PROPOSAL OF OPTIONAL TOUR

To 2012 INU Student Seminar and Master’s Summer School Participants:

Kure City, Hiroshima Prefecture, where Kure Credit Union has its headquarters, has developed as a town of Imperial Naval Force, and has built a numerous warships including the biggest battleship at that time, Yamato (Yamato means old name of Japan). Because of those facts, Kure had received a large-scale air raid during the War and a lot of citizens died.

The technology cultivated in war industries became the basis of post-war industries in Kure. Kure has developed as a town of manufacturing in a wide field like shipbuilding, the car, the semiconductor manufacturing equipment, and the log processing, etc.

Kure City has opened in 2005 a maritime museum called "Yamato museum". This museum, as its name suggests, exhibits a 1/10 scale elaborate model of the battleship Yamato at the center of the pavilion.

However, this museum is not made for justifying the war and the warship. Yamato sailed towards end of the war to Okinawa in the Ryukyu Island chain. Okinawa was the largest amphibious invasion of the Pacific campaign and the last major campaign of the Pacific War. Battleship Yamato, the largest warship ever built, accompanied by a cruiser Yahagi and eight destroyers, was dispatched to Okinawa on 6 April 1945, with no protective air cover. Yamato was reported to carry only enough fuel for a one-way trip to Okinawa. Her mission: beach herself at Okinawa and fight until eliminated. Yamato took 12 bombs and seven torpedo hits within two hours before it sank. Of Yamato's crew of 2,747, all but 23 officers and 246 enlisted men were lost. Losses to the Americans were 10 planes and 12 men. This was the last Japanese naval action of the war.

There are letters to the family, photographs, and the memoir who had to sail to one way mission. People will be also surprised to see the size and the damage of the air raid in Kure. On the other hand, the state-of-the-art technology installed in the warship was diverted to the camera and the communication industry of Japan after the war. The connection with the space industry such as rockets is also exhibited.

There is "Steal Whale pavilion" next to Yamato museum. This building houses a Japanese Maritime Self Defense submarine. The content of the exhibition is "Sea-mine sweeping" that the Maritime Self-Defense Force conducted under the peacekeeping operations in the Middle East.

Outline of schedule:
0800 Depart Higashi-Hiroshima
0925 Mini Cruise, Kure Port
1010 Back to the Port
1015 Yamato Museum
1130 Steal Whale Pavilion
1200 lunch
1300 Visit to a factory
1630 Departure
1800 Back to Higashi-Hiroshima

Cost: About 2,000 yen including lunch and the registration fee