

THREAT PERCEPTION AND THE ROLE OF SECURITY ENTREPRENEURS  
EXPLAINING THE REINFORCEMENT OF THE US-JAPAN ALLIANCE SINCE 1995

by

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## **Abstract**

The US-Japan alliance and security cooperation between Japan and the US has been visibly strengthened since the middle of the 1990s. It is often argued that this strengthening of the alliance took place in response to growing security threats in the region. This thesis argues that security threats alone do not provide a sufficient explanation, and proposes an alternative explanation for the strengthening of the alliance.

The alliance has been strengthened by domestic actors who used regional threats as opportunities to achieve their goals, which are different from the strengthening of the alliance itself. They attributed the need for security cooperation with the US to growing security threats in the region, and tried to pursue their real goal through the strengthening of the alliance. In particular, a coalition of three types of domestic actors (traditional nationalists, the staff of the Prime Minister's Office, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) has formed in the late 1990s. I named these actors "security entrepreneurs." The strengthening of the US-Japan alliance has become a focal point for cooperation among these domestic actors who are pursuing their own domestic goals in the process.

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## List of Abbreviations

ACSA	Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement
ASDF	Air Self Defense Force
CLB	Cabinet Legislation Bureau
DOD	Department of Defense
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
EASI	East Asia Strategy Initiative
EASR	East Asia Strategy Report
GSDF	Ground Self Defense Force
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
JDA	Japan Defense Agency
JSP	Japan Socialist Party
KEDO	Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSDF	Maritime Self Defense Force
NDPO	National Defense Program Outline
NMD	National Missile Defense
NSC	National Security Council
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
SACO	Special Action Committee on Okinawa
SCC	Security Consultative Committee
SDC	Subcommittee for Defense Cooperation
SDF	Self Defense Forces
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
TMD	Theater Missile Defense

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## Introduction

“The US-Japan alliance is obsolete” – this was a widely shared view of the alliance during the 1980s and the early 1990s. With the demise of the Soviet Union and the world taking a new turn to the post-Cold War era, this view became more and more credible. Since threats from the Soviet Union had disappeared, it seemed as if the US-Japan alliance lost its *raison d’être*. Moreover, there was a great deal of friction between the two states, which gave sufficient reason to believe that the alliance was not sustainable in the post-Cold War world. Trade friction was more severe than ever before, and the US took a tough stance on this issue toward Japan. Faced with unprecedented growth in the Japanese economy, some Americans even saw Japan as their biggest threat. The Bush and early Clinton administrations regarded economic policy as their first priority in the relationship with Japan, and did not pay much attention to security policy in East Asia. This attitude was visible in Bush’s policy of withdrawing US troops from the region. Likewise, Japan put the economic issue at the center of its foreign policy toward the US. Meanwhile, Japan was focusing more and more on regionalism and multilateralism in Asia and this attitude gave the US the impression that Japan was underplaying the importance of the US in security affairs. The disharmony between the two states increased during the 1990-91 Gulf Crisis and Gulf War. Japan’s reluctant contribution was criticized as too little, too late.

Since the middle of the 1990s, what had been assumed to happen did not happen and the trend in the relationship between Japan and the US took the completely opposite direction. Security issues replaced economic issues as the central issue of their respective foreign

policies, and Japan and the US deepened their cooperation in security affairs. Security cooperation became apparent in a series of actions taken by the two states to enhance interaction with each other. The first action was taken by US side. The East Asia Strategy Report (EASR), also known as the "Nye Report," released by the US Defense Department in 1995 emphasized the importance of the US-Japan alliance, and of the US presence in the Asia-Pacific. This report was released to make the US, (which had been focusing solely on economic issues) pay more attention to its security policy in the Asia-Pacific. To reciprocate the US move, Japan took a series of steps to strengthen security cooperation with the US. After Hashimoto Ryutaro took office in 1996, the Okinawa base issue suddenly started to move toward resolution. In 1995 Japan revised the National Defense Program Outline (NDPO) for the first time since its implementation in 1978, to cover broader areas that are important to national security. This was followed by the 1997 revision of the defense cooperation guidelines, which suggested more support for the US and an expansion of Japan's military role. Furthermore, Japan and the US agreed to cooperate on research for the Theater Missile Defense (TMD). Japan strongly supported the US in the war on terror and the Iraq war. The Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law in 2001, and the Special Measures Law Assisting the Reconstruction of Iraq in 2003 provided a legal basis for Japan's cooperation in the US-led war. These adjustments of domestic laws expanded the Japanese military role abroad.

Why did the alliance take a course that seems contrary to the trend of worsening relations between the two states in the preceding decade? This thesis examines the unexpected re-strengthening of the US-Japan alliance since the middle of the 1990s.

There are several conventional explanations for this strengthening of the alliance. Pure realists (Green, 2000, 2003) would explain this phenomenon by the existence of direct external threats. Since the middle of the 1990s, Japan faced several regional threats. These include the 1994 North Korean nuclear crisis, the 1995 missile tests by China, the 1996 Taiwan Straits Crisis, Senkaku/Daoyutai dispute between Taiwan and Japan, and the 1998 North Korean *Taepodong* missile launch over Japanese territory. Realists would argue that these physical, direct threats pushed Japan to become more hawkish and realistic about the regional security issue, and made it realize the importance of cooperation with the US. This explanation is partly plausible. The trend to strengthen the alliance does indeed correlate with these regional threats.

However, this realist argument does not provide a sufficient explanation, because it is difficult to connect the strengthening of the alliance process to actual direct threats for Japan. Japan's unprecedented support for the US-led war against terrorism and the Iraq war did not result from direct security threats to Japan. Also, while North Korea does pose a direct threat to Japan, there has been no direct threat from China. If there is a security threat from China, it must be a perceived threat, rather than a material threat, as argued by realists.

Neoliberalists (Nye, 1992, 1995, 2001) consider security as the foundation for economic prosperity. According to this view, Japan and the US strengthened their security cooperation in order to pursue security stability in the region, which is indispensable for the economic prosperity of both countries. However, it is hard to say that the security environment of the region has been stabilized by Japan's deepening security cooperation with the US. Rather, Japan's increasingly active cooperation with the US in military activities

raises serious concerns among neighboring states. This is especially true for China, as China believes that Japan's increasing cooperation with the US destabilizes peace and security in the region.

Institutionalists (Keohane, 1984) would argue that the alliance has been maintained because of its functional contributions and due to the relatively low cost of maintaining it. However, this theory does not explain the unique path that the US-Japan alliance has taken. The alliance has not just been maintained over time, but it has been strengthened after a serious decline.

Although a cultural norms (Katzenstein, 1996) approach provides good insight in terms of its examination of both international and domestic factors, it is not a plausible explanation for the strengthening of the alliance. In the process of increasing security cooperation with the US, it is hard to see pacifism and the persistence of Japan's sense of national identity as a peace-loving, non-threatening country.

In contrast, I argue that the strengthening of the alliance was motivated not simply by growing security threats in the region. Rather, the alliance has been strengthened because of domestic actors who used regional security threats as opportunities to achieve their individual goals. They attributed the need for security cooperation with the US to growing security threats, and tried to pursue their real goal through the strengthening of the alliance. In particular, a coalition of three types of domestic actors has formed in the late 1990s around the goal of strengthening the US-Japan alliance. These three actors end up pushing the same goal but for different domestic reasons. Traditional nationalists aim to realize a "normal nation," that has independent military capabilities and has an ability to go to war if it wishes.

New bureaucratic actors, namely the staff members of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) intend to strengthen political leadership by the prime minister. Finally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) puts its top priority on keeping a strong tie with the US. In the pursuit of a stronger US-Japan alliance, MOFA seeks to preserve its central role in policy making, especially relative to other domestic ministries. To strengthen the alliance for the sake of their individual goals, these actors sometimes even amplify the security threats in the region.

The structure of this thesis is as follows. In chapter 1, I present the puzzle by contrasting the degree of US-Japan security cooperation before and after the middle of the 1990s. Although my argument focuses on the Japanese component in the relation between the two states, I also briefly examine the US point of view. In chapter 2, I examine the existing theories of alliance, and more specifically conventional explanations for the puzzle I present in chapter 1. Chapter 3 provides the main argument of the thesis. That is to say, the alliance has been strengthened not simply because of growing security threats in the region, but more importantly by domestic actors who used threats to pursue their true goals. Chapter 4 and 5 develop two case studies to test my argument. The first case study is the defense cooperation guidelines revision in 1997 (chapter 4), and the second is the legislation process of the Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law in 2001 (chapter 5). I conclude the thesis by summarizing the argument and presenting what can be expected in the future from the analysis of this thesis.

## Chapter 1 The Puzzling Strengthening of the US-Japan Alliance after 1995

### Context: An Alliance in Decline, 1989-1995

After the end of the Cold War, Japan and the US faced a strained relationship. In the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US became the only super power in the world, and many people in the US saw Japan as the next threat to the nation. The perception of the Japanese threat did not come from Japan's military power, but from its growing economic power since the 1980s.<sup>1</sup> The US took a tough stance on trade relations with Japan from 1985 until the mid-1990s. In 1989, Japan was included in the "Super 301" provisions of the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act. When President Bush visited Japan in 1992, the slogan was "Jobs, Jobs, Jobs." Bush brought executives of the American car industry with him, and pressured Japan to announce that Japanese car manufacturers would make an effort to import more cars made in the US. The relationship between the two countries continued to worsen. In Japan, there was a growing antipathy toward US perceptions of the Japan threat. "No to ieru Nihon (The Japan That Can Say No)" written by the founder of SONY Akio Morita and the Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara, was one symbol of this sentiment. Bush lost his own bid for reelection in 1992 to Democrat Bill Clinton, whose campaign manager, James Carville rallied supporters with the phrase: "It's the economy, stupid."<sup>2</sup> The policy of the Clinton administration toward Japan was similarly focused on economic issues. The

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<sup>1</sup> The course of Japan threat argument is summarized in Akihiko Tanaka (1997) "97 nen, beichu wa wakai suru (The US and China will reconcile in 1997)" *Chuokoron* February 1997.

<sup>2</sup> [http://money.cnn.com/2003/09/26/news/economy/bush\\_reelect/?cnn=yes](http://money.cnn.com/2003/09/26/news/economy/bush_reelect/?cnn=yes)

Hosokawa administration did not accept the numerical targets requested by the US, and the summit meeting between Hosokawa and Clinton failed to reach any significant agreement.

The disharmony of the US-Japan relationship in security affairs also mounted during the Gulf Crisis and Gulf War in 1990-91. Japan's reluctance or inability to take part in humanitarian and rear-area logistic support missions generated intense irritation in the US. Japan managed to be a part of the international coalition effort by making a contribution of US \$13 billion, but it could not make even the most modest contribution of man-power despite the fact that 70% of Japan's oil imports came from the Gulf area. The international evaluation of Japanese contribution was "too little, too late." The \$13 billion contribution was more than Japan's annual foreign aid program Official Development Assistance (ODA) but the Japanese realized that their effort brought very little international credit.

The two states did not pay much attention to each other in security affairs. With the end of the Cold War, the US expected a tangible "peace dividend" and tried to reduce its burden in international affairs. The "East Asia Strategy Initiative (EASI)" released by the Bush administration in 1990 and 1992 hinted at a reduction of US forces in the Asia-Pacific region. In fact, as part of this policy, the US removed about 6000 troops mostly from Okinawa. Meanwhile, Japan seemed to be focusing more on a multi-lateral regional framework in Asia than on a bilateral relationship with the US. The sudden demise of the shared perception of the Soviet threat, the prospect of US military disengagement, and the need to incorporate China and Russia as responsible regional players made Japan look toward broader Asia-Pacific cooperation. Regional integration in Europe, and a free trade agreement in North America also stimulated Japan to think of taking initiatives toward a

regional framework in Asia (Funabashi, 1999: 64).

Many actors and observers came to believe that the bilateral Cold War alliance was obsolete. In 1995, John Dower wrote that the “special relationship” between the US and Japan was remarkably undermined. He argued that Japan was less important to most Americans than the US was to the Japanese. Americans had little interest in what Japanese thought of them and thought that the bilateral relationship was conspicuously asymmetrical. According to Dower, trade frictions, nationalistic rhetoric in Japan, and the general Japanese behavior made Americans frustrated. In the eyes of many Americans, China was about to replace Japan. Dower further argued that the growing American attraction toward China reflected not just democratic realities, but also American impatience and mistrust toward Japan (Dower, 1995). Chalmers Johnson also emphasizes the rise of mutual irritants in the alliance following the end of the Cold War. Having to carry the defense burden for its biggest creditor increasingly frustrated the US, while Japan fretted over its inferior status as a quasi US protectorate (Johnson, 1996).

### Rebound in the Alliance after 1995

Surprisingly, this confrontational trend within the alliance changed in late 1995. Japan and the US started to deepen their mutual security engagement, and security cooperation between the two states increased. The alliance that had been once considered unsustainable made a significant turn and, against all odds, steadily reinforced itself.



The action from the US first appeared in the East Asia Strategy Report (EASR) released in February 1995. The report crucially asserted that the US would maintain its presence in the Asia-Pacific with a hundred thousand troops deployed in the foreseeable future. The US began to see its presence in the Asia-Pacific as essential to maintaining stability in the region, and the US-Japan alliance was put in the center of this US strategy.

The Japanese response to the new American posture was quite positive. In fact, from late 1995 on, Japan made it clear that it would cooperate with the US in security affairs. The first significant move was seen in the wake of the 1995 Okinawa rape incident. Two American servicemen raped a 12 year-old Japanese girl on September 4. Despite the fact that this incident had significant political risks in terms of maintaining the alliance, the two states started to engage more positively in security issues relating to the alliance. Beginning with the establishment of the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO), Japan and the US repeated consultations over the issue of US bases in Okinawa. In the same year, Japan revised its 1976 National Defense Program Outline (NDPO). The revised DNPO clarified Japanese support for UN peacekeeping and for US operations in "situations that arise in the areas surrounding Japan," two key elements that were missing in the 1978 defense guidelines. In April 1996, President William Clinton and prime minister Ryutaro Hashimoto released the US-Japan Joint Security Declaration, in which the two states agreed to revise the Japanese defense guidelines to realize more active security cooperation between the two states. The Defense White Paper of the year emphasized the enlargement of US-Japan security cooperation. In the meantime, SACO released its final report and decided to return the Futenma base in Okinawa within five years. The Hashimoto administration kept a close

relationship with Washington. When Hashimoto had meetings with US leaders such as President Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, or Defense Secretary William Cohen, he repeatedly assured them that Japan would not request any reduction of US forces in Japan. In April 1997, the Diet passed a revised special measures law on sites for the US army, that extended the land lease period for US bases in Japan. The defense cooperation guidelines released in September 1997 were significantly different from the old guidelines. The new guidelines allowed more Japanese support to the US and expanded the role played by the Self Defense Forces (SDF). Regarding this revision, there was a debate on whether the “areas surrounding Japan” included Taiwan. If the areas include Taiwan, the possibility comes up that Japan will engage in actions taken by the US in the event of conflict between China and Taiwan. The Japanese government had been ambiguous on this issue, not clearly declaring that it did include Taiwan, but not denying it either. However, in February 2005, the Japanese government deliberately made its position on this issue less ambiguous by declaring, in a joint statement with the US, that Taiwan is a mutual security concern.<sup>3</sup> In 1998, the cabinet and the Diet followed up the new guidelines with three related laws: the Regional Contingency Law (*Shuhen Jitai Ho*), revised Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement, or ACSA (*Nichibei Buppin Ekimu Sogo Teikyo Kyotei*) and revised SDF Law (*Jieitai Ho*).<sup>4</sup> After the North Korean *Taepodong* missile launch in August 1998, Japan explicitly announced its willingness to cooperate with the US on Theater Missile Defense (TMD).

When terrorists attacked Washington and New York on September 11, 2001, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi immediately expressed his support for America’s fight against

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<sup>3</sup> “China and Japan so hard to be friends” *The Economist*, March 23, 2005.

terrorism. Koizumi announced a seven-point plan in response to the terrorist attacks in the US, and declared that Japan would dispatch SDF to provide non-combat support with the US if Washington took retaliatory action. On November 2, the Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law was enacted despite opposition from opposition party members. Based on this law, the Maritime SDF (MSDF) replenishment ships were dispatched to the Indian Ocean to carry out logistic support for US-led military operations in Afghanistan and to transport relief supplied for Afghan refugees. In February 2002, President Bush expressed strong support for Koizumi's efforts on his economic reform, and the two leaders agreed to reinforce ties between the two states.<sup>5</sup> Subsequently in December 2002, an MSDF destroyer equipped with the Aegis air-defense system was dispatched to provide rear-area support for US and allied forces in the fight against terrorism. It was the first time that an Aegis destroyer was dispatched on such a mission.<sup>6</sup>

Japan's support for the US in the Iraq war is also significant. When the military campaign against Iraq started on March 20, 2003, Koizumi declared that Japan would support the US. When Koizumi met Bush in May, he indicated that Japan wished to play an active part in the reconstruction of Iraq, implying possible contributions by the SDF. Indeed, despite strong resistance from the opposition, in July 2003, the Diet enacted the Special Measures Law Assisting the Reconstruction of Iraq, that would allow the government to dispatch the SDF to Iraq.<sup>7</sup> Based on this law, in January 2004, Director General of Japan Defense Agency (JDA) Shigeru Ishiba gave an order to the Ground SDF (GSDF) to dispatch

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<sup>4</sup> The Cabinet approved the three laws on May 24, 1999.

<sup>5</sup> *Japan Echo* April 2002.

<sup>6</sup> *Japan Echo* February 2003.

<sup>7</sup> *Japan Echo* October 2003.

a unit of about 530 troops to Samawah in southern Iraq to provide medical relief and water purification services. The GSDF was dispatched to Iraq two weeks later.

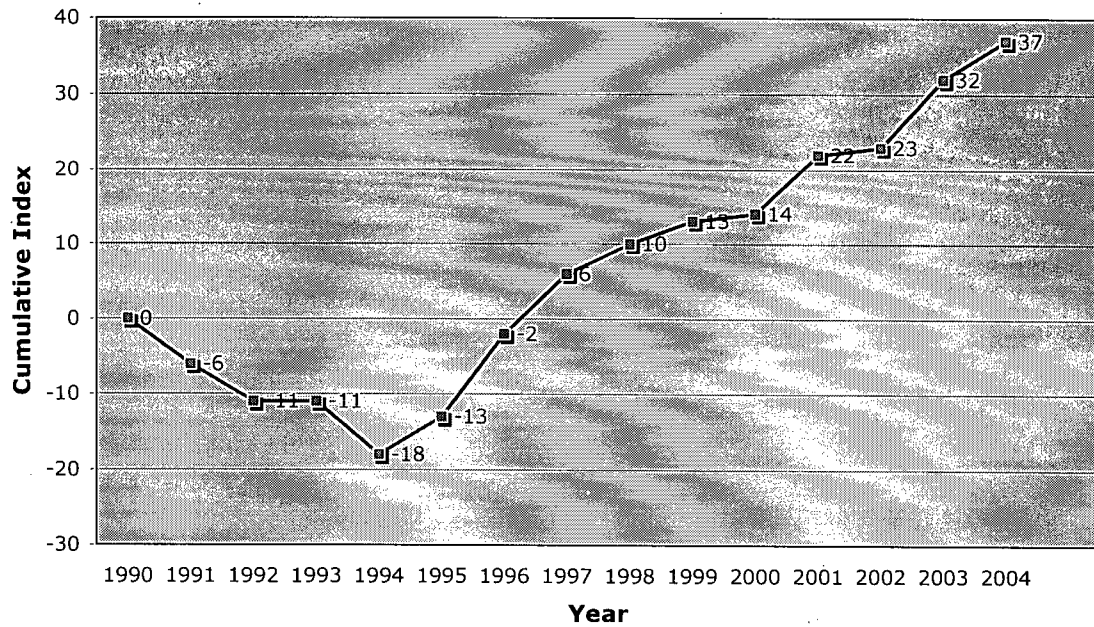
Looking at the revisions of laws concerning the security cooperation with the US (NDPO, guidelines), cooperation on TMD, cooperation in the war against terrorism, and the Iraq war, Japan has been strengthening its security cooperation with the US significantly. The momentum of this effort is stronger than ever before, and this marks a considerable contrast with the trend before the middle of the 1990s. The current steady and close relationship between the US and Japan was never expected a decade ago. This change of course makes us wonder what force is driving the reinforcement of security cooperation between the two states. It is assumed that a change in the political environment has made the promotion of closer security cooperation, which could not be accepted before.

### Systematic Evaluation of the Evolution in the Alliance

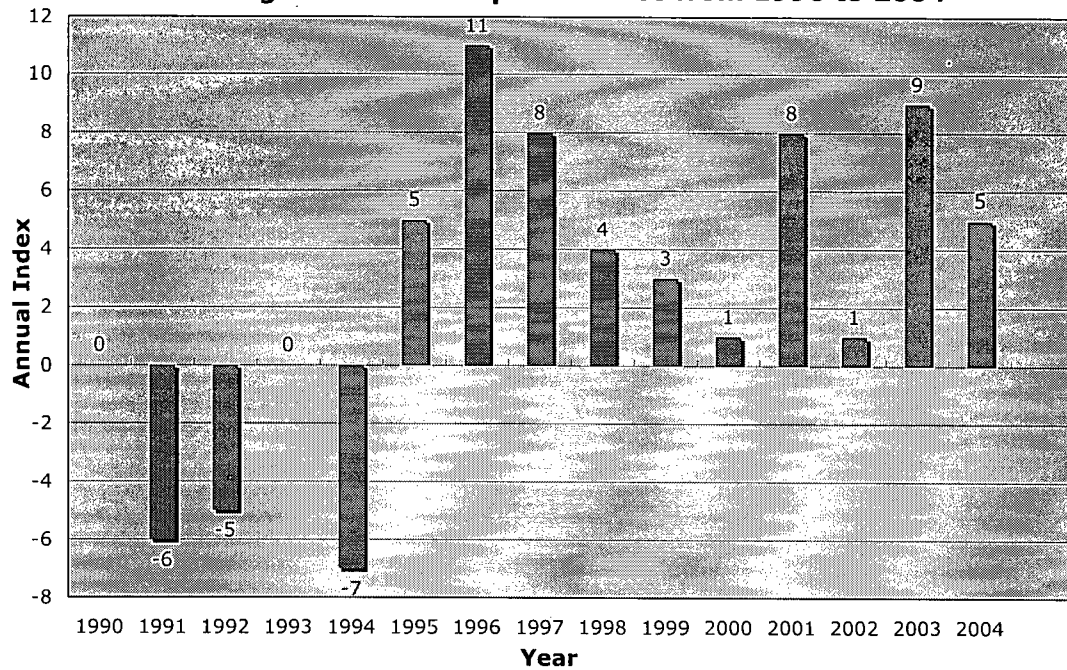
To visualize this change in the trend of the US-Japan security relationship, I used the following method. From 1990 to 2004, I followed up critical events relating to the US-Japan security relationship. I built indexes by measuring change in the relationship both in intensity and in direction. Any improvement in the relations marks +1, +2, +3. A +3 marks a highly positive event. Any deteriorating event marks -1, -2, -3. A -3 marks a highly negative event. For example, Japan's reluctant reaction in the Gulf War marks -3, and the NDPO revision in 1995 marks +3 (see Table 1.1). I calculated the indexes in a cumulative way, putting 0 in

1990 as a base line (see Figure 1.1). It is clearly recognized that the US-Japan security relationship made a sharp contrast before and after the middle of the 1990s.

**Figure 1.1**  
**Evolution of the US-Japan Alliance from 1990 to 2004**



**Figure 1.2**  
**Net Changes in the US-Japan Alliance from 1990 to 2004**



**Table 1.1**  
**Negative and Positive Events in the Relationship between Japan and the US**

NEGATIVE		POSITIVE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gulf War – Japan's contribution criticized as too little and too late (-3)</li> <li>Trade friction sever – Japan does not open its rice market. (-3)</li> </ul>	1991		-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bush visits Japan – the slogan is "Jobs, jobs, jobs" (-2)</li> <li>Miyazawa's speech raises much controversy in the US (-1)</li> <li>Asahi Shimbun opinion poll, the lowest point for the good relationship between the US and Japan (-2)</li> </ul>	1992 Jan 9 Feb 3 Dec		-11 (-5)
	1993		-11 (0)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hosokawa-Clinton summit Economic consultation fails to reach agreement. The US pressures Japan to reduce its trade surplus. (-3)</li> <li>Higuchi Report – bilateral security cooperation in decline. (-2)</li> <li>Japan's sympathy budget for US bases does not increase as promised. (-2)</li> </ul>	1994 Feb 11  Aug  Aug 23		-18 (-7)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shizuka Kamei (ministry of transport) says the US thinks Japanese are slaves, mentioning US exchange policy (-1)</li> <li>Lowest point of Americans' support for strengthening the defense of Japan (Asahi Shimbun) (-2)</li> <li>Okinawa Rape Incident (-3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>1995</b></p> <p>Feb 27</p> <p>Apr 27</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nye Report (EASR) (+3)</li> </ul>	-13 (+5)
	<p>Sep 4</p> <p>Sep 20</p> <p>Oct 25</p> <p>Nov 11</p> <p>Nov 19</p> <p>Nov 28</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of SOFA is considered (+1)</li> <li>Agreement on the pre-prosecution hand over of US army suspect (+1)</li> <li>Agreement on consolidation of bases in Okinawa (+1)</li> <li>Agreement on SACO (+2)</li> <li>NDPO revision (+3)</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>1996</b></p> <p>Apr 12</p> <p>Apr 15</p> <p>Apr 14</p> <p>Apr 17</p> <p>May 22</p> <p>Jun 28</p> <p>Jul 19</p> <p>Dec</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreement on Futenma base return in 5-7yrs (+1)</li> <li>SACO interim report – 20% reduction of bases in Okinawa (+1)</li> <li>Hashimoto-Perry agreed to concrete Japanese cooperation to the US forces in an emergency in the Far East (+2)</li> <li>US-Japan Joint Security Declaration (+3)</li> <li>DOD agrees to provide ballistic missile information to JDA (+1)</li> <li>ACSA implemented (+1)</li> <li>Defense White Paper – emphasis on enlargement of US-Japan security cooperation (+1)</li> <li>Final report of SACO (return of Futenma, sea heliport) (+1)</li> </ul>	-2 (+11)
	<p><b>1997</b></p> <p>Mar 23-24</p> <p>Apr 11</p> <p>Apr 25</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hashimoto assures Gore that Japan will not request reduction of US forces in Japan (+1)</li> <li>Special Measures Law on sites for the US Army – extension of lease period (+1)</li> <li>Hashimoto and Clinton agree to maintain the US force in Japan</li> </ul>	



	Jun 7 Sep 23	(+1) • Interim report on new guidelines (+2) • Defense Cooperation Guidelines (+3)	+6 (+8)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clinton visits China (Japan-passing) (-2)</li> <li>Japan, individual research on information collecting satellite (-1)</li> <li>No strong sympathy from the US about <i>Taepodong</i> missile launch over Japan (-1)</li> </ul>	<b>1998</b> Apr 28 Jun Aug Oct 20 Nov 23 Dec 20 Dec 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidelines-related three laws passes the cabinet (+2)</li> <li>Washington and Tokyo privately agree to collaborate on research for the missile interceptor for the Navy Theater Wide system (+1)</li> <li>Joint use of US Naha naval port passes the cabinet (+1)</li> <li>EASR 1998 (+1)</li> <li>Japan supports Operation Desert Fox (Iraq) (+2)</li> <li>Agreement on the joint research for TMD (+1)</li> </ul>	+10 (+4)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minus growth of Sympathy Budget – No request from the JDA for increase (-2)</li> </ul>	<b>1999</b> Mar 10 May 24 Aug 16 Dec 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PM Obuchi supports US comprehensive approach toward North Korea (+1)</li> <li>The Diet approves three laws implementing the new guidelines (+3)</li> <li>A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on joint research for TMD (+1)</li> </ul>	+13 (+3)
	<b>2000</b> Dec 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A fiscal 2001 budget – funds to upgrade SDF (+1)</li> </ul>	+14 (+1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ehime Maru incident – provokes huge protest against the US (-3)</li> </ul>	<b>2001</b> Feb 9 Sep 11 Sep 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9.11 terrorist attacks – PM Koizumi quickly convenes his national security panel (+1)</li> <li>PM Koizumi calls President Bush to express his support for America's fight against terrorism (+2)</li> </ul>	

	<p>Sep 19</p> <p>Sep 25</p> <p>Oct 20</p> <p>Oct 29</p> <p>Nov 25</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A seven-point plan – preparation of SDF dispatch in noncombatant support for the US retaliation against terrorism (+1)</li> <li>• Koizumi and Bush confirm their shared commitment to the eradication of terrorism. Koizumi explains the measures in his administration's seven-point plan, including prompt enactment of a new law allowing the SDF to support US military action in noncombatant capacities (+1)</li> <li>• Koizumi meets with Bush during the APEC forum summit in Shanghai. The two leaders agree that Japan will play a leading role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan following the fall of the Taliban regime (+1)</li> <li>• Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law enacted (+3)</li> <li>• Three MSDF vessels depart to carry out logistical support for US military operations in Afghanistan and to transport relief supplies for Afghan refugees (+2)</li> </ul>	<p>+22 (+8)</p>
	<p><b>2002</b></p> <p>Dec 16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An MSDF destroyer equipped with the Aegis destroyer leaves to provide rear-area support in the fight against terrorism – first time an Aegis destroyer has been dispatched on such a mission (+1)</li> </ul>	<p>+23 (+1)</p>

	<b>2003</b>		
	Mar 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PM Koizumi declares Japan's support for the US in the event of military action against Iraq (+1)</li> </ul>	
	May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Koizumi promises Japanese help with the postwar reconstruction effort, that would include dispatch of SDF (+1)</li> </ul>	
	May 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Koizumi and Bush agree not to tolerate North Korean nuclear weapons development. Koizumi alludes to possible contribution by SDF in Iraq (+1)</li> </ul>	
	Jul 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Diet enacts the Special Measures Law Assisting the Reconstruction of Iraq, that allows dispatch of SDF (+3)</li> </ul>	
	Dec 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The cabinet approves a basic plan for dispatching SDF (+1)</li> </ul>	
	Dec 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ASDF leaves for Kuwait and Qatar (+2)</li> </ul>	+32 (+9)
	<b>2004</b>		
	Jan 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The dispatch of the first group of the GSDF and the main unit of ASDF is ordered (+2)</li> </ul>	
	Dec 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The cabinet approves an extension of the dispatch of SDF to Iraq (+2)</li> </ul>	
	Dec 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New NDPO is released (+1)</li> </ul>	+37 (+5)

## Motivation from the US Side

From the US side, the driving force behind the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance is clear. It was important for the US to continue and strengthen its engagement in the region to preserve its national interest.

During the late 1980s and the early 1990s, trade tensions increased between the US and Japan and there was severe Japan-bashing. The United States Trade Representative (USTR), Commerce Department, and Congress threatened to enforce reprisals, sanctions, and penalties. Faced with growing economic antagonism toward Japan, the State and Defense Departments and National Security Council (NSC) worried about the situation and worked to lessen the economic harshness. Joseph Nye, who wrote the East Asia Strategy Report (EASR), also known as the "Nye Report," worried that the Clinton administration did not pay much attention to the importance of security cooperation with Japan, and that the US interests were too biased toward economic issues. He writes:

Trade politics and sectoral interests seeking protection from Japanese products have therefore often dominated current policy toward Japan. But trade policy is only one part of foreign policy, and a strategy to advance the long-term interests of the American people must go beyond "jobs, jobs, jobs" (Nye, 1992: 96).

Nye believed that US-Japan relations should be the center of maintaining stability in the Asia-Pacific region. Nye opposed the idea that Japanese economy, finance and high technology were threats to US global power and that the US should contain Japan. He instead argued that "rather than containing Japan, the US goal should be containing the friction that grows out of economic disputes" (Nye, 1992: 104). Nye also thought that Japan was

concerned with US withdrawal from the region, and that Japan was seeking UN-centered foreign diplomacy, regional multilateral security frameworks, or even more independent capability to cope with the security issues in the region.

The US began to initiate a more engaging policy toward the region, which would later be known as the Nye Initiative. The 1995 EASR announced that the US would maintain its presence in the region with a forward deployment of a hundred thousand troops for the foreseeable future and emphasized the importance of American engagement in security issues in East Asia. Nye says “[s]ecurity is like oxygen: you do not tend to notice it until you begin to lose it. The American security presence has helped to provide this ‘oxygen’ for East Asia development.” Nye examines the following five alternatives for US strategy in East Asia. 1) withdraw from the region and pursue a hemispheric or Atlantic-only strategy, 2) withdraw from its alliance in the region and create a local balance of power, 3) create loose regional institutions to replace its structure of alliance in East Asia, 4) create a NATO-like regional alliance to contain China, 5) continue leadership in the region. Nye concludes that it is in the best interest of both the US and the countries in the region that the US maintains its presence and leadership in the region. In so doing, he particularly points out that; 1) Isolation from the most rapidly growing area of the world economy would have high costs, 2) US withdrawal from the region would lead to a remilitarized Japan and an arms race in the region, which would make American participation more costly and more dangerous, 3) It is wrong to treat China as an enemy because sanctions and isolation are less likely than economic growth and engagement to produce liberalization. If the US treats China as an enemy, it is likely to guarantee itself an enemy (Nye, 1995). Nye points out that although it is less likely that Japan

will challenge the US, given the fact that the US is the only superpower after the end of the Cold War, the status quo might be changed depending on how the US treats Japan. He argues that “[a]s Japan’s strength increases, it will outgrow and resent dependency, and American pressure will stimulate nationalism in Japanese domestic politics,” and that the US should shape Japan in a direction that is most compatible with long-term American national interests (Nye, 1992: 97). He argues that the US should keep its presence in the region to deal with these challenges as it works as a stabilizer and a reassurance against the rise of hostile hegemonic states (Nye, 2001: 102).

The report released by the Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) in 2000, which is well known as “Armitage Report,” also defines the US-Japan alliance as a foundation for regional order. The report argues that the uncertainties of the post-Cold War regional setting require a more dynamic approach to bilateral defense planning. Specifically, it proposes the removal of Japan’s prohibition against collective self-defense as it is a constraint on alliance cooperation, and Japan’s full participation in peacekeeping and humanitarian relief missions. The report sees the special relationship between the US and Great Britain as a model for the US-Japan alliance, and argues that it is time for burden-sharing to evolve into power-sharing.

What made the US become more focused on security cooperation with Japan is the threat that it could lose a crucial stake in the region. Even after the collapse of the Soviet Union, a Cold War environment still exists in East Asia. The withdrawal of US bases from the Philippines produced a perception that the US was pulling out of the region. This perception was spurred on by the East Asia Strategy Initiative (EASI) published in 1990,

which announced the US policy of reducing the number of troops in the region. In fact, 6000 troops were removed (mainly from Okinawa) in accordance with this policy. Through EASR and following the process of the Nye Initiative, the US sought to alter this perception of US withdrawal, and to send a message that the US would maintain its presence in the region. The US saw its presence in the region, and especially the US-Japan alliance, as the center for maintaining stability in the region, which is indispensable for US national interests.

### Rephrasing the Puzzle

As discussed above, the Japanese response to the Nye Initiative was quite positive. Since the EASR was released, Japan has facilitated its security cooperation with the US. In the following chapters, I will focus on the Japanese component of the strengthening of security cooperation between the two states. What is the driving force for Japan to strengthen its alliance with the US? Why did Japan agree to new specifications since the middle of the 1990s that would not have been agreed to in the preceding decade?

## Chapter 2 Theoretical Context

### Alliance Theory

In this section, I examine different theories of alliance and present how examining the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance contributes to alliance theory.

In "The Origins of Alliances," Stephen Walt examines alliance formation. He argues that balancing is more common than bandwagoning, that as a motive for alignment, ideology is less powerful than balancing, and that neither foreign aid nor political penetration is by itself a powerful cause of alignment (Walt, 1987: 5). He proposes balance of threat theory as a better alternative to balance of power theory. By examining historical records in the Middle East, he concludes that external threats are the most frequent cause of international alliances, and that states balance against threats, rather than solely against power. He also points out that offensive capabilities and intentions increase the likelihood of others joining forces in opposition (Walt, 1987: 148). He argues that the importance of ideological distinctions declines as the level of threat increases (Walt, 1987: 263). According to him, ideological solidarity is less important than external threats as a cause of alliances, and ideology is a more important factor in explaining superpower commitments (Walt, 1987: 266-67). He explains the reason why states prefer balancing to bandwagoning as follows:

"Balancing against a powerful state will be viewed as the more prudent response if one's assumptions about intentions are incorrect. Joining a defensive alliance to oppose a potential threat will protect you if the state in question is in fact aggressive. Such an alliance will be superfluous...if the state in question turns out to be benign. By contrast, bandwagoning may fail catastrophically if one chooses to ally with a



powerful state and subsequently discovers that its intentions are in fact hostile. Balancing will thus be viewed as the safer response when intentions cannot be reliably determined" (Walt, 1987: 179-80).

As Glenn H. Snyder points out, Walt's study is principally about alliance formation rather than the politics of alliances after they are formed (Snyder, 1991: 125). In this sense, although Walt offers convincing answers to the questions why states ally, and how states choose their friends, he does not consider means other than alliances that states might take to deal with security issues. Snyder also points out that the analysis of structural differences would have helped to enrich Walt's theory, while Walt's analysis is basically focusing on a bipolar system. While Walt argues that states are more likely to balance against threats than bandwagon, Snyder argues that bandwagoning is more likely in a multipolar system than in bipolar system (Snyder, 1991: 130). Walt's study contributes to theories that explain alliance formation by considering not only capabilities or material resources, but also intentions of states or perceived threats.

Jack S. Levy analyzes alliances after they are formed – whether alliances are stabilizing and contribute to peace, or alliances are destabilizing and conducive to war. Through an extensive empirical examination of the relation between alliance formation and wars, Levy concludes that alliance formation is associated with relatively low levels of war (Levy, 1981: 593). He argues that contrary to the popular hypothesis that the greater the number of alliances, the greater the amount of war, the empirical evidence suggests that periods of high alliance formation are characterized by relatively infrequent wars (Levy, 1981: 592). He distinguishes sufficient conditions for war (alliances are followed by wars) from necessary conditions for war (wars are preceded by alliances) and sees only sufficient

conditions in the relation between alliance formation and war. When alliances are formed, they are excellent predictors of wars. He concludes:

“With so few wars...being preceded by alliances, we can conclude that alliance formation has not been a factor involved in the processes leading to most wars, and that other variables have generally been more important as causes of war” (Levy, 1981: 600).

With respect to the alliances during the period prior to the nineteenth century, Levy points out that “nearly all alliances are motivated by the fear that there exists some probability of war.” On this point, he agrees with Walt’s argument that threat perception is an incentive for alliance formation. Levy also analyzes the nature of alliances with respect to their relation to wars. In the pre-nineteenth century, alliances were usually offensive, whereas they are usually defensive in the nineteenth and twentieth century. However, the consequences of wars were different between those in the nineteenth century, which were relatively non-confrontational, and those in the twentieth century, which were often violent. Levy addresses the difference between the alliances in the nineteenth century and those in twentieth century, arguing that the former are “consciously motivated by the concern to restrain one’s allies as well as to deter one’s enemies” while the latter are not (Levy, 1981: 606). Levy argues that “it is the absence of polarized alliance systems in the nineteenth century and their presence during part of the twentieth century” that accounts for the difference in the alliance-war relation noted above (Levy, 1981: 607). The analysis of the nature of alliances and its relation with war probability is the greatest contribution of his argument in alliance theory.

Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder analyze alliance behavior in a multipolar

setting. By examining the first and second world wars, they argue that perceived defensive advantage leads to buck-passing, and perceived offensive advantage leads to chain-ganging. They argue that “the prevailing perception of the relative strength of offence and defense” makes differences in “the strategic behavior of the powers” (Christensen & Snyder, 1990: 147) and that “varying perception of the offense-defense balance constitute a sufficient explanation for the differing alliance patterns: chain-ganging before World War I and buck-passing before World War II” (Christensen & Snyder, 1990: 148).

These alliance theories explore in depth the dynamics of alliance formation and alliance behavior. However, these theories do not explain how an alliance that once began to decline can become strong again. In other words, they do not provide an explanation for the V-shape presented in the previous chapter. In this sense, examining the puzzle presented in the previous chapter contributes to alliance theory.

### Conventional Explanations for the Strengthening of the US-Japan Alliance

There are several approaches to explain the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance. In this section, I introduce different conventional explanations for why the alliance has been strengthened through more active security cooperation between the two states. Then I discuss why each of the conventional theories does not provide a fully sufficient explanation.

## *Realism*

Realists argue that the US-Japan alliance has been strengthened in response to growing external threats in the region. These threats include the North Korean nuclear crisis and *Rodong* missile launch in 1994, Chinese nuclear tests in 1995, the Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1996, the North Korean *Taepodong* missile launch in 1998, North Korea's suspicious ship that invaded Japanese territorial waters in 1999 and so forth. In addition, there is continuous tension on the Korean Peninsula, and conflicts over the Senkaku/Daoyutai Islands.

Michael Green argues that the alliance has been strengthened because of a growing realism in Japan. In the 1990s, Japan began to take a more realistic security policy faced with external threats in the region. In the case of the 1994 North Korea nuclear crisis, Japan had no capability to deal with it. Although the crisis did not become a real conflict, Japan was left with a question of how to deal with similar events in the future. Green argues that this event lead Japan to recognize external threats in the region and to take a more realistic approach to security issues, which appeared in the 1995 NDPO, the 1996 US-Japan Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation, and the new defense cooperation guidelines in 1997. He argues "[t]he Japanese political elite is gradually embracing the trappings of a "normal" national security apparatus – one that is more centralized and capable of independent action" and that "it is this trend that allowed the Defense Guidelines review in the first place" (Green, 2000: 248). Green sees uncertainties of China's future role and the North Korea threat as the major threats in the region that could reduce regional stability. He argues that these threats are the reason why the US-Japan alliance remained and has even been strengthened after Soviet threats disappeared at the end of the Cold War (Green, 2000: 251).

Realists focus on balance of power. In Northeast Asia, balance of power vis-à-vis China is the key for the realist argument. In the early 1990s, Japan enjoyed a good relationship with China, as it served as a bridge between China and the West in the wake of the 1989 *Tiananmen* incident. By the middle of the 1990s, however, a pronounced Sino-Japanese rivalry began to emerge. In 1995 Chinese nuclear tests outraged both the hawkish Right and the antinuclear Left in Japan, leading to an unprecedented suspension of about \$75 million in grant aid to China. China rattled the Japanese public again in March 1996 by bracketing Taiwan with ballistic missiles, some of which landed near Japanese shipping lanes south of Okinawa. China's increasingly strong attacks on Japanese defense cooperation with the US and on Japan's attitudes toward history further irritated Japan. Green argues that Japan's position in East Asia now reflect a self-conscious competition with China for strategic influence in the region in addition to traditional conjunction of mercantile interests and US strategy. He argues that as Japan's economic leadership has ebbed and China's power aspirations have grown, a "new realism" has emerged in Japan (Green, 2003: 6).

Anxiety about North Korea has also grown since the early 1990s. In 1992, the Japanese media found out that Japanese citizens had been abducted by North Korea to teach spies in the North. North Korea's 1993 *Nodong* missile tests were followed by confrontation over its suspected nuclear weapons program. In August 1998, North Korea test-fired a longer-range *Taepodong* missile right over northern Japan and it further exacerbated Japan's anxiety about the North Korean security threat.

The realist argument is partly plausible because the trend of strengthening the

alliance indeed correlates with the security threats in the region. However, this argument has at least three weaknesses in providing a convincing explanation. First of all, it is difficult to connect increasing security cooperation with the US with tangible threat in the region.

Japan's cooperation with the US has been particularly prominent since the 9.11 attack. Japan quickly decided to support the US war against terrorism, and provided unprecedented support in Afghanistan. In the Iraq war, Japan sent its military forces for the first time since WWII to areas where there was still combat taking place. These security cooperation measures took place not in response to a direct security threat to Japan. Although the stability of the Middle East is critical for Japan's national interest, terrorist attacks and Iraq's irresponsibility toward international society were not direct threats to Japan.

If there is a security threat from China, it must be a perceived threat, rather than a material threat. While North Korea does pose a direct actual threat to Japan by launching a missile over Japanese territory or by abducting Japanese citizens, China has not threatened Japan by any direct attack. There is a notion of China as a long-term threat, based on its rising economic and military power and uncertainties over its future role. This notion of the rise of China as a long-term threat is not convincing as a reason for the strengthening of the alliance. It is likely that China will continue to increase its power, and that Chinese power will have significant influence in the security structure in the region. However, the rise of China does not necessarily threaten the region, as there is still time to accommodate the growing power of China.

Secondly, there is a perception gap between political elites and the general public. While politicians' view of China as a potential threat has been increasing, perceptions of

China among the general public has been stable. In the Sino-Japanese crisis in April 2005, Japanese leadership felt threatened by anti-Japanese demonstrations in China, but about 60% of Japanese people blamed the government for worsening relations and not being able to handle the issue in a favorable way, and public support for the Koizumi cabinet decreased slightly.<sup>8</sup>

Lastly, a realist argument does not explain South Korea's alliance with the US. While South Korea has an alliance with the US and shares the same security threats in the region with Japan, it acts quite differently in the relationship with the US. The security relationship between South Korea and the US has not been strengthened, but has weakened instead. Faced with conflicts between the two states that stem from the US military presence in South Korea – notably disputes related to the Status of Forces Agreement, the issue of relocating the US military base in *Yongsan*, the issue of sharing the cost of the US military presence, South Korea has reduced its engagements in the US-Korea alliance. This marks a sharp contrast with the trend of Japan, which has built up stronger ties with the US even after the rape of a young Okinawan girl by US servicemen in 1995, which caused a huge national protest against the US. The realist argument, which looks mainly at external material factors does not explain South Korea's path in its security relationship with the US.

### *Neoliberal Institutionalism*

Those in the neoliberal school of thought stress the moderating and stabilizing influences of the increasing economic interdependence among nations. They believe that

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<sup>8</sup> Japan News Network Opinion Poll ([http://www.tbs.co.jp/newsi\\_sp/shijiritsu/](http://www.tbs.co.jp/newsi_sp/shijiritsu/)).

peaceful evolution has replaced military conflict as the principal means of adjusting relations among nation-states in the contemporary world, and that economic and welfare goals have triumphed over the traditional power and security objectives of states (Gilpin, 1981: 7).

Neoliberal institutionalists argue that the establishment and expansion over time of institutions like the US-Japan alliance have a stabilizing impact on global and regional systems. Institutions establish rules and norms, open up communication channels, create elite linkage, standardize roles and expectations, routinize procedures for conflict resolution, and lay the basis for reciprocity and mutual trust. Once such institutions are in place, they are likely to persist over time, because the marginal benefits of unilateral abrogation are substantially lower than the marginal costs of continued membership in the institution (Okimoto, 1998: 24). Keohane also explains how institutions are maintained based on the same theory. He argues that "international regimes are easier to maintain than to create" and that they "may be maintained, and may continue to foster cooperation, even under conditions that would not be sufficiently benign to bring about their creation" because "the conditions for maintaining existing international regimes are less demanding than those required for creating them" (Keohane, 1984: 50).

The US-Japan alliance is embedded in a broader structure of bilateral linkages, including ties of economic interdependence as well as diplomatic, cultural, and social transactions. The bilateral structure is extensive, the largest and most comprehensive ever established between two nations located on opposite sides of the Pacific. Bilateral trade in goods and services every year exceeds \$200 billion, long-term capital movements amount to over \$40 billion per year, and Japanese foreign direct investments in the US exceed \$200



billion as a cumulative total. More than 5 million Japanese visit the US every year, representing nearly one-third of all Japanese travelling overseas and more than two percent of the national population (Okimoto, 1998: 24). Okimoto argues that the US-Japan alliance “is securely embedded in a structure of broad-based interdependence that appears strong enough to withstand the political tensions and economic conflicts that often flare up in the US-Japan relationship” (Okimoto, 1998: 24). Neoliberalists see the security alliance between the US and Japan as a crucial foundation of the broader bilateral relations between the two states. In order to maintain economic prosperity and advantages that arise from economic interdependence, it is important for both states to maintain the stability of the region as it provides the foundation for growing economic interdependence by trade and investment. Okimoto argues that without the US-Japan alliance, “the bilateral structure of interdependence would never have expanded to the scale that it has” (Okimoto, 1998: 25).

Neoliberal institutionalists argue that Japan and the US strengthened their security cooperation to maintain security stability in the region. A stable security environment contributes to the economic prosperity of both states, and the more economic interdependence deepens, the less military confrontation is likely to occur. However, this argument does not fully explain the strengthening of the alliance since the middle of the 1990s because it is hard to say that the strengthened alliance and more active cooperation between Japan and the US contributed to the security stability in the region. Rather, it has caused serious concerns among neighboring countries, especially China. China is very concerned that Japan is expanding its military role and activities abroad through strengthening security cooperation with the US. In response to the enactment of three laws

relating to the new defense cooperation guidelines in 1999, Chinese newspapers criticized Japanese government severely. People's Daily labeled the new guidelines as war legislation.<sup>9</sup> New China News Agency (Xinhuashe) wrote that there are concerns among neighboring countries that Japan would become a militaristic country, which in turn would disturb peace and security in the Asia Pacific. They argue that the laws enable Japan to spontaneously participate in US-led wars and to conduct military intervention in any conflict in the region just by naming it "regional contingency."<sup>10</sup> As *Takungpao* (pro-PRC newspaper in Hong Kong) put it, China sees the growing security cooperation between Japan and the US as "military threat in the Asia Pacific region." It argues that more active security cooperation between the two states "would increase military tensions and it prevents peace, cooperation and development of the region."<sup>11</sup>

In December 2004, Japan's National Defense Program Outline (NDPO) described China as a source of "concern" for Japan. In February 2005, Japan deliberately made its position on Taiwan less ambiguous by declaring, in a joint statement with the US, that Taiwan is a mutual security concern. This not only meddled in China's internal affairs in China's view, but also marked Japan's symbolic step further from its constitutional restrictions on military action.<sup>12</sup> In response to this declaration, in March 2005, China introduced a bill that effectively pre-authorizes military action if Taiwan takes concrete steps toward formal independence. The legislation specifies that any changes in Taiwan's Constitution seeking to legalize the island's de facto independent status could be a trigger for

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<sup>9</sup> *People's Daily*, May 24, 1999. Japanese translation in Gaiko Forum Special Edition 1999, p.150.

<sup>10</sup> *New China News Agency*, May 24, 1999. Japanese translation in Gaiko Forum Special Edition 1999, p.150.

<sup>11</sup> *Takungpao*, May 25, 1999. Japanese translation in Gaiko Forum Special Edition 1999, p.150.

<sup>12</sup> "China and Japan so hard to be friends" *The Economist*, March 23, 2005.

military action.<sup>13</sup> This is a good example of the destabilizing effect of further bilateral security cooperation between Japan and the US.

According to neoliberal institutionalism, the US-Japan alliance has been maintained because of the relatively low cost of maintaining it, new functions created, and forces by those who have a vested interest in maintaining the institution. However, this argument does not explain the unique path the US-Japan alliance has taken. The alliance has not just been maintained over time, but strengthened despite a trend of deterioration in the preceding period. Path dependency theory does not provide a sufficient explanation for the V-shape.

### *Cultural Norms*

Peter Katzenstein analyzes the effects that culture and identity have on national security. To understand the security policy of one state, and to predict what might happen in the future, he argues that IR theory needs to focus on the formative role played by cultural norms – the configuration of ideas, experiences, values, goals, and national identity that give concrete shape to a country's security policy (Katzenstein, 1996b). As Okimoto says, “[c]ultural norms are not invisible particles floating formlessly somewhere out in space; nor are they a set of attitudes and beliefs that individuals have internalized... Rather, cultural norms are embedded in concrete institutions, like the constitution, laws, regulations, administrative guidance, policy precedents, ideology, and widely shared expectations” (Okimoto, 1998; 28). Katzenstein criticizes other major theories in international relations, namely neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism. Both neorealism and neoliberal

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<sup>13</sup> “Beijing leaders speak of force to keep Taiwan ‘Chinese’” *The New York Times*, March 8, 2005.

institutionalism agree on the central importance of international anarchy and assumption of rational actors for the analysis of international politics. Katzenstein argues that both neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism lack the analysis of domestic politics, without which one cannot fully understand the behavior of states. He argues "[s]ince causes operate at different levels and interact with one another, explanations operating at either level alone are bound to be misleading" (Katzenstein, 1996a: 13). Katzenstein relaxes assumptions of both realism and neoliberal institutionalism. First, in contrast to neorealism, he conceives of the environment of states not just in terms of the physical capabilities of states. Second, contrasting with neoliberalism, he does not focus his attention solely on the effects that institutional constraints have on interests. He argues that institutions can constitute the identities of actors and shape their interests (Katzenstein, 1996a: 16-17). Katzenstein focuses his attention on the continuity in Japanese security policy such as alignment with the capitalist bloc, the security treaty with the US, military weaponry designed only for the defense of Japan, aversion to conflict, pursuit of harmonious relations with all nations, no dispatch of troops to engage in combat missions overseas, the primacy of economic interests, civilian control over the military and the concept of "comprehensive security." Katzenstein argues that only the theory of cultural norms, which treats domestic factors as key independent variables, offers a satisfactory explanation for these continuities in Japanese security policy. Katzenstein emphasizes the importance of the Japanese sense of identity as a non-threatening, peace-loving state and argues that it became embedded and institutionalized over time. The institutionalization of norms and emergence of a strong sense of national identity took root gradually over several decades through a sequence of events.

How do cultural norms explain the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance? If Japan chose to deal with new regional security threats independently from the US, it would lead to remilitarization of the country. This would be contradictory to Japanese sense of identity as a non-threatening, peace-loving state. Instead, Japan chooses to strengthen the alliance with the US to deal with regional security threats so that it will not lose its cultural norms built and embedded during the past half century.

However, this explanation of the strengthening of the alliance by cultural norms is inadequate. In the process of strengthening the alliance with the US, Japan has taken a route that does not match the Japanese sense of national identity discussed above. For example, as Katzenstein argues, no dispatch of troops to engage in combat missions overseas had been one of the basic principles of national security policy. However, in the process of reinforcement of the US-Japan alliance since the middle of the 1990s, this principle has changed, or may have been discarded all together. Also, Katzenstein argues that its peace constitution is embedded in Japanese politics. However, debate over constitutional revision – especially Article 9, the very core of its peace constitution – have been lively in accordance with the strengthening of the alliance. Japan has indeed strengthened its military capability and has provoked some strong criticisms from neighboring countries that Japan is becoming a threat to the region.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, I first examined the different theories of alliance and presented how examining the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance contributes to alliance theory. Then, I examined different IR theories to explain the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance since the middle of the 1990s. Each theory does provide some insight into international politics, but none of them provides a sufficient explanation for the unique path that the US-Japan alliance has taken. In the next chapter, I provide an alternative explanation for the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance.

### **Chapter 3 Instrumental Realism**

In the previous chapter, I examined different theories of alliance and conventional IR theories, and concluded that none of them sufficiently explains the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance that has been apparent since the middle of the 1990s. In this chapter, I propose an alternative explanation for the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance by examining both international and domestic factors. I argue that international factors alone, namely security threats in East Asia, do not provide a sufficient explanation for this trend. In so doing, I introduce and examine domestic actors with individual goals different from the strengthening of the alliance itself. Then, I argue that each of these actors amplified security threats to mobilize public opinion so that they can pursue their own goals. In this process, they used the strengthening of the alliance as a convenient shield. They attribute the strengthening of the alliance to increasing security threats in the region, and pretend that their true objectives are just by-products of the strengthening of the alliance.

I first review the regional security threats of China and North Korea that are said to be widely perceived in Japan. Then I analyze how these threats are perceived by politicians and the Japanese public. I argue that there is a perception gap between the two groups. That is to say, while conservative politicians emphasize the security threats in the region, perceptions by the Japanese people do not necessarily overlap with it. In the last section, I introduce different groups of domestic actors that pushed the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance. I argue against the pure realist argument that external security threats are the reason for the strengthening of the alliance. The alliance has been strengthened because there are

domestic actors that use security threats as an excuse to achieve their individual goals.

## Security Threats in East Asia

After the end of the Cold War, Japan did not consider itself as being faced with security threats in the region. In 1991 Yoichi Funabashi writes: "For the first time in its modern history, Japan in the 1990s will be substantially free of security threats from the north, whether explicit or implicit, ideological or military" (Funabashi, 1991: 63). However, since the middle of the 1990s, the perceptions of security threats have increased. Funabashi writes in 2000 that Japan experienced "security shocks" that had a psychological impact on the Japanese, indicating the Chinese missile tests over the Taiwan Strait in 1995 and 1996, the North Korean test launch of the *Taepodong*, and a chain of events that rocked the foundations of the global nonproliferation regime (nuclear testing by India and then Pakistan in 1998, the US Senate's decision not to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1999) (Funabashi, 2000: 135-36).

Descriptions of the security situation in East Asia have been dominated by realist arguments. Realists argue that security in the region is based on balance of power. They argue that even after the end of the Cold War, this region still holds Cold War dynamics. Since there exist different security threats in the region (missile threat from North Korea, dispute between China and Taiwan, Chinese nuclear tests, conflict over islands and ocean resources among several countries), each state tries to balance against the others. Realists argue, as seen



in the previous chapter, that Japan is strengthening the alliance with the US and its military capability in order to balance against these direct and actual threats in the region.

### *North Korea*

During the Cold War, Japan did not publicly announce the existence of the North Korean threat. Although US bases in Japan had an obvious support role in the defense of South Korea, Japan denied any role or interests in the security of the Korean Peninsula (Green, 2000: 256). Since the middle of the 1990s, however, Japan's recognition of the North Korean threat and Japanese security interests on the peninsula have grown dramatically. North Korea's 1993 test launch of the *Rodong* missile made a strong impression in Japan. In June 1994, tension increased more on the peninsula after the United Nations discussed sanctions against North Korea over suspected nuclear weapons development, by which Japan's entanglement in a peninsula conflict was reinforced. The nuclear crisis led to unprecedented trilateral diplomatic coordination among the US, Japan and South Korea. In 1995 Japan signaled its readiness to play a role in multilateral security on the peninsula by joining the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), which was created to provide light-water reactors to the North under the October 1994 US-North Korea Agreed Framework. At the same time, Japan-North Korea relations soured further with revelations about North Korean abductions of Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 1980s. The *Taepodong* missile fired by North Korea over Japan in August 1998, the March 1999 intrusion into Japanese territorial waters by two suspected North Korean spy ships apparently on a secret mission, and continuing US and Japanese suspicions about North Korea's development of

nuclear weapons, generated a keener sense of insecurity in Japan than had been felt for decades. These threats locked North Korea into Japanese security thinking as a major threat to peace and stability.

After the *Taepodong* missile launch, Japan denied funds to KEDO along with a number of other protest measures toward the North. Japan later retracted its suspension of funds, judging that it could not afford to jeopardize the talks, the burdens of which were more or less broadly shared by the US, South Korea, and Japan. While Japan restored its support relatively quickly, its position vis-à-vis North Korea was made visibly tough.

Funabashi argues that the *Taepodong* missile launch provided direct impetus for both the US National Missile Defense (NMD) and Japan's theater missile defense (TMD) initiatives. It made some Japanese believe that the US and Japan now share, for the first time in many years since the end of the Cold War, a common, concrete threat (Funabashi, 2000: 139).

### *China*

Chinese missile tests over the Taiwan Strait in 1996 and its nuclear tests created a major shock in Japan. When China conducted a series of nuclear tests before joining the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Japanese government took an unprecedented step of suspending grant aid to China. When the Taiwanese president declared a "state-to-state" relationship with China, it conducted military exercises in the Taiwan Strait in the lead-up to the presidential election in Taiwan. China executed unarmed launches of its missiles during military exercises off of the coast of Taiwan. This incident deepened suspicion of China

among Japanese political elites, and Japanese government officials expressed concern about Chinese missile tests and military exercises. The Taiwan Strait Crisis made Japan doubt China's commitment to a no-first-use policy, and heightened Japan's perception of China's missile threat.

Funabashi argues that this incident affected the Japanese security psyche, and increased Japan's motivation to formulate new Japan-US defense guidelines (Funabashi, 2000: 136). Some Japanese, especially those who are close to Japan's defense establishment, viewed China as a threat that replaced the Soviet Union after the end of the Cold War. They claim that China should be contained.

Hideo Sato argues that until the middle of the 1990s, not many Japanese had thought of China as a potential security threat, despite its geographical proximity to Japan. But he argues that the Chinese nuclear tests and military exercises near Taiwan increased the image of China as a potential security threat in Japan and that the relations between Japan and China became particularly stiff in the middle of the 1990s (Sato, 1998).

When the US and Japan issued the Joint Declaration of Security and announced the review of the defense guidelines, the Chinese in turn criticized Japanese militarism and efforts to contain China. Sino-Japanese relations took a further dive as the two states confronted each other on the questions of sovereignty over the disputed Senkaku/Daoyutai Islands in 1997. In November 1998, there was a summit between President Jiang Zemin and Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi. At the summit, the Chinese insisted on a formal Japanese expression of apology and remorse, the same formula Obuchi had given to visiting South Korean President Kim Dae Jung the month before. Unlike Kim, the Chinese leader was not

willing to accept the apology as the final word, insisting on apologies in all future bilateral sessions as well. As a result, the Chinese received only an expression of remorse. Obuchi received broad support within the Japanese political world and mainstream press. Even the Japan-China Economic Council, guardian of Japan's more than three million dollar annual investment in China, stood by the prime minister's hard line. In the space of a few years, Japan's vision of China had shifted from a faith in economic interdependence to what Green calls a "reluctant realism" (Green, 2000: 253).

In the next section, I examine if these threats are sufficient to explain the change by analyzing how these threats are perceived by politicians and the general public.

### **Is the Security Threat Perception Widely Perceived?**

A good way to test the true impact of external threats is to measure the perception of threat by elites and by the general public. LDP politicians' view on security issues can be seen in polls conducted of candidates in the 2003 Lower House election by the Mainichi Shimbun and by the Asahi Shimbun. The Mainichi poll asked their opinions on how North Korea should be handled, views on the US-led war in Iraq and the idea of "collective self-defense" to help allies under enemy attack. The major trend among the ruling LDP candidates was conservative on these security issues. They said the Iraq war was an "unavoidable" move, and Japan should put pressure on North Korea rather than promote a

dialogue. They were also positive about Japan's use of force under collective self-defense to help allies under attack. When asked specifically whether Japan should develop nuclear weapons, 30% of the LDP pollees and 11% of the DPJ candidates were in favor of it "depending on the international situation."<sup>14</sup> According to the opinion poll by the Asahi Shimbun, about 90% of LDP candidates and 60% of DPJ candidates favored revising the Constitution. 80% of LDP respondents called for Article 9 and other articles related to national security to be revised, and nearly half of DPJ respondents also pointed to Article 9 to be included in constitutional revision.<sup>15</sup>

The Mainichi Shimbun further analyzes the outcome of the poll. The answers by candidates in their 30s overlap with the answers by those in their 70s and above.<sup>16</sup> Old politicians tend to be more conservative. Very young politicians share opinions with very conservative old politicians, while those in their 40s to 60s are less conservative. The rate of candidates who answered positively about exercise of collective self-defense was 49% in those in their 70s and above, and 31% in those in their 30s, while it was below 25% in other generations. Asked about the timing when Japan should resume normalization talks with North Korea, most of the candidates in their 30s (63%) and 70s and above (84%) answered it should be after settlement of both the abduction issue and nuclear and missile issues, while 33% of candidates of the total responded that talks should be resumed unconditionally.<sup>17</sup> The Mainichi Shimbun concludes that neo-conservatism is spreading among young candidates.

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<sup>14</sup> "Security issues separate candidates in upcoming election" *The Mainichi Shimbun* November 1, 2003.

<sup>15</sup> "Support for new constitution" *The Asahi Shimbun* November 4, 2003.

<sup>16</sup> "Shuinsen kouhoshu anketo (Lower House election candidates questionnaire)" *The Mainichi Shimbun* November 1, 2003.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

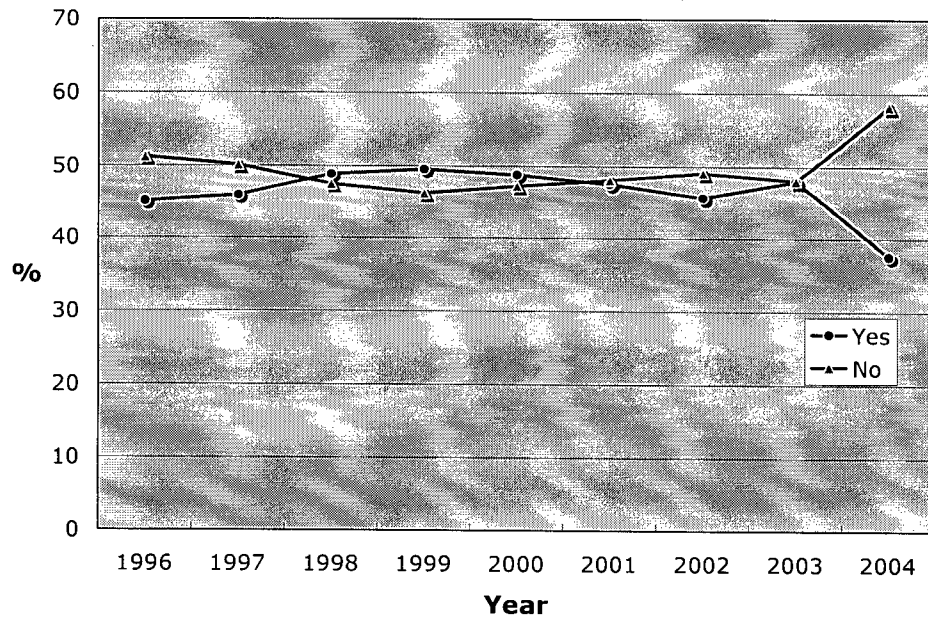
They tend to take a tough stance on diplomacy and security issues.<sup>18</sup>

On the other hand, it is hard to tell that perception of the China threat has increased among the general public. For about a decade since 1996, perceptions of China among the Japanese people have been divided almost evenly, and this trend has been stable. In a public opinion survey conducted by the Cabinet Public Office, people were asked 1) if you have an affinity for China, and 2) if you think the current Sino-Japanese relationship is generally good. The total number of people who answered either "I have an affinity for China" or "I tend to have an affinity for China" has been stable between 45% and 50%. The total number of people who answered either "I tend not to have an affinity for China" or "I do not have an affinity for China" has also been stable between the same percentages. The total number of people who answered the Sino-Japanese relationship is "good" and "relatively good" has been around 45% with a little up and down. The total number of people who answered the relationship is "not very good" and "not good" has also been around 45% with a little up and down. This suggests that the perception of China among the Japanese people has been stable, while the elites' view of China as a potential threat has been increasing.

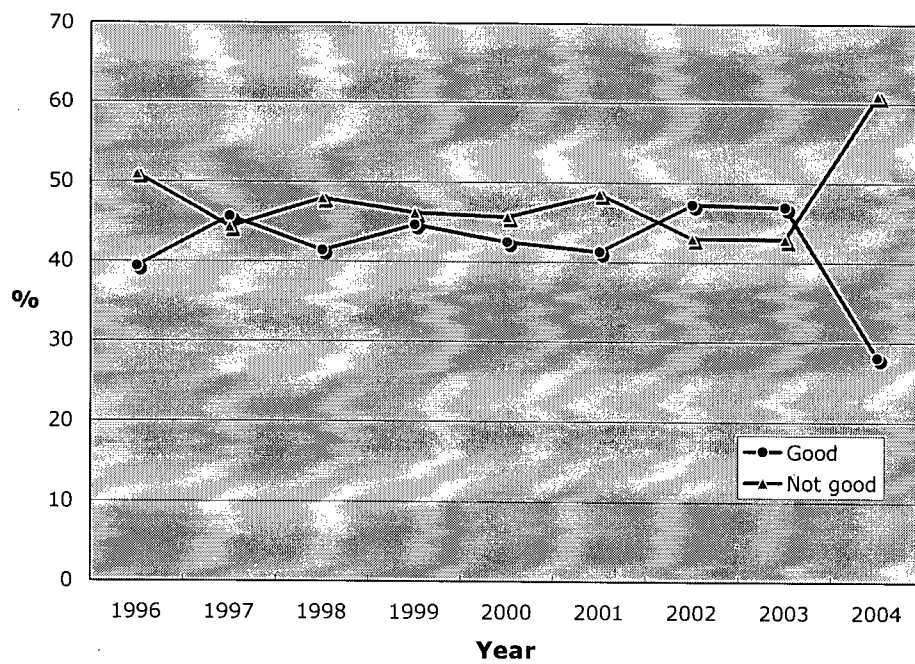
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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

**Figure 3.1 Affinity for China**



**Figure 3.2 Sino-Japanese Relationship**



Source: Cabinet Public Information Office, Public Opinion Survey:  
<http://www8.cao.go.jp/survey/index-gai.html>

## Security Entrepreneurs

The strengthening of the alliance was motivated not simply by growing security threats in the region. Rather, the alliance has been strengthened more importantly by domestic actors who used regional threats as opportunities to achieve their goals, which are different from the strengthening of the alliance itself. They attributed the need for security cooperation with the US to growing security threats, and tried to pursue their real goal through the strengthening of the alliance. In particular, a coalition of three types of domestic actors has formed in the late 1990s. I called these actors "security entrepreneurs." These actors ended up pushing the same goal but for different domestic goals.

In this section, I will introduce these domestic actors and examine what political goals they have and how they try to pursue their goals in the process of strengthening the alliance.

### *Traditional Nationalists*

Traditional nationalists are those who argue in favor of a stronger Japan that has independent military defense capabilities. Their goal is to make Japan what Ichiro Ozawa calls a "normal nation." In order to do so, they seek constitutional revision, especially the revision of the war-renouncing Article 9, troop dispatch overseas, exercise of collective self-defense, military strengthening, and, eventually, possession of nuclear missile capabilities. They support strengthening the US-Japan alliance because the very act of discussing the strengthening of the alliance inevitably brings up other issues related to



Japan's diplomatic and defense policies discussed above. It would be more difficult to gain support for such policies if they were openly pursued for their own sake. Rather, they argue that Japan is building up its defense and military capabilities in response to growing security threats, or for the sake of international cooperation such as to fight against terrorism with other countries, or to provide humanitarian support in the Iraq war. In this way, constitutional change, especially of Article 9, troop dispatch, and collective self-defense appear to Japanese people as unintended consequences of another necessary good.

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi is one of the advocates of revising the Constitution. He has sought the revision of the war-renouncing article of the Constitution as a governmental task during his entire tenure in office. He argues that the war-renouncing Article 9 should be revised given that Japan possesses a large "military" force in the SDF to make it clear that the SDF is legitimate, and to allow the SDF to engage in collective self-defense arrangements.<sup>19</sup> He has also urged the abandonment of the peaceful-sounding name of the SDF, which allows Japanese to pretend that they have no army, though they have 240,000 forces engaged in national defense. He would prefer for them to be known simply as armed forces, and for years, he has been pushing aggressively to expand their role. This began with support for the SDF activities in the Indian Ocean for US operations in Afghanistan, the first time Japan's naval forces have been deployed so far away.<sup>20</sup> However, whether Koizumi can revise the Constitution or not has yet to be seen, particularly given the LDP's lack of a two thirds majority (which is necessary for revision of the Constitution) and the unwilling position of its coalition partner the New Komeito. The further requirement of

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<sup>19</sup> "Koizumi balks at constitution revision, Says election soon" *The Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, September 22, 2003.

popular approval through a referendum still appears as a tough hurdle to jump.

Ichiro Ozawa, who is a key figure of opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), and was a leader of Liberal Party before, asserts the China threat and defends Japan's future nuclear option. Ozawa said "Northeast Asia, in which both China and North Korea are located, is the most unstable region in the world. China is applying itself to the expansion of military power in the hope of becoming a superpower...following the United States."<sup>21</sup> Based on this notion, he argues that it would be a simple matter for Japan to produce nuclear warheads and surpass China's military power. "If (China) gets too inflated, Japanese people will get hysterical. It would be easy for us to produce nuclear warheads – we have plutonium at nuclear power plants in Japan, enough to make several thousand such warheads."<sup>22</sup>

Former Parliamentary Vice Minister of Defense Shingo Nishimura takes a more hawkish stance on national defense. He argues that Japan should adopt a more positive role for the security of East Asia through such steps as forming its own legitimate military forces and introducing its own aircraft carriers.<sup>23</sup> He says "[t]he 'exclusively defensive' defense policy that successive Japanese cabinets have stuck to (since the war) is just stupid." "It would be better to throw that policy into the trash can as a historical document..."<sup>24</sup> He resigned his position after suggesting in a magazine article that Japan consider adopting nuclear weapons. According to *The Japan Times*, the hawkish Liberal Party lawmaker also reiterated Nishimura's view on Japan's three antinuclear principles, which pledge that Japan will never develop, own or permit nuclear weapons within its territory, calling the principles

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<sup>20</sup> "Japan faces burden: Its own defense" *The New York Times*, July 22, 2003.

<sup>21</sup> "Ozawa warns about China, Says Japan could easily go nuclear" *The Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, April 6, 2002.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> "Nishimura urges military upgrade, carrier fleet" *The Japan Times*, December 22, 1999.

hypocritical.<sup>25</sup>

An ultimately hawkish notion on Japanese defense policy can be seen in Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara's remarks. He claims that Japan must bolster its military amid the growing tension over North Korea's nuclear weapons program. He calls for an end to the flow of private remittance funds to North Korea and urged the government to classify the abduction of Japanese people by North Korea as an act of terrorism. He argues that Japan should protect its own airspace and territorial waters, and for this purpose, that Japan should rearm.<sup>26</sup>

Former defense minister Shigeru Ishiba told a parliamentary committee that if North Korea started fueling its missiles, "then it is time to strike."<sup>27</sup>

Former SDF member Nisohachi Hyodo openly urges Japan to possess nuclear weapons. He argues that nuclear armament is an inexpensive solution, quoting the example of France, which he argues spends far less on defense than Japan, while remaining safe from attack by possessing a minimal nuclear deterrent force.<sup>28</sup>

The ruling LDP's hawks – not always a unified bloc – have aimed for a larger military role for the nation but could not overcome the opposition of the parties that object to constitutional revision. Even after the collapse of the traditional opposition such as the Japan Socialist Party, the LDP has needed to maintain coalitions with parties that are less eager to support an enhanced role for the Japanese military (Leheny, 2001). Also, Japan's Asian neighbors have generally been quick to criticize any LDP effort to expand the size or mission

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> "Japan should look to rearm, Ishihara says" *The Japan Times*, March 26, 2003.

<sup>27</sup> "Japan faces burden: Its own defense" *The New York Times*, July 22, 2003.

of the SDF.

However, as seen in statements noted above, becoming what is known as a “normal nation,” one armed and able to fight wars, has been openly discussed in Japan although it is not yet a major course of discussion about Japanese foreign policy. Some people see that public opinion has become more inclined to the discussion of a more assertive Japan, putting leftist defenders of the peace Constitution on the defensive side.<sup>29</sup> According to the opinion poll conducted by the Asahi Shimbun in May 2005, the number of people who answered that the Constitution should be revised marked 56%, and this percentage has been increasing since 1997, when the Asahi Shimbun started to ask the question. On the other hand, the number of those who answered a constitutional revision is not necessary has been decreasing over time (see Figure 3.3). In the same opinion poll, more than 70% of people answered that the SDF should be characterized in the Constitution by constitutional change, by answering either that the existence of the SDF should be stated in the Constitution, or that the SDF should become a normal army (see Figure 3.4).<sup>30</sup> The Asahi Shimbun analyzes that behind the increase of public attitude toward constitutional revision is the expansion of the range of SDF activities in the changing international situation.<sup>31</sup>

Although Japan’s richly financed military forces have some of the world’s most sophisticated hardware – weapons systems like the Aegis destroyer and F-15 fighter jets – their actual configuration, as well as training for their use, has been overwhelmingly defensive. However, some argue that this is changing abruptly. Japan is acquiring in-air

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> “Constitution ‘regulate the SDF’ 70 percent, oppose amendment of Article 9 51 percent” *The Asahi Shimbun*, May 3, 2005.

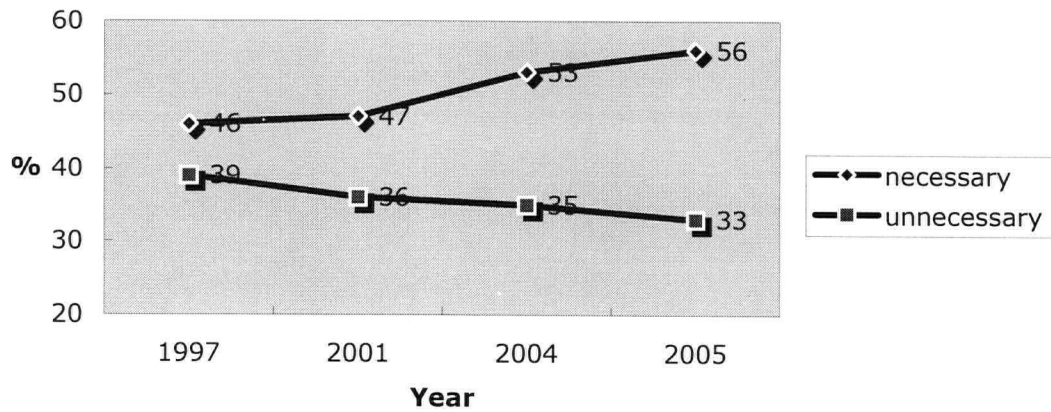
refueling capacity for its fighter force, as well as developing a sophisticated air support ship, that is said to be intended to allow operations near the Korean Peninsula. In addition, these changes have gained increasing political and popular support. In the spring of 2003, the emergency legislation on national security (*Yujihosei*), which greatly expands the government's ability to deploy the SDF, gained support even from the main opposition party DPJ.<sup>32</sup>

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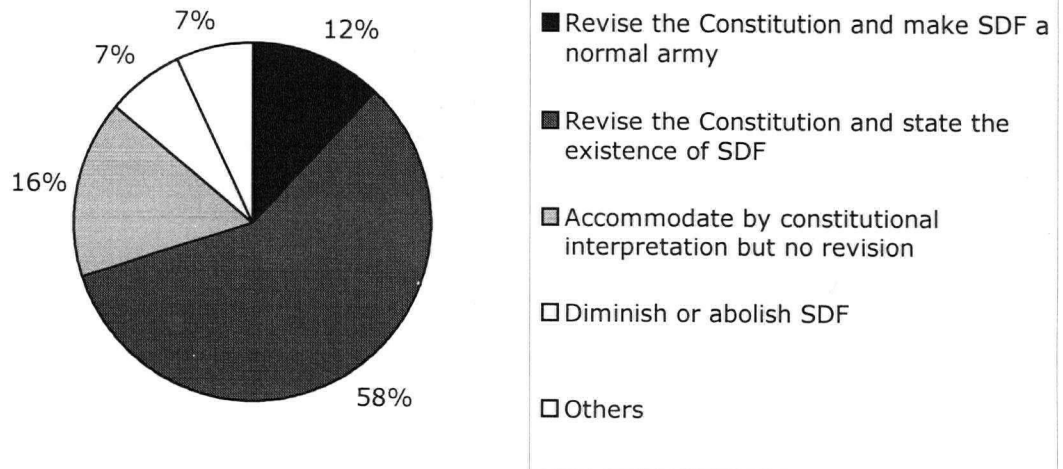
<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

**Figure 3.3**  
**Revision of the Constitution**



**Figure 3.4**  
**SDF in the Constitution**



Source: The Asahi Shimbun May 3, 2005

### *New Bureaucratic Actors – PMO*

Since the late 1990s, new bureaucratic actors seeking stronger leadership by the prime minister began to have strong influence in security policy making.

Shinoda argues that the basis for stronger leadership by prime ministers was established in the Yasuhiro Nakasone government, although at that time the cabinet secretariat exercised leadership only in economic issues. When the Gulf Crisis broke out in 1990, then prime minister Toshiki Kaifu assigned MOFA to deal with the issue. Although the issue needed coordination among MOFA, JDA and the Japan Coast Guard, there was severe confrontation between MOFA and JDA, and MOFA failed to take initiatives. With advice from Ryutaro Hashimoto, then minister of finance, the cabinet secretariat decided to take initiatives and coordinated the UN Peace Cooperation Law, which was once rejected but was enacted as the PKO Cooperation Law in 1992 (Shinoda, 2004: 159, 164). At this time, the PMO began to take initiatives not only in economic issues but also in important security issues.

The power of the cabinet and the prime minister was reinforced as a result of the Hashimoto cabinet's administrative reform program in 1999. Under the revised cabinet law, the policy initiative of the prime minister was improved and Japan's government decision making was changed from bottom-up to top-down. The authority and functions of the cabinet secretariat was also reinforced under the new law. With these changes the prime minister and the cabinet became able to initiate and proceed with the policy processes independently from the relevant ministries.

Strong leadership by the prime minister is well exercised in the cabinet of Junichiro

Koizumi, who has been in office since 2001. For example, when Koizumi reshuffled the cabinet in September 2004, he chose the new members in large part on the basis of their willingness to back him on the postal savings reform issue. It is very unusual for the prime minister of Japan to make his cabinet appointments based on unity around a specific policy.<sup>33</sup>

Koizumi also has a strong political will in security policies. While the direction of his domestic reforms has not been stable, he has made very important decisions in security policies, especially those relating to cooperation with the US with a strong political will. Koizumi does not have strong support within his own party. He makes up for the fragile foundation of his government through strong ties with the US president. He responded to the 9.11 terrorist attacks and the US-led war in Iraq with prompt actions. The Anti-terrorism Special Measure Law took less than two months to be enacted after policy planning. In the case of the Special Measures Law Assisting the Reconstruction of Iraq, it took only one week for approval by the government, and six weeks for the Diet deliberations (Shinoda, 2004: 170). It was unprecedented speed for important security policy making.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) made significant contributions to Japan's security policy. The PMO exercised political leadership in Japan's very important security policies such as the new guidelines for US-Japan defense cooperation in 1999, Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law in 2001, the emergency legislation on national security, and the Special Measures Law Assisting the Reconstruction of Iraq in 2003. The prime minister's personal staff members have been able to force through a process of national policy making, rather than the traditional compromises among disparate ministries. Promising bureaucrats

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<sup>33</sup> "Koizumi shakes up the cabinet, and Tokyo: No lame duck" *The Oriental Economist* 72(10), October 2004.



from the foreign and defense ministries are now part of the PMO and assist the prime minister.<sup>34</sup>

The key figure within the PMO on national security is deputy chief cabinet secretary Teijiro Furukawa. He pulled together the team that formulated Japan's very quick and effective response to the 9.11 terrorist attack. As a result of administrative reforms that began in 2001, the prime minister now has two "assistant chief cabinet secretaries," one for national security and the other for crisis planning. Other key figures in the PMO are assistant chief cabinet secretaries Keiji Omori from the Japan Defense Agency (JDA), and Shotaro Yachi from MOFA, who was also involved in policy making in response to the terrorist attack. Omori has played a key role in Japan's defense policy over the past decade. He is a strong advocate of JDA's bigger role in Japan's foreign policy, and has mentored some younger JDA staff members who are now occupying key positions. Yachi is well known as a firm and clear advocate of Japan's exercise of collective self-defense. Omori's two deputies, Hideshi Tokuchi and Satoshi Maeda, also played key roles in the Nye Initiative. Tokuchi was at the US National Defense University in the mid-1990s to work as a back-channel to Pentagon officials who wanted to upgrade the US-Japan security relationship, while Maeda worked in the Japanese embassy in Washington at the same time.<sup>35</sup>

When Bush announced the commencement of the Iraq war on March 17, 2003, Koizumi immediately called the Security Council and discussed Japan's position on the issue. Staff members from MOFA and the JDA were put together under the cabinet secretariat to prepare new legislation to dispatch the SDF for the reconstruction of Iraq. It was not easy to

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<sup>34</sup> "Japan gets serious about defense: A secure security team" *The Oriental Economist*, September 2003.

gain public support for the SDF dispatch. Even some people in the government disagreed or took a passive approach to the issue. To overcome the objections and convince the general public, threats from North Korea were linked to the Iraq war. Although the stability of the Middle East is critical for Japan, the Iraq war, that is taking place far away from Japan, does not pose a direct threat to Japan. It is difficult for the Japanese people to relate the issue to themselves. On the other hand, the Japanese people feel an actual threat from North Korea. Those in favor of SDF dispatch to Iraq argued that it was important to strengthen the US-Japan security cooperation in the Iraq war in order to gain cooperation from the US on North Korean issues. On July 26, 2003, new legislation allowing SDF dispatch passed the Diet.

These new institutional actors in the PMO are primarily devoted to strengthening top-down political leadership by the prime minister. The US-Japan alliance has emerged as a key battle ground to implement such goals, and regional security threats are linked to the promotion of security cooperation with the US.

## *MOFA*

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) puts the highest priority on maintaining a strong relationship with the US. The policy failure in the Gulf War remained a huge trauma for MOFA. After Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, the US government asked the Japanese government for financial support for the coalition forces, economic aid for Gulf nations, an increased expense burden for US forces in Japan, and contributions in personnel

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

to the coalition forces. Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu assigned the task to MOFA and the Japanese government responded positively to the financial assistance. However, despite its \$13 billion financial assistance to the Gulf War, Japanese assistance was criticized as “too little, too late.” Contribution in personnel was too difficult for the Japanese government to realize at the time.

Because of this trauma, MOFA has been trying harder to meet the US expectation in security cooperation, and pushed a sequence of legislation to strengthen the US-Japan alliance. To deal with the Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law, the emergency legislation on national security, and the Special Measures Law Assisting the Reconstruction of Iraq, the National Security Policy Division under the Foreign Policy Bureau played a central role and acted as a contact channel with the cabinet secretariat. In the case of the Special Measures Law on Iraq, the UN Policy Division of the Foreign Policy Bureau and the Legal Division of the Treaties Bureau also supported them (Shinoda, 2004: 102). In the pursuit of a stronger US-Japan alliance, MOFA also seeks to preserve its central role in policy making, especially relative to other domestic ministries.

### Enabling Conditions for the Rise of Security Entrepreneurs

The rise of domestic security entrepreneurs was predicated on several institutional changes. First is the demise of the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) after 1994, and the JSP-LDP coalition in 1994 to 1996. Until the early 1990s, security policy had been the most conflicting

issue between the LDP and the opposition JSP. Peace and defense of the Constitution was the basic philosophy of the JSP, and it opposed constitutional change to Article 9 or any form of troop dispatch overseas. The demise of the JSP abolished the tense ideological confrontation over foreign policy between the LDP and the JSP. The battle ground between the LDP and the current main opposition party DPJ lies mainly in economic issues and the DPJ shares the basic security policy with the LDP. The removal of divergence on security policies among main parties offered more room for security entrepreneurs.

The second is the reorganization of the party system after 1994. In 1994, the old system of Multiple Member Districts (MMD) was replaced by a dual system of Single Member Districts (SMD) and Proportional Representation (PR). Among different features that the new system brought into the Japanese politics, it promoted centralization of campaign funding and nominating procedures within parties, which strengthened the hand of the party vis-à-vis the political factions (Christensen, 1994: 604). Public distrust after a series of political scandals since 1992 and the LDP's collapse in 1993 also changed politicians' individual incentives and the strategic interaction of political parties. Young LDP members left the party as self-proclaimed reformers. Kohno argues that electorally vulnerable young members had no choice but to commit themselves more strongly to political reform than senior members who had a strong foundation and network of supporters (Kohno, 1997: 146). Similarly, Pempel argues that young members see their interests in urban, international, anti-regulatory forces, while the remnants of the LDP see their interests in traditional supporters in small businesses and the agriculture sector and are oriented toward pork-barrel politics (Pempel, 1998: 163).

Tiberghien points out that a new division has emerged within all parties as a result of political change in 1994. He argues that young, independent-minded and well-educated lawmakers are emerging as a force to be reckoned with. Young members in the LDP have created a cross-faction grouping that aims at shaping the LDP direction, and a significant group within the DPJ matches them (Tiberghien, 2003: 7). These system changes allowed cross-party coalitions of security entrepreneurs as seen in LDP-DPJ linkages on security issues.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, I first reviewed the regional security threats that realists argue are the reason for Japan strengthening the alliance with the US. Then I analyzed threat perception of political elites and the general public and argued that security threats do not provide a sufficient explanation for the strengthening of the alliance. Rather, I argued that the alliance has been strengthened because of domestic security entrepreneurs who amplified regional security threats to pursue their own domestic objectives. The perceived security threats provided a good excuse for traditional nationalists to break away from pacifist norms and an exclusively defensive security policy. The new bureaucratic actors who seek a stronger political leadership linked security threats to the promotion of cooperation with the US, and the US-Japan alliance has emerged as a key battle ground to implement their goals. MOFA also used the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance to preserve its central role in policy

making. The strengthening of the US-Japan alliance has become a focal point for cooperation among these security entrepreneurs who try to pursue their distinctive goals through this process.

The next two chapters are devoted to case studies, which test my argument presented in this chapter.

## **Chapter 4 Revision of the US-Japan Defense Cooperation Guidelines**

In April 1998, the Japanese cabinet passed new guidelines for US-Japan defense cooperation. It was the first time that the guidelines were revised since they were first enacted in 1978. This revision was more than a mere revision of legislation. It has broad implications for security cooperation between Japan and the US. The new guidelines changed the sphere in which Japan would cooperate with the US in its military activities, and put emphasis on cooperation with the US in regional security affairs. Accordingly, the role of the SDF was expanded. This marked an important departure from Japan's traditional focus on self-defense. The new guidelines changed the traditional understanding of the US-Japan Security Treaty, and some people even argue that this is a de facto revision of the Security Treaty.

In this chapter, I examine the revision of US-Japan guidelines as a crucial example of strengthening of the US-Japan alliance and security cooperation. I begin this chapter by delineating the background of the guidelines revision. Then I discuss how important this revision was for the future shape of US-Japan security cooperation, and how it changed Japan's behavior. Next, I examine factors that fostered this revision. I first examine the argument that rising regional security threats stimulated the guidelines revision, and show the insufficiency of this argument. Then, I examine the domestic component of the guidelines revision and conclude that traditional nationalists played a major role in facilitating the revision. I argue that they used the guidelines revision as an opportunity to accomplish their own political goal which is distinct from the revision of guidelines itself.

## A Rocky Path: From Trade Frictions to Security Guidelines – Background for the Guidelines Revision

The decision to review the 1978 guidelines for US-Japan defense cooperation in 1997 was not made suddenly, but was based on security discussions between the two states in the 1990s. When the Cold War ended, Japan was suddenly confronted with the question of whether the US-Japan security treaty was worth keeping. Then the US became involved in the Gulf War and seemed to lose interest in East Asia, while discussion on the shape of the US-Japan security relationship in the post-Cold War era made little progress.

In 1992, Bill Clinton was elected president, and he made it clear that as one aspect of the new post-Cold War policy toward Japan, the US would put top priority on economic issues, adopting a result-oriented policy toward trade disputes. While the USTR was taking a harsh stance toward Japan on economic issues, not even America's security advisors were sure about the level of priority the Clinton administration placed on Japan or whether it had any comprehensive policy toward East Asia.

During this time, the bilateral alliance faced a major crisis as concerns over North Korea's nuclear capability deepened. American and Japanese experts considered this to be a serious issue, but domestically, the Japanese viewed the trade conflict as the more urgent problem, and security questions were pushed aside.

It was around this time that the initial push took place to review the bilateral security



arrangements and to rebuild the US-Japan relationship. According to Igarashi, “what set the stage for the review of the guidelines were these efforts by forces on both sides (Japan and the US) to articulate a policy that could help stabilize Japan-US relations in the post-Cold War age.” Similarly, Watanabe argues that “the review (of the guidelines) resulted from the efforts of people who felt it was important to clearly redefine the Japan-US security relationship in the post-Cold War era” (Igarashi and Watanabe, 1997: 34).

The first concrete manifestation of this flow of revising security arrangements was the US-Japan Joint Declaration on Security issued by Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and President Clinton in April 1996. The declaration mandated the review of the 1978 guidelines for US-Japan security cooperation and the two states started to engage in the review process. In June 1996, they reorganized the Subcommittee for Defense Cooperation (SDC) which is operated under the US-Japan Security Consultative Committee (SCC, also known as “2 plus 2” as it consists of a foreign minister and a defense minister from each side). During the consultation in the SDC that lasted over a year, they issued a “progress report on the revision of the US-Japan defense cooperation guidelines” in September 1996, and an “interim report on the revision of the US-Japan defense cooperation guidelines” in June 1997. Concluding an extended review process, Japan and the United States issued new guidelines for bilateral defense cooperation on September 23, 1997, at SCC in New York.

The revised guidelines provide for close cooperation between Japan and the US in case of emergencies around Japan. On April 28, 1998, as agreed in this revision of the US-Japan guidelines, the cabinet approved draft legislation to make it possible for Japan to provide rear-area support to US forces engaged in conflicts in “areas surrounding Japan.” On

May 24, 1999, three bills relating to the revised US-Japan defense guidelines were enacted after approval in the Diet with support from LDP, Liberal Party, and New Komeito. The three bills are: 1) the Regional Contingency Law (*Shuhen Jitai Ho*), which allows rear area support for US military action in “areas surrounding Japan,” 2) a revised Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement, or ACSA (*Nichibei Buppin Ekimu Sogo Teikyo Kyotei*), which permits the reciprocal provision of necessary goods and services for “situations in surrounding areas,” and 3) a revised SDF Law (*Jieitai Ho*), which allows the government to dispatch SDF ships and helicopters to rescue Japanese citizens overseas.

### Significance of the New Guidelines

In return for US protection of Japan, Japan provides the US with frontline bases in Asia. But, the traditional understanding of the US-Japan Security Treaty in Japan has precluded Japan from cooperating with US military action in East Asia, when such action does not strictly relate to the defense of Japan’s territory. The new guidelines altered this traditional understanding. Based on the new guidelines, Japan will give both official and private support to the US forces including rear support by SDF when the government estimates that Japan and the US face a regional contingency.

The Japanese government has argued that the new guidelines are not a major departure from the status quo with respect to the basic principles of Japan’s security policy but are in fact in keeping with its main elements. They attribute their claims to the following

reasons. The constitutional framework of Japanese defense policy and SDF action has been preserved. The official interpretation of Article 9 and the constraints Article 9 imposes on the roles and missions of the Japanese military have not been altered. The engagement of SDF in combatant roles remains restricted to self-defense. The legal framework of US-Japan bilateral cooperation (the 1960 Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security) has not been revised. They argue that the new guidelines have simply put new activities under new laws which the Japanese government maintains within the framework of the US-Japan Security Treaty.

Contrary to the status quo interpretation, Mulgan argues that the new guidelines go considerably further than the 1978 guidelines, which were primarily focused on facilitating cooperation and coordination between Japanese and US forces for the defense of Japan. She argues that the 1978 guidelines focus on an Article 5 situation under the US-Japan Security Treaty (cases of direct attack on Japan or when such an attack was imminent), while the reference in the old guidelines to an Article 6 (regional) situation was brief. In contrast, the emphasis in the new guidelines is completely the reverse. They are patently geared toward enhancing US-Japan defense cooperation in regional contingencies and elaborating a much more substantial and diversified set of Japanese commitments to assist US forces in the event that a "situation in the areas surrounding Japan" should occur (Mulgan, 2000: 228). Japan will be able to assist US forces through SDF activities on the high seas and logistical support at both the public and private levels, in addition to the use of bases and financial assistance. She also argues that the Japanese government's agreement to assist US forces in a "situation in the areas surrounding Japan that will have an important influence on Japan's peace and security" can now be used as a trigger for SDF deployment in a time of regional conflict. she

further argues that the effect of these developments is to expand the SDF's limited focus from the defense of Japan to a much broader regional focus in which Japan can play a support role to the US (Mulgan, 2000: 229). In sum, the law clearly represents a de facto revision of the Security Treaty.

### Regional Threats and Pure Realist Argument

Realists would argue that the guidelines were revised in order to strengthen US-Japan security cooperation in response to rising security threats in the region. There has been a series of events that can be mentioned as factors that may have influenced the image of China and North Korea as a potential security threat to Japan. China resumed its nuclear tests in 1990 despite strong international public opinion against it, and continued testing about twice a year until the summer of 1996. In early March of that year, China conducted three ballistic missile tests off of the coast of Taiwan, intending to influence the presidential election there, and also began live-fire naval and air exercises in the Taiwan Strait.

In February 1993, North Korea refused to allow special inspections of its nuclear facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). This marked the start of a period of serious worries about North Korea's possible development of nuclear weapons. In early December 1993 a US National Intelligence Estimate was leaked that concluded North Korea had already developed one or two nuclear weapons. There was little doubt in Japan that if joined with the *Nodong* missiles, nuclear bombs would be intended for use against

Japan. While North Korea dragged its feet over IAEA inspections, US officials felt they had no option but to confront North Korea directly with the threat of a blockade and the implicit use of force. With tensions over North Korea's nuclear program mounting, the US military command in South Korea began preparing for the possibility of hostilities with North Korea. The US was ready to impose new sanctions, including a military blockade, and North Korea had already signaled that any such move would be seen as a declaration of war (Green, 2003: 120).

The North Korean nuclear crisis was defused in the summer of 1994 with the intervention of former US president Jimmy Carter, who brokered a deal with Kim Il Sung. But for about a year before that the foreign policy and defense authorities of Japan and the US were afraid of the prospect of having to enforce a UN embargo on North Korea, and maybe even facing a military conflict, with practically no agreed arrangements for bilateral cooperation.

It was after this North Korean nuclear crisis that the Nye Report was released. The report concluded that the US should maintain its hundred thousand uniformed personnel in East Asia given the uncertainties of the security environment, including instability on the Korea Peninsula. In November of the same year, Japan adopted the first revision of the National Defense Program Outline since 1976.<sup>36</sup> Then in 1998 North Korea launched a *Taepodong* missile over Japanese territory, creating a major shock in Japan. Japan unilaterally suspended its negotiation with North Korea in Beijing and announced that it would suspend all food aid for North Korea and financial support for KEDO. Green argues that "[t]he

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<sup>36</sup> "Japan-U.S. defense cooperation" *Japan Echo* 24(5):26-29. December 1997.

missile launch consolidated political support in Japan for passing the implementing legislation for the U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines” (Green, 2003: 126).

Hitoshi Tanaka, then deputy director general of the North American Bureau in MOFA, explains the background of the guidelines review by saying “[i]n many ways Japan is ill prepared in terms of security policy, and the processes outlined in the guidelines for defense cooperation are simultaneously the processes we need to follow in establishing a domestic security setup.”<sup>37</sup> He argues that Japan “is not ill prepared for defense against a direct attack or for cooperation in normal situations. But it lacks the apparatus for dealing with crises in the region that are likely to have profound repercussions on its own security” and that 1994 North Korean nuclear crisis triggered people to become keenly aware of this ill-preparedness.<sup>38</sup>

These arguments that the revision of the guidelines was fostered in response to the rise of external security threats do not provide a sufficient explanation. The rise of China as an economic and military power was seen not only after the middle of the 1990s, when the guidelines revision got a boost, but it was already seen in the early 1990s. There was a number of factors that made some people see China as a new security threat in the region. The *Tianamen* square incident took place in 1989. There was an apparent Chinese preoccupation with enhancing its military capabilities, which seemed to run contrary to the disarmament trend in the US and the former Soviet Union. From 1989 to 1995, Chinese defense spending increased at an enormously high rate every year (Sato, 1998). The relatively hard-line position China has taken with respect to various territorial disputes with

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<sup>37</sup> “An inside look at the defense guidelines review” *Japan Echo* 24(5): 30-33. December 1997.

its neighbors may also have reinforced the image of China as a potential security threat. In 1992 China passed a law declaring that the Senkaku/Daoyutai Islands and virtually the entire South China Sea were under Chinese sovereignty. If one argues that the guidelines revision took place in response to the rise of China, it should have taken place in the early 1990s.

The timing of the guidelines revision does not match up with the North Korean threats either. The 1998 *Taepodong* missile launch created a major shock in Japan because of its abruptness and imminence. However, the danger was much more severe during the 1994 North Korean nuclear crisis, when the Japanese did not get concerned as much as they did over the *Taepodong* missile launch.

The lack of response to the rise of China and 1994 North Korean nuclear crisis suggests that the security threats in the region were amplified in the process of the guidelines revision.

### Security Entrepreneurs and the Hidden Goal behind the Guidelines Revision

To explain the strengthening of the alliance through the guidelines revision, I argue in this section that traditional nationalists played a major role. Discussions over the guidelines revision inevitably triggered discussions on constitutional revision, or Japan's right of collective self-defense. That is where security entrepreneurs' real goal exists. Those who seek a stronger Japan want to amend the Constitution or change the interpretation of it

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

so that Japan becomes freed from its constraints and can play a more active role in security affairs. Uneasy events in the region discussed in the previous section had stimulatory effects for the realization of the guidelines revision and traditional nationalists used the guidelines revision as an opportunity to pursue their goals.

Proponents of guidelines revision include conservative politicians, most notably Ichiro Ozawa, who argues that Japan must become a "normal nation." Not only conservative politicians, but young rising politicians also strongly argue for a strong Japan, and pushed for guidelines revision.

Faced with the North Korean nuclear crisis, the LDP's Ryutaro Hashimoto convened his own internal study group to examine crisis legislation and prepare for the party's return to government. Prime Minister Tsutomu Hata's coalition and conservatives in the LDP saw an issue that might bring them together in a pro-defense national emergency cabinet. Also, a new generation of political leaders like Hashimoto and Ozawa agreed that the nation had to strengthen its crisis preparedness (Green, 2003: 121).

When Ozawa's Liberal Party joined the LDP government in 1998, the movement of revising the constitution got momentum. The North Korean suspicious ship incident was a good opportunity for this trend to get an extra boost.<sup>39</sup>

In the interview by the Seiron, then Liberal Party leader Ozawa said: "Roughly speaking, the guidelines are about involving in wars. They (government) are deceiving people on such an important issue by lying. All problems are attributed to this irresponsible

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<sup>39</sup> "Gaidorain kanrenhouan no kagede ugomeku kaiken seiryoku no shoutai (Constitutional revisionist behind the guideline related bills)" *Ronza* June 1999.



attitude of LDP government.”<sup>40</sup> Despite his critique of the LDP, the Liberal Party is part of the coalition government. He cooperated with the LDP to pass the guidelines not because he was convinced with the government interpretation of the purpose of the guidelines, but because the guidelines would make it easy for him to achieve his own goal – to make Japan a “normal nation.”

Those who are in favor of constitutional revision are not exclusively conservative politicians in the LDP. Young politicians such as Seiji Maehara, Shigefumi Matsuzawa, and Takuya Tasso, who seem to have been influenced by Ozawa Ichiro’s “normal nation” argument, also make the core of this trend (Tada, 1999: 197). During the two and half months of Diet deliberations on the guidelines, it was young politicians who argued in favor of the revision of the constitution or the exercise of collective self-defense. In the Lower House special committee on guidelines in March 1999, Takuya Tasso, a young Liberal Party legislator who formerly had been an official in MOFA, said “I want to say ‘let’s abandon Article 9 (of the constitution) and go out in the world.’” “Is Japan such a country that would become an evil aggressor nation without Article 9?”<sup>41</sup> His assertion resembles that of Ozawa’s, who argues for “normal nation” status. Tasso thinks Article 9 is not a brake on going into war, but a fetter of peace.

Seiji Maehara of the DPJ refused to be a questioner of the party in the Lower House special committee. The DPJ decided to oppose the Regional Contingency Law, which forms the core of three bills related to the guidelines. Maehara was dissatisfied with his party’s

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<sup>40</sup> “Ozawa Ichiro Jiyuto toshu ni chokugeki intabyu (An interview with Liberal Party leader Ichiro Ozawa)” *Seiron* June 1999 p.84.

<sup>41</sup> *The Asahi Shimbun* May 24, 1999, p.39.

decision. He asserts that a country has to defend itself by itself. The US-Japan Security Treaty should be placed as a complement and reinforcement of this theory. For this, he argues that constitutional amendment and the exercise of collective self-defense are necessary.<sup>42</sup> He says "Alliances are supposed to be give and take. Japan should change its interpretation of the constitution that does not allow the exercise of collective self-defense, and cooperate with the US in the event of regional contingencies. It is incomprehensible that Japan cannot do anything when something happened around Japan" (Tada, 1999: 197). Forty-year-old Shigefumi Matsuzawa, who was a rival of Naoto Kan, spoke at the DPJ party leader election. "How long do we have to wait (to change the constitution)? Discrepancy between constitutional clauses and the reality is even more dangerous (than constitutional change)" (Tada, 1999: 197). Young hawks can speak more freely without the risk of being accused of "going back into history."

There are academic scholars and newspaper editors who support a strong US-Japan alliance. They are intellectual brain fathers for the politicians. Akihiko Tanaka, a professor from Tokyo University, is a famous scholar in IR and is a supporter of the US-Japan alliance. He sees the security environment in East Asia as getting worse than that during the Cold War, and the North Korean threat (although he does not use the word "threat") getting more severe, and argues that the Japanese people are faced with the danger of a missile attack.<sup>43</sup> He sees the US-Japan alliance as the key link to deal with security deterioration in the region. He argues that revision of the guidelines and realization of related legislation made a base for

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> "Hokutou ajia saidaino kiki: kitachousen misairu mondai (The greatest crisis in Northeast Asia: North Korea's missile problem)" *Gaiko Forum* 1999 Special Edition, p.46-55.

US-Japan cooperation in case of an emergency.<sup>44</sup>

Hisayoshi Ina, an editor for the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, also pushes for guidelines revision. He examines possible developments in regional security. Ina's view on regional security is more severe than that of Tanaka. He sees a "regional Cold War" in East Asia. He points to the 1994 North Korean nuclear crisis, the 1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis, the 1998 *Taepodong* launch by North Korea, North Korea's suspicious ship that invaded Japanese territorial waters in 1999, and the tension that occurred between China and Taiwan when President Lee Teng-Hui announced "country-to-country relations" in 1999. Pointing to these events, he is alarmed by the fact that Japan is surrounded by serious security crises. He first assumes deterioration of regional security stability (on a short-, medium- and long-term basis), and then presents his view of what Japan should do, including revision of the constitution in the long-term.<sup>45</sup>

In a proposal that appeared in *Gaiko Forum*, the security committee of *Keizai Doyukai*, which makes proposals on a variety of domestic and international issues including security issues, proposed an immediate realization of guidelines-related legislation. They argue that the security situation surrounding Japan is rapidly changing for the worse and instability of the region is increasing, by referring to events that Ina also pointed out. They raised the alarm regarding increased instability and argue that "we have no time to lose to deal with this changing situation." They also argue that Japan should reconsider the exercise of collective self-defense, which is prohibited according to the government's interpretation of

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> "Posuto gaidorain: korekara nihonga chokumensuru 9tsuno kadai (Post-guidelines: 9 tasks Japan will encounter in future)" *Gaiko Forum* 1999 Special Edition, p.80-91.

the constitution.<sup>46</sup>

The common point between Ina's argument and the proposal by Keizai Doyukai is that they discuss guidelines revision in the context that leads to a more significant change in Japanese security policy – constitutional revision in the end. On the surface, they argue that the guidelines were revised for the sake of the US-Japan alliance itself in the face of rising threats. However, North Korea's direct threat alone does not explain the sudden change in Japanese security policy.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I conducted a case study on the revision of the US-Japan security cooperation guidelines as an important development of security cooperation between the two states. Regional security threats as motivation for the guidelines revision are not plausible because the timing of the guidelines revision does not match up with the rise of Chinese and North Korean threats. The threat posed by North Korea and other possible changes in the regional security environment were good excuses to foster a strengthening of the alliance that would lead to the accomplishment of traditional nationalists' real goal. As Shuichi Kato put it in an Asahi Shimbun interview, "it is not that we need guidelines because there is a threat, but we need a threat because there are guidelines."<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> "Soukyu ni torikumubeki wagakunino anzenhoshoujouno yottsuno teigen (Four proposals on national security that have to be dealt with immediately)" *Gaiko Forum* 1999 Special Edition, p.68-69.

<sup>47</sup> "Shingaidorain watashi wa kou yomu (My view on the new guidelines)" *The Asahi Shimbun* September 26, 1997, p.7.

## Chapter 5 Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law

On September 11, 2001, terrorists attacked the United States. Japan responded to this event very quickly, announcing plans for information collection and support for surrounding areas, putting them together into an anti-terrorism bill in a month, and enacting the law only three weeks after that. In this chapter, I examine the legislation process of the Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law to illustrate the development of security cooperation between Japan and the US. Why did Japan respond to the event so quickly, and what enabled Japan to make such an important change in security policy in such a short time?

### Overview<sup>48</sup>

For a week after the terrorist attack of 9.11, there was discussion in Japan as to whether a new law was necessary to support the United States. At the time, the common understanding was that it was difficult to apply the Regional Contingency Law, which had been enacted in 1999 based on the new guidelines for US-Japan defense cooperation. The Regional Contingency Law allows the SDF to support US forces only in rear areas in the event of “regional contingency” in the areas surrounding Japan. To respond to the terrorist attack, JDA officials considered expanding the understanding of “regional contingency” to include the threat of retaliation from terrorists in case the US attacks them. However, the law

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<sup>48</sup> I relied mainly on the Asahi Shimbun from September to October 2001 for facts about the process of making

defines "rear area" as "our national territory, and the high sea and the area above it in the area surrounding Japan where there is no combat," and "regional contingency" as "events that have significant effect on Japan's security." MOFA and the ruling party questioned such a stretch of the law. Also, in 1999, then prime minister Keizo Obuchi said in remarks at the Diet that "events that happen in the Middle East or in the Indian Ocean are not assumed (to be included in 'regional contingency')." Policy decision makers realized that they needed a new law to deal with the situation.

On September 13, only two days after the event, a security project team was formed under the Prime Minister's Office. Under vice-chief cabinet secretary Teijiro Furukawa, there were officials gathered from MOFA, the JDA, and the Cabinet Legislation Bureau (CLB). Only a week after the event, this project team managed to announce a cabinet proposal for the government's reaction to the terrorist attack.

On September 20, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi announced the deployment of the SDF to support the US in its operation to retaliate against the terrorist attack. It was the first time for the SDF to be deployed where combat is still in place. It was difficult to justify SDF deployment in such a situation on the grounds of existing laws. Here again, a new law was necessary to proceed with SDF deployment.

On September 26, outlines for the new legislation was proposed by the cabinet. Although SDF support for the US was proposed as the same one with the one in the Regional Contingency Law, the restriction of using weapons was loosened compared with the Peace Keeping Operation Cooperation Law, which was enacted after the Gulf War. In the cabinet

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the Anti-terrorism Law.

proposal, the deployment of the SDF did not need an advance approval from the Diet but it only needed an ex post facto report. On October 5, the cabinet proposal was approved and was passed to the Diet. It took only 24 days after the terrorist attack and 16 days after the prime minister announced the cabinet proposal of government reaction against the event. Within an exceptionally short period the government decided to widen the sphere of SDF activities and loosened the restriction on the use of weapons.

From the cabinet approval to the Lower House approval on October 18, there were heated discussions over the cabinet proposal of the bill between the ruling party (coalition among the LDP, Komeito and the Conservative Party) and the opposition DPJ. The DPJ requested some revision of the cabinet proposal. The main requests included: to make the law time-limited, to require Diet approval before sending the SDF, not to allow the transport of arms and ammunition, and not to loosen restrictions on the use of weapons (to keep restrictions the same as in the PKO Cooperation Law). Although the ruling party sought the agreement of the DPJ, the DPJ strengthened its opposition, reiterating its demands forcefully. However, while the top two leaders of the DPJ, Yukio Hatoyama and Naoto Kan, maintained opposition, a young leader named Katsuya Okada was positive about the cabinet proposal of the new law and was willing to coordinate with the ruling party. He became a point person in consulting with the LDP for an agreement, and the general trend within the DPJ turned in favor of the cabinet proposal. The DPJ was afraid of being seen just like the opposition party under the 55-year system, the Socialist Party of Japan, a party whose *raison d'être* was to oppose the ruling party but that never actually got a ruling position. The DPJ's policy has been to take over the ruling position by suggesting different economic policies, but their

security policy has not been very different from that of the LDP.

Despite the atmosphere within the DPJ that favored the cabinet proposal, the ruling party and DPJ failed to reach an agreement because a final compromise between the parties could not be reached. Although Koizumi was in favor of accepting the requests from the DPJ, other ruling coalition parties (Komeito and the Conservative Party) opposed compromise on advance approval of the Diet for sending the SDF. Looking at the cooperation between the LDP and the DPJ on the bill, the Conservative Party and especially Komeito were worried that the LDP would change a coalition partner to the DPJ. By disagreeing over the compromise with the DPJ, Komeito and the Conservative Party tried to prevent this from happening.

The cabinet proposal was approved in both the Lower House and then the Upper House without a DPJ agreement, and the Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law was given final approval on October 29. It took less than two months to make a law that significantly expanded the scope of SDF activities and cooperation with the US.

Based on the law, several Japanese supply ships were sent to the Indian Ocean to unload supplies for the 50 ships and 40,000 personnel the US had deployed in that area as part of the battle against the al Qaeda terrorist network.<sup>49</sup> This was the first time for Japan, since World War II, to deploy military forces far from home in an operation that clearly involves combat. Japan's financial officials cooperated with global efforts to cut off the funds controlled by terrorist networks. The Koizumi cabinet dispatched several high-level emissaries to the Middle East to urge nations there to stand solidly behind the coalition.

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<sup>49</sup> "Japan embarks on a new security policy: Normal country?" *The Oriental Economist* 69(11), November



Japan's air force dispatched several large cargo planes to Pakistan with relief supplies for Afghan refugees who have crossed into Pakistan. Japan pledged to help in the post-war reconstruction of Afghanistan – a crucial task in the long-term effort to stabilize the country. Japan stood firmly on the US side and gave significantly strong support considering Japan had been extremely passive in activities that had something to do with military operations.

### Factors behind Japan's Strong Support for the US – Examination of Domestic Actors

What made it possible for Japan to immediately react to the US crisis and to push forward such an important security policy? Realists argue that an alliance is strengthened when a country is facing external security threats. They would argue that the Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law was enacted with significant speed because of the security threat Japan was facing. This pure realist hypothesis does not provide a sufficient theory in this case. The terrorists attacked the US homeland, but there was no direct attack on Japan. Furthermore, the war in Afghanistan was taking place far away from Japan and it was by no means a direct threat for Japan.

Peter Katzenstein's cultural norms approach does not explain Japan's cooperation with the US in the war against terrorism either. Katzenstein argues that the normative context matters more than the economic or military content to the security policy of a country (Katzenstein, 1996b: 14). Normative context means historical and cultural background

embedded in a nation state, and in Japan's case, it is the Japanese sense of identity as a non-threatening, peace-loving country. According to Katzenstein's assumption, Japan would maintain a security policy that restricts the use of military weaponry only for the defense of Japan, averts conflict, and prohibits dispatch of troops to engage in combat missions overseas. This clearly contradicts the reality. In the process of establishing the Anti-terrorism Law, Japan widened its military capability overseas and decided to send the SDF to areas where they might be engaged in combat.

In this section, I will argue that leadership enhancement was the key to push forward this ambitious bill. People who seek stronger political leadership by the prime minister used the 9.11 attack as an opportunity to carry out their goal.

### *Leadership Enhancement – PMO*

Fears of a nuclear North Korea or the 9.11 attack strengthened the sense in Japan that a realistic security policy and an efficient security policy-making apparatus were critical. The rising interest in national security affairs resulted in the growing role of the prime minister's personal staff, which has been able to force through a process of national policy making, rather than the traditional compromises among disparate ministries. Also, core members of MOFA and the JDA became a part of the PMO and came to assist the prime minister on the issues.<sup>50</sup>

Samuels analyzes how politicians have gained power over bureaucrats since the 1990s, using the example of Japan's Cabinet Legislation Bureau (CLB) (Samuels, 2004). The

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<sup>50</sup> "Japan gets serious about defense: A secure security team" *The Oriental Economist* September 2003.

CLB used to enjoy a very strong influence on Japanese law making. The Diet as Japan's sole law making body seemed nominal and constitutional judgement by the CLB was prioritized to that by the Supreme Court. The CLB was regarded as a quasi-constitutional court. However, Samuels argues that with the Gulf War being the high point of CLB power and the beginning of its demise, politicians gained more influence than CLB bureaucrats on constitutional judgement relating to security policies. Influenced by anti-mainstream conservative politicians such as Ichiro Ozawa and Junichiro Koizumi, the CLB began to give endorsements to security policies and constitutional interpretation by conservative politicians, such as SDF missions in Iraq, and cooperation with the US on a TMD system. In the legislation process of the Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law, the CLB first objected to the dispatch of the SDF but Koizumi's proposal of sending the SDF passed in the end. Koizumi's cabinet secretary Yasuo Fukuda declared that Japan's position on the right of collective self-defense, banned under the current government interpretation of the Constitution, will have to change. Koizumi himself also seeks constitutional change. Under his cabinet, the SDF was empowered to do more and further from home. Meanwhile, the CLB role in the Diet debates was not noteworthy. Samuels argues that "the CLB seems to have been bested by a determined LDP leadership."

In the Koizumi cabinet, diplomacy has been lead more by the cabinet secretariat than by MOFA. While MOFA was struggling with its domestic scandals, the prime minister and the chief cabinet secretariat took control of Japanese diplomacy. At the time, there were three main key actors who had initiatives in diplomacy: chief cabinet secretary Yasuo Fukuda, deputy chief cabinet secretaries Shinzo Abe and Teiji Furukawa. Fukuda and Abe are well

versed in national security affairs, but the key figure within the Prime Minister's Office on national security is Furukawa, who is a veteran bureaucrat and has served many prime ministers.<sup>51</sup> Shinoda argues that the center of Japanese diplomacy and security has moved from MOFA to the cabinet secretariat (Shinoda, 2004: 50). When the 9.11 attack happened, Koizumi immediately put it as a "serious state of emergency" and handed this matter to the cabinet secretariat, not to MOFA.

Japan responded immediately to the 9.11 attack because it hoped to avoid a repeat of policy failure in the 1990s Gulf Crisis. Deputy chief cabinet secretary Furukawa pulled together the team that formulated Japan's very quick and effective response to the 9.11 attack. He established a study group within the cabinet secretariat to discuss this issue. The member included Shotaro Yachi and Ichiro Fujisaki from MOFA, Ken Sato and Singo Shuto from the JDA and Osamu Akiyama from the Cabinet Legislation Bureau and two assistant deputy chief cabinet secretaries, each of them was from the JDA and MOFA. Within the cabinet secretariat, a study team for anti-terrorism policy was created. It served as a secretariat cooperating among different ministries in anti-terrorism matters (Shinoda, 2004: 54). In the PMO, there are more key security actors who share a commitment to establishing a legitimate national security system in Japan. Under Furukawa there are two assistant chief cabinet secretaries who did the hard work after 9.11: One is Keiji Omori from the JDA, who was a strong advocate of the JDA assuming a bigger role in Japan's foreign policy after the Cold War. And the other is Shotaro Yachi from MOFA, who is well known in American and Japanese defense circles as a firm and clear advocate of Japan exercising the right to

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

collective self-defense. Under Omori, there are Hideshi Tokuchi and Satoshi Maeda, who both played key roles in the Nye Initiative.<sup>52</sup>

Koizumi does not have a strong support basis in his own party, unlike previous prime ministers. Despite this fact, Koizumi showed strong leadership in establishing important security policies including the Anti-terror Law.

Koizumi did not care much about getting consensus within his own party. Usually the policy making process takes place first by getting consensus within the ruling party and then by consulting it with coalition parties. In the process of making new anti-terrorism legislation, Koizumi got consensus with his coalition parties (Komei and the Conservative Party) before consulting with his own party. After getting consensus among the coalition parties, Koizumi made an explanation of his policy to opposition party leaders. Only then did Koizumi explain his policy to his own party. Shinoda argues that strong public support enabled Koizumi to act immediately with strong leadership (Shinoda, 2004: 57).

### *Traditional Nationalists*

Leheny argues that the 9.11 attack was an opportunity for conservative Japanese politicians to expand Japan's security role. "If Japanese hawks were to have a chance to make Japan more 'normal' by giving its armed forces the opportunity to participate in internationally sanctioned activities, this would likely be it." Among conservative Japanese politicians, Leheny argues Prime Minister Koizumi is especially bold in terms of his willingness to stake his reputation on Japanese military participation (Leheny, 2001).

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

However, Japanese political hawks hardly talk about military build up with regard to the 9.11 attack. It is hard to say that the Anti-terrorism Law was pushed forward because of the intentions of traditional nationalists.

## **MOFA**

MOFA always stands on the same position in terms of Japan's relationship with the US. Their highest priority is to keep a good and stable relationship with the US. Japan's infamy in the Gulf War had remained as traumatic for MOFA. When the 9.11 attack occurred, MOFA thought it would be the last chance for Japan to show the US that Japan is a reliable alliance partner.

However, MOFA failed to play a critical role in shaping national security policies following the 9.11 attack. MOFA had played a central role in Japanese foreign and security policy making. Its role was more critical than that of the JDA even in security policy making. The reaction and management of MOFA in the event of the Gulf War received severe criticism and the need for an overall political approach to security affairs was recognized.

When the 9.11 attack occurred soon after Koizumi took office, MOFA was struggling with many political scandals. Scandals started with the discovery of the embezzlement of secret diplomatic funds and MOFA lost public credence. Moreover, Koizumi's foreign minister Makiko Tanaka stood against bureaucrats and made MOFA dysfunctional.

Despite MOFA's continuous strong support for good relations between Japan and the US, and for the alliance as this base, MOFA lost an opportunity, or did not even have the

ability to play a central role in making Anti-terrorism Law.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I examined the factor that enabled Japan to respond so quickly to support the United States in the war against terrorism even though terrorist attacks did not pose a direct security threat to Japan, and the factor that enabled Japan to make such an important security policy with unprecedented speed.

After the end of the Cold War, Japan questioned whether it could continue to rely on the US for the bulk of its national defense. The 1990-91 Gulf War was a fiasco for Japan and it pushed the country to face more seriously national security issues. The recognition of the need for a realistic security policy and an efficient security policy-making apparatus resulted in the growing role of the prime minister and his staff, known as the Prime Minister's Office.

The process of strengthening national security planning and the crisis management system inside the Prime Minister's Office was especially evident in the days and weeks after the 9.11 terrorist attack. The key is that over the past 10 years, a core group of politicians and bureaucrats have worked hard on defense issues and become well-versed, such that when the 9.11 attack occurred, there were experienced people in place in critical posts and they knew what to do. Another important key is that administrative change within the central government that has boosted the size, strength, and focus of the prime minister's staff. With a

stronger PMO, Japan's fractious government ministries are forced to cooperate more.<sup>53</sup>

Koizumi is known as a prime minister who does not have support from his own party. Because of this very weakness, he promised the public that he would get rid of factionalism within the LDP and received strong public support. Shinoda argues that the irregular policy making process that resulted in the Anti-terrorism Law was possible because of this strong public support for the prime minister (Shinoda, 2004: 77). The 9.11 attack was the first significant opportunity for using the strengthened power of the prime minister and his office in security affairs.

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<sup>53</sup> "Japan's national security system grows: Reluctant samurai" *The Oriental Economist* 72(10), October 2004.



## **Conclusion**

This thesis examined the origins of the unique path that the US-Japan alliance has taken since the 1990s. After the end of the Cold War, the alliance was considered obsolete given that the main rationale for its existence – containment of the Soviet Union – disappeared. Growing economic frictions between the two states further reinforced the credibility of this view. The major view of the alliance was that it would not persist in the post-Cold War world. However, the path that the alliance actually took was exactly the opposite of this widely shared view. The alliance did not fall apart. On the contrary, the two states strengthened the functional capabilities of the alliance by allowing Japan's increasingly active cooperation with the United States.

Examining this unique path that the US-Japan alliance has taken contributes to alliance theory because no conventional theory provides a sufficient explanation for why an alliance takes such a unique path. This study also contributes to Northeast Asian security studies because no conventional IR theory provides a sufficient explanation for the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance since the middle of the 1990s.

I argued that the strengthening of the alliance did not take place simply because of growing security threats in the region. It is true that North Korea poses a direct actual threat by launching a missile over Japanese territory, by invading Japanese territorial waters, or even by abducting Japanese citizens. However, despite loudly exclaimed threats from China, China has not launched any direct attack against Japan. Furthermore, Japan's cooperation with the US in the war against terrorism and in the Iraq war, through which Japan has

increasingly broadened its scope of military activities, did not take place in response to security threats in the region.

I argued that the driving force for the reinforcement of the alliance is the interaction of external factors – security threats in the region – and internal factors – domestic actors who pushed for the strengthening of the alliance and active cooperation with the US. I named those domestic actors security entrepreneurs. They have individual goals that are different from alliance reinforcement itself. Each of these actors amplified security threats to mobilize public opinion so that they can pursue their own domestic goals. They pushed for the strengthening of the alliance and attributed it to the growing security threats in the region, and pretended that their true objectives were unexpected results from the strengthening of the alliance.

The 1998 guidelines revision changed the sphere in which Japan would cooperate with the US and it put emphasis on cooperation with the US in regional security. Accordingly, the role of the SDF was expanded, and it marked an important departure from Japan's traditional focus on self-defense. I argued that in the process of the guidelines revision, traditional nationalists who seek to make Japan a "normal nation" played a key role. Discussions over the guidelines revision inevitably triggered discussions of constitutional revision, and the exercise collective self-defense. That is where traditional nationalists' real goal exists. Uneasy events that appeared in the region at around the same time stimulated the realization of guidelines revision and traditional nationalists used the revision as one way to pursue their goal.

Japan responded very quickly to the 9.11 terrorist attack. Prime Minister Koizumi

immediately announced Japan's support for the US-led war against terrorism. Within two months after the terrorist attacks, Japan enacted the Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law. I argued that domestic actors who seek stronger leadership by prime minister – namely PMO staff – played a key role in enabling Japan to make such an important security policy with unprecedented speed. A core group of politicians and bureaucrats had worked hard on defense issues and had become well-versed. When the 9.11 attack happened, there were experienced people in place in critical posts in the government and they knew what to do. The 9.11 attack provided the first significant opportunity to use the enhanced power of the prime minister and his office in security affairs.

It is likely that in the near future, this trend of strengthening the alliance will continue. In October 2004, Prime Minister Koizumi's personal advisory panel on security and defense capability submitted a report on Japan's security policy in the future. They placed "improvement of international security environment" in addition to defense of Japan as objectives for the new security strategy, and placed the US-Japan alliance as the most important pillar to achieve these goals. Particularly noteworthy in this report is that it suggests the revision of the three principles of arms export (ban on arms export to 1) communist countries, 2) countries prohibited by UN resolution, and 3) countries that are, or are perceived as, parties of international conflicts). This suggestion reflects the fact that Japan will have to provide arms to the US in the joint development of next generation interceptor missiles for missile defense. The report suggested that to prevent the occurrence of security threats from the Middle East to Northeast Asia, Japan promote cooperation with the US

based on the alliance even outside the area surrounding Japan.<sup>54</sup>

Ten years ago, a similar private advisory panel of the prime minister submitted a report on Japan's defense policy. The report, which is widely known as the "Higuchi Report," emphasized the need for multilateral security cooperation. It reflected Japan's posture at the time to not entirely rely on the bilateral alliance with the US. The new report released in 2004 stands in sharp contrast to the Higuchi Report. Also, the core suggestions from the new report were pushed mainly by bureaucrats – staff in the crisis management office under the cabinet.

In February 2005, Japan and the US made it clear in the joint declaration that Taiwan is a mutual security concern. This marks a big step in the security cooperation between the two states. Japan had been ambiguous about its position on this issue despite repeated requests by China to make it clear that Taiwan was not included in "areas surrounding Japan" in the new defense cooperation guidelines. Now that Japan implicitly announced that it will engage in actions taken by the US in the event of conflict between China and Taiwan, provoking a dispute with China is inevitable. Indeed China introduced an "Anti-secession Law" in respect to the status of Taiwan the following month. It might be argued that the US-Japan joint declaration was the result of US pressures. However, the inclusion of Taiwan in the regional areas of concerns for Japan and in the zone of the US-Japan alliance was already present in the NPDO revision in December 2004, which is a purely domestic process.

What can be predicted as a consequence of the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance? Given that the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance has been driven by

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<sup>54</sup> "Nichibei domei tai tero no hashira ni (The US-Japan alliance, pillar of anti-terrorism)" *The Asahi Shimbun*,

nationalists and PMO activists who use the process to strengthen Japan's position and the prime minister's position, it may well be that the strengthening of the US-Japan alliance in the short term may lead to the unraveling of the alliance in the long term. In the very process of strengthening the alliance, Japan's autonomy and military capacity are strengthened as well. In turn, these changes may reduce Japan's dependency on the US in the long term and increase the probability that it walks away from the alliance. There may be a paradox in the strengthening of the alliance.

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October 5, 2004.

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