

軍民両用（デュアルユース）研究とは何か

— 科学者の使命と責任について*¹

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A Letter to Scientists — Deep Concerns about Dual-Use Research

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Abstract

You should know that, right now, not only scientists but every citizen of Japan faces some very serious questions: What is science? What is the role of a scientist? What is the role of a university? That right now, humanity is in the midst of an unprecedented scientific and technological revolution. Kurzweil predicted that we will reach Singularity, a transcendent point for humanity, in 2045. However, the day when machines surpass humans, the day when humans surpass humans, may come even faster. The internet revolution has spread all over the globe, stupefying the thinkers and philosophers alike. Power politics is raising its head in the world order. Seventy-one years after World War II, most of those who survived the war are gone, and even the memories of war are fading.

You should know that, before we noticed what was happening, the Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets came into force, the ban on arms exports was lifted, and finally, Legislation for Peace and Security was forced through, allowing Japan to exercise the right of collective self-defense, which is prohibited by the Constitution. Currently, the government is pushing for anti-conspiracy legislation closely resembling the pre-war Public Security Preservation Law. Quite literally, “Japan is Back.” The government also announced the creation of a special committee on national security, science and technology, aiming to promote military and civilian dual-use research. This is a demon returning, brandishing wads of money and pushing for defensive armament – in other words, military expansion – under the name of “dual-use.” Open your eyes and see! Isn’t this mobilization of respectable universities? In the past, the Empire of Japan used the pretext of protecting Manchuria’s interests to plunge into the Second Sino-Japanese War and then the Pacific War, claiming this was “defense.” Faced with the pressing need to reinforce the troops, in the end the military government resorted to student mobilization and even went as far as using suicide attack units. Doesn’t it seem that history is repeating itself, that what Japan is doing today exactly mirrors its war preparations of the past?

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You should know that in the time of war, scientists of all the countries involved made irreparable mistakes and committed crimes. Doctors from Kyushu Imperial University vivisected American prisoners of war, not to mention the deeds of Shiro Ishii, an army surgeon and Kyoto Imperial University graduate, who commanded Unit 731 in China. Albert Einstein advised President Franklin D. Roosevelt to speed up the development of the atomic bomb in order to get ahead of Nazi Germany. The Manhattan Project was launched, atomic bombs exploded over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the world changed. Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. Confucius says, “To err and not change one’s ways is to err indeed.” Some say scientists must meet the demands of society. That is definitely not so! Scientists contemplate reality and commit to humanity’s future happiness. Isn’t this the true mission of a scientist? Scientists must pursue the highest ideals of their times.

You should know about Einstein’s anguish in his later life. Oppenheimer’s last years. The essence of the Russell–Einstein Manifesto. It says, “Remember your humanity, and forget the rest.” “We urge them [the Governments of the world], consequently, to find peaceful means for the settlement of all matters of dispute between them.”

In February 1948, the World Federation of Scientific Workers adopted the Charter for Scientific Workers. “To study the underlying causes of war. To aid agencies seeking to prevent war and to build stable bases for peace.” These are the responsibilities of a scientist, his or her responsibilities as a human being to the world. Today, in the true Japanese spirit, we must reaffirm our resolutions as scientists and revisit the statements of the Science Council of Japan. “Do not perform scientific research for military purposes.” “Never engage in scientific research for the purposes of war.”

Key words

Dual-Use Research, Russell-Einstein Manifest, The Science Council of Japan, Mission and Responsibility of Scientist, Charter for Scientific Workers

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