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The Anatomy of Japan's Shifting Security Orientation

On June 2, 2010, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's farewell address included the parting shot that "I do not believe it is a good idea for Japan to depend on the United States for her security over the next 50 or 100 years."[1] One could dismiss this as typical Hatoyama, who has repeatedly insisted that Japan should try to establish an "equal relationship" with the United States. Yet, it is not just one leader, but Japan itself that has been asking: can we survive as a responsible stakeholder in the twenty-first century given the status quo?

A Twenty-Year Debate

At the end of World War II, Japan adopted the so-called "Yoshida Doctrine" under which it would focus more on economic growth and rebuilding its infrastructure while effectively relying on the United States for its security. Japan's first postwar prime minister, Shigeru Yoshida (1946–1947, 1948–1954), believed Japan needed to enshrine the new security arrangement through a formal pact. The U.S.–Japan Security Treaty was subsequently signed in 1960.[2] Under the treaty's framework, Japan was required to provide bases on its soil (Article VI) and later agreed to provide extensive financial host-nation support for U.S. forces. In return, the United States agreed to come to the defense of Japan if she was attacked (Article V). Unlike NATO, which treats an attack

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against one signatory as an attack against all, the U.S.–Japan Security Treaty does not obligate Japan to help in the event of an attack against the United States.

Most Japanese believe that on a strategic level the Yoshida doctrine was right for post–World War II Japan, effectively helping her to become one of the world's great economic powers from the 1970s to the 1990s. And while Japan was criticized by some U.S. elites as a free rider on security issues during and immediately after the Cold War, most Japanese policymakers have never seriously questioned leaving the security framework maintained by the United States.

Yet, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the first Gulf War in 1991, some Japanese began to feel uneasy with the half-century long arrangement. Japan's policy elites—from bureaucrats to political leaders, including the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) secretary-general Ichiro Ozawa—were shocked when they discovered that Japan's substantial financial contribution (amounting to $13 billion) to the Gulf War was not appreciated by the international community, who mostly derided it as "checkbook" diplomacy. Traumatized by that bitter experience, many Japanese political leaders, not only from the DPJ but from the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), began to question the kind of security arrangement Japan should seek in the twenty-first century. These leaders included Ozawa himself, then a top official in the LDP.[3]

The fissures beginning to appear in the alliance's underlying foundation are deeply rooted.

In fact, U.S.–Japan experts in both Tokyo and Washington began to be concerned with the growing distance within the alliance as early as the mid-1990s, particularly as the Clinton administration pushed its economy-first approach to Japan. At that time, a new coalition government in Tokyo, led by Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa (1993–1994) and Ozawa, wrote a controversial paper called the "Higuchi Report,"[4] in which some Japanese experts suggested that Japan should develop a new security policy based upon UN-centered multilateralism, rather than a bilateral security arrangement with the United States. After the LDP-led coalition government formally issued the report, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) initiated a new campaign with Japanese officials to reshape the mission of the U.S.–Japan alliance after the Cold War. Partly spurred by the so-called "Nye Initiative," led by Assistant Secretary of Defense Joseph S. Nye, Jr., the two countries negotiated the 1996 U.S.–Japan Joint Security Declaration and new Defense Guidelines, under

which both nations could determine what kind of military cooperation would ensue in a security contingency in Asia.[5]

Security ties strengthened even more following the election of President George W. Bush at the end of 2000. Bush established a good personal chemistry with then-prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi (2001–2006), highlighted by a trip the two took to Graceland, the home of one of Koizumi's favorite singers, Elvis Presley. More importantly, Bush surrounded himself with longtime Japan hands, such as Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia James Kelly, and National Security Council Asia Director Michael Green, all of whom believed in Japan playing a larger security role. The improved relationship was highlighted by Japan's agreement to send troops to Iraq (although in a protected environment in which they saw no action), and by its willingness to help in refueling operations in support of the war in Afghanistan.

At first glance, such events seemed to diminish Japanese post–Cold War calls for a reappraisal of the alliance. Many Japanese political leaders, however, had already come to the conclusion that, sooner or later, Japan would not be seen as a "responsible stakeholder" in the international community without redesigning its security policy. For most Japanese policymakers, such a redesign entailed only marginal change to the overall security framework. Most Japanese policy elites still believe they need a structure that involves U.S.–Japan security cooperation and welcome a strong U.S. presence in Japan. In addition, the U.S.–Japan alliance continues to enjoy the support of more than 70 percent of the general Japanese population, according to recent polls.[6]

At the same time, a growing number of mainstream policymakers in Tokyo believe Japan should stake out a more independent position, either within the framework of a security arrangement with the United States, or even outside of the framework if need be. Ever since Yoshida, mainstream policymakers in Japan have supported the U.S.–Japan alliance, even as many of them harbor mixed feelings about the status of Japan within the alliance. Such misgivings are partly due to Japanese perceptions that the United States sees Japan as a junior partner that must be treated as a young, inexperienced brother in the international arena. In Japanese terms, the United States continues to play the role of *sempai*, or teacher, to its *kohai*, or student, played by Japan.

Many Japanese conservatives in particular believe the United States views the bilateral security arrangement as the cap on the bottle that prevents a remilitarization of Japan—a remilitarization unwelcome in most parts of Asia, especially China and South Korea where Japan is still mistrusted because of its perceived failure to apologize for its actions during World War II. Such sentiments have been confirmed by some Japanese officials who have periodically asserted that senior U.S. military figures and politicians are in fact

playing such a role. For example, Tadakazu Kuriyama, a former ambassador to the United States and former vice minister of Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said at a forum in May 1991 that the U.S.–Japan alliance did provide a certain confidence and comfort to Asia that Japan would not be a big military power again in the future.

Changing Japanese Sentiment

To a certain degree, Ozawa embodies the changing sentiment of Japanese policymakers. Widely considered as the kingmaker of the DPJ, and before that the LDP, Ozawa was considered a solid backer of the U.S.–Japan alliance early in his career. In the run-up to the first Gulf War in 1991, Ozawa, then-secretary-general of the LDP, bypassed Japan's still skittish bureaucracy and agreed to provide the United States with significant financial backing for the war. Not only did Japan receive little credit for its contribution, Ozawa reportedly was furious that Japan received very little advance notice of any military operations before the war.[7] In 2003, Ozawa once again was reportedly livid over the fact that the Bush administration failed to keep the Japanese government informed over their plans to attack Saddam Hussein, despite Tokyo's support for the war.[8] According to Ozawa watchers in Tokyo, such slights have instilled in him a belief that the United States will continue to treat Japan as merely a tool in its global strategy, rather than a real security partner.

> Japan holds an underlying desire to be treated as an equal partner by the United States.

Many Japanese political leaders—perhaps including Ozawa himself—and intellectual elites in Tokyo understand that Japan has not yet come to the point where it can claim to be seen as a real security partner similar to the United Kingdom. They acknowledge that Japan's constitutional restrictions against waging war, relatively small defense budget, and poor intelligence capabilities render it a junior partner, and that attempts to make Japan "a normal nation,"[9] as originally espoused by Ozawa himself, are problematic given the Japanese public's relative pacifism.

With this in mind, a number of Japanese prime ministers have tried to reshape Japan's security policy incrementally, within the framework of the U.S.–Japan security treaty. For example, despite opposition from the Japanese bureaucracy, then-prime minister Ryutaro Hashimoto (1996–1998) directly asked President Bill Clinton in 1996 to return the U.S. Marine air base at Futenma, Okinawa because he believed it was a negative symbol of the U.S. presence in Okinawa.[10]

His successor, Keizo Obuchi (1998–2000), decided to introduce Japan's first indigenous spy satellite after North Korea launched its first intercontinental ballistic missile over the Japanese mainland in 1998—a step that was supported by many Japanese national security bureaucrats who believed Japanese political leaders needed an independent source of intelligence, rather than relying on the United States.[11] These steps were followed by Koizumi's historic decision to dispatch Japanese ground forces to Iraq in 2003, and his successor, Shinzo Abe's (2006–2007) attempt to establish a Japanese version of the U.S. National Security Council on November 22, 2006. Abe and his team expected to lead Japan to exercise collective self-defense so that it could assist the United States more competently in the Asia-Pacific region. Abe and his people believed this was the only way for Japan to be treated as a real partner by the United States, and such treatment would give Japan more independence within the current security framework.

To a certain degree, these changes can be attributed to the new security realities facing Japan such as North Korea's nuclear ambition and China's rapid modernization of its military. But one cannot neglect another important factor—the rise of Japanese neonationalism and Japan's underlying desire to be treated as an equal partner by the United States.

Redefining Political Groupings within Japan

Neonationalism is certainly alive in Tokyo. To determine whether Japan might go so far as to scrap the U.S.–Japan security alliance, one needs to understand the increasing nuance of security orientations among Japanese political leaders. For many years, four categories could roughly define these political groupings: 1) pro-U.S. conservative, who aimed to deepen and enhance the U.S.–Japan alliance; 2) anti-U.S. conservative, who aimed to become more independent by enhancing Japan's indigenous defense capabilities; 3) pro-U.S. liberal, who liked to maintain the alliance as it stood; and 4) anti-U.S. liberal, who advocated neutrality by scrapping the alliance altogether.

Today, Japanese sentiment has diversified to the point that additional categories are needed to understand the multitude of positions emanating from Tokyo. For example, the pro-U.S. conservative school would include Abe, Hashimoto, Koizumi, and Keizo Obuchi. Yet, Hashimoto was quite different from Koizumi in terms of his sympathies toward China, a much more significant power today.[12] Also, Hatoyama is seen as a champion of anti-U.S. liberals, but he actually only insists on Japan maintaining an independent security policy, not outright neutrality. His positions would require Japan to spend more on defense, which is seen in Japan as a conservative position. Finally, Ozawa has been seen as a typical conservative politician. Yet, his pro-China orientation, reinforced by

his trip to Beijing in December 2009 with 143 DPJ Diet members and his push for the Japanese emperor to grant an audience to Vice President Xi Jinping of China,[13] is interpreted as liberal by many Japanese.

To understand the new security dynamic, the previous four categories need to be expanded into six groups, outlined in Table 1. It is no longer enough to analyze one's position on Japanese nationalism and the U.S. alliance, but new factors in today's more complex world—such as relations with China, whether to acquire nuclear weapons, and whether to change Japan's constitution to facilitate greater independence—also need to be considered.

Within these new groups, one can find that a majority of Japan's contemporary and rising political leaders come from one of the four nationalist groups, not the status quo-oriented realists of yesterday's

Table I: Political Groupings within Japan

Groups	U.S. alliance	China	Constitution	Nuclear	Examples
1. **Pro-U.S. realist**	Maintain status quo but add multilateral pillar	Strategic triangle	Status quo	Keep Three Nos principle	Yasuo Fukuda; Ryutaro Hashimoto; Keizo Obuchi
2. **Pro-U.S. national/radical**	U.S.–UK model	Potential threat	Change to expand Japan's security role	Not illegal and revise if needed	Shinzo Abe; Taro Aso; Junichiro Koizumi
3. **Pro-U.S. national/ moderate**	Mildly more self-reliant within current framework	Cooperate but at a distance	Keep but reinterpret	Keep Three Nos principle	Seiji Maehara; Katsuya Okada
4. **Anti-U.S. national/ moderate**	More self-reliant and UN attention to become "normal" nation	Strategic triangle	Keep but reinterpret	Keep Three Nos principle	Yukio Hatoyama; Ichiro Ozawa
5. **Anti-U.S. national/radical**	Fully independent, but maintain cooperation	Threat	Change to restore sovereignty	Ambiguity; never deny	Takeshi Hiranuma, Shintaro Ishihara
6. **Anti-U.S. liberal**	Complete neutrality	Pro-China	Status quo	Never possess	Mizuho Fukushima (Socialist Party of Japan)

politicians. As anti-American as Hatoyama may have seemed during his tenure—such as when he initially said he would like to see a U.S.–Japan alliance without U.S. forces stationed on Japanese soil[14]—on December 16, 2009, he told the Japanese press, "I used to have such an idea, however, I have to seal the idea now since I became prime minister."

Hatoyama belongs in the more moderate anti-U.S. nationalist group 4 than the radical group 5, which would break the alliance, acquire nuclear weapons, or change the constitution. In fact, Hatoyama's political ally, Ozawa, seemed to hold similar views when he said in February 2009 that only the Seventh Fleet—a U.S. Navy forward projection force based in Yokosuka, Japan—should be welcomed in Japan.[15] Both leaders come from a nationalist school that seeks more independence from the United States and prefers a closer relationship with China, South Korea, and other Asian nations. Hatoyama's notorious—at least among some Americans—"East Asia Community" concept is clearly derived from his group 4 philosophy.

Even pro-U.S. nationalists, such as Abe, advocate a more self-reliant Japan in terms of self-defense. In 2003, Abe remarked at Waseda University that Japan's constitution does not prohibit Japan from developing and possessing its own nuclear weapons.[16] Despite strong anti-nuclear sentiment in Japan, his comment was followed by then-Chief Cabinet Secretary Fukuda's (who belongs to the group 1, pro-U.S. realists) confirmation that Abe was correct in theory.[17] Furthermore, the two do not represent a minority within the LDP where even the "hawks" or pro-U.S. conservatives (group 2), including former Prime Minister Taro Aso, have expressed similar sentiments.

Explaining the Failed Grand Coalition

It was a major surprise to everyone in Tokyo when the then-Prime Minister Fukuda (2007–2008) almost agreed with Ozawa to form a grand coalition government in December 2007.[18] A grand coalition has never been formed in the Japanese post-war political scene. If it were formed, people believed that it would create a very powerful and dominant government in many respects, including security policy. Until that time, Fukuda was seen as a core member of the Koizumi cabinet, and many observers would have placed him among the pro-U.S. nationalist moderates (group 2) with Abe and Koizumi. But Fukuda actually should be viewed among the fading set of Japan's traditionalist group (group 1).

During the Koizumi era (2001–2006), Fukuda was often referred to as "Japan's shadow foreign minister."[19] After having fired Japan's first female foreign minister, Makiko Tanaka, Koizumi selected another woman, Yoriko Kawaguchi, as her successor. Unfortunately, as is often the case in the Japanese system of bureaucratic control, foreign ministry officials preferred to work with Fukuda,

who was the chief cabinet secretary, rather than Tanaka or Kawaguchi when handling sensitive diplomatic issues. Moreover, as de facto foreign minister, Fukuda mostly supported the "mainstreamers" inside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who belonged to group 1.

This is why both Fukuda and Ozawa could find some common ground in their security policy orientation. If Fukuda belonged to the same category as Koziumi and Abe, both of whom advocated more independence by expanding Japan's role in the U.S.–Japan security arrangement, Fukuda could not have pushed for a grand coalition with Ozawa. But Fukuda clearly decided he could work with Ozawa, not just because he believed Japan could continue its contribution to Operation Enduring Freedom with Ozawa's support, but also because of his preference for a balanced approach to China and the United States.[20]

This balanced approach was compatible with Ozawa's pro-China position. In a press conference on November 4, 2009, Ozawa said, "The Prime Minister [Fukuda] has decided on a very important policy shift in terms of our national security policy. With that shift, Japan will permit dispatching its self-defense force abroad only as a part of international peacekeeping efforts within UN-oriented activities based upon UN resolutions." Ozawa went on to stress that Japan should make fundamental changes to its traditional security policy, and could establish new principles for participating in international peacekeeping operations: "I personally believe, therefore, that it is worthwhile for us to begin our policy dialogue [between the LDP and DPJ for a grand coalition]," said Ozawa.[21]

After stepping down from the prime ministership, Fukuda explained that he told Ozawa that Japan could pursue a two-pillar security policy: multilateralism and the U.S.–Japan alliance. But according to Fukuda, Ozawa intentionally highlighted only the first pillar and failed to mention the U.S.–Japan alliance.[22] In Fukuda's view, both pillars are not mutually exclusive and, in fact, enhance one another. Rather than just following the United States, adhering to UN mandates allows Japan to decide on a case-by-case basis if it will participate in peacekeeping operations or campaigns such as Operation Enduring Freedom. This group 1 position has been embraced by the so-called American school inside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well.

In Ozawa's view, Koizumi's decision to join in Operation Enduring Freedom derived from his deep commitment to the U.S.–Japan alliance, not the UN mandate. To Ozawa, the operation was simply "America's War."[23] As such, it was Ozawa who continued to oppose the special law which enabled Japan's Self-Defense Force to remain in the region while participating in refueling operations. In the end, these differences, as well as opposition from Hatoyama and others within the DPJ, doomed the historic grand coalition between the LDP and DPJ.

The Roots of Japanese Independence

In light of this dynamic, it is important to understand the background both behind the fatalistic tension between Fukuda and Ozawa as well as how deeply rooted the desire for greater independence is among Japanese politicians. Fukuda's father, Takeo Fukuda (1976–1978) was known for his political rivalry with prime minister Kakuei Tanaka (1972–1974). Tanaka is still widely considered one of Japan's strongest political leaders ever, and whom Ozawa considers his political "godfather."

The political warfare between Fukuda and Tanaka overshadowed the LDP for years by splitting the party into two major groups in the 1970s: the Fukuda faction, from which Abe, Fukuda, and Koizumi originated, and the Tanaka faction to which Ozawa used to belong when he was a member of the LDP. Still, despite this long-time rivalry, Fukuda and Ozawa almost were able to merge the LDP and DPJ, partly due to the shared pro-Asia agenda of their political godfathers—an agenda that included a more independent position from the United States. After becoming prime minister in 1976, for example, Fukuda tried to establish much closer relations with Asian nations such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand. The policy later became known as the "Fukuda Doctrine."

A growing number of policymakers believe Japan should seek a more independent position.

Both Koizumi and Abe of the Fukuda faction were seen by Washington as typical pro-U.S. politicians whose political leanings originated from their faction's spiritual leader, Nobusuke Kishi, Abe's grandfather (2006–2007). Yet, even Kishi, in 1960, had concluded an historic agreement with the Eisenhower administration after insisting that the 1957 U.S.–Japan security treaty be revised. The original treaty was considered unfair to Japan since it allowed the United Sates to use Japanese facilities at will without Japanese approval. Kishi's desire to revise the treaty was so strong, in fact, that he effectively sacrificed his career to see it ratified over the objection of many young Japanese who no longer wanted any part of a formal security arrangement with the United States.

Kishi's desire was shared by Shigeru Yoshida (1946–1947, 1948–1954), who had concluded the original treaty with the United Sates. Yoshida, the grandfather of another pro-U.S. politician, Taro Aso (2008–2009), believed that Japan should reinvigorate its military by changing its U.S.-authored constitution. Even though Yoshida was the father of the economics-first Yoshida Doctrine that put economic development as Japan's priority, in

private he advocated that Japan should become a "true independent country" in the near future.[24] At the same time, both Yoshida and Aso believe Japan can be more independent while maintaining strong ties with the United States. Aso said in his book, *Totetsumonai Nippon* (*Tremendous Japan*) that it seems beneficial for Japan to keep coordinated security policy together with the United States.

Yoshida's life-long political rival, Ichiro Hatoyama (1954–1955), one of the founders of the LDP and grandfather of Japan's recently departed prime minister Hatoyama, was also well known for his nationalism. When Hatoyama became Japan's prime minister in 1954, he immediately restored formal relations with the Soviet Union. Although still a strong conservative, Hatoyama believed developing a new relationship with Moscow would help balance the excessive U.S. influence over Tokyo and facilitate a more independent Japan. Earlier, Yoshida had blocked Hatoyama from taking the highest office since Yoshida was seriously concerned that Hatoyama was too radical, potentially seeking to scrap the security deal with the United States because of his strong desire for restoring independence.[25]

Although their methods may have differed, even this earlier generation of post-war Japanese political leaders shared a common security vision—namely, that Japan would eventually have to become more independent and self-reliant. Yet, they all believed in maintaining the U.S.–Japan security alliance until Japan could reassert itself as a global power. They differed on how long this would take, but all agreed that, in the long run, Japan should change the nature of the bilateral alliance with the United States to restore her own sovereignty. Today, the same vision has been inherited by Japan's politicians whether they are named Ozawa, Hatoyama, or even Abe or Aso.

The Three Nos

Another factor influencing today's more complex, six-group taxonomy is Japan's nuclear option. Although no serious Japanese policymakers advocate Japan developing nuclear weapons today, many believe that Japan could do so "in theory" and that there is nothing in Japan's constitution that prohibits Japan from possessing such weapons. To such advocates, nuclear weapons represent a symbol of sovereignty or independence in Japanese security policy. That is why Abe, in spite of his desire to enhance the alliance, once indicated in 2003 that Japan was not legally prohibited from possessing a nuclear capability.

The foundation of Japan's nuclear policy was laid on December 11, 1967, when then-prime minister Eisaku Sato (1964–1972), one of the founders of both Koizumi's and Abe's political faction inside the LDP, delivered an address to the Diet that introduced the so-called "Three Non-Nuclear Principles"—no

possessing, no making, and no introducing nuclear weapons—or simply the Three Nos principle. Even though Sato and his administration had once favored Japan's own nuclear program in the wake of China's development of the bomb in the late 1960's, he eventually changed course. This was met with approval by Washington, which continues to look unfavorably on Japan acquiring nuclear weapons, and anti-nuclear forces in Japan which continue to represent the majority of Japanese to this day.

Sato's decision to introduce the Three Nos principle was controversial with some Japanese who believed it could weaken the U.S. nuclear deterrent for Japan. In theory, Japan cannot allow the United States to introduce any nuclear device in Japan because of the third no, no introduction. In practice, however, Japan also could not say no to the United States without jeopardizing the security alliance. To address the problem, the foreign ministry negotiated a diplomatic mechanism that Japan called "prior consultation." In practice, this has meant the United States is always expected to consult with the Japanese government prior to their introducing nuclear devices on Japanese territory.

An increasing nuance exists among the security orientations of Japanese political leaders.

Between the United States and Japan, however, a mutual understanding developed regarding the no introduction clause that basically implied that it did not extend to Japanese territorial waters, effectively allowing U.S. warships with nuclear weapons to sit in Japanese harbors. Then-Foreign Minister Takeo Miki said in his testimony before the Diet in 1968 that his understanding was different—that no introduction not only covered Japanese soil, but its territorial waters as well.[26] With this statement, the Japanese government declared that the United States must always inform the Japanese government in advance when U.S. vessels, including nuclear-armed submarines, entered Japanese territorial waters. In other words, with Miki's statement, the Japanese government acted as if the U.S. military vessels did not carry nuclear material or devices since there had been no advance notice given or prior consultation.

Not content with this new interpretation, then-U.S. ambassador to Tokyo, Edwin O. Reischauer, approached Miki's successor, Masayoshi Ohira, on April 4, 1963 to confirm with him that the third no did not, in fact, mean that the United States needs to always consult with the Japanese government when bringing military vessels or submarines with nuclear weapons into Japanese territorial waters.[27] Japan also reportedly concluded a de facto secret deal (*mitsuyaku* in Japanese) with the United States over the third no. Under the

secret agreement, the United States could introduce naval nuclear assets into Japanese territorial waters without any advance consultation with the Japanese government, while Tokyo can assert that no such weapons have been introduced since there was no prior consultation.

Many Japanese elites question the U.S. nuclear commitment to Japan.

Ironically, the secret deal, together with the Three Nos principle, has led many Japanese elites to question the U.S. nuclear commitment to Japan. As was the case with Europeans, such as German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt in the 1970s and early 1980s who pushed for the introduction of U.S. intermediate-range nuclear weapons to counter Soviet SS-20 missiles, many Japanese believed that Washington would not sacrifice Los Angeles by retaliating against Beijing following a Chinese attack against Tokyo. Such fears were further heightened after North Korea's first missile test and subsequent nuclear tests in the 1990s and 2000s. On May 17, 2007, Shintaro Ishihara, a famous nationalist governor of Tokyo, said in his speech in New York, "If the U.S. would not fulfill her responsibility based upon [the] U.S.–Japan security treaty in the case of emergency, Japan will make her own efforts to protect herself. This would lead Japan to possess nuclear weapons as the U.S. is concerned." His voice was not the only one among Japanese then who were seriously concerned about the DPRK's future intention.

To address the new reality in Asia, some Japanese policymakers said that Tokyo should declare that it would go back to the original position concerning the third no. In other words, Japan would welcome U.S. warships with nuclear capabilities into Japanese territorial waters whenever the United States decided to do so. Such realists, including former Foreign Ministry Vice Minister Ryohei Murata, insisted that Japan should abandon the "no-introduction into territorial waters" interpretation so that both governments can ensure the reliability of the U.S. nuclear umbrella in the defense of Japan.[28]

In addition, President Barack Obama's famous Prague speech against nuclear proliferation, which could lead the United States to renounce the first use of nuclear weapons in most circumstances—although pointedly not including North Korea—further raised doubts among some in Tokyo about the U.S. nuclear commitment to Japan. Such Japanese fears that Obama's speech—together with the new U.S. Nuclear Policy Review (NPR) which does not sufficiently account for a possible North Korean chemical or biological attack—has given rise to a fear that there is a perception gap between Japan and the United States. Many Japanese security experts are somehow concerned that

Obama's approach would weaken U.S. nuclear deterrence against North Korea even though U.S. officials repeatedly confirm that would not be the case.

It was partly because of these growing fears that Japanese Foreign Ministry officials went to Capitol Hill in February 2009 to ask that the United States not decommission nuclear-warhead cruise missiles (Tomahawk TLAM-Ns) installed on U.S. nuclear submarines operating in the Sea of Japan.[29] In the end, that request was denied, partly based on recommendations by the report by the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States and the NPR, and the fact that such missiles are due to be removed by 2013.

The Hatoyama Tip of the Iceberg

Hatoyama himself viewed the secret deal over the third no as another example that the old U.S.–Japan alliance management style no longer worked in the twenty-first century. So long as Japan maintains such a posture, Hatoyama and his aides believed they could not establish a more independent position for Japan within the existing U.S.–Japan security framework. In part, this is what led Hatoyama in late 2009 to take the initiative on Futenma away from the foreign ministry, which fully supported the original relocation plan made under George W. Bush's administration. In addition to that, the Hatoyama government did try to ask the United States if some elements of the alliance, such as the Japan Status of Forces Agreement or Host Nation Support (Japan's financial support for U.S. bases in Japan), could be changed.

Of course, this was also done within the context of Hatoyama and the DPJ taking on the entrenched power of Japanese bureaucrats. A central tenet of the 2009 DPJ election campaign was to fundamentally reform the way Japan was governed. Unlike the United States, where political appointees and Congress effectively make policy, Japan has long been governed by an elite cadre of bureaucrats who are unanswerable to the electorate.

This was the backdrop within which Hatoyama believed he could negotiate with the new Obama administration. He was determined not to depend on the Japanese bureaucracy, relying on a small inner circle of advisors who would bypass the foreign ministry and deal directly with their U.S. counterparts.

Yet, none of the numerous "backchannels" Hatoyama used to communicate with the Obama administration worked very well. This was partly due to the quality of his advisors outside of Japanese government. The more Hatoyama struggled to establish such channels, however, the more U.S. officials became suspicious about Hatoyama's ultimate intentions, particularly given the breakdown of relations between the foreign ministry and Hatoyama's office. On July 9, 2010, ForeignPolicy.com carried out a story that described the tension

between the Obama administration and the Hatoyama government with a headline of "Can Anyone Govern Japan?"[30]

Hatoyama and his advisors believed they should end what they considered an old-fashioned alliance management style. But they failed to establish a new system or mechanism with which they could deal with their U.S. counterparts. Rather than being seen as trying to create a new paradigm for U.S.–Japan relations—a paradigm that was not necessarily anti-U.S.—Hatoyama merely engendered distrust from a Washington Japan policy community, which was used to dealing with known quantities in Tokyo.

This, however, was not all Hatoyama's fault. When the Obama administration took office, Japan was far down its ledger of priorities. The global financial crisis, Iraq, Afghanistan, and numerous other issues all took precedence. Compared to the Bush administration, which had many Japan experts, U.S.–Japan relations in the Obama administration was left to a small cadre of officials in the DOD and the State Department, most of whom had no connection to Hatoyama or his inner circle. Meanwhile, long-time U.S. counterparts in the foreign ministry were being routinely cut out of the process by the prime minister's office. Relations with the White House became so bad that Hatoyama was given only a ten minute meeting with Obama at an April 2010 nuclear summit in Washington, a slight that even Hatoyama's critics found to be unduly insulting. On April 15, 2010, Sadakazu Tanigaki, the president of the LDP, blamed Hatoyama himself at a press conference in the LDP headquarters for not being able to have an official meeting with Obama in Washington: "Regretfully, Mr. Hatoyama was not seen as a counterpart to deal with by the U.S."

Now What for U.S.–Japan relations?

Since Hatoyama's resignation on June 2, 2010, alliance watchers have tried to determine the security orientation of Japan's current prime minister, Naoto Kan. Even though he made it clear at his first press conference that he would honor the Hatoyama government's agreement over Futenma, Kan is viewed as somewhat of an unknown foreign policy entity. Kan made his name in the 1990s exposing Japanese health ministry bureaucrats who tried to cover up a tainted blood scandal. And unlike his predecessors Abe, Aso, and Fukuda, the self-made Kan has no political family background that could provide clues as to his orientation.

Many in Tokyo may believe Kan will fall into the nationalist/realist camp since some of his strongest backers include pro-U.S. nationalist/moderate (group 3) adherents such as Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada and former DPJ leader Seiji Maehara. In fact, when he became the DPJ party leader,

Kan said the U.S.–Japan relationship is the foundation of Japan's foreign policy. But it was also Kan who pointed out in August 2001 that Japan should take a serious look at the potential relocation of U.S. Marines in Okinawa outside of Japan.

Given the ongoing rise of China and an unstable nuclear North Korea, none of the nationalist groups outlined above believe the 60 year-old alliance with the United States should be abolished anytime soon. But most of them continue to believe that Japan must reestablish its national pride, and ultimately enhance its security, by pursuing its own national security policy. Given the current state of Japan's two-party system, it is likely that some of these nationalist groups (2 to 5) will remain in power. And although internal political machinations and domestic policy considerations are sure to figure prominently in the future makeup of Japan's ruling coalition, the debate over Japan's security relationship with the United States will also play a large role.

> Tokyo increasingly believes a major U.S. policy change toward Japan is taking shape.

While many Japanese understand the Obama administration's frustrations with the DPJ, there is a growing sentiment in Tokyo, particularly among nationalist elements, that a major change in U.S. policy toward Japan is beginning to take shape. Some point to better ties between Washington and Seoul. Others, however, see the United States as slowly downgrading the U.S.–Japan security relationship in order to curry favor with an emerging China. Many nationalists—from group 2 to group 5—remain traumatized by the 1972 U.S.–Sino rapprochement, which they view as a first step in an eventual U.S. tilt in favor of Beijing. Such nationalists fear that Japan's continuing economic woes, together with a somewhat feckless approach to national security, will lead to a continuing bout with "Japan passing" and further questions about alliance management in Washington.

In fear of a much closer relationship between Washington and Beijing, even pro-U.S. nationalists (group 2), such as Abe, may prefer more independence in security policy, while anti-U.S. nationalists (group 4), such as Hatoyama or Ozawa, could accelerate their tilt toward China in the framework of the East Asia community, if China–U.S. relations were to improve.

Two Roads

Japan may soon come to a juncture where it faces two paths. One entails taking a more independent orientation, led by anti-American nationalists (groups 4 and 5), that includes embracing Asia (or China). The other path, led by pro-American nationalists (groups 2 and 3), involves Japan embracing a U.S.–

UK model, in which Tokyo plays an active role as a full partner with Washington.

Each road presents difficulties. Ancient distrust between China and Japan continues to this day despite some exchanges between political leaders. And Japanese attempts to apologize to China for its wartime misdeeds are more often than not spurned by a Chinese Communist Party, which prefers to keep the issue alive for their own domestic political reasons. For years, predictions of Tokyo turning toward Beijing, or even acting as a bridge between China and the West, have failed to materialize.

Creating a British-style alliance with the United States on the other hand, as even advocated by some in the Bush administration, presents its own problems. Over the years, Japanese political leaders have utterly failed to educate the Japanese public about the benefits, and more importantly the costs, of national security. Backed by the overwhelming might of the United States, the post-World War II Yoshida Doctrine helped ensure that Japan would be insulated from the sometimes messy costs of international conflict. Pacifism was embraced by most Japanese—from intellectual elite to business leaders to ordinary people on the street—largely due to the United States taking on the burdens of providing for security. Moreover, Japan lacks the network of think tanks, academics, and competent political appointees necessary to articulate such policies to the general public. In short, it seems unlikely that the Japanese public is anywhere near the point where it would support a wholesale revision of its security arrangement along the lines of the U.S.–UK model.

Japan and the United States must change the way each views the other.

Despite these problems, the U.S.–Japan security alliance has proven to date to be a success. To maintain it, however, both Washington and Tokyo must accelerate their efforts to institutionalize the mechanisms by which the alliance now functions, so as to insulate it from the political vagaries of the day. This institutionalization should include regular strategic dialogue as well as joint military exercises and intelligence gathering, similar to what both the United States and the United Kingdom now do together.

More importantly, both Japan and the United States must change the way each views the other. It is no longer 1945. Despite its problems, Japan remains one of the most dynamic economic powers on earth. Before thinking about ending its bilateral alliance with the United States, Japan needs to act more like Ozawa's "normal nation" rather than the vassal state it has often been. It needs to increase spending on defense (currently less than 1 percent of GDP compared

to 4.5 percent for the United States) and it needs to embrace the principle of collective self-defense, similar to what exists in NATO. With this principle, many Japanese policymakers believe Japanese self-defense forces can defend U.S. troops in battlefields militarily. Without that, Japan cannot even use its missile defense system if a missile is launched toward the United States by a third party. If such changes are made, Japanese experts hope that the United States will consider intergrating Japan into the decisionmaking process on security issues affecting both countries.

The United States also must understand that the fissures beginning to appear in the alliance's underlying foundation are deeply rooted, both in the past and the present, and not the function of Hatoyma or the DPJ party. History has shown that alliances cannot last forever. Many in Japan, and particularly the United States, may prefer the status quo for a while for many reasons. But the world is rapidly changing, and standing pat may not be good enough. Factors like relations with China, nuclear policy, and the future of the Japanese constitution have made Japanese political factions more complicated. The United States and others need to understand these changes, rather than simply writing off recent difficulties to Hatoyama's tenure. Only then can the future of U.S.–Japan relations be more clearly constructed.

Notes

1. Yukio Hatoyama, Democratic Party of Japan's (DPJ) Diet members emergency meeting, June 2, 2010, http://asx.pod.tv/dpj/free/2010/20100602soukai_v56.asx.
2. See Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Japan–U.S. Security Treaty," January 19, 1960, http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/q&a/ref/1.html.
3. See Kensuke Watanabe, *Ozawa Ichiro: Kirawarru Densetsu* [*Legend to be Hated*], (Tokyo: Syougakukan, May 2009), p. 174.
4. The Higuchi Report was released by Japan's latest socialist prime minister, Tomiichi Murayama, and the coalition government with the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). See "The Modality for Security and Defense Capability of Japan: The Outlook for the 21st Century," Japanese Politics and International Relations Database, August 12, 1994, http://www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ ~worldjpn/documents/texts/JPSC/19940812.O1J.html (in Japanese).
5. See Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Web site, http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/usa/hosho/kyoryoku.html (in Japanese).
6. For example, a poll reported by *Yomiuri Shimbun* on December 11, 2009 shows 75 percent supporting ratio for U.S.–Japan alliance among Japanese. See "US–Japan Relations 'Better' 17% of Japanese, 30% of U.S.," *Yomiuri Shimbun*, December 11, 2009, http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/politics/news/20091211-OYT1T00012.htm (in Japanese).
7. See Watanabe, *Ozawa Ichiro: Kirawareru Densetsu*, p. 174.
8. Ibid.
9. See Ichiro Ozawa, *Nihon Kaizou Keikaku* [Japan Reforming Plan] (Tokyo: Koudansya, 1993).

10. According to some former aides close to Hashimoto, Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials were opposed to Hashimoto's suggestion that he request the return of Futenma. Despite the objection, Hashimoto raised the issue to President Bill Clinton when they met in Santa Monica, CA on February 23, 1996.
11. See Tsuyoshi Sunohara, *Tanjyo Kokusan Spy Eisei* [*Birth of Japan's First Spy Satellite*] (Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 2005), p.128.
12. Hashimoto's position on the Yasukuni Shrine and toward China was complicated. Since he counted on many World War II veterans and their families in terms of the election, he tried to pay respect to the shrine by making a private visit to Yasukuni on July 29, 1996. After 1997, he stopped going because of his visits to China.
13. The meeting was controversial among Japanese conservatives since China was too late in officially requesting an audience with the emperor. Ozawa, as well as the Hatoyama government, had overridden Japan's Imperial Household Agency's grand rule in order to make this meeting happen as Xi Jinping wanted on December 15, 2009.
14. Hatoyama said this at a daily stakeout with Japanese press on December 16, 2009. He later backtracked from the comment. See "Alliance without US force stationing," *Asahi Newspaper*, December 17, 2009, p. 4 (in Japanese).
15. Ozawa said this at his press conference on February 2, 2009 in Fukuoka City. See "Japan can be Nuclearized at Any Time, Ozawa said to Curb China," *Nihon Keizai Shimnun*, April 7, 2002, p. 2.
16. Shinzo Abe made this remark in his speech on May 2002 as Waseda University. Later, on November 8, 2006, he also said in a Diet discussion with Ozawa that Japan could discuss the issue of nuclearization as part of brainstorming on her own deterrence. See "Abe 'Nuclear Debate' We Accept the Statement," NTV News, August 11, 2006, http://www.news24.jp/articles/2006/11/08/0470737.html (in Japanese).
17. Yasuo Fukuda said this at an off-the-record roundtable session with Japan's prime minister residence press on May 31, 2002.
18. Fukuda and Ozawa met for two hours in the Diet to discuss the grand coalition on December 2, 2007.
19. See Tsuyoshi Sunohara, *Domei Henbou* [*Alliance Transformed*] (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shimbun Syuppansya, 2005), p. 84.
20. Fukuda, interview with author, Tokyo, May 2009 (Interview with Fukuda).
21. This statement was made by Ozawa at press conference on November 4, 2007 to explain his discussions with the Fukuda. See "Democratic Party Leader Ichiro Ozawa Has Announced His Resignation, and the Judge Rejects no-Confidence in Coalition Decision," Reuters, November 4, 2007, http://jp.reuters.com/article/topNews/idJPJAPAN-28701620071104 (in Japanese).
22. Interview with Fukuda.
23. He often called the operation "America's war" or "Bush's war." For example, when they met first on August 8, 2007 at the DPJ Headquarters in Tokyo, Ozawa told then-U.S. ambassador to Tokyo, J. Thomas Schieffer, that he could not support the operations both in Afghanistan and Iraq, since neither of them was endorsed by the UN. See "Japan President Ichiro Ozawa Met with U.S. Ambassador , Expressed Opposition to Deadline for Anti-Terrorism Law Extension," AFP News, August 9, 2007, http://www.afpbb.com/article/politics/2265209/2010562 (in Japanese).
24. See Yasutoshi Kita, *Yoshida Shigeru no mita yume* [*A Dream of Sehigeru Yoshida*] (Tokyo: Fusousha, 2010), p. 12.
25. Ibid, p .98.
26. Takeo Miki, testimony in front of the Diet, March 12, 1968, http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/cgi-bin/KENSAKU/swk_dispdoc.cgi?SESSION=28937&SAVED_RID=4&PAGE=0&

POS=0&TOTAL=0&SRV_ID=3&DOC_ID=10275&DPAGE=2&DTOTAL=45&DPOS=36&SORT_DIR=1&SORT_TYPE=0&MODE=1&DMY=9865. Later, on April 23, 1976, he said that any passing of a U.S. nuclear device into Japan's territorial water should be interpreted as a "nuclear introduction."

27. See Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "So-Called 'Secret Agreement' Report of Committee of Experts on Issue," March 9, 2010, http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/mitsuyaku/pdfs/hokoku_yushiki.pdf#search (in Japanese).
28. See Ryohei Murata, *Memoiris of Ryohei Murata* (Tokyo: Minerva Shobou, 2008), p. 136.
29. See United States Institute of Peace, "America's Strategic Posture: The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States," 2009, http://media.usip.org/reports/strat_posture_report.pdf.
30. Jeff Kingston, "Can Anyone Govern Japan?" ForeignPolicy.com, July 9, 2010, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/07/09/can_anyone_govern_japan.