

# **Memories**

**By**

**Former Prime Minister—Hashimoto Ryutaro**

As a child I would sometimes watch my late father cleaning our Japanese sword. I was very envious and would think of how when I grew up, I would clean it and be charmed by its beauty.

After the defeat of the war, due to the occupational forces' decree banning Japanese swords everywhere, my father surrendered his sword. It was never to be seen again. I will never forget how my child heart was truly broken.

Later, when I joined Keio University kendo club, I realized that making a beautiful Japanese sword is theoretically difficult—they must be able to cut well and not break. I began to wonder: how did ancient swordsmiths find the solution to these contradictions?

As I am originally from Okayama prefecture, Bizen-to are an enchanting reminder of my past. Recently, I heard there are modern craftsmen trying to revive the spirit of Bizen-to. When I heard that one of these craftsmen, Ono Yoshimitsu of Nigata prefecture, was to put on a display of his Bizen revival works in the birthplace of Bizen-to, my heart was filled with joy and anticipation.