



THE FUTURE OF AMERICA'S ALLIANCES IN NORTHEAST ASIA

EDITED BY MICHAEL H. ARMACOST AND DANIEL I. OKIMOTO

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ASIA-PACIFIC RESEARCH CENTER

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The Future of America's Alliances in Northeast Asia may be ordered from:
Brookings Institution Press
Department 029, Washington, DC 20042-0029, USA.
Tel. 1-800-275-1447 or 202-797-6258.
Fax: 202-797-2960 Attn: Order Dept.
Online: bookstore.brookings.edu

Asia-Pacific Research Center publications, 2004.
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First printing, 2004.
ISBN 1-931368-06-6

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JAPAN

THE JAPAN-US ALLIANCE IN EVOLUTION¹

Kuriyama Takakazu

The fifty-year-old Japan-US alliance² is going through a serious testing, the outcome of which is by no means certain. At issue is the dispatch of some one thousand troops of Japan's Self-Defense Force (SDF) to Iraq on noncombat missions. The necessary cabinet decision on the basic plan for the dispatch was made on December 9, 2004. The final go-ahead order for the ground troops has yet to be given as of this writing.

I. The War on Iraq

The issue has become increasingly contentious particularly since the loss of two Japanese diplomats on November 29. The tragedy caused a traumatic shock to the Japanese people. Public opinion is now overwhelmingly opposed to sending SDF troops to Iraq. The Japanese public seems willing to approve the dispatch of noncombat troops to engage in humanitarian and reconstruction aid. It is, however, extremely reluctant to support such a mission when there is considerable risk of troops being attacked by insurgents or terrorists and suffering casualties. Moreover, many Japanese are not convinced that the dispatch of troops under such circumstances is constitutional.³ They are asking, Does the alliance with the US require Japan to take on an out-of-area security role?⁴

Prime Minister Koizumi, who stresses that Japan's interests are best served by making the Japan-US alliance and international (multilateral) cooperation compatible and mutually reinforcing, has stood firmly with President Bush on the war against terrorism and the war on Iraq. But now, faced with mounting public pressure, how he deals with the issue of sending troops to Iraq will affect Japan's standing as America's ally and also as a responsible member of the international community.

II. The Original Treaty

The Japan-US alliance has always been the mainstay of the regional security structure in East Asia, which has served the strategic interests of both the United States and Japan.

The original security treaty, concluded in the midst of the Korean War, reflected the reality of the postwar bilateral relationship at the time: Japan's total dependence on the US for its own security as well as regional security in East Asia, or, to use the treaty term, the Far East. John Foster Dulles, who negotiated the

treaty, refused to give Japan a written defense commitment on the grounds that Japan lacked the capability to make its own contribution to collective defense.⁵ Under the terms of the treaty, the US was granted an unrestricted right to use its military bases in Japan. In addition, the peace treaty gave the US the exclusive right to administer Okinawa, which was considered of great strategic value.

The Yoshida government of Japan, after some resistance, finally yielded to the US demand to rearm and established the Self-Defense Force at a modest size (180,000 troops) in 1954. This was of course a complete reversal of US policy during the occupation to demilitarize Japan, which was reflected in the new postwar Japanese constitution.⁶ The reversal was necessitated by the Cold War. In retrospect, had it been possible for the Japanese government to amend the constitution to expressly allow the maintenance of the SDF, it would have avoided the need for the government to make tortuous interpretations of what the constitution actually meant. Amending the constitution, however, was not politically possible in light of the strong pacifism of the people, for whom World War II was a living experience. It would have also given rise to serious objections from Japan's neighbors which had been victims of its aggression.

III. 1960 and the New Treaty

1960 represented an important milestone in the history of the Japan-US alliance. It was the year the new security treaty replaced the original one. The conclusion of the new treaty marked the beginning of the long process of evolution of the alliance from a one-sided relationship of dependence toward a more balanced and mature relationship of shared responsibility.

What the Japanese side (the Kishi government) wanted to achieve by negotiating the new treaty was:

- first, to obtain a written US commitment to defend Japan against armed attack; and
- second, to place certain restrictions on the use of US military bases in Japan through a prior consultation mechanism.⁷

The US side (the Eisenhower administration) agreed to accommodate the Japanese position. Thus the new treaty represented for Japan a remarkable diplomatic success while what the US got in return was a better prospect of a stronger and more stable alliance relationship.

Yet Japan was rocked by large-scale anti-treaty demonstrations, which led to the last-minute cancellation of President Eisenhower's state visit and to Prime Minister Kishi's resignation.⁸ The main reason for such strong domestic opposition was that many Japanese perceived that the treaty with its regional security role would draw Japan into an "American war" against its will. Thus the alliance faced a major crisis.

Few Japanese, however, recognized at the time the true significance of the new treaty, which was almost completely overlooked in the national debate: the prior consultation mechanism as provided for in the treaty marked the first step toward responsibility sharing between the two alliance partners. This should have been obvious from the fact that whether the Japanese government would consent, for example, to the launching of US combat operations from bases in Japan would be a crucial factor in America's ability to carry out its defense commitments to South Korea or Taiwan. Unlike the old treaty, which permitted the US to act unilaterally, the new treaty depended on the ability of the US and Japan to form a common position in order to deal with regional security in East Asia.

IV. The 1969 Joint Communiqué and the Reversion of Okinawa

The issue of responsibility sharing became the focus of negotiations in 1969 between the Nixon administration and the Sato government on the reversion of Okinawa.

Prime Minister Sato committed himself to the basic position that post-reversion Okinawa should be free of nuclear weapons⁹ and that the security treaty including the prior consultation mechanism as applied to mainland Japan should also apply to Okinawa without modification. The Nixon administration, while sympathetic to Japan's legitimate wish to see Okinawa revert to Japan, was nevertheless concerned lest the reversion under Japan's terms (more specifically, the prior consultation mechanism) seriously undermine the US ability to maintain regional security in East Asia.

The Sato government correctly understood that if the reversion negotiation was to succeed, it must accommodate the US concern without compromising its Japan's basic position.¹⁰

The creative wisdom of the negotiators on both sides finally produced the Japan-US joint communiqué issued in November 1969 during the prime minister's visit to Washington for a bilateral summit. Paragraph 7 of the joint communiqué stated:

The President and the Prime Minister agreed that, upon return of the administrative rights, the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security and its related arrangements would apply to Okinawa without modification thereof. In this connection, *the Prime Minister affirmed the recognition of his government that security of Japan could not be adequately maintained without international peace and security in the Far East and, therefore, the security of countries in the Far East was a matter of serious concern for Japan.*¹¹ The Prime Minister was of the view that, in the light of such recognition on the part of the Japanese government, the return of the administrative rights over Okinawa in the manner agreed above should not hinder the effective discharge of the international obligation by the

United States for the defense of countries in the Far East including Japan. The President replied that he shared the Prime Minister's view.¹²

In the author's view, the 1969 joint communiqué is a historic document concerning the Japan-US alliance since it was the first clear-cut statement by a Japanese prime minister that Japan was prepared to share the responsibility with the United States for the maintenance of regional security in East Asia within the framework of the security treaty and the bounds of its constitution. What is stated in the communiqué as the recognition of the Japanese government of the close relationship between the regional security of East Asia and Japan's own security is of course still very much relevant today, particularly in light of the uncertainty on the Korean peninsula.¹³

V. The Post-Cold War World and the Gulf War

The end of the Cold War brought about a tectonic change in the post-World War II international order with its East-West bipolar structure. The rapidly receding ideological and military threat of the Soviet Union and the emergence of new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe fundamentally altered the outlook of the West. The central theme of the political declaration of the Houston G7 summit (July 1990) was "Securing Democracy," which stated:

As we enter the final decade of this century, which we intend should be a Decade of Democracy, we reiterate our commitment to support the strengthening of democracy, human rights, and economic reconstruction and development through market-oriented economies.

The governments of the G7, however, were not oblivious to the diffusion of various threats (both traditional and nontraditional), which would be new challenges of the post-Cold War world. The summit issued a "Statement on Transnational Issues," which focused on terrorism and nonproliferation as two major challenges. Its "Chairman's Statement" expressed the concern that "the Asia and Pacific region has yet to see the same process of conciliation, military disengagement, and reduction of tensions that has characterized East-West relations in Europe" and referred in particular to the Korean peninsula as "an area of sharp concern."

A serious threat to international order, however, arose suddenly from a different direction: the Middle East. Less than a month after the Houston G7 summit, Iraq invaded Kuwait. And the ensuing Gulf War became a major challenge to the post-Cold War Japan-US alliance.

In the context of the Japan-US security treaty, the Gulf War was an out-of-area regional conflict, which did not involve any legal obligation on the part of Japan of responsibility sharing with the US.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the Kaifu government recognized the crucial importance of supporting the US efforts by diplomatic

and military means to organize a broad international coalition of like-minded countries to repel the Iraqi aggression under the authority of the United Nations. That Japan's vital interest was at stake seemed beyond doubt. Not only was the Iraqi action a clear violation of the UN Charter, but it threatened the peace of the region on which Japan depended heavily for the supply of oil.

Hence Japan was among the first to implement the economic sanctions that were demanded by the Security Council. More importantly, it contributed 11 billion dollars to the US-led coalition forces¹⁵ and extended 2 billion dollars of emergency assistance to three key front-line countries (Egypt, Turkey, and Jordan) whose economies were severely affected by the economic sanctions because of their heavy dependence on trade with Iraq.

The Kaifu government, however, recognized that even billions of dollars in financial contributions was not considered commensurate with a country of Japan's international standing without any human participation in the efforts of the coalition forces. Considering the constitutional constraint against sending SDF troops overseas for combat purposes, the government submitted to the Diet a bill that would authorize the dispatch of a noncombat corps to engage in logistic operations in support of the coalition forces. But the bill had to be withdrawn in the face of strong opposition in the Diet. The government, despite its serious efforts, still could not convince the opposition parties in the Diet and the public in general that sending troops strictly on noncombat missions in support of the international community to defend peace was constitutional. The only human participation by Japan in the Gulf War was a fleet of minesweepers that were dispatched to the Gulf after the cease-fire.

The Gulf War was a trying experience for Japan as it forced the Japanese to reexamine the meaning of their post-World War II pacifism. Foreign media (particularly American) showed little appreciation of Japan's large financial contribution: "too little, too late" was their favorite characterization.¹⁶ They caricatured Japan's policy as "checkbook diplomacy." Many Japanese resented such criticisms. But it was by no means easy to justify to the critics why their pacifism was so self-centered and risk-averse. As a result, America's image of Japan as a dependable ally became negative as reflected in a number of opinion polls taken in the first half of the 1990s.¹⁷

The impact of the experience was such as to lead to a substantial change in Japan's security policy in the ensuing decade.

VI. From PKO to Japan-US Defense Cooperation

The first major change in Japan's policy toward a larger role in international peace and security was the enactment in 1992 of the law authorizing Japan's participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations (the so-called PKO Cooperation Law).¹⁸ Under this law the Japanese government dispatched some 1,300 personnel including 1,200 SDF troops to Cambodia to support the activities of UNTAC. This was an epoch-making development, which led in

the following years to participation in other PKO missions; e.g., in Mozambique, Rwanda, the Golan Heights, and East Timor.

It must be pointed out, however, that although the Japanese public has largely come to accept Japan's role in PKO missions, its security policy is still under the substantial constraints of the constitution as interpreted by the government and the pacifism of the public in general.

For example, when a civilian volunteer and a police officer were killed in an ambush by insurgents in Cambodia in 1993, there was a swell of public opinion in Japan calling for immediate withdrawal of Japanese personnel including the SDF troops. And it was only because of Prime Minister Miyazawa's personal decision at great political risk that the Japanese presence in Cambodia was maintained.

It should be noted also that the PKO Cooperation Law limits Japan's participation to traditional peacekeeping operations only (strict neutrality, no peace enforcement mission, and the consent of the governments concerned). It expressly prohibits the use of force and, therefore, permits the use of weapons for the sole purpose of protecting the safety of the Japanese personnel and those under their custody (e.g., refugees) when actually attacked.

Taking part in peacekeeping missions obviously does not fall within the scope of the Japan-US alliance within the narrow meaning of the term. If, however, one considers the alliance to mean a broad framework of global cooperation to strengthen international peace and security, Japan's active participation in such missions should be regarded as an important positive step in responsibility sharing with the United States.¹⁹

The next major development concerning the alliance was the agreement in 1997 on the "Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation," which set forth in specific terms the modalities of defense cooperation between the two governments under the security treaty:

- first, "under normal circumstances,"
- second, "in response to an armed attack against Japan"; and
- third, "in situations in areas surrounding Japan that will have an important influence on Japan's security (situations in areas surrounding Japan)."

What was noteworthy in particular was the third part of the guidelines regarding "situations in areas surrounding Japan" as defined above.²⁰ How the Japanese government viewed the relationship of the peace and security of the "areas surrounding Japan" (the Far East, or East Asia) to Japan's own peace and security was discussed in section 4 in the context of the reversion of Okinawa and the prior consultation mechanism of the security treaty. The guidelines agreed upon in 1978 meant to be the first attempt by the two governments to work out specific plans of defense cooperation, particularly between US forces and the SDF, to deal with such contingencies that would adversely affect Japan's

security. The exercise, however, never went very far mainly because the Japanese government was reluctant to take the necessary political risk of facing negative public reaction.

The agreement on the new guidelines was prompted by the serious tension on the Korean peninsula that arose in 1993–94 over North Korea's covert nuclear activities and its declared intent to break out from the NPT regime. The US and Japanese governments, together with the South Korean government, engaged in intensive consultations with the common objective of preventing North Korea from becoming a nuclear weapon state, which would drastically change the security environment in Northeast Asia. The Clinton administration, faced with the possibility of military confrontation with North Korea, wanted to know in what way and to what extent Japan could support US military action under the security treaty if such need arose. The consultations revealed, however, that the Japanese government had practically no legal authority to ensure effective defense cooperation with the US either inside or outside Japanese territory. Although the tensions on the Korean peninsula eventually subsided, thanks to the so-called US-DPRK framework agreement concluded in 1994,²¹ Tokyo and Washington both recognized the urgency of putting the alliance on a more solid basis capable of responding effectively to a future crisis.

With a view to translating the third part of the guidelines into domestic legislation, the Japanese government enacted in 1999, with the approval of the Diet, the Law Concerning Measures to Ensure the Peace and Security of Japan in Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan (in short, the Law Concerning Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan). The most notable feature of the law is that it authorizes the Self-Defense Force to engage in what is called “rear-area support” for US forces as well as in search and rescue operations in “rear areas.” The term “rear areas” refers to Japanese territory and to those areas on the high seas and in international airspace surrounding Japan where no combat operation is, or is likely to be, conducted.

The reason the SDF's support for US forces is limited to noncombat missions and confined to “rear areas” (as distinguished from combat areas) is because, in the view of the Japanese government, the constitution does not allow the exercise of the right of collective self-defense²² and also limits the use of force exclusively to the purpose of defending Japan.

It is clear from the foregoing that the 1997 guidelines and the 1999 law for Japan-US defense cooperation together mark a significant departure from Japan's passive posture of the past. But, in the author's view, the existing constitutional and political constraints make it difficult for the SDF to give full and effective noncombat support to US forces.²³

VII. Out-of-Area Cooperation: Afghanistan and Iraq

The response of the Japanese government to September 11 and the subsequent war on terrorism was prompt and firm with strong support of the public in general. Prime Minister Koizumi immediately declared Japan's solidarity with America and the international community. And the government enacted, with the speedy approval of the Diet by overwhelming majority, the so-called law on special antiterrorism measures, authorizing the SDF to engage in rear-area support for the coalition forces in Afghanistan.²⁴

Because of the constitutional constraints discussed in the preceding section, it was not possible to send ground troops to Afghanistan, where the rear areas (free of combat operations) could not be identified. Hence, a small fleet of the maritime SDF (MSDF), consisting of supply ships and escort frigates, was dispatched to the Indian Ocean to supply fuel to the US and other fleets of the coalition forces. As of today, the SDF fleet is still deployed there.²⁵

What was significant in this connection was the muted reaction from Japan's Asian neighbors (e.g., China and South Korea) to its more active posture on security issues, which would have been unthinkable ten years before. This was partly a reflection of the strength of the international solidarity on antiterrorism, in which they all joined. But it also showed half a century after the end of World War II, Japan's neighbors have finally come to accept its larger international security role though they remain wary of its history. The change allowed Japan to assume larger responsibility and a wider role in the alliance even beyond the bounds of the security treaty.

Iraq presents a more difficult problem for Japan, both the government and the public. Several factors have made the sending of SDF troops a highly controversial and divisive issue:

- First, the legality of the war. Were the US and the UK justified in their use of force against Iraq without an explicit authorization by the UN Security Council?
- Second, the issue of WMD. Where are the weapons of mass destruction that Iraq was said to have been hiding?
- Third, Japan's national interests. What are those interests that are vital enough to justify sending the SDF to Iraq?
- And fourth, the definition of "combat." Given the highly unstable security conditions prevailing in Iraq, is there a "noncombat area" to which SDF troops may be lawfully dispatched?²⁶

On these points, Prime Minister Koizumi and his government argued:

- Iraq repeatedly violated the 1991 Security Council resolution that set forth the conditions for the cease-fire and failed to comply fully with Resolution 1441, which gave Iraq its final opportunity to disarm.

- Even the UN inspectors (UNMOVIC) reported to the Security Council that there was a large quantity of chemical and biological weapons-related material which remained unaccounted for.
- Japan's dependence on the Middle East for energy makes political stability in the region its vital interest. Equally vital for Japan is to firmly maintain its alliance relationship with the US.
- The government would take every possible precautionary measure for the safety of the troops. A "noncombat area" was not meant to be the same as a "zero risk area." Unorganized hostile actions by non-state insurgents or terrorists were not considered "combat operations" under the law.

The government, however, is hard put to convince the public, which is constantly being exposed to reports in the media, both Japanese and international, of American unilateralism, indiscriminate suicide bombings, an increasing number of casualties of military and civilian personnel in Iraq, and the skeptical voices of some families of SDF members who may be sent to Iraq. It is an image problem that is difficult to overcome. No matter how hard Koizumi may stress that he is not sending the troops to engage in combat but in humanitarian relief and reconstruction operations, people still ask, 'If the troops are attacked and they use weapons to defend themselves, wouldn't you call that combat?' Under such circumstances, public reaction to SDF casualties could be politically explosive. (It must be noted, however, that recently there have been signs of an increase in the level of public support for the dispatch of SDF troops.)

The prime minister, therefore, is being extra careful in deciding the timing of his final order for the dispatch of the ground SDF troops.²⁷ Obviously for the prime minister the politically fatal scenario would be to find himself in a situation in which he would be forced to withdraw the troops.

VIII. Conclusion: Personal Observations

This paper has attempted to review, from a Japanese perspective, the evolution of the Japan-US alliance over the past fifty years. It focused on the issue of responsibility sharing particularly in the post-Cold War era. There are two aspects of this issue: one is defense cooperation under the security treaty and the other is out-of-area cooperation on some transnational issues such as terrorism and WMD. In this context, the author has tried to explain how far government policy as well as public opinion has come in accepting a larger Japanese role on the international scene. At the same time, he has also observed the legal (constitutional) and political constraints that place substantial restrictions on the extent to which Japan can assume an even larger security role, whether regional or global.

What follow now are my personal observations on the future of the Japan-US alliance.

- There are two factors that may affect the future of the alliance in unexpected but decisive ways: Iraq and North Korea. If the SDF troops in Iraq suffer serious casualties, which are likely to give rise to a highly emotional public reaction, Japan's security policy may regress to the time of the Gulf War. What is more unpredictable is the way the failure of diplomacy to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue will affect the threat perception of the Japanese people regarding the Korean peninsula. It all depends on how much credibility the alliance has, or is perceived by the Japanese to have, to cope with a major crisis.
- The major remaining hurdle that stands in the way of further evolution of the alliance seems to be constitutional. Recent polls indicate that public opinion in Japan is gradually moving toward amending Article 9 of the constitution.²⁸ The author, however, does not think that a broad-based public consensus is likely to emerge in the near future on how it should be amended.²⁹ What seems to be the best way under such circumstances is to free Article 9 by a political decision from the excessively narrow and legalistic interpretation of the government that denies altogether the right of collective self-defense and also restricts the right of individual self-defense. Such a decision, however, involves considerable political risk, which no prime minister can easily take on.
- Japan's aversion to the use of force will remain strong. And Japan has always respected and appreciated America's post-World War II internationalism, from which it has enormously benefited. Japan (both the government and the public) will feel more comfortable with, and more supportive of, the alliance when the US is seen to be less committed to unilateralism and more restrained in the use of force. When the use of force becomes necessary to defend peace, Japan would like to see the US first seek a UN mandate, which will give the needed legitimacy to the US action.
- Finally, the author believes that the alliance is in need of a newly defined mission beyond Afghanistan, Iraq, and North Korea. This is not to deny the importance of the issues relating to the so-called rogue states or failed states. The author simply wishes to suggest that there is a more critical conceptual question: What does the Japan-US alliance stand for (not against)? With the end of the Cold War, the Western alliance, to which Japan belonged, seems to have been replaced by various coalitions of the willing, which are formed from time to time depending on the individual issues to be dealt with. This is a highly unstable international system, somewhat similar to the age of shifting alliances in nineteenth-century Europe. Although the need for such coalitions cannot be denied, the institutionalized alliances of democracies should continue to serve as the core of international order. In the absence of the East as an ideological and political concept, the West is

now being used as a civilizational concept, to which Japan does not belong. Then, where does the Japan-US alliance conceptually belong?

NOTES

¹ Although the author holds the title of advisor to the Japanese foreign minister, the views expressed in this paper are not necessarily the official views of the Japanese government.

² The original Japan-US security treaty took effect in 1952 simultaneously with the San Francisco peace treaty. It was replaced by the present treaty in 1960. Unless specified otherwise, the term “the Japan-US security treaty” refers to the present treaty.

³ According to the official interpretation, the constitution does not allow the SDF to engage in combat areas overseas. Hence, under the existing law, troops are allowed to be sent only to noncombat areas. In carrying out a noncombat mission overseas (e.g., PKO), weapons may be used strictly to defend individual troops under attack.

⁴ The expressed purpose of the Japan-US security treaty is to defend Japan and to maintain international peace and security in the Far East including Japan. The term “the Far East” is understood to refer to the area in East Asia that covers Japan, the Republic of Korea (South Korea), Taiwan, and the Philippines.

⁵ Dulles cited the so-called Vandenberg resolution of the US Senate which stated that the US government should enter into “such regional and other collective arrangements as are based on continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, and as affect its national security.” Dulles’ argument was that Japan, with no defense capability, could not meet such congressional requirement.

⁶ Article 9 of the constitution, drafted by the occupation authority, bans possession of “army, navy, air force, and other war potential.”

⁷ It was agreed that the following three categories of US action should be the subject of prior consultation between the two governments (meaning a Japanese veto):

1. introduction of nuclear weapons;
2. launching combat operations from bases in Japan; and
3. substantial increase in the size of US forces deployed in Japan (above a divisional strength).

⁸ The aftereffect of the crisis was such that the first US presidential visit to Japan had to wait until 1974 (President Ford’s visit).

⁹ It was widely known then that IRBMs with nuclear warheads were deployed in Okinawa.

¹⁰ What the US side needed was some kind of credible (if not legal) assurance by the Japanese government that it would not veto US combat operations from bases in Japan when a contingency arose. On the other hand, the Japanese side did not think it possible to give any assurance that would be considered tantamount to issuing a blank check to unilateral action by the US.

¹¹ Emphasis added.

¹² The communiqué also included the prime minister’s statements that “the security of the Republic of Korea is essential to Japan’s own security” and that “the maintenance of peace and security in the Taiwan area is also a most important factor for the security of Japan.” These statements were intended to reinforce the basic recognition of the Japanese government as stated by Prime Minister Sato above.

¹³ As regards Taiwan, the situation has changed somewhat since 1979. Both Japan and the US recognize the People’s Republic of China and have committed themselves to the principle of “one China.” The US no longer assumes a formal defense commitment to

Taiwan. Japan and the US are both opposed to Taiwan's independence. At the same time, both maintain the position that the Taiwan issue should be resolved by peaceful means. And peace and security in the Taiwan area is still a matter of serious concern for Japan.

¹⁴ Obligations under the UN Charter to comply with legally binding Security Council resolutions under Chapter 7 were a different matter.

¹⁵ Japan's financial contribution was by far the largest among the donors except Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. In order to secure the necessary budgetary measures, the government had to raise taxes, which required the approval of the Diet.

¹⁶ This characterization was not entirely fair because in the early phase of the war (both Desert Shield and Desert Storm) the US administration itself did not know how large its cost would be and how the expense should be shared among America's friends and allies.

¹⁷ It should be noted that the unfavorable image of Japan was partly the result of the trade frictions in the early 1990s. The opinion polls turned positive in the second half of the decade.

¹⁸ The law also authorized Japan's participation in internationally organized humanitarian relief operations other than PKO.

¹⁹ This is why the Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security, issued jointly in 1996 by Prime Minister Hashimoto and President Clinton, states under the subtitle of Global Cooperation that the security treaty is "the core of the Japan-US alliance, and underlines the mutual confidence that constitutes the foundation for bilateral cooperation on global issues" and that "the two governments will strengthen their cooperation in support of the United Nations and other international organizations through activities such as peacekeeping and humanitarian relief operations."

²⁰ The guidelines were the product of the joint exercise of the two governments under the mandate given by the Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security of 1996, in which the prime minister and the president agreed to initiate a review of the 1978 guidelines and "to promote bilateral policy coordination, including studies on *bilateral cooperation in dealing with situations that may emerge in the areas surrounding Japan and which will have an important influence on the peace and security of Japan*" (emphasis added).

²¹ Under the framework agreement, North Korea agreed to freeze its nuclear development program and the US promised to supply two light-water reactors, the construction of which would be financed primarily by South Korea and Japan.

²² Such a view leads to the interpretation that the constitution also prohibits any noncombat action if such action is deemed inseparable from the use of force by a third party (say, US forces).

²³ For example, circumstances may arise in the event of an armed conflict under which it will be difficult to distinguish a "rear area" from a combat area where SDF troops cannot engage in support activities.

²⁴ At an early stage of policymaking, the possibility of using the 1999 law on defense cooperation (mentioned in the preceding section) for such a purpose was discussed with a view to saving time. The idea was soon discarded, however, because even with an imaginative interpretation of the law it would be difficult to consider Afghanistan part of "the areas surrounding Japan."

²⁵ Since December 2001, the MSDF fleet has engaged in over 300 operations supplying fuel to the navies of the United States and nine other members of the coalition forces deployed in the Indian Ocean.

²⁶ According to the newly enacted special measures law on humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to Iraq, SDF troops are authorized to be sent only to areas where no combat operation is, or is likely to be, undertaken—the same condition present in the 1999 law on defense cooperation and the 2001 law on anti-terrorism.

²⁷ The government currently plans to deploy 550 ground SDF troops in an area in southern Iraq called Samawah. They will engage mainly in humanitarian relief activities

(e.g., water supply and medical assistance). Three air SDF transport aircraft are also planned to be sent to transport goods for similar purposes.

²⁸ According to an NHK poll in December, for example, 37 percent favored amending Article 9 while 44 percent opposed it.

²⁹ Many among those who favor amending the constitution do not necessarily support a more active security role for Japan but simply feel the need to remove certain ambiguities in the language of Article 9 (e.g., can Japan possess armed forces?).

THE CHANGING AMERICAN GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVES ON THE MISSIONS AND STRATEGIC FOCUS OF THE US-JAPAN ALLIANCE

Rust M. Deming

Since the 1950s, the US government's strategic objectives with respect to Japan have been remarkably consistent. These objectives include:

- Prevent Japan from once again emerging as a military threat to the United States (This objective receded quickly into the background as it became evident that postwar Japanese society had firmly rejected militarism);
- Support Japan's development as a democracy aligned with the free world;
- Ensure that Japan's industrial and human resources do not become aligned with major powers or alliances hostile to the United States;
- Maintain use of US military facilities in Japan;
- Harness Japan's political and economic power and influence, along with its military potential, in support of US interests, particularly in East Asia;
- Prevent Japan's exports from disrupting US domestic markets, undermining US industries, or threatening US technological dominance in key areas;
- Gain equitable American access to Japan's markets, including direct investment and, later, Japanese technology.

The relative emphasis on these objectives has varied, primarily as a function of shifts in the global strategic setting and the regional security environment; the economic power relationship between the two countries; the state of the US economy; the fluctuating influence of American departments and agencies, including the Congress, involved in policy toward Japan; and, importantly, the political and bureaucratic personalities on the American side. The interplay of these forces has sometimes produced internal tensions and contradictions in the development and execution of US policy, occasionally resulting in abrupt shifts in tactics and emphasis in the US approach to Japan. Nevertheless, the overall thrust of American policy has remained consistent: to build a closer,

more collaborative, and better balanced relationship, with Japan playing a more active role in support of shared interests. The US has largely achieved these objectives, representing one of the major success stories of postwar American foreign policy.

The success of the US-Japan alliance was achieved because American leaders, along with their Japanese counterparts, made adjustments as circumstances changed. These adjustments have not always been smooth, but they have incrementally transformed the alliance from a patron-client relationship to partnership approaching true equality. The key transition points in the alliance have been:

- The 1960 Security Treaty Revision, which conceded to Japan the right of “prior consultation” on the use of American bases for combat operations, thereby removing a major irritant and putting the security relationship on a more equal and sustainable foundation;
- The agreement in the Nixon-Sato communiqué of 1969 to return Okinawa to Japanese sovereignty, removing the last vestige of the Occupation, in return for Japan’s formal recognition of its shared responsibility for security in the Far East;
- The “Nixon shocks” of 1971–72, which shook the foundation of the relationship but helped push Japan into a more assertive international political role within the context of strategic cooperation with the US;
- The conclusion in 1978 of the Guidelines for Defense Cooperation, authorizing joint military planning for the defense of Japan and the allocation of roles and missions;
- The use of the term “alliance” for the first time in the 1981 Reagan-Suzuki communiqué to characterize the nature of the bilateral relationship, an initiative that created controversy in Japan but set the stage for Prime Minister Nakasone’s 1983 declaration of the “indivisibility” of the security of the West;
- The US pressure before and during the 1990–91 Gulf War for Japan to put “boots on the ground,” which created bilateral tensions but helped induce Japan later to put in place the legal foundation for dispatching Self-Defense units abroad for noncombat activities, adding an important new dimension to Japan’s international role and to the alliance;
- The 1996 Clinton-Hashimoto security declaration, which set forth a post-Cold War rationale for the alliance, restored a collaborative tone to the relationship after the “trade wars” of the early 1990s, and set the stage for the 1997 revision of the Guidelines for Defense Cooperation, which established the criteria for bilateral defense cooperation in response to a regional crisis.

The events of September 11 and the war on terrorism represent another transition that is still being played out. Japan has responded with unprecedented

speed and assertiveness, including dispatching naval vessels to the Indian Ocean to provide rear-area support for US forces in Afghanistan and sending SDF units to Iraq for reconstruction and humanitarian activities, despite strong domestic opposition. These initiatives represent the “globalization” of Japan’s security perspective and, if successful, may open new avenues for the globalization of US-Japan defense cooperation.

The alliance has succeeded largely because:

- The US has continued to meet its explicit and implicit alliance obligations to ensure Japan’s strategic defense and provide “public goods” in terms of a stable international political system, open trading regime, and Japanese access to the American market;
- Japan has stepped up its responsibility to play a greater international role within the context of a strategic alliance with the United States;
- Both sides have successfully made adjustments in alliance mechanisms and roles and missions as circumstances and power relationships have changed;
- The alliance has not been tested beyond its ability to respond by, for example, a renewed Korean war or a conflict in the Taiwan Strait.

The alliance has thus overcome many hurdles in evolving from a one-sided “post-Occupation” relationship to an increasingly equal partnership of great strategic benefit to both parties. However, the future is not assured. The uncertainties associated with the SDF mission to Iraq, the North Korean nuclear program, China’s emerging power, conflicting views on the appropriate balance between unilateralism and multilateralism in response to security threats, and the ascendancy of a new generation to leadership positions in both societies are among the challenges the alliance will face.

This paper will review the evolution of American strategic thinking toward Japan, from the end of the Occupation through the war on terrorism, and discuss the challenges ahead.

I. Ending the Occupation and the Post-Occupation—1951–60

The US postwar strategic vision of Japan grew out of the objectives of American occupation policy: first, to reform Japanese institutions and policies to make the country into a vibrant democracy that would never again pose a threat to its neighbors; and, later, to help it rebuild so it could become a willing and vital partner in the containment of communism, both at home and in the region.

By 1950, there was agreement within the USG that further progress toward these objectives required the conclusion of a “nonpunitive” peace treaty at an early date. While the Joint Chiefs of Staff wished to delay ending the occupation until hostilities in Korea had been terminated,¹ the State Department and John

Foster Dulles, appointed by President Truman as the peace treaty negotiator, argued against delay on the basis that this would only create doubts in Japan about the wisdom of casting its lot with the United States. They suggested that the conclusion of a bilateral security treaty allowing the US to maintain forces in Japan could achieve the objectives of the JCS without the risks associated with extending the occupation.²

“Securing Japan’s Adherence to the Free Nations of the World”

Truman supported Dulles and the State Department. In his letter of instructions to Dulles, the president spelled out that “the principal purpose of a settlement is to secure the adherence of Japan to the free nations of the world and to assure that it will play its full part in resisting the further expansion of communist imperialism.”³ In briefing the relevant congressional committees on the philosophy of a peace settlement, Dulles emphasized the danger of the industrial potential of Japan falling into the hands of the communists and the need to ensure the future security and economic stability of Japan.

Making Peace Conditional on a Military and Political “Alliance”

In Dulles’ initial meeting with Prime Minister Yoshida to discuss the peace treaty, Dulles raised the need for a simultaneous bilateral security treaty, a concept Yoshida endorsed. Dulles also suggested the need for Japan to reconstruct its military, arguing, “The collective security burden must be shared by all in the free world.”⁴ Yoshida objected, citing Japan’s constitutional constraints and the internal political dangers and economic risks, but finally agreed to the establishment of a limited “Self-Defense Force.” Dulles also demanded that Japan follow the US lead on policy toward China, emphasizing to Yoshida that it would be difficult to obtain Senate ratification of the peace treaty if Japan did not make clear its intention to open diplomatic relations with the Chinese Nationalist Government in Taiwan rather than the regime in Beijing. US-Japan tension with respect to China policy would persist through the “Nixon shocks” of the 1970s and beyond.⁵

Broadening the Definition of Burden-Sharing

In the first statement of policy toward Japan after the end of the Occupation and the coming into effect of the bilateral Security Treaty, a National Security Council memo in late 1952 called for Japan to increase its army to ten divisions totaling 325,000 troops to deter a Soviet invasion of Hokkaido and encouraged Japan to join in the economic development of the free nations of the Pacific. The need for greater Japanese military and economic burden-sharing became a consistent theme of US policy over the next few years, with US policymakers voicing growing frustration with perceived Japanese foot-dragging. At the end of 1953 Dulles, who had become Eisenhower’s secretary of state, wrote

Ambassador John Allison of his “exasperation with Japan’s failure to get its economic and military act together.” Allison responded that Japan was making progress, that overt pressure was counterproductive, and that “Japan need to be treated as an ally, not a satellite.”⁶

By late 1954, however, a debate had opened within the USG on the wisdom of pushing Japan to rearm. Allison in Tokyo argued that the US should shift its emphasis to Japan’s faltering economic recovery, citing the fertile ground that economic instability provided for internal communist forces and the lure of the Chinese market.⁷ While the State Department agreed that “too much emphasis on defense could be self-defeating” and economic development needed higher priority, the military command in Tokyo and the JCS characterized Allison’s approach as “defeatist” and argued that Japan should not only develop the military capability to handle its own defense but should help with regional security.⁸

President Eisenhower again sided with the State Department, and when Prime Minister Yoshida came to Washington in November of 1954 the focus was Japan’s economic recovery and the need for Japan to play a more active role in assisting countries in Southeast Asia against communist influences. The issue of the Japan’s defense efforts fell completely off the agenda. In April 1955 this policy was formalized in an NSC statement that stipulated that the US should avoid pressing the Japanese to increase their military forces to the prejudice of political and economic stability.

In the last half of the 1950s, the Japanese economy began to recover, Japan restored diplomatic relations with Moscow and entered the UN, the situation in East Asia stabilized, and US attention shifted to dealing with a series of Japanese demands for settling remaining postwar issues. These included renegotiating the 1952 Security Treaty to remove elements that were seen as impinging on Japanese sovereignty (e.g., lack of prior consultation); release of war criminals; and return of administrative rights over the Bonins and Ryukyus.

Renegotiating the Terms of the Relationship

In a May 25, 1957, letter to Secretary of State Dulles, the new American ambassador, Douglas MacArthur, recommended that the US take advantage of the strength and pro-American orientation of Japan’s new prime minister Nobuo Kishi to revitalize the bilateral security arrangements by making them more equal.⁹ MacArthur subsequently sent Washington a draft revised treaty. He also argued that the US needed to give Japan greater access to its markets to keep it from turning elsewhere and suggested that time was running out on the US ability to continue to administer Okinawa.¹⁰

In the spring of 1958 the NSC undertook a reappraisal of US policy toward Japan. The NSC listed five long-term objectives:

1. A militarily strong Japan able to defend its own territory and willing to use its forces abroad for defense of the free world;

2. Japan as a member of a regional security pact;
3. Continued US military presence in Japan;
4. The right to introduce nuclear weapons into Japan;
5. A strong Japanese economy, tied to economic growth in East Asia.

The study recognized, however, that while Japan was aligned with the US, there were serious tensions in the relationship, and the US needed to accommodate Japan on key issues. These included:

1. Agree to consult Japan on the disposition of US forces in Japan;
2. Eliminate discrimination on Japanese textile imports;
3. Reexamine the question of the Bonin Islands.¹¹

Ambassador MacArthur endorsed the NSC study, adding that Japan had yet to become a dependable ally because of a feeling that it was being used in a one-sided manner for the US's own purposes and arguing that Japan wanted to be liberated from its "unequal status" and to gain control over the use of US bases on its soil.¹²

Over the next two years, the US and Japan focused on defining a new security relationship along the lines envisioned by MacArthur, with the JCS and to a lesser extent the civilian Defense Department leadership fighting a rear-guard action with respect to surrendering rights in the old treaty and delaying the implementation of the new.¹³ President Eisenhower invariably sided with the State Department and MacArthur, supporting the JCS only on the issue of maintaining control over Okinawa, although with reservations on this as well.¹⁴

The new treaty was successfully negotiated and went into effect in mid-1960, but not without strong opposition to its ratification from the Japanese left which resulted in riots that forced the cancellation of President Eisenhower's scheduled June visit to Japan and the resignation of Prime Minister Kishi.

Broadening the Focus of the Alliance

In a statement of US policy as the new Security Treaty went into effect, the National Security Council declared that the fundamental goal of the US was to "assure that Japan continues to exercise its international role predominately in concert with free world interests," noting that militarily Japan was the key to the defense of the Western Pacific, economically it represented the second largest market for US agricultural products, and politically it was a voice of moderation among Afro-Asian nations. The NSC set forth specific objectives for US policy that differed in many respects from those (see above) laid out just two years before by placing greater emphasis on regional objectives:

1. Preserve Japan's territorial integrity against communist aggression and subversion;
2. Keep Japan allied with the US and the free world;

3. Support Japan's continued development as a stable democracy and prosperous country engaged with the free world;
4. Encourage Japan to contribute to international society by:
 - a. Assisting the economic development of least developed countries in Asia and more broadly;
 - b. Playing a moderating role among the Afro-Asian leadership;
 - c. Strengthening its own defense capabilities to resist aggression;
 - d. Continuing to provide bases to the US;
 - e. Ultimately participating more freely in defending free-world interests.

With respect to the defense relations under the new Mutual Security Treaty, the NSC stated that the US should encourage Japan to develop its armed forces but avoid pressure.¹⁵

During this ten-year period, the focus of US policy had shifted from an emphasis on the rapid and heavy rearming of Japan while shoring up its economy to a more nuanced approach that recognized that Japan could contribute to US interests in the economic and political arenas as well as in the defense field. This reflected American appreciation of the changed circumstances in the region, including the stabilization of the situation on the Korean peninsula, the reduced risk of a Soviet invasion of Japan, the recovery of the Japanese economy, and Japan's firmer commitment to the Western camp under the Kishi government. It also reflected the strategic vision of American leaders, particularly Eisenhower and Dulles, who recognized that to secure Japan's support for the long term the United States needed to respond to legitimate Japanese grievances even if this meant conceding rights that the US military considered important.

II. Moving Beyond the Residue of Occupation—1960–1972

Consolidating the Relationship

The advent of the Kennedy administration in 1961 ushered in a period of relative tranquility in US-Japan relations. After the tumult over the security treaty in 1960 there was fatigue on both sides. President Kennedy was preoccupied with Berlin, Cuba, and Laos and left Japan policy largely to the experts, including Ambassador Edwin Reischauer. When Prime Minister Ikeda came to Washington in June of 1961, Kennedy responded favorably to Ikeda's suggestion that new mechanisms for bilateral consultations be established, and the Cabinet Economic Committee and the Security Subcommittee were inaugurated. An October 1961 NSC policy paper endorsed the basic themes set down the year before (see above) but recommended that security aspects of the relationship be downplayed in light of the 1960 disturbances. The NSC also established an interagency process to consider the question of Okinawa, beginning the process that would lead to the

return of the Ryukyus in 1972.¹⁶ Reischauer for his part focused on repairing the “broken dialogue” with the Japanese intellectual community and increasing cultural and human exchanges between the two countries.

By the end of 1962, defense issues were back on the agenda, with Secretary of State Rusk pushing Japan on defense spending but this time targeting host-nation support with a proposal that Japan pay all the local costs of US forces stationed there.¹⁷ The Kennedy administration, increasingly concerned about the US’s deteriorating balance of payment situation, focused on the economic implications of defense issues, and even considered cutting US forces in Japan to save foreign exchange.¹⁸

A Vietnamese Lens

With the exception of the issue of Okinawa, which became the subject of increasingly intense US-Japan interchanges and interagency debate, the Johnson administration saw Japan almost exclusively through a Vietnamese lens. The summit meeting between President Johnson and Prime Minister Sato focused on Asian issues, with the US calling on Japan to assume greater regional responsibility, including increasing its official development assistance to Southeast Asia to help stabilize those countries in the face of communist pressure.¹⁹

By the 1967 Johnson-Sato summit, Vietnam had become an issue in bilateral relations because of strong criticism by the Japanese press and public of the US bombing of North Vietnam and Johnson administration dissatisfaction with Japan’s “passive” position. Sato, however, agreed to publicly support the US policy on Vietnam in return for US agreement in principal to return the Bonin Islands and greater Japanese involvement in Okinawa.

In a final meeting with Foreign Minister Miki in the fall of 1968, Rusk described US priorities in its relations with Japan as (1) greater Japanese leadership in Asian regionalism; (2) assumption of greater responsibility for its own defense; (3) close consultations on developments in China; and (4) greater economic and technical assistance to the nations of Southeast Asia,²⁰ demonstrating that greater Japanese regional leadership had reached the top of the US agenda.

Shocking Japan into a More Activist Role

The Nixon administration policy toward Japan gave the appearance of being fundamentally contradictory. On the one hand President Nixon recognized the need to remove the major irritant in the alliance by agreeing at the 1969 summit with Prime Minister Sato to return Okinawa to Japan in exchange for Sato’s recognition of Japan’s shared responsibility for the security of the Far East; on the other, President Nixon’s decisions to open relations with China, to devalue the dollar without consultation with Japan, and to invoke the “Trading with

the Enemy Act” to impose unilateral textile quotas were seen by the Japanese as breaking basic postwar bargains.

Consistent with his “Guam Doctrine,” which asked Asian states to take more responsibility for their own defense, both Nixon and Henry Kissinger believed that Japan needed to be “shocked” out of its postwar habit of relying almost exclusively on the United States for security while pursuing a single-minded mercantilist policy. They also hoped to prod Tokyo to do more to use its economic and political strength in support of common interests.²¹ After the “shocks” wore off, the Nixon administration established a constructive relationship with Japan, encouraging its normalization with Beijing ahead of the US’s and expressing understanding of the need for Japan to break with the US on policy toward the Middle East in the wake of the 1973 oil embargo.²² Nixon also became the first American president to voice support for a permanent UN Security Council seat for Japan.

The end of this period marked the formal close of the postwar era with the return of Okinawa, the reintroduction of China into the strategic equation in East Asia, detente with the Soviet Union, and the ascendancy of trade issues to the top of the bilateral agenda. The change in the strategic environment took US pressure off Japan on defense issues and gave both the US and Japan more diplomatic room to maneuver. In addition, the rise of Japan’s economy introduced a new power balance, and new tensions, into the relationship. Military, political, and economic cooperation with Japan remained a strategic imperative for the United States, but the terms of this cooperation were in transition.

III. Building an Alliance—1973–1989

The mid-1970s was a period of steady consolidation of the security relationship. The United States reduced its military presence in the Tokyo urban area, removing daily irritants, while forward deploying the aircraft carrier *Midway* to Yokosuka, thereby demonstrating US resolve to remain engaged in East Asia after its withdrawal from Vietnam. President Ford’s 1974 visit to Tokyo, the first ever by an American president, was largely ceremonial, as was Emperor Hirohito’s 1975 three-week tour of the United States, but both served to demonstrate publicly the friendly relations between the two countries. Various corporate scandals (Lockheed, Toshiba) and trade issues (color television, steel), along with revelations about possible nuclear weapons on American naval vessels in Japanese ports, ruffled the relationship without fundamentally disturbing close political and military cooperation.

Korean Troop Withdrawals and Nuclear Nonproliferation

The advent of the Carter administration in 1977 introduced two disruptive elements into the bilateral relationship: President Carter’s proposal to remove US forces from Korea and his efforts to prevent the operation of Japan’s nuclear

fuel reprocessing plant at Tokai Mura as part of the president's nonproliferation campaign to keep separated plutonium out of the nuclear fuel cycle. The Japanese regarded the first proposal as destabilizing and the second as threatening its nuclear power program, which was seen as essential to its energy security and economic survival. Although Carter eventually backed away from the Korean troop withdrawal idea and compromised on Tokai Mura, the two issues raised doubts in Japan about the reliability of the US as an ally.

Strengthening Defense and Political Cooperation

On bilateral defense issues, the Carter administration took a low-key approach, focusing on:

- Helping Japan to make qualitative improvements in its defense forces through acquisition of P-3Cs and F-15s;
- Increasing Japanese host-nation support through labor cost sharing;
- Negotiating the Guidelines for Defense Cooperation that authorized joint planning on the defense of Japan between the uniformed Japanese and American services;
- Opening discussion on the respective roles and missions of US and Japanese defense forces in carrying out the security treaty, which later led to Japan assuming responsibility for protecting specific sea-lanes.²³

With respect to political cooperation, the administration encouraged Prime Minister Fukuda's active diplomacy in East Asia and the Middle East and sought to channel Japan's economic assistance in support of the Camp David process and other shared interests. This was the first step toward a "strategic dialogue" between deputy foreign ministers that was formalized in the 1980s.

Combating the "Evil Empire"

In 1979, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, coupled with the ongoing buildup of Russian forces in the Far East, altered fundamentally the global strategic atmosphere and strongly influenced the tone of US-Japan security relations. Tokyo joined Washington in boycotting the Moscow Olympics, and the Japanese public became more receptive to US-Japan defense cooperation.

The Reagan administration saw Japan as a key player in the struggle against the "evil empire" and embraced Tokyo as a "global partner" that needed to take more responsibility for maintaining the international security and economic systems from which it benefited. Specific policy objectives included:

- Induce Japan to break the 1 percent limit on defense spending so that it could improve its naval and air defense capabilities and increase host-nation support for US forces;
- Persuade Japan to share military technology with the US;

- Expand the discussion on the respective roles and missions of US and Japanese forces in defense of Japan;
- Explore possible cooperation on missile defense;
- Station F-16s at Misawa Air Base in northern Japan as part of the maritime strategy of horizontal escalation in the event of Soviet aggression in Europe;
- Make Japan face up to economic issues, including rectifying the trade imbalance, controlling exports in sensitive sectors, and opening markets to US products.

Reagan brought in a strong team of like-minded officials on Asian policy²⁴ who took key State Department, Pentagon, and NSC positions, which ensured good interagency coordination on political and security issues related to Japan. When George Shultz became secretary of state in May 1982, he brought with him considerable knowledge and understanding of Japan and his later appointment of Michael H. Armacost as under secretary of state further strengthened the State Department role on Japan.

Bringing the Alliance Out of the Closet

The tone of the new relationship was set when Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki came to Washington in May of 1981. The joint communiqué used the word “alliance” for the first time to characterize the relationship, and Japan agreed to join in the protection of two sea-lanes. These developments were marred by Suzuki’s subsequent refutation of “alliance” as implying a military relationship and the resignation of his foreign minister, but they opened the door to expanded defense cooperation.

In late 1982 Suzuki was replaced by Yasuhiro Nakasone, a long-time nationalist and defense hawk who was eager to develop Japan’s strategic relationship with the United States, referring to Japan as “an unsinkable aircraft carrier” in the Cold War. During his first visit to Washington in January of 1983, Nakasone and Reagan hit it off and launched the “Ron-Yasu” relationship. Nakasone had announced a significant increase in Japan’s defense budget and made clear that he was ready to move Japan more directly into the global Western security framework. This was solidified at the Williamsburg summit in May 1983 when Nakasone declared that the defense of the West was indivisible, a position motivated as much by concern that NATO-Soviet negotiations on SS-20s would not include the Soviet Far East as out of a desire to strengthen Japan’s identification with the US and Europe. The US insistence on a global “zero based” solution was critical in demonstrating to the Japanese that it would not sacrifice their security interests for those of its European allies.

While security issues dominated the Reagan administration approach to Japan, trade issues were not absent. The Reagan team continued the Carter administration efforts to induce Japan to take macroeconomic steps to rectify

the trade imbalance, without notable success. Despite its free trade orientation, the Reagan administration could not resist congressional, industry, and labor pressure to negotiate “voluntary restraints” on Japan’s exports of steel and autos. The administration broke new ground in undertaking sector-specific negotiations to try to open Japanese markets to US exports, a process that proved frustrating for both sides but which did produce some results.²⁵

Trade and Defense Intersect

This period also saw the first clear crossover between the US defense and trade agendas in the form of the FSX issue. The Japanese had for some time been intent on developing indigenously their next-generation ground-attack aircraft. US defense officials had sought to persuade their Japanese counterparts that from the perspective of interoperability and efficient use of scarce defense resources it would be much better for Japan to buy an off-the-shelf American aircraft or to engage in joint development and production. “Techno-nationalists” in Congress and trade agencies saw the program as the Defense and State departments naively providing Japan with technology that it could use to develop commercial aircraft. The Japanese reluctantly agreed to a joint program to develop and produce a plane based on the F-16, but the heretofore sacrosanct barrier between defense cooperation and trade disputes had been broken.

Contributing to the End of the Cold War

As the Cold War came to a triumphant close, the United States could be very satisfied with the contribution made by the US-Japan alliance. The alliance had played a critical role in maintaining relative stability in East Asia, not only by providing the platform for the US military presence but by allowing Japan to develop its economy and become the engine of growth for the region. Particularly in the later days of the Cold War, Japan’s solidarity with the West had put increased pressure on the Soviet Union and perhaps hastened its demise.

For Japan, however, the collapse of the Soviet Union represented less of a clear-cut triumph. Remnants of the Cold war remained in East Asia in the form of a divided Korean peninsula and Russian occupation of Japan’s Northern Territories, and Japanese leaders were worried that the US and Western Europe would forget about the Asian angle as they rushed to embrace Yeltsin and provide assistance to a struggling Russia.

Both countries faced the challenge of redefining their relationship in a world without the unifying force of a powerful and aggressive Soviet Union.

IV. Adjusting to the Post-Cold War World—1989–2001

When President Bush went to Japan for the funeral of Emperor Hirohito, two weeks after the president’s inauguration, the only issue of substance taken up in side meetings was the FSX arrangement, with the new administration demanding

that the agreement be reopened to increase US work-share at the production stage. This signaled that economic factors were not only intruding into security issues but were becoming dominant. American concern about Japanese economic penetration of the US, symbolized by its purchase of Rockefeller Center and Pebble Beach, and Japanese technological domination of certain fields (e.g., semiconductors) had combined with “revisionist” arguments that the US “free ride” to Japan on defense and access to the US market had allowed Japan to threaten the US economically.

Managing Trade Differences in the Context of a Global Partnership

While trade issues had risen to the top of the agenda, the Bush administration was very mindful of the importance of strategic cooperation with Japan, coining the term “global partnership” to characterize an effort to harness Japan’s economic and political power to achieve agreed international objectives. To keep differences on trade issues from poisoning the overall relationship, the administration sought to find joint projects, such as assistance programs in Eastern Europe and Central America and projects to address transnational issues on the environment and scientific research, that would help demonstrate to the publics in both countries the benefits of US-Japan cooperation.

The Bush administration also intensified coordination with Japan with respect to foreign policy issues, particularly Russia, China, Cambodia, and Korea, generally to good effect. Tensions did develop, however, with respect to Malaysian prime minister Mahathir’s proposal for an “East Asian Economic Caucus,” excluding the United States, as a counterweight to NAFTA. The US publicly and privately insisted that the more inclusive APEC should be the forum for regional economic discussions, while Japan was reluctant to reject the idea outright.

The Gulf War

An issue that neither the US nor Japan had anticipated proved to be the one that most shaped the relationship—Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait and the Gulf War.²⁶ The Bush administration was not unmindful of the constitutional, legal, political, and psychological constraints on Japan’s ability to participate directly in the international coalition, but American officials were deeply disappointed by Japan’s perceived passive response, particularly given Japan’s stake in the UN, the rule of law, and stability in the Middle East. The American public more broadly, already in a “Japan-bashing” mood because of trade issues, saw Japan’s absence as another example of a “free ride” on the back of the United States.

Under American pressure, the Japanese government made an effort to pass legislation that would have allowed Japan to send noncombatants, but when this failed the GOJ fell back on financial contributions. The US complicated the process by sending mixed messages on what was expected, but in the end Japan

produced a very generous total of \$13 billion. Unfortunately the protracted process and subsequent disputes about exchange rates kept the GOJ from getting due recognition abroad for its contribution.

With the success of the Gulf War, US-Japan relations soon returned to normal, but the lessons were not lost on either side. The two governments recognized that if a crisis developed closer to home, e.g. Korea, and Japan responded in the same passive way, the alliance would be strained to the breaking point. Japan quickly passed the Peacekeeping Law, which allowed it to send forces abroad (with tight restrictions) for UN peacekeeping operations (the first contingent went to Cambodia) and reorganized its crisis management procedures. The Bush administration, however, facing a faltering American economy with an election approaching, turned its attention to trade issues, leading to the ill-conceived and ill-fated January 1992 “Auto Summit” in Tokyo and setting a tone of mutual recrimination that carried over into the Clinton administration.

“It’s the Economy, Stupid”

Even before the inauguration, the new administration launched a review of policy toward Japan, led by the incoming trade and economic team, many of whom had had business or academic experience with Japan. The premise of this review was that while the security alliance and political partnership were in good shape, the economic relationship was not. Japan’s economic might and predatory trade and industrial practices posed a serious threat to American interests and needed to be attacked aggressively and comprehensively. The team also shared a conviction that during the Cold War the US had “pulled its punches” on trade issues out of deference to the alliance. Now, the US was free to bring much more pressure to bear on Japan with respect to the economic agenda with less worry about the implications for the security relationship.

Three years of acrimonious negotiations ensued, reaching a climax with an accord on autos in May 1995. For all the effort and political capital expended, the results were modest, and, in the words of one close observer, “the framework negotiations that had begun with a bang ended with a whimper.”²⁷

Reanchoring a Drifting Alliance

During the first three years of the Clinton administration, the security agenda had been allowed to drift. There was no senior official in the Defense Department who “took charge” of the US-Japan security relationship the way figures like Richard Armitage had in the Reagan and Bush administrations. Professionals in the Defense and State Departments and in the embassy in Tokyo continued to push the agenda forward with agreements to pursue joint research on theater missile defense and to fully fund host-nation support in the face of GOJ budget pressure, but the Clinton administration approach to Japan lacked an overall strategic framework.

The appointment of Joseph Nye in late 1994 as assistant secretary for international security affairs at the Pentagon represented a turning point. Nye recognized that even with the end of the Cold War, the US-Japan alliance remained essential to US interests in terms of dealing with the tensions on the Korean peninsula, managing the rise of Chinese power, and maintaining American influence in East Asia. The North Korean nuclear crisis that had erupted earlier that year (see below) was a wake-up call to both US and Japanese officials because the crisis made it clear that the GOJ did not have in place the legal framework or the political consensus necessary to support the US in the event of a military contingency on the peninsula.

Nye also recognized that with the collapse of the Soviet threat, a new rationale needed to be articulated for the US-Japan alliance and the US military presence in East Asia that was not based on containing a specific enemy. The result was the East Asian Strategic Review (EASR), better known as the Nye Initiative, issued in early 1995, which described the US-Japan alliance and the US's other security arrangements in East Asia region as the "oxygen" that allowed the region to flourish by maintaining stability and avoiding a power vacuum. The study also reaffirmed the US intention to maintain about 100,000 forward deployed forces in the Western Pacific, reassuring Japan about the administration's fundamental commitment to remain engaged in the region.

With the EASR study as a basis, American and Japanese officials set about drafting a "US-Japan Security Declaration," to be issued when President Clinton was to visit Japan for the APEC summit in November 1995. The purpose of the declaration was to celebrate the success of the alliance, reaffirm the shared values and interests on which it was based, and revitalize the security relationship by providing a post-Cold War rationale for the continued presence of American forces in Japan and our bilateral defense cooperation. The declaration was also designed to lay out an agenda for strengthening the alliance by revising the Guidelines for Defense Cooperation to promote cooperation in dealing with situations that "may emerge in areas surrounding Japan" (e.g., the Korean peninsula), putting in place a cross-servicing agreement, and addressing issues associated with US bases in Japan.

The concept of a security declaration took on new urgency with the gang rape of a twelve-year-old Okinawan girl by three US servicemen, a crime that produced an explosion of outrage throughout Japan and sparked a national debate on the need for a US military presence in Japan after the end of the Cold War. The US moved quickly to deal with the crisis with public apologies by President Clinton and Ambassador Mondale and agreed to set up a "Special Action Committee on Okinawa" (SACO) to examine the consolidation of US facilities in Okinawa and other measures to improve relations between the US military and local community.

Fortuitously, a domestic budget crisis in the US forced President Clinton to cancel his participation in the November APEC summit, and release of the declaration was delayed until April when the president was to visit Japan

and Korea. The intervening five months allowed the debate in Japan on the alliance to play out, with a consensus developing that the security relationship remained necessary, a conclusion helped by the Chinese missile tests in March that landed near Taiwan. In addition during this period SACO produced a report that contained a number of significant steps, including the return of Futenma Marine Corps Air Station, and Prime Minister Hashimoto replaced the figurehead socialist Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, putting in place someone supportive of and conversant with the US-Japan alliance.

The April summit was a major success and went far in restoring vitality to the alliance. In 1997 the revised Guidelines for Defense Cooperation were issued, which shifted the focus of the alliance from defense of Japan to cooperation in responding to regional contingencies. The guidelines spelled out in detail the kind of assistance that Japan could provide in such situations, including rear-area support and such noncombat operational activity as minesweeping, surveillance, and intelligence gathering, and authorized detailed bilateral planning. At the same time the guidelines reaffirmed that Japan would conduct all its actions within the limitations of its constitution and in accordance with its exclusively defense-oriented policy, thereby attempting to reassure both the Japanese public and Japan's neighbors.²⁸

Cooperation on Korea and Other Regional Issues

Beyond addressing economic imbalances and revitalizing the security relationship, the Clinton administration attached importance to enlisting Japanese support on foreign policy issues, particularly with respect to Korea, China, Russia, and Asia-Pacific cooperation.

North Korea reemerged as a major issue in 1994 when it left the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, broke IAEA safeguards, and began separating plutonium from spent nuclear fuel. The intervention of former president Carter defused the crisis. The administration proceeded to negotiate an "Agreed Framework" with Pyongyang by which North Korea promised to freeze its nuclear activities in exchange for US agreement to provide North Korea with two light water reactors to replace the proliferation-prone heavy water reactors. Washington, however, intended to have Seoul and Tokyo pay for the \$4 billion project but had not consulted with either in advance.

The Japanese were furious, and there was strong resistance in the Diet to any such deal, but after months of a combination of strokes and threats the GOJ got on board. The tripartite Korean Energy Development Organization (KEDO) was set up to administer the project, and the US organized the Trilateral Consultative Group (TCOG) to coordinate policy toward North Korea among the three countries. The process worked surprisingly well given the different perspectives and politics on North Korea in Tokyo, Seoul, and Washington, and the perceived success in dealing with the North Korean problem became a positive factor in US-Japan relations.

Coordination on policy toward China was much more problematic, with Tokyo and Washington often out of sync, as they had been on many occasions in the past. At the beginning of the administration, US China policy was dominated by human rights considerations fed by Tiananmen Square, concerns that did not figure prominently in Japan's approach to China. Subsequently US-China relations warmed up to such an extent that Clinton characterized the relationship as a "strategic partnership," creating anxiety in Tokyo that Japan-bashing was being replaced with "Japan passing." Then US-China relations cooled sharply with the Chinese missile tests near Taiwan in 1996 and the dispatch of US carriers to the strait, followed by the accidental bombing of the PRC embassy in Belgrade in 1999.

Meanwhile Japan was expanding its economic engagement with China while worrying about the PRC's growing military power and regional influence. A new generation of Japanese was growing increasingly resistant to China's continued use of the "history card" to exact economic benefits from Tokyo, symbolized by Jiang Zemin's failed visit to Japan in 1998. Both Tokyo and Washington were in accord that a containment policy in response to China's growing power was not an option, but different historical and domestic political circumstances and competing economic interests made it very difficult for the two to coordinate their terms of engagement with Beijing.

The Clinton administration approached cooperation with Japan on Asian regional issues with a certain ambivalence. On the one hand Washington and Tokyo shared an interest in strengthening the role of such organizations as APEC and the Asian Regional Forum (ARF), even if there was a degree of competition for leadership and differences with respect to agenda priorities. On the other, the Clinton administration continued the Bush/Baker concern about Japanese support for or involvement in Asian regional forums that excluded the United States. Despite these concerns, Mahathir's EAEC was in fact reborn as the "Ten Plus Three" (ASEAN plus Japan, China, and the ROK), evolving from a luncheon during the ASEAN Postministerial Conference to a regular meeting at the leaders level.

The US took much greater exception to Tokyo's suggestion of the establishment of an "Asian Monetary Fund" in response to the 1997 Asian financial crisis, with Treasury Secretary Rubin calling it a threat to the IMF. The Japanese backed down, but saw it as American sour grapes after Washington's failure to come to the aid of Thailand and Indonesia while Japan provided substantial financial support.

Another Clinton administration strategic priority with respect to Japan that met with greater success was enlisting GOJ support for the new Russia. Through steady quiet diplomacy, led by Strobe Talbott, the administration was able to persuade Japan that it was in its interest to help stabilize and reform the former Soviet Union by providing financial assistance and permitting it to join the G-7, even in the absence of dramatic Russian concessions on the territorial issue. In turn, the US assured Japan that it would continue to support Japan's

position on the four northern islands and ensure that this issue was not neglected in the G-7/G-8 process.

The Second Bush Administration

The George W. Bush administration approach to Japan was foreshadowed in the “Armitage Report” of October 2000,²⁹ produced by a nominally bipartisan study group, seven of whom subsequently took important policy positions in the new administration.³⁰ With the premise that the US-Japan alliance was more important than ever in view of all the potential flash points in the region, the report alleged that both sides had allowed the bilateral relationship to drift in the period after the 1996 Security Declaration, in part because of Washington’s exaggerated concerns about Beijing’s hostile reaction to the reinvigoration of the US-Japan security partnership. The authors saw the US-UK “special relationship” as a model and suggested the following elements in a revitalized alliance:

- A reaffirmed US defense commitment to Japan;
- Diligent implementation of the revised Guidelines for Defense Cooperation and Japanese implementation of crisis management legislation;
- Increased cooperation between the US armed services and their Japanese counterparts, including greater joint use of facilities, integration of training activities, and a review of the division of roles and missions agreed upon in 1981;
- Removal of Japan’s self-imposed restraints on full participation in peacekeeping and humanitarian relief operations;³¹
- Adjustments in the American force structure in Japan to make them more mobile and to take advantage of developments in technology and changes in the region;
- Full and rapid implementation of the SACO agreement to consolidate the US presence in Okinawa and reduce friction with local communities;
- Increase in the flow of US defense technology to Japan and encouragement of the American defense industry to form strategic alliances with Japanese companies to facilitate a greater two-way flow.
- Broadening of the scope of bilateral missile defense cooperation;
- Expansion of intelligence cooperation.

The Bush administration has in fact pursued an approach to Japan very much along the lines of the Armitage Report and has shown progress in achieving many of these objectives, particularly after the events of September 11.

V. The War on Terrorism and Beyond—2001–2003

Following the attacks on New York and Washington, cooperation on the war on terrorism joined the more traditional strategic objectives of the US-Japan

alliance. Tokyo did not wait to be prodded by the US before shifting its focus in this direction.

Koizumi Steps Up to the Plate

Having learned the lessons of the Gulf War and with new crisis management tools and more dynamic leadership in place, Prime Minister Koizumi immediately voiced strong and unequivocal support for the US war on terrorism and moved quickly to provide concrete support in terms of passing a counterterrorism law that allowed the Japanese military to protect US bases in Japan and authorized the Japan Maritime Defense Force to provide supply, transportation, and communication support to US forces operating in Afghanistan.

Japan followed up by dispatching Aegis class destroyers to the Indian Ocean to provide such support. Japan was also very active in the nonmilitary area, joining Washington as co-chair of the November 2001 Washington meeting on reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan, and Tokyo hosted the ministerial-level meeting of this group in January 2002. Washington encouraged and supported these Japanese initiatives, but the Koizumi government undertook these steps without the traditional overt pressure from the US, reflecting a new decisive top-down leadership style made possible by the evolution in Japanese politics, psychology, and governmental structure since the Gulf War.

Koizumi used the opportunity presented by the US invasion of Iraq to further strengthen the alliance by quickly announcing his understanding and support of the American action, despite strong public and political opposition to the war. Again Koizumi followed up with concrete action by obtaining Diet agreement to legislation allowing the Self-Defense Force to undertake noncombat reconstruction activities in Iraq, and the GOJ is now undertaking preparative steps to send some six hundred ground Self-Defense Force troops to the country, despite the recent deaths of two Japanese diplomats there and continued domestic opposition. In addition the GOJ has announced \$5 billion in reconstruction assistance.

The Japanese government also moved forward with cooperation with the US on missile defense and pushed through the first phase of long-stalled “emergency legislation” giving the GOJ authority to take special measures in the event of a crisis, legislation that is crucial to Japan’s ability to provide rear-area support to US forces in Japan in the event of a Korean crisis.

Besides the war on terrorism, the other issue that has been at the center of Bush administration policy toward Japan is North Korea’s nuclear program. Policy coordination got off to a rocky start with the administration distancing itself from the Agreed Framework and President Kim Dae-jung’s engagement policy, leaving Tokyo in an awkward middle ground between Seoul and Washington. Koizumi’s September 2002 visit to Pyongyang was not coordinated with Washington, and it appeared that US and Japanese policies toward Korea were going in fundamentally different directions. However, Japanese

disillusionment with the results of the North Korean summit and Washington's decision to engage with the North in the context of the six-party talks have narrowed differences between the two capitals.

China policy, on the other hand, has not been an issue in US-Japan relations, at least since the administration shifted back toward engagement after September 11. At the strategic level, the US and Japan both enjoy good relations with China, a rare occurrence in the postwar (or prewar) period. Moreover, the preoccupation of the US trade community and Congress with the flood of Chinese imports took the heat for Japan on economic issues.

Why Has the Alliance Succeeded?

Looking back on the last fifty years, there is a remarkable consistency in the US strategic perspective of Japan and the policies that have flowed from this perspective. There have been moments of crisis – the 1960 Security Treaty riots, the early 1970s Nixon shocks, the Gulf War, and the trade conflicts of the early 1990s – when it appeared that the postwar strategic bargain might come apart, but each time the two countries have recognized the stake they have in continued strategic cooperation and worked to contain centrifugal forces. What has been the glue that has held it together? Let me suggest four key factors.

- The United States has continued to meet its formal and implied obligations of:
 - Ensuring Japan's security and regional stability through extended deterrence (the "nuclear umbrella") and by maintaining conventional military forces in East Asia;
 - Providing "public goods" in terms of a stable, rule-based international political and economic system and an open American market for Japanese goods and investment;
 - Supporting Japan's full participation in the international community (e.g., UN, GATT, OECD, G-7).
- Japan, often responding to US pressure, has steadily assumed more international political, economic, and military responsibility within the context of continued strategic dependence upon the United States;
- Both sides have successfully adjusted alliance mechanisms and roles and missions to new power realities, albeit with some stumbles along the way;
- The alliance has had the good fortune not to be tested beyond its capacity to respond, e.g. by a renewed Korean war or a conflict in the Taiwan Strait, although there have been periods when such a crisis has been narrowly averted.

What Lies Ahead

Can this success continue? Some scholars have noted that it is unprecedented for the world's second economic power to entrust its strategic security to the world's leading power. They have suggested that for this reason the US-Japan alliance is unsustainable over the long term and that at some point Japan will feel compelled to take on the enormous domestic political and economic costs, as well as the regional and international opprobrium, of seeking strategic independence. Thus far there is no indication that Japan is moving in this direction, but below I suggest four issues that bear watching.

For the United States, Japan remains central to the achievement of its strategic objectives in East Asia, even as these objectives have shifted from deterring Soviet aggression and containing communism to dealing with regional instability and such emerging threats as terrorism and proliferation. In the defense area, there is little talk of Japan having a "free ride." US-Japan military cooperation promises to break new ground as Japan overcomes postwar taboos with respect to sending forces abroad, cooperating on missile defense, and engaging in collective security.

While the leaders in both countries are likely to continue to see strategic cooperation as critical to the achievement of their respective regional and global objectives, there are developments that could take US and Japanese policies on key issues in different directions. These include:

- **Iraq:** While both governments now characterize the alliance as never having been stronger and advancing rapidly toward a true "equal partnership" on a global scale, some Japanese and American observers caution that Koizumi's decision to send SDF units to Iraq, by being substantially out in front of the consensus in Japan, runs the risk of a backlash against his government and by extension the United States should, for example, Japanese forces in Iraq incur substantial casualties. The leaders of the Democratic Party of Japan have come out strongly against the deployment, arguing that the Koizumi government is "blindly" following the US and calling for a more independent Japanese policy giving equal weight to relations with Asia, the United Nations, and the United States. In the unlikely event that Iraq policy leads to the fall of the Koizumi government and brings the DJP to power, there could be an abrupt shift in Japanese policy that would strain the alliance.
- **Korea:** Despite the present close collaboration, Korea still has the potential to be a divisive factor in the alliance. Failure to reverse, or at a minimum cap, the North Korean nuclear program could stimulate debate in Japan about its own nuclear options, creating tensions in the region and with the US. Moreover, Washington and Tokyo, with different geographic and domestic political circumstances with respect to the Korean peninsula, may find it difficult to agree upon the appropriate response to a crisis. At the other end

of the spectrum, the termination of the nuclear crisis in the DPRK, along with North-South détente or unification, could be seen by elements in both the US and Japan as removing the rationale for forward deployed forces in Japan while setting in motion a new and perhaps destabilizing dynamic among Washington, Tokyo, Seoul, and Beijing.

- **China:** US-China and Japan-China relations could once again go in different directions, creating major tensions between Washington and Tokyo. In particular, a Taiwan Strait crisis would likely produce different reactions in the US and Japan, with Tokyo less prepared to support a military response. More broadly, if China's economy continues its pace of growth and Japan falls back into stagnation, the strategic equilibrium in East Asia could shift. If accompanied by political liberalization and foreign-policy moderation in Beijing, there may be those in the US who would see China as a more attractive strategic partner than Japan. If, on the other hand, China's increasing economic power is accompanied by a more aggressive foreign policy, there will be pressures in the US to move toward a containment policy. Either eventuality would likely produce great strains in the US-Japan alliance unless managed carefully.

- **Multilateralism:** The current perception of US policy as downplaying the role of the United Nations in conflict resolution, distancing the US from international agreements that impinge on sovereignty, and giving less weight to the views of traditional allies in formulating and carrying out its objectives, has not produced in Japan thus far the kind of backlash that has occurred in Canada and Europe. Nevertheless, many Japanese regard this more unilateral American approach as being in conflict with the importance that Japan has traditionally attached to the United Nations and international law. Moreover a younger, more nationalistic generation is emerging on the political scene in Japan in both the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and the opposition DPJ who call for a more assertive Japanese foreign policy. Most of these new leaders appear to see this new activism in the broad context of the alliance with the United States. However, if the US is perceived as pursuing policies that do not adequately take into account Japan's interests, there could be demands from this generation for a more independent Japanese stance.

Final Thoughts

Over the fifty-plus year life of the alliance, there have been several points of crisis when it appeared that the US and Japan might be on the way to strategic separation. Each time, a recognition of shared interests and wise leadership on both sides prevailed, and the relationship moved forward. At this juncture in history, with postwar systems and institutions facing unprecedented challenges, it is difficult to envision how either the United States or Japan could achieve its foreign policy objectives without continued close cooperation with the other.

History demonstrates, however, that a rational calculation of one's interest is not always the determining factor, and committed leadership in both countries will be required to ensure that the alliance survives and prospers. Without leaders who are able to articulate the benefits of partnership, develop a common approach to critical issues, and manage their internal policy processes, the alliance will have great difficulty in moving forward and may be subject to centrifugal forces.

With both countries seeing the weakening of bureaucracies that have been the traditional alliance managers and the increasing intrusion of domestic politics into foreign policy, the old patterns may be hard to replicate. It is necessary but not sufficient for experts like those gathered here to meet to try to develop a forward-looking strategy based on the 1996 Security Declaration, the 2000 Armitage Report, and other efforts. We need to move beyond this "club" to broaden the base to include a new generation of politicians and private-sector leaders, as well as academics and bureaucrats, in order to create the broad support necessary for the alliance to endure.

This paper was informed by the discussion at the January 14–15, 2004, roundtable on "America's Alliances" hosted by the Asia-Pacific Research Center, Stanford Institute for International Studies. The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the National Defense University, the Department of Defense, or the US Government.

NOTES

¹ JCS Memo to Secstate contained in *Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. VI, 1951–52, p. 778.

² Dulles memo to Secstate, January 4, 1951, *ibid.*, p. 782.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 789.

⁴ Rusk memo to S/P, November 9, 1951, *ibid.*, p. 1432.

⁵ Yoshida later provided a letter to Dulles setting forth Japan's intention to open relations with Taiwan after its sovereignty was restored, a policy it followed until 1972. The UK, which had recognized the communist government in Beijing, objected strongly to this US pressure on Japan.

⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. XIV, 1952–54, p. 1572.

⁷ September 9, 1954, Embassy Tokyo cable no. 798, *ibid.*, p. 1718.

⁸ Embassy and CCFE cables, *ibid.*, p. 1732.

⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. XXIII, 1955–57 p. 328.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. XVIII, 1958–60, p. 3.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 12–14.

¹² MacArthur letter to Asst. Sec. Robinson, April 18, 1959, *ibid.*, p. 67.

¹³ In a May 1960 National Security Council meeting, JCS chairman Twining complained that the US was being "too nice to Japan and that is why it is slipping away." President Eisenhower responded that 'we had to be nice to Japan since it was an independent nation.' *Ibid.*, p. 264.

¹⁴ Eisenhower expressed concern that Okinawa could become like Cyprus or Algeria and suggested the US establish an enclave of minimum size. *Ibid.*, p. 189.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 337.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. XXII, 1961–63, p. 235.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 365.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 382.

¹⁹ Priscilla Clapp and Mort Halperin, *US-Japan Relations in the 1990s* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1974), p. 130.

²⁰ SECTO 36, dated October 6, 1968.

²¹ Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval* (New York: Little, Brown & Co., 1982), p. 6.

²² See pp. 735–745 in Kissinger's *Years of Upheaval* for a detailed discussion of dealings with Japan on the energy crisis.

²³ National Security Council memo from Michael Armacost to Zbigniew Brzezinski, September 13, 1977.

²⁴ E.g., Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Armitage, James Kelly, Gaston Sigur.

²⁴ George Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993), p. 185.

²⁵ In addition to my own recollections I have drawn heavily on Michael H. Armacost's chapter on the Gulf War (pp. 98–128) in Armacost, *Friends or Rivals?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

²⁶ *Friends or Rivals?* p. 188.

²⁷ For an excellent review of the Nye Initiative see Michael Green's chapter "The Search for an Active Security Partnership: Lessons from the 1980s" in *Partnership—The United States and Japan 1951–2001*, edited by Akira Iriye and Robert Wampler (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2001).

²⁸ "The United States and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership," an INSS Special Report published by the Institute for National Strategic Studies at the National Defense University, October 11, 2000, Washington, DC.

²⁹ Richard Armitage, deputy secretary of state; Michael Green, assistant to the president for Asian affairs; James Kelly, assistant secretary of state for East Asian affairs; Torkel Patterson, assistant to the president and then special advisor to Ambassador Howard Baker in Tokyo; Robin Sakoda, special assistant to Mr. Armitage; Robert Manning, State Department policy planning staff, and Paul Wolfowitz, deputy secretary of defense.

³⁰ After passage of the 1992 Peacekeeping Law, the GOJ had "frozen" certain provisions relating to the right to bear arms and operate in dangerous areas because of domestic sensitivities. These provisions were in fact "unfrozen" in 2003 as part of Japan's response to the war on terrorism.

JAPANESE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE SECURITY ALLIANCE WITH THE UNITED STATES: EVOLUTION OF POLICY ON THE ROLES OF THE SELF-DEFENSE FORCE

Yamaguchi Noboru

Since the end of the Cold War, the Government of Japan (GOJ) has taken a number of new approaches to adjust its security policy to match the new security environment. These measures were extremely sensitive or even unthinkable during the Cold War. Japan, for the first time in its post-World War II history, dispatched Self-Defense Force (SDF) minesweepers to the Gulf in 1991, then participated in the United Nations peacekeeping operation in Cambodia in 1992. In the latter half of the 1990s, the GOJ took further steps toward a new national security posture focusing on measures to enhance the Japan-US alliance. These included a revision of the Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation in 1997 and an enactment of laws in 1999 to implement the particulars of the revised Guidelines. This series of efforts was even accelerated after 9/11. In October 2001, by enacting the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law and revising the SDF Law, the GOJ tasked the SDF to perform missions to assist the international efforts to combat terrorism in Afghanistan and to protect US bases in Japan against terrorist attacks. At the end of February 2004, Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) vessels were in the Indian Ocean to support the international fleet combating terrorism in Afghanistan, and SDF contingents were operating in the Golan Heights and East Timor for UN peacekeeping missions. SDF soldiers, sailors, and airmen were also starting humanitarian and reconstruction operations in Samawah, Iraq, based on the Law Concerning the Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq, enacted in 2003.

This paper will examine what the United States and Japan have done to manage their alliance in recent years and address Japan's tasks in particular. The paper will cover the following points.

- 1) During the Gulf crisis and the Gulf War, the implications of the end of the Cold War became clear for Japan and encouraged the GOJ to look for new approaches to Japan's security policy.
- 2) In the mid-1990s, the governments of the United States and Japan made efforts to reaffirm and adjust the alliance, resulting in the US-Japan Joint

Declaration on Security in 1996 and the revised Guidelines for US Japan Defense Cooperation in 1997.

3) Japan took slow but steady steps to implement what the two governments concluded to be the necessary approach toward the future alliance.

4) There are remaining tasks for the future.

Turning Point: Learning from the Gulf War

During the crisis and the war in the Persian Gulf in 1990 and 1991, Japan made financial contributions of thirteen billion dollars, which accounted for nearly 20 percent of the financial support for the war that the United States received from allies and friends.¹ Japan was in fact the third largest contributor after Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. This contribution, however, was not accompanied by human contributions such as sending troops, and attracted little appreciation from the international community.² In March 1991, when the Kuwaiti government—in major US papers and magazines such as the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*—thanked those who made efforts to liberate Kuwait, Japan was not named in the list of contributors.

Through this experience, policymakers and military planners in Tokyo realized that “checkbook diplomacy” did not work. They started making serious efforts to look for policies that would allow Japan to contribute to international efforts for peace and stability in the world, even as they scrutinized the post-Cold War security environment. Right after the Gulf War, the GOJ decided to dispatch minesweepers to the Gulf for postwar reconstruction. Meanwhile, the Diet passed laws enabling the SDF to participate in UN peacekeeping operations (PKOs) and international disaster relief operations in 1992. Since then, the SDF has participated in UN PKOs and international humanitarian relief operations (HROs) such as those in Cambodia (1992–93), Mozambique (1993–95), Zaire (1994), the Golan Heights (1996–), Honduras (1998) and East Timor (2002–).

Behind these policies, there was a notion of the characteristics of the post-Cold War world. Security specialists identified fundamental security requirements for Japan’s post-Cold War security policy, particularly during the process of developing the new National Defense Program Outline (NDPO) of 1995. In February 1994, the administration asked a group of scholars, business people, former government officials, and a former military officer for proposals on Japan’s security policy in the post-Cold War strategic environment. After a series of intensive discussions, the prime minister’s Advisory Group on Defense Issues concluded its report, “The Modality of the Security and Defense Capability of Japan,” in August 1994, known as the Higuchi Report (named after the chairman of the panel, Kotaro Higuchi).³ Many of the ideas recommended in this report were finally reflected in the new NDPO, which set forth the guidance for Japan’s future defense policy and force structure of the SDF.

The report clearly pointed out the fundamental differences between the Cold War and post-Cold War roles of Japan's defense capabilities as follows:

The defense capability of Japan in the Cold War period was built up and maintained for the primary purpose of preparing for attacks on Japanese territory by hostile forces ... [and] Japan's mission was to defend the country based strictly on the right of self defense. In light of its geographical position, however, Japan naturally played an important role in the anti-Soviet strategy of the Western bloc.⁴

While NATO established the western front against the East's massive ground forces in Europe, Japan was directly facing the Soviet Far East forces across the maritime border. Defense of Japan itself was a significant contribution to the Western allies since Japan's three key straits happened to be the critical exits for the Soviet Pacific Fleet from the Japan Sea to the East China Sea and the Pacific Ocean. Then the Cold War ended. Japan's previously vital contribution to the West—its defense capability—suddenly ceased to be critically important because its geostrategic significance drastically decreased in terms of anti-Soviet strategy.

The advisory group also raised a serious question about how Japan should deal with new threats in the new environment.

While clearly visible threats have disappeared and moves toward arms control and disarmament have made some progress centering on the US, Russia, and Europe, we found ourselves in an opaque and uncertain situation. In other words, there exist dangers of various qualities which are dispersed and difficult to identify, and it is hard to predict in what forms such dangers would threaten our security.⁵

From a military point of view, the future will require Japan not only to respond to a direct military invasion but also to deal with a variety of unpredictable threats, such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles and spillover of regional conflicts. There may also be new types of lower-intensity military and paramilitary threats, including violation of territorial water and air space, illegal occupation of territories, interruption of sea lines of communication, terrorism, armed refugees, and sabotage by commando type units. These concerns were validated by events such as the crisis over North Korea's nuclear program in 1993 and 1994, the NoDong missile launch in 1993, and the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway system in 1995.

Meanwhile, Japan has inherent vulnerabilities that should be taken into account when one thinks of its national security. As Japan's economy grew rapidly throughout the 1950s to the 1980s, cities became more complex, population and industry bases became denser, and domestic lines of communication grew more congested. Vulnerabilities have been increasing

in international terms as well. Japan's dependence on imported energy is widely known. As the economic activities abroad are dispersed throughout the world, Japan is heavily dependent on the safety of its market, sea lanes of communication, and countries and areas supplying natural resources including energy. The peace and stability of the world as a whole continue to be of essential importance for Japan even as mere buildup of the SDF becomes less relevant to international interests in a post-Cold War world. Professor Akihiko Tanaka of Tokyo University states that "While Japan did not have to get involved in international conflicts in the world during the Cold War period, since the Cold War ended, even contingencies in remote areas became relevant to Japan's security."⁶

Redefining the Alliance: The Path to the Japan-US Joint Declaration

The above-quoted findings laid out in the Higuchi Report had a significant influence on Japan's post-Cold War security policy, particularly on the new National Defense Program Outline (NDPO) adopted in 1995. The report emphasized active and constructive security policy, noting that "Japan should extricate itself from its security policy of the past that was, if anything, passive, and henceforth play an active role in shaping a new order." Based on this idea, the NDPO pointed out the importance of the SDF's capability for "contribution to creation of a more stable security environment," and listed this as one of SDF's three major functions, as well as the capability for national defense and for response to large-scale disasters and various situations.⁷ International PKOs, international disaster-relief operations, security dialogue, defense exchanges, and cooperation with arms control efforts are included as specific areas for such international contribution.

On the other hand, the Higuchi Report provoked concerns among security experts in Washington, who believed in the importance of the US-Japan alliance. Although the report recommended that Japan should enhance the alliance's functions, this recommendation came after the multilateral security cooperation in the report.⁸ Patrick Cronin and Michael Green, in their paper "Redefining the US-Japan Alliance," stated that "momentum and energy in Japanese policy planning are flowing away from the alliance," and concluded that "decisive action is now necessary to redefine the alliance."⁹ They further recommended that the Department of Defense (DoD) start "a comprehensive dialogue with Japan on new bilateral roles and missions."¹⁰ Based on this recommendation, intensive policy coordination between the two countries began at the end of 1994, aimed at clarifying the significance of the alliance and developing policies to enhance it. Three major policy documents were issued during this process—the "US Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region" released in February 1995, the "National Defense Program Outline in and after FY 1996" adopted November 1995, and the "Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security: Alliance for the 21st Century" issued in April 1996.

The US side took the first step in this bilateral policy coordination. Joseph Nye, as assistant secretary of defense for international affairs, issued the “United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region,” widely known as the East Asia Strategy Report (EASR of 1995) or the Nye Report. The EASR of 1995 emphasized Asia’s new significance by quoting the fact that “United States trade with the Asia-Pacific region in 1993 totaled over \$374 billion and accounted for 2.8 million United States jobs.”¹¹ It also reconfirmed the US military commitment to the region with “a force structure that requires approximately 100,000 personnel.”¹² The significance of the US-Japan alliance was specifically described:

There is no more important bilateral relationship than the one we have with Japan. It is fundamental to both our Pacific security policy and our global strategic objectives. Our security alliance with Japan is the linchpin of United States security policy in Asia. It is seen not just by the United States and Japan, but throughout the region, as a major factor for securing stability in Asia.¹³

In 1995, policy planners in Japan were in the final stages of revising the National Defense Program Outline, which the GOJ had first adopted in 1976. In November 1995, the National Security Council of Japan and the cabinet announced the new NDPO. As mentioned earlier, the new NDPO took many of ideas raised by the Higuchi Report and emphasized wider defense capabilities. In addition, the new NDPO answered to the concerns of Cronin and Green stated earlier, and reflected the voices calling for a stronger alliance with the United States on both sides of the Pacific. The new NDPO states that “the security arrangements with the United States are indispensable to Japan’s security and will also continue to play a key role in achieving peace and stability in the surrounding region of Japan and establishing a more stable security environment.”¹⁴ It identified four important areas for bilateral cooperation: (1) information exchange and policy consultation; (2) operational cooperation including joint studies, exercises, and training as well as mutual support in those areas; (3) exchange in the areas of equipment and technology; and (4) measures to facilitate smooth and effective stationing of US forces in Japan. When it was released, security specialists in the United States welcomed this document and pointed out that “the new NDPO mentioned Japan-US security arrangements thirteen times while the old one referred to them only once.”¹⁵ The new NDPO also elaborates a newly introduced dimension of the alliance that stipulates, in short, Japan’s role in regional contingencies close to but outside Japan. It states:

Should a situation arise in the areas surrounding Japan which will have an important influence on national peace and security, take appropriate response in accordance with the Constitution and relevant laws and

regulations, for example, by properly supporting UN activities when needed, and by ensuring the smooth and effective implementation of the Japan-US Security Arrangements.¹⁶

This point on how Japan should deal with contingencies in the surrounding region was thoroughly reviewed during and after the revision of the Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation.

In 1995, the alliance was reconfirmed by the two countries through the EASR in the United States and the new NDPO in Japan. These efforts to redefine the alliance were followed by the next step—joint endorsement at the highest political level. In April 1996, Prime Minister Hashimoto and President Clinton issued the Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security: Alliance for the 21st Century, in Tokyo. They specifically stated:

For more than a year, the two governments conducted an intensive review of the evolving political and security environment of the Asia-Pacific region and of various aspects of the Japan-US security relationship. On the basis of this review, the Prime Minister and the President reaffirmed their commitment to the profound common values that guide our national policies: the maintenance of freedom, the pursuit of democracy, and respect for human rights. They agreed that the foundation for our cooperation remains firm, and that this partnership will remain vital in the 21st century.¹⁷

This joint declaration was significant for three reasons. First, as mentioned above, the political leaders of both countries affirmed that Japan-US cooperation in security areas was vital in a post-Cold War environment. The Japanese prime minister and the American president formally declared this belief to both domestic and overseas audiences. Second, the declaration set a widened agenda for the two countries by mentioning three areas for cooperation: (a) bilateral cooperation under the Japan-US security relationship, (b) regional cooperation, and (c) global cooperation. During the Cold War period, the alliance was narrowly defined and focused only on the bilateral context, such as the US commitment to Japan's defense, Japan's support for US stationing in Japan, and bilateral cooperation in military technologies and equipment. The two leaders made clear that Japan and the United States would cooperate on regional and global issues. Regional cooperation would include, for example, joint efforts for stability on the Korean peninsula and regional security dialogue. Strengthened cooperation in support of international peacekeeping and humanitarian relief operations and coordination between the two countries for arms control and disarmament were examples of global cooperation. The scope of the bilateral cooperation for security became wider than during the Cold War period. Finally, the third key component of the joint declaration was the proposal to revise the Guidelines for Defense Cooperation.

Revision of the Defense Guidelines

Following the guidance given by the two leaders, the two governments launched efforts to revise the Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation (Defense Guidelines). The first Defense Guidelines were authorized by the Japan-US Security Consultative Committee (SCC) and adopted by the National Defense Council and the Cabinet of Japan in 1978.¹⁸ They were the result of intensive work by defense officials in both countries, and aimed for smoother, more effective implementation of the Japan-US Security Arrangements begun by the initiative of Minister of Defense Sakata and Secretary of Defense Schlesinger in 1976. While the first Defense Guidelines were important in enhancing operational cooperation between the two militaries through the late 1970s and the 1980s, they were designed to deal with a Cold War strategic environment.¹⁹ As Japan and the United States entered the post-Cold War environment, it became crucial to review the Guidelines, and in August 1996 government officials and military planners of the two countries started working on revisions. After intensive discussions, including four case studies on various contingency scenarios, the revised Defense Guidelines were reported to the SSC in September 1997 in Washington, DC.²⁰

The revised Defense Guidelines consist of three major elements: (a) cooperation under normal circumstances, (b) actions in response to an armed attack against Japan, and (c) cooperation in situations in areas surrounding Japan that will have an important influence on Japan's peace and security (Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan). In short, the revised Guidelines seamlessly addressed the full spectrum of Japan's national security, from peacetime to adjacent regional contingencies to Japanese defense and Japan-US security cooperation. Peacetime cooperation includes bilateral cooperation and coordination for peacetime activities such as PKOs, humanitarian relief operations, security dialogue, and defense exchanges as well as information sharing, policy coordination, and defense planning between the two governments. The second point of the guidelines, Japan's defense, made clear that "Japan will have primary responsibility immediately to take action and to repel an armed attack" while the United States "will provide appropriate support varying according the scale, type, phase, and other factors of the armed attack."²¹ The revised Defense Guidelines particularly introduced specific kinds of bilateral cooperation for new types of threats, such as ballistic missile attacks and guerrilla-commando type attacks.²²

Issues related to the third key point, cooperation in situations occurring in areas surrounding Japan, drew the most intensive debates among lawmakers and the public. The revised Defense Guidelines allocated the same amount of space for this section as for the section on defense of Japan. This contrasted sharply to the old guidelines, in which the chapter on contingencies in the Far East occupied only one-tenth the space devoted to the chapter on Japan's defense. Indeed, this point was so focal that the Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security noted that "the two leaders agreed on the necessity to promote bilateral

policy coordination, including studies on bilateral cooperation in dealing with situations that may emerge in the areas surrounding Japan and which will have an important influence on the peace and security of Japan.”²³

The revised Defense Guidelines divided bilateral cooperation components into three categories. The first category is cooperation in activities initiated by either government, such as relief activities, measures to deal with refugees, search and rescue operations, noncombatant evacuation operations, and activities for international sanctions including UN-endorsed ship inspections. The second category specifies Japan’s support for US forces’ activities, such as US use of facilities in Japan and Japan’s rear-area support for US forces. The third category includes operational cooperation, such as Japan’s activities for intelligence gathering, surveillance and minesweeping operations, and US operations to restore peace and security in the areas surrounding Japan. Forty specific items for cooperation in total were listed in the appendix of the revised Defense Guidelines. Representing the US notion of Japan’s support in “situations in areas surrounding Japan,” the EASR 1998 states:

...the revised Guidelines outline Japanese rear-area support to US forces responding to a regional contingency. This support may include providing access to airfields, ports, transportation, logistics, and medical support. Japan would also be able, as applicable, to cooperate and coordinate with US forces to conduct such missions and functions as minesweeping, search and rescue, surveillance, and inspection of ships to enforce UN sanctions. By enhancing the alliance’s capability to respond to crises, the revised Guidelines are an excellent example of preventive diplomacy: they contribute to shaping the environment by improving deterrence and stability in the region.²⁴

Post-Guidelines Efforts: Situations in Areas surrounding Japan

Because the Guidelines are not a formal and legally binding agreement, “the Guidelines and programs under the Guidelines will not obligate either Government to take legislative, budgetary or administrative measures.” However, “the two Governments are expected to reflect in an appropriate way the results of these efforts, based on their own judgment, in their specific policies and measures.”²⁵ Based on this agreement, the Government of Japan undertook a series of measures to implement the revised Guidelines. On September 24, 1997, the day after the Defense Guidelines were released, the GOJ adopted a cabinet decision to initiate work to ensure the effectiveness of the revised Defense Guidelines. It was stipulated that the work should be done by the government as a whole, rather than only JDA or SDF, and should include legal issues. In April 1998, the administration submitted bills related to Japan’s action in “situations surrounding Japan” to the Diet. In May 1999, the Diet passed the bills for the “Law Concerning Measures to Enhance the Peace and Security of Japan in Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan.” In the meantime, minor amendments

were made on the SDF Law and the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement between Japan and the United States (ACSA) to support the Law on Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan. During the process of deliberation on these bills, the Diet decided to take separate legislation measures for ship-inspection operations. The bill concerning ship-inspection operations was submitted to the Diet in October 2000, and enacted in November 2000.

This series of legislative actions enabled Japan to cooperate with US forces in Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan by conducting rear-area support and rear area search and rescue activities for US forces, and participating in ship-inspection operations for international sanctions. Under this legal framework, relevant government agencies as well as JDA and SDF are tasked to implement measures according to their respective jurisdictions. Heads of such agencies are authorized to require the cooperation of local governments and to request cooperation from nongovernmental bodies. This legislation set several conditions to avoid political and constitutional controversy over Japan's activities, including the SDF. First, these activities must not constitute the threat or use of force. Second, these activities must be conducted in areas where there is currently no combat action and where it is deemed that no combat action will take place during the term of the activities. Third, the prime minister must obtain prior Diet approval for activities carried out by the SDF except in cases where implementation of such activities is deemed urgent.²⁶

Since this legislation was aimed at situations in areas surrounding Japan, the SDF's activities were inherently limited in purpose and in geographical area. There are, however, significant implications in the fact that concrete examples of activities are listed within the Constitution. In his book *The Japan-US Strategic Dialogue*, former vice minister for defense Masahiro Akiyama states that "what Japan can do and what Japan cannot do under the Constitution was made clear," and "the laws enabled Japan to offer as much cooperation as possible for the United States under the conditions that did not allow the exercise of right of collective defense."²⁷ In other words, a nearly maximum scope of the constitutional limitation was made clear. This later facilitated the GOJ's efforts to legislate the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law in 2001 and the Special Measures Law for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance in Iraq in 2003. When the bills were drafted, the GOJ no longer had to scrutinize whether the activities proposed by these bills were constitutional, since they were the same as those listed in the laws concerning Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan.

Post-Guidelines Efforts: Widened Role of the SDF in International Missions

Since 1992, when the International Peace Cooperation Law was enacted, the SDF have dispatched troops for UN PKOs. For the first nine years, however, participation was limited to those in support of peacekeeping forces (PKF). The core assignments of PKF undertaken by SDF contingents—such as disarmament

monitoring and stationing and patrol in a buffer zone—had been suspended until another law, the International Peace Cooperation Bill, was considered and approved by the Diet. In November 2001, the suspension was lifted after nine years, during which time the SDF had participated in six different UN peacekeeping missions. Part of the law was also amended to expand the scope of use of weapons, as well as the range of subjects to be defended.

After the terrorist attacks on 9/11, the role of the SDF in international missions expanded still further. On October 5, 2001, the GOJ submitted the draft of the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law to the Diet. The law passed the Diet on October 29, and took effect on November 2. At the same time, the SDF Law was amended to introduce a new category of SDF operations, called Guarding Operations. This amendment enabled the SDF to provide the US forces with support to protect their facilities and areas in Japan without issuing public security orders. The purposes of the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law are as follows:

Recalling that UN Security Council Resolution 1368 regards the September 11 terrorist attacks that took place in the US as a threat to international peace and security, and also noting that UN Security Council Resolutions 1267, 1269, 1333 and other relevant resolutions condemn acts of international terrorism and call on all member states to take appropriate measures for the prevention of such acts, the purpose of the Law is to specify the following measures in order to enable Japan to contribute actively and on its own initiative to the efforts of the international community for the prevention and eradication of international terrorism, thereby ensuring the peace and security of the international community including Japan: (i) The measures Japan implements in support of the activities of the Armed Forces of the US and other countries which aim to eradicate the threat of the terrorist attacks, thereby contributing to the achievement of the purposes of the UN Chapter; and (ii) The measures Japan implements with the humanitarian spirit based on relevant resolutions or requests made by the UN and others.²⁸

The law states that Japan's activities are for: (a) cooperation and support activities for foreign forces, such as provision of goods and services by the SDF including supply, transportation, repair and maintenance, medical service, communications, airport and port services, utilities for bases, lodging and disinfection; (b) search and rescue activities for personnel in distress; and (c) assistance to affected people including transportation of necessities, medical services, and other humanitarian activities. Most of these activities are included in the revised Defense Guidelines and many are the same as those listed in the law on Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan. While geographic areas for such activities are expanded to include high seas and foreign territory (when consent from the territorial countries is obtained), the conditions for

such activities were the same as in the law on Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan. The law dictates that Japan's activities must not constitute the threat or use of force, and these activities are to be implemented in areas where combat is not taking place or not expected to take place while such activities are being carried out. Based on the law mentioned above, Japan has dispatched MSDF vessels and ASDF cargo aircraft for operations in support of foreign forces combating terrorism, and for humanitarian relief purposes in Southwest Asia. As of December 2003, three MSDF vessels were operating in the Indian Ocean, having supplied 327,000 kiloliters of fuel for the navies of ten countries including Canada, Germany, Italy, and the United States.

There has been an important implication in enacting the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law and the SDF activities that accompany it. The rhetoric for international PKO and for operations in the event of Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan merged, and became a template. SDF participation in international PKO had been initiated by the International Peace Cooperation Law, which was enacted in 1992 right after the Gulf War. The Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law of 2001 has the same goals as its 1992 predecessor—to legislate Japan's participation in PKO and international humanitarian relief operations, and to involve Japan actively in international efforts to promote world peace and security. At the same time, the 2001 law employed the same rhetoric introduced by the laws related to Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan (especially with respect to particular activities of the SDF such as rear-area support, search and rescue operations and support for refugees). It can be said that individual parts of the revised Defense Guidelines and the laws to ensure their effectiveness were applied in legislation to expand Japan's contribution to international PKO. Therefore, the time dedicated to legislation of the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law was significantly shorter than before. For example, it took two years to enact the International Peace Cooperation Law since its predecessor, the UN Peace Cooperation Bill, was submitted in October 1990 and died in the next month. The laws concerning Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan, including the Ship Inspection Law, took two-and-a-half years from the time the bills were submitted in April 1998. By contrast, the bills concerning Japan's anti-terrorism activities were put into effect November 2, 2000, just one month after the GOJ submitted them to the Diet on October 5.

This acceleration technique was again applied in August 2003, when the GOJ enacted the Law Concerning the Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq. As before, the GOJ utilized templates developed through legislative initiatives for the International Peace Cooperation Law, the laws related to Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan, and the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law. The major areas of SDF's activities are "humanitarian assistance activities," which involve such actions as distributing necessary goods to displaced persons, and "security assistance activities," which entail helping US (and other foreign) forces to maintain public order.²⁹ The new law set the same conditions on the SDF's activities as previous laws; it

stipulated, for example, that such activities must not constitute the threat or use of force, and that they must be conducted in areas where there is currently no combat action and where it is deemed that no combat action will take place during the term of the activities. On December 9, 2003, Prime Minister Koizumi announced the Basic Plan to dispatch the Japanese contingents including those of the Ground, Maritime, and Air Self-Defense Forces to Iraq.³⁰ The basic plan tasks the SDF troops to conduct missions such as medical services, water supply, and rehabilitation and maintenance of schools and other public facilities in southeastern Iraq, centered on the Governorate of Al Muthanna.³¹ This plan was approved by the Diet on February 9, 2004, a mere two months later. By the end of February, the main body of the SDF contingent—consisting of about 600 GSDF troops with about 200 vehicles and about 200 ASDF airmen with three C-130 cargo aircraft—was in Iraq and Kuwait. Meanwhile, the MSDF is supporting this contingent with the LST “Ohsumi” and the destroyer “Murasame” by transporting heavy equipment such as armored vehicles.

Post-Guidelines Efforts: Defense of Japan

Legal and political measures outlined in the previous section of this paper are for peacetime and for Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan in the context of the revised Defense Guidelines. Another element of the Defense Guidelines is Japan-US cooperation in case of direct attack against Japan. In this area as well, the GOJ has taken significant steps in recent years, first by enacting three laws concerning responses to armed attack, and second, by enhancing SDF capabilities to deal with newly emerging threats such as missile attacks and unconventional threats including guerilla-commando type attacks and terrorist attacks.

The revised Defense Guidelines state that “the two Governments will be mindful that bilateral defense planning and mutual cooperation planning must be consistent so that appropriate responses will be ensured when a Situation in Areas Surrounding Japan threatens to develop into an Armed Attack against Japan or when such a situation and an Armed Attack against Japan occur simultaneously.” This suggests that the SDF might have to protect Japan while providing support for US forces operating to deal with Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan. The legal basis for countering Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan was made in the late 1990s. On the other hand, for more than a quarter-century, legal preparation for SDF operations in case of an armed attack lagged behind, and the JDA had been making efforts to establish just such a legal basis.³² It is questionable to see Japan supporting others while having difficulty protecting itself, and US forces, a supported entity, may well have trouble depending solely upon the support provided by such a country. The legal basis for the defense of Japan was a must for the GOJ. In April 2002, the GOJ submitted three bills on responses to armed attack: (1) the Bill to Respond to Armed Attack, (2) the Bill to Amend the SDF Law, and (3) the Bill to Amend the Law on Establishment of the Security Council of Japan. While these three

bills do not mean that legislative work for Japan's defense is complete, they may significantly improve Japan's defense posture on the following legal grounds.

- 1) The first bill will: a) set a general idea on how Japan responds to an armed attack; b) provide the GOJ with the guidelines for enacting necessary laws to ensure protection of people's lives, smooth and effective operations of the SDF, and smooth and effective operations of US forces in Japan. More importantly, the bill will c) set a two-year deadline to enact such laws.
- 2) The second bill is intended to amend the "SDF Law" in order to make partial improvements for the SDF's smooth operation in case of an armed attack against Japan. For example, this bill adds a series of special provisions on relevant laws such as the Road Traffic Law, Medical Service Law, Building Standards Law, and others.
- 3) The third bill is intended to clarify and strengthen the Security Council, which is the core element of Japan's decision-making in case of an armed attack against the country.³³

In June 2003, the Diet passed these three bills with a nearly unanimous vote. As the first bill dictates, the GOJ will have to complete the work to enact laws for protection of people's lives and for smooth operations of both the SDF and US forces.

Another key component for the defense of Japan is the SDF's capacity to deal with newly emerging threats such as missile and unconventional attacks. With respect to missile defense, the Nodong launch in 1993 and Taepodong launch in 1998 drew the keen attention of the Japanese public as well as military planners and policymakers. Following approval of the Japan Security Council in 1998, the GOJ and the United States began a joint technical research program in 1999 on elements of a Navy Theater Wide Defense (NTWD) system. Nose cones, kinetic warheads, infrared seekers, and stage-two rocket engines have been the focus of the research. In May 2003, Prime Minister Koizumi observed to President Bush that "missile defense is essential for Japan's defense and joint programs on this issue will facilitate promotion of the credibility of the alliance. Japan will accelerate its efforts for deliberation on missile defense." The Defense White Paper of 2003, which particularly notes the technical feasibility of the US PAC 3 system and Aegis-mounted ballistic missile defense system, says that the GOJ will conduct intensive study on (a) the technical feasibility, including capabilities and timelines of various systems; (b) the operational concept and system architecture best suited for Japan based on thorough consideration (including finances); (c) the operational and legal issues related to missile defense; (d) the relation between missile defense programs and the Three Principles on Arms Exports, which virtually ban exports of weapons and related technologies; (e) the impact on neighboring countries; and (f) Japan-US cooperation on the programs.³⁴ In August 2003, the JDA proposed some ¥142 billion for the FTY 2004 procurements of Patriot missiles (PAC-3s) and Aegis-mounted Standard

missiles (SM-3) and the funding for programs related to those systems.³⁵ On December 19, 2003, the GOJ issued a cabinet decision on “Introduction of Ballistic Missile Defense and Other Issues” and announced that the GOJ would build up a BMD system by upgrading Aegis destroyers and Patriot missiles and integrating them.³⁶

In recent years, the SDF has also been making efforts to improve its posture to deal with unconventional threats such as attacks by terrorists and commando-type enemies. The MSDF, following the suspicious boat incident off the Noto Peninsula of 1999, activated the Special Boarding Unit in March 2001, and enhanced its capability for boarding inspections. The GSDF, likewise, is planning to activate a Special Operations Group by the end of FY2003 (March 2004) so that it can better cope with unconventional threats. The GOJ has made additional progress in terms of the legal basis for such operations. As mentioned above, in 2001, a new concept of Guarding Operations was introduced into the SDF Law, in addition to the existing, and more traditional types, including defense, public security, and disaster relief. Through this amendment, SDF units are authorized to conduct operations to protect the facilities of the SDF and of US forces in Japan whenever the prime minister sees the possibility of sabotage against such facilities.

When the SDF units conduct antiterrorism or anticommando operations, it is essential to have close coordination and cooperation with law enforcement authorities, such as police forces. In this context, there have also been significant improvements. The 1954 agreement on the procedures of coordination between the SDF and the police in case of public security operations was amended in December 2000, in order to make the agreement workable in incidents such as illicit activities by armed spy agents. Previously, the agreement had only presupposed riot suppression. In recent years, more and more SDF units have started training regularly with local police authorities in order to be prepared to deal with unconventional threats.

Conclusions: Remaining and Urgent Tasks

This paper has discussed the policies undertaken by the GOJ in recent years for bilateral cooperation with the United States on security issues. These political and legal measures can be categorized into three groups according to geographical proximity to Japan: (1) measures for defense of Japan, (2) measures for bilateral cooperation in case of Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan, and (3) measures for expanding the role of the SDF in international PKO. While remarkable progress has been made in each area, urgent tasks remain.

First, with respect to bilateral cooperation for Japan’s defense, a general legal architecture has been established by enacting three laws related to dealing with armed attacks against Japan. The SDF has started to improve its capabilities to deal with newly emerging threats, but it has more to do. On the one hand, in June 2003, the SDF Law was amended to streamline SDF operations for the defense

of Japan. On the other hand, the GOJ is likewise tasked with enacting laws to ensure that US forces operate smoothly and effectively, and to safeguard people's lives in the event of armed attack against Japan within the next two years. When these tasks are accomplished, a legal framework for national contingencies will have been established, and the JDA's thirty-year-long dream will come true. The posture for missile defense and anti-terrorism operations requires a comprehensive approach, involving cooperation among various agencies of national and local governments, the private sector, and the SDF and US forces. It is essential to deepen the nationwide discussions on these issues.

Second, the enactment of the law on Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan in May 1999 and the Ship Inspection Law in October 2001 provided a legal basis for bilateral cooperation in such situations. The revised Defense Guidelines stipulate mechanisms for planning and execution on coordination and cooperation between the two countries. As former vice defense minister Akiyama states, "these mechanisms do not seem to perform as efficiently as the Defense Guidelines expected."³⁷ It is important to develop bilateral contingency plans with relevant agencies and ministries in the two countries, so that the SDF and US forces can operate and cooperate with each other. In addition, it is necessary for all the players to develop their experience in such cooperation through bilateral exercises and simulations. Such exercises will be beneficial to evaluate the contingency plans and to verify the effectiveness of the mechanisms for coordination dictated by the Defense Guidelines.

Third, the role of the SDF in international PKO has been expanded in recent years. Thus the scope of Japan's bilateral cooperation with the United States is much wider than before in terms of activities dealing with global issues, such as peace and security in Iraq. As noted above, the revised Defense Guidelines, the law on Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan, the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law, and others have identified a nearly maximum scope for what Japan or the SDF can do under the conditions that did not allow the exercise of the right of collective defense. Meanwhile, Japan has continued to enact "special measures laws" to provide an ad hoc legal basis for specific missions, such as anti-terrorism activities after 9/11 and humanitarian and reconstruction assistance in Iraq. These special laws have arisen because Japan lacks a permanent legal basis that provides an overall concept for its contribution to international efforts for world peace and security, with the exception of UN PKO and humanitarian relief operations. The SDF has continued to organize provisional units for the latter missions based upon relevant special measures laws or specific UN requests. This is partly because international PKO are not treated as major missions as described by Article Three of the SDF Law; rather, these include defense, public order, and disaster-relief operations. PKO and humanitarian missions are listed in Article 100, which dictates the SDF's miscellaneous roles. Many believe that this situation requires adjustment. For example, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, in its 2003 general election manifesto, argued that peace cooperation should be based on permanent, rather than special measure laws.³⁸ The Defense

White Paper of 2003 quotes the Report of the Advisory Group on International Cooperation for Peace recommending that the government “amend the SDF Law to establish international peace cooperation as a regular duty of the SDF, and prepare units within the SDF with a high level of readiness to ensure timely and appropriate dispatch.”³⁹ Japan must continue discussions on these points.

In 2004, the GOJ has already begun to discuss defense policy aimed at revision of the National Defense Program Outline. The issues raised throughout this paper will be examined during this process. The United States is reviewing its own national security posture focusing on forward deployment to better deal with the post-9/11 security environment. Both US forces and the SDF are pursuing their transformation based on rapidly advancing information technology. Since the two countries are standing at a pivotal point in their respective security policies, it is vitally important for us to have comprehensive, strategic dialogue. The two governments made continuous efforts in the mid-1990s to exchange views on Japan’s NDPO and the US–East Asia Strategy Report, which resulted in the Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security and the revised Defense Guidelines. The two governments also devoted tremendous energy to discussing the base issues, centering on those located in Okinawa. Such dialogues involved participation from people at all levels, from national leaders and cabinet members to policymakers and military planners. The expertise and flexibility of those from outside the governments, such as academics and business people, facilitated the exchange. Such Japan-US dialogue is particularly crucial in the post–Cold War period. Today’s agenda is wide-ranging, from policy consultation on global issues to operational coordination for specific crises, from strategic concepts to base issues, and from day-to-day business to long-term objectives. Experts across professional levels and fields should be mobilized in order to revitalize the strategic dialogue that the United States and Japan enjoyed in the mid-1990s.

NOTES

¹ According to a DoD report, out of \$61 billion of US expenditure for the crisis and the war, some \$54 billion (88 percent) was from the international community, of which \$11.2 billion came specifically from Japan.

² The Diet rejected Prime Minister Kaifu’s proposal on the Law on UN Peacekeeping Operations in November 1990, which was designed to authorize participation in UN activities for peace, such as UN PKO and coalition operations under the UN auspices.

³ Prime Minister Hosokawa first summoned the Advisory Group on Defense Issues on February 28, 1994. The group submitted the report, “The Modality of the Security and Defense Capability of Japan: The Outlook for the 21st Century,” to Prime Minister Murayama on August 12, 1994.

⁴ See Advisory Group on Defense Issues.

⁵ See Advisory Group on Defense Issues.

⁶ Akihiko Tanaka, *Anzenhoshō: Sengo 50 nen no Mosaku* (National Security: Fifty Years after World War II), Yomiuri-shinbunsha (1997: Tokyo).

⁷ National Defense Program Outline In and After FY 1996 (NDPO 1995), decided by the Security Council of Japan and the Cabinet on November 28, 1995.

⁸ The report indeed pointed out three core policies in the following order: (1) promotion of multilateral security cooperation on a global and regional scale; (2) enhancement of the functions of the Japan-US security relationship; and (3) possession of a highly reliable and efficient defense capability based on a strengthened information capability and a prompt crisis-management capability.

⁹ Patrick M. Cronin and Michael J. Green, "Redefining the US-Japan Alliance: Tokyo's National Defense Program" (McNair Paper 31), Washington, DC: National Defense University, November 1994, pp. 2-3.

¹⁰ Cronin and Green, p. 15.

¹¹ Office of International Security Affairs, "United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region, (EASR of 95)," February 1995.

¹² The US commitment of 100,000 personnel along with the same number for Europe was first declared by the "Report on the Bottom-Up Review," issued by Secretary of Defense Les Aspin in October 1993.

¹³ EASR of 1995, p.10.

¹⁴ NDPO 1995.

¹⁵ Masaru Honda, "Reisengo no Doumei Hyoryu (Drift of the Alliance after the Cold War)," *Nichibei Domei Hanseiki* (Japan-US Alliance in a Half-Century), Tokyo: Asahi-Shimbunsha, 2001, p. 502.

¹⁶ NDPO 1995.

¹⁷ *Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security: Alliance for the 21st Century*, issued by Prime Minister Hashimoto and President Clinton on April 17, 1996.

¹⁸ The Security Consultative Committee was established in 1960. The SCC started with the membership of ministers for foreign affairs and defense from the Japanese side, the US ambassador to Japan, and the commander of the Pacific Command (U.S.). In 1990, the level of US membership was raised to secretaries of defense and state.

¹⁹ Tanaka, pp. 382-84.

²⁰ Honda, p. 502.

²¹ "The Guidelines for US-Japan Defense Cooperation," reported by the Subcommittee for Defense Cooperation to and authorized by the Security Consultative Committee on September 23, 1997 (hereafter Revised Defense Guidelines).

²² See Revised Defense Guidelines.

²³ Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security.

²⁴ Department of Defense, *The United States Security Strategy for the Asia-Pacific Region* (East Asian Strategy Report 1998), released on November 1998.

²⁵ See Revised Defense Guidelines.

²⁶ The *Defense of Japan* (Defense White Paper) of recent years contain detailed explanations of the laws. See also the English version of *Defense of Japan 2002*, Tokyo: Urban Connection, 2002, pp. 189-93.

²⁷ Masahiro Akiyama, "*Nichibei no Senryaku-taiwa ga Hajimatta* (The Japan-US Strategic Dialogue)," Tokyo: Aki-Shobo, 2002, p. 270.

²⁸ The Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law, cited in *Defense of Japan 2002*, p. 112.

²⁹ Foreign Press Center/Japan, "Diet Enacts Iraq Reconstruction Law; Self-Defense Forces to be Dispatched to Provide Assistance," July 29, 2003.

³⁰ Statement by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on the Basic Plan regarding the measures based on the Law Concerning the Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq, http://www.ikantei/foreign/policy/2003/031209danwa_e/html.

³¹ See the outline of the Basic Plan regarding Response Measures Based on the Law Concerning the Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq, http://www.ikanteilforeign/policy/2003/031209housin_e/html.

³² Since the late 1970s, the JDA has been studying necessary legal measures to ensure smooth operations in the event of an armed attack against Japan. While interim reports were submitted in 1981 and 1984, few efforts to enact necessary laws were made until recently.

³³ The “General Outline of Legislation Regarding Responses to Armed Attack” is explained in detail in the *Defense of Japan 2002*, pp. 146–59.

³⁴ *Defense of Japan 2003* (Defense White Paper, Japanese Version), pp. 308–10.

³⁵ Japan Defense Agency, *Focal Points of Defense Buildup and Budget Request for FY 2004*.

³⁶ “On Introduction of Ballistic Missile Defense System and Other Issues,” Decisions of the National Security Council and the Cabinet of Japan, December 19, 2003.

³⁷ Akiyama, pp. 270–71.

³⁸ Policy Research Council of the Liberal Democratic Party, *Jimin-to Juuten Shisaku 2004* (Policies with Priority for 2004), p. 51.

³⁹ *Defense of Japan 2003*, pp. 212–13.

US-JAPAN DEFENSE COOPERATION: CAN JAPAN BECOME THE GREAT BRITAIN OF ASIA? SHOULD IT?

Ralph A. Cossa

The depth and breadth of defense cooperation between Washington and Tokyo since September 11, 2001 have been unprecedented; the only thing that has risen faster than the level of cooperation has been Washington's expectations regarding the creation of an even more "normal" defense relationship with its long-standing ally in East Asia. While Japan may not yet be the "UK of Asia," as once envisioned by Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, it is not a stretch to call Japanese prime minister Koizumi Junichiro Asia's answer to Tony Blair.

Prime Minister Koizumi is one of a small, select group of Asia-Pacific leaders—Australian prime minister John Howard is another—who have won President Bush's utmost trust, confidence, and sincere gratitude. Koizumi has unyieldingly supported the US war on terrorism in all its manifestations and has willingly bucked domestic public opinion to provide support to the two major campaigns in Washington's ongoing war: Afghanistan and Iraq. This has paid handsome dividends in helping to achieve what both sides generally agree are the "best relations ever." However, it may also raise hopes in Washington (and in certain quarters in Tokyo) that will not be easily fulfilled as both sides strive to create a more equal partnership.

Prime Minister Koizumi's recent, unprecedented decision to send Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) troops to Iraq—which remains militarily unstable, despite the declared end to major combat operations—to help in that country's pacification and reconstruction is just the most recent in a series of adjustments that have occurred in the operational arrangements underpinning US-Japan defense cooperation. And, while 9/11 and the resulting war on terrorism are pivotal in understanding and justifying the expanded defense relationship, it is important to look back to the mid-1990s, when examining the current evolution of the alliance. Looking at this recent history is crucial not only because it puts today's changes into perspective, but also because the current trend toward developing a "more equal" partnership dates back to an earlier turning point in the relationship: the *US-Japan Joint Declaration on Security Alliance for the 21st Century* issued by then-president Bill Clinton and his Japanese counterpart, Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro, during their April 1996 summit meeting in Tokyo.

The 1996 Clinton-Hashimoto summit, which signaled an official end to the “Japan-bashing” era (and predated the subsequent Clinton “Japan-passing” era), set the stage for the revised 1997 Defense Guidelines, which in turn ushered in the dramatic changes we have witnessed since 9/11. It is interesting to note that the Joint Declaration and revised Guidelines were provoked by several events that are strangely reminiscent of more recent occurrences: a US-led military campaign against Iraq and a Korean peninsula nuclear crisis.

One need only compare and contrast Japan’s response to the previous Iraq/DPRK crises with the current ones to realize that, thankfully, it is not *déjà vu* all over again. Despite justifiable criticism of President Clinton’s tendency to ignore the alliance during the closing (Japan-passing) years of his administration, his Joint Declaration with Prime Minister Hashimoto laid the groundwork that their successors would subsequently build upon. This is especially true given that 9/11 provided the political cover to move the relationship forward much faster than anyone drafting the Joint Statement or revised Defense Guidelines would have then imagined.

Pre-9/11 Developments

1991 Gulf War

In 1991, when a global “coalition of the willing” was forming to drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait, Japan opted out of active participation, electing instead to write a very large check (US\$13 billion) to help cover Desert Storm expenses. Despite this generosity (which required a tax increase to finance and accounted for some 20 percent of all the outside financial support the United States received for the war), many in Washington criticized Tokyo for not doing more, particularly in light of Japan’s heavy dependence on Persian Gulf oil. The (George H.W.) Bush administration understood the political and constitutional constraints under which Japan was operating, but many senior officials still privately expressed frustration that even noncombat logistic lift support seemed a bridge too far for Tokyo to even attempt to cross.

On the positive side, Washington was grateful for Tokyo’s assistance (even though it occasioned much soul-searching and heated debate) in clearing mines in the Persian Gulf and its associated sea lanes once hostilities ended. This minesweeping effort can be seen as one of the first major examples of a new operational arrangement between Tokyo and Washington: it helped to set the stage for greater Japanese involvement in subsequent peacekeeping operations (PKO) both within and beyond the Asia-Pacific region. The public acceptance of this mission within Japan—where it generated considerable national pride—and the broad support for Japan’s involvement in this military activity demonstrated that nonthreatening Japanese security contributions to international efforts were acceptable. (Participation in Cambodian PKO was another example.)

This opened the door for greater involvement in PKO efforts, in Timor and elsewhere, even prior to 9/11. Nonetheless, after-the-fact support during the first Gulf War did not fully blunt skepticism about Japan's reliability as an ally once the shooting starts.

1993–94 Korean Crisis

Of perhaps greater concern to military planners, and those concerned about alliance maintenance, was the 1993–94 crisis that emerged on the Korean peninsula after Pyongyang threatened to withdraw from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The Clinton administration initially took a hard line, building up defenses on the peninsula and initiating a move toward imposing UN sanctions against North Korea if it carried through with its threat to withdraw from the NPT and deny International Atomic Energy Administration (IAEA) inspection and safeguards at its nuclear facilities. Questions were raised about what Japan could or would do to support a UN sanctions effort and the answer seemed to be “not much.” Given that North Korea was also stating that the implementation of sanctions meant war, prudent US military planners also started asking what Japan could or would do in the event that happened. Disturbingly, the answer was assumed to be, “even less.”

What was even worse was Japan's reluctance even to discuss possible or desirable types of military cooperation in the event of a crisis or war. A timely intervention by former president Jimmy Carter and the subsequent 1994 US-DPRK Agreed Framework allowed both sides to step back from the brink and let Tokyo off the hook. However, the practical limitations of the alliance once again became all too apparent, this time not in some remote location but in Japan's own backyard.

This, more than anything else, sounded warning bells in Washington and Tokyo, especially when combined with the understandable outrage that followed the tragic rape of an Okinawan schoolgirl, which further called the alliance's viability into question. Had a crisis that threatened US and Japanese interests erupted in the region—conflict on the Korean peninsula being the most obvious example—and Japan had refused adequately to support US efforts, this could have torn at the fabric of the alliance. Defining “adequately support” to the satisfaction of both nations, and in a manner not threatening to Japan's neighbors, was the challenge. As former US assistant secretary of defense (and current deputy secretary of state) Richard Armitage noted in early 1996, “The most important issue in the current relationship is not ‘how many forces?’ or ‘what weapons systems?’ but rather ‘What are the US and Japan going to do as security partners should the need arise?’”

Largely unspoken but clearly recognized was concern not just over a Korean contingency but also a potential crisis across the Taiwan Strait. This worry became more prominent in the run-up to the March 1996 Taiwan presidential elections, when Beijing used a series of missile tests to underscore its warnings

against potential independence movements. The move largely backfired, especially after Washington deployed two aircraft carrier battle groups to the region to demonstrate its commitment to a “peaceful resolution” of the issue. This also bears traces of *déjà vu* all over again, given the even more provocative—at least in Beijing’s eyes—Taiwan presidential campaign of 2003. However, Beijing seems to have learned the lesson of 1996 and has, at least as of this writing, taken a more measured, nuanced approach—with help from Washington—in discouraging pro-independence forces in Taiwan.

1996 Joint Declaration

The April 1996 Clinton-Hashimoto Tokyo summit was a significant step forward in answering Armitage’s provocative question. Building upon the Defense Department’s 1995 *East Asia Strategy Report (EASR)*—which stressed the centrality of the alliance to Washington’s East Asia security strategy and the coincident US and Japanese security goals and objectives in Asia—the summit represented a major effort by both allies, and especially by Japan, to revitalize the bilateral security relationship in order to ensure its relevancy in the post-Cold War era. It also demonstrated Tokyo’s increased willingness to take a more active leadership role in regional economic and security affairs.

The Joint Declaration signed by both leaders during the summit meeting committed both sides to the revitalization of the defense relationship. It recognized close bilateral defense cooperation as a “central element” in the security relationship and went on to say that “The two leaders agreed on the necessity to promote bilateral policy coordination, including studies on bilateral cooperation in dealing with situations that may emerge in the areas surrounding Japan and which will have an important influence on the peace and security of Japan.” In short, the Joint Declaration recognized the need, in peacetime, to begin to define each country’s respective role and, most importantly for Japan, to develop procedures for overcoming obstacles to performing them. Prior to this, contingency planning for any scenario short of invasion or other direct attack on Japan was difficult, if not politically impossible.

The signing of the Joint Declaration opened the door for greater defense planning and cooperation. This was formalized at the September 1996 “2+2” Security Consultative Committee (SCC) Meeting (which brought together the foreign and defense ministers of both nations), when Washington and Tokyo both professed their commitment to “reaffirming and strengthening” the alliance. The SCC Subcommittee for Defense Cooperation was then tasked to review and revise the 1978 Guidelines for US-Japan Defense Cooperation. This review was completed in September 1997.

Defense Guidelines Review

The revised 1997 Defense Guidelines represented a praiseworthy attempt by military planners in Japan and the United States to find common ground

between the type of support that US planners desired from Japan and the level of support Japan was willing and felt constitutionally capable of providing. They address defense cooperation under three broad categories: cooperation under normal circumstances; actions in response to an armed attack against Japan; and cooperation in situations in areas surrounding Japan that will have an important influence on Japan's peace and security. The common goal was enhanced defense cooperation in order to maintain peace and stability.

It is useful to note that the Guidelines do not *obligate* Japan (or the United States) to do anything new. Nor do they guarantee that Japan will provide the envisioned support under any and every conceivable circumstance. The new Guidelines merely provide "a general framework and policy direction." To emphasize this point, a line in the most controversial section dealing with "situations in areas surrounding Japan" notes that "in responding to such situations, measures taken may differ depending on circumstances." In other words, there is no guarantee that steps outlined in the Defense Guidelines will ever be taken. The Guidelines clearly delineate what Japan should not be expected to do—in and of itself, an important factor for military planners—but provide no guarantees of Japanese support.

The Guidelines also specifically tie Japan's support in enforcing economic sanctions to United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, although one can interpret the text as not excluding other types of sanction-enforcement operations. However, in this, as in all other actions outlined by the new Defense Guidelines, nothing happens without a decision on the part of the Japanese government at the time of the crisis. The framework's boundaries were clearly delineated; only "defensive actions" were envisioned. Nonetheless, the 1997 Defense Guidelines represented an important step forward in Japan's quest to become a more "normal" nation and a more equal security partner with the United States.

Implementing Legislation

The next step, which took several years to accomplish and in some cases was still not complete when the 9/11 attacks occurred, was the development and enactment into law of the necessary implementing legislation. The three primary pieces of legislation—amendment of the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) to include regional contingencies; amendment of the Self Defense Forces Law to permit certain rear-area support missions for US forces during regional contingencies; and the creation of a Regional Contingency Law to permit nonmilitary rear-area support in Japan for US forces during regional contingencies—passed the Diet in May 1999.

As the Clinton administration was drawing to a close, its final "2+2" SCC meeting (in New York, ironically on September 11, 2000) featured the establishment of a Bilateral Coordination Mechanism to link Japanese government agencies with the US Embassy and US forces in Japan in times of

war. This coordination mechanism was critical to implementing the revised Defense Guidelines, since the United States and Japan lacked a joint and combined command of the sort that manages military responses in NATO or the US-ROK alliance. In late November, the Diet also passed a watered-down Maritime Interdiction Operations Law that gave the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Forces (JMSDF) the authority to stop and search nonmilitary vessels (but only when acting in support of UN-authorized sanctions or with the consent of the ship being boarded).

Armitage/Nye Report

Just prior to the November 2000 US presidential election, the Institute for National Strategic Studies at the National Defense University in Washington published a report (October 11, 2000) that outlines what a more activist US security policy with Japan might look like. While the report was drafted by a bipartisan team of specialists led by Republican Richard Armitage and Democrat Joseph Nye (another former assistant secretary of defense), it was generally interpreted in Tokyo as a “Republican” plan (and, to this day, is often referred to merely as “The Armitage Report”). The report called for “excellence without arrogance” from the United States—a theme used by candidate Bush—while suggesting a more open door in Washington for Japanese ideas and initiatives. It also encouraged Tokyo to expand its security and diplomatic responsibilities in Asia.

The most controversial aspect of the report was the observation that Japan’s decision not to exercise the right of collective defense is an obstacle to alliance cooperation. Many in Tokyo interpreted this as an endorsement of constitutional revision. However, the report was careful to emphasize that decisions on the Constitution must be thoroughly considered by the Japanese people themselves. For the most part, the report was well received in Japan, though many questioned whether the Japanese political system, especially under a very weak and ineffective Prime Minister Mori Yoshiro, was up to the task. This question was quickly laid to rest following the surprise election of Prime Minister Koizumi in April 2001.

The Bush-Koizumi Era

Pre-9/11

US-Japan defense cooperation has clearly been taken to a higher level under President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Koizumi. While much of the progress has been attributed to 9/11—and, as previously argued, the terrorist attacks on that day provided both the impetus and the political cover to accelerate the defense relationship—both sides had already clearly signaled their intention to create a broader, deeper security relationship. In fact, even before Koizumi’s

election, President Bush had issued a joint statement with his predecessor during Prime Minister Mori's visit to Washington that seemed to go beyond the 1996 Clinton-Hashimoto Joint Communiqué in pledging "a dynamic approach to bilateral defense consultation and planning." Included also was a pledge to "strengthen joint efforts to address the transnational challenges of the twenty-first century." (The ability of both sides to handle effectively the tragic accidental sinking of a Japanese training ship by a US submarine also demonstrated that the defense and broader bilateral relationship were on solid ground.)

The selection of Koizumi Junichiro as prime minister dramatically increased the prospects for still deeper cooperation. Fears that Japan would prove a reluctant partner largely vanished amid Koizumi's talk of leading his nation toward a more "normal" role in international affairs. Seemingly taking a page from the Armitage/Nye Report, Koizumi stated that it was desirable for Japan to be allowed to participate in collective defense activities and to help defend its allies (read: the United States) in the event of regional crisis. He also noted that Article 9 of the Japanese constitution—which stipulates that Japan shall never maintain land, sea, or air forces—"fails to reflect reality." Koizumi's view seems to dovetail nicely with calls for a more equal relationship coming from Washington.

Deputy Secretary Armitage seemed to echo Mr. Koizumi's remarks during his May 2001 visit to Tokyo when he noted that "the lack of an ability to participate in collective self-defense, although they are signatories to a defense treaty, is an obstacle. I think it is a healthy thing for the Japanese to look at some of these things and see what is reasonable and what is not." But, while the Bush administration clearly supports an increased Japanese security role, even if this requires constitutional reinterpretation or revision, Armitage and other administration spokesmen have been careful not to call directly for revision, again stressing that this is a domestic Japanese decision.

The Bush administration continues to reinforce this message. Secretary Armitage, as recently as early February 2004, told a Japan National Press Club audience in Tokyo: "I believe that we can say that this debate [about changing the constitution] has never been more serious than it is today in discussing how to deal with collective self-defense, which many of us in the global community, and apparently increasingly in Japan, view as common sense, though clearly these are decisions that only the people of Japan can make."

Washington had other good reasons to applaud the new prime minister. Shortly after taking office, Koizumi said that definitions of "rear areas" were flexible, implying that Japan might be able to provide more support for US forces in a contingency than had previously been thought. His chief cabinet secretary, Fukuda Yasuo, also ordered studies on ways to lift restraints on Japanese soldiers participating in UN PKO. Koizumi also expressed support for missile defense (telling the Diet in early June that the project deserves further study). In short, the trend toward enhanced defense cooperation had been set in motion well before the tragic events of 9/11.

Response to 9/11

Immediately after the attack, Prime Minister Koizumi went on record stating that Japan would “spare no effort in providing assistance and cooperation” in support of America’s war on terrorism. He followed this up with even stronger commitments to provide intelligence and military logistical support during his late September 2001 visit to New York and Washington. During his meeting with President Bush, Koizumi said (in English, for emphasis): “We Japanese firmly stand behind the United States to fight terrorism.” He then added, much to Washington’s amazement and delight, that “It will no longer hold that the Self-Defense Forces should not be sent to danger spots. There is no such thing as a safe place.”

Backing up these assertions, Koizumi quickly put together a seven-point program to respond to the crisis. It included measures allowing the Self-Defense Forces to provide logistical support to the US military in the event of a retaliatory strike; strengthening security measures at important facilities in Japan; dispatching Japanese ships to gather information; strengthening international cooperation over immigration control; providing humanitarian and economic aid to affected countries; assisting refugees fleeing areas that might be hit by US retaliation; and cooperating with other countries to ensure stability in the international economic system. In addition, the Japanese government announced that it would send warships to collect intelligence in the Indian Ocean and would provide support for US vessels heading for battle stations.

At the same time, however, the prime minister made it clear that Japan would be bound by its constitutional limits and President Bush acknowledged the limits and restraints under which the Japanese operate. Bush applauded the Japanese contribution and noted “people contribute in different ways to this coalition . . . resources will be deployed in different ways—intelligence-gathering, diplomacy, humanitarian aid, as well as cutting off resources” to terrorists.

To almost everyone’s amazement, Prime Minister Koizumi quickly delivered on his seven-point package, getting emergency legislation through both Houses of the Diet by the end of October 2001. As promised, the legislation enabled the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to provide noncombat support to the US coalition and to protect US facilities in Japan. It also allowed Japanese forces to fire against territorial violators. In a concession to the opposition, the bill had a two-year time limit, and required that the Diet approve any deployment within twenty days of the dispatch of the SDF. To minimize chances of conflict with the Constitution, the transportation of ammunition and arms in foreign territory was not allowed.

New Operational Arrangements After 9/11

Enduring Freedom

This emergency legislation allowed new operational arrangements to evolve quickly. In early November 2001, two Japanese destroyers and a supply ship left home port for the Indian Ocean to provide offshore, noncombat support for Operation Enduring Freedom. The only disappointment was Japan's failure, despite not-so-subtle US pressure, initially to include an Aegis destroyer in its Indian Ocean task force. The Japanese Cabinet has since routinely voted to extend SDF support for the war in Afghanistan and, in a significant step, finally decided in December 2002 to dispatch one of its high-tech Aegis-equipped vessels to the Indian Ocean as part of that effort. Critics had argued that the protection afforded by the Aegis radar, which can track two hundred enemy aircraft and missiles simultaneously and shoot down ten targets at the same time, would appear to constitute "collective self defense," which has been prohibited by the prevailing interpretation of the Japanese Constitution.

Immediately prior to and since the March 2003 Iraq invasion, Tokyo has stepped up its logistical support for the coalition forces operating in Afghanistan. In early March, JMSDF ships began refueling Italian, Spanish, French, German, New Zealand, and Dutch warships participating in Operation Enduring Freedom, in addition to the US and British vessels. This freed up US logistics forces to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. At the onset of hostilities in Iraq, the Japan Defense Agency (JDA) ordered additional air surveillance by AWACS over the Sea of Japan and stepped up air and sea monitoring of North Korea. (Similar US flights operate from Kadena Air Force Base in Okinawa.) The National Police Agency increased security at 174 US military bases and facilities and at 162 embassies and facilities of countries supporting the United States.

Operation Iraqi Freedom

Japan did not directly participate in Operation Iraqi Freedom, but the above measures—and especially the expanded Indian Ocean refueling operations—allowed the United States to shift more assets to the Iraqi campaign and thus constituted significant (yet still constitutional) indirect support to the war effort. It was sufficient to have Tokyo listed on the Iraqi Freedom coalition of the willing membership list.

Boots on the Ground

The remaining issue to be addressed was Deputy Secretary Armitage's repeated observation about the need for Tokyo to put "boots on the ground" in Iraq, despite continuing low- (and, at times, not-so-low-) level hostilities. This has now been accomplished with the December 2003 announcement that Prime Minister Koizumi had finally approved a troop deployment plan, submitted by

Defense Agency Minister Ishiba Shigeru, formalizing Japan's first military move into a war zone since 1945. Japan's air force sent an advance team of about forty airmen to Iraq, Kuwait, and Qatar in late December to prepare the way for an airlift operation by a larger contingent starting in early 2004. Ishiba also ordered the army and navy to get ready for deployment later, though without giving dates.

The army is to send about 550 medics and engineer troops to Samawah, south of Baghdad. The navy's job is to ferry in vehicles and heavy equipment for the troops. Starting in January, about 150 air force troops will provide transportation services for US and other coalition forces, flying a U-4 multipurpose plane and a Boeing 747 as well as C-130s, between Kuwait, Baghdad, Basra, Balad, and Mosul. The planes are not permitted to transport weapons and ammunition for other countries (although Ishiba said they are not going to open each crate). The deployment plan also said it was permissible to transport soldiers who are carrying weapons. This statement shows how far things have come but also how far they must still go, given that even seemingly simple and mundane matters like a soldier carrying his or her own personal weapon draws scrutiny. The current operating guidelines also stipulate that if combat breaks out near where they are, Japanese troops are to stop work, evacuate, report the circumstances to the Defense Agency minister in Tokyo, and await instructions on what to do.

Diplomatic and Financial Support

Tokyo's support for Afghanistan and Iraq has not been limited to military support. Tokyo has taken the lead role in Afghan reconstruction efforts, drawing high praise from Washington. In his landmark speech on Asia policy to the Asia Society in June 2002 (which remains the administration's most comprehensive review of Asia policy in general), Secretary of State Colin Powell praised Japanese support to Operation Enduring Freedom ("we could not have asked for a more resolute response") and underscored Tokyo's "superb leadership" in the Afghan reconstruction effort. He also praised Tokyo for collaborating closely with Washington in trying to take the war on terrorism to the international financial community.

Prime Minister Koizumi was also an outspoken supporter of Washington's efforts to obtain a stronger UNSC resolution against Iraq, making numerous phone calls to lobby Security Council members. More importantly, when the UNSC fig leaf was removed, Koizumi remained firmly behind President Bush and appeared delighted when Japan was named among the "coalition of the willing," even though no Japanese troops were committed to the war. Prime Minister Koizumi's actions, like those of counterparts Tony Blair in the UK and John Howard in Australia, required great political courage, given rising domestic opposition at the time to a war against Iraq, a fact not overlooked in Washington.

Korean Crisis

Japan's support to the United States has not been limited to Iraq and Afghanistan. Tokyo has steadfastly supported President Bush's multilateral approach toward the nuclear standoff on the Korean peninsula. Washington, in return, continues to argue that Japanese participation is "essential," despite complaints from Pyongyang and only lukewarm support from Seoul and Beijing for a Japanese seat at the table. Tokyo has also played an important role at the regular Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) meetings with Washington and Seoul, urging US flexibility at times, but most importantly echoing Washington's insistence that nuclear weapons cannot be tolerated in North Korea. Japan's stance provides some much-needed backbone to Seoul, which seems to have a looser definition of "will not tolerate" than its other two TCOG partners.

Seldom have Washington and Tokyo been so close in their views of how best to deal with Pyongyang. Recall that in the closing months of the Clinton administration, there was great fear in Tokyo that Washington was going to get too far out in front of Tokyo on this issue. Following an exchange of high-level visits and amid preparations for a possible Clinton visit to Pyongyang, many were concerned that Japan would be pressured to speed up its normalization process with Pyongyang, perhaps beyond a point that was politically sustainable. Conversely, once the September 2002 Koizumi visit to Pyongyang was announced, concern was expressed that Japan might move ahead of a more cautious, tentative Bush administration, which seemed reluctant to engage in meaningful dialogue with a member of the so-called axis of evil.

Today, however, both Washington and Tokyo appear in lockstep, with both insisting on an immediate, verifiable halt to Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programs and ambitions, as well as an immediate full accounting and satisfactory resolution of the abductee issue. Japan's clear pronouncements about its right, under the principle of self-defense, to take preemptive action in the event of an imminent DPRK missile launch, while not too credible militarily, nonetheless provide political support to the US doctrine of preemption while also underscoring the need for close military-to-military cooperation between Washington and Tokyo. As a self-proclaimed member of the coalition of the willing, Japan's seemingly unqualified support for the US-led military campaign against Iraq also solidifies the alliance while sending North Korea a clear message that Tokyo would no doubt be equally, if not more, willing to support Washington in dealing with threats closer to home.

Proliferation Security Initiative

Crossing yet another threshold in military-to-military cooperation, Tokyo also became a charter member of the US-instigated Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), aimed at stemming the flow of weapons of mass destruction. The PSI, first laid out by President Bush in May 2003 and formalized at an eleven-nation meeting (involving Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands,

Poland, Portugal, Spain, the UK, and the United States) in Madrid in June, is “a global initiative with global reach,” under which coalition members agreed, in Brisbane in July, “to move quickly on direct, practical measures to impede the trafficking in weapons of mass destruction (WMD), missiles, and related items.” The Brisbane meeting focused on “defining actions necessary to collectively or individually interdict [WMD shipments] at sea, in the air, or on the land.” A third meeting, in Paris in September “continued work on the modalities for interdiction, in particular effective information sharing and operational capabilities for interdiction.” The eleven participants also agreed in Paris on a Statement of Interdiction Principles “to establish a more coordinated and effective basis through which to impede and stop [WMD] shipments . . . consistent with national legal authorities and relevant international law and frameworks, including the UN Security Council.”

While participants have been quick to point out that the PSI is targeted at proliferation *per se* and not at any particular country, a State Department spokesman did note that Pyongyang “might find itself affected by this initiative” if it continued to “aggressively proliferate missiles and related technologies.” “Unnamed Pentagon officials” were also quick to point out that the first major PSI exercise, dubbed Pacific Protector and held in the Coral Sea off the coast of Queensland on September 13, was aimed at sending “a sharp signal to North Korea.” The Pentagon reportedly wanted to identify the target ship in this interdiction exercise as a North Korean vessel, but the Australian organizers, responding at least in part to Japanese concerns, elected instead to develop a scenario where a simulated Japanese freighter (played by a US destroyer) suspected of carrying contraband chemicals, was stopped and boarded by the Japanese Coast Guard backed up by Australian, US, and French navy and coast guard ships (with the other seven members sending observers). This was the first of a series of ten sea, air, and ground interdiction training exercises that will take place over the coming year. The long-term objective, according to Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security John Bolton, is “to create a web of counterproliferation partnerships that will impede trade in WMD, delivery systems, and related materials.” The idea of Japanese participation in such an effort would have been unthinkable a few short years ago.

Missile Defense Cooperation

From the onset, Prime Minister Koizumi has been a supporter of US-Japan missile defense joint research. A decision to develop and deploy such a system has been another issue, however, since the command and control coordination necessary for a broad-based system to be most effective would appear to cross the (ever-shifting) “collective defense” barrier. Nonetheless, in late December 2003, Tokyo announced that it would begin building a missile defense system, citing “a spread of missiles and a rise in weapons of mass destruction” as the primary reasons behind the decision. Chief Cabinet Secretary Fukuda said

in a statement that “Ballistic missile defense is a purely defensive—and the sole—means of protecting the lives of our country’s people and their property against a ballistic missile attack.” Media reports said the plan initially calls for refitting four Aegis-equipped destroyers with sea-based anti-missile rockets and purchasing advanced Patriot anti-missile rocket batteries starting in 2004. The new system will be deployed from 2007 through 2011. The government will allocate \$935 million for the program in the next fiscal year, beginning in April. The entire program was estimated at \$4.67 billion. Joint research will also continue.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Fukuda also told reporters that the government may review its thirty-six-year-old ban on exporting weapons, their parts, and the technology to make them, with an eye to exempting the United States. Fukuda said it could be inconvenient if the continuing joint research moved on to joint development and manufacture of missiles or parts, but Japan couldn’t sell them to the United States because of the policy. The ban on weapons exports was originally adopted in 1967 so that Tokyo could bar shipments to the communist bloc and countries on the UN sanctions list. The ban was extended in 1976 to cover all countries, but then eased in 1983 when the United States sought to buy high tech materials for its Stealth bomber fleet and for other uses. The changes now being contemplated open the door for still deeper military-to-military cooperation between Washington and Seoul.

More Like the UK . . . or Germany?

What does Washington wish that Tokyo would do now? The answer seems to be: more of the same. During his June 2002 Asia Society speech, Secretary Powell not only stressed Japan’s positive contribution to regional stability—a familiar refrain—but also the alliance’s role in providing “a framework within which Japan can contribute more to its own defense as well as to peace and security worldwide.” Clearly, Washington supports, and wants to encourage, a greater regional (if not global) security role befitting a more “normal” Japan. As Secretary Armitage noted in February 2004, “I believe that Prime Minister Koizumi has set a new benchmark, not just in the dispatch of Japanese Self Defense Forces to Iraq, but also in redefining Japan’s role in the world.” But, with the decision to put boots on the ground in Iraq, it appears unlikely that Washington will be looking to Tokyo to move further forward, at least during the remainder of President Bush’s first term in office.

Washington’s greatest concern now will be to avoid backsliding, especially if (when) Japanese forces become targets, or worse yet casualties, once they arrive in Iraq. I for one have greater confidence in the resolve of Prime Minister Koizumi, the Japanese public, and the JDA than many of today’s pundits. But, it is clear that Tokyo is more prepared militarily than it is politically or psychologically for what appears to be an inevitable first true test under fire, notwithstanding the fact that Japanese diplomats have already been killed in

Iraq and civilian peacekeepers were likewise killed in Cambodia. How Tokyo responds will determine the pace, but not the direction of, future, deeper defense cooperation.

Regardless of who wins the 2004 US presidential elections, but especially if President Bush returns for a second term, there will be continued—hopefully subtle and politically aware—pressure on Japan to continue to find new avenues of enhanced military cooperation and involvement in security matters in East Asia and beyond. “Japan can count on America, and increasingly, America can count on Japan,” Secretary Armitage noted in Tokyo in February 2004. “Certainly a more self-confident Japan, with its own unique style of global leadership, can only add to that equation,” he added, “both in the economic opportunities for our peoples and in advancing our shared global interests.”

As long as Prime Minister Koizumi remains at the helm, such gentle pressure will be welcome and sufficient to see continued forward progress. The big issue is a purely Japanese one: constitutional revision or further reinterpretation to allow collective defense. Since many maintain that Japan, under the UN Charter, is already permitted to exercise collective self-defense but has merely chosen not to do so, it is possible that a political decision short of reinterpretation may be the vehicle Tokyo chooses to advance its quest to become a more normal nation. But given Prime Minister Koizumi’s earlier comments on the subject, one can anticipate a move toward actual constitutional revision at some point in the not-too-distant future. Washington will be cheering on the sidelines, but is likely to continue its official hands-off policy.

Will Japan become the UK of Asia? Perhaps, but it will not happen overnight, even if constitutional reform does take place. The German model may—and I would argue, should—first apply. During the 1992 Gulf War, Germany increased its military operations in the Mediterranean and other NATO areas to free up more non-German NATO forces to participate in Operation Desert Storm, similar to what Japan did, and is continuing to do, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and its aftermath. By the time of the events in Kosovo, Germany had taken the next step in being a full partner in a wartime coalition and few blink an eye today at Germany’s active involvement in Afghanistan—its reluctance to participate in Iraq is driven by other factors, and not by the lingering ghosts of World War II. Before Japan can become the UK of Asia in the twenty-first century, it must become the Germany of the last decade and finally put its own World War II ghosts to rest.

THE JAPAN-US ALLIANCE AND JAPANESE DOMESTIC POLITICS: SOURCES OF CHANGE, PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

Hiroshi Nakanishi

As units of Japan's Self-Defense Force (SDF) head for Iraq in support of humanitarian and reconstruction efforts, there is little further need to emphasize the transformation Japanese security policy has undergone in the last decade or so. At the time of the Gulf War in 1990–91, Japan was the most hesitant among the Western allies, limiting its participation to a substantial 13 billion dollar financial contribution and a contingent of minesweepers sent to the Gulf after the conflict. Ten years later Japan has become the most faithful of America's allies along with Great Britain and Australia. The Koizumi cabinet hastily supported the war on terrorism by the United States after the September 11 attack, and sent a small fleet for logistical support in the Indian Ocean. Even in the Iraqi war, arguably the most divisive use of force by the West in the postwar era, the Koizumi cabinet staunchly showed its loyalty to the Bush administration. More surprisingly, there was no major turmoil at the political or public level, offering another clear contrast to the confusion in the Diet during the Gulf crisis or over the PKO legislation in 1991–92.

While government actions make this change apparent, it is not so easy to identify its sources. Most Japanese, including the author, could not have imagined ten years ago the form and scale of the shift. Attempts to discover a mastermind behind the scenes are futile. For example, not a few observers of Japan regarded Ichiro Ozawa as the country's most powerful politician in the early 1990s, but his political fate suggests that things did not go as he may have planned. As is often the case with affairs in Japan, things happen as a result of a combination of numerous factors and not conscious intent.

This paper tries to sort out the Japanese domestic factors that may have contributed to the transformation we are now observing. The paper discusses changes in the last decade in four areas: political leadership, public perception, regional security perception, and global security perception. In all four areas, substantial change can be identified and the general trend has been to reinforce rather than weaken the bilateral relationship with the United States. But this does not mean Japan is fully satisfied with the current state of the alliance. The last part of the paper will discuss some of the issues that may affect the future course of the Japan-US alliance.

I. Political Leadership: From the 1955 System to the Semi-Two-Party System

Japan experienced a dual shock at the beginning of the 1990s, namely the Gulf War and the end of the Cold War. The most lingering effect of the dual shock was the structural change in the Japanese political leadership.

Up until the early 1990s, the so-called 1955 regime constituted the basic framework of Japanese politics. In the late 1980s, the 1955 regime was characterized by the following elements: (1) the rightist Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) was the only viable political party that could rule Japan, (2) opposition parties led by the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) functioned as the veto power against the arbitrary use of power by the LDP, (3) the LDP supported the Japan-US alliance and the constitutionality of the SDF, but it located Japanese foreign policy primarily in economic pragmatism, staying away from international military affairs under the doctrine of non-use of the right of collective defense, (4) the opposition symbolized the postwar Japanese ideology of a reborn nation, especially in the form of the pacifist ideology defined by Article 9 of the Japanese constitution, originally drafted by MacArthur's occupying General Headquarters and adopted with some revisions in 1946.

By the late 1980s, the ending of the Cold War had already prompted the gradual decline of the 1955 system. The never-ending political scandals, the complete delegitimization of communist ideology, the virulent economic friction with other Western countries, especially with the United States, the psychological friction with its Asian neighbors, Korea (both South and North) and China in particular, all reinforced Japan's dissatisfaction with the 1955 regime. But it was the experience of the Gulf War, which was so humiliating in the eyes of the majority of Japanese, that dealt the most serious blow to the 1955 regime. The experience of not being appreciated for contributing 13 billion dollars of taxpayers' money and of being isolated in the West in the emerging new world order broke the postwar consensus of economic pragmatism and anti-military pacifism.

The upshot was the political realignment out of the 1955 regime. It occurred in several stages, and is still going on. The first break was the LDP's fall from power in the summer of 1993. The fall was caused by the departure of those in the party who were dissatisfied with the status quo. Ichiro Ozawa's group sought a more assertive foreign policy along the new conservative line, while the more liberal group led by Masayoshi Takemura formed the Sakigake party. They led to the anti-LDP coalition cabinets under Morihiro Hosokawa and Tsutomu Hata in 1993–1994. Though the two cabinets were short-lived because of divisions within the coalition and savvy political maneuvers by the remaining LDP members, the experience showed that the LDP may not be the only viable ruling political force in Japan.

The second break came as the JSP rose to power in 1994. The move was partly a result of the success of the attempt of the LDP to divide the anti-

LDP coalition and return to power. The prey in this attempt was the JSP itself. Once it had acceded to power the party had to forgo the ideological identity it embraced throughout the Cold War and wielded as veto power. The Tomiichi Murayama cabinet quickly admitted the utility of the alliance with the United States and the constitutionality of the SDF. In addition, the Murayama cabinet experienced arguably the biggest crises in postwar Japanese history: the Hanshin-Awaji (Kobe) earthquake in January 1995 and the sarin gas attack in the Tokyo subway by the religious cult group Aum Shinrikyo in March 1995. The Murayama cabinet was denounced by the public for the lack of security precautions and its failure to manage the crises. In early 1996 Murayama abruptly retired from premiership and handed power to Ryutaro Hashimoto. Hashimoto was the rising hope of the Keiseikai, the dominant faction within the LDP which had inherited the legacy of the Kakuei Tanaka faction in the early 1980s. From 1996 to 2000, Hashimoto and then Keizo Obuchi, both from Keiseikai, led the LDP-led coalition cabinets.

The third turning point came in 1996 when members of Sakigake and the JSP formed the Democratic Party (DP) at the time of the first general election under the new electoral system based on single-member districts. Later, a majority of the Japan Social Democratic Party (JSDP, formerly the JSP) and some Ozawa protégés joined the DP, to form the core of the anti-LDP group. In the meantime, Ozawa's group and his ally Komeito formed a coalition with the LDP to help strengthen the Japan-US alliance on the issue of the new security guidelines and related legislation as well as on the issue of the Okinawa base. But Ozawa, ever losing followers as he made moves, broke away from the coalition in 2000 and then joined the DP in 2003 as the third general election under the new system neared. From its inception, the DP has admitted the legitimacy of the SDF and the alliance with the United States. If anything, the DP has blamed the LDP for its ambiguous security policies including the apparent contradiction between the traditional constitutional interpretation and the response to newly emerging security measures such as the new guidelines in 1997 or the special laws on terrorism in 2001 and on Iraq reconstruction support in 2003. The LDP and the DP cooperated in legislating the Emergency against Armed Attack Law in 2003, showing that the DP in opposition would not oppose the LDP ideologically like the JSP in the 1955 system.

The fourth turning point was the launch of the Junichiro Koizumi cabinet in April 2001. When Obuchi became incapacitated by illness in April 2000, Yoshiro Mori from the Seiwakai faction was handed power by the LDP power brokers. But the whole process and his easy tongue made Mori extraordinarily unpopular among the public. He had to give up power in 2001. Koizumi was from Seiwakai, but a fairly maverick figure within the LDP. He won a surprising victory in the LDP leadership election against Hashimoto, advocating radical reform and targeting the LDP old guard as the major opponent, the "force of resistance," to reform. Koizumi became the most popular prime minister in Japanese constitutional history, scoring about 90 percent of public support at

the beginning of the cabinet. His blunt and forceful style appealed to the public as international crises set the diplomatic agenda after September 11.

The 2003 general election showed clear signs that Japanese politics has moved from the breakup stage to the realignment stage. Three splinter parties, Hoshushinto (the New Conservative Party), the Japan Social Democratic Party, and the Japan Communist Party, lost greatly, while the LDP barely kept a majority and the DP increased its numbers. The wild card is Komeito, whose constituency is based on the loyal Buddhist group Sokagakkai. By agreeing to electoral cooperation with either of the two major parties, Komeito can keep its presence and the closer the competition between the LDP and the DP the greater the possibility that Komeito will cast the decisive vote.

All three major parties share the basic consensus that the Japan-US alliance is key to Japanese foreign and security policy. But none of them has come up with clear perspectives on the future course of Japanese foreign and security policy. Within both the LDP and the DP there is no small divergence on the issues of the constitution, Japan's security role, and its future relationship with the countries of Asia. Komeito also faces a big dilemma in terms of its pacifist-leaning constituency and the need to be pragmatic in order to form a coalition with either of the major parties. Much will hinge on the interaction between the political leadership and the perception of the general public, for as Koizumi has shown the popularity of the leader has become a key resource in Japanese politics. So it is now necessary to turn to an analysis of the Japanese public's perception.

II. Public Perception of the Japan-US Alliance: From Drift to Reaffirmation

According to opinion polls taken since the end of the Cold War, the general trend in the public's perception of the Japan-US alliance is clear (Charts 1 and 2). The United States has been the most familiar country in the eyes of the Japanese public throughout the decade. But from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s, the public increasingly saw problems in the relationship with the United States. According to the Yomiuri poll, the percentage of those who thought the bilateral relationship with the United States was good declined from 40 percent in the late 1980s to a little more than 20 percent in 1995. 1995 was the only year in the Yomiuri surveys when the percentage of those who thought the bilateral relationship bad was higher than the percentage who thought it good. As for the Japan-US alliance, the trend was generally the same. From the mid-1980s, positive views on the alliance slightly declined from a little more than 70 percent to 63 percent in 1991.

The trend was reversed in the latter half of the 1990s. The Yomiuri survey shows a steep rise in the percentage of those who thought the bilateral relationship good. In 1999, the figure reached more than 50 percent, while the number of those who thought the relationship bad declined to about 10 percent.

The positive view on the alliance also picked up, reaching more than 70 percent again. The surveys indicate Japanese public opinion moving from drift over the utility of the Japan-US alliance to reaffirmation of the alliance.

Several factors seem to have influenced this V-curve movement in the popularity of the Japan-US relationship. First, the fierce bilateral trade disputes harmed the overall relationship in the first half of the 1990s. The Bush Sr. administration started the Structural Impediment Initiative and Clinton followed his predecessor in terms of demanding from Japan numerical import targets of American-made goods. A series of confrontational trade talks boiled down to the showdown in the first half of 1995 when the Japanese yen rose steeply to an 80 yen/dollar rate and Japan threatened to sue the United States in the World Trade Organization (WTO) over the issue of autos and auto parts. Even though the notion of turning to Asia as an alternative to the West never became more than a minority view within official circles in Japan, Japan supported the cause of global multilateralism in the form of the WTO and regional multilateralism in the form of APEC in part in an attempt to sidestep and contain the American trade pressure.

As the Japanese economic slump became clear and the American economy boomed in the latter half of the 1990s, the trade pressure from the American government vanished. Instead the US became concerned with the prospect of Japan's depression becoming a brake on the world economy. The American irritation grew stronger after the financial crises hit Asian countries in 1997. On the other hand, there was dissatisfaction within the Japanese government with the Americans' blunt opposition to the Asian Monetary Fund scheme Japan proposed in autumn 1997. But as the financial crises showed signs of spreading globally in 1998, the two countries became more cooperative in containing the financial turmoil.

Second, in the first half of the 1990s there was a certain sense among the Japanese public that the costs of the alliance with the US were too dear compared with the benefits Japan enjoyed from the alliance. The so-called sympathy budget, the government's financial support of the American bases in Japan, was criticized even within the government. But the biggest issue was the social cost of the bases in Okinawa. The issue became more complex because of the delicate relationship between Okinawa and the rest of Japan. People in Okinawa were the only major population who experienced the land battle in the Pacific War, and the island was under American occupation until 1972. Even after the return to Japan of administrative rights over Okinawa in 1972, the high density of American bases in the central area of Okinawa caused strong irritation among the local residents. But the end of the Cold War made the social cost of the bases seem even more burdensome. In addition, the demise of the 1955 regime made it possible for the dissatisfaction of the populace to directly influence the political agenda.

The uproar against the American bases occurred when the rape of a schoolgirl by American marines became public in September 1995. Emotional

accusations were prominent: the alliance was denounced for allowing American forces to enjoy the unfair privileges inherited from occupation days. But the two governments acted quickly to repair the damage. President Clinton apologized for the crime by the marines. The two governments set up the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) to discuss ways to reduce the burden American bases inflicted on the local population.

Emotional anger against the alliance with the United States gradually died down for several reasons. First, the SACO framework indeed moved to mitigate the social cost of the bases by reducing the base area, artillery live-firing training, noise levels, and so on. The symbolic issue was the Futenma Air Base used by the Marines. In February 1996 Prime Minister Hashimoto and US Ambassador to Japan Walter Mondale dramatically announced that the Futenma base would be returned in five to seven years.

Second, as emotion died down it soon became clear that the Okinawa base issue was not only an international issue but a complex domestic one. There was not enough mutual understanding between Okinawa and Tokyo. And opinion in Okinawa was torn between the social cost of the bases and the economic benefit they brought. There was also intra-island disagreement, as great economic disparities existed within Okinawa. Even though the Futenma base problem did not proceed smoothly because of the difficulty in finding an alternative helicopter base, attention to the Okinawa issue subsided in the late 1990s. In 1999, a special law was passed to keep certain private lands for base use by fiat of the central government.

The Okinawa incident functioned as an important lesson in managing the inevitable social friction surrounding the alliance. When the fishery high school training boat *Ehime-maru* sank after colliding with an American submarine near Hawaii in February 2001 and nine lives including those of students were lost, the two governments moved quickly and succeeded in preventing large political ramifications. Even though the treatment of American soldiers as criminal suspects is still an issue between the two governments, it became understood that crimes and accidents should not govern foreign and security policy.

Third, the level of foreign policy and security dialogue between the two countries stepped up. Based on the human connections formed in the 1970s and '80s, government officials and experts in both countries began to reaffirm and redefine the alliance in the mid-1990s. Because the pacifism of the left was greatly discredited within Japan by that time, there was no substantial opposition against this move. The so-called Nye Initiative was the result of consultation between officials in the two countries, which assured the Japanese. In November 1995 the Japanese government issued the New Defense Program Outline, which emphasized the close interdependence of the role and missions of the SDF and the Japan-US alliance. The high point of the redefinition of the alliance was the US-Japan Joint Declaration on Security issued at the time of President Clinton's visit to Japan in April 1996. The declaration clarified that the key role of the bilateral alliance was regional stability and reassurance.

The bilateral dialogue mechanism was further strengthened in 1996 when the Subcommittee on Defense Cooperation was enlarged to prepare new guidelines for defense cooperation, which were announced in September 1997. Diplomatic dialogue was also institutionalized as the North Korean issue loomed large at the end of the 1990s and the trilateral framework among Japan, the US, and South Korea increased in importance. Prime Minister Koizumi and President Bush agreed on the Japan-US Strategic Dialogue between high-level officials in 2001.

The political force that drove the movement to redefine the bilateral alliance and to enlarge the area of cooperation was the popular feeling among the public that the security of Japan both as state and a society was threatened. The Hanshin-Awaji (Kobe) earthquake and the Aum Shinrikyo sarin attack on the Tokyo subway were key incidents that changed people's mindset. *Kiki kanri* (translated as "crisis management," although the Japanese term includes matters related to emergency response) became the buzzword in the 1990s. Irritation over the lingering economic slump as well as anger against the existing political and bureaucratic system also underlined the security rationale. This popular sentiment also directed the general public mood to the right, blaming postwar Japan as overly naïve and pacifist. Cravings for radical reform among the public led to the election of celebrity local governors such as Shintaro Ishihara in Tokyo and Yasuo Tanaka in Nagano. The same sentiment seemed to support Junichiro Koizumi.

This heightened sense of insecurity appeared to be the driving force behind the passage of the emergency law in case of armed attack in 2003, which had been shelved for a quarter of a century. But, needless to say, the public's sudden obsession with security also derived from international factors. Changes in regional security perception played a particularly significant role.

III. Regional Security Perception: From Cooperative Security to Realist Outlook

Just after the end of the Cold War, it seemed that there was no longer any clear and present military threat in the traditional sense. Countries in general were thought to be cooperative in coping with the new types of threats such as international crimes, terrorism, environmental hazards, and refugee flows. The notion of "cooperative security" reflected this perception. Partly modeled after the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), it was believed that an inclusive and multilateral framework composed of the countries concerned would be better able to cope with these new types of threats than the traditional military alliances of the past. Although the alliances would not be broken up suddenly, they would be gradually replaced by the new multilateral framework.

This perception was widely held in this period. In a sense, the policy of “engagement and enlargement” advocated by the Clinton administration was one form of cooperative security. Japan too was optimistic about the prospect of regional security cooperation. It promoted the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) launched in 1994 as well as track one-and-a-half and track-two dialogues in the form of the Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD) and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP).

The same logic was behind the report by the so-called Higuchi committee, a group of scholars and experts headed by business leader Kotaro Higuchi assembled by Prime Minister Hosokawa in early 1994. Its final report was presented six months later to Prime Minister Murayama. The report, while reaffirming the importance for Japan of the alliance with the United States, proposed enhancing the multilateral system in the Asia-Pacific region and slimming down the SDF.

But the optimism of the post-Cold War era soon waned. The North Korean nuclear crisis in 1993–94 heightened tension in the region. Even though Japan did not necessarily view North Korea as a military threat at this stage, it began to take the possibility of use of force on the Korean peninsula seriously and began to prepare for such a situation.

Then, in 1995–96, China loomed large in the eyes of the Japanese public as a political threat in the region. China repeated nuclear tests in 1995, which struck a nerve in the Japanese as the year was the fiftieth anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Then the heavy-handed approach by China against the Taiwanese presidential election shocked the Japanese public. Beginning around this time the Japanese perception of China changed to one of wariness and rivalry. In the 1980s, nearly 80 percent of the Japanese public felt friendly toward China, much the same level as toward the United States. The number declined steeply in 1989 under the influence of the Tiananmen incident. Then, in 1995, those who felt friendly toward China and those who did not feel friendly became about the same percentage, around 50 percent. The situation has stayed the same since.

The sense of wariness was heightened further in 1997–98. China was eager to make sure that the new security guidelines would not be applied to the Taiwan Strait, but the Chinese attitude hardened the Japanese stance, as the latter decided to maintain ambiguity on whether the guideline covered the Taiwan Strait situation. Then in July 1998, Clinton visited China while bypassing Japan. This incident, labeled “Japan passing,” wounded Japan’s pride as the number one ally of the United States in Asia. When Jiang Zeming visited Japan late that year, he was received unexceptionally coldly for his continual demands for Japanese remorse over war guilt. As China increased its presence in the region, Japan opted to strengthen its ties with the US.

In the meantime the Japanese increasingly came to perceive North Korea as a security threat. The abduction issue came to be widely known by the public in 1998 and caused great emotional anger against the North. The North Korean

spy ship found in Japanese territorial waters by the coast guard in 1999 increased the sense of threat within Japan.

But the sharpest turning point was the launch of the Taepodong missile in August 1998, which resulted in a furious uproar against North Korea. Not only did the Japanese government quickly resort to economic sanctions against the North, Japan also announced its intention to discontinue its financial contribution to the Korean Energy Development Organization (KEDO). Both the US and South Korea were shocked by this move and worked more seriously to contain the missile threat. This resulted in the so-called Perry process, in which Japan, the US, and South Korea tried to resolve the problem with North Korea comprehensively. The three countries formed a close consultation mechanism, the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG). South Korean president Kim Dae-jung's decision to seek a future cooperative relationship with Japan rather than asking for a war-guilt apology certainly helped Japan to have a closer relationship with South Korea.

These experiences showed that a regional cooperative framework, though sometimes useful, cannot effectively cope with real security threats in the region such as the Taiwan Strait issue or the North Korean security threat. As a result Japanese thinking evidently became more realist, recognizing the role of power to secure the peace in the region.

In addition, the Taepodong shock pressed Japan to strengthen its military cooperation with the United States as well as to increase its efforts to gain a certain level of independence. The Japanese government decided to cooperate with the US on missile defense research. Later Japan decided to deploy a missile defense system. On the other hand, Japan opted for its own intelligence capability by deciding to launch a set of information satellites which can cover the region continuously.

The North Korean issue has dominated Japanese security discourse in the twenty-first century. But public pressure made Japan's priority on North Korea somewhat different from that of other countries in the region. The abduction issue gathers by far the most attention, followed by the missile launch and the spy ship or other forms of low-intensity attack. The nuclear issue, which reached a new stage of crisis when the North admitted to having a nuclear weapon program, is low in priority at least for the Japanese public.

Current Japanese thinking on North Korea holds that Japan needs to press the North by forming a concentric figure composed of the Japan-US bilateral alliance at the core, the trilateral framework of Japan, the US, and South Korea at the next level, and finally the regional framework including North Korea, China, and Russia. The Six-Party Talks begun in August 2003 provide such a framework. But Japan suffers from the divergence between the international priority on North Korea's nuclear program and domestic concerns about North Korea. Japan's dilemma is even more serious because two key regional players,

Japan and China, fail to communicate with each other closely. As China seems to increase its influence in the region, Japan seems to enlarge its role in the global arena, partly with a view to strengthening its position against China.

IV. Global Security Perception: From the New World Order to Cooperation against Rogue Threats

As is the case with its regional security perception, Japanese thinking on global security shifted from a liberal orientation to a more realist one in the last decade. In the early 1990s, Japan tried to adjust to the new world order which seemed to arise in the wake of the Gulf War. In this order the major countries of the world would cooperatively solve security questions, especially through the United Nations. The heightened interest in peacekeeping operations (PKO) by the UN formed one of the linchpins of this new world order.

In 1991–92, the ruling LDP took efforts to pass the so-called PKO law, which authorizes the dispatch of units of the SDF on relatively limited missions under the UN PKO framework. Since sending the SDF beyond Japanese territory was taboo during the Cold War, there was substantial opposition in both the Diet and the public. But successful missions in UN PKOs in Cambodia, Rwanda, Mozambique, the Golan Heights, and so on changed the public's perception. In this period the bilateral alliance with the US was thought to be closely linked to the PKO activity.

But as the weakness of the United Nations and the limits of peacekeeping operations became apparent in the 1990s, hope for the new world order waned. The American experience in Somalia as well as the never-ending conflict in the former Yugoslavia demonstrated that international institutions have limited power to cope with serious security threats.

Instead of a new world order, US military might increasingly became the decisive factor in world security situations. In the former Yugoslavia it was American air power that first brought about the Dayton Agreement and then stopped the Kosovo conflict. As Iraq defied UN weapons inspectors, American missile attacks put pressure on Saddam Hussein. And the US resorted to the retaliatory use of force against terrorist attacks in the late 1990s.

Increasingly Japan became one of the allies that was the most quickly sympathetic to American military actions. Characteristic of these cases was that the Japanese public did not show much interest. Affairs in Europe, the Middle East, or Africa seemed distant from Japan's interests. Even though there was a certain amount of skepticism voiced about the legitimacy of American military action, the general tendency was to follow the American decision. This was partly because of the traumatic experience of isolation during the Gulf War and partly because of the bandwagoning calculation.

The September 11 attack was the first opportunity for Japan to seriously consider post-Cold War global security. The vast majority of the public as well as the Diet supported Koizumi's offer of consolation and assistance to the United

States. The Koizumi cabinet hurriedly took counterterrorist measures and in October the Diet passed the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law, according to which SDF troops were sent to assist the war on terrorism conducted by the United States and other countries. Concretely, a contingent of the maritime SDF was dispatched in the Indian Ocean to supply fuel for the navies of the United States, Canada, France, the United Kingdom, and so on. The air SDF also provided aerial supply operations to the American forces both within and outside Japan.

In a more normal time this legislation might have caused serious constitutional and legal debate in the Diet. It could be argued that the operations by the SDF under this law violated the official constitutional interpretation banning the exercise of the right of collective self-defense. But in reality there was no serious opposition to the legislation. The shock caused by September 11 and the unity shown by international society in support of the United States made some form of Japanese participation in the war on terrorism necessary in the eyes of the public, overriding political concerns. The choice also seemed part of the natural evolution of Japan's security policy in the last decade, along with participation in PKO and the new Japan-US defense guidelines, which had gradually eroded the sanctity of the traditional interpretation of the constitution.

The Koizumi cabinet faced much harder opposition over its stance on the war in Iraq. Throughout 2002 the cabinet failed to clarify its stance as the debate became fierce among the major countries. Basically Koizumi took a line similar to that of the United Kingdom, apparently supporting the Bush administration but encouraging the US to take a more cooperative stance within the United Nations. But as the division within the UN Security Council became unbreachable in early 2003, the Koizumi cabinet began openly supporting the United States. The opposition parties led by the Democratic Party as well as public opinion in general were critical, but the opposition was divided between the pacifist stance, which was opposed to any use of force in Iraq, and the legalist stance, which demanded a specific authorization by the UN for the use of force. At any rate, the anti-war sentiment in Japan was weaker than in other countries in the West. There were no large-scale demonstrations against the government and the opposition in the Diet was also controlled.

The same can be said of the government's follow-up measures. The government passed in July 2003 another special law on assistance in the reconstruction of Iraq, intending to send the SDF including ground units to Iraq. The legislation was unpopular with the public but the opposition was generally spotty. After Koizumi won the LDP leadership election in September and kept his ruling majority in the general election in November, he made public his intention to send the SDF to Iraq. Again the majority of the public was opposed, but opposition was not strong enough to have a political impact.

This development suggests several things. First, despite the popular rhetoric in Japan depicting the United Nations as an ideal international society,

Japanese leaders realize that the UN is not capable of handling difficult security questions. The alliance with the United States is, for all the psychological difficulties it creates for Japan as a junior power, a far surer way to maintain Japanese security.

Second, Japan's security and foreign-policy concerns are still regional rather than global. People are far more interested in the Korean peninsula and the Taiwan Strait. Koizumi's explanation that Japan needed to support the US because it was the only country that would help protect Japan against the North Korean threat was crude but persuasive for the Japanese public.

Third, support for Koizumi's foreign policy comes from his popularity rather than his persuasiveness. Generally the public accepts Koizumi as someone who lifts the taboos of the past and leads Japan to be a more assertive and proud nation. His right-wing stance and his decisive and sometimes blunt style have so far won people's support. But popularity can evaporate quickly in the face of potential harm. Sending the SDF to Iraq is no doubt a big gamble for the Koizumi cabinet.

And in spite of the general acceptance of the alliance with the United States, there is criticism of American unilateralism. What was characteristic about the war in Iraq was that such criticism was voiced more from the rightists in Japan rather than the traditional pacifist left. Their intention was more to denounce what they perceive as the government's subordinate diplomacy to the United States (*Taibei Juzoku Gaiko*), but it is possible that such criticism gains more political importance once it gains momentum.

V. Prospects of the Alliance from the Japanese Domestic Perspective

In the four areas the author has examined, political leadership, public opinion, regional security perception, and global security perception, the state of affairs in Japan has changed significantly in the last decade. And the changes as a whole have upheld the strong alliance with the United States as the linchpin of Japan's post-Cold War security policy.

But this does not mean that the current state is firmly institutionalized. It is no less a product of several accidents, and may change as the world situation changes.

First, the political realignment in Japan is not yet secure. Even though the trend toward a semi-two-party system seems irreversible, both of the major parties as well as Komeito have internal weaknesses resulting from the divergence of opinion on security policy. This weakness may lead to further political turmoil if, for example, the SDF in Iraq suffers casualties. Moreover, as constitutional reform nears reaching the real political agenda, there will be a fierce debate within Japan over Article 9 and its interpretation.

Second, the current cordiality between Japan and the US is to no small extent dependent on the personal relationship between Koizumi and Bush as well as

the popularity of the former within Japan. If Koizumi loses his popularity, his cabinet will face serious difficulties. And once his government is gone, there is no guarantee that his policy line will be continued. Major policy changes especially in terms of the global fight against rogue threats have been impromptu, based on special laws with sunset clauses. This suggests the tentativeness of the current cordiality.

The stable mutual understanding among the officials in both countries supplements the ad hoc nature of alliance management. Officials have become adept at handling the emotions of the public, especially when unexpected social conflicts have occurred. But managing the public emotion is always a risky business. Even today the mishandling of a single accident or crime can have great repercussions for the alliance.

Third, most of the development in the alliance happened while economic problems were virtually neglected, which is extraordinary for the two major economies. They occurred during a time of evident Japanese economic sluggishness and American economic boom. This situation may change as the Japanese economy recovers and the American economy is beset with the twin deficits. We can already identify signs of economic friction over safeguards, American beef, and the exchange rate. In addition, the global economic system is moving toward regionally based free-trade agreements. There is no guarantee that the economic interests of the two countries won't diverge and lead to a new round of economic friction.

Fourth, as the Japanese place more importance on the alliance with the United States, concern over abandonment increases. For example, the current military transformation proposed by the Pentagon may have a complex psychological impact when implemented in East Asia. There is a certain level of hope in Japan that the military transformation will reduce the presence of American forces in Okinawa. On the other hand, however, a rapid reduction of the forces may shake the alliance's credibility in the eyes of the Japanese.

Another source of fear of abandonment is American policy toward the Korean peninsula and China. Japan is fearful of the American disengagement from the South and of the possibility of the US making a deal with the North on nuclear and related concerns that would neglect the abduction issue. Japan is also concerned that the US-China entente may replace the Japan-US alliance as the key bilateral relationship in East Asia.

Fifth, in spite of general trust on the part of the Japanese of American leadership, there is a certain level of fear and jealousy of the American "empire." The desire to have a more self-supportive security policy is growing. There is no realistic possibility of Japan having its own nuclear weapons, but it is notable that the matter has come to be openly debated in public journals, which is indicative of the desire by many for Japan to have a more assertive role in international society, including in its relations with the United States.

More directly, some opinion leaders have come to question the legitimacy of American predominance. They insist that aggressive American foreign policy

is the root cause of global threats such as the Palestinian conflict, instability in the Gulf, or Islamic terrorism. So far this feeling has not acquired much political influence, but its potential influence is not to be ignored.

In general, the public mood in Japan has shifted toward the right. Koizumi has fanned debate within Japan by visiting the Yasukuni Shrine annually since he became prime minister, but generally this behavior has contributed to his popularity. Visiting Yasukuni is more popular among the young generation, not because the young have any emotional attachment to the shrine or the Second World War but because they are frustrated with other countries denouncing this behavior. So far Koizumi has failed to persuade neighboring countries, China in particular and to some extent South Korea, to accept the visits to Yasukuni as pure mourning for those who died in the war. The psychological divisions between Japan and its Asian neighbors may strengthen Japanese cordiality with the United States, but the United States may experience difficulty if the divisions lead to more serious conflict.

Thus many things are still in the midst of transformation, even though the Japan-US alliance may seem to be in good standing at the moment. It is not appropriate to be complacent about the current state of affairs, for the alliance still seems in search of an efficient and equitable division of labor in the post-Cold War security environment. Much of the future course of Japanese foreign and security policy will be dependent on developments both within Japan and outside it in the next few years.