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Political Strategy, Leadership, and Policy Entrepreneurship in Japanese Defense Policy and Politics: A Comparison of Three Prime Ministerships

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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

POLITICAL STRATEGY, LEADERSHIP, AND POLICY ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN
JAPANESE DEFENSE POLICY AND POLITICS:
A COMPARISON OF THREE PRIME MINISTERSHIPS

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

by

Daniel Clausen

2013

To: Dean Kenneth G. Furton
College of Arts and Sciences

This dissertation, written by Daniel Clausen, and entitled Political Strategy, Leadership, and Policy Entrepreneurship in Japanese Defense Policy and Politics: A Comparison of Three Prime Ministerships, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this dissertation and recommend that it be approved.

Clair Apodaca

Harry Gould

Matthew Marr

Paul Kowert, Major Professor

Date of Defense: March 19, 2013

The dissertation of Daniel Clausen is approved.

College of Arts and Sciences

Dean Lakshmi N. Reddi
University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2013

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DEDICATION

To my mom, Dulce Jasiiecki. For all her love, support, and wisdom.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION
POLITICAL STRATEGY, LEADERSHIP, AND POLICY ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN
JAPANESE DEFENSE POLICY AND POLITICS:
A COMPARISON OF THREE PRIME MINISTERSHIPS

by

Daniel Clausen

Florida International University, 2013

Professor Paul Kowert, Major Professor

Since the end of the Cold War, Japan's defense policy and politics has gone through significant changes. Throughout the post cold war period, US-Japan alliance managers, politicians with differing visions and preferences, scholars, think tanks, and the actions of foreign governments have all played significant roles in influencing these changes. Along with these actors, the Japanese prime minister has played an important, if sometimes subtle, role in the realm of defense policy and politics. Japanese prime ministers, though significantly weaker than many heads of state, nevertheless play an important role in policy by empowering different actors (bureaucratic actors, independent commissions, or civil actors), through personal diplomacy, through agenda-setting, and through symbolic acts of state. The power of the prime minister to influence policy processes, however, has frequently varied by prime minister.

My dissertation investigates how different political strategies and entrepreneurial insights by the prime minister have influenced defense policy and politics since the end of the Cold War. In addition, it seeks to explain how the *quality* of political strategy and entrepreneurial insight employed by different prime ministers was important in the success of different approaches to defense.

My dissertation employs a comparative case study approach to examine how different prime ministerial strategies have mattered in the realm of Japanese defense policy and politics. Three prime ministers have been chosen: Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro (1996-1998); Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro (2001-2006); and Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio (2009-2010). These prime ministers have been chosen to provide maximum contrast on issues of policy preference, cabinet management, choice of partners, and overall strategy.

As my dissertation finds, the quality of political strategy has been an important aspect of Japan's defense transformation. Successful strategies have frequently used the knowledge and accumulated personal networks of bureaucrats, supplemented bureaucratic initiatives with top-down personal diplomacy, and used a revitalized US-Japan strategic relationship as a political resource for a stronger prime ministership. Though alternative approaches, such as those that have looked to displace the influence of bureaucrats and the US in defense policy, have been less successful, this dissertation also finds theoretical evidence that alternatives may exist.

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GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS, AND COMMONLY USED TERMS

2001 Anti-Terror Legislation. The Anti-Terror Legislation Special Measures Laws announced on October 2001 in response to the September 11, 2001 attacks on the US. They authorized supply and transport in support of US-led coalition anti-terror operations, search and rescue, and humanitarian missions.

2003 Iraq Legislation. The 2003 Law Concerning the Special Measures for Humanitarian Relief and Reconstruction in Iraq. It authorized the dispatch of the SDF to Iraq for purposes of humanitarian assistance.

2006 Realignment Agreement. The 2006 United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation. A comprehensive package for realignment of bases in Japan, it included a reaffirmation of US-Japan intent to move the functions of Futenma Airbase to the Henoko Bay area of Nago city in Okinawa (with 8,000 Marines and their dependents to be moved to Guam).

ACSA. The Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement. It governs the reciprocal provision of supplies and services between Japan's Self-Defense Forces and US Armed Forces. It applies to bilateral exercises and training, United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, humanitarian international relief operations, and operations in response to "situations in areas surrounding Japan."

Ampo (also, Security Treaty). A colloquial term for the US-Japan Security Treaty of 1960. This term is commonly used in journal articles and even academic essays written in Japanese.

ASDF. Air Self Defense Force

Bereaved Family Association. Following scholarly conventions, this term is used to refer to the Japanese organization "*izokukai*," a conservative group with links to the military that is well known for its support of politicians who visit Yasukuni Shrine.

BMD. Ballistic Missile Defense

CLB. Cabinet Legislative Bureau

DPJ. Democratic Party of Japan

EASR (also referred to as the "Nye Report"). The Department of Defense East Asian Strategy Report. It argued that the US military presence in Asia was partially responsible for economic growth and democracy in the region.

Futenma Airbase. US Marine Corps Airbase Futenma, a controversial airbase currently located in a crowded area of Ginowan City in Okinawa.

GSDF. Ground Self Defense Force

Higuchi Report. The final report by a committee chaired by Asahi Beer president Higuchi Kotaro called “The Modality of Defense and Security Capabilities of Japan” (*Nihon no Anzen Hoshō to Boeiriyoku no Arikata*). The report was released in 1994, and advocated for a continuation of the US-Japan alliance and greater contributions to UN-based security initiatives.

HSN (or Host Nation Support). The civilian and/or military assistance rendered by a nation to foreign forces within its territory during peacetime, crises or emergencies, or war based on agreements mutually concluded between nations.

JCP. Japan Communist Party

Joint Declaration. The US-Japan Joint Declaration on Security signed by President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro in 1996.

Joint Guidelines. The US-Japan Guidelines for Defense Cooperation

JSDF. Japan Self Defense Force

Kantei. The prime minister’s official residence. It refers to the combined resources of the prime minister’s office and the cabinet office, which were significantly expanded by administrative reforms in 2001.

Koenkai. Best translated as “local support groups,” these organizations serve as an invaluable tool for Japanese politicians to receive funds and to distribute favors to constituents.

Komeito. Sometimes referred to as the New Komeito or Clean Government Party.

LDP. Liberal Democratic Party

METI (formerly MITI). The Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry; formerly, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry

MoD (formerly JDA). The Ministry of Defense, formerly the Japan Defense Agency

MoF. The Ministry of Finance

MoFA. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MSDF. The Marine Self Defense Force

Murayama Apology. Then-Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi’s remarks on the event of the 50th anniversary of the end of the war. This apology was issued in 1995 and expressed “deep remorse” and “heartfelt apology” for the actions of Japan during the Pacific War. This apology was backed by a Lower House resolution. Since the time of this apology, even conservative prime ministers have endorsed and re-articulated the apology.

Mutoha (also, non-aligned voters). Voters not affiliated with any party. This group has regularly numbered above 50 percent of the electorate since the early 1990s.

Nemawashi. The process of laying the groundwork for a project through informal discussion with stakeholders and the gradual formulation of consensus on an issue.

PARC. The Policy Affairs Research Councils, which have been a feature of both the LDP and the DPJ, as well as smaller parties, at various times. They serve as key institutions for vetting policy proposals in the parties.

SACO. The Special Action Committee on Okinawa. This was an important working group set up following the infamous rape case in which several US Marines raped a middle school girl on Okinawa. This joint committee was set up to reevaluate the base presence on Okinawa.

SCC. The Security Consultative Committee, or the 2 plus 2 meeting. This is a key institution of the US-Japan alliance consisting of meetings of the Secretary of Defense and Secretary of State on the US side and the Defense Minister and Foreign Minister on the Japanese side.

SDPJ (formerly JSP). The Social Democratic Party of Japan. This party is the rump party of the once powerful Japan Socialist Party

SOFA (or Status of Force Agreement). The agreement defining the legal status of US personnel and property in the territory of another nation. The purpose of such an agreement is to set forth rights and responsibilities between the United States and the host government on such matters as criminal and civil jurisdiction, wearing of uniforms, carrying of weapons, tax and customs relief, entry and exit of personnel and property, and resolving damage claims.

Subgovernments. The constellation of politicians, bureaucrats, and client groups that specialize in specific issue areas such as education, health, industry, and defense.

Zoku. “Policy tribes” within the Liberal Democratic Party Policy Research Council that focus on specific issue areas.

A NOTE ON CONVENTION

This dissertation uses the Japanese conventions for writing names, with family names appearing first and given names appearing second.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to Leadership, Strategy, and Entrepreneurship in Japanese Defense Politics

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, Japan's defense policy and politics has gone through significant changes. In the post cold war era, Japan's first major experience was the "Gulf War shock," where Japan was criticized for not providing a human contribution to coalition forces commensurate with its financial power and its hefty financial contribution¹. In the early 1990s, elites at every level internalized the Gulf War incident as a failure. This failure was conceptualized at various levels as a failure of alliance management and as a failure of "international contribution." From this original shock, Japan has evolved into an active "civilian power," a staunch supporter of the US military presence in Asia (and to a lesser extent a supporter of its global security agenda), and a gradually "normalizing" middle power country (see Izumikawa, 2010; Samuels, 2007a; Shinoda, 2007b; Soeya, 2005; Wilkins, 2011).

In the backdrop of the last two decades of the post cold war world—a period best defined by its uncertainty and periodic shocks—the transformation of Japan's defense policy and politics has been anything but inevitable. US-Japan alliance managers, politicians with differing visions and preferences, scholars, think tanks, and the actions of

¹ Despite contributing 13 billion dollars to coalition forces, Japan would not be recognized in the thank you letter published by the Kuwait government in the *New York Times*. This article thanked all the participants of the coalition but failed to mention Japan. This came as a great shock to the Japanese government and proved to be a hot topic in the Japanese media. The lesson learned was simple: it was not enough to provide money; Japan would also need to provide a "human contribution" in order to be recognized for its contributions to global security. Japan responded by dispatching minesweepers to the Gulf. However, by this time, the "shock" of not being recognized for its contribution had permeated the ranks of elite politicians, and bureaucrats, and had become a fixture of elite and popular political discourse (Akiyama, 2002, p. 10-11; Funabashi, 1999; Soeya, 2005; Tanaka, 2009, p. 69-70).

foreign governments have all played significant roles in influencing this trajectory. Along with these actors, the Japanese prime minister has played an important role in the realm of defense policy and politics. Japanese prime ministers, though weaker than heads of states in presidential democratic systems and weaker than the British prime minister, nevertheless play an important role in policy by empowering different actors (bureaucratic actors, independent commissions, or civil actors), through agenda-setting, and through symbolic acts of state (Angel, 1989; Hayao, 1993; Stockwin, 2008; Shinoda, 2000). The power of the prime minister to influence policy processes, however, has frequently varied by prime minister.

Though structural contexts—the balance of threat within the East Asian region, both regional and domestic animosity toward past Japanese militarism, and the legacy of US bases and Japanese dependence on the US military deterrent—provide an essential ingredient for understanding Japan’s policy trajectory, they cannot fully account for the strengths and weaknesses at various times of actors within Japan at promoting their policy preferences. Even governmental politics models of Japanese defense politics retain strong elements of structuralism that tend to obscure seeing policymakers as active participants in their own dramas. My dissertation demonstrates that Japan’s defense policies are not only the product of structural contexts, but also involve innovative agent interactions and political strategies most aptly captured by the concepts “political strategy” and “policy entrepreneurship.”

The present study focuses on the role of the prime minister as a key actor in Japanese defense policy and politics. As my dissertation will demonstrate the *quality of strategy* and *policy entrepreneurship*—the way decision-makers make use of available

resources, the degree to which decisions find synergies with other administration policies, and the degree to which prime ministers are able to exploit underutilized resources—have impacted the course of Japan’s defense trajectory and have had important implications for the overall success of different prime ministerial agendas in Japan.

A Brief History of Japan’s Postwar and Post Cold War Defense and Security

Following its defeat in the World War II, Japan found itself an occupied power with a devastated economy and a shattered political system. The Japanese constitution, drafted by the US on November 3, 1946 and promulgated on May 3, 1947, included the famous Article 9 that renounced the use of military force:

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized (Umeda, 2006, p. 2; GoJ, N.A.).

Although the constitution was an invention of the American occupying forces, a large element of the Japanese public would eventually embrace it and its pacifist sentiments (Umeda, 2006; Berger, 1996; Oros, 2008). Moderates like Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru were able to effectively neutralize opposition to Article 9 from the right by establishing a bilateral security treaty with the US that would ensure Japan’s safety, while at the same time neutralizing left wing opponents by embracing Article 9. The US-Japan Security Treaty with the United States offered an asymmetric bargain: in return for a US guarantee of protection, Japan was to provide the US with bases (Articles 5 and 6 of the Treaty). In the original Security Treaty, the US was also granted authority over Japan’s

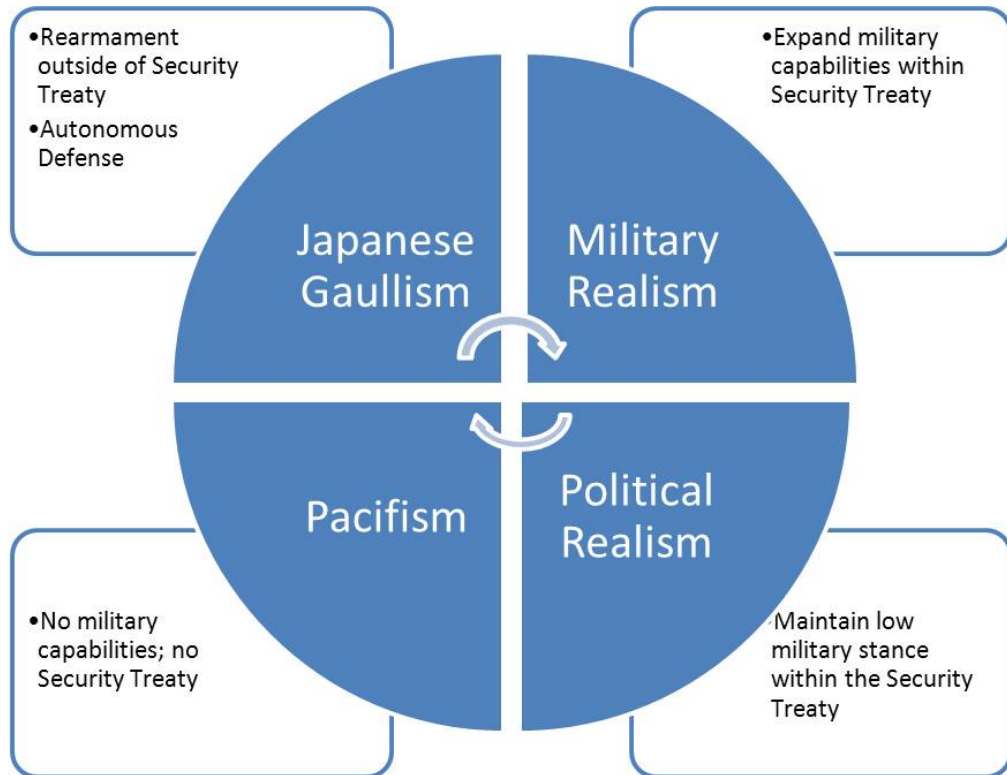
internal security. Not until 1960, under the heavy-handed tactics of the Kishi Nobusuke administration, would the Treaty be renegotiated to return responsibility for internal security, and thus sovereignty, back over to Japan. Though the ratification of the Treaty took place in an atmosphere of intense protests, the US-Japan Security Treaty would be renewed and Japan would be thoroughly ensconced in the Western alliance against the Communist Bloc (Samuels, 2003; Green and Szechenyi, 2011). Thus, under what would be called the Yoshida Doctrine, Japanese politics would be driven by concerns over domestic social harmony, raising living conditions, and economic development. Security and diplomatic commitments, for their part, would be kept to the lowest acceptable level. Though Japan would eventually re-establish a “self-defense force” (the Japanese Self Defense Force (JSDF)) with extensive military capabilities, limits on the use of force would be instituted through successive interpretation of the constitution that bound Japan to “minimum self-defense” (Tanaka, 1997). This interpretation of “minimum self-defense” would also prohibit “collective self-defense” that would allow Japan to come to the defense of an ally. Thus, while the US is treaty-bound to defend Japan from an attack, Japan has no similar obligation. Japan, for its part, would continue to supply the US with bases from which it could continue to project military power in the region.

Though a mainstream consensus formed under the Yoshida Doctrine affirming the importance of the US-Japan Security Treaty (often referred to as *Ampo*), various groups in Japan have nevertheless competed to promote their idea of which defense posture best serves the public interest. Roughly speaking, ideas regarding the prospective path of Japanese defense can be divided into four groups: *Japanese Gaullists*, who seek an autonomous defense position outside of the US-Japanese bilateral treaty; *military*

realists, who seek rearmament within the bilateral treaty framework; *civilian internationalists* or *political realists*, who seek greater regional integration and a lower stance on defense issues within the bilateral treaty (along with greater diplomatic participation in the UN); and *unarmed neutralists*, who see an unarmed, peace-loving Japan as the only assurance against conflict in the region and the rise of militarism within their own country (Mochizuki, 1983/1984; Mochizuki, 1995; Otake, 1983; Samuels, 2007a, 2007b; Sebata, 1992; Sebata, 2010, p. 53-54; Soeya, 2005).

Graphic 1. Mapping Ideas of Japanese Defense and Security

Source: Adapted from Mochizuki (1983/1984); Mochizuki (1995); Otake (1983);



Samuels (2007a, 2007b); Sebata (1992); Sebata (2010, p. 53-54); Soeya (2005).

During the early stages of the Cold War, political realists were generally more influential. However, since the 1980s military realists have been slightly more dominant than their political realist counterparts in mainstream politics. Even though both Japanese Gaullists and their pacifist counterparts on the other side of the spectrum generally remain marginalized from policy debates, they still nevertheless play key roles in empowering or obstructing actors in the mainstream.

Though the US exerted pressure on Japan to raise defense expenditures throughout the postwar period in order to contribute a greater share in its own defense, Japan was largely successful at invoking Article 9 as a constraint on a more active contribution. In addition, and partially as a result of this external pressure by the US, Japan would eventually begin promoting its own concept of security, comprehensive security (*sogo anzen hoshō*). As a concept meant to counter external criticism, the concept stressed its foreign aid and contributions to international organizations as part of a comprehensive contribution to international security; as a concept focused on Japan's national security, the concept has been used to focus attention on Japan's reliance on trade, as well as the importance of food and energy imports. Over time, Japanese concepts of comprehensive security have found affinities with UN concepts such as human security (Edstrom, 2008, p. 63-66; Soeya, 2004; Clausen, 2009)².

² The particular role human security (*ningen anzenhoshō*) has played in Japan's overall security policy has been a subject of debate among scholars. Some scholars believe that Japan's promotion of UN concepts of human security was and continues to be more cosmetic than substantial. At the very least, human security remains a concept alive and well in bureaucracies (such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)), think tanks, and NGOs in Japan responsible for implementing Official Development Assistance and humanitarian assistance more broadly. For the author's previous writing on the subject, see Clausen (2009).

Anti-militarism was deeply institutionalized over the years with the introduction of other policies to supplement Article 9. These policies included the rigorous separation of the military and civilian leaders (and the denigration of the former in policy circles); the executive order establishing the one percent of GDP cap on military expenditures; the three non-nuclear principles not to possess, produce, or introduce nuclear weapons in Japan; and the ban on arms exports. Though postwar Japan has been described as being allergic to defense strategy, this basic characterization of Japanese strategy misses just how much of postwar Japanese prosperity was derived from its minimalist defense policies. A minimalist defense posture, constructed to deter but not threaten, allowed Japan to pursue mercantilist policies that helped build up its national wealth and construct policies in Official Development Assistance (ODA) that could buy the support of neighboring nations. Samuels (2007a, 2007b) has called this a successful case of “cheap riding” on US extended deterrence (see also, Lind, 2004). Others, such as Kawasaki (2001) have suggested that this was a conscious strategy of minimizing offensive capabilities so as not to aggravate the regional security dilemma and provoke a costly arms race.

As Tanaka (1996, 1997) writes, the 1970s would serve as a “rehearsal” for the post cold war era. The combined influences of détente and the US need for greater burden-sharing among allies created an environment where Japan had to consider more seriously its own security needs. During the late 1970s, Japan would develop its Basic Defense Policy, which provided that the Japanese forces should be sufficient for the minimum defense of Japan. Throughout the late seventies and eighties, the US put increasing pressure on Japan to increase its efforts to contribute to the alliance. Increased

burden-sharing would come in the 1970s in the form of Host Nation Support or “burden payments” (*omoiyari yosan*) which offset the US expense of housing troops in Japan. These subsidies were the most generous of any US ally.

Despite the end of the Cold War, the East Asia region was nevertheless beset by a “Cold War residue” (Stockwin, 2008). The two halves of the Korean peninsula technically remained at war, nascent democratic impulses in China proved abortive, and Chinese relations with Taiwan remained tense. Most importantly, territorial disputes by various actors in the region stunted political relations and threatened the region with accidental war. Over time, this “recessed security dilemma” created a structure of embryonic multilateralism overlapping with balance of power politics (Buzan and Weaver, 2003; Katzenstein and Okawara, 2004). Despite the growing economic ties between Japan and China, political relations in many ways remained zero-sum, focused on the territorial disputes and the issue of history (Calder, 2006; Samuels, 2007a; Ishii, 1997; Masuda, 2007). China presents a danger both in its capability to harm Japan through conventional weapons like ballistic missiles and its ability to use its navy for blockade purposes and to disrupt sea lines of communication. These threats are embedded in deeper historical tensions between the countries that reflect anxieties about great power competition, colonial legacies, and wartime atrocities (Ebata, 1996, 1997, 2007; Calder, 2006; Samuels, 2007a). North Korea also remains a primary concern for defense planners. North Korea threatens Japan with its nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles, and territorial incursions. These threats are intensified by the affront of kidnapping cases. The kidnapping cases, which occurred in the late 1970s and 1980s, are seen by the Japanese as a unique crime against Japan. Though the issue of how to handle North

Korea's nuclear programs, its unpredictable leadership, and its frequent humanitarian crises provides a focal point for powers in the region, it can also often be another source of tension.

The post cold war world has thus created new dynamics that have opened up the basic tenets of Japanese defense. Through various special legislation and ad hoc arrangements, Japan has continued to reinterpret and work around Article 9 of the constitution in ways that reflect changing realities. Policy changes in the post cold war world included allowing the dispatch of the JSDF overseas, including peacekeeping missions in Cambodia, Mozambique, Rwanda, and East Timor (Edstrom, 2008; Oros, 2008; Shinoda, 2007b). In the mid-1990s, the government would also reconfirm its commitment to the US-Japan security treaty through a joint declaration between the US president and Japanese prime minister. The issuance of the joint declaration would be followed by the revised Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation to clarify missions and roles with regards to contingencies in the areas around Japan and in regions that would affect Japan's security (see Chapter 3). In the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the US, the JSDF would be deployed for operations in the Indian Ocean and in Iraq in support of their US ally. These operations would push the limits of Japanese prohibitions against collective self defense (see Chapter 4). In 2006, the two countries would agree to enhance military inter-operability by establishing joint bases. The agreement would increase the integration of its military establishment with US technology, as well as US command, control, and intelligence (see Sunohara, 2007; Tatsumi and Oros, 2007). Throughout the post cold war period, Japan would also take steps to expand the role of military-civilian relations and expand its military capabilities

within the one percent GDP limit on defense expenditures. Gradual changes in Japan's defense posture would include: the elevation of the Japan Defense Agency to a full ministry (Ministry of Defense); more frequent dispatches of the Japan Self Defense Force for reasons of alliance contribution, peacekeeping, and disaster relief; and the acquisition of an operational Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) system (Hughes, 2009; Tatsumi and Oros, 2007). Throughout this period, the legacy of Japan's colonial past has also hindered relations with its closest neighbors. All of these changes have taken place against the backdrop of public sentiment that increasingly accepts the existence of the Japan Self Defense Force (JSDF) and is more favorable to amending Article 9 of the constitution to clearly acknowledge the JSDF as a military (Hughes, 2009; Tatsumi and Oros, 2007; Samuels 2007a; Kliman, 2006). In the midst of these changes, the US-Japan security alliance remains strong. However, in the context of a deepening and broadening of the US-Japan alliance, thorny questions still remain over burden-sharing in times of military crisis and human security issues related to the concentration of bases on Okinawa Prefecture³.

In the post cold war world, Japan also faces enormous domestic obstacles that influence how it plans for its defense. These combined obstacles also increase the likelihood that something drastic might happen in domestic politics, overturning what has been an otherwise stable political order since the establishment of the Yoshida Consensus in 1955. In addition to the tragic events of March 11, 2011 (the combined earthquake,

³ As the case studies of this dissertation will demonstrate, human security issues related to bases concentrated in Okinawa have become a central aspect of Japanese defense politics. In particular, the issue of what to do with US Futenma Airbase has dominated the bilateral agenda for the US and Japan in recent years.

Table 1: Chronology of Key Dates in Japanese Defense

| Japan's National Defense Chronology | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1946 | McArthur orders SCAP to draft a model Japanese constitution (February) |
| 1947 | Japan's Peace Constitution goes into effect |
| 1950 | McArthur orders Japan to form the National Police Reserve (July) |
| 1951 | San Francisco Peace Treaty, U.S.-Japan Security Treaty signed (September) |
| 1952 | Occupation ends, Japan becomes independent (April) |
| 1955 | JDA and SDF established (July) |
| 1960 | Revision of the US-Japan Security Treaty (January) |
| 1972 | Reversion of Okinawa GOJ declares that Japan cannot exercise collective self-defense (October) |
| 1978 | Guidelines for US-Japan Security Cooperation established (November) |
| 1989 | The Berlin Wall comes down (October) |
| 1990 | Iraq invades Kuwait (August) U.N. Peace Cooperation bill dies (November) |
| 1991 | Gulf War starts, Japan contributes 13 billion (January) Japan dispatches minesweepers to the Persian Gulf (April) |
| 1992 | International Peace Cooperation Law enacted (June) SDF sent to Cambodia for PKO (September) |
| 1993-1994 | Korean Peninsula Crisis |
| 1995 | Nye Report (February) Okinawan Rape Case |
| 1996 | Hashimoto-Clinton Summit, Joint Defense Declaration (April) |
| 1997 | Agreement on New US Defense Guidelines (September) |
| 1998 | Taepodong flies over Japan (August) |
| 1999 | New Guidelines enacted (August) |
| 2001 | 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, D.C. (September) Anti-terrorism legislation enacted (November) SDF dispatched to Indian Ocean for rear-echelon support (December) |
| 2002 | Contingency legislation introduced in the Diet (April) Koizumi visit to Pyongyang; five abductees return to Japan (September) North Korea admits its violation of the 1994 framework agreement (October) |
| 2003 | North Korea withdraws from NPT (January) Special law on Iraq reconstruction enacted (July) |
| 2004 | Ground SDF sent to Iraq (January) |
| 2005/ 2006 | Agreement on Force Realignment reached |
| 2006 | Koizumi's "Graceland" Diplomacy with Bush; US-Japan alliance declared to have global scope |
| 2007 | Japanese Defense Agency is upgraded to Ministry of Defense |
| 2007 | Abe's Constitutional Reform Program proves abortive |
| 2009 | The Democratic Party of Japan's Hatoyama Yukio comes to power promising a "Close, equal alliance" and to move US Marine Airbase Futenma in Ginowan City |
| 2010 | Prime Minister Hatoyama resigns after failing in his pledge to move Futenma Airbase out of the prefecture. A Chinese fishing trawler collides with a Japanese Coast Guard ship near disputed territories marking a dramatic decline in Japanese-Chinese relations |
| 2011 | The dramatic March 11 triple disaster occurs: a major earthquake, a tsunami, and |

a nuclear disaster; during the crisis US-Japan joint military operation “Tomodachi” proves a success for the alliance

*Adapted from Shinoda (2007); Oros (2011)

tsunami, and nuclear disaster), Japan faces significant medium to long-term issues: the specter of demographic decline and an aging population; an enormous national debt (over 200 percent of GDP at the writing of this dissertation); and prolonged political paralysis in dealing with these problems. Japan will face important questions about the continuation of its nuclear energy policy and how to meet its energy needs in the future, adjust to the harsh demographic challenges, pay its public debts, and revitalize its economy. How these issues are handled will have an important impact on whether Japan can rehabilitate itself into a healthy middle power in the region, able to project its political influence. Thus, future decisions on Japan’s defense policies will need to be made within a framework of these larger issues. No doubt, how security issues are addressed will also influence how Japan is able to address these domestic problems.

Prior Approaches to Japanese Defense Policy and Politics

Prior scholarship on Japanese defense policy and politics has done much to demonstrate why Japanese defense policy has been progressively more “realist” (i.e., pursuing military modernization and a closer relation with the US), but also, why domestic norms and institutions have repressed stronger moves toward military rearmament. Even though Japan has begun an ambitious military modernization program, engaged in joint Ballistic Missile Defense with the US, loosened restrictions on the participation of the military in policy debates, and participated in *de facto* collective security, these actions have been less than what neo-realists predicted would occur in the

post-cold war environment (for a full critique of neo-realist predictions see Katzenstein and Okawara, 2004, p. 110). Japan still retains a one percent of GDP limit on its defense expenditures, has retained Article 9 of the constitution which prohibits Japan from waging war, and still has framed many of its military dispatches in terms of humanitarian missions (Oros, 2008). Though these approaches have enriched our understanding of the underlying structures of Japan's defense trajectory, they have nevertheless neglected to fully conceptualize the role of individual choice and political strategy in the transformation of Japan's defense trajectory.

This section addresses three particularly important approaches to Japanese defense policy and politics: reluctant realism, the security identity approach, and the governmental politics approach.

Reluctant (or transitional) realist approaches to Japanese security politics examine the way shifts in the distribution of capabilities, particularly the rise of China and North Korean nuclearization, have served to move Japan away from its pacifist stance toward a more realist policy (Green, 2001, 2009; Kliman, 2006) that is more focused on the balance of power, the "national interest," and security from external threats in a (somewhat constrained) security dilemma. In contrast to conventional neorealist approaches, reluctant realist approaches have rejected both the unitary actor position and the materialism of neorealism. Instead, these approaches tend to be methodologically constructivist, examining the way external threats create the permissive conditions for internal actors in Japan to shift toward more "normal" forms of discourse on security. In addition, these approaches also identify variables at both the international and domestic level that have constrained Japan's transition toward a more realist security

culture. The tangible effects of this shift in security culture can be seen in programs for force modernization, the erosion of the separation between civilian and military leadership, encroachments on the pacifist constitution and other peace principles that have allowed for greater commitments to peacekeeping, and to some extent cooperation with the US in the realm of defense.

In his study of the trajectory of Japanese security policy, Kliman (2006) argues that Japan should be described as in a stage of transitional realism. For Kliman, four major factors—foreign threats, US policy, executive leadership, and generational change—have worked to slowly erode the foundation of a domestic idealism built on pacifist principles (2006, p. 4). While each of these four factors is important, Kliman’s key focus is on the socializing influence of foreign threat as an independent variable. Because of the shift in power following the Cold War, Japan is no longer the indispensable ally the US once needed to face the Soviet Union. The redistribution of threats within the international system has made it more difficult to rely on US military capabilities at a time when Japan is facing the external realities of a rising Chinese power set on military modernization and a belligerent and unstable nuclear-armed North Korea. Unlike traditional realism, Kliman’s approach does not “black box” the state. Kliman locates key facilitators and constraints to realism in domestic institutions and political processes. While executive leadership and generational change have played key facilitating roles for a realist approach to defense, residual domestic idealism helps to prevent Japan from reaching a realist strategy too quickly. Part of the slowness of change is the consequence of institutional inertia, but also stems in part from pragmatism—Japan does not want to alarm its neighbors and aggravate the security dilemma. Even

though executive leadership is addressed in Kliman's (2006) approach, much of the focus is placed on the prime ministership of Koizumi with little analysis of other actors or the variety of choices available to political actors at different levels of the policy process. Additionally, one important prediction by Kliman, that “Koizumi may represent the forerunner of a new breed of Japanese executive” (2006, p. 152), has not come to pass. Thus, there is a need for research that addresses not only Koizumi-type prime ministers (outliers in terms of their assertive approach to prime ministerial power) but also more consensus-oriented prime ministers who have nevertheless had an important impact on Japan’s policy trajectory.

The security identity approach examines the way norms of anti-militarism have been embedded in domestic political institutions and political discourses, and thus, the way this anti-militarist identity has produced a greater amount of continuity between the Cold War and post-cold war world than realists are willing to admit (Berger, 1993, 1996, 1998, 2007; Katzenstein, 1996; Oros, 2008). The security identity literature examines the way anti-militarist ideas, formed under the aegis of US extended deterrence through the 1950s and 1960s, and embedded through the Yoshida consensus, has formed an anti-militarist security identity. The approach looks at the long-established attitudes against violence, the institutionalization of anti-militarist sentiments through Article 9 of the constitution, the three non-nuclear principles, the one percent ceiling on defense spending, restrictions on arms exports, the rigid separation of military officers from policymaking, and the prohibition against the military use of outer space as examples of the presence of this anti-militarist identity. As Oros defines security identity:

A security identity is a set of collectively held principles that have attracted broad political support regarding the appropriate role of state action in the security arena and are institutionalized into the policy-making process. Once (or if) such an identity become hegemonic in the polity, it serves as a structure in which all future policy decisions must operate, providing an overarching framework recognized both by top decision makers and by societal actors under which a state shapes its security practices (2008, p. 9).

According to Oros, the three central tenets of Japanese anti-militarism are: no traditional armed forces, no use of force by Japan except in self-defense, and no Japanese participation in foreign wars (2008, p. 10). Though the security identity does not determine agent actions, those politicians who wish to cross any boundary of this identity must pay extensive political costs. A security identity shapes the public debate and provides its vocabulary, but does *not* determine the outcome. As Oros argues (p. 1), these principles shape what is considered “normal” in Japanese politics.

Oros himself notes, however, that accounts of Japan's security identity need to have a stronger focus on the way agents actively use and redefine the resources of the anti-militarist security identity. Oros writes: “In looking to Japan’s security future, however, scholars and practitioners must redouble their effort to investigate important sources for sustaining and altering Japan’s security identity, including renewed attention to how “enterprising agents” (or as others term them “political entrepreneurs”) seek to craft ideas and boost their power” (2008, p. 198).

As Oros (2008) suggests, by addressing the role of political entrepreneurs, one can then better see how structural elements are reworked through the practices of agents. As this dissertation will demonstrate, however, the anti-militarist security identity is just one resource that political entrepreneurs can draw from (and often it is not even the most relevant resource). Though the anti-militarist security identity is a resource largely

supported by the general population, it finds decreasing salience in security and defense policy circles where cultures of realism remain prevalent. These policy circles—largely US-Japan Security Treaty diplomats, members of the armed forces and defense bureaucrats, relevant think tank officials, as well as politicians—are often influenced by their education in the United States and England, as well as by their frequent interactions with counterparts from the US (Sebata, 2011, personal interview; Watanabe Tsuneo, 2012, personal interview; Watanabe Akio, 2012, personal interview; Green, 2001). Thus, a realist vocabulary that includes terms such as “balance of power” and “national interest” is also becoming increasingly important (see Samuels, 2007a, 2007b).

A third approach includes variations on the Bureaucratic Politics and Organization Process Models developed by Allison (1971) and Halperin (1974), which I will describe for purposes of brevity as the **Governmental Politics Model**. The most direct uses of the Governmental Politics approach has been Sebata’s (1992, 2010) study of bureaucratic politics and Shinoda's (2007a, 2007b) approach to policymaking using a modified version of Halperin’s model of concentric policymaking circles.

In Sebata’s (1992, 2010) approach, institutional procedures and inertia make any grand changes to policy difficult. Thus, policy change is often an incremental and pragmatic shift from one policy to the next. Sebata (2010) overcomes some of the limitations of the model as applied to the US policymaking system by incorporating Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) politicians and US alliance managers as key actors in internal bureaucratic struggles. Instead of understanding policymaking as coming from a single rational actor, actions are seen as the result of semi-feudal actors within government attempting to pursue their own organizational objectives through action

networks. As Sebata argues, instead of a unified “national interest” (*kokueki*), what occurs instead are “ministerial interests” (*shoeki*) (Sebata, 2011, personal interview). Thus, the concepts of “logrolling” and ministerial interests are applied through each of the cases with a great deal of explanatory utility. While Sebata’s approach puts more emphasis on agent interactions, it often creates a form of “rump” agency. Actors are frequently little more than the position they occupy within the policymaking hierarchy. For this reason, a study that fully theorizes the role of strategy and policy entrepreneurship is needed to demonstrate when and how differences in political skill and mastery of surrounding political resources have mattered in policy making and why more dramatic shifts have sometimes occurred.

A particular weakness of the literature is in explaining why the power of the prime minister has varied so drastically since the end of the Cold War. A critical examination of strategy and policy entrepreneurship—the degree to which leaders are able to exploit different structural contexts positively through political strategies—is necessary to complement these governmental politics explanations.

Shinoda’s pioneering research on the role of the prime minister has taken important steps toward filling this gap (Shinoda, 2000, 2007a, 2011). Shinoda’s (2007a) examination of the role of the *kantei* (the combined resources of the Cabinet Office and the Office of the Prime Minister) in recent foreign policymaking also uses a form of governmental politics. In his approach, Shinoda uses a modified form of the Halperin/Hilsman concentric circles model. In this model, concentric circles are drawn to demonstrate the relevance of different actors to the inner workings of government. The outermost circle is the general public (whose support the inner actors need, even if they

do not participate directly in public policy). Progressing inward toward the center are the media and the opposition parties, followed by coalition partners, the ruling party, and finally the prime minister's own cabinet at the center. Shinoda uses this model to explain how Prime Minister Koizumi was able to elicit support from outside actors to pressure actors on the inside to consent to his policies. Koizumi's approach included the use of general public support and the support of coalition partners to pressure members of his own party in policy negotiations. Through his concentric circles approach, Shinoda demonstrates the various relationships of actors in the policy process to the prime minister and how the prime minister can use bargaining approaches to pressure dissenting parties (2007, p. 11-15). In short, Shinoda finds that the more radical the policy, the more public support is needed to pressure interest groups to adopt the controversial legislation.

My dissertation will not attempt to supplant Shinoda's explanatory framework, but rather to demonstrate broader aspects of strategy as performed by various prime ministers. Most importantly, the current dissertation will look at aspects of coherence, focus, and the formulation of proximate goals as sources of prime ministerial power. While the dissertation will use an approach that focuses on the role of strategy and entrepreneurship, insights drawn from the work of scholars using the governmental politics approach will be indispensable for theorizing the broader contexts of the prime minister's field of action. Key concepts from the governmental political approach will prove valuable for an approach that takes into account more fully the different forms of strategy and entrepreneurship available to the prime minister. The key concepts borrowed from the governmental politics model included the role of expertise, knowledge, and position in the policymaking process as a form of governmental power, as well as notions

of bureaucratic turf and the intransigence of bureaucratic actors when policies impact their ministerial interests. As will be discussed in Chapter 2, while bureaucrats have key advantages in terms of information, having a permanent stake in policies related to their area of policy and access to personal networks, the prime minister has his own advantages. These advantages include a platform for eliciting public approval and the ability to act as the spokesman for the nation.

Theoretical Perspective: Political Strategy and Policy Entrepreneurship

Early examples of the difference that leadership makes in the success or failure of a military campaign or political project can be seen in the likes of Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*, in Sun Tzu's *Art of War*, and in Machiavelli's *The Prince* (Thucydides, 1993; Machiavelli, 2004; Byman and Pollack, 2001; Grove, 2007; Preston, 2010; Sun Tzu, 2008; Rumelt, 2011). Thucydides' contrasting descriptions of the realistic and cautious strategies of Pericles and the reckless and self-aggrandizing strategies of Alcibiades are an early example of how authors have explained outcomes in terms of the quality of strategy and leadership (Thucydides, 1993). More contemporary examples of leadership study have used comparative approaches to demonstrate how leaders in similar contexts have used different strategies to bring about different outcomes (see Samuels, 2003). More recent scholarship in leadership has sought to demonstrate how the quality of strategy can be evaluated across fields and disciplines. This approach demonstrates the utility of in depth case studies for examining when a new entrepreneurial insight has inspired the formation of bold new strategy (Rumelt, 2011).

Despite the general recognition of the importance of leadership and strategy in international affairs (especially by practitioners), in much of the International Relations scholarship, these concepts are often seen as something that must be recovered or even rescued from the excesses of structural theories⁴ (Byman and Pollack, 2001, p. 108; Hermann and Hagan, 1998; Samuels, 2003). The dissertation seeks not only to recover agency as a key variable, but also to move beyond frequent assertions that “leadership matters,” by exploring two important components of leadership: *strategy* and *entrepreneurship*. While the term “strategy” will be well recognized as a concept in International Relations, the term “entrepreneurship” may be less recognized. For most scholars, entrepreneurship is largely associated with the fields of economics and business. Indeed, there are few good translations of the term into Japanese that do not evoke meanings associated with business⁵. Nevertheless, “entrepreneurship” is increasingly being recognized as trait that exists in nearly every sphere of human activity (Stockley, Frank, and Stough, 2009, p. 3; Maclachlan, 2010, p. 1; Klein et al, 2010).

The leadership literature often associates entrepreneurship with creativity, innovation, and in some cases even deviance (Boyett 1996; Klein et al 2010; Samuels

⁴ This neglect of the role of leadership, however, does not extend to other disciplines. The role of the leader is still very much celebrated in disciplines such as history, management, and military studies. The field of International Relation’s ambivalent relationship with the role of individuals can be seen especially in Kenneth Waltz’s *The Man, the State, and War*. Waltz introduces the individual as one level of analysis side by side with the state and the international system only to reject this level in the book’s conclusion (Waltz, 1959).

⁵ When discussing the topic with peers in Japanese, a katakana variant of the word policy entrepreneurship was used: “*porishi antorupurunushippu*”. This was seen as a better translation than “*kigyokaseishin*”, which has a meaning specific to business (*kigyoka* means “someone who starts a business” and *seishin* means “way of thinking”). One interviewee (Watanabe Akio, 2012, personal interview) urged me not to use either term in my talks with Japanese officials, and instead to focus on “*ridashippu*” (leadership) for simplicity’s sake.

2003). Entrepreneurs are “different” because they engage in “creative discovery,” exploring new opportunities to push their ideas and achieve their objectives (Porter, 1996; Schneider and Teske, 1992; Teske and Schneider 1994; Kirzner, 1973; King and Roberts, 1991). What my theoretical focus will retain from the business and public sector management literature on entrepreneurship is the focus on creativity, innovation, and the ability of entrepreneurial agents to see opportunities and resources that other agents miss. Thus, entrepreneurial behavior suggests “alertness to hitherto unnoticed opportunities” (Kirzner, 1973, p. 39; See also, Stockley et al, 2002; Klein et al, 2010; Samuels, 2003; Staveley, 2000). This is not to suggest that “entrepreneurs” are pure agents, unbounded and free. Instead, my use of the concept of policy entrepreneurship posits that agents are able to exert an unusual amount of power through their relationship with structures. In my conceptualization of policy entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs are able to understand and learn from their environments—often intuitively—in ways that allow them to see resources and constraints in ways others do not, thus providing them with a competitive advantage.

As Rumelt (2011) recognizes in his study of strategy, there is a strong relationship between new forms of strategy and entrepreneurial insight. He argues that a new strategy is usually facilitated by a moment of insight (an “aha” moment) where a new resource or advantage is discovered. Rumelt writes, “[i]n a changing world, a good strategy must have an *entrepreneurial* component. That is, it must embody some ideas or insights into new combinations of resources for dealing with new risks and opportunities” (2011, p. 244, *no emphasis added*). If new “entrepreneurial” insights can be seen as underpinning unexpected successes, then we must also consider the possibility that new

approaches (“aha” moments that proved premature) have also produced conspicuous and unexpected failures⁶.

In addition, a focus on strategy and entrepreneurship has the potential to complement the eclectic theories described above. My emphasis on strategy and entrepreneurship can build on reluctant realist, security identity, and governmental politics approaches by examining the difference that innovative agent practices make on policy outcomes. My approach borrows much from Samuels’s (2003) comparative study of Italian and Japanese leadership. Like Samuels, I do not see the study of leadership as opposed to the study of structural contexts as important causes. As Samuels writes, leadership is “that constrained place where imagination, resources, and opportunity converge” (2003, p. 6) and thus, “in the contingency of leadership, is where we are apt to find a connection between agency and structure” (2003, p. 10). A focus on entrepreneurship can demonstrate how different political strategies either helped or hindered actors within these structural contexts, and thus, reveal to us aspects of structure of which we may not have previously been aware.

As Chapter 2 will explore in more depth, the prime minister occupies an interesting position in the game of defense policy. Though formally situated as the ultimate “insider” in the policymaking process, the prime minister in many ways comes to the position as a defense policy outsider. The prime minister, typically groomed through several positions in the cabinet before becoming a prime minister, has

⁶ Indeed, one of the chief motivations behind this research is the realization that prior research on Japanese defense politics has overemphasized the unexpected successes of one prime minister (Koizumi Junichiro), while ignoring more mundane (but at the time, no less unexpected) successes of other prime ministers (like Hashimoto Ryutaro) and unexpected failures (like Hatoyama Yukio).

traditionally had little experience handling defense and security related issues. In addition, if he does have concrete policy preferences in the area of defense, he must often compete against the stable workings of professional US-Japan alliance bureaucrats on both sides of the alliance. These actors typically have more experience, access to key information, and often their own personal networks. Thus, aspects of the position of prime minister at least in some ways demonstrate the possibility of the “deviant” actions often seen from policy entrepreneurs.

Research Questions and Scope of the Study

This dissertation asks:

- How have different strategies and entrepreneurial insights by the prime minister influenced defense policy making and politics since the end of the Cold War?
- How has the *quality* of strategy and entrepreneurial insight employed by the prime minister impacted the trajectory of Japan’s defense policy?

Thus, the scope of the dissertation is the prime minister’s political strategy and entrepreneurial practices in the realm of defense policy and politics in the post cold war period.

For the purpose of the study, the author employs the term “defense” broadly. In addition to decisions concerning military budgets, weapons procurement, and other military issues usually encompassed by the term “defense,” this broader definition also encompasses “softer” civilian security policies, historical symbolism regarding the Pacific War, and issues regarding US bases in areas such as Okinawa Prefecture. Though the dissertation’s focus is on “defense,” the particularities of Japan’s anti-militarist culture, its colonial legacy in the region, and the presence of US bases in Japan often

destabilize the artificial barriers between “defense” as security from foreign threats and other forms of security more broadly⁷.

The key focus of the study will be *strategy* and *entrepreneurial insight*. Each case study will focus on the individual actions of the prime minister, attempt to ascertain the key insights driving these actions, and then evaluate the outcomes of the prime minister’s actions. The study’s focus on political strategy, however, should not be conflated with the strategy of the Japanese state. As the review of the governmental politics literature should make clear, the prime minister is but one player in the game of policy and agenda setting, and many times not even the strongest player. As this dissertation will demonstrate, Japanese prime ministers have varied in their ability to intervene in the affairs of defense policy and politics, and this difference has mattered in the overall trajectory of Japan’s defense posture.

Though much of the focus of the case study chapters will be on the actions of the prime ministers and their results in the area of defense policy, the case studies will also focus on *entrepreneurial insights*, or new insights into restraints and resources that appear to be driving these actions. As Rumelt (2011) has argued, in their employment of new ideas and new resources to achieve change in the world, leaders as policy entrepreneurs are natural scientists positing new hypotheses. Thus, a close examination of

⁷ For the purpose of this study, however, the author refrains from employing the term “security,” since aspects of Japan’s human security, disaster security, environmental security, energy security, and security from transnational crime are only taken up when they impact “defense” politics directly. The Japanese case, however, demonstrates the often arbitrary boundaries between defense and security, and how, in certain cultural contexts, defense can become penetrated by larger security issues and how defense can be replaced by “softer” forms of security for various political reasons. The complex relationship between “security” and “defense” will be most apparent in Chapter 5, the case study of the Hatoyama Yukio administration.

the ideas driving actions and the resulting outcomes can yield new insights about the field in which they operate.

Rather than focus exclusively on instances of successful strategy, my research will also look at instances where deviant behavior proved to be a strategic fiasco. These actions could include: ill-timed introduction of new ideas; employing resources in ways that are inappropriate; or the assumption of unanticipated risks. Failures can often be as instructive as successes (if not more) because they offer instances where “natural hypotheses” have been falsified (though scholars should be cautious about what conclusions they draw from these failures).

My research will also examine strategy and entrepreneurial insight alongside two important intervening variables: *operational context* and the *policy challenge*. Though each of the cases will employ a weak control--the actors examined were each prime ministers in the Japanese political system in the post cold war era--their operational environments were nonetheless different. Thus, each case study has a highly independent *operational context*. Though operational context is conceptualized as an “intervening variable,” this dissertation will examine the approaches of the prime minister side by side with their operational contexts. As discussed above, leaders do not work outside of their contexts, but rather within them, employing their own understandings of constraints and opportunities. As Wight (2006, see also, Samuels 2003, Curtis, 1999, p. 6) argues, agents cannot be artificially separated from the structural contexts in which they must act. For this reason, the study will examine the prime minister’s situation within the party, within his own cabinet, his domestic situation, the regional situation, as well as the international situation as a part of each case study. While these contexts will be examined for resources

and constraints on prime ministerial power, keeping in mind the theoretical approach of the study, the author will also examine what prime ministers can teach us—through their strategies and approaches—about these various contexts that may seem counter-intuitive. In addition to operational context, the author will also examine how differing motivations and expectations influenced the actor’s strategy. Thus, the dissertation will evaluate the relevant strategies and insights in the context of the relevant *policy challenge* the actor faced.

The dependent variable is differing degrees of *policy efficacy*. Policy efficacy will be evaluated on several levels. On one level, policy efficacy will be evaluated strictly in terms of whether the prime minister had the effect on the field of defense policy and politics he had hoped for prior to coming to office. The policy preferences of the prime minister will largely be gauged based on biographical material available through books, interviews, and policy speeches. Another measure of policy efficacy will be the degree to which defense policies can be demonstrated to have boosted or hindered the prime minister’s policy agenda overall. In most of the case studies, defense policies were secondary to economic issues or government reform agendas; and yet, success or failure in areas of defense were essential to how the prime minister would later fare in other key policy initiatives. In this vein, at key points initiatives on defense will be evaluated for their impact on the prime minister’s popularity figures, since high popularity figures have been recognized as an important (in many cases indispensable) resource for getting one’s way in intergovernmental bargaining (see Stockwin, 2008; Shinoda, 2000, 2007a, 2011).

In terms of the time period, there are compelling reasons to see the post cold war era as distinct period worthy of study. The period of 1989-1993 represented a time of

four “shocks”: the collapse of the real estate and stock bubble, the death of the Showa emperor, the end of the Cold War, and the loss of LDP control of the Diet. The final shock, perhaps the one that would have the most direct impact on debates about defense, was the “failure” of Japan to provide a “human contribution” (*jinteki koken*) to the first Gulf War. Much of the literature on policy leadership generally agrees that political agents matter more in times of uncertainty (Hermann and Hagan, 1998; Samuels, 2003; Grove, 2007). Thus, the post cold war period, a period where Japan suffered through a long period of economic recession, political change, and periodic security challenges, should be a period ripe for the investigation of strategy and entrepreneurship.

Research Design and Case Selection

A comparative case study approach will be used to examine how prime ministers have employed different strategies and used different entrepreneurial insights in the realm of Japanese defense politics and policy. The case study approach generally allows for a greater exploration of the interrelationship between many different kinds of variables in ways that privilege the creation of causal complexes over single variable explanations (Kurki, 2008; for more on this point, see Curtis, 1999, p. 4-6; Katzenstein and Sil, 2004). Because of the importance of operational context and individual motivation in the study of political strategy and entrepreneurship, the study will use thick description of a limited number of cases instead of rigorous controls. Though the approach used in this dissertation follows George and Bennett's (2005) logic of “soaking and poking” historical data to make new contributions to theory, the approach will also

have important aspects of structure and focus provided by the research questions stated above.

My research will compare three cases: the prime ministerships of Hashimoto Ryutaro (1996-1998); Koizumi Junichiro (2001-2006); and Hatoyama Yukio (2009-2010). The three cases have been selected to provide maximum contrast among different forms of strategy and entrepreneurship, while providing a limited control on international context (the backdrop of the post cold war era). Data collection efforts for each of the three major case studies will focus on primary and secondary source documents. Secondary source documentation will focus on studies of the prime ministers under study and articles in both magazines and peer reviewed journals. My primary source research will focus on documents such as white papers, party manifestos, autobiographies and memoirs of key officials, and official interviews available through publications during each of the prime ministerships. Interviews with policy officials, think tank researchers, and knowledgeable members of the various administrations will also be used to supplement published resources on the administrations.

The Hashimoto prime ministership (1996-1998) was selected because Prime Minister Hashimoto served during a time of distress between the US and Japan and an ambiguous security environment following the end of the Cold War. During Hashimoto's prime ministership, US-Japan security cooperation was strengthened through revised guidelines, a large contingent of US troops was retained on Japanese soil, and the Japanese Self Defense Force was maintained at about the same level as during the Cold War. There was nothing inevitable about this outcome or the political processes that brought it about. One could argue that the impetus for greater ties between the two

countries originated from high level defense officials and members of independent commissions (Joseph Nye and Higuchi Kotaro) and the initiatives of bureaucratic actors within both the US and Japan (Sebata, 2010, p. 280; Funabashi, 1999). However, a closer examination of this case study will demonstrate that Hashimoto was an active participant in this process, empowering bureaucrats and driving an already active process further. In addition, Hashimoto was also able to pivot on the success of measures to reinvigorate the US-Japan alliance, improving ties with China, assuaging actors in Okinawa, and upgrading Japan's profile in relations with ASEAN and Russia.

The Koizumi prime ministership (2001-2006) was chosen because Koizumi is widely seen as an exemplar of prime ministerial leadership in a setting where scholars have become used to weak leadership. Despite being the leader of a weak faction within the Liberal Democratic Party with little experience in foreign policy or defense, Koizumi was able to improve ties with the US, enacting legislation to support US missions in Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, Koizumi was able to help establish a long term course for greater interoperability between US and Japanese military forces. The case also stands out because of the adept way Koizumi used the enhanced capability of the Prime Minister's office (the *kantei*), and because of his ability to use coalition partners in the government and public support to rally support within his own party and the bureaucracy. Most importantly, however, the author finds in several seemingly contradictory actions of Koizumi's defense policy an important coherence and focus that prior studies of his administration have overlooked.

The Hatoyama prime ministership (2009-2010) was chosen because Hatoyama has been seen as an unusually ineffectual prime minister. Despite coming to power with

overwhelming public support and new ideas about the direction of defense policy, Hatoyama would have to resign within a short period of time after mismanaging the issue of the relocation of Futenma Airbase. Hatoyama's case represents a stark contrast with those of both Hashimoto and Koizumi. Hatoyama came to power at a time when the institution of the prime minister was institutionally at its strongest and when public sentiment was decidedly against the continuation of strong bureaucratic power. However, Hatoyama also had to deal with instability within his own party. In comparison with the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) was largely untested and had to deal with starker divisions within the party on defense issues. Also, whereas Hashimoto was dealing with a structural shift (the end of the Cold War and ambiguity over the direction of policy) and Koizumi was dealing with exogenous shocks (the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the North Korean missile tests), Hatoyama was attempting to alter Japan's policy direction after a long term course had already been set through tedious negotiations with the US.

The Argument: The Importance of Effective Strategy

Strategy is the art of fitting available resources to desired ends, of finding hidden advantages to exploit weakness, and of minimizing risks while maximizing opportunities. Leaders can develop winning strategies through unique insights on how to utilize available resource; by developing coherences between different initiatives; through focus; and by identifying and sequencing proximate objectives. In two of the cases (Hashimoto Ryutaro and Koizumi Junichiro) we see the difference that good strategy and entrepreneurial insight can make in shaping defense policies and politics. In

addition, we see how early success in defense issues can create a more robust prime ministership. In these two cases, effective strategies were built from a combination of mundane and exceptional resources. These strategies at times used the expertise of actors in the defense and foreign policy bureaucracies, and at other times, bypassed them in order to accomplish important objectives. In another case, the nature of the policy challenge was misunderstood from the beginning. This misunderstanding created a situation where expectations were betrayed, resources were squandered, and a promising prime ministership ended abruptly.

Thus, the first insight of this dissertation attests to the power of entrepreneurial vision and strategy in influencing Japan's defense trajectory during the post cold war era. Both Hashimoto Ryutaro (through his skilled management of defense issues) and Koizumi Junichiro (through his bold use of newly formed *kantei* resources) were able to help foster a path toward greater military capabilities, the erosion of barriers between military and civilian leaders, and greater integration of Japan's defense establishment with US technology and intelligence capabilities, along with US regional (and to some extent global) defense priorities. Moreover, this path was further secured through Hatoyama's failure to overturn this course.

Second, the skillful management of defense issues by Japanese prime ministers was very often an important component of prime ministerial power overall, often serving as a precursor for larger economic and administrative reforms.

Third, though past studies have demonstrated that the ability to manage US-Japan foreign relations is an important aspect of prime ministerial leadership, prior accounts have not fully accounted for the fungibility of good US-Japan bilateral relations

as a political resource. As both the Hashimoto and Koizumi case studies demonstrate, good US-Japan bilateral relations often provide prime ministers with flexibility both in external relations and domestic politics. The cases suggest that successes in managing US-Japan relations can be used in a number of ways: to broaden relations with other countries (as was the case in the Hashimoto prime ministership); to pursue domestic reforms (as was the case in the Hashimoto and Koizumi prime ministerships); and to enhance military capabilities and achieve cultural changes in military affairs (as was the case during both the Hashimoto and Koizumi administrations).

Finally, though the cases would seem to suggest the necessity of “embracing” the US as a political partner as a way of overcoming the usual limitations of the office of prime minister, aspects of Koizumi’s postal reform initiative demonstrate that there are political resources for challenging US influence. Following Gaunder (2007) and Maclachlan’s (2010, 2011) studies of reform initiatives in the Japanese setting, the US, as an entrenched interest in Japanese defense politics, can only be challenged through approaches that place policy entrepreneurs in positions where they can influence policy (advisory councils, maverick cabinet ministers) coupled with approaches that use popular politics, accept risk, and which leaders are committed to. By failing to learn from the Koizumi example (his direct confrontation of the postmasters and postal bureaucrats), Hatoyama’s leadership has been an important “cause” of the continuation of the status quo in the US-Japan security relationship.

Outline of the Dissertation

This dissertation has six chapters:

Chapter 2 will examine the relationship between the prime minister and the defense subgovernment in Japan with the intent of demonstrating different practices of political leadership and possible forms of policy intervention and policy entrepreneurship. As this chapter will demonstrate, though the prime minister has difficulty intervening in some aspects of defense policy, he nevertheless has important resources and courses of action unavailable to other actors.

Chapter 3 will focus on the prime ministership of Hashimoto Ryutaro (1996-1998). Prime Minister Hashimoto was an important example of policy stewardship during a time of great uncertainty. Despite being in power for just over two years, Hashimoto oversaw significant accomplishments. In the areas of defense, he was able to: bring about the Joint US-Japan declaration; foster the 1997 US-Japan Guidelines for Defense Cooperation; help negotiate the return in principle of the Futenma airbase in Okinawa; and foster greater ties between civilian and military officials (eroding some of the inhibitions against cooperation with military authorities). Though it cannot be argued that Hashimoto introduced new ideas on defense or that he was particularly innovative in his use of institutional resources, he nevertheless demonstrated adeptness at balancing the needs of various actors. Mostly importantly, Hashimoto demonstrated important entrepreneurial insight in his discovery of the degree to which a reinvigorated US-Japan Security Treaty could be used as a political resource to improve relations with other actors and help his reform initiatives.

Chapter 4 will focus on the prime ministership of Koizumi Junichiro (2001-2006). Prior studies have noted Koizumi's talent for political theater, his skill in using the expanded resources of the *kantei*, and his willingness to take risks in confronting his own party. In addition to these much explored aspects of his prime ministership, the author also finds important examples of coherence and focus in his political strategy. Though the content of Koizumi's policies on defense varied across the political spectrum, there was nevertheless an important coherence to Koizumi's decisions on defense. Whether it was his emphatic support of the US president, his dramatic trip to Pyongyang to meet North Korea leader Kim Jong Il, or his controversial visits to Yasukuni Shrine, each policy made the most of the available opportunity to show off Koizumi's policy acumen and willingness to face down resistance in accomplishing his goals. By demonstrating his policy effectiveness and his independence, his disparate actions in the area of defense boosted his standing with the public, allowing him greater freedom of action in his postal reform agenda.

Chapter 5 will focus on the prime ministership of Hatoyama Yukio (2009-2010). The prime ministership of Hatoyama Yukio is an important case because it is the first time in recent history that a prime minister has challenged—however subtle that challenge may have been—the primacy of the US-Japan Security Treaty. Despite coming to power with overwhelming public support and new ideas about the direction of defense policy, Hatoyama would nevertheless have to resign within a short period of time after embroilment in a money scandal and mismanagement of the relocation of U.S. Airbase Futenma. Hatoyama's prime ministership demonstrates the limitations of civilian internationalist approaches as a substitute for alliance maintenance with the US, as well

as the weaknesses of “consensus-based” and “muddle through” tactics in Japanese politics. Though Hatoyama had significant new ideas on security, he nevertheless took few risks in promoting his own ideas and showed little acumen in using his institutional resources.

Chapter 6 will place the case studies in a comparative framework, outline the key findings from the study and the strengths and limitations of the theoretical perspective, and pose my recommendations for future research on strategy and entrepreneurship in International Relations, as well as recommendations for future research on Japanese defense policy and politics.

CHAPTER 2:
Theorizing Prime Ministerial Leadership in the Context of Japanese Defense Policy and
Politics

Introduction

At first sight, Japanese politics would seem like an unlikely setting for a study of political strategy and policy entrepreneurship. After all, Japanese politics is usually associated with tedious consensus-building, gradualism, and at times even immobilism (Curtis, 1999; Sebata, 2010; Stockwin, 2008; Sohma, 2010), not creativity, flexibility, and innovation. A common theme in the political literature on Japan is the relative weakness of the prime minister in comparison to other heads of state, even the prime minister in Westminster styles of government (Angel, 1989; Mulgan, 2002; Stockwin, 2008). Hayao (1993), for example, characterizes the prime minister's role as "reactive," serving as a mediator of last resort when consensus breaks down in the normal running of the various subgovernments (the assemblage of politicians, bureaucrats, and client groups that specialize in specific issue areas). Since Hayao's study, several administrative reforms, new institutions, and changing public sentiment have given more formal and informal strength to the prime minister's office. Despite these changes, his overall characterization of the office remains relevant. Prime ministers continue to be weak figures within the Japanese system because:

- they must contend with powerful subgovernments—combinations of elites from politics, the bureaucracy, and business who have vested interests in these areas

- they must expend their limited energies balancing and maintaining order within an unruly political party
- cultural norms and the selection process for prime ministers often encourages prime ministers who can maintain consensus within the party, not leaders adept at implementing bold new policies.

Even given these observations, most authors (see for example, Hayao, 1993; Shinoda, 2000; Staveley, 2000; Kurosawa, Kurosawa, and Takero, 2009) recognize that the efficacy of prime ministers has varied greatly on policy issues. As broader studies of leadership outside of the Japanese case have demonstrated, how leaders use the various resources at their command—administrative resources, unusual opportunities, and symbolic resources—matters greatly in the outcomes of policy initiatives (Grove, 2007; Hardgrove and Owens, 2003; Machiavelli, 2004; Preston, 2010; Samuels, 2003). The same can be said of Japanese politics: the timing of prime ministerial interventions in the affairs of subgovernments, their choice of political allies, their use of institutional resources, as well as the public framing of their initiatives, have led to significant differences in the outcomes of their policy initiatives. The ability to accept risk, employ new insights, and develop innovative resources has been and will continue to be an important factor in the outcome of policy and politics.

This chapter examines the position of the prime minister in Japanese politics and theorizes the potential for strategy and policy entrepreneurship in defense policy and politics. As this chapter demonstrates, the prime minister has a number of approaches he can use to intervene in the affairs of the defense subgovernment. These approaches include using his position as chief spokesperson for the state to shift the policy debate, the use of extraordinary events as catalysts for change, using unique forms of coalition-building and bargaining to overcome sectionalism, as well as the option to empower elements within the subgovernment.

As Rumelt (2011) has argued, leaders who are able to thrive in competitive environments typically have an entrepreneurial element. They are able to see resources and opportunities differently than their peers and to form a “theory” of action with regards to their policy area. Thus, while this chapter looks at some of the limitations of the position of the prime minister, it also pays close attention to the resources of the position and the possibility for action in defense politics.

Theories of Power: Who Acts in Japanese Politics?

A lack of strong leadership in Japanese politics has often been lamented by both scholars and pundits of Japanese politics (some examples see, Watanabe 2011, June 7; Mulgan, 2002; Okimoto, 2011). In the wake of multiple failures of leadership and governance, including failures in the regulation of the nuclear industry, failures in response to the financial crisis of the 1990s, and scandals at ministries responsible for pension and health (to name only a few), commentators have bemoaned the lack of

accountability in a political system where power is diffuse. One answer to the enigmatic question “Who acts in Japanese politics?” is: no one. The more scholarly framing of this answer is that discrete actors and agents are difficult to locate because in Japanese politics power is diffuse and political agency is often the product of a “milieu” based on the sentiment of the ruling elite (Wolferen, 1989)⁸. In this account—called the “Power Elite” model—the fragmentation of power produces a bias toward the status quo, with frequent stretches of policy immobility. Typically, dramatic external events are seen as the impetus for policy change. However, even when these events occur, policy changes slowly in order to accommodate vested interests in the bureaucracy, business, and politics. Change is slow because at every level of government, business, and politics powerful stakeholders must be appeased.

The Power Elite model, however, has been criticized for its oversimplification and underspecification. Others, searching for a more nuanced description of Japanese governmental process, contend that government, political, and business elites do not constitute a solid, unified entity; in reality, there is quite a bit of maneuvering by different actors to realize their agendas (see Hayao, 1993; Shinoda, 2000; Stockwin, 2008; Curtis, 1999). In an attempt to move past the Power Elite model, some scholars have taken a comparative approach, demonstrating the unusually strong role of the bureaucracy in Japan compared to other parliamentary democracies. Various authors agree that even compared to the Westminster system of Britain, Japanese bureaucracies have a significant

⁸ In Wolferen’s (1989) much cited work on the subject, Japanese elites in the bureaucracy, political, and business classes rule over a submissive middle class. Japanese policy making cannot be located in any one place, but rather, is the product of an expansive and amorphous “System” where elites in business, bureaucracies, and politics share common ideas on how the country should be ruled.

amount of control over the day to day running of the government (Angel, 1989; Emmott, 2008, p. 98-99; Johnson, 1982, 1995; Shinoda, 2000; Stockwin, 2008). The roots of Japan's strong bureaucracy reach back even before the Pacific War, when bureaucrats maintained a reputation as a highly-educate elite, dedicated to government service. The removal of the military from political influence by the American occupation after the war, in turn, greatly enhanced the clout of the civilian bureaucracies (Stockwin, 2008, p. 137). This level of influence grew with time, as the honesty and efficiency of Japan's bureaucracies was seen as a driving force behind Japan's meteoric economic rise. During Japan's economic rise, bureaucracies enjoyed relatively high public approval, a reputation for honesty and efficiency, and an unusually large amount of autonomy, including the ability to draft legislation.

Some authors, while not disagreeing with this interpretation of Japanese power, note that bureaucrats have been given a great deal of power because they have met the needs of their political masters who wish to stay in power (Rothacher, 1993; Wight, 1999). This principal-agent approach sees politicians as principals empowering bureaucratic agents in order to allow them to focus their energies on developing better support networks and clientelist relationships with local businesses, civic groups, and other organizations so that they can stay in office. As long as bureaucratic power met their electoral needs, intensive intervention by politicians was not necessary. But as has been seen in recent political developments, as electoral opinion has turned against the bureaucracies, the politicians have responded by curtailing the power of the bureaucrats and usurping larger legislative and administrative roles for themselves.

Perhaps the most enduring description of Japanese power is the “truncated pyramid model” of policy making. In the truncated pyramid model, the mid-level actors—namely the party *zokus* (policy tribes) and subcommittees of PARC (the party’s Policy Affairs Research Council) and the division level chiefs in the bureaucracy—have an unusually strong influence on policy. In this model, the prime minister and cabinet members still give policy direction; however, mid-level actors have a great deal of flexibility in implementing these policy directives, including the ability to advise actors at the top on which policies are feasible and which ones are not. Bottom-up policy making is an extensive feature of this model, including *ringisei* or extensive consultation that creates consensus for policies from the bottom-up (Hosoya 1979; Shinoda, 2006, p. 72-74; Shinoda, 2007, p. 23; Ishihara, 1997, 2002). For much of the postwar period, approval in the subcommittees was the same as approval of the Diet, given the LDP’s long tenure in power. Once the policy passed the subcommittee it would go to the PARC and then the LDP General Council. While decision making does occur at the highest levels of government—such as the cabinet—usually these higher level meetings are the product of a much longer decision-making process within the government (Shinoda, 2006; Ishihara, 2002). Leading officials are only called on to act when there is a need for mediation between conflicting groups, when multiple actors need to be coordinated, or when fundamental reforms are required (Hosoya, 1979; Sebata, 2010; Hayao, 1993). Since the DPJ came to power in 2009, this bottom-up process has fluctuated somewhat, with key institutions such as the Vice Ministers Consultative Meeting (a key forum for bureaucratic coordination and policymaking) and the party’s own PARC (Policy Affairs

Research Council) being abolished. These changes resulted in the centralization of policymaking within the cabinet and senior political appointees in the bureaucracies, and diminished the role of career bureaucrats and party backbenchers. However, after two short-lived administrations, these two institutions were subsequently re-established. Despite the DPJ's campaign slogan to transfer power from bureaucrats to politicians, frequent turnovers in cabinet ministers and party infighting have helped to maintain the power of bureaucrats (Koellner, 2011).

For the most part, these aspects of the political system—strong mid-level actors in the bureaucracies, political parties, and interest groups—have led to semi-autonomous fiefdoms or “subgovernment” structures. These subgovernments develop strong ties, form quasi-monopolies on information, and are often hostile to intervention by outsiders. In some cases subgovernments can be made up of a division of the LDP's PARC (now the DPJ's PARC), one or more bureaucracy, and relevant interest groups (Hayao, 1993, p. 142-143). However, the strength of these subgovernments has also been facilitated by the lack of resources and experience of external actors. This included: a tradition within the LDP of regularly rotating politicians through ministerial positions (with a typical tenure of about one year) in order to maximize political patronage; a lack of politically independent think tanks; as well as small personal support staffs for politicians (Mishima, 2007; Sebata, 2011, personal interview; Shinoda, 2000, 2011).

Multiple crises in the early to mid 1990s and 2000s have gradually created public antipathy toward the continued existence of these largely rigid subgovernments, along with the lack of transparency and incentives for corruption they brought. These

failures include the perceived failure of the first Gulf War, the failure of political officials to respond to the multiple financial crises following the bursting of the economic bubble, a high profile scandal involving lost pension records, a scandal involving HIV-tainted blood at the Ministry of Health, as well as the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear crisis following the 2011 triple disaster. In these cases, vested interests slowed the response to a crisis, prevented proper oversight, and/ or prevented the scandal from coming to light sooner. These scandals and failures now make up an essential part of Japanese political consciousness. Since the early 1990s, political and administrative reforms have been on the political platforms of many prime ministers. These reforms have targeted not only the persistence of bureaucratic power, but also areas in politics that have been the source of strong forms of political patronage, most conspicuously the postal savings system and public works.

Indeed, many expected that a series of electoral and administrative changes enacted in the nineties and early 2000s had fundamentally changed the political parties and the office of the prime minister for good. The 1994 electoral changes, which introduced the creation of three hundred single-seat voting districts (out of five hundred total seats, the remainder of which were to remain multimember districts), it was believed, would create an atmosphere of more intense competition among parties. In this new competitive environment, parties would have to choose more charismatic, top-down style leaders who could introduce bold new policies or face defeat at the polls. The government reforms of 1999 had also consolidated Japan's vast bureaucracy and lowered the number of cabinet ministers from twenty to fifteen, making it easier for the prime

minister to reach consensus on an issue in the cabinet. The reform also eliminated the Government Commissioner System, which allowed bureaucrats to answer questions directly from opposition Diet members. This reform was meant to discourage over-reliance on bureaucrats. Finally, the administrative reforms of 2001 had given the prime minister's residence and the cabinet office (collectively known as the *kantei*) greater resources, coordinating power, and institutional support (Shinoda, 2003, 2007a; Machidori, 2010). As we will see in the Koizumi case study, this would provide a significant resource for prime ministers with the creativity to use it. The rise of the DPJ as the ruling party of Japan has brought with it significant changes in the relationship between bureaucrats and politicians. Most notable has been the creation of a National Strategy Office, the elimination of the Vice Minister Coordination Meetings, and the use of a greater number of political appointees in the ministries. As was demonstrated by both Hatoyama Yukio's approach to the re-negotiation of the relocation of Futenma Airbase (see Chapter 5 for details) and Kan Naoto's handling of several crises during the March 11, 2011 disaster (see Hayashi and Shirouzu, 2011, April 9), the first two prime ministers under DPJ tenure have gone to great lengths to sidestep bureaucrats and handle policy issues on their own. However, under the Noda Yoshihiko administration (the current administration as of the writing of this dissertation) many of the previously abolished LDP-era decision-making structures were brought back, including the previously abolished Vice Ministers Coordination Meetings and the DPJ's own Policy Affairs Research Council (PARC) (Makihara, 2011).

Despite these reforms, strong subgovernments and weak political leadership remain a persistent aspect of Japanese government. Explanations for why Japan continues to suffer from weak political leadership span both individualist and institutionalist explanations. Some scholars continue to point out the lack of charisma and leadership skills in individual prime ministers and politicians, while others point out persistent institutional barriers to strong leadership. These institutions include: the continuation of factional politics and patronage practices within the parties; the mixed electoral laws governing the election of members of the Upper House that lead to twisted Diets where one party rules the Lower House and another the Upper House; and the lack of a direct election of the prime minister (for a review of these various arguments, see Machidori, 2010). Thus, twisted Diets and patronage-minded prime ministers have continued to lead to weak prime ministers and a deepening of cynicism among the public—an increasing number of whom prefer neither of the two major parties.

Prior Perspectives on Prime Ministerial Power

Even reaching back before the postwar period in Japanese politics, the position of the prime minister has been weak⁹. Before the war, the prime minister was little more than an equal among cabinet ministers. Often certain ministers, through the influence of their powerful bureaucracies, could rival the prime minister. Much like today, dissent within the cabinet had the power to bring down the government (Angel, 1989; Stockwin,

⁹ Stockwin traces the history of Japan's prohibitions against strong leadership back to the seventeenth century Tokugawa settlement where complex political arrangements were established to prevent any one group from assuming too much power (2008, p. 15). For Stockwin, these arrangements foreshadow current arrangements of factional balancing in government to prevent forceful leadership from assuming power.

2008). Factors contributing to this weakness include cultural inhibitions against aggressive leadership styles, a tradition of consensus building in Japanese politics, the strong position of subgovernments, and the influence of powerbrokers within the political parties (Angel, 1989; McCargo, 2004; Mulgan, 2002; Shinoda, 2000, 2011). Much has been written about the cultural inhibitions against strong leadership (see for example, Angel, 1989 and Hayao, 1993). A prime minister must deal with sectionalism on two sides: one, the side of the party faction, or *habatsu*; on the other side, he must deal with the power of the bureaucracies and other permanent members of the subgovernment (Sinoda, 2000, 2011).

Studies of the Japanese prime minister often stress his role as leader of the party. The internal party selection process has tended to favor candidates who have extensive connections among party members, are skilled at fundraising, and typically make decisions only after extensive consultation. Thus, the grooming process for future leaders has favored consensus-making and party patronage over charismatic, policy-savvy leaders. The same politicians who have been skilled at intra-party patronage have often had little skill at “going public” (Kurosawa, Kurosawa, and Takero, 2009; Shinoda, 2000; Hayao, 1993). There are other compelling legal and institutional reasons for the prime minister’s weakness. The Constitution of Japan vests executive power in the cabinet (Article 65) and deems that the prime minister represents the cabinet (Article 72). Article 6 of the Cabinet Law of 1947 more clearly establishes the limitations on the prime minister’s power, obliging him to seek the consent of the entire cabinet before exercising executive authority (GoJ, n.d.). Because the prime minister relies on the cabinet to wield

power, the prime minister's control over the cabinet determines his influence over government (Shinoda, 2000, p. 201; Shinoda, 2011, p. 50-51). For a long time, intra-party competition and a weak support staff also limited the effectiveness of the prime minister. Though political and administrative reforms during the late 1990s and early 2000s increased the support staff of the prime minister and consolidated the number of cabinet ministers, thus making cabinet consensus easier, the problem of intra-party competition still remains.

Prime ministerial power has also been diminished by the weakness of the cabinet. Despite the prime minister's legal power to choose cabinet members, in reality the cabinet has often been used as a vehicle for party patronage and a method of maintaining balance among the different factions within the party. Constant reshuffles, with tenures lasting often less than a year, and limited political appointees have resulted in unusually independent bureaucracies. Though the DPJ has taken important steps toward increasing the power of politicians over the bureaucracy since coming to power in 2009, it has not changed its practice of constant cabinet reshuffles or choosing a cabinet independent of party factional considerations. Thus, compared to other parliamentary democracies, Japanese bureaucracies remain relatively independent (Stockwin, 2008; McCargo, 2004; Hayao, 1993; Shinoda, 2000).

There have been, however, some noticeable exceptions to the general rule of weak prime ministerships. These prime ministers include Tanaka Kakuei, Sato Eisaku, Nakasone Yasuhiro, and Koizumi Junichiro (McCargo, 2004, p. 94). There has been some consensus that the ability of especially the latter two prime ministers has been due

to several factors, including: their conscious pursuit of a stronger executive power; their canny use of media to produce a higher profile as prime minister; and their use of expertise outside of traditional party and bureaucratic resources, such as advisory commissions and special advisors (two tools that will be discussed in detail later)¹⁰ (McCargo, 2004; Kurosawa, Kurosawa, and Takero, 2009).

Another important facet of prime ministerial power is the role of US *gaiatsu* (or external pressure) in the formation of prime ministerial leadership. As Angel (1989) writes, in the early postwar years prime ministers often used the cover of US pressure to implement unpopular but necessary reforms like trade liberalization. US pressure thus can be an effective alibi for political leaders. Even authors working within different theoretical traditions agree that prime ministers—especially in the area of defense policy—have become addicted to US *gaiatsu* (Sebata, 2010; McCormack, 2007; Shinoda, 2007a). As we will see in all three case studies, however, partnerships with the US come in many varieties that overturn simple formulations of Japanese policymakers as the passive recipients of US demands.

Though the prime minister faces major constraints in his execution of power, he also has many significant resources that are unavailable to other actors. One, often as the leader of the party, he has control over who has membership in the party (as we will

¹⁰ Kurosawa, Kurosawa, and Takero, for example, point out that strong prime ministers have often been supported by an extensive brain trust, usually consisting of scholars, think tank officials, and intelligent members of the business community (2009, p. 122). Prime Minister Nakasone was an exemplar in this respect. Another way to bolster one's power as a prime minister—a method used especially by prime ministers Tanaka Kakuei and Takeshita Noboru—is to build extensive connections within the bureaucracies. By establishing their own connections within bureaucracies, both Tanaka and Takeshita were able to have privileged access to unvarnished information (Kurosawa, Kurosawa, and Takero, 2009; Shinoda, 2000).

see in Chapter 4, the Koizumi chapter, this resource can be a powerful one; in Chapter 5, we will see how Hatoyama was limited without some of this power). Two, he is the actor of last resort for the coordination of different sectional interests. Prime ministerial power thus becomes essential when extensive coordination is needed, as is often the case in issues such as trade and defense. Three, the prime minister is the senior diplomat and Commander and Chief of the Japan Self Defense Forces (JSDF). As the lead diplomat for Japan, the prime minister has the ability to override the Foreign Ministry, to conduct “*tezukuri gaiko*” (hand-crafted diplomacy), as Nakasone did during his tenure—thus frustrating the bureaucracies. Four, the prime minister has an extensive platform for defining the basic ideology of the nation (as we will see with the example of the issue of Yasukuni Shrine visits and the Murayama apology for wartime atrocities). Five, the prime minister has the ability to appoint cabinet ministers (though this power is somewhat constrained by the need to maintain unity within the party). Six, the prime minister can use his public platform to seek popular support for policies. As we will see in the case studies, popular support is an essential resource for prime ministers who wish to challenge vested interests. For this reason, skill in using the media is an important resource for the prime minister (Shinoda, 2000, 2007a, 2011; Hayao, 1993; Kurosawa, Kurosawa, and Takero, 2009).

Finally, the prime minister has the extensive resources of the “*kantei*.” By far, the most extensive research on the use of the *kantei* has been Shinoda’s (2007a) pioneering study of Prime Minister Koizumi’s use of the institution during his term. The author broadly defines the *kantei* as the entire body of the Cabinet Secretariat and the

Prime Minister's official residence. As Shinoda writes, there were 655 staffers at the end of March 2006 (2007, p. 9-10). Much of the strength of the *kantei* has been a result of the administrative reforms of Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro. Koizumi was the first prime minister to benefit from Hashimoto's reforms (Shinoda, 2007, p. 11). As Shinoda (2007, p. 12) argues, the *kantei* has become an essential part of the foreign policymaking process because it provides support and coordination that MoFA cannot provide.

As both the sections on Japanese politics and the institution of the prime minister demonstrate, power is diffuse within the Japanese political system and rigid sectionalism and clientelism has tended to be the order of the day. This has made it difficult for prime ministers (the so-called "top" of the pyramid) to impose their agendas on the various parts of the government. However, as will be discussed in the next section, the prime minister has a number of courses of action he can take in realizing his preferred policies.

Competitive Approaches in Japanese Defense Policy and Politics

As my review of Japanese politics has made clear, much of the prime minister's power is curtailed by strong political and bureaucratic sectionalism. In Japan, issue-specific subgovernments have tended to dominate issues from education, to energy, to healthcare. These subgovernments have often been hostile to intervention by prime ministers or other policy entrepreneurs seeking to enact change. As discussed in the previous sections, even when strong external shocks demonstrate the need for change, policy activists may still find it difficult to encroach on the policy territory of the

subgovernments. Thus, in order to enact major changes that threaten vested interests, they must find alternative political resources. However, pursuing innovative policies does not necessarily mean challenging subgovernments. One particularly appealing strategy is to add political support to measures that have already been “softened up” by bureaucratic actors. Picking winners from ongoing initiatives can be an effective way of using proximate successes to support an image of policy competency. In addition, when solutions to ongoing problems are nowhere to be found, or when interventions into the business of subgovernments means assuming unacceptable risks, prime ministers have the option of leaving issues to linger in committees at the bureaucratic level.

The prime minister of Japan has a unique position in relation to the defense subgovernment. As Commander and Chief of the Japan Self Defense Force and lead diplomat for the state, the prime minister is seemingly the ultimate insider in the defense subgovernment. And yet, the prime minister is also an outsider in many important respects. Though prime ministers are typically groomed through several key positions before becoming prime minister—chief among them the positions of Minister of Finance, Chief Cabinet Secretary, and Minister of Foreign Affairs—only one prime minister, Nakasone Yasuhiro, has been head of the Japan Defense Agency (now Ministry of Defense). For this reason, the prime minister is often heavily reliant on bureaucrats for policy advice. In addition, the dual structure of the US-Japan Security Treaty (which pledges the US to come to Japan’s defense) and Article 9 of the Constitution (which renounces war as a legitimate form of policy) places the Japanese prime minister in an ambivalent position relative to his own defense establishment and the US.

This section details a number of approaches available to the prime minister. These approaches range from empowering outside actors to pursuing consensus within the party to high-risk strategies that sacrifice political office for concrete policy accomplishments. These approaches have been drawn not only from past examples of interventions in defense policy and politics, but from wider examples of Japanese politics.

Approach: Empowering outside policy entrepreneurs: using advisory commissions, appointing “maverick” cabinet ministers, emboldening entrepreneurs outside of government.

As discussed earlier, two of the most common centers of policymaking are bureaucracies and the party policy committees responsible for their respective policy area. Typically, these actors are conservative in their policy orientation. For a prime minister looking to intervene in the processes of subgovernments in a more proactive way (including the defense subgovernment), one of the options available is to empower external policy entrepreneurs. The most common way to do this is either to form an advisory council or to appoint “maverick” politicians as cabinet ministers.

a. Empowering outside policy entrepreneurs: advisory councils (shingikai)

The first two prime ministers to make extensive use of advisory councils (*shingikai*) were Ohira Masayoshi and Nakasone Yasuhiro. Ohira Masayoshi (1978-1980) established several different advisory groups on a range of subjects from security issues to economics and lifestyle. However, it was Prime Minister Nakasone (1982-1987) who can be said to have institutionalized the use of advisory councils as a resource of the

prime minister (see Gaunder, 2007; Samuels, 2003; Shinoda, 2000, p. 108). The most significant advisory councils during Nakasone's tenure was the advisory council for railroad and telecommunication privatization and the Study Group for Peace Issues. These advisory councils allowed Nakasone to recruit intellectuals and business people respected by the public who could give assessments free of the factional politics of the LDP. As Angel writes, "He [Nakasone] appointed individuals of high reputation and visibility known to be sympathetic to his policy objectives in order to publicize and legitimize predetermined policy objectives and overcome resistance to change from career bureaucrats" (1989, p. 593; see also, Gaunder, 2007, p. 127; Samuels, 2003, p. 12-13). In many ways, Koizumi would follow in Nakasone's footsteps in his use of advisory councils. As has been documented extensively in studies of Koizumi's economic reforms, the Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy proved to be a highly effective vehicle for implementing his economic reform agenda (see especially, Gaunder, 2007).

Not all uses of advisory councils are created equal. The prime minister needs to compose the council in such a way that the council comes to the "right" conclusions. In addition, because public opinion waxes and wanes, it is important for the prime minister to gain public support long enough to overcome the resistance of subgovernments. One of the drawbacks to this approach is that subgovernments can sometimes simply obstruct and outwait the advisory council and the prime minister, whose tenure is typically short-lived.

It should be noted that advisory councils have, thus far, had some impact on the field of defense politics and policy. The most significant examples have been

Nakasone Yasuhiro's Study Group for Peace Issues and Hosokawa Morihiro's (1993-1994) Higuchi Commission (which will be discussed in Chapter 3). In 1983, Nakasone created the Study Group for Peace Issues as his personal advisory body on defense issues. Nakasone hoped to use the advisory body to gradually shift public opinion away from its military allergy and to eventually allow for the removal of the one percent GDP limit on defense spending (Sebata, 2010, p, 177; Angel, 1989, p. 595). The group's composition was selected in such a way as to come up with a recommendation for the removal of the one percent of GDP framework on defense spending. When the group presented its final report, it concluded simply that the one percent framework should be reconsidered (Sebata, 2010, p. 178). With the backing of the LDP defense-related committees and the JDA, Nakasone was able to resist pressure from the powerful Ministry of Finance and eclipse the one percent limit for one fiscal year (the only time this has been done since the establishment of the limit by cabinet order). However, since then, the one percent limit has remained a fixture of Japan's defense establishment—demonstrating the limit of even skillful entrepreneurial approaches¹¹.

¹¹ Though the use of advisory councils is an important tool for entrepreneurial prime ministers, it should be noted that advisory councils have not made up a central aspect of all of the case studies. The importance of advisory councils has ranged drastically from one case to another. For example, during the Koizumi administration the Araki Commission was significant in moving Japan to increase its military capabilities, but paled in comparison to policy moves in the area of alliance contribution and defense symbolism (thus, there will be little discussion of the Araki Report in Chapter 4). In the case of Hatoyama, his advisory council, the Council on Defense Capabilities, did little to enhance his prime ministerial power. In addition, it should be noted that the final report of this commission—which emphasized Japan's role as a "peace-making nation" was dwarfed by the atmosphere of "realism" that prevailed following what many saw as his negligent handling of alliance diplomacy, as well as in the aftermath of the collision of a Chinese trawler with a Japanese Coast Guard ship in 2010.

b. *Empowering Policy Entrepreneurs: appointing “Maverick” cabinet ministers*

Another method of empowering policy entrepreneurs is to appoint them to the cabinet (often, in positions where they can influence the policy field they care about most). Because cabinet positions are often assigned after consultation with party elders, this approach can be extremely difficult to implement in practice. Thus, this tactic has been associated with top-down or “maverick” prime ministers since appointing policy entrepreneurs and reformists to the cabinet often undermines the power of factional balancing and consensus-making within the party. Nakasone, for example, chose a big name as the Minister of Education in order to promote education reform during his administration. Likewise, Koizumi would use an appointee outside of politics, Keio University Professor Takenaka Heizo, to head his economic reforms and postal reform agenda. As a specialist on free market economics and economic reform, and an outsider to LDP political infighting, Takenaka was ideally suited to lead Koizumi’s reforms. Not surprisingly, Takenaka was the only member to serve on all of Koizumi’s cabinets (see Gaunder, 2007; Maclachlan, 2010, 2011).

In addition to making negotiations with one’s own party more difficult, there are other risks associated with promoting policy entrepreneurs. The risk of promoting policy entrepreneurs in either advisory councils or the cabinet is that their agenda might exceed the prime minister’s control. As we will see in Chapter 4, Koizumi also appointed another maverick personality—Tanaka Makiko—as foreign minister. Though this appointment helped Koizumi’s popularity in the short term, in the long run his foreign minister’s erratic behavior became a liability. Koizumi’s decision to dismiss the popular Tanaka

became the most significant threat to his administration. There is also the risk that a maverick cabinet minister's stardom might outshine one's own. Prime Minister Hashimoto (1996-1998), for example, would name Koizumi Junichiro as the Minister for Health and Welfare, knowing his strong reformist preferences. As Hashimoto began to negotiate with industry and party officials over the details of postal reform during his administration, it was Koizumi's threat to resign from the cabinet that eventually pushed Hashimoto to take a stauncher stance on postal reform than he was otherwise inclined. Ironically, Koizumi's actions during Hashimoto's administration would eventually give him the very reformist credentials he needed to beat out Hashimoto in the race for the party presidency two years later (see Maclachlan, 2010, 2011). Thus, as the case of both the Koizumi and Tanaka appointments make clear, appointing policy entrepreneurs can be a useful but risky tactic.

Approach: Pressure One's Own Party and the Subgovernments with Outside Support: Use Coalition Partners, Opposition Parties, and Public Opinion to Overcome Inertia

In his seminal study, Shinoda (2007a) demonstrates how Koizumi was able to use public opinion, his negotiations with coalition partners, and even his courtship of the opposition party to put pressure on his own party and the bureaucracy to support his preferred policy initiatives (see Chapter 1). Even though issue-specific bureaucrats and the ruling party have the most direct power over policymaking, Shinoda hypothesized that passive support from the outer rings was necessary to support the work of the inner ring actors. Thus, Shinoda demonstrates how Koizumi used the support and threat of support from outer ring actors such as the coalition party, the opposition party, and the

public to overcome the inertia of the bureaucracy and his own party in passing groundbreaking legislation (see Chapter 4).

One of the resources that has made this approach possible is the expanded resources of the *kantei* since 2001. Whereas before the prime minister relied heavily on the resources of the bureaucracy for policymaking, the expanded resources of the *kantei* have allowed prime ministers to develop policy internally and then seek out actors to support that policy. Because the prime minister can use the best talent from the bureaucracy and civil society in his policy groups as well, he now has an excellent vehicle to coopt talented members of the bureaucracy. Koizumi used the capability to great effect to seek out support from coalition parties first. With the acceptance of coalition parties, he was then able to present legislation to his own party as a fait accompli. As we will see in the Koizumi case study (Chapter 4), he used courting strategies with the opposition parties (most notably members of the DPJ) to keep pressure on coalition parties and dissenters within his own party to help promote his reform efforts.

As discussed earlier, since the early 1990s elections the number of non-aligned voters (*mutoha*) has consistently passed the 50-percent mark. This has expanded the opportunities to grab voters through policy substance rather than through pork-barrel spending or party allegiance. Personal popularity is a crucial asset for any effective prime minister, and a leader without a strong power base within the party must acquire popular support if he hopes to survive (Shinoda, 2000; Kurosawa, Kurosawa, and Shizuki, 2009).

Both Miki Takeo¹² and Nakasone Yasuhiro were famous for using the mass media to help their position in relation members of their party (Shinoda, 2000, p. 103-104). A high level of popularity allowed Nakasone to stay in power for five years and pursue administrative reforms that cut wasteful spending, despite a weak support base within his party. On the other hand, two party insiders, Tanaka Kakuei and Takeshita Noboru, leaders of the largest faction, were forced out of office by low popularity ratings (Shinoda, 2000, p. 99).

Approach: Adding Your Support to Ongoing Initiatives in the Subgovernment

Another strategy is to add support to an initiative that has been “softened up” in the subgovernment. Usually if there is already an initiative on the table in one or more bureaucracies, then all that is needed is a little push to keep the momentum going or to expand the potential of the policy initiative. By adding one’s support to an initiative that has already been vetted by the members of the subgovernment, one also assures an easier implementation process (as we will see in Chapter 3, the Hashimoto case study). Though this approach can be relatively safer than the use of outside entrepreneurs, the approach nevertheless contains risks. When choosing one policy approach over another, the prime minister must often back one ministry or section of the ministry over another. Elevating an issue’s standing from the bureaucratic or subgovernment level may also raise

¹² Popularity was essential in the case of Miki Takeo. Following the Lockheed scandal in which party stalwart Tanaka Kakuei was accused of accepting bribes, Miki came to power because of his strong public support and his reputation for being a clean politician. Despite coming from the smallest LDP faction, he was able to swim against the LDP tide and pursued the indictment of Tanaka. Many LDP members saw the move as self-serving and began a “down with Miki” campaign. However, he was able to withstand the assault for some time because of his adept use of public media (Shinoda, 2000, p. 100-101).

expectations of proximate results among the public. Thus, it is often important to choose an initiative where success (and if possible overwhelming success) is assured.

As we will see in our case studies, prime ministers often have an incentive to use this approach rather than others, even when these initiatives are not among their policy priorities or even conflict with their policy preferences. Getting a major initiative done (any initiative) promotes the public image that the prime minister is competent and has control of the government. This perception can start “a virtuous cycle” where perception of competence leads to greater public approval, and this greater public approval allows him to override opposition and accomplish even more (as we will see in Chapter 4, the Koizumi case study).

Backing powerful stakeholders in the subgovernment has some important advantages. As Japanese political scholars have noted, actors in the subgovernment are permanent players in their issue area, often with greater stakes in the outcome of policies than outsiders (Shinoda, 2000; Hayao, 1993; Mulgan, 2002). Since these actors are permanent professionals in their field, they often have instincts and knowledge that are beyond the abilities of outside players. Indeed, prior studies have demonstrated that bureaucracies, with the help of semi-governmental think tanks, have had success at incrementally shifting defense arrangements in ways that strengthen the US-Japan alliance (Sebata, 2010; Funabashi, 1999). In addition to managing alliance issues with the US, bureaucratic officials have also been able to manage projects that establish dialogues on the history issue with both China and South Korea (Watanabe Akio, 2012, personal interview). At the bureaucratic level, these are relatively low-risk projects. However,

when there is a potential for these projects to make a major breakthrough, a savvy prime minister can often pick up the initiative and add their support.

Finally, policy initiatives that have had the support of important stakeholders tend to be more enduring than those that do not. As can be seen in the history of Koizumi's postal reforms, despite the dramatic nature of his political successes and the high public approval for these reforms, important stakeholders have been able to slowly roll back some aspects of his reforms (Maclachlan, 2011). These rollbacks have been facilitated by Koizumi's own retreat from politics following his term and his decision not to take on a party-elder role (similar to that of Nakasone Yasuhiro) following his resignation as prime minister.

Approach: Take Advantage of Unique Opportunities, Shocks, or Shifts in the Operating Environment

One foundational concept of the leadership literature is that leaders can often substantially boost their power by exploiting the potential of short-term crises, shocks, or shifts in the operating environment (Machiavelli, 2004; Byman and Pollack, 2001; Grove, 2007; Preston, 2010; Sun Tzu, 2008; Rumelt, 2011). This can be a great resource for prime ministers with a sense of timing and an instinct for changes in public appetite. The downside is that it takes great skill and patience to make the most of these opportunities.

The long-time LDP factional leader Ozawa Ichiro, for example, seemed to understand, more than any of his peers in the LDP, the public appetite for reform following multiple scandals involving his own party in the early 1990s (Samuels, 2003; Gaunder, 2007). After the failure of political reform legislation under an LDP

government, he left the party and used his extensive ties with young LDP members and opposition parties to create a short-lived coalition that was able to significantly change the electoral system from multi-member districts to single-member districts. As will be seen in Chapter 4, Koizumi also had an uncanny understanding of his operational environment. Following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the US, he was able to use his budding relationship with President Bush, his own maverick reputation, and the administrative resources of his office to accomplish high profile policy successes in the realm of alliance contribution.

As Rumelt (2011) has written, while these opportunities often seem obvious in retrospect, there is usually little that is obvious about them when they occur. Using these events requires patience, honed political instincts, and an appetite for risk.

Approach: Embracing the US Partnership: Using Personal Relationships with the US President to Boost International Standing

Another important tactic is the use of personal relations with the US--and especially a personal relationship with the US president--to improve one's international and domestic standing. Most prime ministers choose the US as the destination for their first overseas visit, and the party and general public are usually very sensitive to how this first meeting plays out (Shinoda, 2000, p. 113; Hayao, 1993). Nakasone was able to use his personal relationship with Ronald Regan to improve his image domestically and to promote himself as active in international politics. The media quickly termed this the "Ron-Yasu" relationship. A close personal relationship with the US president can increase media exposure and help broaden the international platform for the Japanese

prime minister. As we will see in the Koizumi case study there is also some evidence to suggest that a certain kind of close relationship with the US—over-delivering on alliance commitments early—enhances in some crucial ways the number of available foreign policy options.

This tactic, however, comes with a drawback. A close, personal relationship with the president often limits flexibility on defense issues, especially the ability to counter US demands. It may also cause some political backlash for politicians with support from organizations that adhere to pacifist principles. Socialist Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi, for example, went out of his way to assuage US anxieties about whether he was going to recognize the US-Japan Security Treaty when he became prime minister in 1994. Though his official acceptance of the US-Japan Security Treaty (as well as the constitutionality of the JSDF) cleared the way for his tenure as prime minister in a coalition government with the LDP and the Sakigake political party, in the long term his decision split the Japan Socialist Party. Murayama's decision effectively eliminated unarmed neutrality as a legitimate alternative to the US-Japan Security Treaty (if it had ever been one), and facilitated a significant and semi-permanent shift to the political right on all issues related to defense.

Approach: Seeking Consensus, or the Unfortunate Position of Party-beholden Prime Ministers

As the case studies will demonstrate, the public appetite for consensus-type prime ministers has severely diminished and will continue to diminish in the near future. Although the conventional wisdom suggests that consensus-seeking is the least risky

form of leadership in the Japanese case, in reality this “low risk” approach typically leads to an early departure from the prime minister’s spot, usually after one or more embarrassing policy failures. As Chapter 5 will demonstrate, prime ministers who see themselves as “orchestrators” (as Hatoyama sometimes referred to himself) soon find themselves overwhelmed by the disparate interests of intra-party factions, predatory opposition parties, and a sensationalist media. Still, because the party chooses the prime minister, there has been no shortage of consensus-style prime ministers. In short, except in unusual situations, the party has an interest in avoiding top-down leaders, like Koizumi, who threaten the stable workings of party patronage. Usually, only when a party’s popularity is at a nadir will it resort to finding charismatic figures.

These types of prime ministers are frequently described as “reactive.” Rather than pursue clear cut preferences, they discover their preferences through extensive consultation and dialogue with other partners and respond to crises as they arrive (Hayao, 1993). As will be seen in Chapter 5 (the Hatoyama case study), these types of prime ministers cannot run their government effectively without a strong political “fixer” behind them. These backroom “fixers” or “managers,” such as Ozawa Ichiro or Tanaka Kakuei, have long been admired for their political skill and *realpolitik*. Just as cabinet positions are rotated regularly to allow for fresh appointments, the position of the prime minister is seen as temporary and expendable to the party. In many cases, these leaders are asked in short order to sacrifice themselves for the failings of their party or a particularly unpopular policy and a new consensus-oriented figure is chosen to replace him.

Approach: Symbolic Politics and Personal Diplomacy

As discussed earlier, the prime minister, as chief diplomat and representative of the Japanese state, has a very large platform to promote the essential ideology of Japan and to seek public support for his policies. When this power is used well, it can give the prime minister a strong advantage over vested interests in the various subgovernments. When used poorly, these actions can trigger dissent within the cabinet and the party, and spur negative coverage in the press. In the realm of defense, the prime minister must often find effective ways of approaching the most delicate subjects in defense politics: the lingering base issue in Okinawa; the need to balance Japan's desire for security from military threats with its preference for soft power contributions; how to frame the US-Japan alliance; and how to approach the legacy of Japan's actions during the Pacific War.

While each of these issues is of great importance, one symbolic gesture bears in depth discussion--the prime minister's decision to visit Yasukuni Shrine. Yasukuni Shrine was originally established in 1869 by the Meiji government and was maintained by the Army and the Navy until the end of the Second World War. The American Occupation authorities were responsible for severing ties between the Shinto religion and the state. Despite its status as a private entity, the shrine has been an important symbol of Japan's past, both domestically and regionally. One of the main controversies of the shrine is the "enshrinement" of fourteen World War II Class-A war criminals in 1978. Nationalists in Japan view Yasukuni Shrine as a memorial to the war dead, but also see it as a symbol of Japan's rise as a modern state from the mid-19th to mid-20th century (Shibuichi, 2005; Emmott, 2008). Thus symbolic acts of state, such as prime ministerial

visits to Yasukuni Shrine, impact relations not only with regional actors but also with important domestic actors. In 1985, Nakasone Yasuhiro became the first prime minister to visit Yasukuni Shrine as an act of state. His visit triggered intense protests in the East Asia region, and he refrained from visiting the shrine further during his prime ministership.

Since this time, for the prime minister the choice of whether to visit Yasukuni Shrine or not to has been an important one. These visits reflect not only a personal sense of obligation, but also, the strength of conservative organizations like the Bereaved Families Association which are able to mobilize large numbers of voters and typically pressure politicians to visit the shrine. Leftist groups for their part see the prime minister's visits as a symbol of an outmoded militarism and feudalism that contradicts Japan's postwar legacy as a state devoted to human rights, democracy, and peace. These leftist groups, such as the Japanese Communist Party (JCP), Social Democratic Party (SDP), labor unions, and various NGOs, such as the National Organization of Pacifist Bereaved Families, as well as sympathetic intellectuals and newspapers, oppose the prime ministerial visits (Shibuichi, 2005, p. 200-205).

As we will see in the case studies, another important decision for prime ministers has been whether (and in what way) to formally apologize for Japan's actions during the Pacific War. In the early to mid-1990s, two non-LDP prime ministers would issue public statements of apology—Hosokawa Morihiro and Murayama Tomiichi. The latter prime minister, Murayama, would even help pass a Diet resolution officially apologizing for wartime atrocities and set up a hybrid public-private fund to compensate

former comfort women (*ainfu*) in the region. Though these apologies created some good will in South Korea, China, and other regional countries, these countries also found the apologies insincere given the conservative backlash that followed them (Lind, 2011, p. 312-313; Wan, 2011)¹³.

Though these symbolic actions would seem at first sight to fall outside the realm of defense policy, as important aspects of defense politics they can have an important impact on the regional security dilemma, regional perceptions of Japan as a threat, and the ability of the prime minister to use personal diplomacy to alleviate tensions with its neighbors.

Approach: The Kamikaze Tactic—Focusing All One’s Political Energy on One Issue

Finally, there is the approach Shinoda (2000) describes as the *kamikaze* attack. In this instance, a prime minister who feels that his power is waning may opt for an all-or-nothing strategy focused on one crucial policy. Hosokawa Morihiro (1993-1994), for example, was able to initiate a very important electoral reform before resigning as prime minister. Though the multi-party coalition that was constructed under Ozawa during Hosokawa’s term agreed on very little, they were at least able to pass this very important legislation before breaking up. Similarly, Prime Minister Miki Takeo (1974-1976) felt so adamant about continuing with the investigation of former Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei that he risked his own political livelihood to see the investigation through to the end.

¹³ Indeed, in the Diet session to pass the resolution endorsing the apology, large numbers of politicians from conservative parties abstained from voting. In addition, Communist Party officials voted against the resolution because the apology was seen as not going far enough (Tanaka, 2009, 148-149).

Often a prime minister will offer his resignation as the price for the passage of a crucial piece of legislation. For example, during his tenure Hatoyama Ichiro (1954-1956) tried to normalize ties with the Soviet Union. Strong opposition from the business community accelerated an anti-Hatoyama campaign. As a result, Hatoyama offered to resign in return for the restoration of Soviet-Japan relations (Edstrom, 1999).

The *kamikaze* attack approach is important because it is the one tactic that holds out the most potential for radical change in policy. Indeed, the most important pillar of current defense policy and politics, the US-Japan Security Treaty, is a product of this very tactic. In 1960, the debate over the ratification of the Security Treaty was fierce, and opposition parties used every tactic available to them to try to block the ratification. Thus, Prime Minister Kishi took the extraordinary step of using the police to block opposition members from entering the Diet. Without Kishi's use of these heavy-handed tactics and without his own willingness to take the political fall for his approach, it is very unlikely that both the Security Treaty and Japan's nascent democracy would have survived together (for more in-depth discussion, see Izumikawa, 2010; Reed and Shizuma, 2009, p. 6; Samuels, 2003; Edstrom, 1999; McCormack, 2007). With the most entrenched aspects of any policy, absent a major focal event or shock, sometimes only a *kamikaze* attack can change the policy.

Table 2: Competitive Approaches in Japanese Politics

| Competitive Approach | Qualities needed from Prime Minister | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|---|--|---|
| <i>Empowering: Advisory Councils</i> | Popular support; ability to sell the proposals to the public | Can help the prime minister obtain support for controversial new policies | Limited effectiveness without a popular prime minister and the willingness to accept risk to implement policies |
| <i>Empowering: Maverick Cabinet Member</i> | An appetite for risk; a willingness to go against party patronage system | Can be a powerful agent for change; not constrained by party patronage or bureaucratic loyalties | Can be difficult to control; political stardom might outshine one's own. |
| <i>Seek External Support: Coalition partner, Opposition, Public support</i> | Personal charisma; personal connections; a willingness to approach opposition | Can pressure one's own party to get on the bandwagon | Can create mistrust within one's party |
| <i>Endorsing Initiatives in the Subgovernment</i> | An ability to pick winners among ongoing projects | Has the approval or permanent professionals in the issue area; Have been vetted by professionals | Initiatives are often conservative and reflect the interests and objectives of bureaucrats or industry groups |
| <i>Take Advantage of Shocks or Shifts in the Operating Environment</i> | Patience, an ability to recognize opportunity | Offers an opportunity for dramatic change | Opportunity is perishable; opportunity may not correspond with one's policy aims |
| <i>Embrace the US Partnership</i> | Personal charisma; the ability to connect with the US president | An expanded platform for activism in diplomacy; expanded leverage in external relations with regional partners | A limited ability to refuse requests for support; at times, negative association with US policy and militarism |
| <i>Seeking Consensus</i> | The presence of a strong "fixer" behind the prime minister; weak policy preferences | Maintains one's standing within party; retains reputations as good "party man" | Lowest common denominator policies prevail; weak ability to influence policy; Semi-feudal subgovernments retain power over policy drift |
| <i>Personal Diplomacy/ Symbolic Actions</i> | The ability connect with other leaders | A large public platform to rally popular opinion | Gaffes and missteps can fuel centrifugal processes of government |
| <i>The Kamikaze Attack</i> | A focus on one policy goal; an appetite for risk; allies to implement policy (even if short term) | The ability to create a radical change in policy | The prime minister is often asked in short order to "sacrifice" himself for the sake of his policy; may spell the end of political career |

Conclusion: Toward a Theory of Strategy and Entrepreneurship in Defense Policy and Politics

This chapter has sought to develop a thick description of Japanese politics that demonstrates the possibility of strategy and entrepreneurial action in the area of defense. It has done so by describing the features of Japanese politics, the position of the prime minister, and various approaches available to the prime minister. The prime minister has both formal and informal resources to influence defense policy but is often handicapped by the centrifugal aspects of the Japanese governmental process. This lends the defense subgovernment a great deal of power that usually results in incremental change and at times even immobilism. In order for the prime minister to have any meaningful impact, he must use the resources available to him to form a coherent political strategy based on a diagnosis of the situation. This includes understanding which approach works best at what time and being sensitive to opportunities in his operational environment.

Rather than suggest that success can be reduced to one or a series of these approaches, this dissertation research evaluates the use of these various approaches within Rumelt's (2011) concept of "good strategy." At its most basic level, good strategy entails matching appropriate means to desired ends. One would not expect a consensus-based approach to produce a dramatic policy reform or to overcome the resistance of entrenched sectional interests. But, a consensus-based approach could allow for incremental changes to policy over a long political career. Rich case study research, however, demonstrates that matching means to desired ends is not always a simple process and that within the details are both hidden advantages and pitfalls. At the tactical level, prime ministers may find that using personal chemistry with the US president to

improve bilateral relations is easier to accomplish in theory than in practice. A “kamikaze” attack of a problem, likewise, may hinge not simply on the dramatic choice of whether or not to pursue the policy, but rather, on whether the basic groundwork for the policy change has been set up prior to the dramatic action.

In other words, the success and failure of strategies depend on a number of basic qualities that can only be evaluated in context: the ability to find successful tactics that reflect the capabilities of the leader (is the leader good at personal diplomacy; can the leader communicate well with the public; does the leader need to rely on his connections with members of his or her party); the ability to create coherences in their many initiatives; the ability to develop aspects of focus in their approach; the ability to formulate proximate goals that are obtainable; and the ability to use unique or underutilized resources.

As discussed earlier, some prime ministers, even entrepreneurial ones, have found it necessary to focus their efforts in one or more areas of policy in order to make the strongest impact. Thus, finding successful ways of managing other areas—such as defense policy—without allowing these issue areas to dominate the agenda creates opportunities for interventions into other areas (see Chapter 4, Hashimoto Case Study). As Rumelt (2011) points out in his study of strategy, creating important coherences that allow focus on crucial areas of policy is one of the most basic elements of good strategy. Thus, delegation and frugal intervention into the areas such as defense policy can be an important aspect of good overall strategy. As will be seen in the case studies, finding “workable solutions” in the area of defense politics or leaving thorny issues to linger with

working-level bureaucrats was often an effective way of improving political capital for interventions into other policy areas, namely economic and administrative reform.

As Rumelt (2011) has written, effective strategy is often simple, yet surprising at the time. A good strategy must make difficult choices in an environment of constraint, have insight on where interventions can make the most difference, have coherence, and find the right components for the crucial areas of focus. As Hayao (1993) has written in his own study of the prime minister, focus is especially important to the prime minister because his sources of power are limited and because the natural tendency in the Japanese system is toward dispersion rather than concentration of power (p. 200). Because of these restraints, it was important for the prime minister to be able to apply “his limited energy to an issue that has resonance, that is, one that elicits “sympathetic vibrations” from other actors in the system. The prime minister adds his energy to that which is already being applied by other actors, which in turn elicits more energy from still others” (Hayao, 1993, p. 194-195). As we will see from the case studies, the degree to which different prime ministers have been able to create these resonances has had a major effect on the course of Japanese defense policy and politics.

CHAPTER 3
Policy Stewardship and the Triumph of Mundane Strategy:
The Prime Ministership of Hashimoto Ryutaro

Introduction

The prime ministership of Hashimoto Ryutaro (January 11, 1996 to July 30, 1998, a tenure of 932 days) is an important, but nevertheless, neglected area of study in Japanese defense policy and politics. There are several explanations for the absence of studies on Hashimoto. First, Hashimoto is often associated with Japan's "lost decade" of the 1990s, a time when Japanese politics was beset by many crises both international and domestic and a series of weak governments; second, many of the defense policies of this time period, especially in alliance transformation, were driven by bureaucratic initiatives that transcended any one prime minister; and third, scholars have instead focused their attention on the much more revolutionary leadership of Koizumi Junichiro. Studies that have turned their attention to Hashimoto have done so largely interrogate his role in administrative and financial reforms (see Shinoda, 2000, 2011; Maclachlan, 2010). However, despite being in power for just over two years, Hashimoto oversaw significant accomplishments in the area of defense. These accomplishments came about at a time when US-Japan alliance managers had serious concerns over the durability and relevance of the US-Japan alliance, especially in confronting challenges on the Korean peninsula and in facing Chinese aggression toward Taiwan.

In the areas of defense he was able to: bring about the US-Japan Joint Declaration on Security (Joint Declaration); foster the 1997 US-Japan Guidelines for Defense Cooperation (Joint Guidelines); negotiate the return in principle of the Futenma

airbase in Okinawa; and foster greater ties between civilian and military officials (eroding some of the inhibitions against cooperation with military authorities). In addition, Hashimoto would also demonstrate a great deal of diplomatic skill in improving relations with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Russia. Though his efforts to revitalize the security relationship with the US caused significant frictions in relations with Okinawa Prefecture and China, Hashimoto was nonetheless able to pivot on his success with the US-Japan strategic relationship to manage frictions with these two actors. Perhaps more importantly, early success with security-related initiatives helped maintain his political power and push forward with financial and administrative reforms.

Hashimoto was a rarity in that he was both trusted by his party to continue traditional practices of patronage and at the same time was skilled at “going public.” Two of his greatest attributes were his popularity and charm, qualities that extended to his relationship with foreign leaders. Hashimoto was able to build strong relations with foreign leaders, including his good working relationship with President Bill Clinton and the special relationship he developed with Boris Yeltsin. His skill as a spokesman for Japan, coupled with early successes in the realm of defense and alliance diplomacy, helped to bolster his public popularity, bring the return to power of the LDP, and led to the return of an all-LDP cabinet. These were significant successes, and Hashimoto followed up these successes with the pursuit of a comprehensive reform agenda, led by a high profile advisory commission.

As this chapter will demonstrate, if Hashimoto’s approaches to defense policy and politics can be characterized as conservative and risk-adverse, they should

nevertheless not be mistaken with a lack of vision or strategy. Hashimoto was able to make use of “shovel-ready” initiatives such as the Joint Declaration (accompanied with a summit meeting between the US and Japan) and SACO to revitalize the US-Japan strategic relationship. While these initiatives were essentially the product of dynamic interactions between alliance managers acting as policy entrepreneurs on both sides of the alliance, Hashimoto was nevertheless an active participant in these negotiations and initiatives, pushing them further where he could. In doing so, Hashimoto used a rare skill that would be unavailable to other prime ministers in this study. With his extensive experience in several ministries over his extensive political career, Hashimoto had developed a knack of being able to master the details of issues and being able to argue with bureaucrats at their own level¹⁴ (Takushiji, 2012, personal interview; Okumura, 1998a, p. 36; see also, Funabashi, 1999). Through the leadership of his own office, he was also able to bypass regular bureaucratic channels and arrange for the agreement on the return of Futenma airbase in a way that supported his prime ministerial power and ultimately his reform agenda. His administration supported these initiatives, while finding ways to manage frictions with Okinawa and China caused by a closer strategic relationship with the US.

Despite the mundaneness of Hashimoto’s tactics, the individual components of his approach nevertheless add up to a coherent and effective approach given his circumstances and the policy challenges he faced. Each of his actions worked within a

¹⁴Biographers of Hashimoto have also noted his distrust of MoFA, stemming from experiences during his time as Minister of Transportation where MoFA officials had coordinated poorly with his office (Okumura, 1998a, p. 33). Hashimoto’s distrust of MoFA was a contributing factor in his proactive approach to foreign policy.

framework that emphasized bilateral cooperation in revitalizing the US-Japan strategic alliance. Rather than re-create new resources to improve defense policy, he instead chose to endorse ongoing processes and to use his own office to help smooth the inevitable frictions that would occur through his support of a stronger role in US defense strategy. Moreover, his use of economic incentives and personal diplomacy to improve relations with China and Okinawa, though far-reaching, never threatened the bilateral work that was being accomplished through joint working level initiatives like SACO (and its follow up components) or the joint meetings to revise the Joint Guidelines. His success in the realm of defense (and foreign relations more broadly) allowed him to bring the LDP back to power, solidify his own political power, and allowed him to pursue a more expansive political agenda.

However, during Hashimoto's second term, despite the support of an all-LDP cabinet, his own power began to falter and with it his ability to pursue the comprehensive reform agenda he prized so dearly. Though his declining political fortunes were not directly related to his decisions on defense policy, it is nevertheless an important aspect of this study because of the problems it foreshadows for a future prime minister (Hatoyama Yukio in Chapter 5). As Hashimoto deferred to party elders such as Nakasone Yasuhiro on a key cabinet appointment and to the policy preferences of the Ministry of Finance (MoF) on the need to raise the consumption tax, the popular base behind his reform agenda began to wane. In the latter stages of Hashimoto's reform initiative we see a decreasing willingness to take on risks for his political objectives. Thus, Hashimoto had to settle for a more limited form of reform than he had previously hoped for. If

Hashimoto had accomplished much, what many believed would be a watershed administration ended somewhat anti-climatically.

This chapter will evaluate the Hashimoto prime ministership in terms of its political strategy and policy entrepreneurship. The chapter begins with a background sketch of Hashimoto's political background, highlighting his experience and his opinions on defense issues. It then moves on to a description of his operating context and the challenges Hashimoto faced. The chapter then parses Hashimoto's approach to defense and what made it unique as a form of strategy—the entrepreneurial insights and actions of the prime minister—before concluding the chapter with an assessment of Hashimoto's approach and his relevance to the Japan's defense trajectory in the post cold war world.

Hashimoto's Political Background and Security Orientation

Like many politicians in Japan, Hashimoto Ryutaro came from a distinguished political lineage. His father, Hashimoto Ryogo, had served as Minister of Health and Welfare and Minister of Education. Hashimoto would graduate from Keio University in 1960. He would take up his father's seat in the Diet three years later. Because of early formative experiences dealing with his father's handicaps from the beginning of his political career his primary interests were in social welfare and public health issues (Iwami, 1995, p. 50-51; Hashimoto, 1993). In his later career, Hashimoto would become very active in the field of environmental security, using Japan's own experiences (and tragedies) in early industrialization to promote sustainable development and environmental justice (Hashimoto, 1993; Edstrom, 2008). After years of working his way

through the ranks of the LDP, he finally was able to earn his first cabinet seat as Minister of Health in 1978. As Minister of Transport under the Nakasone administration in 1986 he helped oversee one of Prime Minister Nakasone's most vaunted reforms, the breakup of Japan National Railway into six private companies (Iwami, 1995, p. 102-110).

As Minister of Transportation, he would get his first taste of the difficulties of taking what he considered "common sense" measures to protect Japanese interests abroad. In his writing, he would lament his inability to send the Maritime Safety Agency cutters to protect Japanese tankers and the tankers of other countries in the Gulf during the Iran-Iraq war (Hashimoto, 1994, p. 283-287; Hashimoto, 1993, p. 81). One of his most formative experiences in defense would come as Minister of Finance during the Gulf War, where Hashimoto saw first hand the limitations of Japan's financial contributions as a means of contributing to international security (Iwami, 1995, p. 195-197; Hashimoto, 1993, p. 81-82; Edstrom, 2008, p. 67-68). In his 1994 book, Hashimoto would reflect on the limits of financial contributions, and the need to provide human contributions to international security, including the use of JSDF in peacekeeping missions (Hashimoto, 1994, p. 290-293).

As a politician, Hashimoto was an oddity. Despite joining one of the largest and most powerful factions, run by a politician known for pioneering Japan's patronage system and perfecting the art of backroom dealings, Hashimoto had reputation for being awkward at backroom politics. According to his own account, he hated drinking socially and would have to learn this skill as a matter of political survival (Hashimoto, 1994; Okumura, 1998a, p. 24). Instead, he was lauded by his peers for his policy acuity, his

crisis management skills, and his ability to skillfully use bureaucrats, skills he had honed throughout his various ministerial posts (Okumura, 1998a; Funabashi, 1999; Takushiji, 2012, personal interview).

Hashimoto came to the fore as a candidate for party president and prime minister in the mid-1990s with a reputation that had been earned as Minister of Finance, but especially as Minister of International Trade and Industry during the tense trade negotiations with US Trade Representative Mickey Kantor. Throughout these negotiations, Hashimoto would be a hot topic in major newspapers. Newspaper and magazine articles would frequently characterize him as a tough negotiator (Okumoto, 1998, p. 15; Kitamura, 1998; Funabashi, 1999). After serving as MITI minister under the coalition cabinet of Socialist Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi, Hashimoto competed for the chance to become the prime minister within the coalition government. Hashimoto's chief competitor was the more pacifist Kono Yohei. Several accounts suggest that Hashimoto may have been backed by party elders because of his more conservative stance on the issue of Japan's wartime history (Staveley, 2000, p. 108-109; Funabashi, 1999). Whereas Kono was known for his public statements suggesting admission of the comfort women issue, Hashimoto was known as a conservative on the issue. Hashimoto's selection as party president was unusual in that he was not a member of a major faction. At the time of his selection, the once-dominant faction that had been headed by Tanaka Kakuei was only the fourth most powerful, having been weakened by scandals and defectors from the faction. Thus, his major asset was popular appeal and his

reputation as a candidate with policy substance (Fukui and Fukai, 1998, p. 25-26; Mishima, 1998, p. 970; Shinoda, 2000).

In the area of defense politics, like many of his fellow LDP politicians, Hashimoto was a staunch conservative. Prior to coming to office Hashimoto had a reputation as a nationalist. He was chairman of the War-Bereaved Families Association (*kizokukai*), a group that represents relatives of the war dead with over a million supporters. The organization is a well known nationalist organization with strong ties to the military and regularly supports such actions as visits to Yasukuni Shrine, an act that often upsets Japan's neighbors (such as South Korea and China) who felt victimized by Japanese colonialism. This put Hashimoto at odds with prime minister who had preceded him, and had taken a more reconciliatory track on the history issue, namely Hosokawa Morihiro and Murayama Tomiichi. In his political treatise, published while the LDP was out of power, Hashimoto would criticize Hosokawa's use of the term "invasion war" (*shinryaku senso*) to characterize Japan's action during the Pacific War, stating that such terminology was insensitive to the relatives of fallen soldiers and would invite endless claims by neighbors for financial compensation (Hashimoto, 1994, p. 98-100). These statements, and similar ones made before becoming prime minister, signaled to the LDP right wing that he was not going to abandon the political support of the War Bereavement Association. Despite his reputation as a conservative, Hashimoto nevertheless demonstrated significant mainstream tendencies that often softened his image (as we will see later, Hashimoto would choose to endorse the war apology (in his own words) of his predecessor, Murayama Tomiichi).

Hashimoto's favorite Japanese politician was Sato Eisaku, who won the Nobel Prize for his three non-nuclear principles and had helped to negotiate the return of Okinawa. As a disciple of Sato, Hashimoto was said to have felt regret for the lack of progress on the base issue on Okinawa since its formal return, and to have genuinely sympathized with the plight of Okinawans (Tamura, 1998, p. 118; Funabashi, 1999). Despite his reputation as a conservative, Hashimoto also had the reputation of being genuinely sympathetic to the US security presence in Japan. As Funabashi would write, even though Hashimoto was someone who could say "no" to US trade demands, he was also someone who would say "yes" to the US-Japan Security Treaty (1999, p. 11-14). His embrace, then, of many of the sentiments of the Department of Defense's "Nye Report," for example that the US-Japan security alliance had underpinned the region's economic and political prosperity, never seemed forced or counterintuitive. In his role as MITI minister and vice prime minister during the Murayama government, he would lobby the Socialist prime minister extensively to seek a close relationship with the US and to publicly re-affirm the bilateral security relationship in the back drop of multiple crises (the 1994 Korean nuclear crisis, the 1995 rape case, and tensions with China) (Tamura, 1998, p. 108-109).

Thus, if Hashimoto can be called a hawk and a nationalist—his visits to Yasukuni Shrine demonstrate this much—he was also very pragmatic in his approach to foreign policy. Compared to Koizumi, Hashimoto was closer to what would then be considered the political mainstream. As this chapter will demonstrate, Hashimoto was a sensitive—but also strategic—balancer. Even as Hashimoto strengthened the strategic

relationship with the US, he would reach out to assuage China and mollify dissent in Okinawa.

The Operational Environment: An Alliance Adrift, Domestic Turbulence

One of the key themes of leadership studies is that leaders matter most in times of uncertainty. Hashimoto came to power at a time when Japan was still reeling from a number of international and domestic shocks. Economically, Japan was still suffering from the bursting of the real estate and stock bubble that had left numerous banks with bad debt and host of zombie companies. As the economic climate worsened, the failures of bureaucracies both to manage the financial crisis and to regulate key industries came to light, as did the failure of politicians to oversee the functions of key bureaucracies. Political reforms had already taken place in 1993 that many believed would lead to greater competition among parties, and thus, politicians with greater policy substance. However, there was still a large public appetite for reforms that would remake Japan's financial sector and reshape the relationship between bureaucrats and politicians. Successive scandals at bureaucracies only increased this appetite for reform. However, in the first days of Hashimoto's administration, one of the most pressing issues for Hashimoto's cabinet was the fate of several large housing loan companies, known as *jusen*. *Jusen* companies were investment corporations that were highly involved in the speculative bubble during the 90s. These companies had borrowed heavily from banks and agricultural cooperatives and then had lent this money to builders, speculators, and real estate developers, many with connections to criminal gangs (Shinoda, 1998, p. 715;

Okumura, 1998a). The use of public money to help bail out special interests who had invested heavily in these companies (most prominently the agricultural interests) drew public ire, and thus, was a major issue during the first months of Hashimoto's administration.

On top of this economic crisis were a number of shocks in the area of international and regional security, as well as US-Japan alliance management. Japanese elites—especially those tasked with managing the US-Japan alliance—were still traumatized by the Gulf War incident and Japan's perceived failure to contribute to coalition forces in any significant way other than with money. The Gulf War episode had badly exposed the limitations of bureaucratic-led methods of handling international issues and was one of the catalysts for political and administrative reform initiatives that would take place during Hashimoto's tenure (Shinoda, 1998, 2000, 2007). Bureaucrats, politicians, and the public still remembered acutely the embarrassment of being left out of a thank you letter written by the Kuwaiti government and published in the *New York Times*. This crisis of alliance management and national self-esteem was compounded by Japan's ambivalent support for the US during the 1994 Korean nuclear crisis, where alliance mechanisms were seen to have largely faltered¹⁵. As a result of these failures,

¹⁵ The North Korea crisis occurred during the short-lived Hata administration, which was a continuation of the eight-party coalition that had been headed by Hosokawa. Included in the coalition was the Japan Socialist Party which had close ties with North Korea. During the Korean Nuclear Crisis of 1994, the US provided a very detailed list of issues on which they required assistance. This request included the provision of fuel and materiel, as well as assistance in dealing with a possible refugee crisis. However, officials on the Japanese side had trouble responding to these requests. A contributing factor to this delayed response was the hodge-podge nature of the coalition government which had trouble forming consensus. Luckily, the crisis on the Korean peninsula was soon averted by an agreement brokered by Jimmy Carter (Shinoda, 2006, p. 30; Soeya, 2005; Tanaka, 2009, p. 62-69). As Tanaka Hitoshi, a high level Japanese diplomat, would recall in his memoirs, the failure of the Japanese government to play a major role in confronting the challenge would feel similar to the Gulf War shock of several years before (Tanaka, 2009,

officials on both sides of the alliance had taken the initiative and were working together to more clearly define the nature of the alliance, specifically how and when it could be put to use during regional crises.

Several other events occurred during this time that strengthened the public perception that Japan lacked strong crisis management. During the 1995 Hanshin earthquake, the government was criticized for its slow response. Criticisms focused both on delays in dispatching the Japan's Self Defense Force (JSDF) and the government's initial rejection of foreign assistance. The Aum Shinrikyo sarin nerve gas attacks in Tokyo in 1995 also brought criticisms of the need for a better crisis management system. On top of these crises was also the shock of the rape of a middle school girl in Okinawa by three US servicemen. At the time, there was the very real possibility that the incident would spark violent riots similar to the Koza incident of 1970, where the property and safety of US servicemen had been threatened. The incident put Okinawan base politics back on the political agenda and strengthened the arguments of politicians, such as then-Okinawan Governor Ota Masahide, that the bases in Okinawa should be realigned, consolidated, and reduced (with the aim of eventually getting rid of them altogether by 2015).

At the very start of his administration, Hashimoto would have to balance the dual priorities of a potentially explosive Okinawan situation and the *jusen* incident. Thus, though there was now a window for radical change of the relationship between the US

p. 66). This incident became one of the catalysts for the extensive dialogue between officials on both sides of the alliance (later known as the "Nye Initiative"), and especially the revision of the 1978 Joint Cooperation Guidelines and the Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement (ACSA).

and Japan, for a conservative like Hashimoto who believed in the US-Japan alliance, the more immediate challenge was managing these dual crises. However, as we will see, skillful management of these momentary crises would eventually give Hashimoto expanded clout to push forward with an ambitious domestic reform agenda. His policy agenda was helped in no small part by his reputation as a skillful diplomat and an adept manager of the policy process.

Though his two administration, Hashimoto's domestic situation would vary greatly. In his first administration, he would largely inherit the three-party coalition (that included his LDP party, the Socialist Party, and the New Party Sakigake) that had been led by Socialist Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi, along with its proportional committee structure arranged on policy issues. However, his own popularity would allow him to call for Lower House elections in September of 1996. Though the LDP fell short of a majority in this election, its outstanding gains allowed Hashimoto to form an all-LDP cabinet. The coalition partners were retained in the Lower House but refrained from joining Hashimoto's cabinet. When this happened, the traditional framework of factions came back into play. The party would return to its old habit of running the government largely through the inputs of the LDP's Policy Affairs Research Committee (PARC) structure and through factional balancing on the cabinet (Shinoda, 2000, p. 32-36).

In Hashimoto's first cabinet he retained proportional representation of the three parties with twelve ministers from the LDP, six from the SDPJ, and two from New Party Sakigake. His second cabinet, however, was based on factional representation and left out representatives from the coalition parties (Hasegawa and Watanabe, 1996, November 26).

Thus, Hashimoto's support was based on a combination of party and popular support that defies easy categorization. Hashimoto was chosen largely because Diet members believed that he could return the party to its past electoral glory. Hashimoto had a weak factional base as leader of the rump of the once powerful Tanaka faction, which was now only the fourth strongest faction (Okumoto, 1998, p. 21; Fukui and Fukai, 1998, p. 25-26). As will be discussed later, however, unlike Koizumi, Hashimoto at crucial points chose to govern based on party cohesion and patronage rather than through the strength of his own popular persona. This contrasts with Koizumi who used public opinion to confront his party at crucial points. Though his choice to use consensus and balance of intraparty power is an instinct well followed in Japanese politics, in this case it also cost him his most important asset.

In addition, Hashimoto had a handicap that the other two prime ministers in this study did not. Though Hashimoto came to power at a time when public opinion supported stronger prime ministerial leadership, he was nevertheless limited by a lack of administrative staff, resources, and coordinating power. The 2001 administrative reforms—reforms that Hashimoto himself would pioneer—would give future prime ministers a vast advantage in terms of administrative resources. For this reason, there was even greater reason for him to lean heavily on initiatives that had been “softened up” through bureaucratic process.

Parsing Hashimoto's Approach: Bottom-Up Resources, *Kantei-Diplomacy*, and Balancing Techniques

On many counts, Hashimoto appeared the consummate political strategist and entrepreneur: like Nakasone, he tried to change policymaking customs by sidestepping traditional power centers and appealing to public opinion via special advisory councils (most notably his Administrative Reform Council (*Gyōsei kaikaku kaigi*)); he advocated policies that changed some of the underlying values and institutions of public finance; and, most importantly, he introduced a series of administrative reforms to empower the office of the prime minister (Maclachlan, 2010; Shinoda, 2000, 2011; Tamura, 1998). Though these initiatives would fall short of the six major reforms he would champion at the start of his second administration, Hashimoto's reforms would nevertheless go a long way toward strengthening the office of the prime minister and liberalizing Japan's economy. Moreover, Hashimoto demonstrated a knack for utilizing the power of media in sustaining his image as a can-do prime minister. He was especially clever at using his diplomatic skill to promote his image as a charismatic politician. Though to an extent this was visible with such leaders as Jacques Chirac and Bill Clinton, as well as his "hot springs diplomacy" with South Korean President Kim Young Sam in Beppu, Japan, this was most visible in the casual and friendly partnership he developed with Boris Yeltsin, prompting many to dub the relationship the "Boris- Ryu" relationship (Kitamura, 1998; Okumoto, 1998, p. 35). Thus, during his prime ministership, Hashimoto would show much of the charisma that has come to be associated with both Nakasone Yasuhiro and Koizumi Junichiro.

His success in defense policy and politics, though no less important, were accomplished through largely conventional resources and approaches. Hashimoto's skill in security initiatives was shown not through bold policy stances and adept policy maneuvers (as we will see in the Koizumi administration in Chapter 5), or by confronting his own party, but rather through stewardship of a policy process that had been evolving since before his administration—in short, by *endorsing bottom-up bureaucratic initiatives*. However, in endorsing these bottom-up initiatives, Hashimoto used one resource that would be unavailable to the other two prime ministers examined in this study. Having had experience in four separate ministerial positions, and having established his own contacts in several ministries, Hashimoto displayed a rare knack for grasping policy issues and debating bureaucrats on their own turf.

Kantei Diplomacy was also a conspicuous aspect of Hashimoto's tenure. Much like Nakasone during his tenure, Hashimoto demonstrated talent in developing special relationships with leaders. In at least one case—negotiations over the return of Futenma Airbase—centralizing negotiations in the prime minister's office and maintaining the secrecy of negotiations would bear substantial political fruit (even if the implementation of the agreement would eventually run into problems).

Hashimoto would also demonstrate a knack for *reconciling and managing key relationships*. This tendency was especially evident in his relationship with China and Okinawa. Hashimoto's early embrace of initiatives to improve relations with the US would not be cost-free. Key language in both the US-Japan Joint Declaration would commit to the US's numerical target of maintaining about 100,000 US military personnel

in the Asia Pacific region, with roughly the current number of personnel in Japan. In addition, the US-Japan Guidelines for Cooperation would state Japan's responsibility to cooperate with the US in "situations that may emerge in the areas surrounding Japan and which will have an important influence on the peace and security of Japan" (MoFA, 1997). Not surprising, China would point to this language as evidence that Japan and the US were colluding to contain Chinese power. Japanese-Chinese relations had already been deteriorating significantly since the 1989 Tiananmen Square incident. Relations would continue to deteriorate for other reasons (including Hashimoto's visit to Yasukuni Shrine on his birthday). However, unlike Koizumi who would neglect Chinese relations, Hashimoto would pivot on his success with US-Japan alliance relations to improve ties with China, offering China reassurances that Japan was not remilitarizing and that key language in the documents was not meant to specify any particular country or region.

Similarly, improved relations with the US would also increase tensions with Okinawa Prefecture. Though the SACO (Special Action Committee on Okinawa) process had led to the agreement in principle of the return of the dangerous Futenma Airbase as well as the return and consolidation of a number of other key facilities, Futenma's base functions were to be moved to a less populated location within the prefecture. Just as important, Hashimoto had endorsed roughly maintaining the current level of US troops in the East Asia region and Japan through the Joint Declaration and his summit meeting with President Clinton. Though Hashimoto tried to take a middle course between Okinawa and the US, in one key respect Hashimoto would maintain a strict pro-US orientation. At important moments throughout his administration, Hashimoto would

support maintaining the marine presence in Okinawa, justifying their presence in terms of their deterrent value. Throughout his administration, Hashimoto would attempt to assuage Okinawan fury over the bases, while at the same time sticking to his commitment to maintain the current level of US forces in Japan. In addition to his personal efforts on Futenma, Hashimoto would also use personal envoys, and extensive personal consultations with the Governor of Okinawa to help make his case—tactics that allowed him to maintain a sympathetic image in Okinawa.

Though these episodes demonstrate Hashimoto's tendency to reconcile different positions and his ability to marshal various party and bureaucratic resources to deal with crises, the legacy of this incident is perhaps the most ambiguous of all of his initiatives during his time in office. In the end, SACO would serve as a mechanism for maintaining the approximate level of US forces in the Okinawa region while taking token measures to alleviate the base burden. Though accounts of Hashimoto's administration often cast him as someone who tried to steer a middle path in relations with Okinawa and the US (Brooks, 2010; Tanaka, 2009; Funabashi, 1999), in reality his approach was based on a solid commitment to the current level of troops in Japan and the current level of US extended deterrence.

Hashimoto would also make small, but meaningful, changes to defense precedents while in office. He would take the *symbolic steps to improve governmental ties with the military*, allowing uniformed officers to visit the prime minister's residence and repealing legislation the prohibited contacts between the military and politicians. In many ways, this was the beginning of a more pronounced form of "salami slicing"

(Samuels, 2007a, 2007b) of Japan's anti-militarist institutions. Though closer alignment with the US had created the institutions for greater moves to the right, it was this step that continued the erosion of post-war norms of antimilitarism. At the same time, Hashimoto would also demonstrate the importance *symbolic pacifism and antimilitarism*. Despite his image as a nationalist before the administration, several initiatives would soften his image in the public eye. In addition to abandoning his trips to Yasukuni as prime minister after 1996, he would also endorse the Socialist Prime Minister Murayama's apology for Japan's wartime atrocities and endorse the Asian Women's Fund, a fund to distribute money to victims of Japan's wartime comfort women policy.

Endorsing Bottom-Up Security Initiatives: Political Leadership in the Bureaucratic Process

Throughout the 1990s, the alliance had been stumbling from one crisis to another¹⁶. Alliance managers on both sides were worried that the alliance framework was becoming obsolete. Thus, bureaucrats on both sides of the relationship shared the belief that US-Japan defense cooperation had to be "reconfirmed" or perhaps even "redefined." For their part, alliance managers on the US side wanted a more direct definition of what Japan could do to contribute to the US in case of an emergency in the region. For its own part, Japan wanted a framework to reduce the base burden on Okinawa to decrease the impact of pollution, noise, and crime on the local communities. However, the most important issue that needed to be dealt with was the turmoil that had erupted in the

¹⁶ Throughout the 1990s, bureaucrats on both sides of the alliance had suffered through the Korean nuclear crisis and soon would suffer through a crisis involving China's use of ballistic missiles to influence Taiwanese elections. At the initiative of Assistant Secretary of Defense Joseph Nye and Director General of

aftermath of the 1995 gang rape of a middle school girl by US marines (Funabashi, 1999; Akiyama, 2002; Nye, 1995). Though the turn-style leadership between 1993-1996 had not helped the alliance process, in a sense it had also produced an environment where bureaucrats could take over as policy entrepreneurs. As all parties realized, however, two things were needed: steps would need to be taken—something with symbolic force—to reduce tension on Okinawa, and the US-Japan alliance desperately needed the endorsement of the two nations' top leadership.

In many ways, Hashimoto's role can be described not as a defense policy entrepreneur, but rather, as a steward of the alliance. As a leader, he pioneered very little of what would become some of the most important policy frameworks for the US-Japan alliance in the post cold war era. Instead, he would inherit a process and initiatives that only needed the push of national leadership raise their profile. As MITI Minister and Vice Prime Minister during the Murayama administration, Hashimoto would have intimate knowledge of the processes underway. The institutional resources that had been created included: SACO (Special Action Committee on Okinawa)—the joint framework for working out plans to reduce and consolidate the bases on Okinawa; the bilateral process for working out a Joint Declaration prior to the summit that was supposed to occur between President Clinton and Prime Minister Murayama (which the US had canceled because of a standoff over the US budget); in addition, Hashimoto would also inherit the ideological inputs of both the “Nye Initiative” as well as the consensus that

Defense Policy (JDA) Akiyama Masahiro, the two governments would begin a joint dialogue on defense that would bridge the Murayama (1994-1996) and Hashimoto governments.

had been established by the Higuchi and Nye Reports¹⁷. These initiatives came on top of other initiatives such as the revision of the ACSA (Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement), an agreement that allowed for Japan to supply the US with fuel and parts for weapons under specified circumstances like UN peacekeeping operations and joint military exercises.

At a time of deep uncertainty, Hashimoto's key successes came in carving a space in the pragmatic political center. The space he would create was one where he could demonstrate a level of even handedness while at the same time clearly supporting the US as a partner. At the same time that Hashimoto was allowing joint initiatives like SACO, the Nye Initiative, and preparations for the upcoming summit with the US to

¹⁷ The "Nye Report" had famously described security as "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 Asian development" (EASR, 1995; Nye, 1995, 2001). The logic of the argument was that US military power—which was politically withdrawn from the territorial and historical disputes of the region—had prevented a costly arms buildup by competing countries, and thus, underpinned peace in the region and allowed for economic growth. The report also suggested that the US security guarantee in Asia has been a positive force for democracy. The "Nye Report" would also set rough numerical targets for how many troops to maintain in the East Asian region: 100,000 overall and 47,000 in Japan (EASR, 1995). These numerical targets would be looked on with horror by Okinawan politicians such as Governor Ota Masahide, who had set his own target dates for the complete withdrawal of US troops from the prefecture.

The Higuchi Report, the report commissioned under the Hosokawa government (1993-1994) and chaired by Higuchi Hiroto, the president of Asahi Beer, also based the Japanese defense strategy on the continuation of the US alliance. However, this report also put a great emphasis on multilateral security under the UN (Commission on Security and Defense Capabilities, 1994). Since the passage of the peacekeeping law in 1992, Japan had engaged in peacekeeping operations in Cambodia, Mozambique, Rwanda, and the Golan Heights. Reports differ on the reception of the Higuchi Report by the US Defense Department. Funabashi's account suggests that while many in the DoD were encouraged by Japan's proactive approach to redefining its defense policy and the value it placed in the US-Japan alliance, some in the Defense Department were alarmed by its "excessively" multilateralism, including the emphasis on the UN (Funabashi, 1999, p. 228-230). Akiyama Mashiro, the then Director General for Defense Policy in the JDA, recounts in his book how he believed that the reason US officials were so obsessed with including the specific numbers of the Nye Report (100,000 military personnel in the Asia Pacific, and about 47,000 in Japan) in the Joint Declaration was because they were worried about the multilateral security language in the Higuchi Report, and thus, wanted a firm commitment on the part of Japan (Akiyama, 2002, p. 219).

Regardless, as a result of both the Higuchi Commission and the Nye Report, and the renewed interest in security and defense these two reports inspired, the US and Japan would engage in an intensive dialogue that would last over a year and span the Murayama and Hashimoto governments. Thus, Hashimoto

proceed apace, he was also working to establish better relations between the central government and Okinawa. In the early days of his administration, Hashimoto would take the time out to get to know Okinawan Governor Ota Masahide on a personal basis and to establish a positive working relationship with him¹⁸. Later, on Ota's recommendation, Hashimoto would appoint Okamoto Yukio as his special advisor on Okinawa (Funabashi, 1999, p. 183). Okamoto, a former MoFA official with extensive connections, was known for his sympathetic view toward Okinawa. In the run up to his summit meeting with President Clinton, Hashimoto's office would also secure an agreement for the return of Futenma Airbase, although on the stipulation that a replacement site would be found within Okinawa. The surprise announcement of the return at a special press conference was a public relations success and helped elevate the profile of the upcoming US-Japan summit.

Four days after the official return of Futenma Airbase was announced, and only several months into Hashimoto's prime ministership, President Clinton's state visit took place as planned from April 16-April 17, 1996. During the meeting, both Hashimoto and Clinton signed the *Japan-US Joint Declaration on Security: Alliance for the 21st Century* and the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA). What is clear from both the Joint Declaration and the US-Japan Cooperation Guidelines that would follow nearly a year later is that many of the important building blocs were the ideas and language of the

inherited not only the ready-made concepts of these two reports, but also, the joint consultation process that was driving the re-affirmation and re-definition of the alliance.

¹⁸ Hashimoto would meet with Ota eighteen times during his administration. One of the ironies of the negotiations between Tokyo and Okinawan Prefectural Government is that Hashimoto, a conservative with somewhat nationalist tendencies, would fair better in establishing a personal relationship with the the leftist

“Nye Report” (EASR) that linked the US-Japan Security Treaty with peace and prosperity in the Asia Pacific Region (MoFA, 1996; Funabashi, 1999; Tanaka, 2009). The Joint Declaration affirmed many of the themes of the East Asian Security Review, or the “Nye Report.” Like the Nye report, the document stated that the US-Japan alliance had underpinned the East Asia region’s extraordinary economic growth. The document also reaffirmed maintenance of “about 100,000 forward deployed military personnel in the region”. More importantly, the document created a bridge to the revision of the Joint Guidelines by committing Japan and the US to “studies” of “situations that may emerge in the areas surrounding Japan and which will have an important influence on the peace and security of Japan” (MoFA, 1996). Though reference to maintaining about 47,000 troops in Japan had been left out in consideration of Okinawa, the language of “maintaining the present scale” of US forces (Funabashi, 1999, p. 79; MoFA, 1996) was included. In addition, the SACO Interim Report confirmed what had already been announced several days earlier, the two parties had agreed to the return of Futenma Airbase within 5-7 years provided that an “adequate” replacement facilities were found, including the building of a new helipad in Okinawa (Brooks, 2010, p. 16).

In addition to the re-affirmation of close cooperation and consultation, Japan would pledge to maintain its Host Nation Support. The two countries also agreed to review the Guidelines for Cooperation, work on agreement for joint logistical provisions, and explore cooperation in the vicinity around Japan in times of contingency. In terms of the base issue in Okinawa, the two countries endorsed the SACO process of realignment,

Ota than his predecessor, Murayama Tomiichi, the first Socialist Prime Minister (see Ota, 2000; Akiyama, 2002; Funabashi, 1999).

reduction, and consolidation of bases on Okinawa with the objectives of the Security Treaty in mind; and that the two countries would develop multilateral forums and engage China in a cooperative and constructive manner (MoFA, 1996; Funabashi, 1999, p. 97; Okumura, 1998b, p. 168-169). As critics of the summit would argue (see Chalmers and Keehn, 1996; Carpenter, 1996), despite the end of the Cold War era, nothing revolutionary changed about the US-Japan alliance. Indeed, the revolutionary aspect of the arrangement was how little had changed despite the great fanfare in which the summit was conducted.

If the summit can be called the product of Japan's bottom-up process, one that privileges incremental change over grand strategic maneuvering, it was also effective political theater (following, the Clinton-Hashimoto summit, Hashimoto's public popularity increased by about twelve percent, from 36 percent to 48 percent, according to a Nikkei Shimbun poll (Nikkei, 1996, April 29; Brooks, 2010, p. 17)). There was still much that needed to be done on a working level. In particular, there was still the hard work of revising the US-Japan Joint Guidelines and the thorny details of concluding SACO. The decision to specifically acknowledge the maintenance of 100,000 troops in the East Asian region came as a severe blow to Okinawan expectations (even if the number of 47,000 troops in Japan had been left off the declaration). In addition, the declaration also heightened tensions with China, which looked with suspicion on the entire process of re-affirming the strategic relationship. If endorsement of the nations' top leadership had brought a sense of relief to the drift in alliance relations, the hard work of day-to-day management still remained.

Ameliorating Tensions with China

Since the Tianamen Square Incident of 1989, there had been a noticeable chill in Japanese-Chinese relations. However, the time between May of 1995 and the end of 1996 was an especially difficult one for bilateral relations. The strains on relations came after a year-long stretch where China had conducted underground nuclear tests, had shot missiles across the Taiwan Straits, and in which Japan had suspended economic aid in the form of yen loans. Hashimoto himself had made relations between the countries more difficult through his decision to visit Yasukuni Shrine on his birthday (June 29, 1996). At the time of Hashimoto's visit almost eleven years had passed since Nakasone Yasuhiro had visited the shrine in his role as prime minister. Nakasone had ceased his visits as prime minister in order to smooth relations with both China and South Korea. No doubt, Hashimoto's visit was a way of appeasing one of his core constituencies, The Bereaved Family Society, a conservative organization that boasted an extremely conservative view of history, had ties to the military, and had the ability to mobilize around one million votes. The organization had an especially conservative view of Japan's wartime past and regularly pressured prime ministers to visit Yasukuni Shrine. Before becoming prime minister, Hashimoto had served briefly as the organization's chairman. During his visit to the shrine, he would sign his name on the visitor registry as "Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro" (*naikaku soridaijin*) (Kitamura, 1998, p. 80-81)¹⁹. The visit would, predictably, set off a rash of demonstrations in both China and South Korea.

¹⁹ Mirroring the language of Koizumi Junichiro several years later, Hashimoto would state that the decision to visit was "a personal issue of the heart" (Kitamura, 1998, p. 81).

To make matters worse, the renaissance in Japan-US security ties that occurred in 1996, including the Clinton-Hashimoto Declaration and the decision to revise the Joint Guidelines, was viewed by China largely as a way of containing Chinese power in the region. The controversial phrase contained in the Joint Guidelines, that Japan would cooperate with the US in “areas surrounding Japan” that impacted Japanese security, would expand the framework of the alliance to include not only the defense of Japan, but contingencies throughout the Asia Pacific region. In response to the Joint Declaration and the bilateral work on the Guidelines for cooperation, China began an intense public relations campaign that argued that the Guidelines were a sign of Japan’s return to “militarism” and a method for containing Chinese power (Funabashi, 1999, p. 420-423). The ferocity of China’s public response seemed to catch both Japan and US officials by surprise (see Funabashi, 1999, p. 420).

However, having improved strategic relations with the US, Hashimoto now saw an opportunity to improve relations with China, especially as the 25th anniversary of the normalization of ties between the two countries approached. Following his re-election as prime minister after the Lower House elections of 1996, Hashimoto declared in the press conference that would launch his second administration that he would make repairing relations with China a top priority (Kitamura, 1998, p. 78). He would also—much as Nakasone had done during his prime ministership—pledge to refrain from visiting Yasukuni Shrine for the remainder of his term as prime minister. The groundwork for repairing relations would first be laid out at meeting of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in November, where he would officially support China’s

bid for entrance into the World Trade Organization (WTO) (Kitamura, 1998, p. 84; Yomiuri, 1996, November 22).

Perhaps the most important step Hashimoto took to assuage China was to make the process of re-evaluating the Joint US-Japan Guidelines for Cooperation as transparent as possible. Throughout the process, working groups would put out reports, and officials would make public their progress on the Joint Guidelines. Throughout the revision process, the Hashimoto government would take measures to soften the implications of the revision. In particular, the Hashimoto himself would make it a point of denying that the concept of “areas surrounding Japan” had any specific geographic content and was targeting China directly. Hashimoto used his diplomatic skill to assuage China at every turn. When Hashimoto's Chief Cabinet Secretary (CCS), Kajiyama Seiroku was caught saying that new guidelines meant that Japan would support the US in any emergency in the Taiwan Straits, Hashimoto countered his CCS quickly, assuring Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng that the guidelines were not aimed at “any particular country or region, including China” (Garran, 1997, September 5; Kyodo, 1997, September 8; Nikkei Weekly, 1997, September 1). Though this official stance on the guidelines was a tricky balancing act—one that risked stripping these new Joint Cooperation Guidelines of their meaning—it also provided an opportunity for improved ties with China.

In his visit to China on September 4, 1997, a visit that celebrated the 25th anniversary of the normalization of Japanese ties, Hashimoto called for increased mutual understanding, dialogue, cooperation (Fukui and Fukai, 1998, p. 31-32; Kitamura, 1998, p. 77-78; Ash, 1997). Though there were limits to what Hashimoto could do to assuage

China on the revision of the US-Japan Joint Guidelines, the trip was nevertheless successful. Economic incentives played an important role in making this diplomatic effort work. Hashimoto came offering yen loans valued at approximately 2.3 billion dollars. Just as important was the political message that Hashimoto carried. Hashimoto would acknowledge the suffering and losses caused by Japanese aggression, a step that would help set a precedent for future prime ministers (even ones with conservative leanings). As we will see in Chapter 5, future conservatives would largely follow Hashimoto's example of articulating the Murayama apology in their own words. Though Hashimoto did not improve on the official apology of Murayama Tomiichi, he did find an important symbolic mechanism for expressing regret for Japan's wartime activity. Hashimoto would be the first Japanese leader visit Manchuria since the end of Japan's war with China in 1945. He visited a museum dedicated to the 1931 Manchuria incident (setting a precedent that would be followed by Prime Minister Koizumi, see Chapter 4) (Garran, 1997, September 5). Hashimoto also continued to emphasize that the Joint Declaration and the Joint Guidelines were not targeted toward any specific country or region (Kitamura, 1998, p. 89; Ash, 1997). Hashimoto was met with a remarkably friendly reception. Two months later, Prime Minister Li Peng would reciprocate the visit and receive a warm welcome from Tokyo, despite his well-publicized role in the 1989 "Tiananmen massacre" (Fukui and Fukai, 1998, p. 31). Perhaps one of the most impressive accomplishments of Hashimoto's visit was the scheduling of regular meetings between defense officials. This was an important, if small, step forward for the countries,

given that increasing defense-to-defense ties was a priority for both Washington and Tokyo in their quest to reduce the chances of accidental conflict.

Managing Tensions with Okinawa: The Return of Futenma

One of the most memorable events of the Hashimoto administration in security affairs was the agreement in principle of the return of Futenma Airbase, as well as Hashimoto's handling of the various issues that would arise as a result of base politics on Okinawa. Very little about Okinawan base politics has gone uncontested, and Hashimoto would hold the office of prime minister at a time when the controversial agreement was made to relocate US Marine Corps Airbase Futenma's functions within Okinawa, at a time when land leases for the US bases would fall into a legal vacuum because of Governor Ota's refusal to sign the appropriation papers, and when a local referendum in Nago (the proposed site for the relocation of the base) would pit local sentiment against the national government. If Hashimoto can be criticized for failing to come up with a durable solution to the base issue in Okinawa, at the very least he managed the situation in a way that took the issue off the national agenda and allowed him to pursue his reform initiatives. At the time, Hashimoto's accomplishments were seen largely as a political success. As can be discerned from the advice of his bureaucratic advisors from the JDA and MoFA during this time (see Akiyama, 2002; Tanaka, 2009), few in defense policy circles thought the agreement would be possible given the regional security environment at the time. More conspicuously, the incident also demonstrates the possibilities (as well

as the limitations) of “*kantei*-led policy-making” (*kantei shudo*) for making major breakthroughs in defense policy.

Futenma Marine Corps Air Station is one of the largest U.S. Military bases in the Far East and is located in the congested residential area of central Okinawa, Ginowan City. In 1995, during the Murayama administration, the Okinawan base issue came to the forefront as the result of the rape of a 12 year old girl by three US Marines. This event sparked massive protests on the island, and marked a new low point in US-Japan relations. That year, a summit meeting between Clinton and Murayama would be cancelled. Though the cancellation had been based mainly on the shutdown of government because of a standoff between President Clinton and the Republican Congress over the budget, the intensity of protests at the time may have also played a small role in Clinton’s decision. Murayama would instead meet with Vice President Gore and the leaders would set up SACO to negotiate the particulars of the “reorganization, consolidation, and reduction” of US bases in Okinawa (Funabashi, 1999; Tanaka, 2009). Following his departure from office, Murayama personally asked Hashimoto to see to it that he address the festering Okinawa issue. The Okinawan base issue encompassed more than just the short-term tension of the 1995 rape case. Anti-base governor Ota Masahide had been advocating for the complete removal of the bases for some time, and the Okinawan Prefectural Government had called for the phased removal of US bases by 2015 (Brooks, 2010; Inoue, 2007; Gabe, 2003).

Despite the many problems that remain with the military base issue in Okinawa--including lingering resentments in Okinawa about the small scale of the

reduction of the base burden, and the problems with finding an alternative site for the functions of Futenma--Hashimoto's actions with regard to the base are important because they demonstrated the power of the prime minister's office in diplomatic affairs (as well as important limitations). In a way reminiscent of Nakasone's "*tezukuri gaiko*" (hand-crafted diplomacy), and in a way that would foreshadow Koizumi's "*kantei* diplomacy," Hashimoto negotiated the return of Futenma largely through his own office. For this reason Okumura (1998) calls the event a "top-down" diplomatic success, while Funabashi (1999) has referred to the event as "the prime minister's play." The issue of the return of Futenma had come up at the first meeting between Clinton and Hashimoto in the Santa Monica Summit on February 23, 1996. At the time, Hashimoto was hesitant to bring up the issue of Futenma. Funabashi's (1999) stylized depiction of this summit frames the decision as an existentialist moment similar to Hamlet's monologue: to bring up the issue, or not to bring up the issue. Key officials from MOFA and the JDA, as well as LDP Defense *zoku* members, had advised Hashimoto not to bring up the matter in his meeting. The rationale was that if the US president dismissed the idea, there would be little room to explore the possibility in the future.

Chief among bureaucratic advisors who would advise against bringing up the issue of Futenma were Tanaka Hitoshi of MoFA and Akiyama Masahiro of the JDA who would play a significant role in the Joint Declaration, Joint Guidelines, and SACO negotiations. As detailed in the first person accounts of both Akiyama and Tanaka, they would both advise Hashimoto against bringing up Futenma during his meeting with President Clinton. Foremost among their reasons was the possible effect a return of

Futenma would have on US deterrence in the region (for a more detailed account of this conversation, see Tanaka, 2009, p. 74-76; also, Akiyama, 2002, p. 196; Funabashi, 1999, p. 6-8). However, Hashimoto also received word in a round about way that Governor Ota of Okinawa would be pleased if Hashimoto brought up the Futenma base issue. In the end, Hashimoto would bring up the Futenma base issue in his first meeting with Clinton, though without explicitly asking for Futenma's return (Funabashi, 1999, p. 21-22; Okumura, 1998b, p. 162-167; Tamura, 1998, p. 119)²⁰.

Hashimoto's decision to bring up the matter at the Santa Monica Summit jump-started a dialogue on the possible return of the base. A conspicuous element of negotiations on the return of Futenma was the degree to which negotiations were kept a secret, even from top bureaucrats. The rationale, as surmised by accounts of this period, is that Hashimoto knew that given the risk involved in the initiative, negotiations would need to be the responsibility of the prime minister, not the bureaucrats. In addition, accounts make clear that Hashimoto knew full well that all measures would need to be taken to prevent leaks to the press (Tanaka, 2009, p. 75-76; Akiyama, 2002, p. 198-200; Funabashi, 2009)²¹. As discussed in Chapter 2, on issues of great importance, the prime

²⁰ Hashimoto's statement on Futenma in the Santa Monica summit with President Clinton is in some ways a microcosm of the Hashimoto administration's approach to US-Japan-Okinawan trilateral relations. Hashimoto would advocate for measures to relieve Okinawa's burden on the supposition that US deterrence should be maintained. Funabashi translates Hashimoto's statement as such: "Were I to pass on the demands of the Okinawan people, it would be for the complete return of Futenma. However, bearing in mind the importance of US-Japan security and maintaining the functionality of the US armed forces, I realize that that is extremely difficult" (Funabashi, 1999, p. 21). This statement would cause much confusion on the US side, as officials argued whether Hashimoto had requested the return of Futenma or whether Hashimoto had acknowledged that the return of Futenma would be difficult (Hashimoto had in reality done both) (Tanaka, 2009, p. 76).

²¹ In his account of meetings during this time, Tanaka Hitoshi depicts Hashimoto as someone who was deeply involved with the specifics of the Futenma negotiations (2009, p. 74-83).

minister sometimes has an incentive to get deals done before they can be made subject to the centrifugal forces of Japanese politics, including the inputs of party backbenchers, coalition partners, and the press²².

On April 12, 1996, Hashimoto was able to call a press conference after discussions with Ambassador Walter Mondale to announce the return in principle of Futenma Airbase under the stipulation that a replacement site be found within Okinawa Prefecture. Preceding that press conference, Hashimoto had called Governor Ota and told him personally the good news about the return of Futenma. Governor Ota, for his part, expressed his pleasure with the effort taken by Hashimoto and Ambassador Walter Mondale, but also brought up his reservations about moving the base's functions within Okinawa (see, Ota, 2000, p. 51-52; Funabashi, 1999)²³. If the agreement on the return was well-timed (it came four days before the US-Japan summit where the Joint Declaration would be signed) and orchestrated in a way to boost Hashimoto's popularity by demonstrating his initiative and policy competency, from the beginning it was understood that this would be a qualified victory. The return of Futenma would come at a

²² No doubt the example of Sato Eisaku, Hashimoto's political mentor must have crossed his mind as well. In his negotiations for the return of Okinawa to Japan in the early 70s, then-Prime Minister Sato had used secret emissaries to negotiate with the US the details of Okinawa's return. This method had helped to keep the details of the negotiations—many of which were controversial—out of the press. Tanaka Hitoshi, a key participant in the early negotiations over Futenma, would compare the method of negotiations to those used during the Koizumi administration to arrange for Koizumi's meeting with Kim Jong Il (2009, p. 81; see Chapter 4).

²³ An important element to the agreement over the return of Futenma was also the leadership of US Secretary of Defense William Perry. As Funabashi's (1999) account of the days leading up to the announcement of the return of Futenma demonstrates, without Perry's willingness to take on the vested interest of the various military services, even this basic agreement would not have been possible (see also, Tanaka, 2009; Akiyama, 2002).

price--the functions of the base would have to be relocated in a less-populated part of Okinawa. It was also understood from the beginning that Japan would likely be asked to shoulder a great deal of the cost of this relocation (Okumura, 1998b, p. 160-162; Funabashi, 1999). For those political groups, especially on Okinawa, who had hoped to be rid of the bases, the agreement seemed like little more than a continuation of the status quo of the US-Japan Security Treaty.

Over the course of the remainder of the SACO negotiations, US and Japanese officials would struggle over the specifics of the replacement site. Sites on the mainland such as Iwakuni would soon be ruled out because of the staunch local resistance. Areas in Koichi Prefecture and Hokkaido Prefecture would be ruled out by the US because they were seen as slowing the possible response time of Marine forces to contingencies in East Asia (Moriya, 2010, p. 192-193). Japanese officials would push hard for the consolidation of Futenma's functions into Kadena Airbase (a US Air Force Base), an option that would be vigorously opposed by the US and the surrounding townships. The two sides would also debate the manner of construction of the replacement facility and how the various functions of Futenma would be divided up (for a detailed recounting of these negotiations, see Brooks, 2010; Funabashi, 1999; Morimoto, 2010).

The final SACO report was issued on December 2, 1996, and confirmed the return of some 21 percent of all US facilities on Okinawa. In terms of the replacement site for Futenma, a sea-based facility was approved, that would be removed when it was no longer needed. The construction site would be determined no later than 1997, the report stated (Funabashi, 1997, p. 214; SACO, 1996). SACO would recommend the

return of Futenma on the condition that a replacement facility be built off the waters of Camp Schwab in the less congested Henoko District (1,400 population), the eastern district of Nago City (55,000 population) (Inoue, 2007, p. 127; SACO, 1996). This would decrease the likelihood of a military accident and help to create a more sustainable alliance.

If some of the details of the return were less than desirable, Hashimoto nevertheless also received praise for his respectful handling of Okinawan sentiment, as well as the pains he took to consult with his Okinawan counterpart in Governor Ota (Tanaka, 2010; Inoue, 2007, p. 136; Honda, 2008; Tamura, 1998). Throughout his tenure as prime minister, Hashimoto would hold eighteen meetings with Governor Ota and appoint a special representative, Okamoto Yukio, to take into account the sentiment of Okinawans. The appointment of Okamoto Yukio came with the approval of Governor Ota. As special representative, Okamoto went about establishing a relationship of trust with the mayors of Okinawa, visiting the prefecture 53 times during Hashimoto's administration (Funabashi, 1999, p. 184-185; Brooks, 2010, see also, Okamoto, 1996)²⁴.

²⁴ The literature on the Futenma negotiations is extensive. Over the course of negotiations, officials would have to work out the knotty problems of where to relocate the functions of Futenma and what type of construction method should be used to create the facility. Debates would rage over the various merits and demerits of land reclamation versus an offshore helipad. Later these issues would evolve into debates about the length of the runway and what shape the runway should take. Meanwhile, officials from Tokyo would have to figure out new development schemes to ameliorate local opposition (see Morimoto, 2010; Brooks, 2010; Inoue, 2007).

Managing Tensions with Okinawa: Land Leases and the Local Referendum

If Hashimoto's approach can be described as respectful and proactive, at times he would also have to be heavy-handed, using back-room maneuvering and the political process to override local sentiments. Two incidents in particular demonstrate the complex relationship between Okinawa, US bases, and national-level politics—and in particular, Hashimoto's own dubious role in the affair. The first issue is the referendum held in Nago regarding the relocation of Futenma Airbase to the Henoko region of the city. The second is Hashimoto's handling of Governor Ota's refusal to sign papers authorizing the appropriation of land leases for areas occupied by US bases.

In late 1997, the local residents of Nago city would hold a non-binding referendum on the relocation of the Futenma Airbase to the Henoko region of Nago city. As described extensively in Inoue's (2007) study of the incident, the referendum pitted a wide range of anti-base activists, environmentalist, and anti-militarists against pro-business and pro-LDP forces in the city. In order to win over the population, the LDP would flood the city with money explicitly linking the building of a replacement facility with the future of development funds to the area. In late 1997, the local residents of Nago city would vote in a non-binding referendum 54 percent to 46 percent not to accept the replacement base in the Henoko area of Nago city. In the face of this public opposition, the Mayor of Nago, Higa Tetsuya, pledged not to allow the relocation of the base. This was a significant blow for the LDP and Hashimoto, who had invested so much in negotiating the return of Futenma.

However, in a bizarre turn of events, the mayor of Nago would fly to Tokyo several days later, pledge his support for the relocation of the base, calling it “a step forward for the reduction of the U.S. Military presence in Okinawa,” and then resign in front of Hashimoto (Economist, 1998, January 3; Inoue, 2007, p. 193; Okumura, 1998b, p. 166-167) Hashimoto reportedly shed tears of happiness (Inoue, 2007, p. 193; Honda, 2008, p. 238-239). What was specifically said to Mayor Higa to make him accept the relocation of the bases remains unknown (or at the very least, the author has found no account of what deals were made in the backdrop of this incident)²⁵. On February 1998, several months after the referendum, Governor Ota would withdraw his support for the agreement to move Futenma Airbase’s functions to the Henoko region of Nago city, citing local sentiments and the impact of the new base construction on the environment.

Another major issue that demonstrates the troubled relationship between the mainland and Okinawa over the bases was the issue of land leases that began during the Murayama government and extended into Hashimoto’s administration. The issue was a technical and legal issue that had created the conditions for a unique form of political resistance. While most of these land-holders were more than willing to accept rents from

²⁵ There is more to this story, especially with regard to the relationship of Okinawan activism, national-level politics, and development spending in Okinawa. After the referendum in Nago, the links between mainland development money and acceptance of local bases became more explicit. Governor Ota Masahide—the politician who had most adamantly fought against the presence of the bases—would be an unfortunate casualty of these politics. Despite the public consensus in Okinawa on reducing the bases, progressive governor Ota Masahide (1990-1998) lost a tight election in 1998 to Inamine Keiichi, a more conservative, pro-Tokyo candidate. The defeat was the result of “a perception, accurate or otherwise, that the determined stand of Ota against the bases threatened the economic future of the prefecture” (Hook and Sidle, 2003, p. 11). The future governor, Inamine Keiichi, a local business man, would be rewarded with a larger development package from the central government, and the 2000 G8 Kyushu-Okinawa Summit was held in the city of Nago, with all the financial benefits that came with it. For more on Okinawan base politics, see Cooley and Martin (2006), Inoue (2007), and Gabe (2003). Former Governor Ota Masahide

the central government (typically at above market price), there was nevertheless a small but principled group of land owners who would refuse to lease their land to places occupied by US bases (this group represented less than one percent of base-occupied land). To resolve this issue, the governor of Okinawa would periodically have to sign documents to appropriate the land (Inoue, 2007; Shinoda, 1998, p. 717-718; Akiyama, 2002, p. 189-190). Governor Ota, however, had been elected for his resistance to the bases in Okinawa. On November 4, 1995, two months after the infamous rape incident on the island, a high profile confrontation between Ota and Prime Minister Murayama would ensue where Ota refused to sign the documents that would renew the leases of the unwilling land owners. The issue would go unresolved and on March 1996, under the Hashimoto administration, US bases on the land would fall into a legal vacuum.

In response to this event, the Hashimoto administration proposed a revision of the 1952 Special Law Governing Land for Armed Forces Stationed in Japan. The revision would give the central government the authority to override local governments and landowners and renew the leases for US bases when necessary. The incident is an important one because of the legislative process used to enact this controversial legislation (the example will also provide an important contrast for Chapter 5 and Hatoyama's handling of issues regarding Okinawa). At the time, the LDP was still in a three-party coalition with the Socialist Party and the New Party Sakigake (though none of these parties were represented on the cabinet at this point). When the Socialist Party refused to cooperate in the revision of this law, Hashimoto contacted then-New Frontier

also continues to write extensively on the Okinawan base problem in such publications as *Sekai* (see for example, an early interview Ota (1996), as well as Ota and Satou, 2010).

Party president Ozawa Ichiro. Sensing that Ozawa was hungry for a way to remain relevant in national policy, Hashimoto would put aside his own personal rivalry with Ozawa to pass this crucial piece of legislation. With NFP support, the Taiyo party, Democratic Party, and Sakigaki party also joined the coalition to pass the bill in the Diet in April 1997 (Brooks, 2010; Funabashi, 1999). As we will see in Chapter 4 (the Koizumi case study), flexibility in courting opposition parties can be a powerful tool for achieving policy successes. A lack of flexibility, however, (as we will see in Chapter 5, the Hatoyama case study), can often lock prime ministers into policy quagmires with small parties or factions within the party that oppose a particular piece of legislation.

Even after the end of Hashimoto's administration in July 1998, the imbroglio over Futenma would continue. Though Governor Ota would lose the 1998 election to the LDP and Okinawa business community-supported candidate Inamine Keiichi, this would not make the implementation of the agreement over Futenma easier. Inamine would eventually come out with his own proposal for the replacement facility in the Henoko region of Nago. His proposal would call for a facility with a significantly lengthened runway that could accommodate both civilian and military aircraft. Furthermore, Inamine would agree to the plan only on the condition that the airport would revert to Okinawa within fifteen years (Brooks, 2010, p. 34-35). Thus, the Futenma issue would drag on long after Hashimoto left office.

Symbolic Contributions: Setting the Way for Greater Political-Military Ties and Outward Antimilitarism

Hashimoto would also make important symbolic contributions to defense politics. Surprisingly, he contributed both to eroding the barriers of domestic anti-militarism and in defining the contours of a new outward-looking pacifism. As chairman of the Bereaved Family Association prior to becoming prime minister, Hashimoto had courted the support of the military and military families. As prime minister, he would take important steps toward acknowledging the legitimacy of the military in Japan. One important symbolic act was his decision to meet regularly with military officers in the prime minister's residence. Another important step was his abolition of the 1952 directive that forbade military staff officers from having direct contact with Diet members or officials of government without the presence of a civilian member of the JDA (Samuels, 2007a, p. 101; Okumura, 1998b, p. 178-182). Though these steps may seem trivial, they were important "early slice" in Japan's anti-militarist tradition (see Samuels, 2007a) that would pave the way for much bolder moves during both the Koizumi and Abe administrations in the 2000s²⁶.

However, in spite of his reputation as a conservative on defense issues, Hashimoto would also make important contributions to Japan's outward focused pacifism. Prior to Hashimoto's administration, two non-LDP prime ministers (Hosokawa Mihiro and Murayama Tomiichi) had actively pursued a course of recognizing and apologizing

²⁶ Discussion regarding the upgrading of the Japan Defense Agency to the status of a full ministry was also discussed during the Hashimoto administration. However, one of the reasons plans to upgrade the Defense Agency were shelved was diplomatic consideration for China (see Kyuma, 2009, p. 54-55).

for Japan's past wartime crimes, including the infamous state-sanctioned comfort women system. In his own political treatise, Hashimoto had criticized Hosokawa's acknowledgement of war guilt, suggesting that it would bring endless claims for compensation from Japan's neighbors (Hashimoto, 1994, p. 98-100). And yet, it was Hashimoto's tacit support while vice-prime minister in the Murayama government that allowed the official government apology for Japan's wartime crimes to come about. Moreover, his support for the Murayama apology came in spite of his role as Chairperson for the Bereaved Family Association (Tanaka, 2009, p. 148). Hashimoto would set a precedent for Japan's evolving outward-focused pacifism through his endorsement of the Murayama's official apology (articulated in his own words) and his personal support of the Asian Women's Fund, a government established but privately funded foundation to compensate living victims of Japan's comfort women program during the war.

Like Hashimoto's influence in other policy areas, Hashimoto's influence with the official Murayama apology reached far beyond his role as prime minister. While serving as MITI Minister under the Murayama cabinet, Hashimoto also been served as the Chairperson for the Bereaved Family Association. Without Hashimoto's support, the official government apology would have been void. Despite his ties to the conservative organization, he would also strengthen the apology by recognizing and rearticulating it during his prime ministership (Tanaka, 2009, p. 148). Hashimoto's support of the Asian Women's Fund was also important. Hashimoto would endorse the fund in an official letter on behalf of the Fund, offering his personal apology to that of the government's official apology for the Comfort Women issue (Hashimoto, 1996; Economist, 1996, May

18). This letter would be sent to each of the three hundred women in South Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines where atonement projects were to be implemented. In addition, in his trip to China in 1997, Hashimoto would express his “remorse and heartfelt apology”—an iteration of the official Murayama apology—that would serve as a template for even anti-mainstream conservatives such as Koizumi Junichiro (McCormack, 2007, p. 15; Kitamura, 1998). These initiatives came on top of his already well-known endorsements of environmental security and sustainable development at international forums, and his efforts to expand Japan’s profile with neighbors such as ASEAN and Russia through personal diplomacy.

Hashimoto’s Fall from Power: A Retreat from Popular Politics to Party Patronage

Though not directly related to his approaches to defense policy and politics, Hashimoto’s fall from power is worthy of analysis because of what it teaches us about the nature of the position of the prime minister and his strategic choices. In many important moments during his administration, Shinoda describes Hashimoto as a “grandstander” politician (2000, p. 210). In Shinoda’s characterization he was a lone wolf within the party who was willing to use public support to pursue an ambitious reform agenda. He had appointed himself chairman of his own advisory committee on administrative reforms. At the height of the reform movement in 1997, his popularity hit its peak of 59 percent. In September of 1997, Hashimoto and the advisory council released the Interim Report, which set out an ambitious agenda to privatize postal savings and insurance

services, scale back the number of ministries from 22 to 13, and drastically increase the power of the prime minister's office. Throughout the process, Hashimoto maneuvered around the bureaucracies and protected the council from the attacks of the LDP policy *zokus* (Shinoda, 2000, 2011; MacLachlan, 2010).

However, just as important were the aspects of Hashimoto's leadership that made him similar to "party-beholden" or consensus-style prime ministers. Like most Japanese prime ministers, Hashimoto paid close attention to the balance of power among his party factions and created his cabinet with this balance in mind. In addition, at crucial points Hashimoto risked his popular support by adhering to norms of party patronage. This can be seen especially when it came to the controversial appointment of Sato Koko, a politician convicted in 1986 of taking a bribe in the famous Lockheed scandal, to the position of Minister of Management and Coordination. The appointment was a "gift" to the conservative wing of the LDP and to faction leader Nakasone Yasuhiro in particular (Economist 1997, September 25). In addition, Hashimoto hoped that Sato's clout as a party insider would help him suppress opposition to his reform agenda (Shinoda, 2000, p. 187). However, Hashimoto's reputation changed dramatically after his appointment of Sato. Hashimoto knew that this appointment was risky given Sato's involvement in the highly publicized Lockheed scandal. Despite his reservations, Hashimoto faced relentless pressure from Nakasone to make the appointment (Shinoda, 1998, p. 719; Shinoda, 2011, p. 56). It was a classic choice between public opinion and party patronage. The negative impact of the appointment on Hashimoto's popularity, however, was beyond anything he could have expected. As a result of the appointment, Hashimoto's approval rating would

drop from 59 percent to 28 percent according to a Kyodo poll (Shinoda, 1998; Economist, 1997, September 25; see also, Fukui and Fukai, 1998, p. 25-26). As a result Sato would resign shortly afterwards and Hashimoto would bow his head in apology to the public. As a result, his public image as a strong political leader willing to stand up to his own party was damaged.

As a result of his declining popularity, Hashimoto had to make many political compromises from his original interim report. Some of his most important reforms, for example, on postal privatization, were greatly limited by party pressure as his popularity ratings began to fall (as was described in Chapter 2, if it were not for the risky political gambit of an ambitious cabinet minister by the name of Koizumi Junichiro, there might not have been any move on postal privatization at this point; see, MacLachlan, 2010, 2011). In addition, Japan's economic recovery suffered a major setback. Hashimoto's decision to raise the consumption tax from 3 percent to 5 percent, a measure that had been suggested by the powerful Ministry of Finance (MoF), was primarily blamed for this setback (Fukui and Fukai, 1998, p. 29). Thus, it seemed as if the once "lone wolf" was giving into the most entrenched and conservative bases of power, the need to appease LDP elders and the powerful MoF.

As a result of poor showings in the 1998 Upper House elections, Hashimoto would have to resign as prime minister and party president. He would be replaced by his foreign minister, Obuchi Keizo. However, under the Obuchi administration, Hashimoto would be retained as a special foreign affairs advisor to help maintain the progress in Russian-Japanese affairs. This move demonstrated the standing and trust that Hashimoto

Table 3: *Hashimoto Ryutaro: Approaches to Defense Policy and Politics*

| Approach | Characteristics | Results |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Personally Endorse the Alliance/ Push Joint Declaration and Joint Guidelines</i> | *Bottom Up/ US-Japan alliance managers as key players *Nye Initiative as key intellectual input | *Successful Summit with President Clinton in April *Approximately 20 points boost in popularity ratings |
| <i>Pursue the Return of Futenma</i> | *Top Down *Limited Involvement of Bureaucrats and Party Officials | *Agreement for Return in Principle of Base (with the stipulation that bases functions are relocated in Okinawa) *Public recognition of his role in agreement |
| <i>Pivot towards China</i> | *Top-Down Diplomacy *Re-start of Yen loans | *An uptick in relations with China, reduction in tensions |
| <i>Allowing Military Officers into the Prime Minister's Residence</i> | *Symbolic Gesture | *Would serve as an important step toward breaking down barriers between civilian policymakers and military |
| <i>Endorse Murayama Apology and Asian Women's Fund</i> | *Symbolic Gesture | *Created diplomatic possibilities with South Korea and China, softened Japan's image in the region *Risky as a nationalist with LDP right wing |

had established with other foreign leaders, especially Russian leader Boris Yeltsin. He would also later take up the position of the Minister of Administrative Reform in the Mori Yoshihiro cabinet to help see his reform plan through (Shinoda, 2007, p. 77). Thus, at the very least Hashimoto was able to continue to exercise influence on the policy issues he had helped create as prime minister.

As will be discussed in other case studies and the conclusion, the downfall of Hashimoto—though not related to security issues—demonstrates a persistent aspect of Japanese politics in the post cold war era. In a time where many voters are non-aligned and there is a strong appetite for reform, prime ministers will frequently fall from power when they appear even the slightest bit ineffectual or when they seem to privilege intraparty management over their own stated policy agenda.

Conclusion: The Triumph of Pragmatic, Mundane Strategy

At a time of deep uncertainty, Hashimoto was able to succeed in defense policy and politics by balancing the needs of different stakeholders from the political center. Having inherited the resources of his predecessor—SACO, the Nye Initiative, and a draft for the Joint Declaration—he was able to innovate these institutions by reaching out to Okinawa and pivoting on a revitalized alliance to improve relations with China and broaden relations with other actors (noticeably Russia and ASEAN). If Hashimoto's tenure was a triumph of mundane strategy, then it was a triumph that was facilitated by his astute attention to detail. It was, however, an approach that had important limitations.

As was seen in the latter part of Hashimoto's administration, a defense strategy based on a revitalized US-Japan strategic alliance also created natural barriers to better ties with Okinawa and China. Hashimoto was able to overcome some of these barriers through his use of financial incentives (development spending and public works in the case of Okinawa; yen loans in the case of China) and sincere efforts to build personal relations with their respective leaders. However, these efforts could only reach so far. Much of the improvement in relations with China and Okinawa (with Russia as well) would be short-lived.

Hashimoto's greatest triumphs would remain his domestic reforms. Indeed, one of the ironies of history is the interdependence of the histories of Kozumi Junichiro and Hashimoto Ryutaro. Despite all of Hashimoto's successes—his reorganization of the bureaucracy and the introduction of new executive institutions designed to empower the prime minister—it was his stubborn insistence on being a good party-man and following the dictates of the powerful Ministry of Finance that eventually led to his fall from power. As we will see in the next chapter, these were choices that Koizumi, with his eye constantly on public opinion, would never have made. Koizumi would eventually beat out Hashimoto in 2001 in the race to become party president, and thus, to be the next prime minister. Hashimoto, who was favored to win that race because of his popularity with the LDP party elders, lost partly because of changes in rules governing the selection process of prime ministers. Ironically, the former prime minister once chosen to lead based on his popularity was beaten out by a candidate that embraced his lone wolf precepts more adamantly than he had. Koizumi would go on to have the longest tenure of

any prime minister in the post cold war era. A host of academic studies, popular books, and dissertations would be written about Koizumi, whereas the study of Hashimoto has been largely relegated to a few studies of political reform in Japan. Yet, without Hashimoto's reforms, Koizumi would have lacked many of the administrative tools he needed to conduct his famous "*kantei* diplomacy" that made his administration so effective (see Chapter 4).

In terms of his contributions to security policy and politics, Hashimoto will mainly be remembered for his stewardship—for placing the US-Japan security relationship on a secure footing and for managing the Okinawan protests and Chinese objections adeptly in a way that protected the alliance and largely maintained the status quo. US-Japan security cooperation was strengthened, a large contingent of US troops was retained on Japanese soil, and working-level meetings on how to move Futenma Airbase and make the US presence more manageable for local communities continued. Most significantly the revised guidelines expanded the purview of the alliance to cover regional contingencies and opened the door for a more global alliance. In addition, Hashimoto was also able to make small innovations, expanding ties with ASEAN, making some headway on negotiations with Russia, and changing precedents for the interaction between civilian and military leaders.

In some crucial ways, however, Hashimoto's tenure might be considered a failure. He may be faulted, for example, for not resolving the Okinawa base issue in a way that was politically sustainable. Indeed, despite the great fanfare in which the return of Futenma was announced, the airbase still sits in the same crowded place it did in 1996

when the reversion was agreed to in principle. One may frame this as a failure to manage more skillfully the bottom-up policy process. One may fault him, for example, for allowing the key stipulation, early in the agreement, to relocate Futenma's functions within Okinawa Prefecture without consulting with a wider range of actors. One could also fault him for settling too quickly on the option of moving the functions of Futenma to the Henoko area of Nago. Those on the far left of the political spectrum might even fault Hashimoto for not embracing Okinawa's plan for a gradual phase out of the bases, with a total demilitarization of the island chain by 2015. These criticisms, however, tend to miss much of the historical context of Hashimoto's situation. At a time when his political position was tenuous, even attempting to find a resolution to the problem took an enormous amount of political courage (and significant political risk). Moreover, even a conditional return of Futenma was beyond the imagination of many national-level politicians and bureaucrats. For this reason, even anti-base activists like former Governor Ota give Hashimoto high marks for his leadership (Funabashi, 1999; Ota, 2000).

Another potential criticism of Hashimoto is that he did not fight the sectionalism of the defense subgovernment effectively enough. At a time when "security" was in the process of being radically reshaped following the end of the Cold War, there was a substantial opportunity to chart a new course that would have allowed Japan—one way or another—to come to terms with the legacy of the Pacific War. Instead, as critics have written of the legacy of the "Nye Initiative," Hashimoto helped endorse a process of "ossification" that has kept the US base structure intact and has changed very little of the fundamental dependence of Japan on the US for defense (see Johnson and Keehn, 1995;

Carpenter, 1996). Alternative approaches were possible and alternative resources were available. The Murayama apology had created one political opportunity for better relations with neighbors. New processes for managing the history issue with China and South Korea could have been created with a more adamant push from national leaders and may have allowed Japan to sustain its anti-militarist posture, instead of drifting further into the US-Japan alliance. In addition, Hashimoto could have countered the “Nye Initiative”—a bureaucratically-led process—with a full democratic dialogue with the people of Japan. Instead, Hashimoto allowed, and indeed enabled, bureaucratic alliance managers to reshape a new consensus on defense without greater democratic inputs.

These critics, I would argue, have placed blame in the wrong figure²⁷. As a conservative and pragmatist, Hashimoto was always the ideal figure to promote this ongoing process, and all biographical evidence supports the idea that Hashimoto approved of the bottom-up bilateral work on defense he would eventually endorse. Hashimoto, one of the most entrepreneurial prime ministers of the post cold war era (behind Koizumi), chose a conservative path and mundane resources for a reason. Financial issues, especially the issue of what to do with troubled *Jusen* company loans,

²⁷ In a sense, Hashimoto’s promotion of the revitalization of the US-Japan alliance and its ideological overtones had been softened up not only by the bureaucracy, but also the actions and non-actions of three short-lived prime ministers. In addition, evidence suggests that China and South Korea further enabled this process by failing to reciprocate the olive leaf of the Murayama apology. There was a sense within the bureaucracies and government that during the past three years, both China and South Korea had stopped taking Japan seriously (Funabashi, 1999, p. 28). Clearly, if there had been any chance for an explicit challenge to the US-Japan alliance, it had been missed in the Murayama administrations (1994-1996). As part of the coalition, Murayama Tomiichi became the first Socialist Prime Minister of Japan. Historically, the Socialist Party had been opposed not only to the constitutionality of the SDF, but also, the US-Japan Security Treaty. As a condition of joining the coalition, however, Murayama had given up his opposition to both of these issues (and in doing so would eventually lead to the implosion of his party). In a sense, it was Murayama’s tacit acceptance of the terms of the alliance that opened up the political space for greater entrenchment in US regional strategy.

and other government reforms were of much more immediate concern to him and the public at large. At issue, as well, was the rehabilitation of the LDP party as a whole.

On another level, Hashimoto might also be criticized for neglecting the multilateralism and antimilitarist trend that had been evolving around the debate over “international contributions” since the 1991 Gulf War shock. The Higuchi Report that had been a product of the expert panel established by the Hosokawa administration had advocated a stronger role for Japan under UN-led multilateralism. In a sense, the Nye Initiative (and the Nye Report) had been aimed at drawing Japan more squarely into a US-led security agenda. By embracing many of the precepts of the Nye Report in the Joint Declaration during the Hashimoto-Clinton summit, it seemed as if Hashimoto had rejected Japan’s multilateralism and UN-centric trajectory (see Shibata, 2011, p. 201). In a sense, one might argue that this was the inevitable result of the crises in the immediate vicinity of Japan—the Korean nuclear crisis and the China-Taiwan standoff—in which the UN had little role, as well as a year-long process between bureaucrats whose purview was “defense,” not security in its larger forms.

It is crucial to recognize that Hashimoto’s approach to defense politics did not make a key mistake that another prime minister (Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio, see Chapter 5) would make. In short, though antimilitarist and UN-led multilateralism could be powerful supplements to Japan’s defense policy, it could not displace the functions of the US-Japan Security Treaty. Though Hashimoto’s tenure as prime minister was largely dominated by issues of revitalizing the US-Japan strategic partnership and the Okinawan base issue, Japan’s UN-based multilateral security policy would survive the deepening of

the US-Japan alliance. At the same time that Hashimoto and defense bureaucrats were pursuing closer relations with the US and its security objectives, Hashimoto's foreign minister, and next prime minister, Obuchi Keizo was continuing Japan's UN-based and multilateralist security policy through his exploration of human security initiatives like the Ottawa Treaty against Landmines. Human Security initiatives would be a strong feature of Japan's foreign policy from 1998-2003 (and have had some staying power beyond) (see Edstrom, 2008). Indeed, these initiatives arose very little concern in Washington because alliance issues were being met not only with a strong working-level process, but also, were being addressed by Japan's top leadership.

If Hashimoto cannot be said to have pioneered new processes or ideas on defense, at the very least his approach to defense demonstrates aspects of effective strategy as defined by Rumelt (1993, 2011). Hashimoto demonstrated a good understanding of his operational environment and its resources (an ongoing bureaucratic process, a chance for leader-to-leader diplomacy on many levels, as well as some opportunities to alleviate the base burden in Okinawa) and its challenges (the need to balance the tensions of the US-Japan alliance with the needs of China and Okinawa); he understood the benefit of proximate achievements (the Joint Declaration, the Guidelines, and an agreement on Futenma); he understood the linkage of different aspects of his approach (proximate successes in area of defense could help solidify the LDP's power); and he understood overall design (a revitalized US-Japan strategic relationship could be used as a resource to pursue better relations with China, as well as Russia and ASEAN).

As this dissertation explores the much more robust leadership of Prime Minister Koizumi, it is important to remember that Hashimoto's situation was much different than Koizumi's. In the early days of his prime ministership, Hashimoto came to power as a result of a three party coalition that privileged consensus and a committee structure. With much more circumscribed authority than Koizumi, he was nevertheless able to push through much needed financial and administrative reforms. Despite several major slip ups during his time in office, many considered him a shoe-in to take the prime ministership yet again. Yet, it was not to be. Instead, Koizumi would win the election by appealing to popular sentiments for greater reform.

Chronology of Key Events: Hashimoto Ryutaro Administration

- Sep. 4, 1995: Rape case occurs in Okinawa involving 3 marines that spark intense protests
- Sep. 29, 1995: Governor Ota refuses to sign the papers as a replacement for land owners
- Nov. 19, 1995: Vice President Gore and Murayama meet and establish SACO
- Nov. 20, 1995: SACO commences its first meeting
- Dec. 7, 1995: Prime Minister Murayama files suit against Governor Ota in the Fukuoka Higher Court for failing to sign the papers authorizing the land leases
- January 11, 1996: The Hashimoto Administration begins
- January 23, 1996: Hashimoto's first meeting with Governor Ota to discuss the base issue
- Feb. 9, 1996: Proposal released to use public funds to help "Jusen" financial institutions
- Feb. 23, 1996: Hashimoto Meets Clinton in Santa Monica, where the Futenma Base issue is discussed.
- March 8-25, 1996: Standoff between China and Taiwan over elections; dispatch of USS Independence to calm situation
- March 25, 1996: The Fukuoka High Court finds in favor of the Prime Minister on case of Okinawan land leases
- April 1, 1996 : Ota appeals the decision to the Japanese Supreme Court
- April 12, 1996 : The US and Japan agree in principle to the return of Futenma (within the next 5-7 years) and to work toward the reorganization, reduction, and consolidation of bases on Okinawa.
- April, 15, 1996: The interim report for SACO is released

April 16-17, 1996: Hashimoto and Clinton Meet; they sign the Joint Statement reaffirming the alliance.

April 19, 1996: Hashimoto visits Russia and meets with President Yeltsin.

April 23, 1996 : A Nikkei Survey finds that Hashimoto's approval rating rose from 36% to 48%

June 18, 1996: Hashimoto announces his Administrative Reform Vision

June 23, 1996: Hashimoto expresses his apology for comfort women issue at joint press conference with President Kim Young Sam in South Korea.

June 29, 1996: Hashimoto visits Yasukuni Shrine on his birthday; signs the register as "the Prime Minister" (the first visit by a prime minister in 11 years).

Aug. 28, 1996: The Supreme court finds in favor of the Prime Minister (orders Ota to sign the lease forms)

Sept. 9, 1996: Second Meeting between Hashimoto and Governor Ota

Sept. 13, 1996 : Ota signs the documents that specify the forced leasing of land to the US military; Hashimoto orders lawsuits against Ota to be dropped

Sept. 17, 1996: Hashimoto's first visit to Okinawa

Sept. 27, 1996: Dissolution of the Lower House

Oct. 20, 1996: LDP gains 28 seats in the Lower House Elections (239 in total), twelve short of a majority.

Oct. 21, 1996: LDP, SDPJ, and Sakigake announce that they will maintain their three party alliance.

Nov. 11, 1996: Hashimoto is reconfirmed as president of the LDP and Prime Minister. The Second Hashimoto administration begins.

Nov. 11, 1996: Hashimoto forms a new cabinet (made up entirely of LDP) and announces his six major reforms: administrative reform, government finance reform, economic structural reforms, financial system reforms, social security reforms, and educational reforms.

Nov. 28, 1996: The First Meeting of the Administrative Reform Council

Dec. 2, 1996: A final report compiled by the U.S. and Japanese Special Action Committee on Okinawa calls for a 21 percent reduction in U.S. military bases in Okinawa and construction of an offshore facility to replace the heliport at Futenma base.

Dec. 17, 1996 : Peru Hostage Crisis Begins

Jan. 25, 1997: Hashimoto and President Kim Young Sam from South Korea meet in Beppu

February 1, 1997: Hashimoto meets with Peruvian President Fujimori in Toronto, Canada.

Feb. 12, 1997: Asahi Shimbun popularity polls show that he has slipped 13 points to 42 percent from December

March 24, 1997: Hashimoto tells Vice President Gore in meeting that he will not be asking for troop reductions on Okinawa

March 25, 1997: Hashimoto tells Governor Ota that he will not ask for a reduction in troop presence in Okinawa

April 1, 1997: Start of the change from 3 percent to 5 percent consumption tax.

April 3, 1997: Hashimoto holds meetings with Ozawa (Shinshinto)

April 17, 1997: Diet passes law with help of Ozawa's party that amends Special Measures for Land for the US Military. The central government will have the legal power to continue using Okinawan land plots for US forces even after leases involving 12 US bases and some 3,000 anti-base landowners expire on May 14.

April 23, 1997: The Peru Hostage is resolved through military action (Peruvian Commando Forces).

April 25, 1997: Hashimoto visits the US for a third time

April 26, 1997: Hashimoto meets with President Clinton

June 18, 1996: The "Junsen" Bill becomes law

July 12-13, 1997- Kyodo Poll shows Hashimoto support rate at 59 percent

August 17, 1997: Chief Cabinet Secretary Kajiyama remarks that "shuhen jitai" (situations around Japan) language of new Joint Guidelines does include Taiwan Straits. Chinese officials react harshly.

August 25, 1997: The Committee on Reform Begins.

August 28, 1997: In a speech, Hashimoto says that he shares the sentiments of the Murayama apology and offers his "heartfelt apology" for wartime atrocities

September 4-8, 1997: Hashimoto makes first visit to China; emphasizes that Joint Security Declaration and US-Japan Joint Guidelines are not targeting any specific region or country

September 11, 1997: Hashimoto reshuffles his cabinet. In deference to Nakasone, Hashimoto appoints Sato Koko as Minister of Management and Coordination

September 16, 1997: Members of coalition government request Sato Koko's resignation

September 22, 1997: Sato Koko resigns; As a result of the appointment, Hashimoto's approval rating would drop from 59% to 28% according to a Kyodo poll

Sept. 23, 1997: Security Consultative Committee (2 plus 2) agrees on new guidelines

Nov. 11, 1997: In Hashimoto-Yeltsin meeting parties agree to try to conclude peace treaty by 2000.

Nov. 11-16, 1997: Premier Li Peng visits Japan and calls for "dialogue and cooperation"

December 3, 1997: Final Report of Administrative Reform Council

December 12, 1997: Hashimoto survives no confidence vote in the Lower House.

December, 21 1997: Referendum for Nago on relocation of base takes place. The results show that the city prefers not to have the base relocated to the Henoko region of Nago (52.85 percent vote against the relocation).

January 20, 1998: In effort to shore up confidence in the banking system, Hashimoto Administration announce plan to use public funds.

February 6, 1998: Okinawa Gov. Masahide Ota announces his opposition to the proposed offshore heliport facilities.

February 8, 1998: Kishimoto Tateo, supported by those in favor of the offshore heliport plan, is elected mayor of Nago.

February 8, 1998: Kyodo Poll finds Hashimoto approval rating at 34 percent

April 1, 1998: The Start of "Big Bang" in Financial Deregulation. Hashimoto announces that this will make Japanese financial markets "fair, free, and global"

April 19, 1998: Hashimoto meets with Boris Yeltsin in Shizuoka Prefecture to discuss the Northern Territories.

April 28, 1998: Hashimoto administration submits two laws related to the new US-Japan guidelines.

May 18, 1998: Hashimoto dispatches ASDF planes to Singapore in case they are needed to evacuate Japanese citizens from Indonesia.

June 1, 1998: The LDP's two coalition partners announce they will be leaving the coalition

June 9, 1998: Hashimoto's administrative reform bill clears Diet

July 17, 1998: In the Upper House Elections, the number of LDP seats in the Upper House falls from 61 to 44. Hashimoto Ryutaro announces he will resign to take responsibility.

July 24, 1998: Obuchi Keizo is chosen as new prime minister for Japan. Hashimoto to take up position as foreign policy advisor.

Timeline adapted from *newspaper articles from Nikkei Shimbun, Japan Times, and Asahi Shimbun (also Funabashi, 1999; Tamura, 1998)*

CHAPTER 4:
The Strategist and the Policy Entrepreneur: The Prime Ministership of Koizumi Junichiro
(2001-2006)

Introduction

Koizumi Junichiro (April, 26 2001-September 26, 2006) is the most studied Japanese prime minister of the post cold war era, and ranks alongside Yoshida Shigeru, Kishi Nobusuke, Tanaka Kakuei, and Nakasone Yasuhiro as one of the most interesting and enigmatic prime ministers in Japanese history. In the post cold war era, Koizumi has had no equal in terms of his leadership prowess. Indeed, much of the scholarly literature shows that Koizumi was an exemplar of prime ministerial leadership in a setting where the general public had become used to weak, consensus-based leaders (Mishima, 2007; Shinoda, 2003, 2007; Hayao, 1993). Much has already been written about the style of Koizumi politics—books on his leadership often note his skillful use of mass media, his talent as a political entertainer, and his use of simple expressions (“one phrase politics”) and appeals to citizens’ common sense (Mikuriya, 2006; Iijima, 2006; Otake, 2006; Horiuchi, 2009; Uchiyama, 2010). For some, Koizumi’s style of politics was populism of the worst kind (McCormack, 2007; Hosaka, 2005), a form of theater that played on the deep insecurities of the Japanese public rather than addressing the public’s true dilemmas. However, beyond the style of Koizumi politics, what this chapter calls attention to are the fundamental ideas that gave Koizumi’s policies coherence.

As Rumelt (2011) argues, good strategy frequently coalesces around a single idea, an entrepreneurial insight, that is simple yet surprising that becomes the basis for coherent strategic action. In the previous chapter we saw that the key insight of Hashimoto's administration was that available bureaucratic resources could be used to revitalize the alliance--and that within a revitalized framework, actions could be taken to improve relations with Okinawa Prefecture and China. Koizumi's key insight was necessarily different because the aims of his prime ministership were more revolutionary and his power base within the party was weaker than even Hashimoto's. Insider accounts and personal testimony suggest that Koizumi understood that in order to enact controversial policies, like his postal reform agenda, he would have to draw on resources outside of his party (Mikuriya, 2006, p. 32; Iijima, 2006; Tawara, 2006). Koizumi's ambitious reform agenda necessitated that Koizumi look for support from the public through very visible policy successes.

Though his most dramatic accomplishment was in the area of postal reform, his successes in the area of defense politics were also significant; indeed, much like with Hashimoto, successes in the area of defense and alliance management would serve as a precursor for high-profile domestic reforms. Despite having a weak power base within the LDP, Koizumi was able to improve ties with the US, enacting legislation to support US missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, and lead a dramatic mission to North Korea that led to the return of five of the abductees and their families. In addition, Koizumi was able to help establish a long-term course for greater cooperation and interoperability between US and Japanese military forces. Within the US-Japan alliance framework, Koizumi was able

to significantly improve Japan's military capabilities, allowing the military to move toward an operational ballistic missile shield. These moves alone would be impressive. What is most conspicuous, however, is the way Koizumi used these defense initiatives to change the nature of defense politics, enacting significant changes in domestic culture and policy making institutions. Koizumi was able to use changes to defense policy to set the stage for greater participation of the military in policy formation (and the eventual creation of a Ministry of Defense during the Abe Shinzo administration) and a more profound sense of respect for the JSDF among the public. Even though defense policy measures were in large part done under the umbrella of military realism (realism within the confines of the US-Japan Security Treaty), the domestic transformations were toward self-confident nationalism. Thus, as an incremental Gaullist, we might also characterize his defiant trips to Yasukuni Shrine as another form of domestic policy "success." While his trips to North Korea for normalization talks and frequent messages of peace during trips abroad have had a less significant impact, we should nevertheless also see these policies as part of a coherent political strategy set on maximizing Koizumi's political power while minimizing political costs.

Authors such as McCormack argue that Koizumi's "performance made up in emotional force what it lacked in intellectual consistency" (2007, p. 192). However, what this chapter finds is that what seem like disparate and incoherent actions were actually part of a consistent and coherent strategy. Each policy act helped the prime minister keep the population engaged, supported his image as a reformer and maverick, and demonstrated his skill in achieving short-term policy gains, thus boosting his support

among the population. While the focus of this case study is Koizumi's defense policy, the chapter also argues that these policies were not separate from an overall political strategy set on maximizing the prime minister's political support outside of his party.

This chapter will evaluate Koizumi's prime ministership in terms of his political strategy and his policy entrepreneurship. The chapter begins with a background sketch of Koizumi's political background, highlighting his experience and his opinions on defense issues. It then moves on to a description of his operating context and the challenges he faced. The chapter then parses Koizumi's approach to defense, examining the ideas that underpinned the individual actions on defense during his administration, before concluding the chapter with an assessment of his approach and his relevance to Japan's defense trajectory in the post cold war world.

Koizumi Junichiro's Political Background and Security Orientation

Koizumi Junichiro was known as maverick and rule-breaker long before he assumed the position of prime minister in 2001. As a third generation politician, he entered politics in 1969 at the age of twenty-seven shortly after his father's death²⁸. He would lose his bid for Kanagawa's second district seat partly because of fierce competition, but also because of his failure to consult with the local *koenkai* (local political support group) leaders or senior members of his own party. Some evidence suggests that Koizumi's obsession with postal reform had its origin in this early electoral

²⁸ His father had served as the Minister in charge of the JDA in 1960. The author could not find any biographical reference to whether or how his father might have influenced his ideas on defense.

defeat, as the defeat may have been partially attributed to the desertion of postmaster support for his campaign bid (Maclachlan, 2010, 2011). His 1972 bid for a Lower House seat, however, would prove successful and Koizumi would begin his parliamentary career. In 1988, he was named Health and Welfare Minister under Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru and was reappointed to the same post six months later under new Prime Minister Uno Sosuke. In 1991, he was named to the powerful post of chief deputy secretary general of the LDP (Iijima, 2006; Mikuriya, 2006).

Throughout the years, Koizumi's reputation for political defiance would grow. During his brief period as Minister of Posts and Telecommunications under Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi, he shocked his LDP colleagues and postal bureaucrats by calling for postal privatization. His frequent calls for postal reform came despite the political influence of the postmasters and the close clientalist relationship between the postmasters and the LDP. Koizumi's defiance gained him some popularity, but not enough to overcome the preference for seniority and conformity within the party (Iijima, 2006; Reed and Shizuma, 2009). Despite his lack of support within the party, he would run for party president and prime minister in 1995 and 1998, losing first to Hashimoto Ryutaro and then to Obuchi Keizo, two candidates who had firmer support within the party.

During his time in the Hashimoto cabinet as Minister of Health and Welfare, Koizumi demonstrated his knack for political theater. At a moment when it seemed that reforms of the postal service would not go through—thanks to successful lobbying by the postal interests and Hashimoto's own lack of political courage—Koizumi threatened to

resign the cabinet if something was not done. This threat forced Hashimoto to negotiate with key LDP leaders and come up with a reform bill, however limited, that appeased both Koizumi and the postal lobby. This bill set the way for some of Koizumi's much more extensive reforms during his own tenure as prime minister (Maclachlan 2010, 2011).

Koizumi's third try at the party leadership would be different. Due partially to changes in rules for how LDP leadership was elected based on the votes of local chapters, Koizumi would take the party leadership by highlighting his passion for reforming the party. Throughout his campaign, Koizumi promised to change the LDP, or failing that to "break it" (Iijima, 2006; Lin, 2009). Compared to other prime ministers, Koizumi's resume was less distinguished. He served in the Ministry of Health and Welfare twice and the Ministry of Postal Services once, but had no experience as Chief Cabinet Secretary, Minister of Finance, or Minister of Trade and Industry. In addition, many would point out that Koizumi spoke much differently than normal politicians. His style of speech is best described as "pithy." Indeed, both his critics and admirers alike have referred to his rhetorical style as "one phrase politics." His statements are short, to the point, but in their own way clever.

If Koizumi's intentions for postal reforms were transparent, his attitudes toward security issues were less easy to gauge. In many ways, Koizumi seemed like a politician cast in the mold of Nakasone Yasuhiro and Hashimoto Ryutaro. As a conservative with ties to the Bereaved Families Societies, he seemed to share the same pragmatic Gaullism instincts that these two politicians shared: a desire for a more independent Japan with great military capabilities, coupled with a realization that close

cooperation with the US was the most politically feasible option in the short-term (Envall, 2008). However, in his actions before and during his administration, Koizumi would prove to be much more conservative than the LDP mainstream. Like many anti-mainstream conservatives, Koizumi had walked out of the Diet rather than sponsor the official Murayama apology for wartime crimes. However, in many ways, Koizumi's contentious politics went far beyond that of Nakasone Yasuhiro and Hashimoto Ryutaro, both of whom had tendencies to moderate their stances in order to position themselves more in the mainstream. Whereas both prime ministers had eventually yielded to external and domestic pressure and had refrained from Yasukuni Shrine, Koizumi seemed to thrive off this pressure, refusing to relent in his Yasukuni Shrine visits. While in office, Koizumi was an outspoken proponent of constitutional revision, visits to Yasukuni Shrine, and officially acknowledging the JSDF as a military. However, the Gaullism of Koizumi also had its limits. As will be demonstrated in this chapter, there was a limit to Koizumi's endorsement of anti-mainstream ideas on defense, and like Hashimoto, he would take several moderating measures, such as approving the re-articulating the Murayama apology and his embrace of various anti-militarist and pacifist tones, throughout his tenure. As this chapter will also demonstrate, to a certain degree Koizumi's own views on security were less relevant than his more overarching projects of upholding "reform" as a political symbol and his project of postal privatization.

The Operational Environment: Popular Support Base, Expanded Administrative Resources, Rising External Threat

In 2000, the LDP faced a crisis of legitimacy. The LDP had posted a dismal showing in the Lower House election and faced public dissatisfaction after the party had chosen Mori Yoshihiro as Prime Minister following Obuchi Keizo's stroke. The public was dissatisfied with the way Mori had been chosen (largely behind closed doors), and the gaffe-prone Mori's popularity figures soon dropped to single digits. In order to restore public trust, the LDP changed its party selection process, raising the number of votes that local branches had from one to three. This brought the Prefectural Delegate votes from a minority of the total votes to a majority. How these votes would be cast was determined in local primaries (Lin, 2009; Glosserman, 2001, April; Mikuriya, 2006). Party leaders in the LDP figured (incorrectly as it turned out) that factions and *koenkai* would continue to shape the outcome of these primaries. Thus, most predicted—incorrectly—that former Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro would win the position of party president, and thus, become the next prime minister of Japan. Despite having weak backing within the party, especially from the most powerful factions, Koizumi was able to use his well-known image as a political and economic reformer to appeal the prefectural chapters. These chapters were increasingly inclined—like many voters in the modern era—to favor charismatic, creative leadership over interest-group loyalty. Koizumi was able to win 42 out of 47 prefectural chapters, and with this local support behind him, many of Koizumi's former opponents in the party had little choice but to line up behind him in the second phase of the voting (Lin, 2009).

Thus, Koizumi has been described as one of the most democratically elected prime ministers in postwar Japan (Izumikawa, 2010, p. 152; Lin, 2009; Uchiyama, 2010). As Iijima Isao, Koizumi's personal political secretary, has written about Koizumi: instead of appealing to just LDP members, he instead decided to appeal the wider Japanese population with the idea that if he did so, they would put pressure on the party members to elect him. As his political secretary recalls, Koizumi wanted to be the first prime minister elected by the people, not just his party (Tawara, 2007, p. 70). The change in voting system for party leadership made this more of a possibility.

Thus, from the very beginning Koizumi had a very different power base than many of the prime ministers who came before or after. Instead of strong factional support, Koizumi had a popular base that reached beyond his party and allowed him to attack it when necessary to pursue his preferences. Koizumi's popular persona allowed him to ignore factional considerations when making his policies. Thus, Koizumi's popular persona was an important resource, but one that needed to be constantly retained through dramatic acts that kept the public engaged and interested.

The government reforms of 1999 and 2001, including changes to the Cabinet Law, had also reduced the formal constraints on prime ministerial power. First, the law reduced the size of the cabinet in order to make consensus amongst the cabinet members easier. The reforms also took important steps in limiting the influence of the bureaucracy. In Diet deliberations, bureaucrats could now only act as witnesses on technical matters. Politicians were now responsible for answering questions during Diet sessions (Gauder, 2007, p. 125; Shinoda, 2003, p. 24-26). The legal power of the prime minister, the cabinet,

and the *kantei* also changed during Koizumi's tenure. Administrative reforms that had begun during Hashimoto's tenure became active. The Basic Law, along with the Cabinet Law amendments, granted the Cabinet Secretariat enhanced powers of coordination. The prime minister was also now able to create new positions within the *kantei* to deal with new issues as well as *ad hoc* offices for specific policy initiatives. The prime minister could also appoint new ministers of state based on issues he deemed important (Shinoda, 2003, 2007; Iijima, 2006; Maclachlan, 2010). These new legal powers undermined the traditional "bottom-up" decision-making structure that privileged the bureaucrats, *zoku* politicians, and interest groups that made up the subgovernment.

At the domestic level, Koizumi had to deal with financial structural reforms and Japan's stagnant economy. Often, concerns over financial reform—and especially Koizumi's project of postal reform—would trump other issue areas throughout his term. At the regional level, the Koizumi administration continued to face regressed security dilemma that placed Japan in the same neighborhood as a belligerent and nuclear-armed North Korea and a China with rising military capabilities and desires for regional leadership. In the erratic behavior of North Korea, anti-mainstream conservatives would find not only a palpable external threat in the North's ballistic missile capabilities and nuclear tests, but also in the lingering abduction case a unique crime against Japan that could be used to focus popular fears and anxieties. These rising security threats would end up being a substantial resource for the continued "salami slicing" (Samuels, 2007a; see also Kliman, 2006) of Japan's anti-militarist norms. Perhaps no other resource was as important as the memory of the Gulf War shock of 1991. As Kliman (2006) has written,

the memory of Japan's failure in the first Gulf War created a sense of "internalized" *gaiatsu* was another important resource for the Koizumi administration that helped him push through bold initiatives to support the US in the Global War on Terror.

Parsing Koizumi's Approach: *Kantei*-Diplomacy, Personalizing the US-Japan Alliance, Proving his Maverick Credentials

Much has been written about the style of Koizumi's politics. Books on his style of politics often note his skillful use of the mass media, his skill as a political "entertainer" and his use of simple expressions ("one phrase politics") and appeals to citizens' common sense (Mikuriya 2006; Iijima 2006; Otake 2006; Horiuchi 2009). In some studies, this kind of leadership has been associated with populism of the worst kind, a style of leadership that played to the deep insecurities of Japanese society (see, for example, McCormack, 2007; Hosaka, 2005). However, beyond mere style, there is a pattern in Koizumi's policy approaches that points to an important coherence. All of his actions point to a politician who was able to use unexpected opportunities to support his public image as a reformer, a maverick, and strong leader able to follow through with his convictions.

Scholars have noted the lack of consistency in Koizumi's foreign and defense policy (Uchiyama, 2010, p. 79; McCormack, 2007). Despite his often nationalistic rhetoric, Koizumi showed little inhibition about playing a subordinate role in the US's security agenda (McCormack, 2007). At times, Koizumi would embrace the US strongly, casting aside doubts about its unilateralist course or domestic worries about Japan's entrapment in US global strategy (*military realism*). At other times, Koizumi's actions

would suggest a more moderate track, one interested in regional reconciliation and reduction of the security dilemma through diplomacy (*political realism*). This was most evidently displayed in his negotiations over the normalization of relations with North Korea and the return of Japanese abductees. At other times, Koizumi appeared as a nationalist, demonstrating little concern for the sensitivities of neighbors such as China or North Korea over wartime atrocities (*nationalism/ Gaullism*). And still, at other times, Koizumi would speak sincerely about Japan's role as peaceful nation, in no way interested in repeating her history as an aggressor (*symbolic pacifism*)²⁹.

Thus, on the surface, Koizumi's approach to defense policy and politics would seem like an incomprehensible amalgam. However, a closer inspection that situates his defense policy in relation to his other policy objectives as prime minister reveals something quite different. Despite the often conflicting ideologies of the different parts, each action within these groupings served a singular goal: each action took advantage of a short-term opportunity to demonstrate Koizumi's policy acumen and competence as a national leader in accomplishing proximate goals. The importance of this approach cannot be stressed enough. As a leader with small factional power, and a flagrant challenger to traditional ways of doing business, Koizumi needed to find ways to energize a moribund public in order to maintain his popularity³⁰. This popularity, in turn,

²⁹ For a review of the four major lines categories of thought on defense policy in Japan: Gaullism, military realism, political realism, and pacifism, see Chapter 1. For a more comprehensive review, see Samuels (2007b) or Mochizuki (1983/1984).

³⁰ Though commentators of Japanese politics have noted that Japanese society is generally conservative, there is nevertheless an aspect to Japanese politics that is quite sensationalist. Sakai (2011), for example, describes the behavior of the Japanese media as often quite close to that of tabloid magazines, more interested in gossip and innuendo than even-handed reporting. In an age when a great deal of voters

would help him in his prime objective of postal reform. Thus, his approach to defense policy and politics can be seen as coherent when seen through the larger lens of his overall strategy as a prime minister.

Aspects of Koizumi's unique approach to Japanese politics have been abundantly explored in major books, articles, and dissertations (see for example, the work of Gaunder (2007), Shinoda (2007a), Horiuchi (2009), Maclachlan (2010, 2011) and Uchiyama (2010)). Prior works have, for example, pointed out the revolutionary aspects of Koizumi's *policy-based method for selecting cabinet ministers*. Not only did Koizumi choose Takenaka Heizo, an economics Professor at Keio University, to head up his economic reforms, but he would also appoint an unprecedented number of women to the cabinet (five), including the very popular Tanaka Makiko as Foreign Minister. He would also minimize cabinet reshuffling throughout his tenure to minimize factional influences. By evading factional considerations in his decision on cabinet ministers, not only did he optimize the talent available for policy decisions, but he also increased his credibility with the public³¹.

Political theater, "one-phrase" politics, and personal branding were also important aspects of his approach. Throughout his tenure, Koizumi used "theatrical" performances that allowed him to stay in the spotlight. These performances often

identify themselves with neither party, a politician that finds a way to be "interesting" has a distinct advantage.

³¹Rejecting the traditional faction-based method of selecting a cabinet had one other major benefit—it was wildly popular. Polls taken by the Asahi Shimbun immediately after the selection of his cabinet showed that this already high support rate of 78 percent had gone up to 85 percent (Shinoda, 2011, p. 58).

underscored his reputation as a “maverick.” As will be discussed in later sections, his decision to personalize his relationship with George W. Bush and his decision to meet personally with North Korean leader Kim Jong Il were likely calculated to maximize opportunities for media exposure and to help make successes in these bilateral relationships appear as personal victories.

As was seen in the previous chapter, “*kantei-shudo*” or “*kantei* diplomacy” can be a powerful tool for personalizing diplomacy and accomplishing important policies that are beyond the reach of bureaucrats. The term “*kantei* diplomacy” has become somewhat synonymous with Koizumi’s administration (see, Shinoda, 2007a; Takami, 2006). Koizumi’s *kantei* diplomacy was one part personal preference and one part necessity. In the early parts of his administration, the 9/11 attacks and the disarray in MoFA following the appointment of Foreign Minister Tanaka Makiko made it essential for Koizumi to use the expanded resources of the *kantei* to avoid the stigma of “too little, too late” that had been attached to Japan’s first Gulf War response. Koizumi understood that he needed to fashion a response that was decisive and that would visibly contribute to coalition forces in Afghanistan. Koizumi’s use of the *kantei* was especially adept. He was able to bring in the best talent from the various ministries and use this talent to come up with new policies quickly. In addition, he was able to move special legislation through the Diet in record time. This *kantei*-led approach to policy would continue with the Iraq legislation and with other initiatives, including his much prized postal and economic reforms.

In addition, Koizumi would use *negotiations with the political actors outside his party* to maximize policy flexibility. He would frequently use negotiations with the Komeito, the coalition partner of the LDP during this period, as well as overtures to the DPJ to help put pressure on his own party (to say nothing of the threat of US *gaiatsu* that was often employed in defense policy). As Shinoda (2007) details in his concentric circle approach, using the support of outsider actors like the Komeito and the DPJ helped keep pressure on government officials within his own party. Koizumi was able to negotiate with Komeito first and then present the product of these negotiations to the LDP elite as a *fait accompli* (see Gaunder, 2007, p. 124; Shinoda, 2007). Koizumi also consistently sought the support of the DPJ through his term in order avoid excessive reliance on the LDP or the Komeito for policy passage (Shinoda, 2007, p. 137; Shimizu, 2005, November 14). Though Koizumi's attempts at courting the DPJ were largely unsuccessful, this action demonstrated Koizumi's flexibility and his desire to use outside resources to battle his own party.

Another important aspect of Koizumi's tenure was his *use of the electoral process to attack his own party*. One of Koizumi's campaign slogans was: "If I cannot change the LDP, I will break the LDP!" (Iijima, 2006, 2007; Nakasone, 2005, February 22; Mikuriya, 2006, p. 34). Koizumi was skillful in using his grass root support and popularity to overcome resistance in his party. Unlike Hashimoto, who had eventually yielded to party pressure, Koizumi would use every tool in his political repertoire to achieve his objectives. When it came to postal reform, Koizumi bet that his popularity would help keep anti-reformers in line. When anti-reformers refused cooperate, he

dissolved the Lower House, branded those who had opposed his reforms as “rebels,” and had them kicked out of the party. He then sent out “assassins” candidates to compete with these Diet members in the election. As will be discussed, this approach bears discussion because of the potential it holds for more radical approaches to defense policy and politics in the future.

Building on this scholarship, what this section will demonstrate is that the various components of Koizumi approach to defense policy and politics, despite their distinct ideological trappings, worked within a coherent strategy. As Rumelt has argued, good strategy is usually based on a single critical insight that gives coherence to actions. Koizumi’s *embrace of the US (military realism)*, his *diplomatic overtures to North Korea (political realism)*, and his *Yasukuni Shrine visits (Gaullism)* were all important components in maintaining his image as a can-do prime minister, capable of overcoming the trappings of the LDP party system. Within these ideological strains, Koizumi was able to overcome opposition, realize proximate goals, and thus remain interesting to a public that had the tendency to be disillusioned with politics. Though often overlooked in studies of Koizumi, *symbolic pacifism* also played an important supporting role during his administration. His embrace of symbolic aspects of Japan’s anti-militarist identity both in his embrace of the rhetoric of apology and adherence to the content of anti-militarism in key policies allowed him to limit his political liabilities and remain an attractive leader to the Japanese political center and outside of the East Asian region.

During his administration, the issue of Futenma Airbase would come up as a point of contention. In this area, too, Koizumi demonstrated shrewdness, though of a

different kind than witnessed in his other policy measures. Unlike Hashimoto who had chosen to involve his office personally in the return of Futenma and to create a personal relationship with the Governor of Okinawa, Koizumi would for the most part leave relations with Okinawa in the hands of experienced bureaucrats. To an extent, this approach was necessary. This hands-off approach, though different from his approach to other policy issues, was consistent with his primary goal of postal reform. Coinciding as it did with his attempts to push through dramatic postal reform legislation, Koizumi judged that his personal involvement in the issue would gain him little.

Logics of Military Realism: Embracing the US

Because of the broad consensus among Japanese elites on the benefits of the US-Japan alliance, there has usually been little question over whether to embrace the US as a partner. The question has been: to what extent and for what purposes? In the case of Koizumi, he chose not only to embrace US policies whole-heartedly, but also to personalize the relationship between himself and US president George W. Bush in unprecedented ways. Through his skillful management of the policy process, he was also able to make groundbreaking contributions to the alliance and provide himself a platform for pursuing gradual change in military affairs.

The personal relationship between Koizumi and President George W. Bush would come to surpass even the “Ron-Yasu” relationship of Ronald Regan and Nakasone Yasuhiro of the mid-1980s. Koizumi would be a frequent visitor at Bush’s Crawford Ranch in Texas, the beneficiary of several poolside chats, and would even have the

privilege of listening in on one of the President's Daily Briefs by the CIA (Tawara, 2006, p. 135-136; Iijima, 2007). During the celebration of Bush's 59th birthday, Koizumi would serenade Bush with a verse from Elvis's "I Want You, I Need You, I Love You." The two frequently bonded over their shared love of Elvis and their fondness for Gary Cooper's western classic *High Noon*. In his final trip to the US, Koizumi was not only rewarded with a summit putting a final stamp on the alliance's transformation, but was also treated to a presidential tour of Elvis Presley's Graceland in Memphis, Tennessee (Faiola, 2006, June 27; Iijima, 2007, p. 277-279; Yoshida, 2006, June 29). Despite Bush's unpopularity in Japan, the personalization of the bilateral relationship nevertheless proved a great political success for Koizumi. The close relationship gave the prime minister another arena in which to demonstrate his charisma and flamboyance, and provided him with numerous opportunities to exploit his media savvy.

The substance of his contributions to the US alliance and his skill in manipulating the policy process were no less significant. For example, one of the most studied aspects of the Koizumi administration is his acumen with the resources of the *kantei*. Koizumi would use those resources to help overcome bureaucratic and political obstructions in formulating policy on contributions to the alliance in both Afghanistan and Iraq (Shinoda, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007; Takami, 2006; Kliman, 2006). In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, many Japanese politicians and bureaucrats remembered painfully the "failure" of the first Gulf War, where Japan had been criticized for not providing a "human" contribution to the war, only its large financial contribution. The shock and embarrassment of this incident reverberated deeply in Japanese elite

circles and provided permissive conditions for a bolder approach to alliance management should another crisis arrive. Though elite attitudes were pre-disposed to a more active contribution, few would predict the boldness and speed of Koizumi's policy responses in the wake of the September 11th attacks. Ground-breaking legislation to send the Japan Self Defense Force overseas in support of US operations in Afghanistan was passed in just three weeks. Koizumi was able to use early public statements pledging concrete support to the US to outpace the bureaucracies, his party, and the Diet. This approach contrasted drastically with the traditional practice of intensive consultation (*nemawashi*) before announcing a policy course (see Chapter 2), all of which had inhibited Japan's response during the first Gulf War. As Kliman (2006, p. 83) argues, by setting high expectations with the US, Koizumi was using the threat of future American *gaiatsu* to overcome complacency and intransigence within his own party and the bureaucracy. Other attributes of Koizumi's policy process were equally conspicuous in their effectiveness: Koizumi assembled the most skilled bureaucrats and experts from the relevant ministries under policy teams in the *kantei* in ways that allowed him to form policy options quickly under his own leadership; he used early negotiations with the LDP's coalition partner the Komeito to help pressure his own party to take action; and Koizumi also framed his contributions in both Afghanistan and Iraq as contributions to international security rather than defining them in collective self-defense terms (Shinoda, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007; Kliman, 2006; Samuels, 2007a).

Dispatches of the JSDF to the Indian Ocean and Iraq would stretch the limits of constitutional pacifism without entirely alienating the Japanese public or breaking the

coalition with the more pacifist Komeito. The Anti-Terror Legislation of 2001 would allow the JSDF to provide logistic and noncombatant support to the U.S.-led multinational force, engage in search-and rescue activities for missing military personnel, and carry out humanitarian relief operations for refugees. Over time, the MSDF would take on an extensive role in refueling US ships in the Indian Ocean. The 2003 Iraq Special Measures Legislation, the second piece of legislation to allow the JSDF to assist the US overseas, would be enacted in the same top-down style as the 2001 Anti-Terror Legislation. The obstacles would be more formidable for the 2003 Iraq Special Measures Legislation. Instead of the “rear area” support provided in the 2001 legislation, these measures proposed sending JSDF into an active war zone (though for legal purposes, the Samawah region or Iraq would have to be labeled a non-combat zone before JSDF members could be dispatched). In addition, as the legislation was being debated, two Japanese diplomats would be slain in Iraq. However, much like the Anti-Terror Legislation of 2001, Koizumi’s early promises of support to President Bush, his own strong support ratings, and memories of Japan’s failure to provide a “human contribution” to the first Gulf War helped spur legislative action. From February 3, 2004 to July 18, 2006, 600 Ground Self Defense Force would be stationed in Samawah, Iraq and provide humanitarian assistance and help with reconstruction.

Though both the Anti-Terror Legislation of 2001 and the Iraq Dispatch Legislation of 2003 broke with tradition by dispatching the JSDF for de facto collective self-defense, they nevertheless adhered to Japan’s anti-militarist identity in ways that allowed Japan to maintain the pretense of constitutional pacifism (Oros, 2008). Japanese

JSDF personnel were for the large part kept out of danger, and in the details of JSDF dispatches pains were taken to limit contributions to tasks that were largely humanitarian in nature. Both the Anti-Terror Legislation of 2001 and the Iraq Dispatch Legislation of 2003 also served the proximate goal of demonstrating to the public Koizumi's skill at using the *kantei* resources to overcome the centrifugal forces of the government. In doing so, he helped avoid the trauma associated with the first Gulf War and strengthened the sense of trust with the US. Most importantly, however, these contributions had taken place without overt requests from the US. The swiftness of Koizumi's declarations of support, coupled with his close relationship with President Bush, helped create conditions for his administration to control the policy content of alliance contributions.

Japanese contributions to the War on Terror and the Iraq War helped put the US-Japanese security relationship on secure footing, thus guaranteeing US extended deterrence against North Korean belligerency and the emerging long-term Chinese military threat. Though Japan no longer had to fear US abandonment, Japanese officials and the public now had to worry about entrapment in US wars. Within the contours of this new special relationship, some believed Japan was becoming the "Britain of East Asia" (McCormack, 2007). Increasingly, joint-statements released by both governments suggested that the alliance was in reality being globalized (White House/ MoFA, 2006, June 29; Nabeshima, 2003, June 2). Just as Prime Minister Nakasone had done in the mid-1980s, Koizumi was using the contours of the US-Japan alliance framework to whittle away at the edges of Japan's anti-militarist institutions (Envall, 2008; Samuels, 2007a). Within this new alliance framework, old inhibitions against collective self-

defense would fall by the wayside. Japan would begin to acquire the set pieces for an operational ballistic missile defense shield. Building on a formal decision in 1998 to support joint missile defense research, a cabinet decision would be made in December 2003 to proceed with a two-layer system consisting of Standard-3 missile interceptors deployed on AEGIS-equipped destroyers and ground-based Patriot Advanced Capability-3 missiles (Glosserman, 2004, January, p. 4; Uriu, 2004, p. 177). The decision by the Tokyo government to deploy a limited missile defense system would require Japan and the US to integrate planning, development, and systems design in unprecedented ways. The missile defense systems would allow Japan access to US early warning intelligence and technology, but also bring up thorny issues of legality. Not only would cooperation require modifications of the ban on arms exports, but it would also require maneuvering around constitutional issues of collective self-defense. Though Japan would maintain its one percent of GDP limit on defense spending, significant improvements would be made in capabilities, including the acquisition of mid-air refueling aircraft, an important component of any pre-emptive or retaliatory strike on North Korea.

During the Koizumi administration, alliance managers on both sides would continue to reshape the alliance in ways that strengthened Japanese capabilities and immersed Japan further in US technology and US global defense priorities. Indeed, McCormack (2007) would call the 2006 agreement leading to the fusion of command and intelligence functions of US and Japanese forces the most dramatic turn in the alliance since the signing of the security treaty. Joint force modernization plans would include enhanced intelligence capabilities, a coordinated network of satellites, missile

interceptors, and radar, as well as increased joint training, and the establishment of the first joint command centers (Samuels, 2007a, p. 178-179; McCormack, 2007). In short, Japan would continue to benefit from US extended deterrence and technological integration with the US; in exchange, Japan would willingly enmesh itself deeper in US defense infrastructure and expand its roles within the alliance.

In siding closely with US, Koizumi demonstrated both the continuing relevance of a mainstream military realist approach to the transformation of military affairs and the importance of the prime minister/ US presidential relationship for prime ministerial power. He also demonstrated the “paradoxical logic” (see Envall, 2008; Mochizuki, 2007) of embracing the US. In short, the more Koizumi earned the trust of US leadership, the more flexibility he had in other areas of foreign policy and defense. Koizumi would be able to pursue independent diplomacy with North Korea and the US would turn a blind eye as Japan pursued an energy development initiative worth billions in Iran—despite both of these countries being labeled members of Bush’s “axis of evil.” The US would also acquiesce to Japanese demands to include the “*rachi mondai*” (abduction of Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 80s) on the agenda of six-party talks with North Korea, and would turn a blind eye as Koizumi’s trips to Yasukuni Shrine rankled regional stakeholders like China and South Korea³².

³² One of the lingering questions that remains from Koizumi’s administration is the relevance of this approach for other prime ministers. Indeed, because few other prime ministers have been able to connect so closely with the US president on a personal level *and* have attempted to pre-empt US demands for alliance contributions, it is difficult to tell whether this is indeed a strategy relevant across prime ministerships or a tactic more specific to the Bush-Koizumi relationship.

Logics of Political Realism: Koizumi's Dramatic Trip to Pyongyang

One of the most dramatic events of Koizumi's administration was his historic meeting with North Korea's leader Kim Jong-Il on September 17, 2002. Though the decision to visit the leader face-to-face and negotiate the return of Japanese citizens and pursue normalization of ties was characteristic of Koizumi's flare for the dramatic, the move also risked alienating the Bush administration and threatened Koizumi's support from conservative groups on the political right (like the Bereaved Family Association) (Iijima, 2007, p. 105). The Pyongyang Declaration required that he admit Japanese guilt for wartime atrocities, apologize for Japanese transgressions, and promise one of Asia's most unstable dictators economic and humanitarian assistance (even if only provisionally). Despite these risks, the trip worked within a larger strategic logic: his visit to Pyongyang to meet Kim Jong-Il was dramatic in a way that both allowed him to surprise the Japanese public and demonstrate once again his maverick credentials, and it also accomplished a several important short-term goal that made Koizumi look effective as a national leader. In his first visit, Koizumi was able to bring back five of the abductees and help secure access to more information on the other abductees. The visit also served another important political purpose. It helped Koizumi's popularity figures rebound after the steep drop following the forced resignation of his popular Foreign Affairs Minister Tanaka Makiko. By May of 2002 Koizumi's popularity ratings had fallen into the low 40s. His dramatic trip to Pyongyang to meet with Kim Jong-Il and return the abductees boosted his approval rating by nearly 30 points and brought his

popularity ratings back to about the level they were when he had started his administration (Cha, 2004).

There was nothing automatic about Koizumi's trip to meet directly with Kim Jong-Il. Throughout Koizumi's term, North Korean ballistic missiles, coupled with the regime's erratic behavior, represented the most palpable threat to national security, not only absorbing the administration's time and energy, but also capturing the imagination of the public. Indeed, many commentators hypothesized that Koizumi's enthusiastic embrace of the US security deterrent was driven by the threat of North Korean aggression (Samuels, 2007a; Hughes, 2009). North Korea's 1998 Taepodong missile tests, the regime's periodically belligerent rhetoric, the revelations of nuclear weapons development, and the details of the abductee cases all contributed to a sense of threat throughout Japan that made direct negotiation with the regime a political hazard.

More importantly, negotiating with the dictator for possible diplomatic normalization seemed to cut across the grain of Koizumi's conservative ideology. Still the opportunity to visit Pyongyang to talk directly with North Korea's leader and to bring five of the abductees back was an opportunity that proved too difficult for the prime minister to pass up. Indeed, accounts suggest that the decision to visit the reclusive country had more to do with the proximate goal of bringing back the abductees than with the opportunity for normalizing ties with the North. Koizumi was reported as telling his associates that if he could bring back even one abductee he would go (Iijima, 2007; Yomiuri Shimbun Seiji-Bu, 2006). The opportunity to visit Pyongyang came after long negotiations between Japanese officials and their North Korean counterparts. For the

most part, the details of the meetings were worked out through secret meetings and rendezvous between clandestine contacts and officials on both sides (Yomiuri Shimbun Seiji-Bu, 2006; Tanaka, 2005b; Tanaka, 2009, p. 104-116). For a long time the two sides had negotiated on the issue of the abductees, the normalization of diplomatic ties, and nuclear and security issues. For some time, fear of a leak had kept Japanese officials from informing their US counterparts. Japanese officials were worried that if there were a leak, the North would back down and the visit would be ruined (Tanaka, 2005, 2009)³³. Before the visit, Koizumi would notify the US and later contact President Bush directly to inform him of his intention to meet with Kim Jong-Il. Though Bush was not enthusiastic about the trip, he nevertheless voiced his understanding of Koizumi's visit (Yomiuri Shimbun Seiji-Bu, 2006). As Tanaka Hitoshi, a top diplomat partially responsible for arranging the meeting would note in his memoirs, it was the special relationship that Koizumi had formed with President Bush that made Koizumi's gambit possible (Tanaka, 2009, p. 112, 120).

On September 17, 2002, Koizumi made his dramatic trip. He would be the first Japanese prime minister to visit the reclusive country. Despite predominantly being associated with a Gaullist/ nationalist tradition with regards to defense, Koizumi was nonetheless willing to apologize for the "tremendous damage inflicted by Japanese colonialism" (Cha, 2002; Yomiuri Shimbun Seiji-Bu, 2006; Iijima, 2007; Uriu, 2003). In

³³ Much as Hashimoto had done with Futenma, Koizumi made secrecy a priority during the initial phases of negotiations, keeping only the members of MoFA directly involved in the negotiations, the Chief Cabinet Secretary, the Vice Cabinet Secretary, and the Foreign Minister notified of progress (Tanaka, 2009, p. 103). No doubt domestic considerations were also an important factor behind the decision to keep negotiations secret. The abductee issue was one of the most sensitive political issues in Japan, and leaked information of

return, Kim Jong-Il apologized for the abduction of thirteen Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 80s. The two parties then signed the Pyongyang Declaration, which consisted of four agreements: (1) the two sides would resolve to normalize ties; (2) there would be a “settling of accounts with the past” that would include the provision of economic assistance from Japan and in return the North would waive pre-1945 property claims; (3) on abductions, the North Koreans agreed to ensure that no similar incidents would occur in the future; and (4) the two sides agreed to security-related confidence-building measures, and the North Korean side agreed to a moratorium on missile launches in and after 2003 (Stockwin, 2008, p. 112; Cha, 2002; MoFA, 2002).

As a result of Koizumi’s visit to North Korea, five of the original abductees were returned. However, the mood of the Pyongyang Declaration was spoiled by the specifics reported by the North Korean officials regarding the remaining abductees. Of the thirteen that were thought to be abducted, eight were reported by North Korean authorities as dead. Since the abductees were young at the time, many in the Japanese media speculated that the abductees died by violent means. The issue of the abductees and the specifics of the crime would soon become a media sensation that would overshadow the diplomatic gains of the Pyongyang Declaration. Later revelations that North Korea was enriching uranium and had been continuing with its nuclear program in violation of a 1994 agreement would also dampen enthusiasm for further normalization talks, as would the Bush administration’s hardline stance toward the regime (Stockwin, 2008, p. 113; Uriu, 2003; Yomiuri Shimbun Seiji-bu, 2006). The North’s withdrawal

any kind would likely have sparked a media circus. Behind Koizumi’s dramatic meeting with Kim Jong Il were no less than 20 secret meetings between officials (Tanaka, 2009, p. 103).

from the Nonproliferation Treaty in 2003 would strain diplomacy even further and spur Japan to aggressively pursue a joint ballistic missile defense program with the US.

In May 2004, to break the silence between the two countries, Koizumi visited Pyongyang for a second time. Much like the first meeting with the two countries, the meeting was spurred by the possibility of accomplishing an important proximate goal. In this case it was getting North Korean government to allow the family members of the abductees to leave for Japan. During this meeting, North Korean officials acknowledged that the return of Japan's citizens was permanent and agreed that their families could leave to join them. Koizumi, in return, agreed to provide humanitarian aid (food aid and medicine) and reopen negotiations for normalization of diplomatic ties. Koizumi was also able to get Kim Jong-Il's promise to provide more information on the abductees reported dead. By this point, however, a coalition of powerful pressure groups had emerged on the abductee issue. The net effect of the pressure from these groups was to strengthen the hand of the conservative Cabinet Secretary Abe Shinzo within the government and draw the Japanese position closer to the US. The strange case of Yokota Megumi's ashes would soon push the issue beyond the control of the government. A series of tests done by Japanese scientists showed that the ashes handed over by the North Korean government were the remains of two unrelated people. This news infuriated the Japanese public and tainted the credibility of the North Korean regime in the public's eyes (Hiwatari, 2006, p. 50-51; Cha, 2004).

The second trip only marginally improved Koizumi's already high approval rating of 60 percent (Cha, 2004). After 2004, Koizumi would quietly abandon the North

Korean initiative. Realizing that key members of his government, a majority of the public, and Japan's key strategic ally were not supportive of his initiatives, he accepted that there was no longer any benefit in pursuing the issue. Though the primacy Koizumi placed on US alliance management would impinge on his efforts to normalize ties with North Korea, as would the scale of popular revulsion in Japan at the abductee issue, the most important impacts of Koizumi's trip to Pyongyang lied beyond the content of this political realist initiative. Koizumi's trip to North Korea provided another platform for a dramatic display of leadership and allowed him to demonstrate once again his ability to accomplish important proximate goals (in this case, the return of the abductees and their families). His trip to Pyongyang helped to improve his flagging popularity figures, strengthened his power base among the public, and helped him continue on his path toward postal reform.

Symbolic Nationalism: Yasukuni Shrine Visits as a Matter of the Heart

Perhaps Koizumi's most contentious act in the realm of defense politics was his visit to Yasukuni Shrine every year during his prime ministership. These visits put him at odds not only with China, South Korea, and other countries that had suffered under Japanese colonial rule, but also with left wing politicians, pro-China business elites, and even during the last year of his administration the US Congress. Despite the lingering questions over the legitimacy of the shrine and its symbolism, Koizumi would frequently characterize his visits as a domestic issue and "a matter of the heart." In his press conferences and speeches accompanying his visits, he would frequently justify his trips in

terms of his desire to pray for the perished war dead, express his puzzlement at negative reactions to his visit, and punctuate his trips with pacifist language that restated his desire that Japan never again embark on the path of war. Polling data from several newspapers, including the *Asahi*, *Yomiuri*, and *Mainichi Shimbun* during this time shows that by the end of his prime ministership Koizumi had turned an otherwise unpopular symbolic act of state into a quasi-popular one (Stockwin, 2008; McCormack, 2007; Mong, 2010). The reversal in popular opinion may have reflected the growing insecurity of the Japanese public against the backdrop of rising Chinese power and the noxious North Korea abductee issue, but probably also demonstrated the public enthrallment with Koizumi's ability to overcome political obstacles. In short, his Yasukuni visits became one more symbol of a prime minister who could stare down opposition.

Koizumi's determination to visit Yasukuni was probably based on his assumption (an assumption that had regularly proven correct) that his reputation as a reformer was tightly bound with his ability to meet the letter of his campaign pledges, and that any retreat from these pledges would be exploited by his political opponents. Before becoming prime minister, Koizumi had promised the powerful Japan Bereaved Families Association, which boasts close to a million voters, that he would make a formal annual visit to the shrine (McCormack, 2007, p. 50; Samuels, 2007a). Additional pressure was placed on the prime minister by other smaller organizations such as the Military Pension Federation, and the Association of Shinto Shrines, as well as major rightist intellectuals. Leftist groups for their part saw the prime minister's visits as symbols of an outmoded militarism and feudalism that denied Japan's postwar legacy as a state devoted

to human rights, democracy, and pacifism. These leftist groups, such as the Japanese Communist Party (JCP), Social Democratic Party (SDP), labor unions, and various NGOs, such as the National Organization of Pacifist Bereaved Families, as well as sympathetic intellectuals and newspapers opposed the prime ministerial visits³⁴. In addition to these groups, Koizumi also faced staunch regional opposition to the visits from China and South Korea. In China, the visits usually provoked statements of displeasure from officials in Beijing as well as street demonstrations. South Korea also saw Yasukuni as a sign of Japan's past oppressive rule. South Koreans have not forgotten, for example, that a large number of Koreans were conscripted to fight in WWII and died as a result (Shibuichi, 2005, p. 200-205)³⁵. As discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, prior prime ministers—such as Nakasone Yasuhiro and Hashimoto Ryutaro—had visited Yasukuni in their capacity as prime minister, only to abandon the visits once opposition from China and South Korea became a major diplomatic issue.

Several explanations have been presented as to why Koizumi chose to consistently visit the shrine. One, that Koizumi was apt to make decisions for emotional reasons, and therefore was greatly moved by his memory of the memorial when he was

³⁴ One tactic used by peace groups was to file suit against Koizumi for his visits. Several important lawsuits took place against Koizumi for his visits to Yasukuni Shrine. Lawsuits against Koizumi occurred in Osaka, Fukuoka, and Okinawa. These lawsuits pointed out that Koizumi's visits violated constitutional provisions against the separation of church and state. For more on these lawsuits, see Tanaka (2004a, 2004b) and McCormack (2007, p. 16-17). Both the Fukuoka District Court in April 2004 and Osaka High Court in September 2005 returned judgments that the visits to Yasukuni were unconstitutional. However, in the summer of 2006, the Supreme Court would throw out the judgments of these rulings on a technicality. Though none of these lawsuits were successful, they helped keep pressure on the prime minister to refrain from visiting the shrine.

³⁵ As might be expected, protests in both China and South Korea were quite intense. Crowds would frequently burn Japanese flags. In one case, twenty young Koreans cut off their pinky fingers and sent them to the Japanese embassy in protest (McCormack, 2007, p. 16).

younger; two, the prime minister was motivated by his political desire to maintain support among influential pressure groups on the right; and three, Koizumi's strong feeling that Japan should not simply bend before the criticism of its neighbors (Stockwin, 2008, p. 108; Mong, 2010). While all of these factors probably influenced his decisions to an extent, writers have also pointed out that Koizumi's prime ministership coincided with "a period of rapid growth in the Chinese economy, and fears in Japan that the balance of economic and political influence was shifting away from Japan in favor of China were widespread" (Stockwin, 2008, p. 108). This idea, that Koizumi was adept at playing on the insecurities of the public, has been reflected in the arguments of several other authors (see McCormack, 2007; Hosaka, 2005; Mikuriya, 2006). While Japanese insecurities about rising Chinese power may have played one important role in Koizumi's political calculations, perhaps the most important aspect was the dramatic and contested nature of the visits. Resistance from leftist groups, business groups with economic interests in China and South Korea, and later even from the US helped to demonstrate Koizumi's resolve to the public. His willingness to visit Yasukuni became a proxy for the larger image of "reform" that was linked with other measures, including his maverick persona and his postal reform measures. Since he had promised the Bereaved Families Association that he would visit the Shrine every year as prime minister, the visits themselves were a symbol for his credibility as a reformer who could live up to his public promises.

Koizumi was also able to frame the issue of the Yasukuni visits in ways that benefited his maverick persona and downplayed the nationalist character of his visits.

Koizumi repeatedly stated that his visits were for purposes of peace and to mourn for the spirit of fallen soldiers. In his press conference on January 4, 2006, Koizumi criticized China and South Korea for turning “a matter of the heart” into a diplomatic issue (Kunimasa, 2006, January 31). These various framings—as a domestic issue, a personal matter of the heart, and as a way of honoring Japan’s pledge for peace—were methods of tempering resistance from Japan’s political center. The more China and South Korea railed against his visits, the more Chinese and South Korean activists seemed like extremists instead of Koizumi. By using his visits to espouse the virtues of peace, he distanced his own actions from a radical right position. As time passed, public sentiment increasingly backed Koizumi.

In 2006, Koizumi’s visits to Yasukuni would come under increased pressure. In May, Koizumi learned that he would not be allowed to address a joint sitting of the houses of Congress unless he pledged to stop his Yasukuni visits (Nakata, 2006, May 17; McCormack, 2007). When asked at November 2005 Summit with George Bush whether he would stop the visits to Yasukuni Shrine if the US asked him to, he reportedly stated that “I will never stop, even if asked by the United States not to” (McCormack, 2007; Wan, 2011, p. 340). Additional pressure was also put on Koizumi by the Association of Corporate Executives, and the *Asahi* and *Yomiuri* newspapers would oppose the visits in a rare joint editorial. Perhaps most devastating was the revelation that the deceased Showa Emperor had stopped visiting the shrine because of the enshrinement of the Class A war criminals (McCormack, 2007; Stockwin, 2008). Despite mounting opposition, Koizumi would nevertheless go forward with his August visit to the shrine. At this point,

his prime ministership was in its twilight, and Koizumi no longer needed dramatic acts to increase his power base to challenge his party. This visit was truly a matter of the heart. On August 15, 2006 Koizumi made his final visit to Yasukuni Shrine as prime minister—his sixth in total. As opposed to previous visits, this one was different in that it took place on the anniversary of the end of World War II. A Yomiuri poll taken right after his last visit showed that 43 percent of respondents approved of the visit while 39 percent disapproved (Green and Koizumi, 2006). It is a testament to Koizumi’s persistence that a “matter of the heart” would in the end also become another (albeit small) political victory for his administration³⁶.

Limited Peace Offerings: Low-Cost Pacifism that Adhered to Japan’s Anti-Militarist Identity

A frequently overlooked aspect of Koizumi’s defense policy is the extent to which he embraced the rhetoric of anti-militarism, pacifism, and reconciliation³⁷.

³⁶ Koizumi’s visits to Yasukuni Shrine have an interesting postscript. After top leaders from both Japan and China had refrained from visiting each other’s capitals for over four years, relations unexpectedly blossomed under Koizumi’s even more conservative successor, Abe Shinzo. Despite Abe’s reputation as a staunch conservative (even more so than Koizumi) and his own ties with the Bereaved Families Association, Abe refrained from visiting the shrine as a way of improving ties with China. In a sense, Koizumi’s assessments of relations with China—in essence, that economic interdependence and cultural exchanges provided a backstop of deterioration in relations—seemed justified by this later development. In addition, Japan’s improved ties with the US also seemed to make Chinese leaders eager to stem the decline in relations. Wan has argued that the upswing in relations with China from 2006-2009 is difficult to justify by structural factors alone. Given Abe’s conservative leanings, the blossoming of better relations has been even harder to explain (Wan, 2011, p. 341-343). Prime Ministers after Koizumi would largely refrain from visiting both Beijing and Seoul to improve relations, drawing international praise (Emmott, 2006; McCormack, 2007). In addition, Abe and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao would agree to create a joint commission on the history that would take place over three years. The two governments would also agree in principle to an agreement to jointly develop the petroleum and natural gas fields in the disputed areas in the East China Sea (Przystup, 2012, Personal Interview; Watanabe Akio, 2012, Personal Interview; Wan, 2011).

³⁷ In a sense, this approach drew from the example past conservatives such as Hashimoto Ryutaro, who in his 1997 trip to China had also offered his own “heart felt apology” (see Chapters 3). Yet, for a politician

Throughout his tenure, the prime minister was very adamant about framing his international activities in the language of Japan's peace identity. Following the example of Hashimoto during his administration, Koizumi would frequently visit memorials and sites associated with the victims of Japan's colonial past and the victims of World War II (Iijima, 2007). During these trips, he would repeatedly pledge that Japan would never again embark on the path of war. Typically, Koizumi's verbal contributions to reconciliation, peace, and anti-militarism have been overlooked because the content of his policies were largely center-right and nationalist in character. His trips to Yasukuni Shrine, for example, were seen as naked attempts to appease supporters on the far right, especially the Bereaved Family Association. For these reasons, scholars have tended to dismiss Koizumi's apologies as formulaic and insincere (McCormack, 2007). Regardless of Koizumi's sincerity or the formulaic nature of his apologies, Koizumi's pacifist and anti-militarist rhetoric were important aspects of his political strategy. Overall, his repeated pledges that Japan would never again engage in war, his endorsement of the Murayama apology for wartime atrocities, and his visitation of sites that related to Japan's wartime past helped dampen criticisms of his regime domestically, assuaging many in Japan's political center, and allowed him to avoid stricter criticisms from countries outside of Asia, including the US.

Following his first visit to Yasukuni Shrine in his first year as prime minister, Koizumi was quick to remark that: "We should not engage in such a war ever again. I paid the visit to renew my pledge for peace" (CNN 2001, August 13). Koizumi's pledge

like Koizumi, who was known to be more confrontational than the diplomatic Hashimoto, this is nevertheless an important element, worthy of analysis.

for peace and his promise that Japan would never again engage in war were to be repeated not only at future visits to Yasukuni Shrine, but at other functions as well. In the weeks following September 11, the prime minister traveled to Beijing and Seoul and met with his Chinese and South Korean counterparts to convince them that Japanese contributions to the US campaigns in Afghanistan were not moves toward remilitarization. During these visits, Koizumi also visited two symbols of Japan's imperialist past—the Marco Polo Bridge and Sodaemun Independence Park. At each of these sites, Koizumi would visit the memorials to Japan's wartime atrocities, despite the often anti-Japanese nature of these sites. The diplomatic payoff was that both Beijing and Seoul shelved their criticisms of Japan's contribution to the US war in Afghanistan (Kliman, 2006, p. 84; Iijima, 2007, p. 35). During these visits, Koizumi would repeat his pledge that Japan would never again engage in war and offer his “heartfelt” apology for Japan's wartime atrocities (Iijima, 2007, p. 36-37; Tanaka, 2009, p. 150). Koizumi would repeat his apology for the suffering caused by Japan in other settings as well, for example in his dramatic meeting with Kim Jong-Il in Pyongyang, as well as in his visits to Manila Bay in the Philippines and Arlington Cemetery in the US (Iijima, 2007).

Just as Koizumi's “heartfelt” apologies for Japan's wartime atrocities helped to blunt the edge of his Yasukuni visits and made his policies more palatable to Japan's political center and international audiences, he would also use the language of international community and international contribution to soften the sharp edge of contributions to the US-Japan alliance. Throughout his tenure, Koizumi would enact a number of important measures that would lead to greater de facto collective self-defense

with the US; however, Koizumi adamantly characterized these contributions in terms of international contributions and highlighted the humanitarian nature of these operations. The most conspicuous aspect of this framing can be seen in the dispatch of the JSDF to Iraq. In the early stages of the war against Iraq, Koizumi was quick to announce his support of the US war despite a majority of Japanese citizens being against the invasion. Just as in the Indian Ocean dispatch, Koizumi chose roles for the Ground Self Defense Force in Samawah, Iraq that conformed closely to Japan's anti-militarist identity. Thus, activities were limited to humanitarian assistance and rebuilding efforts and great efforts were taken to keep Japanese forces out of danger (Oros, 2008, p. 186). Once the UN resolution authorizing the rebuilding of Iraq was passed, Koizumi made the most of its significance, emphasizing the multilateral character of the operation, the anti-militarist aspects of the dispatch, and the core values of international solidarity and international contribution symbolized by the UN resolution.

Generally speaking, Koizumi could afford to endorse pacifism and anti-militarism rhetorically. There was little political risk in doing so. His visits to Yasukuni Shrine had already mollified his supporters on the political right, and his rhetoric did little to concern alliance managers in Washington. As critics would acknowledge, Koizumi would stop short of pledges to peace that directly addressed Chinese and South Korean fears or anger over the history issue—for example a joint commission with China and South Korea to explore the history issue—and thus, entailed political risks (Iijima, 2007, p. 39-41). Koizumi's example demonstrates to future political leaders that rhetorical pacifism and anti-militarism can be an effective mechanism for winning tacit consent

from Japanese audiences in the political center and internationally outside of Asia, even as the content of policies endorse moves on the political right such as greater alliance contribution, rearmament, and symbolic nationalism.

Okinawa: Koizumi's Reluctant Bottom-Up Approach

Another important defense issue during the Koizumi administration would be the lingering case of Futenma Airbase, the wider issue of Okinawa's base burden, and the realignment of bases in Japan. The Okinawan base issue lingered on past the Hashimoto administration through the Obuchi and Mori administrations into the Koizumi administration. Little progress had been made in shifting the functions of Futenma from Ginowan city to the less populated Henoko area of Nago City, despite the efforts of defense bureaucrats to win over local support. Local resistance by environmental and political groups constituted an important reason for the failure to implement the agreement (McCormack, 2007; Brooks, 2010). Other factors were also now at play. The agreement on the details of the relocation had been opened up to the inputs of local politicians. In November of 1998, Ota had been replaced by Governor Inamine Keiichi, a candidate supported by the LDP and the business community. Though an ostensible proponent of the decision to move Futenma's functions to Henoko, Inamine would set conditions that would ultimately complicate the implementation of the agreement. Instead of the 1,500 meter runway eventually settled on, Inamine advocated a 2,500 meter runway that was to be used as part of a joint civilian-military airstation with a time limit of fifteen years to be set for the military use of the runway. The Obuchi administration

eventually adopted a resolution approving the concept of joint civilian-military airport and agreed to discuss the concept of a 15-year limit on the use of the facility with the US (Brook, 2010; Morimoto, 2010). In addition to wrangling over the feasibility of a civilian-commercial airport in the sparsely populated Henoko region, local parties would continue to debate the merits of various means of runway construction, including replacing the original concept for an offshore facility with a land reclamation project.

On August 13, 2004 a major helicopter crash occurred on the campus of Okinawa International University in the vicinity of Futenma Airbase. The crash caused major damage on the university, but luckily no one, including the crew members, was seriously injured. This incident served as one catalyst for including the Futenma relocation issue into the negotiations that were taking place between US and Japanese counterparts for the realignment of bases in Japan and the East Asia region. For the most part, Koizumi's role in the negotiations over the 2005/ 2006 realignment agreement would be a small one. One scholar judges that in comparison to Hashimoto, who had devoted extensive energy to balancing the interests of the alliance and Okinawa, Koizumi's attention to the matter was sporadic (Brooks, 2010).

There were good reasons for his sporadic attention. The negotiations over the base realignment were occurring at a time when Koizumi's primary goal of postal reform was finally at its climax. During key parts of the negotiations, Koizumi was pre-occupied with engineering his electoral gambit (including his use of political "assassin" candidates to run against those resisting postal reform). For this reason, the figures of then JDA Director General Nukuga Fukushima and Administrative Vice Minister Moriya Takemasa

are more prominent in the negotiations. Still, Koizumi's leadership would play a small but important role in the tedious negotiations over the realignment of bases. In a sense, it was his personal credibility with the US that was the glue that held negotiations together. In contrast to Japan's contributions to coalition forces in Afghanistan and Iraq, negotiations for the base realignment would be much more contentious. This was not surprising given the controversial nature of the base issue in Japan. At key moments, he was also responsible for spurring working-level bureaucrats to work harder toward an agreement. Much like Hashimoto, Koizumi stressed to working level officers his desire for an agreement that would maintain US deterrence in the region, while still seeking out methods of lower citizens' burden within the alliance (Moriya, 2010, p. 185)³⁸.

The new agreement would once again settle on the location of the Henoko area of Nago for a relocation site, but would also add the extra benefit of shifting 8,000 marines and their dependents to Guam. As part of the agreement, Japan would bare nearly 60 percent of the costs, estimated at approximately 6 billion. Given the enormity of the figure, it would be a subject of intense negotiations throughout this time period (Brooks, 2010; Moriya, 2010). The implementation of the agreement, however, would continue to meet with staunch resistance from local activist groups prompting, the Okinawa base issue to once again come to the forefront in 2009 after the election of the DPJ (as we will see in Chapter 5).

³⁸ I translate this directly from Moriya's account. Moriya writes that Koizumi ordered, "Try your best to lower citizen's burden without damaging US deterrent capabilities" [*Nichibei anzen hosyo taisei no yokushiryoku wo sokonau koto naku, kokumin no fundan no keigen wo jitsugenseyo*] (Moriya, 2010, p. 185).

The case of base realignment is an oddity within the Koizumi case study, but also one that is consistent with his approach as a prime minister. Having devoted his attention to the issue of postal reform, Koizumi lacked the resources Hashimoto had built up during the earlier phases of his prime ministership, namely a personal relationship with the governor of Okinawa and working-level knowledge on the base agreement, to intervene directly in the issue. For this reason, Koizumi had little choice (and every incentive) to leave negotiations in the hands of experienced bureaucrats.

Postal Reform: An Example for Defense Entrepreneurs?

Koizumi's greatest feat of political entrepreneurship took place not in the field of security policy and politics, but rather, in the area of postal reform. However, this reform holds important lessons for defense policy and politics because it demonstrates how significant will-power and daring strategies can upset entrenched sectionalism by leveraging the power of popular opinion. Prior to coming to office, Koizumi had campaigned on a reformist agenda. He had promised the electorate that if he could not change the LDP, he would smash the LDP. A priority for Koizumi was reforming Japan's government-run postal system. In order to reform the system, he appointed Takenaka Heizo, an economics Professor at Keio University, to his cabinet. While it was Takenaka and others of the so-called "supply-side" economists in Japanese academia who were responsible for the details of postal reform, it was Koizumi who was responsible for the broad strokes of the reform movement. Others from the Council of Economy and Finance were chosen mostly from the private sector, and thus, were chosen outside of the faction

system. The Prime Minister's Office and the Council of Economy and Finance did not negotiate directly with the party, but rather, presented decisions as a *fait accompli* (Yomiuri Shimbun Seiji-Bu, 2006). When Koizumi's postal reform bill passed the Lower House with only a slim margin, and faced even stiffer competition in the Upper House, Koizumi threatened to call Lower House elections if the bill did not pass the Upper House (Gauder, 2007, p. 129-130).

In the past, Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki (1989-1991) had made a similar threat in order to pass electoral reforms, but had later backed down. Koizumi, however, would not shy away from calling new elections. In September 2005, Koizumi made good on his campaign pledge to dissolve the Lower House of the Diet and called for snap elections based around the issue of postal reform. This made the election a direct referendum on his postal reform project. In addition, he refused to grant party endorsement to Lower House LDP members who had voted against the bill. For those who resisted his reform efforts, he had them kicked out of his party and sent "assassins" (hand-picked contenders) to compete with these Diet members in their district. The election gave Koizumi an unprecedented 296 out of 480 seats—a resounding victory for his reform agenda (Gauder 2007; Maclachlan, 2010, 2011). With a two-thirds majority in the Lower House, he now had the ability override resistance in the Upper House if necessary. The framing employed by Koizumi was an essential part of his success. Koizumi, using his reformist credentials, argued that a vote for these "rebels" was a vote for the status quo (Maclachlan, 2010; Gauder, 2007). Clearly it was the style of

Table 4: Koizumi Junichiro: Approaches to Defense Policy and Politics

| Approach | Characteristics | Results |
|---|--|---|
| <i>Personalize the Relationship with the US</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Personal diplomacy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An expanded platform for demonstrating charisma *A political liability in the unpopular George W. Bush *A political ally against rivals within his party |
| <i>Over-deliver on Alliance Contributions</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Top-Down Decision-making *Special <i>Kantei</i> teams *Negotiations with coalition members before appealing to party base | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Concrete alliance contributions (avoiding “too little, too late” label) *Refueling support in Afghanistan *JSDF dispatch to Iraq for humanitarian assistance |
| <i>Dramatic Visit to North Korea</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Top-Down Diplomacy *Softened up by officials in MoFA and secret contacts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Return of five abductees *Boost in popularity rating by thirty percent |
| <i>Visit to Yasukuni Shrine</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Security and historical symbolism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Increased visibility *A liability during most of his administration, would nevertheless serve as a symbol of his resolve |
| <i>Okinawa/ Base Realignment</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Bureaucratic-bottom-up approach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *a modified version of the 1996 agreement (8,000 marines to be moved to Guam); Japan to pay approximately 60 percent of costs *avoided public gaffes and alliance friction |
| <i>*Postal Reform (non-security example)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Direct Challenge to dissenting party members *Confrontational politics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Historic privatization of Japan’s postal services |

Koizumi's politics as much as the actual content that excited the public, especially non-affiliated voters, and gave Koizumi his expanded mandate.

Koizumi's use of his power as party president and prime minister to attack dissenting members of his own party is an important example of entrepreneurship. It stands as an important example for the area of defense policy and politics because of its potential use in areas where entrenched interests currently prevent progress on key issues. This is most apparent in the areas of constitutional revision, revisions to the US-Japan Security Treaty, and/or bolder moves on the Futenma Base issue. In each of these areas, short of dramatic tactics to fight policy dissenters in the coalition, ruling party, and minority party and that appeal to popular opinion, little is likely to change.

Conclusion: The Value of Coherent Strategy

Koizumi's policy accomplishments in the realm of defense were second to none. By the time Koizumi had left office, he had put Japanese soldiers on the ground in Iraq, contributed billions to the US in support of the War on Terror, cooperated closely with the US on ballistic missile defense, brought back five of the abductees from North Korea, and created a permissive environment for greater military and JDA (now MoD) contributions to policymaking. Shortly after his administration ended, the JDA would be upgraded to a full ministry. Most importantly, he had conducted his defense policy in a way that strengthened his support domestically, and thus, contributed to his victory in his primary political goal of postal reform. As he went into his final month in office, he enjoyed a support rate of 47 percent—an astounding number considering that many

Japanese prime ministers leave office with support rates in the low twenties or high teens (Asahi Shimbun, 2006, August 28).

It is fitting that former Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro would say of Koizumi: “Prime Minister Koizumi has an ability to recognize the needs of the times” (2005, February 22). Nakasone’s comments were directed specifically towards Koizumi’s recognition that pressure groups were losing their hold on voters, and thus, that prime ministers could get around *zoku* policy groups and party factions to enact change. His comments, however, could also be applied to Koizumi’s recognition that the public wanted someone who could “smash” the LDP. Though Koizumi demonstrated the greatest amount of risk, boldness, and political shrewdness in the area of postal reform, he nevertheless also demonstrated great skill, leadership, and innovation in the area of security policy and politics.

As Takami (2006) writes, there were several factors that made Koizumi’s “top-down” leadership possible. First was the large number of non-aligned voters that had grown since the 1990s. This allowed the prime minister to stand apart from the party and build an independent support base. The second important feature that had made “Koizumi magic” possible was the importance of television in politics. This made Koizumi’s “one phrase politics” easy for viewers to understand. Finally, the administrative reforms enacted during the Hashimoto administration strengthened the prime minister’s office, allowing Koizumi the administrative support he needed to lead from the *kantei*. All of these important enabling factors of Koizumi-style top-leadership remain.

Some scholars have noted the lack of consistency in Koizumi's foreign and defense policy (Uchiyama, 2010, p. 79; McCormack, 2007). Though Koizumi embraced policies ranging from political realism, to military realism, to Gaullism, his policies were nonetheless logical in one important regard: his actions helped bolster his image as a prime minister who could accomplish goals against great resistance. Whether it was his decision to support the US as an ally, his decision to visit North Korea and meet Kim Jong-Il face to face, or his decision to visit Yasukuni Shrine, each of these policies kept Koizumi in the public eye and demonstrated his skill at achieving proximate objectives and facing down resistance. The dispatch of the Marine Self Defense Force to the Indian Ocean was a concrete show of alliance support for the US; Koizumi's face to face meeting with Kim Jong-Il in North Korea resulted in the return of five abductees; the dispatch of the Ground Self Defense Force to Iraq was a "human" contribution that was revolutionary in Japan's postwar era; and his trips to Yasukuni demonstrated his commitment to following through with campaign promises despite stringent opposition. The controversial nature of each of these actions, in turn, helped sustain his image as a "maverick," and thus, helped Koizumi maintain his support base outside of the party³⁹.

³⁹ Perhaps the most stinging criticism of Koizumi came from none other than Hashimoto Ryutaro, who went on record as saying that Koizumi's approach to diplomacy was too focused on the US. Hashimoto would say in an interview: "Currently, Japan's ties with other nations other than the U.S. are like dotted lines. We should at least try to make those dotted lines into solid ones as well." As well as that, "Japan needs to have more politicians who can establish close relations with other nations - those who can truly engage in diplomacy and not just seek out their own concessions" (Daimon, 2004, January 1). While applauding Koizumi's moves to improve US relations through the dispatch of the JSDF to Iraq, cooperation on missile defense, and for the administration's support of the US in the war on terror, he nevertheless felt that Japan was becoming too narrowly focused on the US. In a sense, what Hashimoto was criticizing Koizumi for was not pivoting on better US-Japan relations to reach outward to other countries as he had during his administration. This criticism would ring sharpest in the areas of South Korea and Chinese diplomacy.

Throughout his tenure, Koizumi also demonstrated the “paradoxical logic” of seeking greater diplomatic autonomy through closer relations with Washington. Indeed, Washington stepped aside as Tokyo pursued a normalization track with North Korea and was awarded a contract for developing energy resources in Iran--two members of Bush’s “axis of evil.” Evidence suggests that the reason Washington did not take a stronger stance on these issues is because of Koizumi’s unflinching support of the alliance, Japan’s contributions to coalition forces in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the special relationship that Koizumi had built with President Bush.

Through strength of personality and cunning political theater, Koizumi was also able to turn his most unpopular policy moves, his Yasukuni Shrine visits and his dispatch of the JSDF to Iraq, into quasi-popular ones by making them symbols of his own maverick image. While some of his initiatives—for example, the transformation of Japan’s defense establishment to allow greater inputs from military officers and force realignments for greater interoperability with the US—have stuck, others have proven less enduring. His most controversial action, prime ministerial visits to Yasukuni Shrine, has been by and large neglected by successive prime ministers. This demonstrates the persistence of Japan’s anti-militarist culture and the degree to which future leaders have sought to minimize the risks of antagonizing China. This demonstrates the limitations of charisma and showmanship in creating long-lasting change in the realm of defense politics.

The Koizumi case teaches us that coherence of design in political strategy is important, but that this coherence need not be faithful devotion to any one line of

Japanese strategic thinking (Gaullism, military realism, political realism, or pacifism). In the case of Koizumi, the most important coherence was in terms of the desired end state: higher popularity figures to support his reform agenda. Each of the defense policies pursued above sought to foster Koizumi's image as a politician who could accomplish clear-cut goals against great political odds. This image helped to maintain his popular support base outside of his political party, and thus, to pursue reform efforts against entrenched interests.

As Rumelt (2011) writes, good strategy is surprising at the time, yet simple in retrospect. Koizumi's key insight was just that. He understood that the Japanese public was eager for a prime minister who could accomplish something (anything!), face down opposition, and represent a more self-confident Japan. For this reason, Koizumi's defense policies embraced opportunities for assertive action, wherever those opportunities may have been.

Chronology of Key Events: Koizumi Junichiro Administration

Apr. 23, 2001: Koizumi Junichiro wins upset victory to become Liberal Democratic Party president over Hashimoto Ryutaro.

Apr. 26, 2001: New Cabinet sworn in. In a break with tradition, PM Koizumi picks the members himself, without bargaining with faction bosses.

May 23, 2001: Koizumi Cabinet records 85 percent public approval rating.

Sept. 13, 2001: PM Koizumi supports U.S. retaliation for Sept. 11 terrorist strikes. "It's only natural for President Bush to take strong action." When asked if he support U.S. retaliation, he says "of course."

Sept. 17, 2001: PM Koizumi prepares to support possible U.S. retaliation by providing logistic support and intelligence, "strong support for U.S. fight against terrorism."

Sept. 19, 2001: Coalition government agrees to write legislation that allows SDF to protect U.S. bases in Japan, Diet, PM residence, and nuclear power plants.

Oct. 5, 2001: Japanese Cabinet approves a bill to support U.S. counterterrorist operation. The legislation allows the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) to provide logistic and other noncombatant support to the expected U.S.-led multinational force, engage in search-and

rescue activities for missing military personnel, and carry out humanitarian relief operations for refugees.

Oct. 18, 2001: Special Measures to Fight Terrorism Bill passes Lower House.

Nov. 27, 2001: Lower House approves SDF dispatch to Indian Ocean.

Jan. 29, 2002: FM Tanaka Makiko is fired from her position after multiple gaffes and disputes with MoFA officials.

Feb. 1, 2002: Kawaguchi Yoriko is sworn in as foreign minister.

March 29, 2002: Kyodo News Agency poll shows that Koizumi Cabinet approval rate hits record low of 44.8 percent, dropping below 50 percent for the first time (as a result of the Tanaka firing).

May 2, 2002: Kyodo News Agency poll shows Koizumi Cabinet's approval rate drops to 43.4 percent and disapproval rate is 45.1 percent; 80.2 percent of respondents speculate Koizumi Cabinet will not last more than one year.

June 23, 2002: PM Koizumi promises that he will speed negotiations on relocation of the U.S. Futenma heliport in Okinawa.

Sept. 17, 2002: PM Koizumi meets Kim Jong-il in Pyongyang.

Jan. 14, 2003: PM Koizumi visits Yasukuni Shrine.

Jan. 28, 2003: PM Koizumi vows to make annual pilgrimages to Yasukuni Shrine as long as he is in office.

Feb. 17, 2003: Defense Agency spokesman says Japan and the U.S. have agreed to begin ballistic missile defense (MD) tests off Hawaii in the spring of 2004.

Feb. 26, 2003: Tokyo notifies Washington that it will not support the military expenses of Iraqi war, but it will shoulder the burden of Iraqi reconstruction after Saddam Hussein is ousted.

Feb. 27, 2003: U.S. announces plans to review the defense of Japan, including strengthening of interoperability with the SDF along with the assumption of Japan's deployment of MD.

March 17, 2003: PM Koizumi gives total support to a U.S. announcement to take military action against Iraq unless Saddam Hussein surrenders within 48 hours.

April 4, 2003: Japan Defense Agency signs contract to buy first air refueling tanker, scheduled to be delivered in FY 2007.

April 21, 2003: U.S. tanker and F-15s of ASDF begin first aerial refueling exercise over Kyushu and Shikoku.

May 15, 2003: Three military emergency bills designed to prepare Japan for foreign military attacks pass Lower House with an overwhelming majority.

May 22-23, 2003: Bush-Koizumi summit held at Bush's private ranch in Crawford, Tex.

June 6, 2003: Three military emergency bills pass House of Councilors with an overwhelming majority.

June 13, 2003: Cabinet approves bill that allows SDF to help Iraqi reconstruction, for the first time without the consent of the host country.

June 29, 2003: Asahi poll finds that 46 percent of Japanese voters support sending SDF to Iraq, 43 percent oppose it, while about 70 percent feel that Japan needs to contribute to Iraqi reconstruction. The poll finds public approval of Koizumi's Cabinet at 47 percent,

down slightly from May, while 52 percent support Koizumi's reelection in the LDP's leadership election in September.

July 11, 2003: Japan sends two Air Self-Defense Force C-130 transport aircraft carrying Self-Defense Force members to Jordan as part of a UN humanitarian effort to help Iraq.

July 11, 2003: JDA introduces a "layered missile defense system," combining the ground-based PAC-3 and a sea-based SM3 into four Aegis destroyers and one Air Defense Missile Group with a budget of ¥200 billion over the next two years.

July 16, 2003: Yomiuri Shimbun poll indicates that 31 percent are in favor of the dispatch of SDF to Iraq, while 43 are opposed and 24 percent undecided.

July 25, 2003: Bill allowing dispatch of SDF to Iraq passes with 136 votes in favor, 102 votes against despite a no-confidence motion against PM Koizumi in the Lower House.

Sept. 19, 2003: President Bush and PM Koizumi affirm that both nations will cooperate to reconstruct Iraq; Japan prepares \$1 billion in financial aid for 2004 in response to U.S. request.

Sept. 20, 2003: PM Koizumi wins re-election as LDP president with 399 votes (60 percent) of the 657 votes cast, he says that he will continue with economic reform.

Nov. 2, 2003: PM says Japan's SDF in Iraq will need to be protected by US and British coalition forces; he also indicates the need to review the constitution to "legitimize" the SDF as a National Military".

November 29, 2003: Two Japanese diplomats killed in an ambush in Tikrit, Iraq.

November 30, 2003: FM Kawaguchi tells Secretary Powell via telephone that Japan will continue to help Iraq reconstruction efforts despite death of two diplomats.

Dec. 17, 2003: Tokyo will spend nearly \$1 billion on missile defense in 2004. The system will utilize Patriot missiles and intercept missiles deployed aboard Aegis-equipped destroyers.

Dec. 19, 2003: Japan announces plans to buy an American-made missile defense system and continued participation with the U.S. in the joint-development of a missile defense system. Partial introduction of the system will begin in early 2007 and be fully operational by 2011.

Jan. 9, 2004: JDA Chief Ishiba Shigeru orders advance reconnaissance team from the GSDF to leave for Iraq – the first of about 600 soldiers that Japan plans to send to southern Iraq for reconstruction efforts.

Feb. 18, 2004: Japan wins right to develop Iran's Azadegan oilfield for an estimated \$2.8 billion. U.S. calls the deal "deeply disconcerting."

Feb. 18, 2004: Under Secretary of State John Bolton meets counterpart Amano Yukiya to discuss WMD nonproliferation and arms control policy. He reassures Japan its agreement to develop Azadegan oilfield will not damage U.S.-Japan relations.

March 16, 2004: Asahi poll reveals support for Koizumi Cabinet up to 49 percent from last month's 44 percent; those who did not support the government fell from 37 percent to 32 percent. Support for SDF deployment to Iraq is split with 42 percent for and 41 percent against, a sharp drop from the 48 percent against in February.

April 10, 2004: Poll shows 45.2 percent disagree with Tokyo's rejection of the kidnapper's demands to withdraw troops vs. 43.5 who supported the decision. Support

for the Koizumi Cabinet fell 3 percentage points from March to 48.4 percent; the disapproval rate is up 2.6 points to 39.3 percent.

May 11, 2004: Asahi Shimbun opinion poll indicates 73 percent of respondents favor maintaining the U.S.–Japan Security Treaty.

July 4, 2004: Fuyushiba Tetsuzo, secretary general of New Komeito, opposes PM Koizumi Junichiro’s remarks that the pacifist Constitution should be revised so it can exercise the right to collective defense and carry out joint actions with U.S. forces.

Aug. 13, 2004: A U.S. military transport helicopter crashes at a university campus in Ginowan, Okinawa, but there was no report of casualty from students.

Oct. 4, 2004: Prime Minister’s Defense Advisory panel (Araki Commission) presents “The Vision for Future National Security and Defense Capabilities.” It recommends bolstering U.S. ties, easing arms exports, and enacting a permanent law on Self Defense Force (SDF) deployments overseas.

April 22, 2005: Japan extends Self Defense Forces (SDF) deployment by six months (until Nov. 1, 2005) in support of “Operation Enduring Freedom.”

June 28, 2005: Senior Japanese and U.S. officials begin two-day meeting in Washington to discuss the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan and the sharing of defense roles.

June 29, 2005: Kyodo News reports PM Koizumi expresses willingness to consider keeping Japanese troops in Iraq beyond the mission’s current deadline of December.

Aug. 8, 2005: PM Koizumi dissolves House of Representatives and calls general election for Sept. 11 after House of Councilors voted down government-sponsored postal privatization bills.

Aug. 10, 2005: Okinawa International University launches balloon to protest U.S. Marine Corps helicopter crash in August 2004, which damaged the walls of its main building.

Sept. 11, 2005: PM Koizumi’s Liberal Democratic Party wins majority of seats (296 of 480) in the Lower House and coalition partner New Komeito wins 31 seats.

Sept. 26, 2005: U.S. and Japanese defense officials begin senior working-level talks on realignment of U.S. forces in Japan. They break up after two days without agreement.

Oct. 13, 2005: Senior Japanese and U.S. government officials fail to agree on Futenma Air Station relocation.

Oct. 14, 2005: Diet approves postal privatization bills.

Oct. 17, 2005: PM Koizumi visits Yasukuni Shrine for the fifth time.

Oct. 26, 2005: U.S. accepts Japan’s proposal on a replacement facility for the relocation of the Futenma Air Station in Okinawa.

Oct. 29, 2005: Tokyo and Washington reach agreements to finalize reshaping their bilateral alliance, including major troop redeployments, new construction, and increased jointness among U.S. and Japanese personnel.

Oct. 31, 2005: Okinawa Gov. Inamine Keiichi rejects plan to relocate the Futenma Air Station within Okinawa Prefecture. New Defense Agency Director General Nukaga Fukushima says he hopes to win over local communities on this matter.

Nov. 15-16, 2005: President Bush visits Japan. He meets PM Koizumi at a summit in Kyoto and stresses the importance of the alliance for promoting freedom in Asia and pursuing global economic and security matters.

Dec. 8, 2005: PM Koizumi announces decision of the Cabinet to extend for one year SDF activities in Iraq.

Feb. 13, 2006: PM Koizumi says he will shelve plans to give Japan its first full-fledged Defense Ministry since World War II after a military bid-rigging scandal.

Apr. 23, 2006: Japan and the U.S. strike a deal on sharing the cost of relocating 8,000 U.S. Marines from Okinawa to Guam, with Tokyo paying 59 percent, or \$6.09 billion, of the estimated \$10.27 billion total cost through grants, investment and loans. JDA Director Gen. Nukaga and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld announce the agreement, paving the way for implementation of the package to realign the U.S. military presence in Japan.

May 1, 2006: The U.S. and Japan release a joint statement confirming a bilateral deal to realign U.S. Forces in Japan by 2014. Major features include the integration of USFJ command structures with the headquarters of several branches on the U.S. mainland. Under the deal, Japan will pay for infrastructure costs and the U.S. for operational moves.

June 20, 2006: Prime Minister Koizumi announces Japan will withdraw ground troops from Iraq. The ASDF will remain to transport goods and personnel for the coalition.

June 28-30, 2006: Prime Minister Koizumi makes final visit to the U.S. as prime minister. A White House Dinner, Oval Office summit, and Graceland visit are planned.

July 17, 2006: The 10th Ground Self Defense Force contingent ends humanitarian and reconstruction assistance and completed its withdrawal from Iraq.

July 19, 2006: The government of Japan decides to expand the Air Self-Defense Force's airlift mission between Kuwait and Iraq.

Aug. 15, 2006: PM Koizumi visits Yasukuni Shrine. This visit is his sixth and first on the anniversary of the end of World War II.

Aug. 16, 2006: Yomiuri Shimbun conducts a poll on Koizumi's Yasukuni visit: 53 percent of respondents (including those generally favorable) support the visit, and 39 percent did not.

Sept. 26, 2006: President of the LDP Abe Shinzo is elected prime minister by both houses of Parliament.

Timeline adapted from materials in *Comparative Connections Chronologies (2001-2006)*

CHAPTER 5:
Yuai Politics and the Collapse of Power: The Prime Ministership of Hatoyama Yukio
(2009-2010)

Introduction

Hatoyama Yukio's prime ministership (September, 16 2009-June 2, 2010) is an important case in Japanese defense politics because it is the first time in recent history that a prime minister has challenged—however subtle that challenge may have been—the primacy of the US-Japan strategic alliance. In contrast to both Hashimoto Ryutaro and Koizumi Junichiro, who had believed in the importance of the alliance and helped deepen it through their charisma and personal involvement, Hatoyama had throughout his political career stood against deeper entrenchment of the US-Japan alliance. In addition, whereas both Hashimoto and Koizumi had used the expertise of bureaucrats to help manage the alliance, Hatoyama's politics was ideologically set against the continuation of bureaucratic control of policy in all areas. Hatoyama had campaigned throughout his political career on the slogan of “from bureaucrats to politicians” (*kanryo kara seiji made*) and “policy by politicians” (*seiji-shudo*). Given that the US-Japan alliance had benefited from the close ties and the accumulated personal networks of key bureaucrats and officials, Hatoyama's challenge to bureaucratic power was significant. Yet, despite coming to power with overwhelming public support and new ideas about the direction of defense policy, Hatoyama would nevertheless have to resign within a short period of time after mismanagement of the relocation of Futenma Airbase. This was first time in the post cold war period that a Japanese prime minister's resignation was directly due to the

mishandling of defense issues. By the end of his approximately eight months in office, Hatoyama's popularity figures had declined from his post-election high of 71 percent to a mere 17 percent (Economist, 2010, June 2). By the end of his administration, Hatoyama's policies had effectively alienated both the US and Okinawa, had forced the Social Democratic Party to leave the coalition, and had damaged his party's prospects for winning the Upper House election scheduled for July.

Critics of Hatoyama have described him as “hapless” and “aloof”—by one critic as having a “diplomacy without a strategy” (Yamauchi and Inoue, 2010, p. 99) and by another as having a “blind-folded diplomacy” (Nakanishi, 2010, p. 113). Certainly, there were elements of Hatoyama and the DPJ's approach that signaled what Rumelt (2011) has described as “bad strategy.” The DPJ's 2009 *Manifesto* set out numerous goals on a range of topics that opposition politicians criticized as wishful thinking. Though the *Manifesto* itself seemed to be an important element of a good *electoral* strategy—one that helped produce an overwhelming victory over the LDP—as a list of preferred outcomes, the lack of hierarchy these goals produced seemed to have migrated into the first DPJ administration itself. Second, and most importantly, Hatoyama would demonstrate through his tenure an inability to face the problems at hand and to choose between a number of unsavory alternatives. Hatoyama was the consummate “peace lover” (see Hayao, 1993; Shinoda, 2000) throughout his administration, hoping to appease all parties with nuanced and delicate compromises⁴⁰. As Rumelt has written, the inability to choose is usually the foundation of bad strategy.

⁴⁰ Hashimoto had also demonstrated “peace loving” tendencies during his administration. However, though Hashimoto's attempts to assuage China and Okinawa had sometimes stretched the coherence of previous

A closer examination of Hatoyama's policy actions and statements during this period reveals that there was a basic logic to Hatoyama's approach to defense and foreign affairs. Indeed, by examining these important logics, the crucial limitations of Hatoyama's approaches become clearer. Through his actions and his rhetoric, Hatoyama demonstrated a desire to chart a course that rejected Japan's shift toward greater integration into the US's global military strategy. This course had been building momentum since at least the mid-1990s and had been mapped in various ways through successive government documents such as the Clinton-Hashimoto Joint Declaration on Security, successive National Defense Program Outlines, the US-Japan Guidelines for Defense Cooperation, the Armitage-Nye Report (on the US side), and through the many statements of LDP prime ministers from Koizumi onward stressing the values of democracy and free markets shared with the US (Bisley, 2008; Hughes, 2009; Samuels, 2007a; Sebata, 2010). As an alternative to this defense trajectory, Hatoyama (and to an extent followers within the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ)) sought to lower Japan's liabilities within the alliance, demonstrate leadership internationally through "civilian" issues like nuclear nonproliferation and climate change, and bring many aspects of defense into the realm of citizen politics. In the long term, Hatoyama and the DPJ also hoped to make progress on regional integration and the history issue in ways that would lead to the gradual de-militarization of the region.

gains made in US-Japan alliance management through the Joint Declaration, SACO, and negotiations over the Joint Guidelines, he would never abandon his support for maintaining US deterrence in Okinawa. In short, Hashimoto chose to support US deterrence early in his administration, and used that position as a pivot on which to reach out to other actors.

In some ways, Hatoyama's operational approach also seemed to be based on a reasonable assessment of the situation. Given the depth and breadth of the US alliance and his own party's fragmented views on defense and security, it would be difficult to mount a direct political challenge to the US-Japan alliance. Instead of the more confrontational political style of Koizumi, Hatoyama attempted to achieve his desired course by balancing the interests of the many actors involved. Hatoyama sought to balance coalition partners (especially the Social Democratic Party) and US-Japan alliance managers; the needs of the US military with the needs of Okinawan citizens; and to use overtures to China as a counterbalance to US *gaiatsu*. He did so while adopting a "first among equals" approach to managing his cabinet and a trial-and-error approach to seeking workable solutions.

However, if Hatoyama's approach demonstrates that he understood at least the basic aspects of his challenge--the fragmentation of views of security in his cabinet, a Japan that had become more deeply integrated into US global strategy and technology, and a regional context not yet ripe for peace—there is also some evidence that he misunderstood many fundamental aspects of his situation as well. The most essential mistake Hatoyama made was in overestimating how much he could realign the US-Japan relationship around his and Obama's shared interest in climate change and nuclear security. He also grossly overestimated the US's willingness to renegotiate the terms of the Futenma Airbase relocation and his own administration's ability to navigate defense issues without the help of the bureaucracy. In his operational approach, Hatoyama mixed the worst of bottom-up and top-down approaches: while avoiding the expertise of

bureaucrats and mid-level officials at the bottom, he allowed himself to become bogged down in the morass of the fractured opinions of his cabinet. Over the time, his cabinet's fractured view on Futenma would become apparent in ways that opened up the administration to media scrutiny. Moreover, the timing of his challenge of the US-Japan Security Treaty could not have been worse. Hatoyama's indirect challenge came at a time when the US-Japan Security Treaty marked its 50th anniversary, at a time when President Obama enjoyed high popularity ratings in Japan, and when dramatic examples of the lingering security dilemma in Asia would reappear. Though Hatoyama's failures as a leader can be attributed to his misreading of his environment (and thus are somewhat context-driven), they also demonstrate a somewhat generalizable aspect of political strategy: muddle-through and consensus-based approaches are inferior when one seeks to challenge entrenched positions within a subgovernment.

This chapter will evaluate Hatoyama's prime ministership in terms of his political strategy and his policy entrepreneurship. The chapter begins with a background sketch of Hatoyama, his political background, highlighting his experience and his opinions on defense issues. It then moves on to a description of his operating context and the challenges he faced. The chapter then parses Hatoyama's approach to defense before concluding the chapter with an assessment of his approach and his relevance to the Japan's defense trajectory in the post cold war world. In addition to demonstrating the miscalculations Hatoyama made during his administration, this chapter will also build on aspects drawn from the Hashimoto and Koizumi case studies to conduct counterfactual analysis of where Hatoyama could have improved his approach.

Hatoyama Yukio's Political Background and Security Orientation

Like many prominent politicians in Japan, Hatoyama Yukio came from a long political pedigree. Hatoyama was a fourth generation politician from a family that is often referred to as the “Kennedy family” of Japan (Mori 2009; Itagaki 2009; Hasegawa 2010). His great grandfather began his parliamentary career in 1892; his grandfather, Hatoyama Ichiro, was prime minister from 1954-1956; and his father Ichiro was Foreign Minister in 1976-7. If political fame came from the paternal side of the family, wealth would come from the maternal side. Hatoyama's mother is heir to the Bridgestone tire fortune and has been called the “Godmother” of politics for her ability to fund the political careers of both her sons Yukio and Kunio (Mori 2009; Itagaki 2009; Hasegawa 2010). In many ways the legacy and attitudes of Hatoyama Ichiro, the grandfather who became prime minister during the tumultuous period of the fifties, would foreshadow many of the attitudes of his grandson. As a conservative politician aligned against future mainstream politicians like Yoshida Shigeru, the elder Hatoyama saw the restoration of Japanese sovereignty, the expulsion of US forces from Japan, the revision of the constitution, and independent armed forces as his goals (Edstrom 1999; Mori 2009).

Hatoyama Yukio graduated with a PhD degree in Industrial Engineering from Stanford University and worked as a professor of engineering before entering politics in 1986. Hatoyama won his first House of Representative seat in 1986 under the LDP and the Takeshita faction. In his early days, under a group called the “Utopia Society,” he and other like-minded parliamentarians studied political reform. In 1993 he left the LDP and co-founded the New Party Sakigake. He and Kan Naoto then left this party to found the

Democratic Party of Japan in 1996. A key theme from the party's early political ideology was to create a party that could take responsibility and wrest authority away from the bureaucracies. As much of their policy statements and party literature would state, this new party would attempt to shift Japanese politics away from "collusion" between politicians and bureaucrats and towards partnerships between citizens and politicians (Iwami, 1996; Koellner, 2011, p. 25). Hatoyama led the DPJ from 1999-2002. When Ozawa Ichiro stepped down from the party leadership in May 11, 2009, Hatoyama became the new face of the party and the main candidate for prime minister. In an election by fellow party representatives, Hatoyama won the leadership race over Okada Katsuya (Itagaki, 2009).

Mirroring many of the sentiments of his grandfather in the early postwar period, Hatoyama would say at a Foreign Correspondents Club meeting in 1996: "We have never questioned the deployment of U.S. troops in Japan for the last five decades after the war, particularly during the Cold War years. But now, we do not want to regard it as a matter of course to have a foreign military force stationed in Japan, which is an independent nation...We would like to create an environment for Japan to consider a Japan-U.S. security regime that does not require the full-time deployment of U.S. forces" (Yomiuri Shimbun, 1996, October 4; Akita, 2009, December 21). Hatoyama's desire for an alliance without permanent bases was also reflected in an article written for the *Bungei Shunju*. This article—which Sneider (2011) argues should be seen as representing the core group of the DPJ at the time and not just Hatoyama (though the article is attributed to Hatoyama)—proposed a gradual decrease in the number of bases in Japan with the

goal of eventually creating an “alliance without permanent bases.” This decrease in bases, the article argued, would be made possible by expanding regional forums for cooperation on security issues (Hatoyama, 2011, p. 125-127; see Sneider, 2011, p. 123, for a background narrative on the creation of this article).

Despite the periodic lip service he paid to the US alliance during his administration, there is evidence to suggest that Hatoyama's preferences for a more autonomous Japan were genuine. His odd editorial printed in *Voice*, which was partially translated in English for the August 27, 2009 online edition of the *New York Times*, railed against American capitalism and spoke of the decline of US power. Hatoyama depicted American capitalism and American-led globalization as threats to local tradition and local economic models (Hatoyama, 2009, p. 136). Though part of this critique was leveled at Koizumi-era free market reforms, by implication these criticisms could also be applied to the American economic model from which Koizumi's economic reformers took much of their ideas. Even as the editorial acknowledged the important military role of the US in the East Asia region for years to come, the same editorial spoke of the insecurity of the dollar economy, Japan's Asian identity, and noted that Japan would have to steer an independent course between China and the US (Hatoyama, 2009). The article was thus conspicuous in the way it implicitly depicted the US as an economic threat, a declining power, and in the somewhat reluctant tone⁴¹ in which Hatoyama signaled the need to

⁴¹ The issue of “sincerity” when it comes to Hatoyama's acknowledgement of the importance of the US-Japan Security Treaty is a complex and important one that will be explored throughout this chapter. Nevertheless, there was a consistent pattern to Hatoyama's approach, both rhetorical and otherwise, to the US Security Treaty: Hatoyama outline his desire for alternatives and amendments to the alliance while later stating (somewhat contradictorily) his support for the alliance.

embrace the US for military reasons⁴². Furthermore, in his resignation speech as Prime Minister, even as he re-affirmed the necessity of the US-Japan Security Treaty, he looked hopefully to a future down the line where Japan would no longer need the US bases (Hatoyama, 2010, June 2).

Beyond his preference for a Japanese defense posture without bases, Hatoyama also inherited from his grandfather a love of the ideas of European integrationist Count Richard Nikolaus von Coudenhove-Kalergi. During the historical 2009 campaign, Hatoyama stressed his pet idea “*yuai*”—the two kanji for friendship and love—sometimes translated as “fellowship.” The idea of “*yuai*” embraced not only ideas that were grounded on the founding of the European Union, but also, on the French ideas of fraternity, equality, philanthropy, and freedom (Hatoyama, 2009; Itagaki, 2009; Mori, 2009). His ideas for “*yuai*” diplomacy would include diplomacies of “trust” with other countries and an East Asian Community as a war-free zone that would help lower security “dependence” on the US (Itagaki, 2009; Hatoyama, 2009). His preference for an East Asian Community that would serve as a “war free” zone gives Hatoyama’s Gaullism a left-leaning aspect that is absent from the more nationalistic Gaullism of Nakasone

⁴² Hatoyama’s thinking was heavily influenced by scholars such as Terashima Jitsuro, president of the *Mitsui Global Strategic Studies Institute*, who served as a personal advisor to Hatoyama. Much like other scholars who regularly publish in *Sekai* and *Japan Focus*, Terashima is an outspoken critic of US bases. His writings for *Sekai* have frequently chided mainstream Japanese intellectual for abetting the ossification of the US-Japan alliance and has urged that Japan stop its “excessive dependence on the US” and to return to the “common sense” assumption that Japan’s security should be secured by Japanese (for relevant examples see: Terashima (2009, October; 2010, February)). For Terashima’s own analysis of Hatoyama’s leadership and the deeper meanings of his failure to move the Futenma Base outside of the prefecture, see Terashima’s (2010, August 9) article in *Japan Focus*. Taking a different track than Hatoyama’s critics, Terashima argues that his failure was not in mismanaging the details of Futenma, but rather, in letting his larger goal of comprehensively re-evaluating the alliance from the ground up to become a quagmire over how to deal with just one piece of the puzzle. In Terashima’s opinion, Hatoyama sealed his fate the moment he accepted the prior negotiating framework of finding a location that would maintain the US’s current military capabilities in the region.

Yasuhiro, Koizumi Junichiro, and Abe Shinzo. In addition, whereas conservatives such as Koizumi had rankled relations with China and South Korea through visits to Yasukuni Shrine, Hatoyama pledged not to visit the shrine. In addition, he gave signals that he planned to approach the lingering history issue through such measures as a fresh government statement on Japan's wartime guilt (to supplement the official apology made by the Socialist Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi in 1995) and a proposal to build a non-sectarian war memorial to challenge the ideology of Yasukuni Shrine (Itagaki, 2009; Easley, Kotani, and Mori, 2010). In addition to these measures, both his political career and his policy actions while in office made it clear that Hatoyama was deeply passionate about both advancing the cause of climate change diplomacy and working toward a non-nuclear world.

The Operational Environment: Fractured Party/ Cabinet view on Defense, Entrenched US-Japan Security Relationship, and the Regional Security Dilemma

Hatoyama came to power at a time when the institution of the prime minister was institutionally at its strongest and when public sentiment was decidedly against the continuation of strong bureaucratic power. At the beginning of his administration he had strong approval ratings (77 percent) that reflected the spirit of his party's triumph over the incumbent LDP. This starting approval rating would rank second only to Koizumi in the post cold war era. The landslide victory of the DPJ in the Lower House elections of August of 2009 ended more than half a decade of nearly uninterrupted rule by the LDP. This was a revolutionary moment in Japan: the first time the dominant LDP party had been thrown out of power by the power of the vote. As a result, the DPJ easily held a

two-thirds majority in the Lower House of the Diet. Much like the other prime ministers studied in this dissertation, Hatoyama also came to power on the heels of domestic turmoil, a public appetite for reforms, and economic issues that seemed at the time to dwarf issues of defense and foreign policy. The “Lehman Shock,” as the global recession of the time was often referred to in the press and by politicians, had gravely weakened Japan’s export-dependent economy. The result of this shock was deepening public suspicion of US-style capitalism and Koizumi-era economic reforms.

If these aspects of Hatoyama’s context suggest that the situation was ripe for dramatic political change, other trends suggest that the path toward new policies, especially in the realm of defense, would be very difficult. To begin with, the DPJ party and its leadership reflected a much more heterogeneous mix of preferences on defense than the LDP. Since its inception in the late-1990s, the DPJ had developed in such a way as to attract a diverse group of politicians who were united primarily in their opposition to LDP hegemony. The result was a heterogeneous mix of LDP-defectors, former bureaucrats, NGO activists, and former executives. While the party had managed to form a consensus on the need for better social policy and a gradual unwinding of some of the LDP’s most unpopular neoliberal economic programs, divisions on defense issues were more drastic than anything the LDP had experienced during its time in power. The party ranks included the more conservative views of Hatoyama and Ozawa Ichiro, pro-US alliance conservatives like Maehara Seiji, as well as moderates such as Kan Naoto. In addition, important party members, such as former Socialist Yokomichi Takahiro, held extremely pacifist views (Easley et al, 2010, p. 5; Konishi, 2009, p. 2-3; Sohma, 2010;

Sneider, 2009, p. 7-8; Koellner, 2011). This lack of consensus on defense issues, the US-Japan alliance, and how to approach difficult issues such as constitutional revision and regional reconciliation led to clever but largely ambiguous phrases in the 2009 Manifesto, such as “close but equal relationship with the US” and an “East Asian Community,” which hinted at significant changes without outlining specifics (DPJ, 2009).

Aggravating the fractured nature of the party was the design of the party leadership. Hatoyama had come to power in May of 2009 after then-party head Ozawa Ichiro had been caught up in a scandal involving illegal donations to his political fund. Hatoyama won the party leadership over Okada Katsuya in no small part because of his support from Ozawa (Koellner, 2011, p. 29-30). Though Hatoyama was the leader of the party, Ozawa would continue to play a strong role within the party. De facto power would be split between Hatoyama and Ozawa following the September 2009 election. Whereas powerful leaders in the LDP had been both leaders of their party and prime ministers, the DPJ would split the functions with Hatoyama serving as prime minister and Ozawa serving as Secretary General of the party. This post, along with his strong following within the party, and his manifold connections made Ozawa an extremely powerful figure. As was seen in the previous chapter, Koizumi Junichiro had skillfully used his power as leader of his party to expel from the party individual politicians who had opposed his main policy of postal privatization. By allowing Ozawa to rule the party while he was prime minister, Hatoyama had given up a key source of power for bargaining with members of his own party and helped to fuel some of the centrifugal

processes already prevalent in Japanese politics (see Shinoda, 2000; Hayao, 1993; see Chapter 2).

Another important limitation—one largely of Hatoyama’s own making—was his promise to the Okinawan people to rework the 2006 base realignment agreement with the US, coupled with past rhetoric that positioned Hatoyama as against the US base presence. In the heat of electoral battle, Hatoyama had promised to rework the relocation plan for the controversial Futenma Airbase that had taken the US and Japan nearly a decade to negotiate. In the current plan, the airbase (which is located in a crowded section of Ginowan city) would be returned to Japan by 2014 after building a replacement facility in the Henoko area of Nago in northern Okinawa. At the same time, 8,000 US troops and 9,000 family members would be transferred to Guam, with Japan paying \$6.1 billion, or 60% of the total relocation and infrastructure building costs (MoFA, 2006, May 1; see Chapter 4). The issue of the relocation of Futenma Airbase had been festering for well over a decade. Despite the central government’s attempts to undermine local resistance through a range of economic assistance packages, resistance to the creation of a replacement base in the Henoko area of Nago city had grown into a significant political force (see Endo, 2010). During his campaign, Hatoyama had promised to move Futenma “outside of the country or at least outside of the prefecture” (*kaigai, sukunakutemo kengai*), reflecting the spirit of the party’s “Okinawa Vision” published a year earlier (DPJ, 2008, p. 4-5; Endo, 2010; Yomiuri Seiji-bu, 2010)⁴³. This promise would pit

⁴³ During the DPJ’s historic campaign, two conspicuous instances where Hatoyama announced his intention to seek a solution that allowed the bases to be moved out of Okinawa Prefecture were speeches on July 19 and August 17, 2009 (Fukushima, 2011, p. 33).

Hatoyama against US officials, who would pressure Japan to stick to the original 2006 agreement, as well as bureaucrats within MoFA and the MoD who had worked so hard to negotiate the 2006 agreement. Making matters worse for Hatoyama was the public record of his preference for a US-Japan alliance without bases and other rhetoric—such as his stated preference for a defense framework less dependent on the US—that undermined US confidence and diminished US willingness to accommodate his desire for new negotiations.

Other factors were also working against Hatoyama. In order to achieve passage of legislation in the Upper House, the DPJ had formed a coalition with the left-leaning Social Democratic Party (SDP) (the rump party of the once major opposition Japan Socialist Party) and the anti-reform People's New Party (PNP), both of which had argued strongly for renegotiating base realignment plans with the US. Moreover, the DPJ had signed an agreement with both coalition partners promising to move toward the realignment of US forces on Okinawa with the aim of decreasing the prefecture's burden (Fukushima, 2011, p. 35-38; Yomiuri Seiji-bu, 2010). While prior LDP administrations had also found it necessary to form coalition governments with a minority party with pacifist leanings, the SDP and its leader Fukushima Mizuho would prove much more stubborn in their resistance to accommodating alliance issues than anything the Komeito had demonstrated during its coalition with the LDP (see Chapter 4). The SDP would prove to be ideologically wedded to the Okinawan base issue and to a lesser extent its preferences for a security policy without a permanent US military presence (see

Fukushima, 2011)⁴⁴. The DPJ's coalition with these two parties thus made Hatoyama's attempts to build a "relationship of trust" with President Obama more difficult.

Perhaps most importantly, in terms of his preference for a defense posture less dependent on the US, Hatoyama was fighting the current of a deepening and broadening alliance structure that had been gaining momentum since the mid-1990s. This trend reflected more than just rhetoric, but also technological integration, and integrated force planning, command, and intelligence sharing. These trends had started during the Hashimoto administration (see Chapter 3) and were given a substantial boost during the Koizumi administration (see Chapter 4) and had maintained their momentum during the following LDP years. During his term, power politics would also reassert itself in ways that would threaten Hatoyama's ability to find suitable political space outside the shadow of the alliance. Instead of a region ripe for friendship, he would instead find periodic reminders of the security dilemma in East Asia and reminders of why the US military presence was still needed in the region.

Parsing Hatoyama's Approach to Defense Policy and Politics: Indirect Challenge to the Alliance; *Yuai* Diplomacy; and De-bureaucratization

Much has been written about Hatoyama's pension for abstraction, his aloofness, and his failure to deal with the specifics of policy. Indeed, much of what occurred during the short term of Hatoyama's administration might rightfully be

⁴⁴ The DPJ's alliance with the SDP and PNP did not have to be a political liability, however. As I discuss later, the alliance with these two parties could have been a political asset in the event that Hatoyama chose to directly confront the US over the details of the base treaty.

described in terms of what Rumelt (2011) calls “bad strategy.” As Rumelt argues, a great deal of bad strategy is conditioned by an inability to choose. As the crisis over Futenma Airbase came to the political fore, Hatoyama *inability to choose* became apparent. During the campaign, he left Okinawans with the impression that he would move the base “out of the country, or at least out of the prefecture.” However, during a November summit meeting with President Obama—the famous “trust me” summit—the president left their meeting believing that Hatoyama had promised to implement the original 2006 Henoko agreement. During this time, both his Defense and Foreign Minister were under the impression that he had conceded that endorsing the original 2006 Henoko agreement was the only feasible option (Kitazawa, 2011). After the summit, however, when it became apparent that the issue of Futenma might cause a rupture in the coalition government, Hatoyama would state that he would need to put off making a decision until he had considered all other options. In addition, and in comparison with the two other prime minister examined in this dissertation (Hashimoto Ryutaro and Koizumi Junichiro), Hatoyama had difficulty turning his abstract concepts—“a close but equal alliance” and “East Asian Community”—into concrete policies, with proximate goals, that would demonstrate his policy competency to the public.

All of these criticisms of Hatoyama are well founded, and this chapter addresses these failings. However, to Hatoyama’s credit there were also important elements of coherence in his various approaches to defense, to an extent grounded in the realities of the moment, that warrant examination. Hatoyama’s thinking on Japanese security politics ran against trends in defense policy that have been evolving since the

mid-1990s. These trends include further integration into US strategy, the loosening of constraints on collective self-defense, as well as the gradual weakening of Japan's anti-militarist norms and the strengthening of Japanese military capabilities within the alliance framework. Hatoyama's own preferences were for a Japan devoid of US bases, or at the very least, less reliant on US military power for defense⁴⁵. Instead, he hoped to guide Japan toward policies that adhered more closely to Japan's anti-militarist security identity (see Oros, 2008; discussed in Chapter 1), where Japan sought international prestige through "civilian" security issues such as nuclear diplomacy, climate change diplomacy, and development assistance. However, recognizing both the influence of US officials in key ministries like MoFA and MoD, as well as his own party's fractured vision on defense issues, his key insight was that *the US could not be confronted directly*.

Instead of hugging the US closely as LDP politicians had done since Koizumi, Hatoyama's approach—at least in the early stages—would attempt to lean on *civilian internationalist policies, friendly overtures towards China, and greater citizen involvement on security issues*. With civilian internationalism, the Hatoyama administration would attempt to use its contributions to issues like climate change politics and nuclear nonproliferation as a means of projecting leadership in the world (Toyoshita, 2009; Easley et al, 2010; Mulgan, 2009, November 12). At the same time, his administration would attempt to use historical reconciliation and regional order-building as a way of alleviating the security dilemma in the region. Hatoyama hinted that issues

⁴⁵ Hatoyama would state in an interview with the Ryukyu Shimibun several months after the end of his administration that although he had never used the term "an alliance without bases" during his administration, he was hoping that his administration could move the alliance in that direction (Ryukyu Shimibun, 2011, February 13; Norimatsu, 2011, February 28).

such as the base problem in Okinawa, Host Nation Support and the Status of Force Agreements, and the secret nuclear agreements of the early 1950s and 1960s, would be made the subject of popular democratic politics. Thus, the Hatoyama and the DPJ would “domesticize” defense politics by emphasizing greater transparency and debate in the Diet (Easley et al, 2010). All of these measures were generally consistent with the DPJ mantra of transferring power from bureaucracies to politicians and from politicians to citizens. As will be demonstrated, the broad strokes of Hatoyama and the DPJ’s strategy were poorly suited for a context that included an active regional security dilemma, a Chinese government that was unwilling to embrace “*Yuai*” approaches to security, and a US partner that was unwilling to compromise on prior agreements on base relocation issues.

Equally important to Hatoyama’s approach were nuances in execution. The two most important nuances were his *consensus-based, first among equals approach to handling his cabinet*, and his *de-bureaucratization* of the policy process. Though his approach to cabinet management was abundantly criticized in the press, the reality was that Hatoyama had allowed himself to be drawn into this difficult position from the beginning of his administration. As a faction leader within the DPJ, Hatoyama’s position was second strongest, and thus very powerful, but was a far second to Ozawa’s faction⁴⁶. Hatoyama had come to power on the terms that his leadership would be de-facto split with Ozawa. His cabinet had been chosen with the help of Ozawa to reflect both factional power within the DPJ and to give coalition partners such as the SDP and the PNP an

⁴⁶ Koellner (2011) measures the factional strength of Hatoyama as having 45 members of the DPJ as compared to Ozawa’s 120 members. This calculation, however, should be considered a rough calculation.

important stake in the new government. These cabinet members were for the most part fellow faction leaders within the DPJ, and, as in the case of SDP and PNP representation, leaders of minority parties. These figures had little hesitation on speaking out independently on policy to the media, sometimes with policies that contradicted other ministers.

To make matters worse, his cabinet, constructed out of consideration for factional power and coalition party representation, contained drastically different views on defense. Social Democratic Party President Fukushima Mizuho, well known for her pacifist sentiments and her pro-Okinawan stance, was placed in the same cabinet with moderates such as Minister of Defense Kitazawa Toshimi (who would endorse the 2006 agreement to move Futenma to the Henoko area of Okinawa). Having established a cabinet with a fractured vision of defense, Hatoyama then opted for a strategy that maximized flexibility by exploring different alternatives and trying to form a consensus around an issue. This consensus-based approach, however, would not be extended to bureaucrats. Having come to power on a stringently anti-LDP and anti-bureaucracy platform, the DPJ had set about centralizing power in the cabinet and the prime minister's office. Thus, at a key point in negotiations with the US over the relocation of Futenma Airbase, Hatoyama would decide to cut out bureaucrats with prior experience negotiating with US officials over the base issue. Though the intent of this move was to create an environment where new approaches could be considered by cutting out participants with vested interests in the old 2006 agreement, the result of this approach was to deprive the administration of the expertise and personal contacts of the experienced bureaucrats. The

move also served to strengthen the suspicion of US officials that supporting the Hatoyama administration was not in their long-term interest.

Civilian Internationalism, the Demilitarization of the Alliance, and Ignoring the Security Dilemma

An important pillar of Hatoyama's approach would be his use of civilian internationalist approaches such as nuclear nonproliferation, international development, and climate change diplomacy as platforms for international leadership and as common ground for a close relationship with the US. In a sense, this approach substituted softer "international" agendas for regional ones that addressed the growing security dilemma (Toyoshita, 2009; Easley et al, 2010). Hatoyama's speech at the UN on September 22, 2009 would emphasize his government's pledge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and his desire for Japan to act as a bridge between the developed and developing world. He would also frequently state his desire to work with the Obama administration toward a world free of nuclear weapons and to address global poverty (Hatoyama, 2009, September 22; Green and Szechenyi 2009, October 3).

In his two early meetings (September 23, 2009 and November 13, 2009) with President Obama, Hatoyama would also demonstrate his desire to reformulate the US-Japan bilateral relationship around these common civilian goals of nuclear nonproliferation and climate change. One of the unstated purposes of this greater emphasis on nonproliferation and climate was to capture two of the most popular themes of Obama's historic campaign (which had been widely followed in Japan) and to use them as a way of putting distance between Japan and the military aspects of US global

security strategy. Prior to the November Summit meeting with the US, Hatoyama's government would announce that his government would not extend refueling assistance to allied forces in the Indian Ocean after January. As the opposition party, the DPJ had regularly pointed out the problematic nature of fuel assistance for the constitutional ban on collective self-defense. As they had argued frequently in their battles with the LDP, there was no way of knowing whether the fuel would be used for combat or non-combat missions. Since at least some of the fuel would be used plausibly in support of combat missions, fuel assistance could be seen as a violation of the constitutional ban on collective self-defense. Rather than directly repudiating the current support, the administration would let the current legislation expire. In replacement of this fuel assistance, his government would support job training and agricultural assistance in Afghanistan with five billion dollars worth of additional aid (Yomiuri Seiji-bu, 2010; Green and Szechenyi, 2010, January).

Though these early policy moves were largely successful, it soon became clear that the DPJ would face stiff resistance from the US when it came to renegotiating military base issues. From public statements and high level bilateral contacts, down to working level meetings, the Obama administration would send clear messages early in the new DPJ administration that it would not renegotiate the 2006 agreement that would transfer the functions of Futenma Airbase within Okinawa prefecture. During their summit meeting on November 13, 2009, Hatoyama uttered the words "trust me" to Obama on the issue of Futenma, leading the president to believe that his administration would implement the 2006 Henoko agreement. Instead, Hatoyama and his administration

would undertake a lengthy re-evaluation process that would drag on for several months. Hatoyama's failure to support the 2006 plan from the outset, ironically, would eventually erode his ability to remain relevant in one of the civilian internationalist issues he cared about most. After months of mixed statements and contradictory proposals from the Hatoyama cabinet on the base issue, the Obama administration would deny Hatoyama a full meeting at the Washington Nuclear Summit in April 2010 (Ogawa, 2010, April 8; Nikkei Shimbun, 2010, April 14; Funabashi, 2010, June 8). Hatoyama would instead have to settle for a ten-minute sidebar. The brevity of this meeting would contrast sharply with the 90-minute meeting secured by Chinese counterparts. This inability to secure a meeting with the US would turn out to be a significant political failure and signal a steep decline in the prime minister's support rate.

To make matters worse, visible signs of the security dilemma would appear in ways that would provide the media fuel to point out Hatoyama's neglect of the alliance. If Hatoyama had hoped to emphasize "*Yuai*" diplomacy—creating relationships of trust and friendship—with countries in the region, North Korean belligerency would provide a poor backdrop for his approach. On March 26, a North Korean torpedo sank the South Korean naval ship *Cheonan*, heightening tensions in the region. As Hatoyama would later state in an interview, the sinking of the *Cheonan* was on his mind during the negotiations for Futenma and would help shift momentum back to the original 2006 plan (Ryukyu Shimbun, 2011, February 13; Norimatsu 2011, February 28). Small incidents with China in the East China Sea would also crop up late in Hatoyama's administration, upsetting hopes of closer ties with China as a way of decreasing Japan's "dependence" on the US

for security. In April, a Chinese surveillance helicopter would come within 90 meters of a Japanese Marine Self Defense Force destroyer during a People's Liberation Army naval exercise near Japanese territorial waters. Also, in early May a Japanese research ship operating within Japan's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) would be pursued by a Chinese ship and ordered to cease its activities (Przystup, 2010, July; Nikkei, 2010, April 23). These incidents would be a harbinger of the much more serious incident in September during the Kan Naoto administration when a diplomatic row would ensue after a Chinese trawler would clash with a Japanese Coast Guard vessel.

Each of these incidents served as a reminder of the sensitive security environment in the region and the importance of the US military presence as a stabilizing force. These incidents also helped create stark penalties for Hatoyama for downgrading the military aspects of the US-Japanese relationship.

Other Means of Displacing the Alliance: Engaging China, "Yuai" Diplomacy, and Seeking an East Asian Community

Another important aspect of Hatoyama's approach would be his lean toward Asia. This approach would include overtures of friendship toward China and preliminary movements toward an East Asian Community. Hatoyama would also show some signs that his "Yuai" philosophy might eventually manifest in grand gestures on historical issues. It seemed as if the Hatoyama administration hoped that improved ties with China would lead to greater leverage in its relationship with the US, and that over time this leverage would allow it to displace military aspects of the alliance. However, as bilateral relations with the US deteriorated, Hatoyama would have to modify his rhetorical stance,

admitting that improved regional relations and region-building would be based on the foundation of a strong US-Japan alliance framework (Przystup, 2010, March; Green and Szechenyi, 2010, March).

Despite expectations to the contrary, Hatoyama's attempt to engage China were very modest, building cautiously on the positive gains of prime ministers before him. Efforts to improve relations with China included attempts to move forward on the 2008 agreement on joint development of oil and gas resources in the East China Sea and preliminary gestures on the history issue. These initiatives came in addition to Hatoyama's pledge to refrain from visiting the controversial Yasukuni Shrine, as well as suggestions that the DPJ would explore a secular replacement for the controversial shrine (Yang and Lim, 2010; Yomiuri Seiji-bu, 2010). In his early meetings with President Hu Jintao, Hatoyama emphasized his convictions that an East Asia Community could be built on the foundation of a strong China-Japan relationship and stated that he would like to turn the East China Sea into a "Sea of Fraternity" (Przystup, 2009, October, p. 5; Yang and Lim, 2010, p. 64). In addition, Hatoyama would engage both South Korea and China regarding his idea of an East Asian Community during major leadership meetings and summits. However, the lack of specifics involved in Hatoyama's East Asian Community idea suggests that the concept was more an aspiration than a policy idea and that he was not yet ready to take political risks to make the idea a reality. A more benign explanation would be that Hatoyama hoped small cooperative initiatives such as a joint project on gas and oil development in the disputed territories might eventually develop into more robust political ties between the countries.

The most ambitious action, however, came not from Hatoyama but from Ozawa Ichiro. In December, Ozawa would lead a large delegation that included 143 Diet members to China as a way of creating stronger political relations with the country. As a result of the visit, the DPJ and the Chinese Communist Party agreed to increase the exchange of Diet members on a regular basis. Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping, a possible successor to President Hu Jintao, also visited Japan. Hatoyama arranged for him to meet the Emperor on December 15. This meeting was arranged with less than the 30 days advance notice required by protocol (Przystup, 2010, January; Harris, 2010, January 1).

In a sense, these overtures by Hatoyama and the DPJ provided a counterweight to the shift toward the US that had been occurring under the LDP since Koizumi had come to power. However, significant barriers remained to using better ties with China to offset aspects of the US alliance. One such barrier was popular opinion. In Japanese government polls taken in 2009, for example, 66.6 percent of respondents said that they did not feel close to China, and 71.9 percent rejected the idea of an alliance with Beijing. In the same poll, 73 percent said they felt close to the United States, and 76.4 percent said that the U.S.-Japan alliance was useful for Japan (Green, 2011, p. 21; for similar results see also, Przystup, 2009, October, p. 6). In addition, to the usual lingering bilateral issues--China's human rights record, differences over the history issue, and territorial disputes in the East China Sea--a significant barrier to better relations would also be China's own domestic politics, where Chinese politicians frequently benefit from using Japan as an outlet for domestic unrest.

In short, during Hatoyama's administration measures to improve Chinese relations would remain largely symbolic, despite a desire to displace Japan's security dependence on the US. The promise of an East Asia Community would also remain a long-term aspiration rather than a concrete policy proposal. If some authors have suggested that Hatoyama's realism was learned over the tenure of his administration (Green 2010, July), there is evidence in Hatoyama's relations with China that some of this realism was understood from the outset.

Elements of Execution I: Consensus, Ambiguity, and Muddle Through

If shifts toward civilian internationalism and better relations with regional powers were seen as the proximate goals of the administration, Hatoyama's actions made it clear that he believed these goals could not be approached directly through either an appeal to the public for a new defense course or through a Diet resolution calling for drastic changes, such as the unconditional return of Futenma Airbase. Instead, rhetorical ambiguity, muddle through, and gradual consensus-building would be employed. As one scholar has noted, these strategies are little more than the traditional styles of Japanese politics that seek to "moderate, compromise, and seek a sense of balance" (Sohma, 2010, p. 7). In the Hatoyama case, however, these approaches seemed even more necessary given that *de facto* leadership was split with Ozawa. On the security issue that would become one of the proximate causes of his administration's fall—the issue of Futenma Airbase—he would stubbornly stick to an approach of consensus and balancing, even

when there was no consensus to be had. He would refuse to choose between the US and pro-alliance forces in his government on the one hand, and Okinawa and his coalition partner the SDP on the other.

Both in the campaign literature and in speeches, the DPJ and Hatoyama called for a “close but equal relationship” with the US as well as an “East Asian Community.” However, Hatoyama and the DPJ did so without defining what precisely was meant by these terms. In a sense, much of the ambiguity of these phrases served an important function—they appealed to popular sentiments in Japanese society while papering over division on defense issues within the party. Thus, an “equal relationship” was a free-floating signifier that could mean different things at different moments. The term “equal” was largely seen as code for a Japan that would be less submissive to the US. However, specific aspects of equality—for example, Japan’s willingness to revise its constitution to allow for collective defense—were quietly ignored. The phrase could also be understood to mean a Japan that would lower its contributions within the alliance, and thus, would resist further Japanese integration into US global security strategy. In its maximalist formulation, the phrase could also be interpreted to mean a policy of gradually undoing the fundamentals of the alliance: starting with a drawdown of bases and then moving toward revision of Host Nation Support and the Status of Force Agreement (Easley et al, 2010)⁴⁷. However, these meanings were largely assumed, and the ambiguity that

⁴⁷ As Sunohara (2010) has written, there is nothing new about the use of the word “equality” when it comes to dealing with the US. Indeed, Bush administration officials had promoted their own version of an “equal” partnership. Using the Nye-Armitage report findings, Bush officials were reported to have frequently chided their counterparts to reinterpret the constitution to allow for collective self-defense. As these officials argued, a truly equal Japan should be able to come to the US’s defense in time of need (see also, Samuels, 2007a).

shrouded these statements did little to satisfy the US or clarify the DPJ's long-term intentions for the larger Japanese public. Still, few who have followed Hatoyama's career doubted that his instincts were to oppose the presence of US bases on Okinawa. Indeed, early in his administration, it still seemed entirely possible that Hatoyama would take a hardline stance against the US. In an October 29, question and answer session in the Lower House, Hatoyama would said that his party would conduct a comprehensive review of the US-Japan alliance including Host Nation Support, the bilateral Status of Forces Agreement, and the realignment plan for US forces in Japan. On November 16, Hatoyama would tell reporters that there was no point in holding a bilateral working group discussion over Futenma Airbase if changes to the agreement are not possible (Kitazawa, 2012, p. 135). The statement, however, was puzzling, coming as it did only three days after a summit with President Obama where the US president was left with the impression that Hatoyama would implement the 2006 agreement. In his June 2 announcement that he would be stepping down from the prime minister post, Hatoyama express his thoughts about the security relationship in this way: "I don't think a U.S.-dependent security should last fifty or one hundred years...Japan's peace should be created by the Japanese themselves" (Tanaka, 2010, June 14; Hatoyama, 2010, June 2). As prime minister, however, Hatoyama will largely be remembered for his unwillingness to challenge the US openly and his mixed statements on the US alliance.

In terms of the "East Asian Community," it too would signify varying and sometimes contradictory content. In most formulations it would mean a war-free security community based on the shared economic interests of the region. At some points, it

would mean a regional community without the US, but at other times, Hatoyama would state that he could not image an East Asian Community without a US military presence (see Itagaki, 2009). In his article for *Voice*, Hatoyama would also discuss the idea of an East Asian monetary fund that would help to protect Asia from the instability of the dollar (Hatoyama, 2009, p. 139). As discussed before, Hatoyama's ideas on East Asian regionalism were partially based on Coudenhove-Kalergi's ideas of a pan-European zone. Since Coudenhove-Kalergi's own ideas were aspirational at the time, perhaps we should judge Hatoyama's ideas in the same way. After all, in his resignation speech Hatoyama would say that his ideas were not necessarily meant to refer to the present, but rather, to a Japan five, ten, or twenty years from now (Hatoyama, 2010, June 2).

As will be discussed in more detail in the next sections, Hatoyama frequently avoided confrontational approaches when dealing with his own cabinet, especially members of the cabinet who were from coalition parties. It also seemed that in terms of "evaluating" the US-Japan alliance from the ground up, Hatoyama eventually hoped to open up the alliance to the realm of citizen politics. The issue with this approach was, of course, the stiff resistance that Hatoyama would face from the US and the lack of support he would receive from his own cabinet. In short, consensus-based approaches work poorly in situations where actors are firmly entrenched in their positions. If the US was willing to allow minor changes of direction in efforts in Afghanistan and symbolic measures such as the DPJ's decision to review secret nuclear treaties from the early postwar period, they would draw the line at tampering with the 2006 agreement on base realignment. The SDP was also unwilling to change their position on moving Futenma

out of Okinawa. Thus in the end, critics of Hatoyama found it easy to make his consensus-based approach synonymous with a lack of leadership.

Elements of Execution II: Callous Statements towards the Alliance, Lax Cabinet Management, Poor Sequencing, and De-bureaucratization

As has been demonstrated thus far, Hatoyama's broad strategic approach to defense corresponded poorly to his operational environment. Not only did he misjudge the degree to which he could substitute civilian internationalist policies for maintenance of the military aspects of the alliance with the US, but he also misjudged the degree to which overtures towards China would be rewarded with an alleviation of the security dilemma. Compounding the weaknesses of Hatoyama's strategy, however, was poor execution and policy management. Failures at this level would include a callous approach to speaking about the US-Japan alliance, lax management of his cabinet, poor sequencing of policy measures, and shutting out valuable expertise in the Japanese bureaucracy.

From the early days of his administration, Hatoyama would have to fight off speculation that he was anti-American in his outlook. Nearing the end of the DPJ's historic electoral campaign, parts of an essay written by Hatoyama for *Voice* were translated and published in the *New York Times*. The passages included parts that denounced "American-style economics" and suggested that Japan needed a strategy to seek independence from US and Chinese power struggles (Hatoyama, 2009, August 26; see also, Hatoyama, 2009). In a sense, this article was nothing more than a distillation of Hatoyama's campaign rhetoric. This article, however, caused a small firestorm in the

press (both in the US and Japan), and Hatoyama found himself in the early phases of his administration explaining how his article was not meant to be anti-American (Nikkei Shimbun, September 3). Despite his efforts to praise the benefits of the US-Japan alliance, especially during the backdrop of its 50 year anniversary, characteristics of Hatoyama's anti-alliance tendencies would crop up in ways that worried both US alliance managers and members of the press. For example, at an October 10, 2009 trilateral leadership meeting with South Korea and China participants would report to US officials that Hatoyama was proposing his East Asian Community idea as a way to decrease "dependence" on the US (Green and Szechenyi, 2010, January; Kitazawa, 2012, p. 141)⁴⁸.

In addition to his occasional callous statements, his decision to move forward with largely symbolic measures, like a panel to examine the secret nuclear agreements of the 1950s and 1960s, put populist politics over alliance management in ways that fueled the worst suspicions of US alliance managers and political commentators⁴⁹. Hatoyama would also reiterate his intention to review the US alliance from the ground up, including Host Nation Support and the Status of Force Agreements (Funabashi, 2010, June 8;

⁴⁸ As then Defense Minister Kitazawa Toshimi reports the incident in his memoirs, Hatoyama reportedly said, "Up until this time, Japan has relied too much on the United States. As a member of Asia, we want to emphasize a strategy that focuses on Asia" (Kitazawa, 2012, p. 141).

⁴⁹ The "Secret Pacts Committee," headed by Kitaoka Shinichi of University of Tokyo was generally conducted in a low profile manner. This committee examined 1) the secret pact between the government in January 1960 regarding the introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan in times of emergencies 2) the pact regarding military operations in the event of an escalation of conflict in the Korean Peninsula, and 3) the pact made during the reversion of Okinawa in 1972 regarding the introduction of nuclear weapons in case of an emergency. One of the key reflections of Kitaoka (2010) was that the secret pacts demonstrated how limited democratic participation had been in the area of security in the postwar era (2010, p. 27). However, as Brooks has argued the low profile manner of the "Secret Pacts" Committee was symptomatic of a larger pattern during the Hatoyama administration—piecemeal approaches that were not linked to any strategy or major political goal (2011, p. 22).

Green and Szechenyi, 2010, January; Nikkei Shimbun, 2009, October 30). These measures sent strong signals that in the long-term the Hatoyama administration and the DPJ had interests inimical to the alliance⁵⁰.

To make matters worse, Hatoyama showed poor control over his cabinet. As discussed earlier, the challenge of managing his cabinet lay partially in the manner of its construction. Social Democratic Party President Fukushima Mizuho, well known for her pacifist sentiments and her pro-Okinawan stance, was placed in the same cabinet with moderates such as Minister of Defense Kitazawa Toshimi⁵¹. The gulf between Fukushima and Kitazawa was much greater than had been experienced in previous cabinets. Even the Socialist-led government of the early nineties had been formed only after an understanding had been reached with then party president Murayama Tomiichi that he would recognize the constitutionality of the US-Japan Security Treaty and the Self Defense Forces. As Fukushima would write about Hatoyama's leadership, despite his

⁵⁰ Hatoyama's pension for making headlines through controversial statement would not be limited to the time of his administration. On February 13, 2011, Hatoyama would make headlines again. In an interview with the Ryukyu Shimbun (a newspaper in Okinawa), he would state that at the time his administration had decided to settle on the 2006 Henoko agreement, they needed an explanation for the decision and so had settled on "deterrence" as an "expedient" (*hoben*). The Ryukyu Shimbun newspaper would feature the headline "*yokushiryoku wa hoben*" (Deterrence an Expedient). Though Hatoyama's statement that deterrence was an "expedient" would make the headline, the full statement made it clear that Hatoyama understood that Futenma's bases functions were an essential part of the US base structure in Okinawa, and that in a larger sense Futenma did contribute to deterrence (see Kitazawa, 2012, p. 147; Norimatsu, 2011, February 28; Fukushima, 2011, p. 77). Nevertheless, his interview with the Ryukyu Shimbun demonstrates his ability to baffle both US-Japan alliance supporters and anti-base activists alike.

⁵¹ In his memoirs on his time as Defense Minister, Kitazawa Toshimi would recount how he was convinced of the merits of the Henoko plan early during his tenure as Minister of Defense. Though he originally had sympathy for Hatoyama's policy of "out of the country, or at least out of the prefecture," briefings with defense bureaucrats and his own trips to Okinawa would convince him that what was most important was to implement the 2006 agreement as soon as possible (Kitazawa, 2012, p. 127-128). One might note that Kitazawa's change of heart proves that Governmental Politics adage that "where one stands depends on where one sits."

slogan of “policy by politicians” (*seiji-shudo*), at no point did he take firm control of his cabinet (2011, p. 80). As a maverick cabinet minister, Fukushima would eventually play an important spoiler role. At the end of Hatoyama’s administration, Fukushima would refuse to sign the cabinet order authorizing the acceptance of the Henoko option for the relocation of Futenma Airbase. However, beyond this measure, she would also refuse to resign from her cabinet post, forcing Hatoyama to fire her (see Fukushima, 2011, p. 28-30)⁵².

When asked in an interview several months after his resignation why he did not choose a cabinet that would allow him to realize his vision of a security treaty “without permanent bases,” and specifically why he appointed the moderate Kitazawa as his Minister of Defense, he replied: “Kitazawa was Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense, and was supposed to have a stable vision for defense-related matters. Rather than appointing ministers on specific themes, we had lists of candidates, and placed the most suitable person in each position” (Norimatsu, 2011, February 28; Ryukyu Shimbun, 2011, February 13). In short, Hatoyama had followed a traditional method of selecting cabinet minister, reminiscent of old LDP practices that ignored policy preferences in favor of seniority and factional balancing.

As the Futenma Airbase issue evolved, cabinet ministers would make their different preferences for policy on the issue known through public statements. This gave the public a sense that there was no one policy on Futenma and that each of the cabinet

⁵² As Fukushima (2011) explains in her memoirs, her decision not to quit, but instead, to make Hatoyama fire her was a calculated political move meant to demonstrate her and her party’s strong stance against his decision to backtrack on his electoral promise to move Futenma out of Okinawa.

ministers was acting independently. In the early days of the administration, Defense Minister Kitazawa would make public statements that suggested that the original 2006 agreement would be the inevitable course of action; meanwhile Foreign Minister Okada Katsuya would publicly state that the current plan was unrealistic and that the functions of Futenma should be consolidated into Kadena Airbase on a 15 year limited basis. Soon after these statements, Fukushima Mizuho would publicly state that her party might leave the cabinet if Futenma Airbase was not moved out of the prefecture (Kitazawa, 2012; Fukushima, 2011; Green and Szechenyi, 2010, January). As the self-imposed May deadline for an agreement approached, and it became clear that neither Guam nor the Kadena consolidation option would be available, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano Hirofumi would propose Tokunoshima city in Kagoshima Prefecture as a possible location for some of Futenma's functions (on the recommendation of DPJ lawmaker Makino Seishu) (Kitazawa, 2012, p. 137). However, the problem with the Tokunoshima option was the same had been faced by the other options. Not only were the local townships opposed to the relocation, but the US too was opposed to the option.

Hatoyama would also poorly sequence his policy measures. In the early days of his administration many analysts predicted that Hatoyama would attempt to delay any significant challenges to the US-Japan alliance until after the DPJ had consolidated power in the Upper House elections in July 2010 (Konishi, 2009; Sohma, 2010). However, following the summit with the US in November of 2009, Hatoyama would set a self-imposed deadline for resolving the Futenma Airbase issue by the end of May, just before the Upper House elections. Given his administration's lack of preparations on the

Futenma issue and the lack of consensus in the cabinet, this self-imposed deadline seems in retrospect like a major blunder⁵³. In an interview conducted after his resignation, when asked why he chose to impose a deadline on his own administration for the end of May, Hatoyama would justify his approach by saying he thought he would need to postpone a decision until after March when the budget would be voted on, but that he could not delay the decision for much longer than that without angering the US. In addition, he hoped to resolve the issue in a way that kept it off the agenda for the July Upper House elections (Norimatsu, 2011, February 28; Ryukyu Shimbun, 2011, February 13). Despite his rationalization of the move, there seemed little reason for Hatoyama to limit his own range of action on the issue.

Perhaps several of these mistakes could have been avoided if there had been stronger inputs from experts in the bureaucracy. Indeed, a conspicuous aspect of the Hatoyama government was the degree to which he tried to divest bureaucrats of power and centralize control in the prime minister's office. One of the ways he attempted to accomplish this was by setting up a National Strategy Unit (in reality little more than an office at this point in his administration). This bureau not only centralized budget-making and other important functions, taking them out of the hands of bureaucrats, but also divested special interests of power within the party structure (Sohma, 2010; Tanaka, 2010, June). In one sense, the National Strategy Unit was meant to build on some of the successes of Koizumi's *kantei* special teams (Shinoda, 2007a). However, from the

⁵³ Unlike Hashimoto, who had worked hard during the early stages of his administration to establish a working relationship with the Governor of Okinawa and the US ambassador, Hatoyama lacked significant resources to approach the Futenma issue by the time he set his deadline.

beginning, Hatoyama's administration cut itself off from an important resource by refusing to use top talent from the bureaucracies. In addition to shutting out the advice of bureaucrats from political deliberations at the top, in the later part of negotiations with the US over the relocation of Futenma (at the behest of SDP head and Consumer Affairs Minister Fukushima Mizuho) top bureaucrats with direct experience in prior negotiations would be relieved of duty (Tanaka, 2010, June; Brooks, 2011, p. 91). This move would further unsettle US officials involved in the negotiations and intensify concerns that Hatoyama would have a negative impact on the alliance the longer he stayed in power (Brooks, 2011).

Counterfactuals I: Decisions, Deadlines, and Cabinet Management

Despite the difficult operational environment of Hatoyama's administration, the scope of his failure as a prime minister was largely avoidable. Small differences in sequencing, a different cabinet construction, a different approach to cabinet management, and differences in rhetorical strategy could each have made significant improvements to his performance.

The first and most dramatic change Hatoyama could have made to improve his political situation was to have made a decision on the Futenma Airbase issue early in his administration or to keep the issue off the agenda until after the July 2010 Upper House elections. There was a sense throughout Hatoyama's administration that he hoped a solution to the Futenma issue would materialize through diligent negotiations or that the

public, Okinawa, and the US administration would appreciate his efforts to accommodate their very different positions. A more effective approach would have been to make an early decision among several unsavory possibilities: to concede defeat by endorsing the 2006 agreement; shelve the issue until after the summer Upper House elections; or risk the DPJ's electoral popularity in a direct confrontation with the US (for more on this option, see below). Given that the DPJ and its leadership was more eager to take on economic and social welfare issues, the primary concern of Japanese politics at the moment, an early concession on Futenma would have been the most prudent course of action. Indeed, As Defense Minister Kitazawa would write about the early days of the administration, he felt that as soon as soon as the DPJ had opened up the possibility of amending the earlier agreement they were in essence opening "Pandora's box." Suggesting that Futenma could be moved outside of Okinawa would heighten Okinawan expectations (in reality expectations had already been heightened during the campaign), sow the seeds of distrust with the US (who had invested 15 years into negotiating the details of the original agreement), and more importantly make the original agreement harder to implement (Kitazawa, 2012, p. 128). Kitazawa's assessment would prove correct. Now that Hatoyama had suggested that a better agreement was possible, it was hard to reign in expectations. The ultimate product of Hatoyama's approach would be to simultaneously alienate the US and Okinawa, while making the original agreement harder to implement.

Indeed, early in the administration the US had made its position on the issue clear in a way that allowed the administration ample time to reformulate its policy on the

issue and move on. As early as October, both Defense Minister Kitazawa and Foreign Minister Okada tried to convince Hatoyama that other options (including the Kadena option that Okada had earlier advocated) had very little possibility for implementation (Kitazawa, 2012, p. 133-134). At this point, Okamoto Yukio, who had served as former Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro's special envoy to Okinawa, consulted with Hatoyama and tried to convince him of the merits of the 2006 Henoko plan and that the prime minister should focus his efforts on lobbying for an environmentally friendly base (even if the financial cost would be higher) (Kitazawa, 2012, p. 134). Though backtracking on the policy would have been harmful to Hatoyama's popularity figures and his administration's survival, changing course early might have allowed his administration to move on to other tasks while minimizing the political fallout. Indeed, there is some evidence to suggest that Hatoyama considered doing just that during his November summit with the President Obama, where Hatoyama uttered the words "trust me" to the president.

Despite the difficult situation Hatoyama found himself in between alliance managers, members of his own cabinet, and the intransigent position of the SDP, there is reason to believe that more Koizumi-esque approaches might have improved his situation. In terms of his negotiating tactics, Hatoyama might have taken a cue from Koizumi, who chose to fire the popular but intransigent Foreign Minister Tanaka Makiko from his cabinet. As the Futenma issue dragged on, SDP leader Fukushima Mizuho was allowed to play a stronger role in debates, frequently challenging Hatoyama on the issue. Koizumi had faced a similar challenge during his administration in the figure of Tanaka

Makiko, the popular maverick politician whom he had appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Tanaka had become embroiled in a nasty fight with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and had shown herself on more than one occasion to be negligent in her duties as Foreign Minister. Koizumi dismissed his popular foreign minister and suffered a drastic loss in popularity (approximately a 30 percent drop). The key difference with Koizumi's approach to his handling of Tanaka and Hatoyama's approach to Fukushima, was that Koizumi dismissed Tanaka early in his administration and quickly found an issue (his trip to North Korea to meet Kim Jong Il) where he could accomplish a dramatic success and regain his popularity. A close examination of the timeline of Hatoyama's administration demonstrates that he had missed his window of opportunity around December when the SDP had publicly threatened to quit the coalition if the DPJ backtracked on Futenma. At this point and time his own popularity rating were still relatively high and could have survived the firing of a cabinet minister. His chances of political survival would have been even greater if he could have found another project that offered a proximate success.

An alternative approach to the issue would have been to delay making a decision on Futenma until after the June 2010 Upper House elections. Indeed, the decision to set a deadline for the end of May is puzzling given that there was little external pressure to do so. Though his popularity rating would undoubtedly have slipped, this slippage would probably not have endangered his administration to the extent that his other approach did. In addition, a successful Upper House election would have given him additional clout to either abandon his campaign pledge on Futenma or to seek a new arrangement with the US.

Regardless of which course Hatoyama chose on the issue of Futenma and the alliance, his administration would probably have fared much better if Hatoyama had been able to keep discipline in his own cabinet. Given the dual power structure within the government, this would have required the cooperation of Ozawa. Early decisions on Futenma and how to address questions of the alliance and the bases could have been settled behind closed doors early in a way that demonstrated the government's common voice on the issue. When cabinet members began to test their own proposals on the issue publicly, they allowed the media to paint Hatoyama as a weak leader with little control over the situation.

In addition, Hatoyama should have given up largely symbolic measures with regards to the US alliance that did little more than undermine trust with the US. Hatoyama could have given up, for example, the special committee set up under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to examine the secret nuclear agreements with the US. Hatoyama could also have refrained from stating that he would seek a comprehensive review of the alliance that would include a review of Host Nation Support and the Status of Force Agreements. More importantly, Hatoyama could have abandoned rhetoric—the suggestion that Japan relied excessively on the US for defense, for example—that sounded warning bells in Washington. Each of these statements gave the US incentives to withhold support for the Hatoyama administration early before the administration was able to accumulate a record of success and secure political power. While it was clear that Hatoyama understood he would have to moderate his stance on the US alliance to make headway on his domestic agenda, the record shows that he did not moderate soon enough.

Counterfactuals II: Questioning the Basic Assumption of Hatoyama's Strategy

As discussed in the previous sections, what critics and media personalities would often describe as the bizarre behavior of Hatoyama, what US officials described at one point as his “loopiness,” and his inability to live up to electoral promises appear to be conditioned by a key insight: the US-Japan security relationship could not be challenged directly. Caught between hardliners like the SDP's Fukushima Mizuho and the PNP's Kamei Shizuka and more moderate forces within his own cabinet such as Kitazawa Toshimi and Okada Katsuya, Hatoyama found himself hedging between irreconcilable paths: at once seeking a relationship “less dependent” on the US, and seeking a relationship of “unwavering trust” with President Obama; promising to live up to his campaign pledge to move Futenma out of Okinawa prefecture, but also, not ruling out the 2006 agreement; promising to review SOFA and HNS, but also, speaking of the US-Japan security agreement as the cornerstone of Japan's foreign policy. Thus, caught between his desire to change the relationship with the US and a lack of imagination for how to bring it out, Hatoyama flip-flopped and muddled through.

Hatoyama's one time policy advisor, Terashima Jisturo (2010), in his own analysis of the causes of the Hatoyama administration's failure over Futenma, argues that Hatoyama lost the negotiations over Futenma the moment he accepted the status quo of US-Japan Security Treaty. As discussed in Chapter 1, Article 5 and 6 of the Security Treaty set the basic bargain of the treaty: Japan is to provide the US with territory for bases and the US in return provides defense from external threats. As seen during the

Hashimoto and Koizumi administration, negotiations on the return of Futenma had been based on the condition (which reflected the basic bargain of Article 5 and 6 of the Security Treaty) that the current capability and functionality of US forces be maintained. As Terashima (2010) argues, the only way to have reversed the 2006 agreement on Futenma would have been through a comprehensive reworking of the alliance from the ground up. Indeed, in an early statement on October 29, Hatoyama had pledged that his party would conduct a comprehensive review of the US-Japan alliance including Host Nation Support (HNS), the bilateral Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), and the realignment plan for US troops in Japan. As the Futenma issue heated up, however, this pledge was largely forgotten.

In a sense, Terashima was suggesting a revolutionary approach to defense politics similar to the way Koizumi had approached the Postal Reforms. The comparison is an essential one. As discussed in Chapter 1, the US role in the defense subgovernment is a strong one, somewhat similar to the strong influence of the Postmasters in the LDP. The postmasters themselves have a positive image in Japan, well-liked for their social role in rural communities (MacLachlan, 2011). Yet, despite this positive image, Koizumi was able to privatize the postal service largely by linking postal reform for larger reforms of the Japanese political system. A direct challenge to the US would most likely have had to have made use of this same logic, linking reform of the US-Japan Security Treaty to an “ending of the postwar period.”⁵⁴ Hatoyama had at least two of the resources needed early

⁵⁴ The desire to “end the postwar period” is a goal shared by many liberals and conservative in Japanese politics, often found equally in the pages of *Sekai* (a liberal magazine) and *Seiron* (a conservative magazine).

in his administration, strong public support ratings and coalition partners in the SDP and PNP who were ideologically predisposed to challenging the precepts of the alliance. Clearly, the most important resource Hatoyama was missing to accomplish this goal was a firmer hold on power within his party (instead of the de facto split with Ozawa), and a cabinet (including Minister of Defense) that shared his goal. As discussed in the previous chapter, Koizumi had used Professor Takenaka Heizo, a Keio University Economics Professor with no background in politics to spearhead his reforms from the cabinet. For Hatoyama to mount a direct challenge to the US opinion, he would have needed a policy entrepreneur with deep knowledge of security issues to make his attempt successful. However, beyond this, Hatoyama would have needed one other resource—one that Fukushima Mizuho (2011) herself faults Hatoyama for not having—and that was a commitment to challenge the foundations of the US security treaty⁵⁵. Even given these resources, given the popularity of the US-Japan alliance and the depth of positive feelings toward the US in Japan, there is no guarantee that a broad reform agenda would have succeeded.

⁵⁵ An intriguing aspect of Fukushima's own thoughts on Hatoyama's failing is her invocation of Koizumi as a counter-example. As a member of the SDP, Fukushima had fought ideologically against everything that Koizumi stood for—his pro-market economic reforms, his embrace of the US alliance, and his visits of Yasukuni Shrine. And yet, she is still able to admire Koizumi for his political courage in boldly pursuing his political objectives. Fukushima suggests that Hatoyama should have shown the same courage in pursuing his desired policies (Fukushima, 2011).

Table 5: Hatoyama Yukio: Approaches to Defense Policy and Politics

| Approach | Characteristics | Results |
|--|---|--|
| <i>Find Common Ground with President Obama on Nuclear Nonproliferation and Climate Change Diplomacy</i> | Early efforts to focus on these issues and downplay various sources of friction such as Futenma | Avoids overt friction with the US early in his administration |
| <i>Gradually Substitute Civilian Internationalist Measures For Military Aspects of the US-Japan Alliance</i> | Allows legislation providing fuel assistance to the US to expire; substitutes with development assistance for Afghanistan | The US expresses regret for losing fuel assistance but is pleased with development aid; fear over standoff on Futenma grows |
| <i>Attempt a “Muddle Through” Approach to Move Futenma “Outside the country, or at least outside the prefecture”</i> | Put off decision on Futenma until May; attempt to find alternative to 2006 agreement through consultations with various townships | Fails to resolve the basic conflict between the US’s insistence on 2006 agreement and the SDP pledge not to support that agreement. Lax cabinet management fuels accusations that Hatoyama lacks control of policy |
| <i>Soft Sell of “Review of the Alliance”</i> | Early statements in Diet to review the alliance from the ground up, including HSN and SOFA Commission to review “Secret Pacts” with US | Helps to fuel the suspicion within the Obama administration that the Hatoyama administration will impact the alliance negatively in the long term |
| <i>Yuai Diplomacy/ Lean toward China</i> | Proposes notion of East Asia Community; insists that China and Japan implement agreement to jointly exploit resources in disputed territories | In the backdrop of the <i>Cheonan</i> shelling and frictions in the disputed waters, Hatoyama’s <i>Yuai</i> diplomacy has trouble evolving |

Conclusion: The Failure of Strategy and the Collapse of Power

If the enabling causes of Hatoyama's failure can be found in his operational context—the fractured nature of his party, the particulars of the coalition government, the persistent security dilemma, and heightened expectations created by his party's manifesto--the extent of his failure as a prime minister was due primarily to the broad strokes of his policy strategy and failures in execution. Displacing military aspects of the US-Japan alliance with “softer” aspirational objectives like a nuclear diplomacy, active climate change diplomacy, and a tentative diplomatic courtship of China was a rough path given the depth and breadth of the US-Japan military and political relationship and the lingering security dilemma in East Asia. This path was made even more treacherous by rhetorical gaffes, poor sequencing, a lenient approach to cabinet management, and his decision to shut out knowledgeable experts in the bureaucracy. As this chapter has sought to demonstrate, a number of changes in Hatoyama's policy mixture or his execution could have done much to prolong the life of his administration, even if the long-term displacement of military aspects of the US alliance seemed out of reach. A true challenge to US primacy in Japanese defense affairs could have only occurred through a deliberate approach that emphasized every available resource of prime ministerial power. Such an approach would no doubt have borrowed much from Koizumi's approach to postal reform.

The impact of Hatoyama's failed approach was significant. Having opened (what then-Defense Secretary Kitazawa called) “Pandora's box” with regard to the Futenma Airbase issue, the DPJ effectively alienated the US alliance managers, Okinawa

Prefecture, and the Japanese public. At a local level, Hatoyama's failure will be felt for a long time to come in Okinawa. Having heightened Okinawan expectations over the base issue, politicians will now find it more difficult to implement the original agreement for the return of Futenma. In the broader sense of security, Hatoyama's failure has pushed the DPJ's policy on defense in many ways closer to that of the LDP. Not only has the DPJ found it necessary to acknowledge the 2006 Henoko agreement and the necessity of maintaining US deterrence in the region, but they have also had to rely more extensively on defense and foreign policy bureaucrats. However, in a more general sense, the declining fortunes of the DPJ and the sting of Hatoyama's failure have created another "drift" similar to the one experienced in the early 1990s prior to Hashimoto's prime ministership. Lacking political energy from the top of the governing pyramid, alliance managers have been left to manage a stagnant status quo. In the most general sense, Hatoyama's failure has also played an important role as a catalyst in another bout of political stagnation and party realignment (though his direct role in this later development is hard to specify).

At the heart of Hatoyama's failure were deficits of insight. Having recognized the deeply entrenched nature of the US role in defense policy, Hatoyama had overestimated the degree to which aspects of the alliance could be displaced gradually over time through piecemeal approaches. One commentator would describe Hatoyama's approach as similar to "donuts." While the many promises of the DPJ had made the policies sweet on the outside, there was very little in the middle for which the political leadership was willing to stand for (Hasegawa, 2010, p. 137-138). Indeed, for all of the

new ideas that Hatoyama had helped to introduce—an East Asian Community, a “close and equal relationship” with the US, and the East China Seas as a “sea of fraternity”—it was hard to find one concrete policy proposal in which Hatoyama was willing to take significant political risks. As Hatoyama made clear in an interview several months later, though he had never said “an alliance without bases” he nevertheless wanted to move in that direction (Ryukyu Shimbun, 2011, February 13; Norimatsu 2011, February 28). Lacking a vision of how to get there, and realizing the strong influence of the US in defense affairs, he opted for a piecemeal, trial-and-error approach. What Hatoyama had not anticipated was the political risks these half-measures would entail.

As Rumelt (2011) has written of “good strategy,” it often makes use of proximate objectives that are not only possible, but that can be accomplished overwhelmingly. As Hayao (1993) and Shinoda’s (2000, 2011) research on the institution of the prime minister demonstrates, because of the precarious position of the prime minister, the prime minister has an extra incentive to find proximate successes to maintain his popular support. Directly following the DPJ’s historic victory, Hatoyama was able to accomplish some important proximate objectives. His administration was able to allow the Special Measures Law authorizing fuel support for coalition forces in the Indian Ocean to expire, replacing this contribution with development assistance in Afghanistan. Hatoyama had accomplished something significant in his first few months in office: he had created an alternative to one Koizumi-era mechanism for alliance support. The Hatoyama administration was also able to promise greater cuts in Green House Gas emissions as a way of demonstrating leadership on climate change diplomacy.

However, following these early successes, Hatoyama allowed himself to be caught up in a policy area (the Futenma issue) where a clear proximate success was nowhere in site. Moreover, as his administration progressed, this issue would consume a great deal of his time and effort, preventing him from pursuing other policy issues⁵⁶.

If Hatoyama had truly hoped to move Futenma out of the prefecture or out of the country, there is no doubt that he had failed in the most fundamental aspect of strategy: creating a bridge between a challenge and a desired end state. As Rumelt (2011) writes, good strategy is surprising at the time, yet simple in retrospect. Bad strategy can seem equally obvious. Caught between the demands of his coalition partners and his own desire for change in defense affairs and the needs of the US-Japan security treaty, Hatoyama substituted muddle-through approach for choice. As a result, his party would lose its coalition partners, damage their prospects for electoral success in the July Upper House elections, alienate the US and Okinawa, and set the stage for longer delays in the relocation of Futenma Airbase. Fourteen years after Hashimoto had made the first steps toward revitalizing the alliance, the US-Japan security relationship was once again set adrift.

⁵⁶ It bears noting that there are authors who attribute Hatoyama's "failure" to a wider failure of Japan's political system, in particular its sensationalist media. As Sakai (2011) argues, Hatoyama's failure had much to do with the constant prodding of newspapers such as *Nikkei*, *Yomiuri*, *Asahi*, and *Sankei*. The constant criticisms of Hatoyama during the Futenma crisis—which the author describes as sensationalist—fed into the larger public relations strategy of the LDP and US alliance managers. He argues that instead of fulfilling their democratic duty to report the news, these newspapers served as part of a larger "US lobby." Sakai points out that articles frequently used words such as "crisis" (*kiki*), "rift" (*kiretsu*), and "cooling" (*reikyakuka*) in reference to the alliance relations (2011, p. 23). For Sakai (2011), the major newspapers were responsible for dealing the Hatoyama administration a death by a thousand cuts (see also, Terashima, 2010, February; Fukushima, 2011, p. 67-69).

Chronology of Key Events: Hatoyama Yukio Administration

- July 29, 2009: DPJ President Hatoyama Yukio states that the MSDF refueling mission in the Indian Ocean will not be extended if the DPJ wins the Aug. 30 election.
- Aug. 6, 2009: DPJ President Hatoyama states that a DPJ government would work closely with the Obama administration on the goal of a nuclear weapon-free world.
- Aug. 9, 2009: DPJ President Hatoyama suggests that a DPJ government would codify Japan's three non-nuclear principles into law.
- Aug. 17, 2009: DPJ President Hatoyama says if elected he will establish an investigative team in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and dispatch members to the U.S. in an attempt to declassify documents regarding U.S. nuclear weapons policy in the 1950s and 1960s.
- Aug. 27, 2009: A translated summary of a journal article by DPJ President Hatoyama appears in the online edition of the New York Times.
- Aug. 30, 2009: The DPJ records a landslide victory in the Lower House election, securing 308 of 480 seats.
- Aug. 31, 2009: DPJ President Hatoyama states that an article outlining his political philosophy is not anti-American.
- Sept. 2, 2009: State Department spokesman Ian Kelly states that the U.S. has no intention of renegotiating the Futenma replacement facility plan or Guam relocation plan with the new Japanese government.
- Sept. 7, 2009: DPJ President Hatoyama delivers an address on climate change and announces a midterm emissions reduction target of 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020.
- Sept. 9, 2009: The DPJ, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the People's New Party (PNP) sign an agreement to form a coalition government which states that it would move towards reexamining the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan to reduce the burden on the residents of Okinawa.
- Sept. 15, 2009: The DPJ elects former party president Ozawa as secretary general.
- Sept. 16, 2009: Hatoyama Yukio is elected prime minister in a special session of the Diet and later introduces his Cabinet.
- Sept. 16, 2009: Defense Minister Kitazawa Toshimi says at his first press conference the Hatoyama government would not extend the MSDF Indian Ocean refueling mission and would discuss the realignment of U.S. forces on Okinawa "based on a realistic view of the situation."
- Sept. 17, 2009: Mainichi Shimbun reports a 77 percent approval rating for the Hatoyama administration.
- Sept. 17, 2009: Foreign Minister Okada orders an investigation of the classified agreements in the 1950s and 1960s between the U.S. and Japan regarding U.S. nuclear policy.
- Sept. 22, 2009: Prime Minister Hatoyama addresses a UN conference on climate change and announces the "Hatoyama Initiative" for Japan to assume a leadership role in bridging the divide between the developed and the developing world.

Sept. 23, 2009: President Obama and Prime Minister Hatoyama meet in New York and discuss the U.S.-Japan relationship, North Korea, Afghanistan, and nuclear nonproliferation.

Sept. 24, 2009: Prime Minister Hatoyama addresses the UN General Assembly and cites global economic recovery, climate change, nonproliferation, development, and his vision for an East Asian Community as foreign policy priorities.

Oct. 7, 2009: FM Okada tells the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan that the Hatoyama administration is considering alternatives to the 2006 realignment for US troops on Okinawa.

Oct. 8, 2009: Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio announces his commitment to follow the 1995 Murayama Statement on history.

Oct. 16, 2009: Hatoyama government postpones decision to fund feasibility study on construction of non-sectarian war memorial.

Oct. 16, 2009: PM Hatoyama suggests he may postpone a decision on whether to accept the existing bilateral agreement on the relocation of US forces on Okinawa until mid-2010.

Oct. 20-21, 2009: US Defense Secretary Robert Gates visits Japan and meets PM Hatoyama, DM Kitazawa, and FM Okada to discuss the realignment plan for US forces in Japan, specifically the relocation of Futenma, and other security issues.

Oct. 22, 2009: PM Hatoyama announces that a decision on the relocation plan for US Marines on Okinawa would not be reached before President Obama's visit to Japan in November.

Oct. 23, 2009: FM Okada states that moving Futenma off of Okinawa is unrealistic and suggests moving its operations to Kadena, another base on the island.

Oct. 27, 2009: DM Kitazawa says the existing agreement to relocate Futenma on Okinawa would not violate the DPJ election pledge to move the facility out of Okinawa or overseas. Both PM Hatoyama and FM Okada later dispute Kitazawa's claim.

Oct. 29, 2009: PM Hatoyama notes during a question and answer session in the Lower House of the Diet that his government will conduct a comprehensive review of the US-Japan alliance including host nation support, the bilateral status of forces agreement, and the realignment plan for US troops in Japan.

Nov. 1, 2009: Kyodo News poll posts a 61 percent approval rating for PM Hatoyama.

Nov. 5, 2009: Assistant Secretary Campbell meets FM Okada in Tokyo to discuss the relocation plan for US Marines on Okinawa.

Nov. 10, 2009: Japan announces a new aid package for Afghanistan of \$5 billion over five years.

Nov. 10, 2009: The US and Japan agree to establish a bilateral working group to discuss the relocation plan for US Marines on Okinawa.

Nov. 13, 2009: President Obama and PM Hatoyama meet in Tokyo to discuss bilateral security relations, Afghanistan, Pakistan, North Korea, nonproliferation, and energy and climate.

Nov. 16, 2009: PM Hatoyama tells reporters there is no point in holding bilateral working group discussions on Okinawa if changes to the agreement are not possible.

Nov. 17, 2009: The bilateral working group on Okinawa convenes its first meeting in Tokyo.

Nov. 19, 2009: In his e-mail magazine *Yuai* Prime Minister Hatoyama stresses his desire for an unwavering relationship of trust with the US and reveals that he asked President Obama to trust him during their meeting on Nov. 13 in Tokyo.

Nov. 23, 2009: Mainichi Shimbun publishes a survey indicating a 64 percent approval rating for PM Hatoyama.

Dec. 3, 2009: Fukushima Mizuho, head of the SDP, says her party might leave the ruling coalition unless PM Hatoyama decides to move Futenma outside Okinawa.

Dec. 7, 2009: A Yomiuri Shimbun poll finds PM Hatoyama's approval rating at 59 percent.

Dec. 8, 2009: FM Okada says the bilateral working group on Okinawa has been suspended.

Dec. 12, 2009: Cabinet Office releases data from a poll conducted in October showing that 78 percent of Japanese harbor positive feelings toward the United States.

Dec. 15, 2009: FM Okada announces the government will put off a decision on the relocation of Futenma. Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano cites the need to consult further with the SDP and PNP. PM Hatoyama denies the decision to delay is irresponsible, stressing the need to consider the feelings of the Okinawan people and says a decision could be reached in a few months.

Dec. 18, 2009: PM Hatoyama's approval rating falls below 50 percent for the first time to 46 percent according to a poll released by Jiji Press.

Dec. 18, 2009: FM Okada expresses doubt about a proposal by the SDP to relocate all US Marines from Okinawa to Guam, citing the potential impact on deterrence.

Dec. 22, 2009: Defense Minister Kitazawa tells reporters that the government would like to resolve the Okinawa base issue by May 2010.

Dec. 26, 2009: PM Hatoyama rules out relocating Futenma to Guam.

Dec. 26, 2009: Kyodo News poll reports PM Hatoyama's approval rating fell 16 percentage points to 47 percent compared to a previous survey in November.

Dec. 29, 2009: FM Okada says that if a better alternative to the relocation plan for Futenma cannot be found the government will proceed with the existing agreement.

Jan. 4, 2010: Prime Minister (PM) Hatoyama Yukio holds a New Year's press conference and stresses the importance of reaching a decision on the relocation of Marine Air Station Futenma.

Jan. 9-10, 2010: Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano Hirofumi visits Okinawa to consider relocation options for Futenma.

Jan. 11, 2010: Yomiuri Shimbun poll reveals a 56 percent approval rating for the Hatoyama Cabinet.

Jan. 14, 2010: In an interview with Reuters, FM Okada dismisses the idea that the Hatoyama government is promoting relations with China at the expense of the alliance with the US.

Jan. 15, 2010: The Special Measures Law authorizing Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) refueling operations in the Indian Ocean expires.

Jan. 18, 2010: The Hatoyama Cabinet posts a 41 percent approval rating in a Kyodo News poll. A Yomiuri poll released the same day lists a 45 percent approval rating with 70 percent saying Ozawa should resign as DPJ secretary general because of an alleged funding scandal.

Jan. 19, 2010: PM Hatoyama and President Obama each issue statements to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the US-Japan Security Treaty. The bilateral Security Consultative Committee (“2+2”) also reaffirms the importance of the US-Japan alliance.

Jan. 24, 2010: Susumu Inamine, an opponent of the relocation plan for Futenma, wins Okinawa’s Nago City mayoral election.

Feb. 16, 2010: PM Hatoyama appoints an advisory board to offer recommendations for the National Defense Program Guidelines to be finalized by the end of 2010.

Feb. 20, 2010: Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano visits Okinawa a second time to consider options for the relocation of Marine Air Station Futenma.

Feb. 28, 2010: The Hatoyama Cabinet’s approval rating stands at 43 percent according to a Nikkei Shimbun poll.

March 9, 2010: A panel of experts submits a report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding confidential agreements reached between Japan and the US in the 1960s on the introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan.

March 17, 2010: PM Hatoyama calls for greater efforts to resolve East China Sea issues in order to make the region a “Sea of Fraternity.”

March 19, 2010: PM Hatoyama instructs his Cabinet to develop specifics on the East Asian Community concept by the end of May.

March 26, 2010: North Korean torpedo sinks the South Korean naval ship *Cheonan*, heightening tensions in the region. As Hatoyama would later state in an interview, the sinking of the *Cheonan* influenced his thinking on the Okinawan base issue.

March 29, 2010: A Nikkei Shimbun poll reports a 36 percent approval rating for the Hatoyama Cabinet.

March 30, 2010: Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirano states during a press conference that the government is working on relocation plans for Futenma within Okinawa Prefecture.

April 2, 2010: Okinawa Gov. Nakaima Hirokazu meets Defense Minister Kitazawa Toshimi in Tokyo and expresses opposition to the relocation of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma within Okinawa prefecture.

April 5, 2010: A survey released by Yomiuri Shimbun posts a 33 percent approval rating for the Hatoyama government and suggests 50 percent of voters do not support any political party. The July 2010 approval rating for the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) stood at 24 percent compared to 16 percent for the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

April 12, 2010: President Obama confers with Prime Minister Hatoyama during a working dinner at the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington. Hatoyama pledges to settle the issue of MCAS Futenma relocation by the end of May.

April 14, 2010: In his Washington Post column *In the Loop*, reporter Al Kamen dubs Prime Minister Hatoyama “the biggest loser” at the Nuclear Security Summit and notes some Obama administration officials consider Hatoyama “hapless” and “increasingly loopy.”

April 24, 2010: The Washington Post reports the Hatoyama government indicated it would broadly accept an agreement reached in 2006 to relocate MCAS Futenma within Okinawa prefecture, citing an April 23 meeting in Tokyo in which Foreign Minister Okada presented a plan to US Ambassador to Japan John Roos.

April 25, 2010: Over 90,000 Okinawans rally to oppose the relocation of MCAS Futenma within the prefecture.

April 28-29, 2010: Japanese media outlets report the Hatoyama government will propose modifications to the 2006 agreement on the relocation of MCAS Futenma including alternate construction methods for a key runway and the transfer of some training functions to Tokunoshima Island.

May 4, 2010: Prime Minister Hatoyama states during a trip to Okinawa that it would be difficult to relocate all Futenma functions off the island, contradicting a previous pledge to do so.

May 13, 2010: Prime Minister Hatoyama suggests his government might not be able to resolve the impasse over Futenma by the end of May as he promised.

May 14, 2010: Jiji News poll shows a 19 percent approval rating for the Hatoyama government with 42 percent of respondents citing a lack of leadership as the proximate cause and 49 percent suggesting he should step down if unable to resolve the Futenma issue by the end of May.

May 23, 2010: Prime Minister Hatoyama visits Okinawa for the second time to apologize to the governor of Okinawa for breaking a pledge to remove MCAS Futenma off Okinawa and explain his decision to largely accept the existing plan adopted in 2006.

May 24, 2010: Prime Minister Hatoyama tells reporters the sinking of a South Korean vessel west of the Korean Peninsula in March factored into his decision to largely accept the existing agreement on the Futenma relocation.

May 25, 2010: Fukushima Mizuho, minister for Consumer Affairs and head of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), visits Okinawa to reiterate her support for removing bases from the prefecture and tells the press she will not approve Prime Minister Hatoyama's relocation plan if presented at a Cabinet meeting.

May 28, 2010: The US-Japan Security Consultative Committee (SCC) issues a joint statement reiterating a commitment to relocate MCAS Futenma.

May 28, 2010: Prime Minister Hatoyama dismisses Consumer Affairs Minister Fukushima from the Cabinet for refusing to support his decision on Futenma relocation.

May 30, 2010: The Social Democratic Party bolts the ruling coalition with the DPJ.

May 30-June 1, 2010: Several Japanese media outlets release public opinion polls with Prime Minister Hatoyama's approval rating falling between 17 and 20 percent and his disapproval rating between 67 and 75 percent.

June 1, 2010: Hatoyama government releases policy statement on his concept of an East Asia Community, saying that US involvement is vital.

June 2, 2010: Prime Minister Hatoyama and DPJ Secretary General Ozawa Ichiro resign.

June 4, 2010: Kan Naoto is elected prime minister.

Adapted from *Comparative Connections Chronologies (2009-2010)* and Yomiuri Seishu (2010) Chronology

CHAPTER 6:
Conclusion: Leadership, Strategy, and Policy Entrepreneurship Reconsidered

Introduction

How have the different political strategies and policy entrepreneurship of prime ministers mattered in post cold war Japanese defense policy and politics? As this chapter concludes, the quality of strategy and entrepreneurial insights at different times looms large over Japanese defense politics. Effective strategy—both its mundane and dramatic variants—has been important not only for the transformation of defense policy and politics, but also, as a component of overall prime ministerial power. These strategies used solid insights, formulated practical proximate goals, and had important coherences in their design. At key moments in the post cold war era, the approaches of both Prime Ministers Hashimoto Ryutaro and Koizumi Junichiro have helped to revitalize the US-Japan strategic relationship and to loosen anti-militarist constraints on military institutions, and have increased Japan’s military capabilities within the one percent of GDP framework. Moreover, these administrations used successful measures in defense (and foreign policy more generally) to help their domestic reform policies. Strategy is equally consequential in its failures. Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio’s approach—underpinned by poor insights, weak coherence, and an inability to locate practical proximate objectives—was unsuccessful in reversing much of the post-Koizumi status quo in defense. In addition, his failures have set the stage for another period (similar to the early 1990s) of policy drift in defense affairs.

This chapter will place the insights from the case study chapters in a comparative context, demonstrating how the approaches of prime ministers differed in the post cold war world, and how this difference has mattered in the trajectory of Japan's defense policy and politics. As this chapter argues, while some important generalizations can be made about what constitutes effective strategy in the context of Japanese politics, it is also important to avoid a myopic approach to strategy. As I will attempt to demonstrate, the universe of effective approaches reaches far beyond what is currently captured by current approaches to defense policy and politics. The chapter will conclude by outlining possible future avenues for the study of competitive strategy and entrepreneurship in Japanese defense policy and politics and beyond.

Political Strategy and Entrepreneurial Insight Matter

As this dissertation has demonstrated, different prime ministers have had different degrees of impact on Japanese defense policy and politics through the quality of their political strategies and entrepreneurial insights. In many cases, the impact of prime ministers has been hard to evaluate because their contributions were largely symbolic and were part of larger dynamic interactions with bureaucrats responsible for defense policy. Nevertheless, prime ministerial approaches have made up an important aspect of Japanese defense politics. In addition, contributions to defense politics are an important aspect of overall prime ministerial power, making contributions in this area important not only for scholars of Japanese defense and foreign relations, but also for scholars of Japanese domestic politics.

Prior studies of leadership have focused on the issue of whether leadership matters. Samuel's (2003) comparative study of Italian and Japanese leadership, for example, examined how leaders in similar contexts influenced their environments through their choices. Other studies have sought to move past whether leadership matters and have looked at components of leadership such as charisma, risk-taking, and dedication to a cause (Maclachlan, 2010; Gaunder, 2007). Certainly, these characteristics of leadership were operative throughout the case studies. An unwillingness to take political risks, for example, was an important reason Hatoyama Yukio was ineffective in the area of defense policy and politics. Charisma was also an important component of Koizumi and Hashimoto's prime ministerial power.

Yet, at the heart of the success or failure of different prime ministers was also the quality of their political strategy, along with the insights that underpinned these strategies. Without close attention to obstacles and resources power collapses. Thus, beyond charisma, dedication, and risk-taking, leaders are also important for their insights and for how they use these insights to formulate action.

One prime minister, Hashimoto Ryutaro, had an important influence on defense policy and politics through his use of conventional resources. He was able to make a difference by utilizing bureaucratic initiatives, inching policies forward, and balancing key stakeholders through nuanced personal diplomacy. In essence, his greatest impact was to legitimize the ongoing work of bureaucrats and to use personal diplomacy and financial incentives to make Japan's revitalized alliance with the US more palatable diplomatically. His key insight was that he could pivot on his successes in revitalizing the

US-Japan strategic relationship to help assuage tensions with China and Okinawa Prefecture.

Another prime minister, Koizumi Junichiro, made a difference through policies that were bolder and more personalized. He was able to utilize political theatrics, top-down initiatives, and personal diplomacy to an extent that few if any prime ministers in Japan's history have ever been able to. His key insight was that in order to stay in power and pursue his cherished goal of postal reform, he would need to pursue bold policies and demonstrate dramatic policy successes. His personal relationship with President Bush and his administration's strong popularity ratings provided a broad umbrella under which to integrate Japan's defense establishment further into US technology and strategy, as well as to set the groundwork for upgrading the Japan Defense Agency to a full ministry.

As both the Hashimoto and Koizumi cases demonstrate, while there is no single model for effective leadership, the underlying elements of good strategy are nevertheless the same: quality insights into constraints and resources, a guiding principle on how to overcome obstacles, and coherent actions based on this guiding principle. In the cases of both Hashimoto and Koizumi, executive leadership was an important element in Japan's greater entrenchment in US strategy and defense technology, its expansion of military capabilities, and the gradual normalization of its use of the military. In addition, defense and foreign policy proved to be an important element of domestic reform. In both cases, skillful alliance management was a precursor to a major domestic reform initiative: for Hashimoto, financial and administrative reform; for Koizumi, postal and economic reform.

Leaders, however, are also important through failures of strategy. As the Hatoyama administration case demonstrates, Hatoyama's desire to dramatically change Japan's defense policy and politics was inhibited by failures of insight and strategy. Beyond criticism of Hatoyama as aloof and disconnected from policy details, Hatoyama's insights—that the US could or should not be challenged directly, that his cabinet should be managed through consensus, and that civilian security initiatives could be used to gradually displace military aspects of the US alliance—proved disastrous for his party's political power and his own efforts to move Futenma Airbase out of Japan. Poor sequencing, his decision to cut experienced bureaucrats out of the policy process, and gaffes throughout his administration exacerbated his failures. Other alternatives were available: the possibility of directly confronting the need for US bases in Japan; an approach that relegated the Futenma issue to a later date (when the DPJ might have consolidated power); or an approach that sacrificed the Futenma issue early on in order to focus on issues that were the core of the DPJ's electoral politics (for instance, issues of livelihood and economic revitalization). Hatoyama's early failures have led to a period of extensive drift in alliance management where once again bureaucrats and politicians have reacted passively to issues as they develop. In the context of Hatoyama's failure, successive DPJ leaders have found themselves reluctantly embracing policies strikingly similar to the LDP, including improving Japan's military capabilities within the one percent of GDP limit and endorsing the 2006 Realignment Roadmap. Thus, Hatoyama's administration has presaged an era of muddle and drift remarkably similar to the period in US-Japan alliance affairs from 1991 to 1996.

Table 6: Evaluating Prime Ministerial Strategy

| Prime Minister | (Independent) Strategy | (Intervening) Context | (Dependent) Policy Accomplishments | Days in Office |
|--------------------|---|---|--|----------------|
| Hashimoto, Ryutaro | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Build on existing resources: SACO, Joint Declaration, Guidelines *Pivot from revitalized alliance to improve relations with Okinawa and China <i>*Key Insight:</i> A revitalized US-Japan relationship can be used as an important resource | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Financial Crisis (Jusen Issue) *Public desire for stronger crisis management *Alleviate tension in US-Japan relationship *Manage tension over Okinawa issue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Stewardship of US-Japan relationship *US-Japan Declaration *Revised US-Japan Guidelines *Base Realignment Agreement *Able to enact Financial and Administrative Reforms *Stabilized relations with Okinawa and China | 931 |
| Koizumi Junichiro | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Emphatically support the US by preempting demands *Use proximate successes to build personal brand <i>*Key Insight:</i> Brand as a maverick needs to be maintained through dramatic accomplishments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *9/11 attacks *US war in Iraq *North Korean nuclear belligerency *Public demand for reform | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *De facto collective defense contributions to the US *Dispatch of JSDF to Iraq *Modernization of Japanese forces *BMD cooperation *Declining relations with China | 1979 |
| Hatoyama Yukio | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Try to displace military aspects of the alliance with softer civilian internationalist approaches: *Soft courtship of China; East Asian Community <i>Key Insight:</i> The US-Japan Security Treaty cannot be challenged directly; thus, trial and error approach to policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *A cabinet and party divided on defense issues *A stalled policy on Futenma *Global Financial Crisis *The inexperience of his party | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Friction with the US *Anger of Okinawa *Rebellion within his own cabinet *Officially voiced the alternative of an East Asian Community | 265 |

Rumelt's (1993, 2011) research on strategy points to the importance of entrepreneurial insight. Successful strategy is usually based on an insight that competitors miss. For Koizumi, that insight was recognition of the public appetite for a prime minister who could demonstrate competency and boldness in overcoming obstacles. For this reason he sought to demonstrate policy acumen in almost any area where a proximate goal seemed within reach. Through the steady accumulation of successes, he was able to maintain his popularity and personal brand, and build resources toward postal reform.

For Hashimoto, his guiding principle was that he could use available bureaucratic resources to revitalize the US-Japan alliance. Through small innovations (the return of Futenma and direct involvement in the Okinawa base issue) he could improve ongoing initiatives, make them more balanced, and then use the revitalized US-Japan strategic relationship as a resource to boost his own prime ministerial power and pivot to improve relations with Okinawa and China. An important insight for Hashimoto was also an understanding of the limits of his resources. He realized that while financial incentives, personal diplomacy, and softened rhetoric could help bring these two important actors closer to Japan, he could not make statements that would undermine progress in the revitalization of the US-Japan alliance.

For Hatoyama, his main insight—that the military aspects of the US-Japan alliance would need to be slowly displaced by civilian internationalist programs and that better relations with regional countries could lessen dependence on the US for security—proved a liability throughout his administration. This insight conditioned mixed messages

to the US and party coalition partners and helped fuel speculation in the media that Hatoyama was weak and indecisive.

Another important element for these prime ministers was the ability to set and accomplish proximate goals. In theory, a good entrepreneurial insight should help identify proximate goals. As Rumelt has written, good proximate goals should not be targets that are overly ambitious, but rather, ones that organizations can reasonably be expected to hit, even overwhelm (2011, p. 106). Moreover, these proximate goals should ultimately contribute to a “strategic” or overall goal. As discussed in Chapter 2, in the setting of Japanese politics, where the position of the prime minister is highly vulnerable to weak popularity ratings, factional infighting, and the tendency of subgovernments to protect their turf, finding good proximate goals to reach, even overwhelm, is the imperative of every prime minister. As each of the cases also demonstrates, secrecy can be an important method of minimizing risk when a prime ministerial initiative is less than certain of success.

In the case of Hashimoto, the proximate goals were conditioned by the exigencies of the moment. The combined traumas of the North Korean nuclear crisis and the rape case in Okinawa had created a sense of crisis in the defense subgovernment. Having inherited the SACO, the Joint Declaration, and the Nye Initiative from alliance bureaucrats, his clear proximate goal was to guide these resources and use them to execute a successful summit with President Clinton. As officials had warned Hashimoto at the time, adding the additional goal of securing the return of Futenma Airbase was a political risk. For this reason, Hashimoto chose to keep negotiations secret until he knew

that he had secured an agreement. Secrecy was important not only because it minimized the fallout in case of failure, but also because it neutralized the centrifugal influences of debate with coalition political parties and members of his own party, and because it guarded against sensationalist coverage in the press.

A close examination of the Koizumi case shows a prime minister with similar skill in pursuing proximate goals. In some instances, Koizumi proved just as cautious as Hashimoto in keeping issues a secret so as not to raise the hopes of the public. For example, Koizumi kept his plans to visit Pyongyang to meet directly with Kim Jong Il secret until the very day of his trip. The secrecy of negotiations was important, not only for maintaining the trust of the North Korean regime, but also for minimizing gossip in the press and debate within the Diet. By the time of the actual trip, the proximate goal of bringing back the five abductees had turned from a remote possibility into a very accomplishable objective (though fears that the North Korean regime might renege on its agreement were palpable). The secrecy of the trip, too, made the trip dramatic in ways that benefited Koizumi's image. For many, the return of the abductees seemed like "Koizumi magic." In reality, the meeting between Koizumi and Kim Jong Il had been carefully orchestrated by secret contacts among top level officials for over a year.

However, Koizumi was purposely less secretive in his approach to both the 2001 Anti-Terror Legislation and his 2003 Iraq Special Measures Legislation. As Kliman (2006) and Shinoda (2007) demonstrate in their studies, open public promises of support for the US were used to force members of his own government to endorse ambitious plans to support the US. The legislation was also designed in ways that ensured that

Koizumi could deliver alliance contributions in ways that avoided the label of “too little, too late” that had accompanied the response to the first Gulf War and that avoided the stigma of merely sending money. However, in both of these measures pains were taken to make sure that the measures did not completely alienate the pacifist Komeito party. Prior consultations with the Komeito were used to ensure that the policies were not overly ambitious in their promises of human contributions through the dispatch of the JSDF.

In the Hatoyama case, too, we find some examples of important proximate successes. In the opening days of his administration, Hatoyama announced his country’s intention to cut the Green House Gas emissions reduction target to 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020. Hatoyama would also announce that Japan would assume a leadership role in bridging the divide between the developed and developing world in combating climate change. In announcing these two goals on the international stage at the UN, Hatoyama was beginning to draw the contours of his “*yuai*” diplomacy. Hatoyama was also successful in his first initiative to displace military contributions to the US-Japan alliance with softer civilian initiatives. In order to soften the blow of his administration’s decision to allow the legislation that enabled the JSDF to assist coalition forces in the Indian Ocean to expire, his administration offered five billion dollars in new development assistance to Afghanistan over five years. On the heels of the DPJ’s historic electoral victory, this early action was met with little protest by US officials. However, from this point on, Hatoyama would struggle to come up with proximate objectives that would demonstrate his ability to lead. His management of the Futenma Airbase issue demonstrates important contrasts with the approaches of the Hashimoto and Koizumi

administrations: one, instead of keeping negotiations with the US over Futenma secret, he allowed the debate over various options on Futenma to become a public debate (with different cabinet members voicing different options); and two, he made the mistake of setting a deadline for resolving the imbroglio (the end of May) without first establishing the means of satisfactorily solving the issue in a way that would demonstrate his competency and leadership. Equally important, Hatoyama also failed to identify other proximate objectives that might demonstrate his success in visible ways. As the Futenma issue dragged on, Hatoyama would have to devote his energies to finding some form of solution (anything) that might allow his administration to save face on the issue. The failure to identify achievable proximate objectives (as Hashimoto and Koizumi had done) was an important reason for Hatoyama's early exit from office.

As Rumelt also writes, an effective strategy should ideally make use of coherent design (2011, p. 124). This insight has proven especially powerful for explaining outcomes in Japanese politics. In situations where there are no ambitious objectives, then loose designs are sufficient. Indeed, most prime ministers have little or no coherent strategy because they are content to oversee the semi-autonomous work of subgovernments. However, the more ambitious the objective, the more coherent the design of the strategy needs to be.

In hindsight coherences may seem more obvious than they were at the time. In the case of Hashimoto, the design of the comprehensive package that would revitalize the alliance was one accomplished mainly through bilateral dialogue between key stakeholders at the bureaucratic level. As Vice Prime Minister and MITI Minister during

the Murayama administration, he would have had a good understanding of these initiatives and their value. These measures were careful to balance support for the US (military realism) with the need to maintain a low posture so as not to threaten China (political realism). His chief innovation was adding the return of Futenma (thus adding a domestic human security component) to the existing elements of that package and adding his own stamp of approval as prime minister. In his pivot to improve relations with Okinawan and China (as well as to elevate relations with Russia and ASEAN), Hashimoto would tread carefully, making sure initiatives to expand Japan's diplomatic portfolio and assuage other partners did not threaten the progress that had been made in revitalizing the alliance. Though Hashimoto would use yen loans to China and economic development money for Okinawa as means of repairing ties, he would continue to speak out on behalf of the US military presence in Japan. To do otherwise would have threatened the work on the Joint Declaration and the revised Joint Guidelines.

If Koizumi's strategy demonstrates the most coherence of any approach in this study, one can attribute this partially to the ambitiousness of his primary political goals: postal reform and his challenge to the influence of the postmasters within his party. As Chapter 4 demonstrates, Koizumi's choice in proximate goals was designed to maximize his image as a confident, can-do prime minister. His appeal to conservatives through the endorsement of an independent Japan with a normal military along with his visits to Yasukuni was tempered by rhetorical endorsements of Japanese anti-militarism, seen in his endorsement (in his own words) of the Murayama apology and his stance that Japan would never again embark on the path to war. His embrace of conservative aspects of

Japanese defense politics coupled with his anti-militarist rhetoric served to maintain his support among conservatives while limiting his alienation of the mainstream Japanese and foreign audience (including the US). His personal and emphatic support of the US, too, created flexibility that allowed him to pursue wider avenues of prime ministerial power. His personal relationship with President Bush, for example, was an important resource that allowed him to pursue diplomacy with North Korea and allowed the abduction issue to be included in the Six Party talks with North Korea.

As for Hatoyama, however, there would seem to be little, if anything that was coherent about his approach. Without outright rejecting the conventional wisdom that Hatoyama had no clear strategy, this dissertation has insisted that the lack of coherence in Hatoyama's approach was conditioned by a central insight: that given its breadth and strength, the current structure of the US-Japan alliance could not be challenged directly. Within this framework, Hatoyama found himself using a trial-and-error approach to find methods of slowly displacing the military aspects of the alliance. His trial-and-error approach would be most conspicuous during negotiations over Futenma. As negotiations dragged on, he found himself in the uncomfortable position of searching for a solution that appeased US officials, members of his cabinet with mainstream tendencies (Foreign Minister Okada Katsuya and Defense Minister Kitazawa Toshimi), a member of his cabinet who was ideologically committed to moving the base out of Okinawa (Fukushima Mizuho), and Okinawa Prefecture, while maintaining at least some of the spirit of his pledge to move Futenma "out of the country, or at least out of the prefecture."

Given the conflicting expectations of the parties involved, a consensus-based approach seemed doomed from the beginning. Different designs were possible: Hatoyama could have opted for early acquiescence to US demands (retaining as much as possible his emphasis on climate change and cooperation on nuclear diplomacy) without the SDP in the coalition; another option was, as Terashima (2011) has argued, to have included the Futenma issue in a comprehensive review of the alliance, backed by a cabinet that understood and supported the scope of his challenge to the US-Japan Security Treaty. The latter approach would have borrowed extensively from Koizumi's own challenge to the postmasters during his administration. Like Koizumi's successful campaign to change Japanese politics by uprooting the influence of the Japanese postmasters, any approach to challenging US influence in Japanese defense would have needed a popular prime minister (a Hatoyama willing to promote his own political brand), cabinet ministers in important positions who shared his policy views and sense of purpose, and an advisory commission and special policy teams in the *kantei* to help turn principles into concrete policies. Most importantly, Hatoyama would have needed a series of proximate policy successes to maintain his popularity ratings. Even with these resources, given the popularity of the US partnership and the long-term relationship between the US and Japanese defense establishments, success would have been anything but certain.

Table 7: Quality of Strategy

| Prime Minister | Guiding Insight | Proximate Goals | Design |
|----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro | <p>Insight 1: Only minor innovations to bureaucratic-level initiatives are needed</p> <p>Insight 2: From a revitalized alliance, measures can be taken to improve relations with China and Okinawa</p> | <p>*Return of Futenma Agreement</p> <p>*Successful summit with President Clinton</p> <p>*Defuse base resistance in Okinawa</p> <p>*Successful summitry with Chinese leaders</p> | <p>*Commitment in “areas surrounding Japan” cannot threaten China (balance military realism and political realism)</p> <p>*Any commitment to maintain US deterrent in Okinawa should help alleviate burden on Okinawa</p> |
| Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro | <p>Insight 1: The US will be an important political partner not only for defense of Japan, but also for reforms.</p> <p>Insights 2: Pursue all opportunities to demonstrate effectiveness in policy and energize non-aligned voters.</p> | <p>*Successful personal relationship with Bush.</p> <p>*2001 Anti-Terror laws; 2003 Iraq Special Legislation.</p> <p>*Trip to Pyongyang to secure release of five abductees.</p> <p>*Pursue trips to Yasukuni Shrine</p> | <p>*Proximate objectives support personal brand as maverick</p> <p>*Emphatic embrace of the US allows flexibility on policy toward North Korea and abduction issue.</p> |
| Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio | <p>Insight 1: The US cannot be challenged directly</p> <p>Insight 2: Displacement of US influence in defense affairs will need to be displaced gradually</p> | <p>*Allow Anti-Terror Legislation to expire; substitute with development assistance.</p> <p>*Attempt to move Futenma “out of the country, or at least out of the prefecture”</p> | <p>*Trial and error approach to Futenma negotiations (low coherence)</p> <p>*Trial and error approach to East Asian Community (low coherence)</p> |

Destabilizing an External/ Internal Capital Model of Leadership, Strategy, and Entrepreneurship

Thick description of a limited number of cases can provide new insights into the nature of leadership, strategy, and entrepreneurship. Instead of creating a highly parsimonious model of prime ministerial strategy--one that boils down success and failure to a few major components--this study has instead developed rich descriptions around thematic elements drawn from literatures on leadership, strategy, and entrepreneurship. Prime ministers were evaluated for: the quality of their insights both at an overall level and at a "tactical level"; their ability to create coherences in their many initiatives; the way they were able to develop focus; their ability to formulate proximate goals that were obtainable; and their ability to use unique or underutilized resources.

Certainly, there were similarities in cases of effective policymaking. Successful approaches frequently used the knowledge and accumulated personal networks of bureaucrats, supplemented bureaucratic initiatives with top-down personal diplomacy, and used a revitalized US Japan strategic relationship as a political resource for a stronger prime ministership. Strong prime ministers have also been opportunistic in finding proximate objectives that can prove their acumen to the public and allow them to snowball one success into another.

Yet, this dissertation has resisted the urge to formalize these elements into a model of effective strategy. There was nothing inevitable about this approach. Shinoda's (2007a) concentric circle model of foreign policy, for example, gives us the foundation for theorizing effective strategy in terms of internal and external capital. In Shinoda's

concentric circle model, foreign policy is pictured as similar to an onion. The general public is pictured as the outermost layer, with interest groups coming next, then opposition parties, followed by coalition parties, the ruling government, and finally the prime minister and his cabinet in the center. In this model, the prime minister can use support from outer layers, such as the general public, interest groups, and even opposition party members to pressure actors within the inner core to accept a policy⁵⁷.

When we look at the three case studies, we might be tempted to suggest that Koizumi was a triumph of “external” capital. His bold policies entertained the public, helped maintain high popularity figures, and allowed him to keep pressure on the inner core to enact his policies. Hashimoto, on the other hand, might be categorized as a triumph of “internal” capital. Leaving aside the boldness of some of his initiatives outside of defense, his successes came largely from his stewardship of conservative policies developed in the inner policymaking circles. By promoting initiatives that had been softened up by bureaucrats, his skillful management allowed him to win some support from the outer core (the public recognized his skillful management of the process). Hatoyama, on the other hand, was someone who was unable to master either internal or external capital to any great degree. Not only did he mismanage affairs with his own party and coalition partners, but he confused the public with mixed messages on his policy objectives.

⁵⁷ It should be noted that Shinoda’s approach itself was highly descriptive and that his model was meant to demonstrate how Koizumi was able to achieve policy success outside of more conventional policymaking approaches.

An approach that highlights these elements misses much of the nuance that was important for good strategy in both the Koizumi and Hashimoto cases. As Shinoda's (2007a) study demonstrates, Koizumi was a master of manipulating public opinion. However, a great deal of his success in defense came at certain points from his ability to use internal capital when such an approach was called for. As Chapter 4 demonstrated, Koizumi had few great options in negotiations over the realignment of US forces in Japan, and more importantly, little political energy to expend on the issue. For this reason, he chose to allow Director General Nukaga and Vice Minister Moriya to deal with the issue at a bureaucratic level. Other elements of Koizumi's success were equally as important but difficult to categorize. Koizumi's annual visits to Yasukuni Shrine, for example, were meant to appease a specific interest group: the Bereaved Family Association (*izokukai*). In Shinoda's model, this group would be placed within the second most outer layer as an interest group. Depending on how you categorize this group, they would either be an important part of external capital or internal capital. However, even if they were categorized as a form of external capital, the visits to Yasukuni could not be categorized purely as an asset for external capital purposes. For most of Koizumi's administration the visits were more unpopular than they were popular. As I have also argued, the pacifist tones in which these visits were often framed were also an important softening mechanism for these visits, creating a limit on the amount of damage he caused to his reputation in the Japanese mainstream and overseas. What was important about these visits was that they helped support a consistent persona: Koizumi was a “maverick” that would not back down when faced with opposition. Thus, his visits to Yasukuni are only

coherently about “external” capital when linked with other high profile actions during his administration.

In the Hashimoto case, we also see details that upset any ambitions to settle him as an exemplar of “internal” capital. In his early interventions into the details of US-Japan alliance diplomacy, Hashimoto would flout the advice of experts from MoFA and the JDA and bring up the thorny issue of Futenma Airbase at the summit with President Clinton at Santa Monica. The decision to reject the advice of internal actors, at least from the beginning, was not part of a grand scheme to win over public support. Instead, the move was made as a gesture to Okinawan Governor Ota with whom Hashimoto was developing an important working relationship. As many authors and critics have pointed out, Okinawan views have long been marginalized in policy discussions. And indeed, Okinawan interests fit uneasily in Shinoda's (2007a) concentric circles: they at once make up important (but marginalized) segments of the general public, interest groups, opposition parties, and on rare occasions coalition partners. They can be described as “external,” but only on rare occasions can they be thought of in terms of “political capital.” Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 3, the exact language Hashimoto used to bring up the Futenma issue was important: he both acknowledged the problem of Futenma Airbase without making a direct demand for negotiations over its return.

Was this an instance of the use of external capital or internal capital?

Instead of answering this question, I have instead chosen to define it as an entrepreneurial moment. As a prime minister who had come up through the LDP system and had been groomed through numerous cabinet posts, Hashimoto understood the

importance of the US relationship and the importance of US armed forces in Japan. However, as a politician, he also understood the limitations of the bureaucracies and bureaucratic thinking, especially their aversion to risk.

Does an external/ internal capital perspective help us understand the failure of Hatoyama Yukio? To an extent, this model might have some utility. Throughout the Hatoyama case, I compared his attempts to displace the influence of the US in Japanese defense affairs as similar to challenging a key stakeholder in a subgovernment. In past instances of success, this has required a public relations strategy that uses popular politics aimed at the general public to pressure actors in the inner core. However, even if Hatoyama had developed a strategy aimed at galvanizing the general public (his external capital), he would have also needed to master elements of internal capital as well. He would have needed to create institutions within government that could harness this popular support, as Koizumi did with his establishment of the Council of Economic and Fiscal Policy (with Takenaka Heizo as his policy guru) for his reforms. What Hatoyama would have needed was a coherent strategy that linked an ambitious public relations strategy with a high level body (an independent commission, for example) tasked with finding an alternative to defense policy as usual.

In short, though a focus on external/ internal capital captures some of the ingredients of success, it is ultimately underspecified in ways similar to theories discussed in Chapter 1.

The devil truly is in the details.

Indeed, as this dissertation has sought to demonstrate, nothing is as vulnerable to the tyranny of context as the study and practice of leadership, strategy, and entrepreneurship.

Reevaluating Major Approaches to Japanese Defense Politics

Throughout the case studies, prior approaches to defense policy and politics were an important resource, pointing to relevant factors and creating connections between data points both within case studies and among the different cases. The case studies and their specific focus on political strategy and policy entrepreneurship, however, also provided opportunities to evaluate the major theoretical approaches.

Re-evaluating Reluctant (or Transitional) Realism. Sensitivity to external threat was a major component in each of the three prime ministerships studied. In two of the case studies (Hashimoto and Koizumi) we saw prime ministers with a similar perspective on the importance of the US-Japan alliance. Both Koizumi and Hashimoto believed that any rift in the US-Japan security relationship would negatively impact regional stability and that pains should be taken to reaffirm, reconstitute, and reinvigorate the alliance. In a sense, there was very little that was “reluctant” about the realism of either Hashimoto or Koizumi. Rather, the “reluctant” aspect was a product of both residual pacifist elements within the Japanese public and governing institutions, and the tendency of different political actors within the Japanese body politic to resist forceful leadership. For the most part, neither the Hashimoto nor the Koizumi case stretch the insights of reluctant/ transitional realist theory (indeed, Kliman (2006) originally included

Koizumi's political acumen as a major "cause" of Japan's newly discovered realism). In addition, the Hatoyama case seems to further confirm the predictions of reluctant realism. Having come to power with strong electoral support, a preference for creating an alternative to the current US-Japan Security Treaty, and policy ideas based on expanding civilian internationalist policies and regional reconciliation, Hatoyama presented the best hope for a tough case against reluctant realism's predictions. And yet, by the end of his administration Hatoyama's agenda for shifting Japan toward a less militarized version of the alliance had all but collapsed. By the end of his administration, he would publicly announce that he had a newfound respect for the important deterrent value of US forces in Japan and that in light of the sinking of the South Korean naval ship the *Cheonan* he would not take actions that would harm US deterrence in the region (see Hatoyama, 2010, June 2; Norimatsu, 2011, February 28). In the language of realism, Hatoyama had been (reluctantly) socialized into the security dilemma. As a result of Hatoyama's policy failures in defense, subsequent DPJ prime ministers have found themselves—also reluctantly—following policies that were more or less the same as their LDP predecessors, including policies that improved Japan's military capabilities within the one percent limit of GDP.

If this dissertation has not presented a refutation of reluctant realism, it has attempted to present a broader framework for explaining its mechanisms. As this dissertation has argued, political strategy—both effective and not—has been an important cause in Japan's defense trajectory. Contextual aspects, such as the *Cheonan* sinking, as well as a sense of threat presented by China and North Korea, were important variables,

but so were very obvious weaknesses in Hatoyama's approach. Hatoyama would later say in an interview some months afterwards that the use of the word "deterrence" had been a "means" or "pretext" (depending on the translation of "*hoben*") for explaining his decision to endorse the original 2006 Henoko plan. In the same interview he would explain that one of the major reasons he could not move the base outside of the prefecture is that his administration had not been well prepared to take up the policy issue prior to coming to office (Ryukyu Shimbun, 2011, February 13; Norimatsu 2011, February 28). As my case study has also demonstrated, failures of strategy could be seen in Hatoyama's basic approach (a gradual approach, a de-linking of Futenma from broader aspects of the US-Japan Security Treaty) and in his execution (poor cabinet management, a self-imposed deadline that made little sense, and the decision to distance himself from bureaucrats with necessary expertise). These failures were at least as important as external threats to Japan's security. In short, an approach that fully conceptualizes the possibilities of strategy and entrepreneurship demonstrates that there was nothing inevitable about Hatoyama's socialization.

Reevaluating the Security Identity Approach. Certainly, Japan's anti-militarist security identity was a major constraint on each of the prime ministers. Constitutional limitations on the use of force as policy, the one percent of GDP limit on defense expenditures, the ban on arms exports, and the three non-nuclear principles all remained in place and helped to shape what was possible for each of the leaders studied. However, the three cases also demonstrate how executive leadership was responsible for the gradual rollback—what Samuels (2007a) has called "salami slicing"—of Japan's anti-militarist

security identity. Policy entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship were major “causes” enabling the persistence of Japan’s anti-militarist security identity. However, these actors were mostly on the margins, extracting costs from violators of the security identity and deterring more aggressive actions in the areas of collective self-defense, constitutional revisions, and rearmament. These groups included Okinawan peace activists, grassroots Article 9 societies, and to a point minority parties such as the Komeito and the SDP. In the Koizumi case study, these groups were an active participant—particularly the Komeito. Koizumi would frequently have to take into account the sentiments of this party, even privileging negotiations with this party before engaging in negotiations with his own party on specifics of defense policy. Entrepreneurship was also evident in the actions of citizen groups that filed suit against Koizumi for his trips to Yasukuni Shrine, arguing that his visits violated the constitutional separation between church and state (Tanaka, 2004a, 2004b). Though these suits did not deter Koizumi in his visits to Yasukuni Shrine, they may have played some small part in deterring future prime ministers. In the Hashimoto case, self-constraint was a major pillar of anti-militarism. Hashimoto, with his tendency to be neither too hot nor too cold in his relationship with different actors, made the decisions to abandon his trips to Yasukuni Shrine after one visit, embrace the Murayama apology (in his own words) and the Asian Women’s Fund, and improve relations with China, even as he revitalized the US-Japan security relationship and broke down the walls between political leaders and the military.

Hatoyama, the prime minister most inclined to aggressively pursue anti-militarist policies, would fall from power before he ever had a chance to implement his

most ambitious anti-militarist policy ideas. These policies included plans for a shrine that would serve as an ideological alternative to Yasukuni Shrine, a new formulation of the Murayama apology, the promulgation of the three non-nuclear principles into law, and concrete proposals to create an East Asian Community (to say nothing of his desire for an alliance structure without bases). The three case studies, however, do suggest a common prognosis for Japan's anti-militarist security identity: anti-militarist institutions that are atrophying, a growing realism among the public (as emphasized by the reluctant realism perspective), and a failure of left-leaning politicians to find innovative approaches (forms of good strategy) that allow them to achieve major breakthroughs in regional reconciliation and demilitarization. Counterfactual analysis suggests that the slow atrophying of Japan's anti-militarism was anything but inevitable. A focus on political strategy and entrepreneurship, for example, points to avenues not taken that could have drastically improved the chances for anti-militarist policies.

In the early days of his administration, when his popularity ratings were still relatively high and when the issue of Futenma was not yet a focal point of policy, Hatoyama could have relegated the issue of Futenma to the backburner, and sought aggressively both to counter domestic nationalism through a new formulation of the Murayama apology backed by a Diet vote and through a proposal for a new shrine that would counter the ideology of Yasukuni. In addition to combating nationalism, an issue Hatoyama had written of as a threat to peace and stability in Asia (Hatoyama, 2009), these initiatives would have been much more achievable proximate goals than a new agreement on Futenma. These initiatives would have had an even greater chance of

success had Hatoyama been able to form a solid relationship with President Obama from the outset of his administration.

Reevaluating Governmental Politics. As Chapters One and Two demonstrated, there are reasons specific to Japanese politics why governmental politics approaches have been useful for explaining policy outcomes. The Japanese political system has a long history of allowing mid-level actors extensive power. These mid-level actors--notably bureaucrats and politicians, but also in some cases civic leaders and business interests--are often part of a dense system of entrenched interests that make grand policy shifts difficult. However, as was seen in the case studies, in the post cold war era there has been a consistent public appetite for politics that can overcome these entrenched interests. These public sentiments were important aspects of reform initiatives during the Hashimoto administration and during the Koizumi administration. As a result of key reforms during the 1990s and early 2000s, the formal strength of the prime minister has never been stronger. In addition, the possibility for a strong “maverick” prime minister has been made possible by the persistence of a large number of voters—consistently over 50 percent—who support neither major party. These nonaligned voters can be a significant political resource for a prime minister who is able to rally their support.

And yet, Japan has still been beset by weak prime ministers unable to make significant policy changes. Against the backdrop of weak political leadership, bureaucrats and other mid-level actors have been left to manage the policy status quo. Indeed, a governmental politics approach provides important intellectual resources for explaining the difficulties Hatoyama faced in renegotiating the Futenma Airbase issue. As someone

unfamiliar with past negotiations over the airbase and little subject matter knowledge on defense issues, Hatoyama faced severe disadvantages in relation to professional defense bureaucrats with intimate knowledge of their subject. He soon allowed himself to become involved in a negotiating framework where outcomes were decided at least partially by technical details related to US defense capabilities and the feasibility of various construction methods.

What this dissertation has tried to point out, however, was that at different stages of the case studies the varying persistence of government politics was conditioned by choice. By failing to incorporate negotiations over Futenma into a larger process of reevaluating the alliance at a political level, Hatoyama allowed himself to get caught up in an ossified negotiation structure with a predefined result. Though Hatoyama at one point barred bureaucrats with past experience negotiating the 2006 Henoko plan from negotiations (replacing them with less experienced bureaucrats), this approach did little to upend the strong influence of mid-level bureaucratic actors. What was missing was a strong political challenge to the status quo in US-Japan security affairs. As soon as Hatoyama accepted that an alternative plan would need to meet with US approval—and thus would need to meet the major condition of maintaining US military standards of operability in the region—the 2006 Henoko plan became all but inevitable.

However, as this dissertation has also demonstrated, the entrepreneurial prime minister does not have to choose governmental politics as an approach to issues. There are alternatives. The case of Koizumi's postal reforms is an important one for scholars of Japanese defense politics because it bears possibilities for future revolutionary

approaches to policy. In short, the use of popular appeal and electoral politics can be an important asset for breaking the monopolies of information and calcified action networks that sometimes appear in bureaucratic politics.

Certainly, there will remain strong barriers to the entrepreneurial prime minister. The foremost of these barriers is the selection process for the prime minister. Since the prime minister is elected by his party, he has often been beholden to faction leaders and other powerful members within the party. Thus, the Japanese prime minister has often spent much of his energy maintaining factional support and appeasing entrenched interests. Even entrepreneurial-minded prime ministers like Hashimoto have had a hard time breaking this mold (see Chapter 3). Party members have little incentive to elect mavericks like Koizumi who threaten these entrenched party interests or have their own agenda. Other barriers to strong prime ministerial power include a media that can be quite sensationalist in its approach to politics. However, the media can be both a liability and strength. For Hatoyama, media scrutiny of his handling of the US-Japan relationship proved a proximate cause of his downfall. For Koizumi, however—someone who was media savvy and sought out chances to improve his brand—a sensationalist media was an important strength. (For Hashimoto, the role of the media was mixed). Finally, prime ministers suffer from the weakness of party cohesion in Japan. In the Japanese political system, political parties tend to have weak ideological cohesion, meaning that in order to implement important policy changes, prime ministers often have to reach outside of the party for support. A major impediment to Hatoyama's ability to formulate a coherent

defense policy was the rather large division in policy preferences in his cabinet, and indeed, his party.

For the most part, this dissertation, however, has found that governmental politics explanations of policymaking can be enriched by understanding the relationship between bureaucratic politics and politics more broadly. As we have seen in several of the case studies, mid-level actors have often desired the intervention of the prime minister. As was seen in the Hashimoto case study, the process of reevaluating the US-Japan alliance that had taken place through bureaucratic initiatives (the combined Nye Initiative, SACO commission, and drafting of the Joint Declaration) meant little without the approval of top leadership. Hashimoto's approval of the process and his personal summitry with President Clinton legitimated the work of alliance bureaucrats. As was seen in the Koizumi case study, it was the special relationship between President Bush and Prime Minister Koizumi that made possible such bureaucratic initiatives as BMD, aggressive alliance contributions in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the negotiations over base realignment. Certainly, these initiatives would not have been possible without the hard work of bureaucrats. But also, they would not have been possible without Koizumi. Without the support of top leadership, bureaucratic initiatives, however inventive, tend to stall or to settle at a kind of lowest common denominator.

The Future of the Study of Strategy, Leadership, and Policy Entrepreneurship in Japanese Politics and Beyond

At the writing of this dissertation, the challenges that Japanese leaders face are substantial. Domestically, leaders find themselves faced with enormous public debt,

questions over the political sustainability of the nuclear power program, a population in decline, and—most significantly—a volatile political situation that features constant party reshuffles, perennial leadership changes, and growing public discontent with politics altogether. On top of these pressing domestic issues are the lingering issues of territorial disputes, growing Chinese power, and historical tensions that disrupt relations with neighboring powers, some—like South Korea—that would otherwise seem like natural allies. In the future, as in the past, leadership will be conspicuous both in its presence and in its absence.

The study of leadership has always been a risky venture for scholars of international relations and the social sciences more generally. As Maclachlan has written about the trouble with studies of leadership:

Leadership matters deeply in political studies, but the social scientist who cares about theory and methodological purity would be well advised not to touch it. As most scholars would agree, the definition, causes, and consequences of political leadership are conditioned by a complicated web of variables ranging from the leader's individual psychological characteristics and his relationship with his political constituency, to the structure of the institutional arena in which he operates (Maclachlan, 2010, p. 4).

This study has attempted to cope with this “complicated web of variables” by focusing on the guiding principles that conditioned different prime ministers' approaches to defense policy and politics. As Rumelt (2011) has argued, at the heart of strategy is a hypothesis about the way the world works that tests the limitations of what is currently known. A dramatic success usually is a clear sign of a new insight regarding how to apply strength to weakness. Dramatic failures are often conditioned by a failure of recognition, and thus, often serve as a challenge for future leaders and social scientists to examine through comparison and counterfactual analysis.

Despite issues of method and purity, there has nevertheless been no decline in the demand for studies of strategy and leadership. In a sense, it is only natural to wonder why some leaders succeed while others fail, why some are able to overcome their circumstances (in reality they are conspiring with them), and why others seem overwhelmed by them. In both the unexpected successes and failures of leaders we find fertile grounds for new research into our understanding of policy complexes. In the study of leadership, strategy, and entrepreneurship we also find the bridge between the practice and study of international politics.

Beyond the study of political strategy, this study has also sought to contribute to the study of policy entrepreneurship. Certainly, entrepreneurship is an important aspect of strategy. Good strategy usually comes from a new insight, a challenging idea that comes from seeing the world differently. As an outsider to defense and foreign policy in general, Koizumi was able to see possibilities in US-Japan relations that few knowledgeable insiders could. These insights came from seeing the alliance from the perspective of a politician fighting for his political life against hostile forces within his own party. Similarly, from his position as a politician, Hashimoto was able to ignore the advice of bureaucrats to pursue negotiations on Futenma Airbase. However, as Chapter 1 discussed, policy entrepreneurs can also influence policy through their deviance. As this dissertation has demonstrated, though prime ministers are outsiders to defense policy and politics, their position at the head of government usually limits the degree to which they can be deviant. Certainly, forms of deviance were on display during the Koizumi administration. A Japanese prime minister singing Elvis songs to a US president is

certainly not a normal state of affairs in US-Japanese relations. Beyond mere diplomatic showmanship, Koizumi also displayed deviance through his annual visits to Yasukuni Shrine, which occurred despite the strong criticisms of regional powers. Given his views on the US Security Treaty, Hatoyama had the most potential to play a deviant role, but in the end proved less risk-accepting than either Koizumi or Hashimoto. From the early days of his administration, when he first tried to minimize the importance of criticisms of the US in his infamous *Voice* article, a great deal of effort was spent closeting his early ideas on the need for a qualitatively different US-Japan relationship. Though at one point he mentioned to his Chinese and South Korean counterparts that he would like to decrease “dependence” on the US for defense, and at one point seemed like he might challenge the US directly over the issue of Futenma Airbase, for the most part Hatoyama did his best to temper his criticisms of the US and to move closer to the mainstream.

As recent events have shown, however, there still exists ample space for deviance in Japanese defense politics. To take one example, the outspoken nationalist, decorated author, and former Governor of Tokyo Ishihara Shintaro, has proven his ability to “stir the pot” of Japanese nationalism time and time again. Despite his often racist public statements, Ishihara has consistently proven a popular candidate for prime minister (for additional biographical information see especially, Samuels, 2003, p. 333-343; Samuels, 2007a, p. 120-122). His most recent initiative has proven the most ambitious. On April 12, 2012, Ishihara began a campaign to have the Tokyo Prefectural government purchase the disputed Senkaku Islands, five uninhabited islands southwest of Okinawa and east of Taiwan. These islands are claimed by both China and Japan and have proven

a consistent sore spot. As reported by MacKinnon (2012, August 14), a website set up to collect money for the Tokyo Prefecture's purchase of the islands collected 17 million dollars in private donations. This move forced the central government to act, spurring Prime Minister Noda Yoshihiko to promise to buy the islands (MacKinnon, 2012, August 14).

The activity of minor parties, grassroots organizations, and protesters has also been significant. SDP head Fukushima Mizuho played a considerable role in the events of the Hatoyama administration. Her threat to leave the coalition if the prime minister did not live up to his campaign pledge to move Futenma Airbase off of Okinawa was a strong factor in preventing Hatoyama from settling on the original Henoko plan early in his administration. Protesters in Okinawa have also done much to upset the implementation of the relocation of Futenma Airbase to the Henoko area of Okinawa, and grassroots Article 9 societies were a major reason why LDP efforts to revise the constitution failed in the mid-2000s. In short, a study of entrepreneurs as plot-foilers, deviants, and risk-takers will enrich our understanding of how Japanese defense politics has been shaped in ways that are counterintuitive to more structurally oriented explanations.

Following the example of this dissertation, future studies may also look to show how differing qualities of leadership can produce above optimal outcomes and suboptimal outcomes in similar contexts. These research studies will work best when they seek to accomplish two goals simultaneously—to interrogate the relevance of different strategies and partnerships within rich descriptions of contexts *and* to use different examples of leadership and entrepreneurship to test the limits of understanding

of those contexts. As Samuels argues, scholars should “do agency” not as a way of challenging the validity of constructing structurally-based explanations, but rather, to make our structurally-based explanations more robust (2003, p. 18). The study of leadership, strategy, and policy entrepreneurship is truly a practical pursuit that can be applied in all areas of social interaction.

No doubt the study of leadership, policy strategy, and policy entrepreneurship will be an important component in our understanding of Japan’s future approach to defense policy and politics (as well as the larger story of how Japan goes about rebuilding itself in the post-March 11, 2011 world). These events take place in a landscape of evolving contexts that will shape Japan’s future. Leaders will have to face dire domestic problems, the most prominent being: economic malaise, growing sovereign debt, demographic decline, and growing discontent with the political status quo. Against this backdrop, China will continue to rise as a significant regional power with growing military, political, and economic dimensions. All of these contexts suggest the potential relevance of political leadership without specifying its content. As has been seen in the years following Koizumi’s resignation, leadership is as conspicuous by its absence as it is by its presence.

Will leaders find new ways to revitalize the US-Japan strategic relationship, continuing to shape its contours and make it relevant to a changing world? Will leaders energize nonaligned voters through dramatic political acts (either confrontation with the US or personal alignment with individual US presidents)? Will politicians—as many have in recent years—neglect the challenge of leadership, instead opting for backroom

deals, party realignments, and muddle-through? Or, are other forms of political entrepreneurship in the making that will radically transform the Japanese state? These are the crucial questions of Japan's political leadership that will help define its defense trajectory in the coming years.

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