shadowy figures with suspicious characters. No matter how powerful a prime minister or president, he would not be regarded as a don if legitimately elected in a democratic country. Documents, even if they existed, recording clandestine activities of dons are usually not available to the outsiders. So there is no way of knowing if a person is a don. Uemae Junichiro called Sasakawa a chatterbox mastermind. This is an oxymoron of a kind as the hallmark of a mastermind is to be incognito. In most cases kuromaku or dons are created much the same way as conspiracy theories to satisfy suspicious minds by simplifying complex realities.

Where the public activities of Sasakawa are concerned there are plenty of materials that show him to be most unlike a *kuromaku*. In studying Sasakawa the most difficult question is to know how he came to amass such a great private fortune. It is said that he did it through successful dealings in stocks and commodities trading. That probably is true, but given the untransparent nature of these markets in Japan it is not possible to shed light on the details. It is a fact, however, that not once has Sasakawa's name been cited in all political scandals of his time. It is safe to say that he did not make his fortune in collusion with powerful politicians.

Given Sasakawa's intense sense of mission and self-confidence and extreme loyalty shown by those around him, it is understandable that he gave the impression of being full of himself and given to self-aggrandisement. However, in the course of my research, there is no evidence that Sasakawa sought honor or status. It is a mean-spirited and suspicious person who sneers at Sasakawa for giving away his money in order to earn a Nobel Peace Prize. Having once given up his life by submitting himself to imprisonment in Sugamo he has ceased to crave honor and distinction, as he tirelessly stressed, at least after the war.

How long will it take this unselfish man burdened by his image of wealth and worldly success to be recognized in his own country for what he was?

### Notes

1. Abe Shinnosuke, ed., *Gendai Nihon Jinbutsuron* [Contemporary Japanese personality portraits] (Tokyo: Kawadeshobo, 1952), 260-61.
2. Paula Daventry, ed., 2d ed., *Sasakawa: The Warrior for Peace, the Global Philanthropist* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1987), 68.
3. *Ibid.*, 66.
4. Zenkoku Motaboto Kyosokai Rengokai, ed., *Motaboto 30 Nenshi: Sosoki ben* [History of thirty years of motorboat racing: The beginnings] (Fukuoka: Zenkoku Motaboto Kyosokai, The Federation of Motorboat Racing Associations, Bulletin, 1981), 5.
5. *Ibid.*, 4.
6. *Nihon Senpaku Shinkokai 30 nen no Ayumi* [History of thirty years of Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation], 1.
7. Zenkoku Motaboto Kyosokai Rengokai, *Topikkusu ben* [History of thirty years of motorboat racing: Topics], 2.
8. Zenkoku Motaboto Kyosokai Kyogikai [Japan Motorboat Racing Operators' Council], ed., *Motaboto Kyosobo Kokkai Gijiroku* [Motorboat Racing Law Parliamentary minutes], Zenkoku Motaboto Kyososekokai Kyogikai, 1979, 5.
9. *Ibid.*, 75.
10. *Ibid.*, 97, 20.
11. *Ibid.*, 40.

12. Ibid., 47.
13. Ibid., 25.
14. Ibid., 47.
15. Daventry, *Sasakawa: Warrior for Peace*, 68.
16. Motorboat Racing Law Parliamentary Minutes, 1979, 245ff.
17. Ibid., 328.
18. Zenkoku Motaboto Kyosokai Rengokai, ed., *Motaboto 30 Nenshi: Topikkusu ben*, 22.
19. Ibid., 75-76.
20. Ibid., 53-54.
21. Zenkoku Motaboto Kyosokai Rengokai, ed., *Motaboto 30 Nenshi: Sosoki ben*, 21, quoting Marui Kan'ichi, assistant, administrative section, Ships Bureau, Ministry of Transport.
22. Ibid. 21, quoting Tsuboi Kurotake, Maritime Coordinating Director General, Maritime Bureau, Ministry of Transport.
23. Sasakawa Yohei, *Chie Aru Mono wa Chie de Tsumazuku: Doro wo Kabutte koso* [A little knowledge can ruin a man: Be prepared to take the blame] (Tokyo: Crest, 1996), 84, 88.
24. Ibid., 89.
25. Tsurumaki Yasuo, *Zaidan no Keizaigaku: Shirarezaru Nihon Senpaku Shinkokai no 30 Nen wo Kensho Suru* [Economics of the JSI Foundation: Verifying unknown aspects of the Foundation's thirty years] (Tokyo: IN Press, 1993), 109-10.
26. Ibid., 112-13, 114-15.
27. *History of thirty years of motorboat racing: The beginnings*, 15ff.
28. Ibid., 17-19.
29. *History of thirty years of motorboat racing: Topics*, 5.
30. Kageyama Yukio interviewed by the author, 13 August 1997.
31. *History of thirty years of motorboat racing: Topics*, 7.
32. *History of thirty years of motorboat racing: The beginnings*, 25.
33. Zenkoku Motaboto Kyosokai Rengokai, ed. *1981-90 Motaboto Kyo-so Nenshi: Kyotei Gannen karano Ayumi* [History of motorboat racing, 1981-90] (Fukuoka: Zenkoku Motaboto Kyosokai Rengokai, 1991), 5.
34. Daventry, *Sasakawa: Warrior for Peace*, 68-69; and Takei Buhei, interviewed by the author, 3 May 1997.
35. Zenkoku Motaboto Kyosokai Rengokai, ed. *1981-90, Motaboto Kyo-so Nenshi*, 5.
36. Sasakawa Yohei, *Chie Aru Mono wa Chie de Tsumazuku*, 88-89.
37. Sasakawa Ryoichi, "Watashi no Teigen: Minshushugi no Mokuteki wa 'Kokuri Minpuku'" [My proposal: The object of democracy is to "Promote national interests and the welfare of the people"] *Zenkoku Motaboto Kyosokai Rengokai Kaiho* [Bulletin of the Federation of All-Japan Motorboat Racing Associations], 1 January 1976 Issue.
38. Sasakawa Ryoichi, "'Watashi no Teigen: 'Jinmei' Atteno 'Jinken Soncho'" [My proposal: "Human life comes before human rights"], *Zenkoku Motaboto Kyosokai Rengokai Kaiho*, 1 April 1978.

39. Aki Yoshiharu, interviewed by the author, 20 June 1997.
40. *Motorboat Racing: Topics*, 8.
41. *Ibid.*, 8.
42. *Ibid.*, 12.
43. *Ibid.*, 25.
44. *Ibid.*, 32.
45. *Ibid.*
46. *Ibid.*, 29.
47. Sasakawa Yohei, *Chie Aru Mono wa Chie de Tsumazuku*, 88.
48. Aki Yoshiharu, interviewed by the author, 20 June 1997.
49. *Thirty Years of Motorboat Racing: The Beginnings*, 23.
50. *Ibid.*, 13.
51. Parliamentary Minutes on Motorboat Racing Law, 339, 497ff.
52. *Ibid.*, 617.
53. *Ibid.*, 717ff.
54. Nihon Senpaku Shinkokai [Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation], ed. *Nihon Senpaku Shinkokai 30 Nen no Ayumi* [Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation Thirty-year history] (Tokyo: Nihon Senpaku Shinkokai, 1992), 9.
55. Parliamentary Minutes on Federation of Motorboat Racing Law, 845ff.
56. *Ibid.*, 769ff.
57. *History of Motorboat Racing, 1981-90.* See opening dialog between Hayashi Junji (administrative vice minister of transportation from 1989) and Sasakawa Yohei, and specifically remarks by Hayashi Junji.
58. *Ibid.*
59. Sasakawa Ryoichi, *Jinrui Mina Kyodai* [Human beings are all brothers and sisters] (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1985), 125-26.
60. Ino Kenji, "Ichinichi Ichizen to Sasakawa Jimmyaku" [Doing one good deed a day, a JSIF slogan, and Sasakawa connection], *Shimpyo*, December 1977, 23-24.
61. Sasakawa Ryoichi, *Jinrui Mina Kyodai*, 123-24.
62. Takayama Masayuki, "Takayama Masayuki no Ikenjizai" [Takayama Masayuki has a frechand dissent," *Sankei Shimbun*, 25 April 1998.
63. Jimmy Carter, in an interview by the author, 13 March 1998.
64. Sasakawa Ryoichi, *Kono Keisho wa Nariyamazu* [The alarm bell never stops] (Tokyo: Shirakawashoin, 1981), 35.
65. Sasakawa Ryoichi, *Jinrui Mina Kyodai*, 141-42.
66. Nishibe Tsutomu Susumu, "Gyoseikaikaku no Genri: Kogyosei, Kokueki, and Gyoseigaku" [Principles of administrative reform: Its public nature, national interest and public administration," *Seiron*, April 1997.
67. Sasakawa Yohei, *Chie Aru Mono wa Chie de Tsumazuku*, 183-84.
68. *Ibid.*, 184.
69. Sasakawa Ryoichi, "Watashi no Teigen: Koeikyogi wa 'Hitsuyoaku': Sansho wa Shiso Toitsu wo" [My proposal: Public sports are "a necessary evil."

Three ministries should standardize their policies], *Zenkoku Motaboto Kyosokai Rengokai Kaiho*, 1 April 1973 Issue.

70. Shigemitsu Mamoru, "Shigemitsu Mamoru Kankei Bunsho" [Shigemitsu papers]. Unpublished documents kept at Kensei Kinen-kan, nos. 3A-115, dates unknown.

71. *History of Thirty Years of Motorboat Racing: Topics*, 40.

72. Sasakawa Yohei, *Chie Aru Mono wa Chie de Tsumazuku*, 89.

73. *History of Motorboat Racing, 1981-90*, 94.

74. Sasakawa Yohei, *Gaimusbo no Shiranai Sekai no "Sugao"* ["Real world" unknown to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], Sankei Shimbun News Service, 1998), 58-59.

75. Jimmy Carter, interviewed by the author, 13 March 1998.

76. Sasakawa Ryoichi, *Jinrui Mina Kyodai*, 230-31.

77. *Thirty-Year History of Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation* (Tokyo: JSIF, 1992), 188.

78. Sasakawa Yohei, *Chie Aru Mono wa Chie de Tsumazuku*, 189.

79. *Ibid.*, 189-90.

80. *Ibid.*, 192.

81. *Ibid.*, 193.

82. *Ibid.*, 193-94.

83. Yamamoto Eiichi, *Yomigaere Afurika no Daichi: Sasakawa Global 2000 no Kisekii* [Rise Africa: Sasakawa global 2000] (Tokyo: Daiamondosha, 1997), 46.

84. Nihon Senpaku Shinkokai, *Nihon Senpaku Shinkokai 30 Nen no Ayumi*, 231-32.

85. Yamamoto, *Yomigaere Afurika no Daichi*, 126-28.

86. *Ibid.*, 133.

87. *Ibid.*, 135.

88. *Ibid.*, 219-20.

89. Nihon Senpaku Shinkokai, *Nihon Senpaku Shinkokai 30 Nen no Ayumi*, 136-37.

90. Kamiyama Eiichi, interviewed by the author, 8 August 1997.

91. Tamayama Kazuo and John Nunneley, *Tales by Japanese Soldiers of the Burma Campaign, 1942-1945* (London: Cassell, 2000), 6.

92. *Ibid.*, 9.

93. Tsurumaki, *Kaikaku no Jidai*, 26.

94. Sasakawa, *Kono Keisbo wa Nariyamazu*, 30.

95. *Ibid.*, 31.

96. Sasakawa, *Jinrui Mina Kyodai*, 19-20.

97. Kageyama Yukio, Sanjo Nobuhiro, Hashizume Tokuomi, Okitsu Yoshiaki, and Morimoto Kazuo, interviewed by the author, 13 August 1997.

98. Sasakawa Yohei, *Chie Aru Mono wa Chie de Tsumazuku*, 78-80.

99. *Ibid.*, 170.

100. Sasakawa, *Jinrui Mina Kyodai*, 202-3.

101. Hoshi Shinichi, *Yosei Haikyu Gaisha* [Fairy distribution enterprise] (Tokyo: Hayakawa Bunko, 1973), 9-15.

102. Sasakawa, *Kono Keisho wa Nariyamazu*, 74-76.
103. *Ibid.*, 242.
104. Tsurumaki, *Kaikaku no Jidai*, 51.
105. *Ibid.*, 321.
106. Sasakawa Yohei, *Chie arumono wa chie de tsumazuku*, 147-48.
107. Ino Kenji, *Gendai no Kuromaku: Kodama Yoshio no Kyoizou to Jitsuzou* [Contemporary mastermind: Kodama Yoshio's false and true images] (Tokyo: Soukon Shuppan, 1970), 7.

## Postscript

I SHALL NOT BE SURPRISED if not a few readers find me excessively lenient toward Sasakawa Ryoichi. After all, three years after his death the media in Japan continues to put him down.

Not long ago, *Shukan Shincho*, a weekly magazine, published a special issue on one hundred Japanese of the twentieth century — including among them Sasakawa Ryoichi, Kodama Yoshio, and Osano Kenji. These three appeared on the same page. The magazine noted that, late in life, Sasakawa had the habit of appearing in TV ads that called for viewers to perform “one good deed a day.” However, he had been an outright right-wing nationalist prior to World War Two and then had been incarcerated in jail after the war ended as a Class A war criminal suspect, along with Kodama and Kishi Nobusuke. After the war, the magazine continued, he took on the chairmanship of the newly created Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation, and he built up his position in politics behind the scenes, using huge funds he obtained from organizing motorboat racing. Furthermore, he helped the Unification Church’s Rev. Sun Myung Moon make inroads into Japan, serving as an advisor to him. In 1978 he was awarded a First Class Order of Sacred Treasure, thereby provoking protest.<sup>1</sup>

Why succumb to bias? I prefer to consider Sasakawa’s actual words and deeds, as I found them in the course of research. I warmed to him — his words rang out, as I read them day after day. I never met him, but some who did and who may be regarded as completely independent in their attitudes — Endo Shusaku, the Catholic novelist, and Oshima Nagisa, the film director — quite simply liked him.<sup>2</sup>

I received help from many people in preparing this volume. I would like to thank the Nippon Foundation and its president, Sasakawa Yohei. He gave me free access to papers in the possession of the family and the foundation. I thank also managing director Utagawa Reizo and the foundation’s advisor Torii Keiichi, as well as Funagoshi Makoto, the head of the secretariat. They gave me access to the materials I needed

and arranged interviews. I received help from Muto Michiko, subchief of general affairs, in making copies of documents and other matters.

Let me express my sincere gratitude to these people and to all those who generously shared what they knew of Sasakawa (please refer to the list of interviews). *Chuo Koron*'s chief managing director, Hirabayashi Takashi, and magazine editor-in-chief, Yukawa Yukiko, and also librarian, Hasegawa Hiroshi, were unfailingly patient, when I let slip my deadlines; they encouraged me and gave me the benefit of their comments. Without their cooperation and that of many others I have not named here I would have been unable to complete my work, given my limited time and physical strength.

My eldest son, Takeshi, a writer, helped me with the book — and with the typing. I make the traditional disclaimer. I alone am responsible for this work.

May 1998  
Sato Seizaburo

### Notes

1. See *Shukan Shincho*, 30 April 1998.
2. See the work by Tsurumaki Yasuo, *Kaikaku no Jidai* [An era of reform] (Tokyo: IN Press, 1989), 304, for meetings between Sasakawa and thirteen people from various walks of life.

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## List of Interviews

Date	Interviewee	Location
3 May 1997	Nagata Shina, a relative of Sasakawa Ryoichi on his mother's side	at home in Mikuni
	Sasakawa Shizuko, wife of brother Shunji	at home in Kosaka
	Hiroko, second daughter	same place
	Michiko, third daughter	same place
	Nakai Takebei, former mayor of Minoo	at home in Minoo
	Morimoto Kazuo, general affairs manager, Osaka Motorboat Racing Association	in the car in Osaka City
4 May 1997	Sasakawa Kazue, family member	at home in Ibaragi
	Sasakawa Yoshiko, Ryoichi's younger sister	at home in Onohara
	Okitsu Yoshiaki, Sasakawa Yoshiko's son-in-law	same as above
	Kisee, Sasakawa Yoshiko's daughter	same as above
	Uojima Kosaku, Ryoichi's childhood friend	at home in Onohara
	Sasakawa Teruyo, oldest daughter of Ryohei, Ryoichi's younger brother	at home in Minoo
	Morimoto Kazuo, general affairs manager, Osaka Motorboat Racing Association	in the car in Osaka City

16 June 1997	Hinohara Shigeaki, president, St. Luke's International Hospital	in his office at the hospital
20 June 1997	Aki Yoshiharu, chairman, Japan Motorboat Racers Federation	at the Federation office
8 August 1997	Kamiyama Shoichi, president, Japan Maritime Science Promotion Foundation	reception room, Maritime Museum
13 August 1997	Kageyama Yukio, chairman, Osaka Motorboat Racing Association	Chinzan-so, Toranomom
	Sanjo Nobuhiro, former executive manager, Federation of All Japan Motorboat Associations, president, Motorboat Racing Modernization Center	Chinzan-so, Toranomom
	Hashizume Tokuomi, managing director, Motorboat Racing Modernization Center	Chinzan-so, Toranomom
	Okitsu Yoshiaki, Sasakawa Yoshiko's son-in-law	Chinzan-so, Toranomom
	Morimoto Kazuo, general affairs manager, Osaka Motorboat Racing Association	Chinzan-so, Toranomom
14 August 1997	Sasakawa Katsumasa, Ryoichi's oldest son	executive meeting room, the Nippon Foundation
	Sasakawa Shizue, wife	at home in Sengoku
21 August 1997	Sasakawa Yohei, Ryoichi's third son	president's room, the Nippon Foundation
19 September 1997	Sasakawa Takashi, Ryoichi's second son	Takashi's office in Ginza
14 November 1997	Sasakawa Shizue, wife	at home in Sengoku
12 December 1997	Azumazeki Daigoro, former Sumo champion Takamiyama	reception room at his stable
??	Mrs. Kazue	??
22 January 1998	Yoshida Hironobu, chief Buddhist priest, Ninwaji, the head temple of Buddhist sect	reception room, the Nippon Foundation
	Kuranobu Ryugen, executive officer, Ninwaji temple	same place as above

	Horikawa Wakai, officer, Ninna-ji temple	same place
21 February 1998	Nakayama Tatsuo, former director, general affairs, Federation of All Japan Motorboat Racing Associations	executive meeting room, the Nippon Foundation
??	Former executive director, former Japan Motorboat Association	??
5 February 1998	Shibuichi Mitsuo, former staff, Federation of All Japan Motorboat Associations	same place
	Sohma Yukika, daughter, Ozaki Yukio, vice chairman, Ozaki Yukio Memorial Foundation	conference room, Ozaki Yukio Memorial Foundation
9 February 1998	Endo Minoru, composer	Endo Minoru office, Shinjuku
	Ide Hiromasa, former staff, Federation of All Japan Motorboat Associations, composer, same as above	
13 March 1998	Jimmy Carter, former US president	guest room, the Nippon Foundation
22 April 1998	Robin Chandra Duke, chairperson, Population Action International, director, US-Japan Foundation	Hotel Okura
	Sengoku Setsuko, former staff, the Nippon Foundation; director, Tokyo Office, Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation	Hotel Okura

## Life of Sasakawa Ryoichi in Chronological Order

<b>Year</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>National and World Events</b>
1899	0	Born, Toyokawa Village, Mishima County, Osaka Prefecture, 4 May	Boxer Rebellion in China
1901	2	Brother Shunji born, 20 February	
1904	5		Russo-Japanese War starts, 10 February
1906	7	Enrolled at Toyokawa Ordinary Primary School, April	
1910	11		Annexation of Korea by Japan, 22 August
1911	12	Sister Yoshiko born, 30 March	
	13	Graduates Ordinary Primary School Enrolls in Advanced Primary School	
1914	15	Graduates Advanced Primary School Enrolls in Auxiliary Agricultural School	World War One starts, 28 July

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| 1915 | 16 | Brother Ryohei born, 2 January<br>Graduates from Auxiliary Agricultural School.<br>Trains under Abbot Harada at Shonenji temple near home |   |
| 1916 | 17 | Studies flying and maintenance of aircraft under pilot Nishide Kiyoshi for two years  |   |
| 1917 | 18 |   | October Revolution in Russia, 7 November  |
| 1918 | 19 | Passes conscription examination   | World War One ends, 11 November   |
| 1919 | 20 | Serves as a private army combat engineer, attached to Second Air Battalion based at Kagamihara  | Independence movement in Korea<br>Antigovernment struggle in China                          |
| 1921 | 22 | Discharged on account of right shoulder broken by propeller   | Prime Minister Hara Takashi assassinated, 4 November  |
| 1922 | 23 | Father, Tsurukichi, dies, 18 January  | Washington Naval Treaty signed, 6 February<br>Anglo-Japanese Alliance abrogated             |
| 1923 | 24 |   | Great Kanto Earthquake, 1 September   |
| 1925 | 26 | Elected Toyokawa Village Assemblyman, serves one four-year term<br><br>Starts commodity trading at Dojima, Osaka, makes a fortune         | <i>Security Maintenance Law</i> , 19 March<br><br><i>Male Suffrage Law</i> passed, 29 March |
| 1926 | 27 | President of National Defense Co. on request<br>Pays for the publication of its monthly organ, <i>Kokubo</i>                              |   |

1927	28	Establishes Ichikawa Udaemon Productions, becomes its president	Financial crash in Japan, 15 March
1929	30		Wall Street crash, 24 October
1930	31		London Naval Treaty signed, 22 April Prime Minister Hamaguchi injured in assassination plot, 14 November
1931	32	Establishes National People's Party; president, 10 March Warns Mitsui Zaibatsu against purchasing US dollars, 5 November Advises Prime Minister Inukai on Manchurian policies, 17 December	Manchurian Incident erupts, 18 September

- 1932 33 Visits Manchuria to comfort soldiers, 21 March-9 April, from Osaka  
 Visits Shanghai to comfort officers badly injured by terrorist attack, as well as Minister Shigemitsu, 13 May  
 Establishes National Volunteer Flying Unit; commander, 20 May  
 Sasakawa brings a charge against Takahashi in Tokyo District Court for breach of trust over Meiji Sugar Co. tax evasion, 22 August  
 First son, Katsumasa born, 23 August  
 Establishes National People's Transportation Union; president, 6 November  
 Establishes National People's Aviation Union; president, November  
 Establishes National People's Party (NPP) Kanto Headquarters, November
- 1933 34 National Rally against arms reduction; chairman, 11 November  
 Offers the Army an airfield to be completed in Nakakochi County, Osaka, the following year, November
- 1934 35 Opening of Osaka Air-Defense Field, 19 June  
 Presents the airfield to the Army, 7 September  
 Operates mining businesses around the country
- Assassinations of former finance minister, Inoue, 9 February, and Mitsui and Co. president, Dan Takuma, 5 March
- Manchurian State established, 1 March  
 Prime Minister Inukai assassinated  
 May 15 Incident  
 Lytton Commission issues its report, October
- Hitler assumes government, 30 January  
 Japan withdraws from the League of Nations, 27 March

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| 1935 | 36 | NPP Kanto HQs Voluntary Unit commander<br>Fuji attacks home of Ichiki, chair of the Privy Council for his support of the theory of the emperor being an organ of the state, March<br>Sasakawa and 9 NPP leasers arrested for extortion, 7-8 August<br>Second son, Takashi, born, 5 October | Movement denouncing “organ theory” rises, 18 February<br>Italy attacks Ethiopia, 3 October   |
| 1938 |    | Acquitted by the court of first instance, December   | <i>National Mobilization Law</i> proclaimed, 1 April   |
| 1939 | 40 | Third son, Yohei, born, 8 January<br>Found guilty by an appellate court, 11 December<br>Flies to Italy in <i>Yamato</i> , meets Mussolini, January   | Nomonhan Incident between USSR and Japan, 12 May<br>Second World War starts, 1 September   |
| 1941 | 42 | Supreme Court returns the case, appellate court acquits, 9 August  | “The Pacific War” begins, 8 December   |
| 1942 | 43 | Elected to the House of Representatives as a non-government-sponsored candidate in Imperial Rule Assistance Election, April  | Battle of Midway, 5 June   |
| 1945 | 46 | Enters Sugamo Prison as a Class A war criminal suspect, 11 December  | Great air raid over Tokyo, 9 March<br>US troops land on mainland Okinawa, 1 April<br>Germany surrenders, 7 May<br>Potsdam Declaration against Japan, 26 July<br>Atom bomb dropped over Hiroshima, 6 August<br>USSR declares war against Japan, 8 August<br>Japanese government accepts Potsdam Declaration, 14 August<br>World War Two ends, 15 August |

- 1946 47 A bill of indictment against twenty-eight suspected Class A war criminals, 28 April  
Promulgation of the Constitution of Japan, 3 November
- 1948 49 Released from Sugamo Prison, 24 December  
Engages in organizing motorboat racing
- 1949 50
- 1950 51
- 1951 52 *Motorboat Racing Law*, June
- 1952 53 Successfully petitions General Chiang Kaishek to pardon war criminals related to Republic of China (ROC)  
Inaugurates motorboat race in Omura, 6-8 April
- 1953 54 Osaka Motorboat Racing Association established, February  
Federation of All Japan Motorboat Racing Associations established, April
- 1954 55
- 1955 56 Tokyo Motorboat Racing Association established, April
- Soviet Union blockades Berlin, 1 April
- NATO established, 4 April  
People's Republic of China (PRC) established, 1 October
- Korean War begins, 25 June  
Police Reserve Forces established, 10 August
- General Douglas MacArthur fired, 1 April  
Peace Treaty, Japan-US Security Treaty, 8 September, promulgated 1952, 28 April
- Stalin dies, 5 March  
Korean War ceasefire agreement, 27 July
- Defense Agency, *Self-Defense Forces Law*, 9 June  
*Time-limited Law on Bicycle Race*, 9 June
- Integration of Right and Left Wing Socialists, 13 October  
Liberal Democratic Party founded, 15 November

1956	57		Japan joins the United Nations, 18 December
1957	58		USSR successfully launches a satellite, 4 October
1958	59	Mother, Sasakawa Teru, dies, 17 January	
1959	60		Cuban revolution, 1 January
1960	61		Japan-US Security Treaty effective, 23 June
1961	62		Korean military coup d'état, 16 May
1962	63	Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation established, October	Cuban crisis, 22 October-20 November
1963	64	Made an honorary citizen of Minoo City, Osaka, January	John F. Kennedy assassinated, 22 November
1964	65	International War Memorial erected in Ibaragi City, Osaka, with his own money, April Association of War Memorial for All Victims established, August	Japan becomes a member of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Art. 8, 1 April Japan joins the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 28 April Tokyo Olympic Games, 10-24 October
1965	66		United States bombs North Vietnam, 7 February Japan-Korea Basic Treaty, 22 June Government bond issued, 19 November
1966	67	Uses own money to support building Philippines Culture Center and Philippines Veterans Center	Cultural Revolution in China begins, 16 May

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| 1967 | 68 | Establishes Japan Maritime Science Foundation, April<br>Establishes Aviation Industry Association, June  | European Community (EC) established, 1 July<br>ASEAN established, 8 August  |
| 1968 | 69 | Establishes Aviation Pollution Prevention Association, August (name changes to Airport Environment Association in April 1993)<br>Japan Poetry, Swordplay, Dancing Association established, October | University campus riots begin from Tokyo University, 29 January<br>Ogasawara Islands returned to Japan, 26 June   |
| 1969 | 70 | Establishes All Japan Karate Federation, January<br>Chairman, Japan Veterans Association   | US Spaceship <i>Apollo</i> lands on the moon, 20 July   |
| 1970 | 71 | Establishes World Karate Federation  | JAL <i>Yodo</i> hijacked, 31 March  |
| 1971 | 72 | Uses own money to head a delegation to collect remains of the war dead in New Guinea, January<br>Japan Award Association established, May<br>Establishes Aviation Safety Association, October      | Gold Standard discontinued, 15 August<br>PRC replaces ROC in the United Nations, 25 October                       |
| 1972 | 73 | Chinese Academy of Science bestows honorary doctorate of philosophy  | President Nixon visits China, 21-27 March, Okinawa reversion, 15 May, Japan-China relations resumed, 29 September |
| 1973 | 74 | Establishes Blue Sea and Green Land Foundation, March<br>Sasakawa Shunji dies, 30 June   | Vietnam Peace Accord, 27 January<br>Fourth Middle East War, 6 October<br>First oil crisis, 17 October             |

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| 1974 | 75 | Kingdom of Tonga, honorary<br>counsel general, January<br>Manila honorary citizen, March<br>Establishes Life Planning Center,<br>March<br>Establishes Japan National<br>Music Foundation (renamed<br>to Japan Musical Foundation,<br>1994), March<br>Central African Republic, hon-<br>orary counsel general, May<br>Establishes Sasakawa Memorial<br>Health Foundation, May<br>Establishes Federation of All Ja-<br>pan Kendo Dojo, October | Nixon resigns over Watergate,<br>8 August<br>Tanaka Kakuei resigns over<br>money scandals, 26<br>November        |
| 1975 | 76 | Establishes Japan Hotel Educa-<br>tion Center, March<br>Draper World Population Fund,<br>honorary founder, May<br>Managua City, Nicaragua, spe-<br>cial citizen, July<br>Establishes Japan Shipbuilding<br>Promotion Foundation (re-<br>named Ship and Ocean Foun-<br>dation in December)  | Vietnam War ends, 30 April   |
| 1976 | 77 |  | Lockheed scandal exposed,<br>6 February<br>Tanaka Kakuei arrested,<br>27 July<br>Mao Zedong dies, 9<br>September |
| 1977 | 78 |  | Two maritime laws promul-<br>gated: 12-mile territorial wa-<br>ters and 200-mile fishing<br>zone, 2 May          |

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| 1978 | 79 | Receives the First Class Order of the Sacred Treasure, May 9<br>Chairman of Japan Firefighters Association, May  | New Tokyo International Airport (Narita) opens, 20 May<br>Japan-China Peace and Friendship Treaty signed, 12 August<br>OPEC decides to boost crude oil prices, second oil crisis, 16 December<br>Vietnamese Army invades Cambodia, 25 December |
| 1979 | 80 | Appointed admiral of the State of Georgia, January<br>Establishes UNESCO Peace Education Party, November   | US-China relations normalized, 1 January<br>Chinese Army invades Vietnam, 17 February<br>Israel and Egypt sign peace accord, 26 March<br>Pak Chunghee assassinated, 26 October   |
| 1980 | 81 | Made honorary citizen of the City of Los Angeles, May  | Iran-Iraq War starts, 9 September<br>Second Ad Hoc Administrative Reform Council established, 5 December   |
| 1982 | 83 | Sasakawa Ryohei dies, 15 April<br>Receives UN Peace Award, 30 April<br>Establishes UN Sasakawa Environment Award, May<br>Receives honorary doctor of philosophy from ROK Yenko University, June<br>Establishes World Volunteer Firefighters Federation, December | Tokyo Gold Exchange established, 23 March<br>500 yen coin issued, 1 April  |
| 1983 | 84 | Made honorary citizen of the State of Oklahoma, February<br>Receives Linus Pauling Humanitarian Award, February<br>Receives honorary doctor of law degree from Long Island University, Southampton College, May  | Yasuoka Seitoku dies, 13 December  |

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| 1983<br>(cont'd) | 84 | <p>Receives Helen Keller International Award, May</p> <p>Made honorary citizen of the State of Washington, September</p> <p>Made first class honorary citizen of the City of Seattle, September</p> <p>Made general of the State of Washington honor guard, September</p> <p>State of Washington names 24 September, "Sasakawa Ryoichi Day"</p> <p>City of Seattle names 30 September, "Sasakawa Ryoichi Day"</p> |  |
| 1984             | 85 | <p>Establishes UN Sasakawa Health Award, May</p> <p>Establishes US-Japan Foundation, May</p>  | <p>Kodama Yoshio dies, 17 January</p> <p>Establishes Ad Hoc Education Council, 21 August</p>   |
| 1985             | 86 | <p>Establishes Federation of Japan Gate Ball, January</p> <p>Sasakawa Memorial Health</p> <p>Establishes Scandinavia Japan Sasakawa Foundation, March</p> <p>Establishes Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation, May</p> <p>Made honorary citizen of Nice, France, July</p> <p>Establishes World Federation of Gate Ball, September</p>  | <p>Gorbachev becomes general secretary of USSR Communist Party, 11 March</p> <p>Privatization of Telephone and Telegraph Co., Japan Tobacco, 1 April</p>   |
| 1986             | 87 | <p>Made honorary citizen of Sydney, Australia, May</p> <p>Receives Martin Luther King Jr. Nonviolent Humanitarian Award, May</p> <p>Establishes UNDRO Sasakawa UN Disaster Prevention Award, June</p>   | <p>Marcos regime collapses and Corazon Aquino is made president of the Philippines, 22-25 February</p> <p>Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident, 26 April</p> <p>Diet passes eight laws to split up the National Railways, 28 October</p> |

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| 1987 | 88 | <p>Made honorary ambassador by mayor of Cairns, Australia, March</p> <p>Made honorary citizen of the state of Queensland, Australia, March</p> <p>Made honorary mayor of Honolulu, March</p> <p>Establishes Motorboat Safety Association, April</p> <p>Receives First Class Order of the Rising Sun, 8 May</p> <p>Made honorary citizen of Haifa, Israel, November</p> | <p>President Roh Taewoo declares democratization of the Republic of Korea, 29 June</p>  |
| 1988 | 89 | <p>Made honorary professor, Houston University Space Architecture, September</p> <p>Houston sets 6 September as "Sasakawa Ryoichi Day"</p> <p>Made honorary mayor of New Orleans, Louisiana, September</p> <p>New Orleans sets 7 September as "Sasakawa Ryoichi Day"</p>   | <p>Recruit scandal exposed, 5 July</p> <p>Diet passes law to introduce consumption tax, 24 December</p>   |
| 1989 | 90 | <p>Appointed WHO Goodwill Ambassador, May</p> <p>Bestowed honorary doctorate from Sussex University, U.K., 3 June</p>  | <p>Demise of Emperor Showa, 7 January</p> <p>Tiananmen Incident</p> <p>Anticommunist Solidarity wins overwhelming victory in Poland's first free election, 4 June</p> <p>Collapse of the Berlin Wall, 9 November</p> <p>Collapse of the communist regime follows in East Europe</p> |
| 1990 | 91 | <p>Establishes Japan-France Sasakawa Foundation, March</p> <p>Establishes Motorboat Racing Modernization Center, July</p> <p>Made honorary counsel of the {something missing}</p>  | <p>Iraqi Army begins offensive in Kuwait, 2 August</p> <p>Unification of East and West Germany, 3 October</p>   |

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| 1991 | 92 | <p>Made honorary citizen of São Paulo, Brazil, May</p> <p>Establishes Sasakawa Sports Foundation, June</p> | <p>US and multinational military force attacks Iraqi Army in Kuwait, 17 January</p> <p>Civil war in Yugoslavia, 6 May</p> <p>Soviet Conservatives coup d'état fails against Gorbachev, 19-21 August</p> <p>Soviet Communist Party dissolved, 24 August</p> <p>Three Baltic states declare independence, 26 August</p> <p>Collapse of the Soviet Union, 21 December</p> <p>Gorbachev resigns, 25 December</p> |
| 1992 | 93 | <p>Establishes International Sumo Federation, September</p>  | <p>Diet passes PKO Cooperation Law, 15 June</p> <p>Self Defense Forces dispatched to Cambodia, 17 September</p>  |
| 1993 | 94 | <p>Shiragiku Survivors' Association dissolved and memorial services discontinued</p>                       | <p>Liberal Democratic Party splits on the eve of general election, 21-23 June</p> <p>Non-LDP coalition government established with Japan New Party representative Hosokawa Morihiro as prime minister, 9 August</p>  |
| 1994 | 95 |  | <p>Diet passes <i>Electoral System Revision Law</i>, 28 January</p> <p>LDP, Japan Socialist Party, and Sakigake form a coalition government under Murayama Tomiichi, JSP chairman, 30 June</p>   |

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| 1995 | 96 | Sasakawa Ryoichi succumbs,<br>18 July<br>Private wake, 19 July<br>Wake, 20 July<br>Private funeral, 21 July<br>Third rank bestowed, 15 August<br>Public funeral and farewell,<br>14 September | Great Hanshin Earthquake,<br>17 January<br>Sarin gas attack in the Metro,<br>eleven dead, 20 March<br>Aum religious sect investi-<br>gated, 22 March |
| 1996 |    | First anniversary Buddhist me-<br>morial service held, 3 July   |  |
| 1997 |    | Chuo Koron Sha publishes<br><i>Sugamo Diary</i> , 10 February   |  |
| 1998 |    | Third anniversary Buddhist me-<br>morial service held, 18 July  |  |

**SATO SEIZABURO** was born in Tokyo in 1932. After receiving degrees in Literature and Law from Tokyo University, he taught in the Faculty of Law at Rikkyo University and then at his alma mater. He also taught at Keio and Saitama universities and was a vice rector of the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies. Professor Sato was chief researcher at the World Peace Research Institute and served as adviser to prime ministers Ohira Masayoshi and Nakasone Yasuhiro. His published works included “Shi no choyaku wo koete: Seiyo no Shogeki to Nihon” (About the impact of the West on Japan) and “Sasakawa Ryoichi kenkyu: ijigen kara no shisha” (A study of Sasakawa Ryoichi). Professor Sato died in 1999.

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