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Date: 4 December 2018

MASTER'S THESIS

Opposition Discourse on Security Policy in Japan

Case of the 2015 Legislation for Peace and Security

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UNIVERSITY OF TURKU

Centre for East Asian Studies/Faculty of Social Sciences

TUORILA, EERO: Opposition Discourse on Security Policy in Japan: Case of the 2015 Legislation for Peace and Security

Master's Thesis, 105 p.

East Asian Studies

December 2018

This thesis discusses the opposition discourses surrounding the 2015 Legislation for Peace and Security, with special focus on two parties, the Democratic Party of Japan and the Japan Communist Party. It offers a detailed historical overview of developments in Japan's security policy in the post-World War Two era, showing that the country's policies have undergone evolution over the years, while staying well within the constraints established by Japan's unique Constitution. The thesis then explains how the form and the parties of the opposition have changed over the years, showing how the post-war ideological divisions on security policy have weakened, but not disappeared, after the collapse of the Japan Socialist Party and in the 1990s.

Through an overview of scholarly literature on Japan's security policy, arguing that security policy has changed in response to external circumstances surrounding Japan, while emphasizing the endurance of public opinion and pacifist norms that play important roles in shaping security policy. Afterwards, it explains the background of and reactions to the 2015 Legislation for Peace and Security. Finally, dividing the discourses employed by opposition parliamentarians into several categories, the thesis argues that opposition discourses focus on several points, such as concern over entanglement in US conflicts; the government's justifications for the legislation; perceived rise in risks for Self-Defense Forces service members deploying abroad and possibly to Japan's citizens more widely; the unconstitutionality of the legislation and a lack of public understanding of the legislation. In conclusion, the thesis argues that these discourses will likely continue to form the main thrust of opposition to security legislation in the future and offers a brief comment on the status of parliamentary opposition in late 2018 and the possibility of constitutional revision.

Keywords: security, security policy, political opposition, opposition in Japan, Democratic Party of Japan, Japan Communist Party, parliamentary debate, discourse analysis, Abe Shinzo, Article 9, Japan.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisor, Annamari Konttinen for her comments that helped improve this thesis, and for being a great teacher and supervisor throughout my two-and-a-half years at CEAS.

Thanks to Kitaba Yuri for her immense help in translating the data, and to Alexander Guirakhoo for helping proofread the thesis and for his comments on how to improve certain parts.

Finally, I would like to offer my gratitude to Dr. Sarah Hyde, my academic advisor during my undergraduate studies who sadly passed away last year, for instilling me with an enduring passion for studying Japan and its politics.

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List of abbreviations

DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
JSP	Japan Socialist Party
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
JCP	Japan Communist Party
SDP	Social Democratic Party
JRP	Japan Restoration Party
DSP	Democratic Socialist Party
NFP	New Frontier Party
SDF	Self-Defense Forces
GSDF	Ground Self-Defense Forces
MSDF	Maritime Self-Defense Forces
CLB	Cabinet Legislative Bureau
CSD	Collective self-defense
PKO	Peacekeeping operation
NSS	National Security Strategy
NDPO	National Defense Program Outlines
NDPG	National Defense Program Guidelines

Chapter I: Introduction

The government of Prime Minister Abe Shinzo passed landmark legislation in 2015 that, apart from the myriad of other changes it ushered, marked the first time the post-war Constitution had been reinterpreted to allow Japan the right to use force not solely for its own self-defense. While Japan's security policies have shifted considerably, especially in the post-Cold War era, no previous legislation had taken such a drastic step. Throughout the Cold War, Japan relied upon highly constrained interpretations of its right to use force that were always focused solely on the defense of the country itself. There is, as will be demonstrated in this thesis, disagreement on how consequential recognizing the right to exercise collective self-defense will eventually be. This by itself makes the law and its passage a crucially important area of research. While studies in Japan's security policy are plentiful, few have focused on security policymaking in the Diet, Japan's bicameral national parliament. Even fewer have studied the arguments made by members of the political opposition. It is likely that some analysts see it as a somewhat pointless exercise; after all, what use is the study of opposition arguments when the legislation has already passed and come into force?

Nevertheless, I argue that to understand security policymaking in Japan, it is crucial to not only understand the government view, but also that of the opposition - legislative processes do not exist in a vacuum. All laws are the result of bargaining and negotiating between different political groups with varied views. Studying political views other than the dominant ones can offer important clues as to what some part of a nation's people feels about a piece of government policy. In Japan's case, security policymaking in particular has been an incredibly controversial area of government policy in the post-war

era, owing to the traumatic memories of the devastation caused by World War II and a deep-seated resistance to an idea of Japan using military force to settle political disputes. This has led to a view of Japan as a country whose very identity is closely tied to its renunciation of war.

This history, and the way it has translated into debates in post-war Japan - especially because the divide between those advocating for an expanded ability to use force and those who do not aligns perfectly to the right-left political divide. Here, the latter has traditionally identified itself far closer with Japan's "pacifism" than the former, which makes studying opposition views on security policy in Japan a particularly worthwhile exercise. Thus, it can also tell us what the "status" of the opposition and its arguments are in the twenty-first century, and what it might do in the future. Japan being a democratic country, what the political opposition says and what it argues also offer important clues to what the electorate believes Japan should do for security policy. These are the questions that this thesis seeks to answer.

How this thesis is structured

This thesis focuses on the period between May and September of 2015, when the Diet's special security legislation committees, formed both within the House of Representatives (referred to as the Lower House) and the House of Councilors (referred to as the Upper House) debated the government's legislative proposal, itself based on a 2014 Cabinet decision that set out the goals for the legislation.

Chapter II offers a detailed historical overview of Japan's post-war security policy, starting from the immediate post-war era and ending in the update to United States-Japan Security Guidelines in 2015, while going through the major policy changes of the era. The chapter also points out specific laws and policy issues that were mentioned and

discussed in the 2015 debate on security legislation. This will be referred back to in subsequent chapters. **Chapter III** contains a history of the political opposition in post-war Japan, while explaining how the opposition parties' positions on security policy have evolved, especially in the post-Cold War era. Special attention is paid to the two parties that are central to the analysis of this thesis: The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and what is widely seen as its predecessor, the Japan Socialist Party (JSP); and the Japan Communist Party (JCP), Japan's oldest political party and a staunch supporter of maintaining the country's constitutional status quo. **Chapter IV** is a literature review of the major works on Japanese security and foreign policy. It divides academic literature into three categories, based on what factors the works prioritize in explaining Japan's security policy, and offers an overall view on the factors influencing security policy. **Chapter V** offers a detailed overview of the 2015 security legislation – The Legislation for Peace and Security – and explains what the legislative proposals contained and how they were formulated. The chapter also discusses expert views on the policies themselves, public opinion polling on the legislation and, in closing, summarizes the positions of the different political parties involved in the debates, sans the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the Japan Restoration Party (JRP). **Chapter VI** contains the analysis itself and explanation of the chosen methodology – discourse analysis – for analyzing the speeches of Diet members, divided into four categories. **Chapter VII** contains the conclusion, where conclusions are drawn from the varied discourses employed by the opposition parliamentarians and discusses what these discourses say about the political opposition to security legislation. It also offers some brief comments on the current status of the opposition and on the possibility of constitutional revision in the near future.

Two definitions are important for this thesis. First, as collective self-defense represents a change away from individual self-defense, both terms must be defined. Individual self-

defense refers to a state's right to defend itself from armed attack from another state. This is differentiated from collective self-defense, as the latter refers to a state's right to come to the defense of another country that is under attack. Along with collective security operations – military use of force that is sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council - these are the only three occasions on which states are allowed to use force under international law, as specified in Chapter VII of the UN Charter (United Nations n.d.). Japan adheres to these legal standards just like any other state in the international political system. The reason why collective self-defense was controversial has thus little direct relation to matters of international law and are instead wholly to do with interpretations of what Japan is allowed to do under its constitutional limitations on the use of force.

Japanese names are written in the Japanese form, where the family name comes first, and the first name comes second. Thus, Shigeru Yoshida will be written as Yoshida Shigeru.

Chapter II: Security policy in post-war Japan

No discussion of Japan's post-war security policy is possible without starting with a discussion of the Constitution and its war-renouncing Article Nine, that has unquestionably shaped, constrained and affected Japanese security policy to an immense degree. The Constitution was written and adopted during the seven-year period of US occupation¹ following Japan's devastating defeat in World War II. The full text of the article is as follows:

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 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.

(Cabinet Office)

The text of the Constitution is unique: no other country in the world has a constitution that bans both the use of force and that explicitly forbids the existence of military forces² (Soeya et al. 2011: 5). The Constitution and Article Nine have also never been amended – the procedures for doing so were only established in 2007 - although the latter has undergone reinterpretation over the post-war era (Oros 2015). The process for revision requires, first, a two-third majority in both chambers of the Diet, followed by approval by

¹ Of course, the US occupation in Okinawa lasted far longer, until 1972.

² The Article's wording, however, is not as unique. It is similar to the text of Article One of the Kellogg-Briand pact of 1910 (which Japan, along with most great powers of the time, were signatories to) that sought to outlaw war (Wada 2010).

simple majority in a national referendum. Despite the desires of some politicians to do so, however, constitutional revision has proven to be a political impossibility in the post-war era, for reasons that will be explained later (Soeya et al. 2011: 6). While the effects of Article Nine on policymaking are concrete, it has also affected policy debates by making debates on security policy in Japan revolve, to a great degree, around the constitutionality of specific actions or laws, and not about whether some policy choices are better than others, while discussing whether to revise it or not has become an unavoidable feature of any discussion on Japan's security policy (Tadokoro 2011: 39).

Interpreting the Constitution

Upon the first submission of Article Nine for debate in the Diet, many were concerned that the article bans the use of force, even for self-defense. Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru stated at first that it did so, while noting wryly that Japan had justified every war since 1931 to be in the name of self-defense, suggesting that the law's implications were, at that point, still unclear (Dower 1999: 395). This interpretation would undergo significant change over the years, and not long after the Constitution's adoption in 1947, the government began to construct security policy in a way that would not contravene it. A crucial moment that helped define the early post-war interpretation of Article Nine was the 1950 outbreak of the Korean War in Japan's immediate neighborhood, which the government saw as proving the infeasibility of unarmed neutrality in an evidently volatile security environment. Largely in response, in 1952, the government established the National Police Reserve, which was upgraded to the National Security Forces in the same year. Soon afterwards, some politicians began to see contradictions between the existence of the NSF and the ban on the maintenance of military forces by Article Nine, with the left-wing political opposition in particular arguing that the NSF constituted a military

force (Wada 2010). Yoshida, however, was not keen on resolving this apparent discrepancy through attempting a full revision of the Constitution, despite support for it on the political right. This issue was not solved on the spot, but the same questions would resurface two years later as the NSF was reorganized as the Self-Defense Forces (SDF). The opposition, while unable to stop the legislation creating the SDF, did secure a ban on, for example, the forces acquiring aggressive military hardware (Oros 2008: 61-62).

Since the SDF's creation, it has not been an uncommon occurrence for some to question its existence as contravening if not Article Nine itself, then its spirit. Indeed, while at face value the force's existence seems to be in blatant violation of the article, the question of its legal basis was solved fairly quickly. This legal basis emanated from an interpretation of Article 9 by the Cabinet Legislative Bureau (CLB, *naikaku hosei kyoku*), a civil service-staffed organization within the Cabinet tasked with examining draft versions of laws and regulations along with providing legal advice to the Prime Minister. Re-established in 1952 after it had been dissolved by the occupation authorities in 1947³, the CLB argued that the "use of force" referred exclusively to force used aggressively, and that the wording of the first clause did not explicitly prohibit self-defense (Samuels 2004; *ibid.* 2007: 46). This justification was based on the so-called Ashida amendment, named after committee chairman Ashida Hitoshi, who, he later claimed, had amended the original Occupation-authored provisional version of Article Nine precisely to allow the existence of a force that, if used exclusively for defense, could exist without contradicting the Constitution (Dower 1999: 396). To underline the use of force solely for self-defense, the government specified that the SDF was not allowed to possess offensive weaponry, nor could it be used for anything outside of pure territorial defense (Arase 2007). This

³ According to Samuels (2004), due to the CLB's predecessor (Legislative Bureau, LB), having wielded significant political power in the pre-war era, it quickly become a prime target for the occupation authorities pursuing "democratization."

interpretation also ruled out using the SDF for collective self-defense (hereafter referred to as CSD). As for the issue of “war potential”, the CLB came to interpret it as forbidding only that military capability that exceeded the “minimum necessary level” that was required to protect Japan from attack, an interpretation that would be followed by successive governments (Martin 2007; Samuels 2007: 47). Japan could use force in order to combat an “imminent and illegitimate act of aggression” and when other means have been exhausted, so long as the force is, again, limited to the “minimum necessary level”.

While this interpretation could be seen as solving the legal basis of the SDF, it instead ended up sprouting a myriad of new ones; for one, questions over what constitutes a “minimum necessary level” for self-defense have never been settled. Tellingly, during Diet deliberations at the time, the Minister of Justice admitted that there exist no clear measurements for “war potential”, as this can be defined only in relation to the capabilities of other states (Samuels 2004). The political effect of this question has been to generate endless debate over whether some weapons are inherently offensive or defensive, and the term’s definition remains unsettled to this day (Martin 2007).

1950-60: the birth of the Yoshida Doctrine and the 1955 system

Since the 1950s until the 1990s, Japan’s post-war foreign and security policy was defined by the Yoshida Doctrine – so named after Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru who crafted it. With it, Japan would seek to align itself with the US on global affairs whilst maintaining minimal military capabilities while pouring resources into economic development (Easley 2017). The US was committed to defending Japan as per the countries’ 1951 Mutual Security Assistance Pact, and this gave few practical reasons for Japan to divert its – at the time – scarce resources into building a military, the use of which was highly limited due to the Constitution. Yoshida’s strategy was criticized for

the dependence upon the US that it seemed to lay forth. For the political right, the doctrine was seen as limiting Japan from playing a role in military affairs, while the left saw the commitment to the US as contradicting, if not the Constitution, then the spirit of it (Tadokoro 2011: 41). Additionally, the latter saw siding with the US in the ongoing Cold War as increasing the risk of Japan being drawn into a war with the Communist bloc while inviting unnecessary hostility from the Soviet Union (Hirata 2008). Regardless, by the 1960s, the doctrine was supported by a broad social and political consensus⁴ (Arase 2007, Tadokoro 2011: 40). Indeed, central to the doctrine's survival for such a remarkable long time was that, while it was not ideal to any political group, it represented the only policy palatable to all in the politically highly divisive post-war years. The right wing would be pacified via being in government, while the pacifist left would be contented with government assurances that the government would not pursue constitutional revision (Samuels 2007: 38). The existence of Article Nine squared well with the doctrine. As Yoshida himself saw it, it proved useful in deflecting any attempts by the US to request Japan's participation in international military operations. After all, Japan was merely following the constitution as it was written by the US (ibid. 33).

Politics in post-war Japan experienced the birth of two parties who defined divisions on security policy until the end of the Cold War. In 1955, Japan's two right-wing parties combined to form the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), with two left-wing parties (re-)combining to become the Japan Socialist Party (JSP). The LDP, which few would have known at the time would come to rule the country for most of the post-war era, favored the revision of Article Nine and promoted security co-operation between the US

⁴ This consensus is often referred to as the "Yoshida consensus."

and Japan, while the JSP opposed revision and rejected the US-Japan security relationship, promoting unarmed neutrality (Wada 2010).

Changes to security policy in the 1950s were mostly minor in nature. In 1957, the Cabinet approved Japan's first Basic Policy for National Defense, which confirmed the earlier interpretations of Article Nine made by the CLB, defining Japan's military security policy as being solely for defense, giving birth to the idea of "exclusive defense" (Arase 2007). The two major events of this period were the furor surrounding the 1960 US-Japan Security Treaty, and the near-upending of the government's constitutional interpretations by the "Sunagawa case". The first issue involved the administration of LDP Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke, who sought to challenge the brewing Yoshida consensus. Under his premiership, Japan was able to gain a concession from the US in the 1960 US-Japan Security Treaty negotiations – the treaty that would define the division of duties within the partnership for the 10-year period - by removing the US' role in maintaining internal security in Japan. Another issue that the two reached an agreement on was the "mutual obligation" that each country owed to the other. In return for the US military presence in Japan, the US would commit to defending Japan against attack (Green 2001: 14-15). The treaty's renegotiation created a significant amount of public and political furor that discouraged the LDP from attempting any major revamping of security policy, and after Kishi stepped down as prime minister, his successor, Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato, refocused the party's efforts on economic growth. Conservative arguments for a larger security role for Japan gained little traction in an era where an expanded security role was seen by a significant portion of the public – and by the main opposition party, the JSP - as harkening a return to the time before World War II (Wada 2010). Additionally, to most, Japan's relatively peaceful security environment discouraged

dramatic increases in the defense budget or any major shifts in security policy (Arase 2007, Wada 2010).

The second issue stemmed from protests following a US decision to expand its military base in Sunagawa, on the outskirts of Tokyo (part of modern-day Tachikawa). Seven protesters were arrested and received charges for trespassing, having entered the US base. As part of its initial ruling, the Tokyo District Court found that US military presence in Japan was illegal because it violated the second clause of Article 9 that bans maintaining military force. Such a ruling, if upheld, would have had potentially enormous consequences to the US-Japan security relationship. However, following an appeal from the government, partly thanks to US urging, the case found its way to the Supreme Court, which found that Japan does possess the right to exercise self-defense, while taking no position on whether the Security Treaty (or the SDF) are constitutional, seeing them as political issues, not legal ones (Panton 2010; Wada 2010; Hanssen 2014).⁵ The ruling further stated that courts should only intervene in security policymaking if a legislative proposal was deemed to be “obviously unconstitutional”. As for the US military presence in Japan, the Supreme Court argued that since the forces are not under Japanese command, they cannot be counted as constituting Japanese war potential (Martin 2007). The ruling in the Sunagawa case would solve the potential legal contradictions stemming from Article Nine from the perspective of Japan’s judiciary, making security policy questions the exclusive purview of the government and the legislature.

In 1966, Prime Minister Sato Eisuke restricted the SDF area of operations to cover only the territory of Japan, and in 1967 introduced the Three Non-Nuclear Principles,

⁵ This ruling would have an effect that reverberated all the way to the 2015 CSD debate; as part of the Supreme Court ruling, the Court argued that the Japanese government has the right to take measures that it feels are necessary for defending its existence. The government advisory board on security policy in 2014 would interpret this as a legal seal of approval for allowing CSD (Hanssen 2014; Osaki 2014).

disallowing Japan from producing, possessing or permitting the deployment of nuclear weapons on its territory (Anderson 2016). Two years later, the government interpreted the Constitution as prohibiting attacking for self-defense. The strategy of “exclusive defense” was now replaced by “defensive defense”.

1970s-80s: the “Nixon Shock”

Perhaps the greatest external disturbance to the lull in security policymaking was the US shift in foreign policy, represented by the Guam Doctrine, which urged the US’ Asian allies to shoulder more responsibility for their own defense. For Japan, this meant that the SDF would take primary responsibility for national defense, with the US playing a secondary role. This was achieved through the creation of another defense strategy, “autonomous defense”, that replaced the earlier strategy of “exclusive defense” where the US had still had the primary role in Japan’s national defense (Arase 2007). Some conservatives both in the political and business spheres saw this as an opportunity to begin rebuilding Japan’s military capabilities, spearheaded by Nakasone Yasuhiro, then the head of the Japan Defense Agency, who sought to double the country’s defense budget (Green 2001: 15). This opportunity was soon squashed by the “Nixon shock” of 1972, where the US re-established relations with the People’s Republic of China without informing or consulting Japan beforehand, much to its shock, as Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei scrambled to quickly normalize relations with China (Green 2001: 15). This blew the wind out of the sails of those pushing for rearmament, as Tanaka and Japan’s business community saw a larger Japanese military as presenting a risk for potentially lucrative business opportunities on the continent. Under Tanaka’s premiership, Japan’s security policy remained largely within the contours established by his predecessors. Its most

significant act was clarifying conditions on Japan's right to use force for self-defense,⁶ which could be employed under the following three conditions. First, it required the appearance of a sudden unlawful threat; the lack of alternative (i.e. non-military) means to address the threat; and, finally, that the use of force ought to be limited to the minimum amount of force required (Hughes 2017; Lindgren 2016).

Reductions in US troop numbers in Vietnam and South Korea⁷ under the Nixon and Carter administrations stoked anxieties over what seemed like abandonment in Tokyo (Anderson 2016). In response, Japan released the National Defense Program Outlines (NDPO) in 1976 and began to build up the SDF's capabilities, although spending increases remained modest, with Prime Minister Miki Takeo declaring that defense spending would not go beyond 1 percent of gross national product (Arase 2007). In 1978, Japan began to contribute to the running costs of US bases in Japan. The same year, undergirded by Japanese concern over rising tensions between the US and the Soviet Union, the US and Japan negotiated the 1978 US-Japan Defense Guidelines. While the new guidelines led to increased investments for enhancing Japan's defenses, Japan's role in the partnership remained unchanged, and it would continue to focus solely for the defense of its own territory (Berger 1993, Arase 2007).

The 1980s began with Japan developing its own conception of security that did not limit itself purely to the military sphere (Easley 2017). This concept of "comprehensive security" included ideas such as food, energy, environmental and social security alongside military security, while putting emphasis on diplomacy and foreign aid as tools of Japan's foreign and security policy, through which the country was able to respond to

⁶ It would be these three conditions that the Abe government's cabinet decision would touch upon in 2014.

⁷ The US would reverse the withdrawal of troops from South Korea by the end of the decade, however.

security threats while still answering to its obligations as a member of the global community (Howe 2010, Green 2001: 16). But the 1980s went on as before, with the overall framework of the Yoshida doctrine still intact.

In 1980, committees on defense were first created in the Japanese Diet, and in 1981, the SDF were given a mission to patrol strategically important sea lanes up to 1,000 miles (roughly 1,600 kilometers) from the Japanese archipelago, while similarly taking a greater role in anti-Soviet naval patrols in the Sea of Japan. It was Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro who throughout this period attempted to break the Yoshida consensus, advocating for the country to take a greater role within US military strategy while taking a more assertive stance towards the Soviet Union (Singh 2016). Nakasone also called for Article Nine to be revised and for additional military spending (Katzenstein 1996: 118). His revisionist efforts were however sunk by the LDP's poor showing in the 1983 Lower House elections, after which he was forced to tone down his public comments on security affairs.

At the same time, Japan's economic stature was becoming immense with its GDP tipped to surpass that of the US, while contributing to the international community by becoming the largest provider of official development assistance (ODA). But Japan's economic success created resentment in the US, where Japan was seen as "free-riding" on US security commitments (Arase 2007). Japan's policymakers were concerned that, in response, the US would pressure it to allow the exercise of collective self-defense (hereafter abbreviated as CSD). The CLB would preempt this by coming up with a novel interpretation of constitutional limitations on the exercise of CSD in 1981, arguing that while Japan did possess the right to exercise CSD as a right afforded to all states in the UN Charter, doing so would exceed limitations on the use of force to the minimum necessary level for national defense that was set out by previous interpretations (Pyle

2007: 255). The last decade of the Cold War closed with Japan's security policy continuing as being firmly defined by the Yoshida Doctrine.

The post-Cold War era: The Gulf shock and other security challenges

A combination of outside events in the beginning of the 1990s would prove consequential for Japan's defense policy. Much of this was explained by a combination of US pressure for more burden sharing, the rise of a new crop of conservative politicians advocating for a more muscular security policy and the sudden end of the Cold War, which also led to the relatively rapid breakdown of the Cold War-era political divisions on security policy. The post-war party system of an LDP-led government skirmishing with a JSP-led opposition collapsed in the summer of 1993, leading to a multi-party coalition government, containing every party except the LDP and the JCP. Riven with divisions, the coalition government's only major achievement would become its law revamping the electoral system,⁸ as the coalition collapsed less than a year later. In 1994, the eight-party coalition government was succeeded by a government that brought together two former arch-rivals, the LDP and the JSP, under the premiership of Murayama Tomiichi (Wada 2010). This ushered a breakdown of long-standing post-war era ideological barriers, as a result of which the JSP, and alongside it, most other parties in the Diet, becoming supportive of both the SDF's legality and the US-Japan Security Treaty. This led to the loudest pro-pacifist voices vanishing from the Diet almost overnight (ibid.). Divisions on security policy would now largely lie between those advocating for action on a bilateral, US-Japan basis, and those who stressed the importance of the UN and multilateralism for Japan's security. Security discourse in this era now came to be

⁸ The reform of the electoral system that created 300 single-seat constituencies with 180-seat proportional representation block on top of it would itself prove helpful in allowing parties to win a greater number of seats even if their vote share stayed more or less the same. A practical effect has been that parties tend to attain a two-thirds majority position with more ease than was previously possible (Takao 2007: 30-31).

characterized by an apparent need for Japan to provide an “international contribution”, mostly defined vis-à-vis participation in UN-approved PKOs.

But security policy begun to change even before this realignment, as Japan’s post-war security consensus was greatly shaken as a consequence of the so-called “Gulf shock” of the early 1990s. As the war against Iraq raged in Kuwait, Japan was asked to contribute personnel to the international coalition’s war efforts. Frustrated by fierce public and political opposition (from JCP, JSP and Komeito) and constrained by the CLB’s interpretation of the limits on the Constitution, Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki’s government was unable to pass the 1990 legislation that would have allowed the SDF to aid in the UN-approved operation in Kuwait. Kaifu’s government instead provided 13 billion US dollars to the coalition forces while sending SDF minesweepers into the Persian Gulf after the fighting was already done. The coalition countries responded to this contribution with contempt, deriding it as “checkbook diplomacy” while seeing it as a pitiful contribution coming from a country as globally influential as Japan (Tadokoro 2011: 44, Midford and Scott 2008: 132-134).

Following this initial failure, Kaifu’s successor, Miyazawa Kiichi’s government was able to pass legislation in 1992, through gaining the support of the DSP and Komeito, that allowed the SDF to participate in peacekeeping operations (PKOs) under the International Peace Cooperation Law (Shinoda 2009). The same year, the SDF was dispatched on the forces’ first-ever overseas PKO mission in Cambodia. To pass the law and to make it constitutional, the government added several restrictions. Japan’s peacekeepers would have to follow guidelines, that, among other things, requires there to be a cease-fire in place before the SDF can deploy, with each mission would requiring prior approval by the Diet. While Japan would now be able to send the SDF abroad, they could only do so in places with miniscule risk of having to fight (Shinoda 2009, Midford and Scott 2008:

157, Berger 1993). Additionally, Japan was shaken by the burgeoning of a potential crisis on its doorstep with the beginning of North Korea's nuclear missile development program in 1993 that would lead to the country conducting ballistic missile tests, some of which overflowed Japan.

In response to a perception of a worsening security environment in East Asia, Japan in 1995 renewed its National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG), allowing the SDF to, for the first time, address situations in “areas around Japan” that would directly affect Japan’s security (Arase 2007). Two years later in 1997, the government passed a law allowing the SDF to respond to “contingencies” in the region surrounding Japan by supporting US forces in non-combat roles. The government interpreted that the Constitution did not prevent the SDF from addressing contingencies where non-intervention by Japan might lead to a direct attack on the country (ibid.). In 1999, the Law Ensuring Peace and Security in Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan gave the SDF the legal right to support US “stabilization” operations in East Asia⁹.

2000-2009: The LDP’s rise and fall

The first few years of the 2000s continued the streak of security legislation that began in the 1990s, as the government, for the first time, set up a parliamentary research commission to study the possibility of constitutional revision. In its final report, the commission’s majority opinion, signed by the LDP, Komeito and the DPJ, recommended revision of the second clause of Article Nine in order to explicitly stipulate the right for self-defense and to secure a constitutional basis for the SDF’s existence¹⁰ (Ogawa 2010).

⁹ Interestingly, as noted by Shinoda (2009), the original proposal had no restrictions on geographic scope. The restrictions were only introduced following protestations from Ozawa Ichiro, then-leader of the Liberal Party, who argued that the area should be specified as the “Far East”, similar to the wording of the US-Japan Security Treaty.

¹⁰ The LDP’s own proposal called for clause two to be deleted in its entirety (Ogawa 2010).

Regardless, despite a remarkably high level of public support for constitutional revision in the early 2000s, combined with more and more support for revision in the Diet, the government led by LDP prime minister Koizumi Junichiro never broached the topic of outright revision, choosing instead to argue that its security legislation fell well within the interpreted parameters set by the CLB's interpretation of Article Nine (Arase 2007; Kersten 2011). Meanwhile, Japan would soon fall into another spat with North Korea, following the latter's 2002 admission that it had abducted Japanese citizens in the 1970s (Anderson 2016). The North's confession did little to aid healing the two countries' relations, but the case was used by some conservative politicians in attempts to repudiate post-war Japanese security policy by arguing that post-war passivism¹¹ had left it open to the North's abduction operations (Midford: 2008: 40; Hagström and Hanssen 2015). The government's perception of the North Korean threat meant that it quickly took the top spot in the annual listing of the country's security threats in the Defense White Paper (Hughes 2009).

The political security debate now shifted to discussions regarding the conditions for SDF participation in PKO operations, especially following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001 that shocked Japan: not only did the country lose twenty-four of its citizens in the attack, it was also seen as a demonstration of the vulnerability that any state may have to similar attacks (Weston 2008: 43). The Koizumi government responded rapidly to an attack on its close partner, motivated by not wishing to repeat the embarrassment of the Gulf war a decade earlier, and it moved quickly to enact legislation that would allow the SDF to take part in operations to support its long-time ally (Welch 2011: 23-24). First, it passed a law allowing the deployment of the Maritime SDF (MSDF) to the Indian Ocean to aid in

¹¹ Likely meant as a synonym for pacifism.

refueling US forces fighting in Afghanistan.¹² In order to ensure that the laws passed, the government was forced to make several concessions, largely owing to pressure from Komeito, its coalition partner by, for example, agreeing to limit the SDF to non-combatant roles while adding a two-year sunset clause on the operation itself (Midford and Scott 2008: 136-137). This may have won over Komeito, but not the opposition, who voted against the law, albeit the DPJ would come to support the legislation a few months later (ibid. 138). Apart from deploying the SDF to undertake these operations, the government passed a law that allowed the Japan Coast Guard to open fire on “suspicious” ships that entered Japanese waters, a right it used in 2001, when a Coast Guard ship fired at a North Korean ship, killing 15 of its crew members (Anderson 2016). In 2003, the government passed laws allowing the SDF to take certain extraordinary measures – such as the ability to enter private property – in case of a national emergency. Koizumi had pulled back from a previous attempt at such a law in 2002 following resistance from the DPJ and the rest of the opposition, but in 2003, the law passed with widespread support from the opposition, including the DPJ, who participated in crafting the legislation (Shinoda 2009).

Most controversially, the Koizumi government passed a law in 2003 allowing for the deployment of 5,500 SDF troops to Iraq, marking the first time that Japanese troops have been dispatched to an active conflict zone since World War II (Easley 2017). But passing the legislation to allow the deployment did not come easily. Koizumi’s government not only experienced voices of dissent from within the LDP, but it also had to contend with a public who viewed the operation with overwhelming negativity and would do so

¹² As per a 1997 CLB interpretation of Article Nine the SDF could only provide rear-area support as long as it was not directly tied to combat operations (Wada 2010). Becoming directly tied with combat operations was termed *ittaiika*, or “integration”; as we shall see later, this is a point whose definition generates a significant amount of controversy in Japan.

consistently throughout the deployment (Eldridge and Midford 2008: 237-238, 38-39). To those who opposed the law, the main reason cited was that Iraq was not safe for a deployment, whilst opinion minorities in support of the law saw the dispatch as a necessary part of the “international contribution” that Japan should make (Ishibashi 2007). Opinion polling had thus remained remarkably consistent over the previous decade; while the electorate was open to the idea of Japan participating in international operations, it was nevertheless concerned over possible entanglement in war (ibid.). Apart from facing a consistently negative public opinion majority, the deployment also received no support from the opposition, and the DPJ submitted its own suggestion version of the Iraq bill, where the deployment of the SDF was altogether removed due to the party’s view that the government legislation lacked a clear differentiation between combat and non-combat zones, and thus the deployment might violate Article Nine (Shinoda 2009). The situation that the Koizumi government faced in its battle to legislate was therefore remarkably similar to the one the Abe government would face ten years later. Like the Abe government of 2015, however, the Koizumi government was determined to pass the law, and, receiving no support from the opposition, passed it solely on government votes. However, in an act of political foresightedness, the government delayed the dispatch until after the November 2003 Lower House elections, to keep the issue as far away from the public’s minds as possible. This decision aided in making the economy and social security the main issues on the electorate’s minds as they voted, and the government subsequently cruised to a comfortable victory in the elections, after which the SDF was dispatch was finally given the green light with troops arriving to Iraq in January 2004 (Ishibashi 2007). Much of Koizumi’s success in passing security legislation also derived from the personal popularity he enjoyed: his approval numbers may have fluctuated, but they remained consistently high in comparison to other post-Cold War prime ministers. His popularity

meant that he was he was able to legislate even against public opinion without damaging his approval too much; and as the popularity translated to government seats in the Diet, it gave him the ability to simply bypass the opposition if absolutely necessary (Midford and Scott 2008: 132-133). In addition to the SDF deployments, the Koizumi government issued an update to the NPDG. The 2005 version emphasized a more flexible defensive force, able to respond to and carry out sustained operations in contingencies across the world. While the strategy places great importance on the US as a partner to coordinate operations with, it also presses on Japan to create the ability to operate autonomously in its region (Arase 2007).

But Koizumi's successors could not recreate his success in passing security legislation. This streak would soon come to a halt, however, following Koizumi's retirement in 2006. Koizumi's successor, Prime Minister Abe Shinzo, was known as a staunch advocate of constitutional revision, seeing the Constitution as a foreigner-crafted document which prevented Japan from taking the steps that he saw as necessary in order to secure itself in the twenty-first century (Kersten 2011). To lay the potential groundwork for constitutional revision, Abe's government for the first time passed a law that specified the procedures necessary for changing the Constitution. Abe also appointed a panel of experts to inspect whether the current interpretation of the Constitution is fit for purpose, and whether it should be re-interpreted to allow, for example, the exercise of CSD (Martin 2007). Apart from this, Abe elevated the Japan Defense Agency to ministry status, creating the Ministry of Defense (Kersten 2011). Abe's dreams of constitutional revision were cut short, however, as his term came to a premature end soon after the LDP lost its Upper House majority in the July 2007 election, where Abe had placed constitutional revision front and center of the LDP's electoral platform. Subsequently, Abe resigned the premiership in September, ostensibly for health reasons (Wada 2010, Oros 2015). It

seemed that the moment for constitutional revision that may have existed in the early 2000s had evaporated, with the electorate now concerned with economic issues instead (Oros 2015). Abe's successors fared similarly poorly, as both Fukuda Yasuo and Aso Taro served only a year each, struggling to pass significant legislation through the opposition-controlled Upper House, where the DPJ immediately sought to prevent a renewal of the Koizumi government-initiated Indian Ocean refueling mission while stalling the plans to relocate Futenma air base, much to the annoyance of the US (Oros 2017: 108-109).

2009-2012: The DPJ interlude

Japan experienced a historic political moment in the 2009 HR elections, as the DPJ rode a wave of anti-LDP dissatisfaction to electoral victory. The DPJ did not place security policy issues high on its electoral manifesto, instead choosing to prioritize other issues, such as the economy and government reform (Green 2011, Oros 2015). Still, the few changes the party and its coalition partner, the Social Democratic Party¹³ (SDP), did promise could have proved significant to Japan's post-war security policy had they been enacted. A significant point of departure from previous policy consensus involved the governing coalition's wish to revise the US-Japan Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), with an aim to shift some of the US troop deployments in the country to other locations. The party also sought to create a more autonomous foreign policy in response to the beginning of expected US decline. To do this, the manifesto emphasized the importance of building closer relations with its East Asian neighbors, partly through trying to defuse historical tensions (O'Shea 2014; Oros 2017: 101, 113).

¹³ The party is discussed in more detail on pages 40-41.

But the DPJ's security policies did not end up straying far from the remarkably widespread, cross-party security policy consensus established following the end of the Cold War, despite the party's intentions to the opposite (Oros 2017: 112). Its security policy tracked with the policies established by previous governments, where Japan's security policy posture keeps expanding. In the case of the DPJ, this was well demonstrated by its decisions to open Japan's first overseas military base since World War II in Djibouti and relaxing rules on weapons exports (Kersten 2011, Oros 2015, Kitaoka 2014, Midford 2013, Easley 2017). However, the DPJ's reign was not marked as much by security policymaking as it was by government turmoil, going through three prime ministers in three years. The downfall of the DPJ's first premier, Hatoyama Yukio, was largely precipitated by his inability to negotiate a relocation of the US base in Futenma. The government sought to relocate the base entirely outside of Okinawa, in accordance with the wishes of the locals and the SDP. This goal was met with the unmovable objects of resistance in the US and the citizens of the proposed new location of the base, which was determined to stick to a previous agreement to relocate the base to another, less populated area in Okinawa. US resistance was coupled with a warning of the possible damage to the alliance that Japan's insistence on renegotiating this agreement would cause (Koellner 2015; Green 2011).

Unable to come up with a solution that would please both the US and the electorate, who were, at first, supportive of Hatoyama's efforts, the government announced that it would stick to the previously agreed to relocation plan. In protest, the SDP bolted from the governing coalition, and Hatoyama himself resigned soon afterwards (Koellner 2015). The resulting public anger towards Hatoyama's handling of the issue would cast a cloud of perceived incompetence over his successors' foreign policy decisions, an image that the LDP was more than happy to encourage (Midford 2013). Seeing the fate of his

predecessor, Hatoyama's successor, Kan Naoto made clear his intention to stick to domestic policy issues, and, in any case, the party's loss in the Upper House elections in 2010 meant that it was unable to freely pursue its policy priorities without having to attain some buy-back from the LDP and Komeito (Easley 2017, O'Shea 2014; Oros 2015). But circumstances in Japan's neighborhood ensured that the government could not simply choose to do so. In response to the 2010 Senkaku trawler incident between China and Japan, the 2010 NPDG reflected a growing concern over China's new-found assertiveness, and in the guidelines, Japan's strategic attention was turned towards China, stating that the country must adjust to "new material circumstances" surrounding it (Oros 2015). This change of focus would prove somewhat prescient, as two years later, Japan's relations with China were rattled by crisis once more.

Kan Naoto would eventually step down after passing a raft of legislation related to reconstruction efforts following the 3/11 Triple Disaster in the summer of 2011, to be replaced by Noda Yoshihiko, who would prove to be the last DPJ Prime Minister (Koellner 2015). The immense disaster relief efforts that the SDF and the US undertook together, alongside increased worries over Japan's security vis-à-vis China following the Senkaku trawler incident, drove support for the alliance to an all-time high. These challenges proved to be the final nails to the coffin of attempts to try and renegotiate Japan's relationship with the US, This was further underlined by another flare-up with China in 2012, following the Noda government's decision to nationalize the Senkaku islands, in response to efforts by nationalists instigated by Tokyo governor Ishihara Shintaro to purchase the islands (Hrebener and Haraguchi 2015; Oros 2017: 120). Eventually, as the DPJ started to break apart and the party's approval ratings had entered terminal decline, Noda reached an agreement with the LDP where the latter would help the DPJ government pass a few laws, and, in response, Noda would dissolve the Diet.

Finally, the Diet was dissolved in November, and in the Lower House elections the following month, the DPJ was effectively wiped out by a resurgent LDP led by Abe Shinzo (Oros 2017: 121).

2012 to present: The LDP returns

Japan's security policy has experienced a significant number of changes under Abe's second term in office. Enjoying a majority in both houses of parliament, Abe's government has again placed efforts to seek a further revision Japan's post-war security policy near the center of its policy program. Despite his security agenda being nearly identical to the one promoted during his unsuccessful first term in office, Abe has been able to hold his premiership with few difficulties, with the government having passed the most security-related legislation than any previous government (Hughes 2016, Nakanishi 2015). The discourses employed by the government to justify its legislative activities are nearly identical to those that had emerged two decades earlier, resting on two central pillars; one, that the global and regional security environments Japan faces are increasingly "severe"; and two, that Japan needs to take a greater role in maintaining global stability. What is newer in the Abe government's justifications – as we shall see later in the case of the CSD legislation – is that it has chosen to emphasize the risks posed by crises on the other side of the globe to Japan's security, and the importance for Japan to have the ability to respond to them.

In 2013, the government established the cabinet-level and prime minister-led National Security Council, which was also equipped with its own cross-ministerial secretariat, seeking to streamline and centralize security policy- and decision making under the Prime Minister's Cabinet. Late in the same year, the government passed the Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets, which introduced strict punishments for leaking security-related secrets (Kitaoka 2014). The law was modified slightly to account

for some of the criticisms, but this did little to pacify the opposition; thus, it was passed on government votes alone (Oros 2017: 136). A mere few days later, the government proclaimed Japan's first-ever National Security Strategy (NSS), aimed to guide the direction of Japan's security policy. While the strategy itself contains few surprises,¹⁴ it does lay out the government's new foreign policy strategy, termed the "Proactive Contribution to Peace",¹⁵ which places international co-operation and the idea that Japan must do more globally as its central operating principles. It also characterizes Japan's security environment as being "increasingly severe" (Nakanishi 2015). This concern is similarly reflected in the 2013 NPDG, which shows concern over China's actions in Japan's neighborhood, with the accompanying defense procurement plan setting out the establishment of an amphibious warfare component, tasked with the retaking of remote islands, for the Ground Self-Defense Forces (GSDF) (Hughes 2016). A year later, the government established new guidelines on defense exports, overturning an almost-40-year ban on defense exports (Kitaoka 2014). Finally, the government has published an updated version of the US-Japan Defense Guidelines, released a month prior (April 2015) to the beginning of the Diet debate on CSD. The guidelines feature a greater range of situations in which Japan is allowed to help the US, along with removing all geographical restrictions on alliance cooperation. The guidelines also regularize contact between the two militaries, in that co-operation is not limited only to wartime activities, with coordination to become regularized in peacetime via a new Alliance Coordination Mechanism. Additionally, the guidelines contain a specific mention of CSD, as it sets out

¹⁴ The NSS (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, n.d.) calls for Japan to 1) strengthen deterrence 2) improve the regional security environment through co-operation and by strengthening the US-Japan alliance 3) to improve co-operation multilaterally and with neighbours and important allies 4) "strengthen diplomacy" and rule of law 5) support democratization and "respond to development challenges" and finally 6) strengthen "domestic foundations that supports national security."

¹⁵ Authors including Kitaoka (2014), Kamiya (2014) and Oros (2015) note that the literal Japanese translation is "active pacifism" (*sekkyokuteki heiwashugi*); however, Oros (ibid.) remarks that the government's translation is probably better suited for a foreign audience.

what the two countries ought to do in case an armed attack occurs against a country other than Japan (Hughes 2016; Oros 2017: 163-164).

The story of Japan's security policy, especially in the post-Cold War era, has been one of incremental change, representing a significant shift in the understanding of Japan's successive governments of how to secure the country. Japan's governments now see that it must be able to intervene in possible contingencies that take place near it, and that it needs to contribute more to helping maintain international stability. It is no longer focused solely on the defense of its own territory. Regardless, the Constitution and still creates strong limitations on what the SDF can do, and under what conditions it can be deployed abroad.

Chapter III: The post-war political opposition

Pacifism (*heiwashugi*) in post-war Japan is shaped by a strong sense of victimhood stemming from the country's traumatic experience of World War II and a sense of "never again." The war was disastrous for the country. Three million of its citizens perished as a result, both as soldiers fighting in far-flung corners of Japan's overseas empire and as civilians suffering back home in cities obliterated by US bombing campaigns, with livelihoods destroyed and the economy all but collapsed. It is no surprise that in such circumstances, the political ideologies of fascism and militarism that had driven Japan to disaster were utterly discredited, to be replaced by a twin adherence to democracy and pacifism, seen as the strongest weapons against any possible resurgence of militarism (Oros 2008: 49; Takao 2007: 20). It is this traumatic memory of the war that gave birth to post-war pacifism, and it shapes the long-standing opposition and wariness towards a more militarily assertive Japan to this day. Importantly, these pacifist values find their home among the people, and not necessarily within the country's leaders (Takao 2007: 19-20).

Pacifism in Japan, as far as it manifests itself in politics, tends to be understood as opposition to war, combined with a strong mistrust of the states' right to use military force (Midford 2008: 12-13, 19). For post-war pacifist discourse, the Constitution and Article Nine made Japan into an abnormal and unique state, one that differentiated itself through an aspiration to a higher ideal – a type of pacifist shining city on a hill, acting as an example of the benefits of being a pacifist state for the rest of the world (Berger 1993, Hagström and Hanssen 2015). These views would come to represent a significant contrast between political pacifists on the left and the conservatives on the right, the latter of whom saw the Constitution as a foreign-imposed document that sapped the citizenry of their national pride by not allowing the country to maintain a strong military (Berger 1993;

Curtis 1999: 29). The electorate, meanwhile, would eventually come to favor a security policy that was low both in cost and in risk, by choosing to prioritize non-military means to ensuring Japan's security, while keeping the Constitution untouched (Takao 2007: 27).

From this fundamental divide, some of the policies that the pacifist parties endorsed were vastly different to the route that Japan would eventually take. A position of neutrality in the nascent Cold War combined with unarmed pacifism never reached widespread popularity among the public, especially after the outbreak of the Korean War in Japan's immediate neighborhood (Tadokoro 2011: 42; Oros 2008: 54-55). But the pacifist parties would have a divide amongst themselves, too, regarding what they believed Japan ought to do, hindering their efforts to effectively cooperate against the conservative-led government in the post-war era. The final major divide between the left and the right was in attitudes towards Japan's alliance with the US. The left saw the partnership as a tacit sign of approval for the use or force of another state, thus contravening Japan's spirit of pacifism (Oros 2008: 46). These divisions would endure, becoming representative of the gulf of opinion between parties in the Diet and between the government and the opposition until the end of the Cold War.

The parties of the opposition: JSP and the JCP

With the LDP standing for the conservatives, the political standard-bearers of spirit of pacifism came to be the two major parties of the left, the JCP and the JSP. The former was not created as much as it was reformed following the lifting of wartime bans that had sought to destroy it; the party is, to this day, the oldest political party in Japan, having been formed in 1922. The two leftist parties shared a skepticism of the military and an opposition to the expansion of its role in Japan, a view rooted in their understanding of history that placed the blame for the disastrous war on the feet of Japanese society and

societal structures. To prevent such devastation from taking place in the future, the parties argued, it was necessary to reform Japan along socialist lines (Yuan 2008).

However, that is where the commonalities ended. The JSP and the JCP could never agree on a common platform beyond advocating for defense policy to be based on the “spirit” of the Constitution. Additionally, the JCP held a strong dislike of the US while being ideologically allied to the Soviet-led communist bloc¹⁶ (seeing it as a “force for peace” against the US and its allies). This alliance to the Soviet Union, alongside its opposition of the Emperor system would be seen as too radical by most of the electorate, preventing it from ever reaching widespread popularity¹⁷ (Maeda 2017). The JSP, on the other hand, took a more moderate view, emphasizing neutrality as the best way forward for Japan in the emerging Cold War, and situated itself politically as the guardian of the Constitution (Hyde 2006). It would also come to oppose the existence of the SDF, seeing it as wholly unconstitutional (Ogawa 2010). This vision would remain a vision, however, as apart from the party’s short stint in power in the immediate post-war era, it was never popular enough to dethrone the LDP. The party led two ideologically diverse governments in the 1940s, both of which eventually collapsed. Afterwards, the electorate delivered a strong rebuke of the two government’s efforts, and the party would be relegated to the opposition bench for the remainder of the Cold War era. In response to its losses, the JSP tilted JSP’s leftwards, in order to recoup some of the voters who had switched their allegiance to the JCP (Oros 2008: 56; Kohno 1997). Meanwhile, the JCP tried to widen its support by moderating the party’s militant rhetoric and by signaling openness for a possible coalition

¹⁶ While the JSP was, at first, orientated more towards the Soviet Union, it ended up gravitating more towards Beijing as relations between the two communist powers soured in the late 1950s. However, following disagreements over Beijing’s demands that the party join a united front against both the USSR and the US in 1966, the party decided to stand on its own (Dixon 1972; Berton 2000).

¹⁷ The JCP also suffered from the US occupation authorities’ crackdown on communists as the Cold War took shape (Kohno 1997).

government with the JSP and other parties of the opposition. But lingering concerns over its allegiance to the communist bloc and its earlier (later dropped) goal of establishing a “proletariat dictatorship”,¹⁸ ensured that its efforts had little success. The press and the public remained doubtful of the party’s commitment to democracy, and the JCP would become a perpetual party of the opposition for good (Dixon 1972; Berton 2000).

But sitting in the opposition benches did not mean that the DPJ or the JCP had no power over the government. It was able to exert its power by hastening the downfall of at least two LDP prime ministers in the 1950s, Hatoyama Ichiro and Kishi Nobusuke, owing to the government’s perceived attempts to revise the Constitution and expand Japan’s security role in the US-Japan alliance. In this, the parties were aided by widespread popular outrage over the renewal of the 1951 US-Japan Security Treaty in 1960 that was seen as increasing the chances of Japan becoming entangled in a US conflict in Asia. Additionally, the Kishi government’s method of ramming the legislation through the Diet without proper consultation with the opposition caused significant consternation. In response, Kishi’s successor Ikeda Hayato chose not to broach security policy issues at all in order to keep the conservatives in power, helping avoid the kind of battles the treaty’s renewal had aroused (Panton 2010: 183-184; White 1993). This would prove to be a wise decision: the next time the treaty was renewed in 1970, it aroused little opposition, and the furor surrounding the renewal in 1960 would come to represent the high-water mark of widespread post-war pacifism (Martin 2011; Hirata 2008). The government’s efforts were now firmly focused on economic growth, much to the detriment of the opposition,

¹⁸ To be replaced by a new goal of advocating for “working-class power” in the 1972 Party Congress (Berton 2000).

who were thus deprived of being able to campaign on the potentially most divisive topic in the post-war era.¹⁹

The fierce resistance to the 1960 US-Japan Security Treaty had a splintering effect on the opposition. The more right-wing members of the JSP, disliking what they saw as the party's leftward shift, broke away from the party and reformed as the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP). Thus, the more left-wing factions within the JSP - already emboldened following the swing to the left that had helped the party improve its electoral results - were able to set a reformation of Japan along socialist lines as their ultimate goal (Kohno 1997). The JSP's strengthening ideological adherence to achieving socialism and a position of unarmed neutralism were certainly helpful in creating a strong contrast to the conservative LDP, but subsequent rigidity and uncompromising nature of the JSP's goals also aided in the birth of a parties that swooped in to capture the center ground (ibid.). Thus, whilst the JSP was able to improve its vote shares in the 1950s by moving to the left, in the 1960s, the electorate swung the other way, with more moderate parties such as the DSP and, later, Komeito (formed in 1964) coming to siphon support from the JSP, reversing the upward trend of its support numbers. Meanwhile, although the JSP and JCP continued to oppose the US-Japan Security Treaty and the SDF, public opinion had, by the 1970s, largely come to accept these as indispensable for Japan's security (Takao 2007: 25-26).

The fractioning of the opposition increasingly made defeating the government difficult, as no single party could be counted on to govern instead of the LDP, nor could the ideologically divided parties be counted on to produce a common platform to run on.

¹⁹ A major reason behind the LDP's success in the era up to the 1990s was that it was able to portray itself as a safe pair of hands that could maintain the political stability that underpinned post-war economic miracle. This was greatly valued by an electorate where both workers and executives were enjoying the fruits of growth, and thus had scant interest in pursuing a socialist revolution (White 1993; Maeda 2012; Scheiner 2005: 38).

While the LDP also suffered electorally from the formation of new parties, it was able to sustain its at times wafer-thin majorities through electoral alliances with some of the moderate parties. Additionally, at times, the LDP was able to siphon support from opposition parties' by adopting their more popular policy proposals as its own (White 1993, Hyde 2006). This pattern continued throughout the Cold War. Even when the LDP was at its weakest following a loss of its majority in the 1989 Upper House elections owing to a number of corruption scandals that shook the party, the opposition parties' uncompromising policy positions divisions meant that the parties were not able to unite on a common program and to sweep the LDP out of power (Scheiner 2005: 41). In the following Lower House elections, the opposition was again trounced by the LDP.

The post-Cold War era

Following the end of the Cold War, post-war left-wing pacifism began to crumble. Although this did not mean that the public or the opposition became more open to the use of force, constitutional revision, nor to the idea of Japan starting to play a greater military role. Instead, what changed was that following the Gulf shock, the public gradually came to believe that Japan ought to play a greater role in helping maintain global stability. This is well shown by a shift in opinion polls, where, while opinion majorities were opposed to sending the SDF abroad in the early 1980s, by 1992, this opinion had shifted, with majorities favoring PKOs and the idea of the SDF contributing to international stability starting to appear (Hyde 2009: 87-89). The new-found openness for a greater international role for the SDF combined with a heightened feeling of vulnerability following the beginnings of North Korea's nuclear missile program and missile tests, and in response to what was seen as the growing military power of China. National consciousness regarding security was further shaken by the government's bungled response to the 1995

Kobe earthquake and the Aum Shinrikyo gas attacks (Takao 2007: 27-28). These factors combined to make security legislation less politically controversial and easier to pass than before. The post-war pitting of competing visions for what Japan ought to do vanished, and political polarization begun to weaken. Voters lost their partisan loyalties and became “floating”, or “swing” voters instead, more open to voting for different parties regardless of their political orientations, whilst coming to favor moderate positions over radical ones (White 1993). In reaction, parties would seek to moderate their positions to swoop the center ground. While this reckoning of post-war Japanese politics ended up being relatively minor on the political right²⁰ (with the breaking away and re-merging of various smaller and short-lived political groupings from and back to the LDP), it became far more significant for the political left. Ideals of achieving a socialist (or communist) Japan now seeming anachronistic, the JSP and the JCP began to re-examine whether their political visions were fit for a post-Cold War Japan (ibid.). A position of neutral pacifism seemed to make little sense following the breakdown of the Cold War’s ideological divisions, as did a strong ideological adherence to communism and socialism.

The JSP’s response in this new era would become its downfall. After a tumultuous eight months as the head of an eight-party coalition government, the party joined its archenemy, the LDP, in a coalition government in 1994, with the JSP chairman, Murayama Tomiichi, becoming prime minister. In order to hold onto the post of the premier that the party had not held for nearly half a century, and to reconcile the parties’ differences in opinion on the country’s security affairs, the JSP dropped its long-standing opposition to both the existence of the SDF, arguing that the state ought to follow a “pragmatic” interpretation of the Constitution that allowed self-defense, and the US-Japan Security Treaty (Curtis

²⁰ The LDP did similarly tone down its public support for constitutional revision in the early 1990s to win votes – this would prove to be short-lived, as the future would show (White 1993).

1999: 188-189, 198; Ogawa 2010). While this kept Murayama as prime minister for two years, it alienated the more left-wing constituency to whom these positions were dear (Hyde 2009: 81, 105). The left wing of the party was now upset at this sudden about-face, and with the upcoming creation of a more moderate party on the left that would end up hoovering most of the anti-LDP vote, the JSP was left with little room to move. It experienced an electoral near-wipeout in the 1996 Lower House elections, after which its coalition with the LDP would collapse, and soon afterwards, the party reformed as the Social Democratic Party²¹ (SDP) (Hirata 2008; Hyde 2009: 105; Scheiner 2005: 35). The rebranding did little to help the party's sinking popularity, however. As the SDP, the party has found little electoral success, and, by the 2010s, it was barely holding onto a Diet representation. Its continued survival is largely thanks to a relatively stable base of voters consisting of a handful of prefectural-level trade union organizations who have thrown their support behind the party. The party entered government together with the DPJ in 2009, but the two parties' cooperation was fraught with rifts between their stances on security policy, as the SDP's positions on the US alliance and the Futenma base issue hewed far closer to the positions of the JCP than those of its coalition partner (Ikeda 2017). The largest immediate beneficiary of the JSP's collapse would be the Communists, who were able to Hoover up more former JSP votes than the DPJ in the 1996 Lower House elections. This boost in its electoral results would prove to be short lived, as by 2003, most of the opposition voter base had switched support to the DPJ (Maeda 2017).

²¹ As an interesting anecdote, per Hyde (2009: 55), is that the JSP's English name had already been changed to "SDP" in 1992.

From the opposition to government: Komeito

Whilst Komeito has come to be known as a party of the government since the 1990s, the party was, at its creation, firmly in the pacifist camp. How its positions have evolved can be characterized as opportunistic, as while the party has sought to play a constraining position on the LDP's more revisionist tendencies, it has consistently chosen to remain in government instead of risking a collapse of the governing coalition and thus its own downfall from power.

The party was founded in 1964 as the political wing of the Buddhist religious organization Soka Gakkai, although the two organizations severed their official links in 1970. Its representation in the Diet has been constant since its founding, thanks to the reliable base of voters it possesses among Soka Gakkai membership, who make up around half of the party's voters. What differentiates Komeito from the JSP and the JCP, it has never attempted to campaign as a party that would dethrone the LDP (Lindgren 2016). Instead, it has largely exerted its power by joining governing coalitions by first merging with (and later separating itself from) Ozawa Ichiro's New Frontier Party (NFP) to enter government in 1994 or, since 1999, by becoming a regular member of the LDP's governing coalitions (Scheiner 2005: 50-51). For the LDP, Komeito's stable base of voters offers a reliable junior partner to govern with, whilst simultaneously helping keep both parties in power by Komeito asking its base to vote for LDP candidates in districts where the party is not running its own candidates (Oros 2017: 130). During the three-year stint in the opposition between 2009 and 2012, Komeito sought to situate itself as a partner for cooperation with the government of the time on issues of mutual interest – albeit in this case, mostly unsuccessfully (Klein 2013).

As stated before, Komeito's stance on security policy on its foundation was pacifist; largely owing to its religious roots, opposing the US-Japan Security Treaty and regarding

the SDF as unconstitutional. But this pacifism never translated into advocacy for a position of unarmed, neutral pacifism, seeing the right to self-defense as an inherent right that it did not disagree with. Komeito began to shift its positions on security issues in the 1970s, as the party first recognized the legality of the SDF, and later coming to support the US-Japan Security Treaty, arguing that while the latter was not ideal, it would maintain it “for the time being” (Hrebendar 2000: 195-196). This was largely because the party saw its previous positions as a hindrance to joining a governing coalition with the LDP and, possibly, other parties. By the 1990s, it would (after initial resistance) support the UNPKO bill (1992), with its support for the bill crucial to ensure its passing. To reconcile its pacifist stance with approving the dispatch of SDF peacekeepers abroad, Komeito Diet members argued that the maintenance of peace was important not just in Japan, but globally as well, seeing Japan’s pacifism as being in line with the spirit of the UN Charter. Komeito would eventually extend similar justifications for the Iraq deployment, where its members referred to specific UN resolutions calling for humanitarian aid for Iraq as a basis for the SDF’s deployment. As for constitutional revision, the party has come to express openness to adding a clause allowing for self-defense and the existence of the SDF, but nothing more (Akimoto 2013).

The DPJ as a party of the opposition

Dissatisfaction towards the JSP’s alliance with the LDP led to a breakaway group of JSP members, together with Sakigake, and, later, (most of) the Cold War era moderate leftist party, the DSP, coalescing into a new grouping in 1996 under the leadership of Yukio Hatoyama. The new party, taking on the name of Democratic Party of Japan, would soon gain an influx of new members following the collapse of the NFP, and took on the mantle of the main opposition party by the end of 1998 (Ikeda 2017; Curtis 1999: 193-194). Its

foundational principle was an idea that Japan's governing regime must be overcome through achieving deep-reaching reform, especially among the bureaucracy, but also among what it saw as Japan's protected industries that were dragging down its economic dynamism (Koellner 2015). As the party's ranks were swelled by an influx of members from the more conservative NFP and, later, by some former members of the LDP, the DPJ started to shed its socialist roots and inched slowly towards the political center. The amalgamation between multiple parties with varied views on security policy would lead the party leadership to refrain from forcing its members to vote a certain way on legislation that may have proven divisive to its members, creating difficulties in trying to craft a common position on security issues (Hyde 2009: 98-99). This process was further hastened as many ex-JSP members of the Diet that formed the party's original core lost their re-election battles and decided not to run again (Weiner 2011).

The party did eventually form a position on constitutional revision, endorsing the Lower House constitutional commission's 2005 report that advocated for revision of the second clause of Article Nine, demonstrating how the party's socialist roots had undergone a significant shift over the party's less than ten years of existence (Ogawa 2010). The party's own 2006 recommendations sought to clarify what it saw as vague aspects of the Constitution, by explicitly making it clear that peacekeeping operations were legally permissible. This aspect of emphasizing multilateralism and working through the UN was an important aspect in the DPJ's security policy platform, and, stemming from its origins as a hodgepodge of varying political ideologies, arguably one of the few security issues the party could reach a consensus on (Koellner 2015). Its foreign and security policy agenda also included a continuing a ban on exercise of CSD, albeit not all of the party's members were fully on board with this position. The DPJ sought to differentiate its own security policy from the LDP by standing in opposition to both the Iraq deployment and

the dispatch of the MSDF on anti-piracy operations (Martin 2011). But to many in the electorate, the differences between the LDP and the DPJ seemed too minor to establish a meaningful break from government policy, and voters who may have found the government's Iraq legislation distasteful were unable to find strong opposition to the legislation from the ranks of the DPJ (Ishibashi 2007). Additionally, as discussed earlier, Koizumi's perceived status as an outsider and his critique of the LDP took the wind out of the DPJ's sails, as Koizumi effectively sidelined the opposition by acting as the LDP's in-house opposition party (Hyde 2006). Koizumi was also not afraid to adopt an effective method from the LDP's Cold War-era toolkit, as his government appropriated some of the more popular parts of the DPJ's electoral platform (Koellner 2015).

Following Koizumi's retirement in 2006 and Abe's poor performance as his successor, the DPJ was able to defeat the LDP in the 2007 Upper House elections, making it possible to block or influence government policy (together with the Social Democrats and the JCP), which it was able to do to a limited degree. Withstanding a corruption scandal in 2008 that felled its then-leader Ozawa Ichiro, the party was led to victory in the 2009 Lower House elections by Hatoyama Yukio (Koellner 2015). Apart from its platform that focused largely on government reform, it advocated for withdrawal of MSDF vessels from refueling operations in the Indian Ocean, and, fatefully for Hatoyama, moving the US Marine base away from Futenma in Okinawa (Martin 2011). The DPJ's disastrous run in government (as detailed earlier) was ended by its calamitous electoral outcome in the 2012 Lower House elections, returning the party to the opposition bench yet again. By the time of the Abe government's security law proposals, the topic of this thesis, the party had increased its representation to 73 seats, taking on the mantle of the biggest opposition party (Pekkanen and Reed 2018). Still, this growth was not enough to mask the fact that the party's support levels had utterly collapsed, and the party suffered

immensely from an image of incompetence. This made it impossible to prevent the passage of the 2015 security legislation. The government coalition, equipped with a two-thirds majority in both the Lower House and the Upper House were effectively free to pass legislation at will, wholly unconstrained by the opposition.

Political pacifism in the post-Cold War era has reconstituted itself around several central themes. These include a resistance to deeper co-operation with the US, fearful of becoming entangled in a US war, while placing emphasis on building better ties with Japan's Asian neighbors. In this, pacifists believe that Japan should recognize its responsibility as the primary aggressor in the Second World War. Keeping the Constitution untouched has remained a central position throughout the era (Hirata 2008). The parties today that most closely share these goals, as far as is evident through their policy platforms, are the JCP and the SDP, whilst the DPJ has tended to take more moderate positions²².

²² The party championed refocusing more on Asia, was willing to confront the US over the base issue and avoided visiting the Yasukuni shrine that tends to anger Japan's close neighbours. At the same time, it endorsed constitutional revision (although the party was internally not wholly united on this matter) and its policy track record was mostly in line with the LDP-set consensus view (Koellner 2015; Hirata 2008).

Chapter IV: Debates on Japanese security policy

Japan's security policy represents, in many ways, an enigma. In the post-war era, it can be simultaneously characterized as more pacifist and independent than the US would like, more pacifist than Japan's conservatives would prefer, and less militaristic than the domestic opposition and international observers fear (Easley 2017). This chapter will discuss the main theoretical frames that scholars have proposed for explaining Japan's security policy and the changes in it. Works have been divided into several categories based on what factors the writers prioritize in their work. Nevertheless, it must be noted that this division is not as clear-cut as may seem, as most academics tend to incorporate factors from multiple theoretical frameworks into their own perspectives (Oros 2008: 35).

The terms "normalization" and "remilitarization" are common within security debates, employed to explain change from the current state, described as either "pacifist" or, simply, "abnormal." The definition of this "normalness" is, however, elusive, and there really is no agreed upon definition what a "normal" Japan would look like; to begin with, one would need to define what being a normal state means in the first place. Howe (2010) argues that the term is intrinsically tied to a Western understanding of "proper" state behavior, and that Japan's perceived "abnormality" – that is, the unique constitutional limitations on Japan's ability to use force - is therefore a deviation from a standard created by the West.²³ Further, Katzenstein and Okawara (2001: 33-34) argue that regarding the views of right-wing nationalist conservatives as "normal" means arguing that such politics are somehow "natural" to Japan. Regardless, the term has such a long history within Japan, that in Hirata's (2008) taxonomy of participants in the domestic security debate, one group is named "normalists".²⁴ "Normality", in this sense, is not necessarily a

²³ For a fuller critique of Western international relations theories and how they translate to a Japanese and Asian context, see Katzenstein and Sil (2008: 268-274).

²⁴ The term was coined by former LDP secretary general (later DPJ secretary general) and political heavyweight Ichiro Ozawa in his 1993 book "Blueprint for a New Japan" (Welch 2011: 34). Its origins

reference to a certain type of right-wing conservatism that was widespread in Japan during the pre-war era. “Normality” is instead defined as the ability of the state to defend its interests in the sphere of military power with few limits, which is seen as part and parcel of state behavior. Japan is seen as deviating from this standard, as it does not proactively seek to employ military power in this manner due to restrictions created by Article Nine, despite possessing a significant amount of power in the economic sphere. The challenge in this formulation, however, is answering the question of why Japan has not amended its constitution if it was widely felt to be a point of unacceptable abnormality, a point that Soeya et al (2011: 8-9) concede.

External factors: the international environment

The first group of scholars, who I term the “realists”, argue that Japan’s security policy is, by nature, reactive, in that it tends to shift as a reaction to perceived change or changes in its security environment, with authors sometimes characterizing Japan’s security policy changes as “adjustments” to better suit what it sees as its security needs (Nakanishi 2015: 9). This naturally focuses most academic work on explaining change in Japanese security policy as deriving due to specific external circumstances. Japan is characterized as a pragmatic or “rational” state, with its leaders’ thinking closely attuned with the realist school of thought in international relations²⁵ (Samuels 2007: 189), while Green (2001: 6) sees that Japan’s leaders have become realist merely as a reaction to its security

can be traced back to prime minister Nakasone Yasuhiro, who advocated for Japan to become a “conventional nation” a decade earlier (Samuels 2007: 35). Nevertheless, it would be Ozawa’s term that would stick.

²⁵ Realism is a school of thought in international relations theory with many subsects. Four aspects, however, are common across all of them: 1) politics takes place between cohesive (through nationalism) groups (usually but not always states) 2) political actions are driven mainly by self-interest 3) as no global government exists, the international system is anarchic 4) the combination of groups and self-interest in an anarchical environment means international politics is dominated by power politics and state survival (Wohlforth 2008: 133). Realist policy prescriptions tend to promote states seeking their own interests.

challenges. Domestic politics does not hold much power in explaining Japan's security behavior: as Pyle (2007: 21) argues, domestic politics could always be counted on to fall in line with its leaders' visions in foreign and security policy. Additionally, security challenges have contributed greatly to the fraying of idealism and pacifism in foreign policy, to be replaced by a reassertion of Japan's power out of necessity, whilst the Constitution is seen as "handicapping" Japan from becoming a normal nation (Green 2001: 7-8; Tadokoro 2011: 38).

The most commonly cited external factors that necessitate a reaction are the rise of China and North Korea's nuclear weapons development program. If North Korea is seen as creating a more imminent security threat, the rise of China is seen as creating a more serious challenge in the long-term. This is helped along by a new crop of politicians who believe that Japan cannot compete with China purely in the economic sphere, and that it therefore needs to engage in balancing – i.e., bolstering its defenses while forging closer international ties with regional allies - against an increasingly powerful and assertive China (Hughes 2016, Hagström and Jerdén 2010). But politicians are not the only one who are concerned, as the citizens themselves have become more worried about Japan's neighborhood, especially following the North Korean missile crisis and the Taiwan Strait crisis, both in the 1990s (Green 2001: 4-6, Gronning 2014).

Additionally, throughout the post-war era, key revisions to security policies have coincided with US demands for additional burden-sharing, and it is evident that Japan's continued reliance on US security guarantees has led to the latter wielding a large, if often indirect, influence on Japan's development of security policy. The US played a role in pushing for Japan to create the SDF in the 1950s and for demanding that Japan do more during the Gulf War of the 1990s. Fears of a repeat of "checkbook diplomacy" and a great willingness to please its close partner were also behind the government's deployment to

Iraq in 2004, and the eventual abandonment of the Futenma relocation plan in 2009 (Miyagi 2009; O’Shea 2014). But Japan’s close partnership with the US has created another factor that looms large in policy discussions: its fear of abandonment or entrapment by its stronger ally (Green 2011). This dual concern is a common thread throughout Japanese security thinking vis-à-vis the US in the post-war era. In terms of abandonment, Japan is concerned over whether the US would truly be willing to commit its troops to defending the Senkaku islands, while fears of entrapment have revolved around the reasonably realistic scenarios of a conflict in Taiwan or South Korea leading to Japan becoming dragged into the war, or, at the very least, being targeted through hosting important US military installations (Oros 2017: 160-162).

Domestic political factors

The second group of scholars tends to explain Japan’s security behavior through examining the internal political dynamics within the country. These authors do not dismiss external factors; indeed, most acknowledge the rise of China and North Korea’s nuclear program as clear reasons that motivate Japan to alter its security behavior but, for a variety of reasons, choose to emphasize internal factors. One perspective involves looking at the decline of political factions that advocated for continuing a more constrained security posture. As an example, those advocating for²⁶ an economics-first foreign policy that stressed the need to keep Japan’s military purely for self-defense and not for, for example, peacekeeping, were discredited following the disdain shown towards Japan’s “checkbook diplomacy” in the 1990s and faded in importance after ending up on the losing side of internal LDP power struggles (Hirata 2008). These individuals were

²⁶ Hirata (2008) terms this group the “mercantilists”, whilst Singh (2016) describes them as “pragmatists” seeing them as representing the mainstream conservative consensus on security policy that took shape in the early-post war era.

then replaced by members of the more revisionist factions within the LDP, such as Koizumi Junichiro, Abe Shinzo and Aso Taro who would eventually come to hold the office of the Prime Minister (Singh 2016); Arase (2007) adds the rise of such politicians alongside external factors such as US pressure and security challenges. Singh (2016) argues that these politicians would later reap the benefits of Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro's administrative reforms that helped increase the power of the prime minister in policymaking at the expense of the bureaucracy, who had tended to dominate security policy for most of the Cold War era. Some focus (Welch 2011: 34-47) instead on individuals that influence policy and policy debates to a great degree, such as how the personal popularity of Koizumi Junichiro helped him in surviving the passage of contentious security legislation (Howe 2010), or how a politician such as Ozawa Ichiro²⁷ was able to affect security policy through his work as an author and as a politician with a colorful career, having served as the secretary general of both the LDP and the DPJ (Welch 2011: 34-47).

Other authors focus on internal factors to explain the enduring strength of Article Nine, arguably the most powerful single factor shaping Japan's security policy, with Soeya et al. (2011: 4) arguing that revision was not possible in the post-war era due to bureaucratic and governmental constraints. Additionally, the power the 1955 system gave to opposition parties in the legislative process created significant difficulties for any attempt to pass controversial legislation. More simply, perhaps, the electorate was satisfied with the Constitutional status quo, thus making the process of attempting a revision not only too difficult, but politically pointless (Wada 2010). The method for legislating in the Diet is highly time-sensitive, leaving the process wide open to filibusters and other delaying tactics by the opposition. Such constraints have helped engender a system where the party

²⁷ See page 47, footnote 21.

in government tends to avoid ramming laws through the Diet, preferring instead to consult and court the opposition to ensure smoother passage through the two chambers (Shinoda 2009). Nevertheless, Japan's security policy has changed considerably regardless of the lack of constitutional revision, and it is possible politicians simply did not consider revision worth the political effort involved when change could be achieved without entering into the politically fraught process of revision (Kersten 2011).

One common perspective involves the study of opinion polls, and what shifts in public opinion signal about the attitudes of the electorate on security policy. Public opinion matters, and the attitudes of the electorate towards the Constitution and the tasks of the SDF have helped determine the direction of the country via their elected representatives, and, through that, help explain Japan's foreign and security policy positions (Tadokoro 2011: 39). Political parties – including the LDP – are naturally subject to public opinion pressures that can constrain legislative efforts and policy choices (Midford and Scott 2008: 126). Further, previous convention suggests that governments in Japan build policy that in a way seeks to avoid provoking the political opposition and public opinion majorities to turn against them (ibid. 129). In no other policy area is this effect as visible as in security policy, owing to it being seen as a contentious topic for policymakers.

Opinion polling in Japan has shown some shifting in response both to a perception of vulnerability to security threats and to calls by politicians to respond to potential threats. Opinion polls tend to suggest that the electorate has come to support Japan's investments in bolstering its defenses²⁸ and in believing in a more proactive role for the SDF (in disaster relief and peacekeeping, for example). Nevertheless, the electorate remains

²⁸ Midford (2008: 13-14) calls Japan's security policy stance "defensive realism", a subclass of "realism." It posits that the security of a state is best defended by investing in defense and thus deterrence, over its opposite, "offensive realism", where offensive military capability is seen as the best insurance for states' safety (ibid.).

skeptical towards the use of military force in pursuit of foreign policy goals and increased military spending. Simply put, while a feeling of vulnerability translated into support for Japan to contribute more to international security, it has not meant that the electorate has come to believe in a more muscular security posture (Vosse 2014; Midford 2008: 13-17; Howe 2010).

Identity-based and normative factors

The third group of scholars argue by focusing on what they see as pacifist norms²⁹ that both shape and constrain Japan's security policymaking and help constitute Japan's identity³⁰ as a pacifist state. The foundational texts for this group were largely written in the 1990s, but the general outlines that they set out are like the works by contemporary authors. The general outline of the argument is as follows: Japan's security policy is shaped mostly by domestic, not international, politics. These politics are shaped to a great extent by anti-militarist norms that have their roots in the traumatic experience of World War II and the military takeover of politics that preceded it, and it taught the public that the military is a potentially dangerous institution that must be constantly restrained and monitored so that it does not threaten Japan's democratic order (Katzenstein 1996: 204; Berger 1993). This led to the birth and sustainment of an identity of domestic antimilitarism with specific policy prescriptions. These include an opposition to the creation of traditional armed forces and to Japan's participation in foreign conflicts, along

²⁹ Norms are defined as per Jepperson et al. (1996: 45) as 'collective expectations about proper behaviour for a given identity.'

³⁰ 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" (Oros 2008: 9). Security identity acts as a recognized framework within which policymaking and policies must operate. A security identity does not require that everyone agrees with its prescriptions; instead, it influences security policymaking by being institutionalized within the policy process itself (ibid: 12).

with rejecting the use of force outside self-defensive purposes Oros 2015). Policies tend to conform to this norm; if it does not, policymakers will face stringent constraints and high political costs for stepping outside of the norm (Miyagi 2009). And, despite political pacifists largely disappearing from the Diet, the norms sustain themselves among a populace reluctant to expand the government's security powers and the role of the SDF. Change in Japan's pacifist identity is possible only if Japan's security identity is shifted over time through a process of slow recalibration of identity, through a calamitous event that shows the futility of the current identity, or, through popular politicians expending a significant amount of political capital to reach their goals (Berger 1993, Easley 2017, Oros 2015).

Scholars that belong to this group tend to emphasize certain constants that imply a continued influence of normative factors and security identity on Japan's security policy. As an example, normative perspectives would point out how Koizumi was forced to add some restrictions to the Iraq deployment in order to ensure the law's smooth passage through the Diet, or by noting how the 2015 CSD law contains stringent qualifications that must be fulfilled before the law may be used to defend an ally (Oros 2015). In a normative context, "normalization" is seen as antithetical to a pacifist state identity; indeed, Oros (2015) writes that Japan's identity as a pacifist state is "under siege" by those advocating for normalization. But this is not an opinion that is shared across the board. Hagström and Hanssen (2016) argue that the meanings associated with the term "peace" (and how to keep it) have changed considerably since the end of the Cold War. While decades ago the term was associated with adherence to a strict interpretation of Article Nine, the current understanding rests on an interpretation that Japan must strengthen its defensive capabilities and co-operate with other states to maintain peace; thus, it is in line with a pacifist identity (ibid.). This suggests that "peace identity" has not

disappeared nor faded, but that the associated actions and policy prescriptions have undergone evolution. Singh³¹ (2016) argues that Japan has undergone an identity shift from a Cold War-era “peace-state” identity to a new, “international-state” identity today. The “international-state” identity has created its own normative framework that has led to Japan taking steps to maintain peace and stability in its regional and international environment, becoming more proactive and internationalist in the process. Singh also emphasizes that policy continues to be limited by several enduring factors, of which “resilient pacifism” that influences Japan’s security objectives and choices.

Different authors have, over the years, offered differing explanations as to how Japan’s security policy changes, and what its nature is. It is clear that no one perspective can offer a complete picture, as policy can be motivated and informed by a large variety of factors. That said, there are three conclusions about Japan’s security policy can be drawn from these works. One is that Japan’s security policy is undoubtedly affected, to some degree, by outside factors such as the behavior of states like China, North Korea and the US. This is also supported by opinion polling that shows that the electorate has become more worried about these potential security threats and are more open for the country to play a more active role in maintaining international security. Secondly, public support for PKOs may have risen, but the public remains strongly opposed to the use of force for anything other than self-defense. Third, it is clear that, to some extent, this opposition is motivated

³¹ The work of Singh (2016) was mentioned earlier in the context of domestic political reasons as well. Singh’s work combines a perspective of institutional change within security policy-making regimes with analysis of Japan’s security identity (“identity-regime interaction”). This example is illustrative of how authors combine various viewpoints in their arguments and are not always tied to a single theoretical framework.

by the endurance of pacifism, exerting its power via norms, that constrain the perhaps more pro-revisionist tendencies of the mostly LDP prime ministers of the last thirty years.

Chapter V: The collective self-defense law of 2015

The most significant impact that the second Abe government has had on security policy thus far was passing of the 2015 Legislation for Peace and Security. While the legislative package consisted of a whole raft of other security laws, the one that gathered the most attention was one that touched upon Japan's right to use force by legalizing the exercise of collective self-defense under three new conditions, replacing the previous three conditions that had been established in 1972³² (Hughes 2017; Easley 2017).

The guidelines for exercising CSD now give Japan the right to use military force in the following cases:

- (1) When an armed attack against Japan occurs or when an armed attack against a foreign country that is in a close relationship with Japan occurs and as a result threatens Japan's survival and poses a clear danger to fundamentally overturn people's right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness,
- (2) When there is no other appropriate means available to repel the attack and ensure Japan's survival and protects its people,
- (3) Use of force limited to the minimum extent necessary

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

The legislation was first proposed in a 2014 Cabinet Decision that was then turned into a legislative proposal. Before the Cabinet decision was reached, it was amended via internal coalition discussions between the LDP and Komeito, who added several conditions for the SDF's possible overseas dispatch based on the new law. The conditions require that

³² See page 19.

the dispatch must be consistent with international law;³³ that the forces would be strictly under civilian control; that Japan would work to ensure the troops' safety; and that Japan could only assist countries it was in a close relationship with (Akimoto 2018: 73; Lindgren 2016). Apart from allowing CSD, the laws proposed allowing SDF peacekeepers to use force during peacekeeping missions under certain conditions (permission from the host state and for self-preservation and use of force being proportional), while one permits the SDF to defend, if necessary, the military hardware of other countries (again, that are in a close relationship with Japan).

Meanwhile, another one loosens restrictions on providing rear-area support (*koho shien*) for friendly countries. This is a particularly complicated point that necessitates further explanation. Essentially, this change means that the SDF could be deployed in support operations (e.g. providing ammunition or gasoline) into war zones (a previous guideline required a ceasefire to be in place), as long as no combat took place in the exact area of the deployment; if combat did take place, the SDF would be pulled away. This created significant controversy in the debate, as opposition politicians saw it as being in violation of an existing interpretation of the Constitution, where SDF support activities for other countries can take place only as long as the support does not constitute an integral part of the country's use of force. A situation where the SDF becomes integral is called integration (*ittaiika* in Japanese) with another state's use of force, which would be seen as contravening the interpretation of the Constitution (Cabinet Secretariat 2014; Advisory Panel on Reconstruction of the Legal Basis for Security 2014). (Cabinet Secretariat 2014; Mori 2015). Additionally, each SDF peacekeeping deployment would no longer require the passage of a corresponding law in the Diet (Liff 2015).

³³ This means that the dispatch must be based on, for example, a UN Security Council resolution (Akimoto 2018: 73).

The ban on CSD had existed since 1954, when the Constitution had been interpreted as banning it, allowing Japan to only use force for individual self-defense. This interpretation was reconfirmed in 1972, remaining government policy since, despite a short-lived question of permitting CSD rose briefly in the early 2000s following the SDF deployment to Iraq, but it was not pursued by the then-Koizumi government (Hughes 2017; Samuels 2007: 48, Kitaoka 2014; Samuels 2004; Ishibashi 2007). The historical interpretation of the constitutional limits on the use of force was that while CSD was legally permissible under international law, it was seen as exceeding the “limit on (use of force in) self-defense authorized under Article Nine of the Constitution” and was therefore banned (Ministry of Defense 2012). From the perspective of the government, the legal basis for CSD was that while the Constitution might ban collective defense (i.e. Japan using force to defend another country), it would not ban CSD, if it was exercised in defense of Japan (Akimoto 2018: 91).

In order to pass the law in the 189th session, the Abe government decided to extend the Diet’s session by three months (Ascione 2015). The proposals’ passage was near-certain from the start, as the LDP and Komeito held enough seats to pass them without having to compromise with the opposition. The law passed the Lower House with LDP and Komeito votes on the 15th of July, with most of the opposition parties simply boycotting the vote (Japan Times 2015). Proceeding into the Upper House on the 27th of July, the laws passed nearly two months later, on the 19th of September. Along with parliamentarians and government ministers, the debate included several outside experts, such as those specializing in military security affairs and international politics, along with a number of legal and constitutional experts (Akimoto 2018: 76-79).

Views on the 2015 collective defense law

Kitaoka (2014) argues that the legal change was necessary; few countries can defend themselves without some assistance from an outside state. The ban on CSD is, he argues, antiquated, while citizens' opposition to the proposals was, to Kitaoka (ibid.), based on a "fixation" on the second clause of Article Nine. Mori (2015) and Hughes (2017) similarly believe that allowing CSD is necessary for securing Japan in an unstable region, while Tanaka (2014) characterizes a limited right to CSD as a "rational progression" of the country's past security policies. Banning CSD would constitute a failure to "respond to the demands of the current security environment" while also undermining Japan's vital alliance with the US. Hughes (2017) argues that the legislation would prove to be a "watershed" moment for post-war security policy; no longer could Japan reject US requests for deeper Japanese contribution to alliance cooperation. However, the authors do find some quibbles. Mori (2015) finds that the government's efforts to convince the citizens of the proposals' necessity have been lacking, while Hughes (2017) criticizes the three new conditions, calling them "highly circumscribed"; and it is questionable if they are "new," or even "conditions" at all, seeing as they leave a huge amount of room for interpretation (ibid.).

Many downplay the significance of the new legislation – that, as Yakushiji (2015) argues, the three new conditions create a high hurdle for exercising CSD, and, for the time being, the law is unlikely to lead to an increase in SDF deployments. Green and Hornung (2014) and Liff (2015) see that the conditions greatly restrict the government's exercise of CSD; as any threat must also target Japan, its doctrine of exclusive defense (*senshu boei*) remains largely intact, and Japan's right to use CSD is still greatly restricted in comparison to other powerful states. Nakanishi (2015) argues that the collective defense law does not represent a major break from previous precedent, seeing that a major change instead has been the willingness of the government to pursue security policy reforms more

aggressively. Green and Hornung (2014) similarly argue that the laws have been predicated on the Abe government coming to place increased emphasis on Japan's alliances as underpinning its security. Samuels (2015) argues that the concerns are overblown, seeing that Japan has exercised *de facto* CSD since the Koizumi government's deployments to support coalition combat operations in Afghanistan; and that the laws may amount to a simple expansion of exclusive defense. He attributes the government's more moderate legal revision as stemming from public opposition to a more expanded version of the law.

Other interpretations stress the enduring normative factors that the law proposals helped highlight. Easley (2017) and Oros (2015) argue that the strong opposition both within the Diet, from inside the LDP and from the public represented the enduring power domestic politics possesses over security policy. Easley (2017) notes that, considering the controversy surrounding the process with which the law was made, it might well come to represent the greatest extent to which Abe can stretch current security policy. Oros (2015) largely concurs, pointing to the significant amount of revision the law went through before being presented to the public, whose reaction to the law was generally negative.

Finally, some authors worry about the effects that the process of passing the laws itself will have on Japan and security policy. Pempel (2014) sees that the laws will likely have a minimal impact in the short-to-medium term, seeing greater risk in the effects that the Abe government's methods of legislating by "brute force"³⁴ create for both Japan and to its relations with its neighbors. Wakefield and Martin (2014), in a highly critical article on the law, decry both the government's method of passing it and Green and Hornung's

³⁴ Pempel (2014) here refers to what he sees as the Abe government's "executive overreach", for example, by appointing what he calls an "Abe acolyte" to head the CLB, who took no stance on the constitutionality of the security laws.

(2014) article where the two authors had supported the government's legal arguments, calling the process of reinterpretation "illegitimate", stating that it makes "a mockery of the entire notion of a constitution." They argue that this method creates a precedent where any future cabinet can simply repeat this process of "arbitrary government reinterpretation"; this does not "augur well" for democracy or Japan's constitutional order. Additionally, they argue, since the new guidelines seem to give a significant amount of decision-making power to the prime minister, Japan's participation in potential foreign conflicts will be restricted only if the premier chooses to sit them out (ibid.).

Opinion polls on the security legislation

Opinion polls certainly seem to suggest that throughout the legislative process, the public saw the laws as crossing the boundaries of what is acceptable security policy. This was also evident in the streets, as Japan would experience the most widespread public protests since the 1970s (Klein and McLaughlin 2018), that would at one point see the attendance of former Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi himself (Oros 2017: 127). Regardless of a media source's political stance, the opinion polls returned remarkably similar results over time. This consistency was not only found in simple approve-or-disapprove questions, but across multiple different questions, all of which returned a view of a public strongly critical of the laws, the rush accompanying the legislative process and the justifications used to advocate for the laws. In a poll published by TV Asahi's *Houdou Station* program (TV Asahi 2015a) in May, a majority (66 percent) responded that they do not understand the laws nor feel that the government has properly explained them (75 percent), and most supported taking more time to debate the legislation (71 percent), with a Nikkei poll in May finding that 55 percent were against passing the law in the current Diet session (with 25 in favor) (Nikkei 2015).

The government's downplaying of the chances of Japan being dragged into a war alongside the US were treated with doubt, to put it mildly, with 71 percent finding the arguments unconvincing (TV Asahi 2015a). Polling by the right-wing Sankei newspaper in June found that while 49 percent found the laws "important" (43.8 percent found them unimportant), 57.7 percent found them unconstitutional and 58.9 percent did not see the necessity of passing them during the ongoing Diet session (Sankei 2015). Likewise, a poll conducted by the right-leaning Yomiuri Shimbun newspaper in August found that 80 percent felt that there has not been enough explanation of the laws to the public, with 54 (35 agreeing) disagreeing with the statement that the laws will strengthen Japan's deterrent power (Yomiuri Shimbun 2015). But when the question was whether the government should expand SDF activities in order to intensify "contributions to international society", the number in favor climbed to 40 percent, although a majority (48) were still against. The formulation of the question was clearly a leading one, but its result reflects an overall sense of negativity towards the legislation. In a special public opinion poll conducted by the Asahi Shimbun newspaper (Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation 2014,³⁵ quoted in Krauss 2016) on the issue, 63 percent were against allowing Japan to exercise CSD, with a combined total of 88 percent concerned ("greatly concerned" and "partially concerned") that allowing for a right to CSD might drag Japan into a war.

Finally, polling by the left-leaning Asahi Shimbun newspaper conducted after the laws passed in September found that a majority (51 percent) opposed the law (with 30 percent in support) with 75 percent feeling that the Diet debate was not yet exhaustive and 74 percent feeling that the government did not make enough effort to convince the public of

³⁵ Sadly, the author was unable to find the original data, as the Foundation's website had undergone an update, and, with that, the opinion poll database had disappeared.

the law's importance³⁶ (Asahi Shimbun 2015). TV Asahi, in a September poll, found that while the understanding of the laws had increased (48 percent reported that they understood them with 49 percent saying they did not), almost half (49 percent) saw the legislation as containing parts that were unconstitutional (TV Asahi 2015b).

Poor polling results for the government coincided with a precipitous drop in the Cabinet support rate as measured by the public broadcasting company NHK; while 51 percent supported (*shiji suru*) the government in May, this dropped to 37 percent by August, when 46 percent replied that they do not support (*shiji shinai*) the Cabinet (NHK 2015). Still, the support rates would climb back up to 46 percent by December, nearly identical to the rate from a year before (47) (NHK 2014). Even as the opposition to the laws precipitated a drop in the government's support rates, these bounced back relatively quickly once the furor had passed.

The politics of collective self-defense: LDP and Komeito

The LDP's position was that the legislative package would help secure Japan and ensure peace primarily through maintaining and strengthening deterrence, especially as the legislation was seen as important for strengthening the US-Japan alliance.³⁷ It was argued to be necessary in order to "protect the lives and property of the Japanese" and to work with other countries to maintain the stability of the international community. The laws were necessitated because of "fundamental changes" in the security environment

³⁶ Interestingly, 49 percent of respondents also answered that they did not think positively (*hyouka shinai*) regarding the opposition's way of dealing with the law (Asahi Shimbun 2015). Disapproval, it seems, extended across the political aisle.

³⁷ The government introduced some scenarios where CSD would be necessary to the public in May 2014. It is not necessary to detail all 15 scenarios (for all 15, see Akimoto 2017: 35-65), but one that had relevance in the parliamentary debate ought to be mentioned. In this scenario, a hostile state enacts a blockade in the Straits of Hormuz (through which 80 percent of Japan's oil supply passes through). The government view was that this represented an "existential threat to Japan" to the extent that would necessitate SDF dispatch; many opposition politicians, however, disagreed (Pollmann 2015; Liff 2015).

surrounding Japan, the advances in weapon technology, and changes in “international circumstances” – remarkably similar to the motivations behind policy as identified by the realist scholars discussed earlier. Further, the statements emphasized that the conditions attached to the “limited” exercise of CSD ensured their constitutionality, conditions that were then stressed to create strict standards for CSD that were unique to Japan (LDP 2015a). Further, the statements refer to the wording of the 1959 Sunagawa judgement, where Japan was ensured to possess the right for self-defense, and, according to the LDP’s (and by extension, the government’s) interpretation, this created a “responsibility” for the government to take “appropriate measures for self-defense” (LDP 2015b). As for the debate in the Diet, the statement emphasized that across the two chambers, the laws were “carefully deliberated” for over 200 hours (LDP 2015a). The LDP presented the laws as necessary for Japan’s security, and argued that time spent debating it lent it an air of legitimacy.

The law presented more of a challenge for Komeito due to its past as a pacifist party. The party was, at first, opposed to the idea of allowing CSD, but after a year-and-a-half long negotiation process with the LDP, the party felt like it had secured concessions in the form of conditions on the exercise of the right for CSD, and threw its support behind the proposal, much to the chagrin of Soka Gakkai (Lindgren 2016; Klein 2016). The party went to explain to the group’s members that it had played a crucial role as a “brake” (*hadome*) on the LDP’s more assertive impulses, and it had to support the law in order to remain in government to do so in the future as well (Klein and Maclaughlin 2018; Lindgren 2016). In its public statements, however, the party offered only full-throated support. In an interview with the party’s Vice Representative Kitagawa Kazuo posted on the party’s website, Kitagawa offers the same justifications as the LDP; the need for the legislation stems from the threats Japan faces, and the necessity of improving the

country's deterrence. Reflecting the relatively greater controversy that surrounded the laws within the party, Kitagawa emphasized the "in-depth discussion" and length of time the Cabinet took to reach its decision to pursue the legislation in 2014. As for the laws regarding rear-area support, Kitagawa stresses that such support has strict conditions, such as UN Security Council approval, stressing that this support does not reach the standard of becoming integrated with the use of force. In closing, he argues that the interpretation of Article 9 has not changed, and Japan's defense-only posture remains unchanged (Komeito 2015).

DPJ and the JCP

The DPJ's position is made clear through a statement (in English) that the party posted on its website following the law's passage on September 19th, 2015. Strongly worded, the statement decries what the party saw as a lack of respect and understanding of the popular opinion; that the government "forcibly" enacted patently anti-constitutional legislation that betrays its lack of understanding for separation of powers and democracy (DPJ 2015a). It terms the three new conditions "ambiguous", one that breaks with precedent created through the "efforts of many of our forebears". The party's president, Okada Katsuya, also released his own statement, similarly in English, where he blasted the laws as unconstitutional and against the spirit of pacifism, vowing to fight in the next elections in order to "return to the drawing board" on the issue of CSD (DPJ 2015b). Nevertheless, reflecting the party's tendency to take more moderate positions on security policy, its lawmaker Nagashima Akihisa (who held several junior cabinet posts during the party's term in power) clarified that the DPJ was not wholly opposed to allowing CSD, but was critical of the vagueness of the three conditions and the government's view of contingencies in far-flung corners of the world being treated with the same level of danger

as a contingency in Japan's neighborhood (Nippon.com 2015). Nagashima states that the party's general position can be summed up by the slogan of "restraint afar, realism nearby and active involvement in humanitarian reconstruction", reflecting the party's position that hews close to the public opinion on security policy in the post-Cold War era.

In contrast, the JCP was strongly opposed to the laws, and a statement released on the day of the law's passage under its chairman's, Shii Kazuo's name, blasted the laws as "war" legislation (Shii 2015). It decried the government for "railroading" the bills through the Diet despite public opposition, calling the laws themselves unconstitutional. Shii calls for the formation of a coalition government ("National Coalition Government to Repeal the War Legislation") consisting of like-minded parties to repeal the laws and to "restore constitutionalism" by seeking to win the next Lower House elections through electoral co-operation (ibid.). For the JCP, who have maintained a remarkably consistent position on security policy in the post-war era, the legislation was a stake into the heart of Japan's post-war pacifist identity.

Chapter VI: The parliamentary debate on the security laws

Methodology

Social reality is produced through discourses; that is, speech and writing. Discourse analysis as a methodology seeks to “explore the relationship between discourse and reality” (Phillips and Hardy 2002: 4). Starting from the presupposition that reality is socially constructed, discourse analysis seeks, through analysis of multiple texts and inspecting the connections between them, to discover the connective tissue built across them. These discourses – defined as a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of it) (Jorgensen and Phillips 2002: 1) - are made meaningful through processes of analysis, while also helping constitute social reality by producing meaning themselves. By necessity, discourses are always connected to the social, political and historical contexts, and cannot be disconnected from them; discourses help construct the social reality (Phillips and Hardy 2002: 4). Of course, this thesis focuses more specifically on political discourse, which, while still squarely within the realm of discourse analysis as a methodology, has its own peculiarities. As van Dijk (1997) writes, “typical and effective discourse in political contexts may well have preferred structures and strategies” that are functional in trying to accomplish actions in the specific context of politics. As an example, speech in parliament is an act that has a direct influence in constructing social reality; indeed, speech in such a setting is directly functional for a political process (ibid.). The advantages of employing discourse analysis on political speech is not only that it contributes to our knowledge of discursive practices, but also to knowledge “of their relations with the social and political context... including the constraints on discourse” (ibid.).

The point of such a methodology is not to judge the arguments and debates on their merits; that is, not to fact-check the arguments made by the politicians. The analysis offered here analyzes and uncovers the patterns of discourse that the Diet members produce, and then seeking to inductively draw conclusions about the state of the parliamentary debate on Japan's security policies. Previously, Hagström and Hanssen (2016) have used discourse analysis methods to analyze in what way "peace" was debated in the Diet with relation to China, finding that Japan's new discourse as a "peace state" holds that the country needs to "normalize" in order to actively defend peace, and that China plays a significant role in this discourse. Earlier, the same authors analyzed how China, in general, was discussed in the Diet's Foreign Affairs Committee, finding that the discourse has in 2008 become more "open", i.e., it now includes statements ranging from radical to moderate, to an extent that it was not in 1999 (Hagström and Hanssen 2010). As for the 2015 security legislation, Akimoto (2018: 74-86) has offered a general overview of Diet debates regarding the 2015 security legislation, expertly summarizing some of the questions in each debate session. However, Akimoto does not spend time analyzing the parliamentarian's speeches further than simply inspecting what they say.

The focus here is specifically on the arguments by Diet members from the DPJ and the JCP, as they have been the main focus of this thesis. The Lower House Special Committee also had representatives from the Japan Restoration Party (JRP), a party closely associated with charismatic then-Osaka mayor Hashimoto Toru that has been described as "populist" by Reed (2012), while the Upper House Special Committee had representatives from the Social Democratic Party (SDP) along members from other minor parties. Apart from the DPJ and JCP, the analysis includes two speeches from JRP members and one speech by an SDP member. However, the focus remains on the parties of the political left, which the JRP does not represent.

A total of 21 speeches were analyzed in full. 12 by DPJ members; 6 by JCP members; 2 by JRP members and 1 from a member of the SDP. Analysis followed a rule of one speech by one individual; as it happened, the same members often held speeches during multiple sessions of the Special Committees, but these were skipped in favor of enhancing the diversity of speakers and to gather the widest possible representation of views.

The analysis encompasses the Lower House Special Committee’s meetings from May until July for a total of three meetings that were fully analyzed, with a total of four Upper House meetings, who met between July and September, of which three were analyzed fully. All translations are by the author and have been double-checked by a native Japanese speaker to ensure accuracy.

○寺田（学）委員 一個一個整理していつているんです。

砂川判決に集団的自衛権を合憲であるという言及はないと。言及はないけれども、今回法案として出されている限定的な集団的自衛権を合憲と、根拠とすることはこの砂川判決からありますかと聞いているんです。この砂川判決を今回の限られた集団的自衛権が合憲であるという根拠にされますかという話を聞いたんです。

○中谷国務大臣 その根拠というのは昭和四十七年の見解の基本的論理でありまして、この中に「自国の平和と安全を維持しその存立を全うするために必要な自衛の措置をとることを禁じているとはとうてい解されない。」これは砂川判決の中の同じ文章です、自国の平和と安全を維持しその存立を全うするために必要な自衛のための措置をとり得ることは、国家固有の権利として当然のことと言わなければならない。まさに同じ内容の文章がこの四十七年に書かれているわけでありまして、私たちは軌を一にするものだと考えております。（寺田（学）委員「イエス・オア・ノー。イエス・オア・ノーです」と呼び、その他発言する者あり）

Figure 1: An example of the debate log³⁸ (HR 15.6.)

The formation of the Special Committees

The Lower House formed its Special Committee on the 19th of May 2015 to discuss the proposed legislation – its official, long form name was the “Proposed Law to Revise part of the Self-Defense Forces Law to Ensure the Security of the Country and to Contribute to Ensuring the Peace of the International Society” by the cabinet. The discussions

³⁸ An exchange between DPJ lawmaker Terata Manabu and Defense Minister Nakatani Gen. Terata asks whether CSD is constitutional or not, expressing doubt on the government’s position on the issue; Nakatani replies that the government’s decision is based on “following the logic” of the 1959 Sunagawa case (see page xx) and how it allows the government to take “necessary measures” to defend the country – an answer that Terata interrupts by shouting “Yes or no? Yes or no?” (HR 15.6.).

followed a format of government representatives and experts answering questions from committee members, who represented both government and opposition parties. This thesis only examined speeches that were aimed towards government representatives.

The committee was chaired by Mr. Hamada Yasukazu, a member of the LDP and a former Minister of Defense. The committee was officially appointed with 45 members on the 21st of May (HR 22.5.). During its existence, the Lower House committee met a total of 22 times. The committee finished its deliberations on July 15th, with a decision from Chairman Hamada to end deliberations, despite opposition protest. Opposition parties in the Diet did not participate in the final Lower House vote in the Diet chamber, with most walking out before the government voted to pass the laws, arguing that the debate on the law should continue for longer. The legislation passed on the 16th of July, from where it was sent to the Upper House for further debate (Nikkei 2015; House of Representatives website).

The laws entered Upper House on the 27th of July. The laws were debated in an Upper House special committee with the same name as the Lower House committee, and it met a total of 21 times, chaired by LDP member Yoshitada Konoike. Following its passage through the committee, the Upper House passed the laws in a plenary session on the 19th of September, with 238 votes in favor and 148 against. All LDP and Komeito members (alongside a few representatives from smaller parties) voted in favor, while all JRP, DPJ, SDP and JCP members voted against (House of Councilors 2015a; *ibid.* 2015b).

Overall nature of the security debate

The discussions can be characterized as lively. Answers by government representatives would often be interrupted by shouting, and, on occasion, by opposition lawmakers shouting their demands for straight answers to their questions. These occasions were

written in the logs simply as either “someone making noise” (*hatsugen suru mono ari*) or, in case the shouting was done by the Diet member who was listening for an answer for his or her questions, by marking down what was said. If things got too out of hand, the chairman would demand silence, before indicating for the speaker to continue. Throughout, the government’s answers were often considered inadequate and evasive, with considerable time spent on repeating or rephrasing questions, only to be met with responses that range from a repetition of the government line or refraining from answering, citing security concerns (HR 15.6.; HR 8.7.). Representatives from government parties would, as can be expected, content with using their speeches to reaffirm Cabinet talking points.

A good example of this was Komeito representative Kitagawa Kazuo’s speech (HR 8.7), where he argued for the importance of the law’s passage, with reference to Japan’s changing security environment and the need to build trust and enhance Japan’s alliance with the US, while simultaneously calling the ban on CSD antiquated in light of “developments in military technology” – with specific reference to North Korea’s nuclear weapons program. In their answers to Kitagawa, Defense Minister Nakatani Gen and Foreign Minister Kishida Fumio, both of whom were regulars at the meetings of both the Upper and Lower House committees, sought to continue his discourse on Japan’s vulnerability, with Nakatani characterizing North Korea as presenting a “grave threat to Japan’s security”, while also referring to China’s development of sophisticated weapons systems, such as stealth fighter jets and anti-satellite missiles. Kishida, for his part, stressed that CSD is a right written down in the UN Charter, while pointing out that the Constitution has its limitations for laying out what Japan can do in self-defense, as it does not even explicitly provide Japan with the right to for self-defense. Indeed, there is a

remarkable degree of similarity between the government's arguments and the factors cited for Japan's security behavior by realist scholars.

A difference between the debate in the two chambers is that the members of the Lower House seemed to have more time to ask questions, giving them the ability to query the government on multiple issues and, if necessary, delve deeper into some topics where they sensed a lack of clarity. However, in the Upper House, members' speaking time seemed, more limited on occasion, something that many members lament during their speeches. It could be expected that this means the members would tend to focus on fewer topics, but this is not necessarily as such. The SDP's Mataichi Seiji (HC 8.5.), for example, goes through a whole raft of topics over a relatively brief period of time, from rising risks for SDF service members to the possibility of Japan being attacked if it participates in supporting an US war. Occasionally, parliamentarians seemed to include issues that had no direct relevance to the legislation but were included, as the member saw the legislation as containing implications for other tangentially related issues. As an example, an Upper House DPJ parliamentarian would go on a lengthy series of questions on the topic of medical care for SDF service members wounded abroad, and asks what qualifications, if any, provisioners of such care would have (HC 5.8).

Makikomareru-ron: The question of Japan being dragged into a war

The more questions we ask, the more the citizen's doubts arise.

DPJ's Motohiro Ohno (HC 9.9)

A common discourse was involved the concern over potential entanglement in a US conflict. This was often accompanied by the Japanese verb *makikomareru*, which roughly translates as being “dragged into” something. The DPJ's Okada Katsuya (HR 27.5) expresses his worry that the removal of geographical limitations for SDF operations, alongside their new ability to operate in increasingly unstable areas, increases the risk of the SDF being dragged into a war, even if they were deployed only for rear-area support. In the same session, the DPJ's Ogushi Hiroshi (HR 27.5) questions whether Japan would be able to assist the US if it carried out an invasion of a country, such as what happened with Iraq. In a rare case for the meetings, he receives a direct answer from Prime Minister Abe Shinzo, in attendance in this meeting, who answers that participation in such a conflict would not be possible as it would not fulfil the three new conditions. Still, it is a question that is clearly felt to be important, as three months later, DPJ member Mataichi Seiji (HC 5.8) would repeat a nearly identical question, asking if Japanese support for an US invasion under CSD would not also make Japan into a warring party in a conflict.

The JCP's Mikishi Daimon (HC 5.8) states that he sees the allowing of CSD as only helping increase risks of conflict with China, lambasting the government's justification of the laws as trying to scare the citizens of the threat of China, and calling the government's argument that Japan's security situation has become worse, necessitating the legislation, as “embarrassing”. He then calls for a “fact-based” and “peaceful” dialogue with China, mentioning Southeast Asian countries as an example of states that seek to solve their disputes through peaceful means. The laws, however, are a sign that

Japan is going to the opposite direction. He argues that while the Defense Minister keeps repeating that China is no threat, he sees Japan's war game simulations of responding to a Chinese attack as simply ramping up tensions, as these will inevitably lead to China organizing similar exercises of its own. A similar line is taken by the SDP's Mataichi Seiji (HC 14.9) who likens the government's security environment-based justifications to the story of the "boy who cried wolf". The only country ramping up tensions in East Asia, he continues, is Japan, citing the Abe government's actions over the Senkaku islands and his visit to the Yasukuni shrine in 2013.

Similarly, the JCP's Akamine Seiji (HR 15.6) brings up the 2015 US-Japan Security Guidelines,³⁹ arguing that the guidelines' removal of geographical restrictions on alliance operations, along with the legalization of CSD increases risks that Japan will get "dragged into" a war with the US, especially so, he says, as the latter's military has none of the restrictions that the SDF has. Considering the party's long-standing negative view of the US-Japan alliance, is no surprise that the JCP's representatives reserved particular ire for the implications the law and the new guidelines would have for Japan. The party's Hatano Kimie (HR 8.7) argues that the removal of limits on alliance cooperation of the two militaries removes any "insurance" Japan may have had in the past to sit out participation in US conflicts.

The DPJ's Ohno Motohiro (HC 9.9) questions the government's presentation of scenarios that it sees as constituting a serious danger for Japan's existence. He discusses the scenario, where US Aegis anti-ballistic missile defense system equipped warship is trying to shoot down a missile but is being attacked by another country while doing it,⁴⁰ arguing

³⁹ See page 31.

⁴⁰ The government's argument was that when the ship is trying to shoot a ballistic missile down, it becomes vulnerable to enemy attack and cannot properly defend itself. Japan should have the right to help defend the ship even if the missile fired was not aimed against Japan was essentially the government's argument (Akimoto 2018: 41-42).

that if this can be counted as falling under the standard that would necessitate the exercise of CSD, then anything can. He questions whether this would not mean that the reasoning could be extended to justify defending almost any US military asset anywhere in the world, making Japan into a US “defense subcontractor”. In closing his speech, he warns citizens that the government is about to permit military deployments without limitations, a danger also mentioned by the JCP’s Miyamoto Toru (HR 8.7). Another danger that members see in using the SDF to defend US assets is that it draws away resources from national defense, a point brought up by the DPJ’s Tsujimoto Kiyomi (HR 8.7), who argued that as the SDF only possesses a limited number of Aegis-equipped warships, using them to defend US assets would leave Japan’s own ships potentially vulnerable.

The government’s justifications: a lack of genuine threat

Closely related to the discourse of *makikomareru-ron* is the doubt that Diet members heap on the government’s justifications for the legislation. Here, we return to the 15 scenarios mentioned in the previous chapter, especially one that involved the blockade of the Straits of Hormuz, presented as a scenario that would necessitate the exercise of CSD. Diet members found different angles of arguing that this justification for use of force in this scenario lacks merit. For one, the DPJ’s Haku Shinkun (HC 5.8) argues that the relations between Japan and Iran are close, and, therefore the scenario is simply not realistic; while the JCP’s Akamine Seiken (HR 15.6) points out that, from Iran’s perspective, blockading the strait by laying down mines will be just as damaging to it as to any other country. Besides, he continues, the SDF dispatched minesweepers in the aftermath of the Gulf war in the 1990s following US requests; and this was achieved without a legislative basis that the government wishes to have with these laws. Further, the DPJ’s Nagashima Akihisa (HR 15.6) argues that the Nakasone government of the 1980s had concluded that the then-

security situation does not necessitate CSD, when, Nagashima argues, the security situation was even worse than now. Therefore, he sees little reason why the international environment would necessitate the law now.

The DPJ's Ogata Rintaro (HR 15.6) asks what the practical differences are between Japan's responses to the new legislation's "a situation that endangers Japan's existence" (*sonritsu kiki jitai*) and "an attack on Japan" (*buryouku kougeki*), arguing that since North Korea's 2009 missile test was not deemed a "contingency in the region surrounding Japan" (*shuuhen jitai*), it is difficult to see how a blockade of the Straits of Hormuz would somehow be more serious than the former, and why it should be treated with the same level of seriousness as an outright attack on Japan. Indeed, he continues, if so, the standards for employing force will become considerably lower than before.

Flag-covered coffins: the risks for SDF service members

If the risks of Japan being dragged into war have increased, so have the risks of death or injury for SDF service members, a common issue mentioned by multiple Diet members. The JRP's Kakizawa Mito (27.5.) expresses his worries that the legislation will increase risks for SDF service members. In response to the government's downplaying of the possibility of increased risk, Ogushi Hiroshi (27.5) characterizes the downplaying of possible increased risks as "odd" (*okashii*); another member, Mataichi Seiji from the SDP (HC 8.5) calls Nakatani's denials of rising risks as "deceptive", and not based on the realities that troops on deployment would face. In response to Defense Minister Nakatani's continued assurances that the government would evaluate any risks before deploying the SDF - stating that there exist safety standards that must be met before sending troops abroad - Ogushi states that he simply does not understand what the government is talking about, demanding a yes-or-no answer from the minister.

Afterwards, Ogushi recites a personal anecdote, telling the story of a female relative of his, married to an SDF service member, who worries that the law will make her husband's missions more dangerous.

The safety standards clearly created a significant amount of confusion. Months after Nakatani's initial answer, the DPJ's Fukuyama Tetsuro (HC 11.9) lambastes the government for not presenting any clear way of measuring what constitutes a danger for SDF troops on deployment. Fukuyama continues by accusing the government for telling the citizens that there are measures to ensuring SDF member's safety, when such measures are not written anywhere on the legislation. Nakatani's assurances that ensuring the SDF's safety is the government's obligation (*gimu*) are similarly rejected by Fukuyama, who demands to see where such an obligation is written; and in case it is not, to retract the law and add in such an obligation. Continuing to pretend otherwise would only invite misunderstanding of what the legislation contains, he argues. The DPJ's Haku Shinkun (HC 5.8) points out that if the enemy knows that the SDF will withdraw in case they are attacked, this would surely make them into even more of a target. Besides, Haku argues, if support missions are only carried out in peaceful areas, he sees little reason in dispatching the SDF in the first place, instead of a private logistics company.

The JCP's Shii Kazuo (HR 27.5) similarly discusses the risks that SDF members would face and starts by asking Nakatani what weapons SDF troops possessed on their deployment to Iraq. After being told that recoilless rifles (a type of handheld weapon that is able to shoot explosive projectiles) were among the weaponry provided to service members, Shii pounces, and asks if being deployed with such weapons does not indicate a readiness to fight a full-blown war. Despite the troops being deployed to a "de-conflict zone", Shii continues, Iraq was a country that was a mere one step away from becoming a war zone, and where SDF service members carrying out rear-area support missions may

well have been targeted by enemy attack. Previous deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq had at least some limitations, he argues. One, that the area of deployment was peaceful, and two, that the area would remain so for the duration of the deployment. But with the removal of this second condition, the risk that the SDF would get attacked increases, especially so as the law allows the troops to now provide ammunition to allied troops, making them even more of a target for enemy action. He mentions the tragic example of rising risks for SDF service members from a perhaps unexpected angle, stating that 54 SDF members who served in Iraq and Afghanistan have committed suicide. Would this number not rise, he questions, if the deployments would increase, referring to the many US service members who have come to suffer from PTSD following their deployment (HR 27.5).

The DPJ's Tsujimoto Kiyomi (HR 8.7) argues that allowing rear-area support missions to other countries would not only increase risks for SDF service members, but would also make Japanese citizens into possible targets for terrorist groups, a point similarly mentioned by Fujisue Kenzo (HC 5.8), who argues that such missions would make Japan into a regular combatant state and therefore a target for attack for the defending country's military. Tsujimoto (HR 8.7) further mentions a more specific group of citizens worried for their own security if the laws passed: the people of Okinawa, who suffered unique hardships during World War II, citing a question from a person she met in Okinawa who asked whether the government's laws might make the island into a "stone to be thrown away" yet again (*suteishi ni sareru*). The risks are greater for Okinawans, she argues, because the concentration of US bases makes the island a prime target for any hostile country, especially so because of its importance for the US's global military strategy, an importance that she sees that the laws will intensify (HR 8.7). The DPJ's Mataichi Seiji (HC 5.8) also argues that exercising CSD to fight together with the US would surely make

Japan into a target and asks whether citizens living near military bases or nuclear power plants should be prepared for a possible attack. Indeed, this represents a common discourse; that the legislation may make the whole of Japan into a target, not just SDF members deployed in some far-flung corner of the globe.

Another scenario mentioned by Diet members involves a law permitting the rescue of allied military personnel. The JCP's Miyamoto Toru (HR 8.7) focuses his questions on this topic, arguing that the SDF rushing to the rescue of, for example, a downed US military pilot would inevitably increase the risks for SDF service members. Miyamoto points out that there seem to be no guarantees for safety of the personnel carrying out such missions, especially so as these operations do not have the same guarantees for safety that peacekeeping operations possess. Miyamoto questions why Japan should participate in such operations, and not leave them to be taken care of by the US military, whose strategy necessitates the rescue of downed personnel anyway. Besides, he continues, any rescue mission would require SDF members to possess weaponry that would far exceed the limits as set by the second clause of Article 9 (ibid.).

“A constitutional violation of the darkest kind”⁴¹ and other legal issues

Predictably, many assembly members discussed the proposal's constitutional implications. Referring to an apparent tweet by an LDP Diet member – where the parliamentarian had decried what he perceived as the selfishness of young people not wishing to fight in a war for Japan - the DPJ's Fujisue Kenzo (HC 5.8) asks whether the permitting of CSD does, indeed, allow Japan to wage war, seeing as an LDP member seems to equate waging war with the legislation. This is not the only government gaffe

⁴¹ An expression used by DPJ member Konishi Hiroyuki (HC 11.9).

that Diet members would refer to: the DPJ's Haku Shinkun (HC 5.8) urges the government to make one of its advisers resign, following the advisor's public comments, where he had apparently downplayed the impact of the legislation's possible unconstitutionality; if he is not made to resign, he argues, it would surely undermine the government's arguments of the proposals' constitutionality.

Most speeches, however, linked the issue of constitutionality with the concept of *ittaiika*⁴² (integration between Japan and the US). The JCP's Hatano Kimie (HR 8.7) argues that as it seems that the two countries are combining their command structures into one, and mentions how as an example how, in exercises, the US has taken the command while Japan plays a secondary role. Further, Hatano mentions that the US and Japan are using computer systems that share information on the exact locations of enemy missiles; add to this Japan's new ability to defend allied military assets, and it must be asked whether the two militaries are now essentially acting as one. In the past, she continues, the interpretation was that in order for Japan to help defend US assets, the US had to first try to avoid a situation where combat might take place; and after a possible engagement, was not to pursue the enemy; these standards, however, seem to no longer exist. The JCP's Yamashita Yoshiki (HC 14.9) employs a similar argument, mentioning an exercise where US military aircraft practiced launching from SDF warships.

This legally rather complicated point illustrates the difficulties of Japan's legalistic security policy debates. The DPJ's Haraguchi Kazuhiro (HR 15.6) links *ittaiika* with the possible melding of the US' and Japan's rules of engagement (rules that determine when soldiers can use force). However, despite persistent attempts to do so, he is unable to gain an answer to his question from Defense Minister Nakatani. Yamashita Yoshiki from the

⁴² See page 57, footnote 31 for details.

JCP (HC 14.9) connects constitutional issues with the recently agreed US-Japan Security Guidelines, arguing that the government had promised lifting the ban on CSD before it consulted the Diet, while “arbitrarily” changing the interpretation of the Constitution, thus “making light” of Japan’s sovereignty and independence. He also blasts the legislation’s name – Legislation for Peace and Security – as a falsehood, and states that, for a government that does not listen to the voices of the people calling the legislation unconstitutional, there can be no future.

With today’s questions, it has become obvious that the government’s proposal is illegal, as it violates the first clause of Article 9 that bans the use of force. We will absolutely not recognize this legislation.

JCP’s Shii Kazuo (HR 27.5)

The DPJ’s Fujisue Kenzo (HC 5.8) sees the use of force in the Hormuz scenario as going over the constitutional limits on the use of force, while the JCP’s Shii Kazuo (HR 27.5) asks whether allowing the SDF to enter areas the previous government would have classified as combat zones mean that such deployments count as waging war. Shii also lays scorn upon the government’s chosen term of “rear-area support”, arguing that this is a term only used in Japan, with other states using the term “logistics” instead, considering it part and parcel of waging war. Having established this, Shii argues that rear-area support is inseparable from warfare; it itself is warfare, and he further states that this is common military thinking around the world. Thus, the government’s proposal is in violation of the first clause of Article Nine, as this constitutes a clear case of *ittaiika*. The DPJ’s Fujisue Kenzo (HC 5.8) argues in a similar manner, seeing the supply of ammunition and petroleum as representing *ittaiika*, considering it an act of war.

The DPJ's Fukuyama Tetsuro (HC 11.9) begins by asking the government whether Japan could use force against ships, belonging to country "A" that is attacking Japan, who were carrying out support activities. After Nakatani answers in the affirmative, Fukuyama asks whether Japan could use force against a private ship that is supplying an attacking country, to which Nakatani again replies that yes, this is permissible under current law. However, when Fukuyama asks whether Japan could use force against country "B" that is supplying attacking country "A", Nakatani demurs, answering that use of force is not permissible unless the support activities of country "B" become integrated with the use of force. Fujisue Kenzo (HC 5.8), when given the same answer a month earlier, replies with incredulity, and states his belief that Japan not being able to target country "B" (he uses the same labels as Fukuyama) would create a serious danger for Japan's safety.

Fukuyama (HC 11.9), however, responds by quoting an answer from 1999 given by then-Foreign Minister Koumura Masahiko, who stated that in case Japan has no other ways of preventing a hypothetical country "B" from supporting country "A", Japan could use force (to the minimum necessary amount" to interrupt that country's activities, asking therefore if the government's interpretation had changed, and demanding to know what the standards are, if any, that prevent support activities from being counted as *ittaiika*. He soon points out that, in the past, a former government official had answered that the provision of ammunition and fuel would indeed constitute *ittaiika*, using this to criticize government bureaucrats for what he sees as flip-flopping. In closing, he makes a pointed comment towards the bureaucracy, reminding them that they do not serve the Abe government, but the people and the Constitution.

The DPJ's Haraguchi Kazuhiro (HR 15.6) asks whether the government's strategy of "proactive contribution to peace" is "twisting" the country's pacifism while undermining the SDF's existence as a force that is not to possess war potential. Haraguchi's party

comrade Nagatsuma Akira (HR 27.5) also asks whether allowing CSD would, at least in the minds of the people, represent a change to Japan's doctrine of "exclusive self-defense", which might mean that the SDF's name should be changed, seeing as the force will soon no longer be purely self-defensive. Another interesting point is brought up by the DPJ's Haku Shinkun (HC 5.8), who asks whether Japanese vessels would be able to carry US nuclear warheads in its capacity of providing rear-area support, as there seems to be no reference to any limits on what can be provided in the legislation. Following Foreign Minister Kishida's answer that this is not something they had thought of,⁴³ Haku seems shocked; especially, he continues, because Kishida hails from Hiroshima. It would certainly be a historic first, Haku continues, were the SDF to be given the ability to carry nuclear weapons, and in his closing remarks, Haku calls the laws "incredibly dangerous". The point seems to have been effective enough, as Fujisue Kenzo (HC 5.8) also seems flabbergasted that there seem to be no limitations on what Japan can carry for friendly countries.

Reinterpreting the Constitution and a lack of understanding

Much criticism is also reserved for the government's chosen method of re-interpretation and not outright revision. Nagatsuma Akira from the DPJ (HR 27.5) argues that the government should have gone for a full revision instead of reinterpretation that by itself seems to create its own constitutional challenges and creates more uncertainty in comparison to a full-blown revision. Konishi Hiroyuki from the DPJ (HC 11.9) criticizes the government for choosing to sidestep the difficulties of revision by choosing

⁴³ Nakatani, for his part, answers that even if the legislation does not explicitly mention it, the Three Non-nuclear Principles would mean that the government would not agree to carry US nuclear weapons. Haku, however, does not seem convinced.

reinterpretation instead, and calling the government's explanation "completely strange", while arguing that the Cabinet has now effected huge change on Japan's security and foreign policy through a simple Cabinet decision, the legality of which is based on the legal stamp of approval provided by three bureaucrats.⁴⁴ He also calls the laws a "repudiation" of the principle of legal stability, a point similarly made by the DPJ's Fukuyama Tetsuro (HC 11.9), who called it as "breaking" legal stability. The DPJ's Tsujimoto Kiyomi (HR 8.7) states that the laws and the method of reinterpretation create a danger for Japan's constitutionalism, as they go against the "fundamental basis" of the Constitution. Unlike the PKO legislation in the early 1990s⁴⁵ which was resisted at first but gained public acceptance later, he argues that the current legislation faces opposition even from unexpected individuals, such as a former head of the CLB and a former Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary. Indeed, a few members bring up examples of other laws and the process of their passing. The DPJ's Okada Katsuya (HR 27.5) refers to his own experience in passing security legislation, arguing that unlike the government, his party had attempted to make the citizens understand the laws at each step, lambasting the government for attempting to ram through a major overhaul without proper consultation with the public.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga (Yoshihide), this is not a question of whether people's understanding of the legislation should be deepened or not. It would be better to be brave and withdraw this proposal. Withdrawing it is not embarrassing; in fact, if you withdraw it, I think the people will think that, oh, they understood our concerns, and the people would be pleased with the government.

DPJ's Tsujimoto Kiyomi (HR 8.7.)

Reference to the public appears often in the member's speeches. The DPJ's Nagashima Akihisa (HR 15.6) argues that the biggest impediment to citizen's acceptance of the laws

⁴⁴ Presumably, this is a reference to the CLB.

⁴⁵ See pages 21-22.

is the trauma of Japan's defeat in World War II, and the loss of 2.6 million compatriots. This is also linked to a mistrust of the government (*seijifushin*), as the wartime government never told the country the reality of the war effort. The only way to overcome this trauma and gain the citizen's acceptance, Nagashima argues, is taking more time to convince the citizens of the law's necessity. Indeed, this lack of understanding among the people is an often-mentioned point. The DPJ's Ogata Rintaro (HR 15.6) states that whenever he visits his home town of Kitakyushu (located in the northern part of Japan's southern main island), he keeps meeting locals who do not seem to understand why the government is pushing for the legislation despite resistance from legal and constitutional scholars. Similarly, the DPJ's Fukuyama Tetsuro (HC 11.9) argues that despite hours of debate, the citizens' understanding of the laws has not deepened, and they remain strongly opposed to the legislation. Some members also urge the government to simply withdraw the legislation, with such comments made by Haku Shinkun (HC 5.8), Hatano Kimie (HR 8.7), or, in the cases of Fujisue Kenzo (HC 5.8) and Fukuyama Tetsuro (HC 11.9), calling the government to rewrite some parts of the legislation.

Chapter VII: Conclusion

The discourses and arguments employed by opposition Diet members signal that the opposition viewed the legislation as not being debated in enough detail, while heaping scorn on the government's justifications. The ever-present fear of Japanese entanglement in an US war was common, and the risks that undertaking operations with the US presented to service members and to Japan were clear. The government's arguments rested on reassurance that Japan's leaders would know what is legal and what is not and where Japan should step in and where it should stay out.

If we are to consider that US pressure has undoubtedly played a significant role in making Japan change its security policies in the past, it is clear that, as one Diet member stated, Japan's ability to resist the US' demands becomes unquestionably weaker with the legislation. No longer can Japan use Article Nine as "insurance", at least to the extent that it used to be able to, and as opinion polling showed, this concern was shared well beyond the chambers of the Diet. It is also apt to ask whether the scenario involving a blockade across the Straits of Hormuz does, indeed, present such a threat to Japan's existence as to necessitate an armed response. Justifying a rather expanded use of force based on arguments that it is for self-defense was, after all, what Yoshida Shigeru himself had noted regarding Japan's arguments for all of the conflicts it engaged in since 1931.⁴⁶

There was a significant amount of confusion regarding what conditions there existed for ensuring the safety of SDF service members and for the government's arguments that rear-area support of the kind that is now allowed – provision of fuel and ammunition – does not constitute an unconstitutional integration with an allied states' use of force. This was also a point that was brought up by representatives from every party, from the left-wing JCP to the more right-wing JRP. Indeed, it is a rather logical argument that allowing

⁴⁶ This is referred to on page 11.

SDF members to enter areas that under previous legislation would have been deemed unsafe would obviously the risks of being wounded or killed. However, the government sought to tamp down on all such fears, naturally concerned that an admission that Japanese soldiers may die would motivate more popular opposition that may have rattled the government. Again, the government was quick to answer that it would somehow work to ensure the safety of SDF members on deployment. Parallels can be seen in the historical mistrust of the state that is a central feature of Japan's pacifism and the skepticism that opposition politicians heaped upon these reassurances. For preventing *ittai*, the view that provision of ammunition and fuel is clearly an indication of the integration with the use of force was widespread. Similarly, bafflement at the argument that Japan, for its own self-defense could not target vessels supplying an attacking state with resources that are naturally necessary for allowing attacks on Japan made for a strange exchange between government and opposition representatives.

What these discourses say about Japan's security debate is that, in the long-term, it has remained remarkably similar over the years. The fears of entanglement in war was common throughout the post-war period, as were concerns that the more Japan helps in maintaining international stability, whether that be through peacekeeping missions or by provision of rear-area support, the more it risks being targeted in an attack. In such a case, Japan's eagerness for "international contributions" would backfire, and it is hard to argue for deployments that would actually make Japan less secure for its citizens. It can be argued that while Japan seems genuinely eager to aid other countries and take part in reconstruction efforts, it still shows great reluctance to accept the risk that is a natural part of increased overseas activity. On the other hand, such reluctance shows that the public does not want Japan to partake in operations which necessitate using deadly force. That

is perhaps one facet of the continuing endurance of pacifist discourse, as self-interested as it may appear.

Additionally, the legalistic nature of Japan's security debate meant that much of the discourse was not whether Japan *should* or *should not* do something, but instead whether it is legal or not in the Constitution. Indeed, using the measuring stick of whether a law exceeds the limitations of Article Nine or not seems to essentially carry the same meaning as whether the law is good or not. The opposition may not act as the guardians of the Constitution to a similar degree as they used to, but a perceived violation of Japan's supreme law still acts as a useful rhetorical tool in arguing that a particular security policy direction is no good.

As for party positions, the divisions between them may not be as wide as in the Cold War era, but there still exist clear differences that may hinder co-operation among them in the future. The DPJ, a product of multiple party mergers and a party whose origins as a Socialist party are mostly long forgotten, took a more moderate position, and its arguments mostly rested on a seeming lack of citizens' understanding, what they saw as particular defects of the law, the method of legislating (i.e. reinterpretation over revision) and on the government's rhetoric surrounding the law. The DPJ, after all, during its stint government, largely seemed to concur with arguments that Japan's external environment necessitated a wider conception of security, and its legislative record reflected this understanding. On the other hand, the JCP, with its long history of standing in opposition to any constitutional revision, and its members attack the law's basis more forcefully than the DPJ. Additionally, it is interesting to note that while much hay was made of the reactions to the laws from South Korea and China, the two countries went largely unmentioned in the debate. As normative scholars argue, Japan's security debates are mostly influenced by domestic politics, and not by issues such as the international balance

of power. Perhaps the divide between how parties interpret how Japan needs to react to the changes taking place in its neighborhood constitutes the greatest divide on security policy in the twenty-first century.

How impactful the legislation will eventually prove remains to be seen. In case the Straits of Hormuz was blockaded by mines, would the government end up dispatching the SDF, if that meant that Japanese ships would be targeted? Will militant groups in unstable areas be convinced by arguments that the provision of ammunition and fuel can somehow be separated from being used against them? These questions, at present, have no answers. Having the legal right to do something does not mean that the government or the Diet will choose to exercise that right and, considering the rather overwhelmingly negative public opinion that surrounded the legislation, it is a pertinent question to ask. On the other hand, the twenty-first century has seen two prime ministers who have shown that they are ready to stand against fierce opposition if they see their policies as necessary for Japan's security. But as well-demonstrated by research, the same laws can have varying interpretations between scholars, depending on their viewpoint and their chosen theoretical framework. To some, this law would be an example of Japan again seeking to adjust to external circumstances and instability, in accordance with realist theory. To others, the furor surrounding the law, the fierce opposition to it, the lack of public understanding and the conditions on the use of force inherent in it signal that pacifism – however different its meaning may be today – is alive and well, and its power to shape and restrain policy remains intact. Both interpretations can be correct at the same time, and one perspective of the study of security policy Japan perhaps ought to focus on the seeming gap between what the decision-makers and the population feel are the best ways for Japan to ensure its security. In the future, security debates in Japan will most likely continue to be dominated by issues such as the constitutionality of policy, risks of

entanglement in wars, and fears over sustaining casualties through deploying to potentially increasingly unstable regions of the globe.

The future: the new opposition and constitutional revision

Japanese politics have shifted considerably in the three years since the CSD legislation was passed. Abe Shinzo remains in power, and, after winning the LDP's party leadership elections in September 2018, will likely continue to do so until 2021. As for the opposition, while the JCP continues to maintain a small but stable position in a corner of the Diet, the DPJ's divided nature eventually led to the party's division into two, with the more left-leaning factions forming as the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan (CDPJ), whilst the right-leaning groups joined Tokyo governor Koike Yuriko's Party of Hope to form the Democratic Party for the People (DPP). The former now holds the title of the biggest party in the opposition, albeit the number of seats it holds remains a far cry from the heyday of the DPJ. Both parties view CSD as illegal under the Constitution, and both call for CSD to be repealed and for a return to the policy of exclusive defense (CDPJ 2018; DPP 2018). For them to be able to fulfil this vision, they would need to form an electoral alliance, coordinate their electoral strategies and then, finally, form a government together. This may prove to be a challenge, but not an impossible one. Still, as with the division between the DPJ and the JCP, and in light of the long history of the opposition being largely unable to unite against the government, it is difficult to say if they would be able to put aside their differences and win power.

Indeed, Japan may again be on the cusp of a major shift in security policy. All rumors seem to indicate that the Abe government seeks to fulfil the LDP's long-lasting dream of constitutional revision, most likely by attempting either to revise the second clause of Article Nine or to add a third clause. Both revisions would establish a constitutional basis

for the SDF's existence, something that the government perceives as necessary in order to secure the forces' legal basis. However, this time the government cannot rely purely on their two-thirds parliamentary majority, as it would also require winning a majority in a national referendum, a challenge that may prove difficult to achieve considering the evident public and opposition skepticism to security legislation. Ensuring the SDF's legal basis may not be a radical change, but the act of changing the Constitution itself would prove to be an event of immense political significance. Expect the new and old members of the opposition to fight such attempts every step of the way.

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The data for the House of Councilors (HC) is from a publicly available parliamentary debate database maintained by the National Diet Library. Linked below is the entrance to the Diet Library’s web portal.

<http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/>