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Defence of Japan: Decision-makers and Trends

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Security and defence issues in Japan are still considered to be a topic which induces debate and controversies. Defence forces and actors are submerged under myriad layers of civilian control; as a result the voice of military is often muzzled. Since the 1990s, the levers of control are shifting, muted military expressions are becoming clear, and the civilian administration too understands the need for a realistic outlook on security matters. This change does not insinuate that Japan is going back to remilitarisation way of the 1930s. Bequeathed with robust democratic structures since World War II, Japanese defence decision-making follows a certain pattern and trend. Many studies in English have examined Japan's economic, trade, and security policies, while Japan's defence decision-making has not been analysed. In recognising this neglect, this study focuses on the defence decision-making process from the decision-makers points of view. This study will aim to clear some doubts over the Japanese decision-making process opaqueness.

KEYWORDS: *defence decision;* Ringisei*;* Nemawashi*; bureaucratic political model; political parties; PARC;* Kokubozoku*;* Zaikai*; MOFA; MOF; METI; MOD; civil–military relations*

On December 27, 2011, the Chief Cabinet Secretary issued a statement revising the overseas transfer of arms and defence equipment.[1] This brought a ray of hope to

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countries as the United Kingdom and France which were eager to work with Japan in the defence sector. It was the first time Japan showed willingness to work with "likeminded" countries in addition to the United States. Earlier, this issue gained some political momentum when the ruling Democratic Party of Japan's (DPJ) Policy Affairs and Research Council (PARC) Chief, Seiji Maehara, came out forcefully in favour of revision at Washington in September 2011. The DPJ's Diplomacy and Security Policy Committee has had their own view on the three principles,[2] which prevented the transfer of defence goods to 1) communist nations; 2) countries subject to a UN resolution or arms embargo; and 3) countries involved in armed conflict or in the process of entering armed conflict. The United Kingdom was the first country to gain since the restriction was eased, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda and British leader David Cameron on April 10, 2012, agreed to strengthen bilateral defence cooperation, including joint weapons development.[3] It took nearly four decades for Japan to ease this restriction and as a result Japan has been accused of slow decision-making.

Many studies in English have examined Japan's economic, trade, and security policies, while Japan's defence decision-making has not been analysed. In recognising this neglect, this study focuses on the defence decision-making process from the decision-makers points of view. This study will aim to clear some doubts over the Japanese decision-making process opaqueness.

This paper is divided into two parts. Section 1 deals with the various decision-making models and observes the characteristics of the Japanese decision-making process. Section 2 looks at important actors and players in the defence decision-making process, here political parties, business community and bureaucratic bodies are explained in detail.

1. Japanese Decision-making

1.1. Characteristics of Japanese Decision-making

T.J. Pempel characterises Japanese decision-making as collective rather than individual and states that the Japanese prefer compromises over forceful decisions.[4] Nathaniel B. Thayer emphasises the importance of *hanashiai*, which means "talking together".[5] James T. Watkins recognises "consultation among a group" and argues that conciliatory decision-making is the rule. He contends that discussions within the

council made players' compromise easier and relieved ''the individual of personal responsibility for the decision''.[6] In this way, consensus formation helps avoid confrontation within an organisation and maintains harmony among the members. In Japanese politics, reaching a consensus takes time because of the different interests among players as well as lack of strong leadership. As a result, ''pulling and pushing'' takes place, and when consensus is reached, a decision is made.

There are three additional significant facets to Japanese decision-making. The first is characterised by Chihiro Hosoya as a ''truncated pyramid system''. This system lacks leadership at the top level of policymakers: middle-echelon players (Bureau Directors and Section Chiefs) have strong ''pulling and pushing'' power and influence within the organisation. Weak leadership increases the necessity of consensus within the system, compared with a country that has strong leadership.[7] This decision-making process is deeply rooted in the structure of *amae*[8] and the Japanese mindset of ''leaning against each other'', which means mutual support in Japanese society.

Another aspect of Japanese decision-making is that the participants seek consensus through informal talks called *nemawashi*,[9] which are frequently used to settle difference of opinions before formal meetings. It also helps to avoid open confrontation and to form a consensus. Unlike any other countries, open and face-to-face confrontation or disagreements are the exception and to be avoided. As a result, the decision may be delayed or perhaps it cannot be made. Because of consensus-building, Japan is often accused of an inability to decide without external pressure, or of deliberately delaying a decision.

The third aspect of decision-making is *ringisei*. An official of relatively low rank initially drafts a document called *ringisho*, taking into consideration senior officials' strategic views, and then circulates it to various units for approval and consensus. As a result of this time consuming process, a consensus will emerge. When a decision is made, everyone in the organisation is familiar with the subject and decided policy will be implemented without strong opposition.

Some argue that *ringisei*, consensus, *nemawashi*, and ''pulling and pushing'', are not unique, but were seen in other countries too. But some argue that these facets are unique in their degree of emphasis. Hosoya gives examples of situations that would not happen in Japan. President Richard Nixon changed US foreign policy towards China without having a consensus either among the bureaucrats in the State Department or among the congressional leaders. In contrast, Hosoya illustrates

the ''Japanese way'' historically: the Japanese government from January to August in 1939 had over 70 meetings of the Five Ministers' Conference to resolve the issue of the tripartite alliance. Holding so many meetings would rarely happen in the United States.[10]

Incidentally, the consensus formation sometimes did not work. Japan's decision to surrender in 1945 is a good case study. Even after two atomic bombs were dropped and the Soviet Union invaded Manchuria, there was no consensus among the top leaders. The decision was split between those who wanted to terminate the war (the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, and the Navy Minister), and those who insisted on fighting (the Army Minister, Army Chief of Staff, and Navy Chief of Staff). Therefore, the issue was presented to the Emperor, a rare occurrence.[11] The Emperor expressed his view, which supported an end to the war, and the military did not oppose it. Had the military been against the Emperor's will, the war would have continued. In fact, there was a coup attempt by young military officers in August 1945.[12]

1.2. Decision-making Models

While analysing foreign policy, in this case decision-making trends, three models are observed viz. rational actor model, organisational process model, and bureaucratic politics model. Here these three models are being utilised and put in the context of Japanese decision-making.

The rational actor model is based on rational choice theory. This model adopts the state as the primary unit of analysis, and international relations as the context for analysis. The state is seen as a monolithic unitary actor, capable of making rational decisions based on preference ranking and value maximisation. The rational actor model has been subject to criticisms. This model tends to neglect a range of political variables, of which Michael Clarke includes: ''political decisions, non-political decisions, bureaucratic procedures, continuations of previous policy, and sheer accident''.[13]

The organisational process model assumes that actions are regarded as outputs of different organisations. Here the state is not a unitary actor but it consists of diverse groups within the government. Decisions are made after negotiations among potential coalition members. In the context of Japanese politics this model is applicable since Japanese politicians and bureaucrats tend to form factions and these

different factions form coalition. Negotiations take place among different coalitions and a decision in made when they reach a consensus. Thus the decision-making process is a time consuming effort. This model does not devote much attention to individual players.

The bureaucratic politics model assumes that the state is a collection of different bureaucracies vying to increase their funding and size. Things are often viewed as a zero sum game where one bureaucracy ''wins'' or increases their level of funding and is seen as a loss for another bureaucracy. Here decisions are made by bureaucracies competing against each other. This model is helpful when examining Japan's decision-making process since it focuses on individual players, such as politicians and bureaucrats within the government. In Japanese politics both politicians and bureaucrats seek their own interests as well as their organisational interests. Because of these different interests, ''pulling and pushing'' takes place and a decision is reached as a result of bargaining. In other words, the bureaucratic politics model assumes that the decisions and actions of the government result from compromise, conflict, and bargaining, among individuals within the system.

2. Actors and Players

According to bureaucratic politics model, it is important to identify the power of the various participants since the more power they have, the more they influence policy outcomes. Understanding the power relationships among different players gives one a better understanding of the policy formation process and subsequent policy outcomes. This section focuses on the participants within the decision-making structure. Starting with the political parties, it discusses viewpoint of five major political parties and influence of political bodies as the PARC and the *Kokubozoku*. Interests of business community and bureaucracies are also probed.

2.1. Political Parties

The *Liberal Democratic Party* was in power for almost 54 years from its founding in 1955 until its defeat in the 2009 election. Prior to 2009, the party had only been out of power for a brief 11-month period between 1993 and 1994. In five decades of ruling the LDP has witnessed the 1960 Security Treaty; the 1976 NDPO (National Defense Program Outline which later, from 1995 onwards, was called the National

Defense Program Guidelines, NDPG), 1995, 2004; the Gulf War 1991; the 9/11 terrorist attacks; and the 1995 Sarin attacks in a Tokyo subway. As a result there is considerable opinion over defence issues inside the party. Kent Calder observed that the LDP gained influence in policymaking in the 1980s, especially in the areas ''where bureaucratic jurisdiction is ambiguous'' and ''where the interests of the constituency are strong''.[14] The LDP through the PARC controls the policy formulation and in defence-related matters, the influence of *Kokubozoku* cannot be underrated. In the subsequent sections, the role of the PARC and the *Kokubozoku* have been mentioned in detail.

The ruling *Democratic Party of Japan* (most of the current DPJ members were associated with the Democratic Socialist Party which was dissolved in 1994) advocated both the revision of the 1976 NDPO and the establishment of a new defence build-up in the 1980s. It accepted the Self-Defence Force (SDF) as constitutional, admitted the Security Treaty, and promoted its operational improvement.[15] It came to power in 2009 promising the people of Japan to evict US forces from Okinawa and stop the SDF operation in the Indian Ocean. While they were able to fulfil the latter promise, little was done in relocating US forces. Under their tenure, NDPG 2010 and the relaxation of overseas transfer of arms and defence equipment in 2011 was released, which in many way is seen as a realistic assessment of security in and around Japan.

The *Socialist Democratic Party* (earlier Japan Socialist Party) took a more flexible approach to the SDF and the Security Treaty than it had in the past. In 1984, for the first time, the SDP acknowledged that Japan indeed had military forces. It stated that the SDF was ''unconstitutional but legal'' in the sense that lawful procedures had resulted in the formation of the SDF.[16] The party stated that civilian control over the SDF needed to be strengthened and it would consider restructuring and reducing the SDF in the future. The SDP also insisted that the SDF be eventually dissolved and replaced by a peaceful national land construction corps. Finally, the SDP advocated the termination of the Security Treaty through diplomatic negotiations with the United States and signing of a United States–Japan Friendship Treaty. However, since Tomiichi Murayama, who was the chairman of the SDP, became the Prime Minister in 1994, the SDP amended its policy and now supports the Security Treaty. In addition, since 1995 the SDP has accepted the SDF as constitutional.[17]

But in February 2006, the SDP declared that the SDF was unconstitutional.[18] Perhaps the SDP is unable to find a consistent defence policy.

The *Komeito* also now recognises the constitutionality of the SDF as long as it works within the policy of "exclusive defensive defence" and if its roles and missions are limited to the protection of Japanese territories. In the 1980s, the Komeito advocated a neutral policy restructuring of the SDF into a national land guard and accepted the continuation of the Security Treaty as an inevitable and realistic response. Moreover, in the future it aims to a United States–Japan Friendship and Non-Aggression Treaty to replace the Security Treaty. In the late 1990s, the Komeito confirmed its plan to retain the Security Treaty.[19]

The *Japan Communist Party* (JCP) did not change its policy in the 1980s. It did not recognise the SDF as constitutional and gradually sought the future abolition of the SDF. The JCP also advocated the termination of the Security Treaty. While the JCP admitted the right of self defence, it believed that in the future the party would decide its attitude on the Constitution concerning the minimum and necessary means of self defence based on the will of the Japanese people. In recent years, the JCP admitted that the party will not dissolve the SDF for the time being and freeze the demand for abrogation of the Security Treaty if the JCP joins the coalition government. In this way, even the JCP in fact approves the SDF and the Security Treaty.

In the 1980s and the 1990s, except for the JCP, all the opposition parties began to support the SDF and the Security Treaty. On the one hand, the power and influence of those groups who have traditionally opposed Japan's militarisation have now declined. On the other hand, the conservative groups in the LDP and the DPJ have increased their voices. Over the last three decades, the Japanese public have supported the latter and accepted Japan's militarisation.

2.2. Political Bodies

The *Policy Affairs and Research Council* is a party organ which is outside the legislature yet has a significant role in Japanese defence decision-making. It is an intra-party policy process which primarily studies, researches and plans party policies before they are officially introduced in the Diet. It is headed by the Chairman who is appointed by the party President; he oversees and supervises the management of the Council.

Within the Council there are separate functional divisions which are headed by a Director.

In a typical policymaking pattern, the bureaucrats and the Diet members through various divisions in the PARC consult with each other from the early stages of the decision-making. This Council essentially 1) carries out intra-party discussion and generates party approval of proposed legislation before it is presented to the cabinet; 2) provides opportunities for the members of parliament's (MPs) to study legislative proposals and build relationships with the bureaucrats; and 3) irons out disagreements among branches of the bureaucracy regarding legislative proposals.[20] The draft bill is submitted to the Executive Council of the party and subsequently to the Cabinet.

Some see this development as a victory of the politicians over the bureaucracy.[21] Being part of a particular PARC division, politicians gain substantial knowledge and expertise in an issue, eventually they act as influential brokers or gate keepers for policies in their area of expertise, side-lining the views of bureaucrats. After the LDP lost the general election in 2009, many legislators viewed the PARC as one of the causes of the defeat.[22]

Currently, under the DPJ rule the PARC is chaired by Seiji Maehara, who is regarded as a China Hawk and has a considerable opinion on the security of Japan. The DPJ has given the PARC additional power under the Noda administration.[23] The statement on revising the overseas transfer of arms and defence equipment was done after careful deliberations in the PARC.

The *Kokubozoku*[24] or *Boeizoku's* influence with regard to defence matters is very prominent. From the 1980s onwards, interest in defence issues within the LDP has increased, and the party has actively embraced defence policy. Becoming a member of the *Kokubozoku* also has some merit. For example, throughout elections most SDF officials voted for the *Kokubozoku* candidates, who in turn support the SDF.

Expert opinions on the role of *Kokubozoku* in defence budget preparation are divided. Michael J. Green argues that US pressure and closer bilateral relations gave *Kokubozoku* Diet member's political leverage over the Finance Ministry in increasing the defence budget in the 1980s that led to a 6% increase every year.[25] While some argue that the LDP's *Kokubozoku* Diet members were trying to maintain the defence budget in the 1990s, their influence decreased.[26]

Former Prime Ministers and prominent *Kokubozoku* members as Ichiro Hatoyama, Nobusuke Kishi, and Yashishiro Nakasone voiced for more independent defence policy, emphasising the political and military aspect of Japan's foreign policy. Nakasone supported the revision of Article 9 of the Constitution. It is interesting to note that some the former Defense Ministers are powerful *Kokubozoku* members, Taku Yamasaki (1989–1990), Fumio Kyuma (1996–1998 and 2006–2007), Shigeru Ishiba (2007–2008), Fukushiro Nukaga (1998 and 2005–06), and Tsutomu Kawara (1988 and 2000). They have expertise on defence matters and still maintain important party posts.

Under the Junichiro Koizumi administration in the 2000s many *Zoku* Diet members lost their influence. Prime Minister Koizumi was willing to exercise his leadership without paying attention to factions and *Zoku* within the LDP. As a result, the LDP lost the flexibility to accommodate the various views and interests under the leadership of Koizumi. Under the Shinzo Abe, Yasuo Fukuda, and Taro Aso administrations, factions and *Zoku* have regained influence once again. Faction leaders exercised their influence and power in choosing the President and allocating other important posts in the party. *Zoku* Diet members are still influential in decision-making.

2.3. Business Community

The *Zaikai* (business community) forms the third leg along with the bureaucrats and politicians in the Japanese decision-making tripod. In defence policy the role of the *Zaikai* is much smaller than the role it plays in other policy areas. Moreover, the *Zaikai* is not monolithic, but reflects many different views with regard to defence issues. Prior to the 1980s, opinion from the *Zaikai* with respect to defence matters was seldom heard. After the 1980s, more business people began to actively discuss Japanese defence policy. For example, Hosai Hyuga, chairman of *Kansai Keizai Rengokai* (Japan Economic Federation in the Kansai area), proposed that Japan study the feasibility of conscription and increase her defence budget up to 1.9% of Gross National Product (GNP).[27] Shigeo Nagano, President of the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, supported reconsideration of the three no-weapons-export-principles.[28]

Japan's defence industry is small and has been under several restrictions such as the three no-weapons-export-principles and a small allocation of budget funds to

defence. It is important to recognise the increased influence of the *Zaikai* and the defence industry, *Kokubozoku* Diet members, and the Defense Agency behind Japan's military activism in the 1990s. In addition to this trend, former Prime Minister Nakasone suggested the maintenance of an independent defence industrial base while he was Director General of the Defense Agency in 1970, and decided to provide the United States with military technology. The opposition parties strongly opposed this decision, arguing that the export of military technology violated the government's policy which had declared a virtually total ban on weapons export (including technology) in 1976.[29]

The bureaucrats also became tolerant toward defence activism in the 1980s and the 1990s. In addition to the officials of the Defense Agency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) and Finance Ministry indicated support of a defence activism.[30] Moreover, among labour unions, the Federation of National Shipbuilding Labor Union proposed the domestic production of weapons. The shipbuilding industry would have like to obtain orders of naval vessels. Toshiba and Fujitsu took a serious look at defence production as well.[31] When a country faces economic recession, companies and labour unions involved in the defence industry tend to rely on steady government weapons procurement, and Japan is no exception. It can be observed that the heavy industry tend to support a rapid defence build-up, services and light industries advocated the status quo.

2.4. Bureaucracy

The *Ministry of Foreign Affairs* (MOFA) is responsible for forming and implementing foreign policy and maintaining Japan's relations with other countries. Since the conclusion of the Security Treaty of 1960, MOFA has been playing an important role in Japan's defence policy formation. This was especially true in the 1950s and 1960s when defence debates were related to Article 9 of the Constitution and the unconstitutionality of the SDF, as well as to US involvement in Vietnam and the presence of US bases in Japan. Peter J. Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara state that although the Foreign Ministry did not have a domestic political constituency, it was the primary authority in coordinating and conducting all aspects of foreign policy including economic and security issues. It has also maintained greater access to top political leaders.[32] Until the late 1970s, the Foreign Ministry emphasised

Japan's economic position with regard to the country's role within the international community, although the basis of Japan's foreign policy lay in close cooperation with the United States in large part through the Security Treaty System. The majority of the Foreign Ministry held the view that the supremacy of diplomacy and civilian control over military matters should be maintained in Japan's foreign policy.

In the area of defence and security, the MOFA had been a competent and leading authority for a long time. As the defence argument became more technical and concrete in the 1980s and 1990s, the status of the Defense Agency increased compared to the MOFA.

Hirofumi Iseri analysed Foreign Ministry officials in the 1970s and the 1980s as belonging to the ''Security Faction'' or the ''Economic and Diplomatic Faction''.[33] Until 1980 the ''Economic and Diplomatic Faction'' occupied the mainstream of the Foreign Ministry, but since the early 1980s the ''Security Faction'' has increased its influence within the Foreign Ministry. In 1979, an ad hoc committee called the Security Policy Planning Committee was created within the Foreign Ministry and chaired by Councillor Masao Takashima. The view of the ''Security Faction'' was clearly represented in the report produced by his committee, and emphasised the need to rapidly achieve the defence capability level set out in the 1976 NDPO and in the Midterm Operation Estimate for 1980–1984. It also suggested the future use of SDF officials in the United Nations Peace Keeping Operations (UNPKO). One can argue that an attempt by Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu in 1990 to dispatch SDF officials to the Middle East was made along these lines and advocated by the ''Security Faction'' of the Foreign Ministry.

The *Ministry of Finance* is in charge of macroeconomic policy and the government budget. Finance Ministry officials are the elites of the elite among the Japanese bureaucrats. Within the Finance Ministry, the Bureau of Budget is regarded as the most prestigious and perhaps the most powerful bureau. Under the director there are three deputy director and nine budget examiners. The Defense Section of the Budget Bureau is responsible for the defence budget. Within this section there are 14 officials including one budget examiner and four inspectors. In the past the Finance Ministry was regarded as more internationalist that MITI, and its relations with the MOFA were generally cooperative. Up until the late 1970s, the Finance Ministry was against the Defense Agency in opposing a sharp increase in the defence budget and supporting the opening up of the Japanese domestic market against the

opposition of MITI. However, in the 1980s and 1990s the unchallenged power of the Finance Ministry seems to have declined. Eventually, as defence technology became modernised and complicated it became difficult for the budget examiner to counter-argue with a military official of the SDF about the necessity of purchasing sophisticated weapons since the military officials have extensive knowledge about military technology.

The Finance Ministry's guiding principles and organisational basis are to retain the right to dictate budget compilation, keep the nation's budget in good condition, and evenly allocate funds to each ministry/agency. This last principle, a sense of balance or *baransu*, is particularly important when the Finance Ministry examines the defence budget. In the past, the Finance Ministry strove to keep the balance between the defence budget and other budgets, particularly in the social welfare area. In general, the Finance Ministry believed that the annual increase in the defence budget should be equal to or lesser than the annual increase of the social welfare budget and that it would be better to keep the entire amount of defence budget to half the amount of social welfare.[34]

The Ministry of Finance appears not to possess its own view of defence. The Finance Ministry has always played an effective role in checking rapid defence build-up on its fundamental economic principles. The Ministry has also tried to maintain a rational distribution of the budget by preventing unnecessary spending and keeping a balance among different items. The principles mentioned above have been gradually losing their validity. As Japan attained economic prosperity and put more money towards social welfare spending, which had been neglected for a long time, the defence budget also inevitably and rapidly increased according to the balance argument in the 1980s.

The *Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry* (METI) (earlier Ministry of International Trade and Industry) is a powerful ministry in economic policy in both domestic and international areas. Through its administrative guidance, the right to grant license and approval, and industrial policy determination, METI has exercised its strong influence over the business world in Japan.[35] METI's roles and missions are to promote Japan's foreign trade and industrial development. Its power base lies in the right to grant license and approval and administrative guidance. It may be difficult for a new firm that does not have METI's support to penetrate the Japanese domestic market.

METI's attitude towards defence issues is ambivalent. While METI accepts the necessity of Japan's independent defence build-up effort in general, it is not willing to promote a strong defence industry. The mainstream of METI officials, maintained in the 1960s and 1970s that Japan's priority should lie in promoting industrial development rather than defence capability. While sections of young officials, on the other hand, favoured reconsidering an embargo on the export of weapons of the 1960s. Although Japan has exported military-related technology to the United States since 1983, those who supported reconsideration of the weapons embargo do not represent the majority of METI.

While the Foreign Ministry and the Defense Agency were willing to export military technology to the United States, METI was reluctant to do so. After 1983, however, METI became responsible for overseeing the flow of military technology toward the United States. As a result, from the late 1980s, METI has increased its influence with regard to security policy through the issue of dual-use technologies and weapons related technology export to the United States. Since military related technology transfer is a politically sensitive issue, officials in the Export Division in the International Trade Administration Bureau are generally cautious about approving such technology transfer. METI also reviews, along with the Ministry of Finance, procurement plans submitted by the Defense Agency, taking into consideration their impact on industrial development. As a result, METI's views lacked a military perspective.[36] In any case, METI retains certain influence over defence issues including weapons procurement and dual-use technology transfer although the final decision is in the hands of the Defense Agency.

METI officials tend to actively support spin-off effects, i.e. the commercial use of technology developed in the military area and to view defence issues from a position of foreign economic policy, although some of these officials oppose the enlargement of the defence industry. These views are slightly different from those of Finance Ministry officials who regard defence matters from the standpoint of finance. Economic bureaucrats from both METI and the Finance Ministry are, however, cautious about the formation of a strong military–industrial complex and criticise military officials thinking, which tend to put too much emphasis on military capability. By sending their own officials to the internal bureaus of the Defense Agency, the Finance Ministry and METI exercised influence over the defence policy.

The *Ministry of Defense* (until 2007 the Defense Agency) theoretically is the leading agency that hold both the authority and the power in defence decision-making. In reality, it has been subordinated to both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in general, the Security Treaty in particular, and the Ministry of Finance in the area of defence budget compilation. Until it became a fully fledged ministry in 2007, its status within the government was not impressive, and officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Finance, and Economy, Trade, and Industry have placed their officials in internal bureaus.

2.5. Arena for civil military tussle?

Studies of civil–military relations often rest on a normative assumption that civilian control of the military is preferable to military control of the state. The principal problem, however, is empirical: to explain how civilian control over the military is established and maintained.

According to Samuel Huntington, civilian control means that there is a distinctive difference between political responsibility and military responsibility, and that the latter is institutionally subordinate to the former. He emphasised subjective and objective control. Subjective civilian control involves the exercise of power over military by one civilian group as a means to enhance its power at the expense of other civilian groups.[37] While the objective control relies on civilian government granting the military autonomy to exercise control within its national defence sphere and relying on the professionalism of the military to be the guarantor of military subordination to the civilian leaders.[38] According to Huntington, civilians must respect the military's professional expertise and accept the military both socially and politically. It is necessary to establish ''objective civilian control'' and democratic politics that the people could check and control.

In the case of Japan, one can see ''subjective civilian control''. Civilians do not heed to the military's professional expertise or accept independence of the ministry. In post-war Japan, the military has not been accepted as a social or political entity, and the military is kept under absolute control of the civilians. This is the ''subjective civilian control'', but today, the military demands ''objective civilian control''. Japan maintains unique civil supremacy, which is mainly based on a multilayered bureaucratic scrutiny within the internal bureaus, and Article 9 of the Constitution in checking the military.

Japan does not technically possess a military. While technically not a military, the SDF possess all the qualities of one-uniformed officers and troops under arms, a hierarchical chain of command, and a mission to defend the nation. By interpreting the constitution in a way that allowed to field forces to defend itself and using euphemistic names and terms, Japan justified the creation and formation of its armed forces.

2.6. Civil–Military Discontents

The relationship between civilian and military officials has always been a controversial issue in post-war Japan. In pre-war Japan, the military overshadowed the civilian leaders. As a result of this situation, the status of military officials in post-war Japan was intentionally lower than their status in other countries. The Defense Agency and *Kokubozuku* Diet members tried to change the status of the Defense Agency from that of a second-class government bureau to a fully fledged ministry in October 1997, the LDP's National Defense Division attempted to upgrade the Defense Agency to the status of the Ministry of Defense.[39] Such an attempt did not succeed until 2007.

While the status of the military officials in the SDF has increased vis-à-vis the status of the civilian officials in the internal bureaus in the 1980s and the 1990s, the influence and power of the military officials in the SDF are still marginal compared to their counterparts in other countries. Military officials are generally not satisfied with any situation that lacks an understanding of defence issues among the politicians. They also regard their own status in the government as extraordinarily low.

The former Chairman of the Joint Staff Council (JSC), Tsugio Yata, points out the Japanese characteristic of civilian control. He states that in the past, officials in the internal bureaus thought that civilian control meant the internal bureaus' dominance over military officials of the SDF rather than supremacy in politics over the military. Yata explains three basic differences between civilian and military officials in the Defense Agency, the first being a difference between political soundness and military rationality. The civilian thinks about Japan's defence policy from the viewpoint of political consideration while the military seeks the best military means to defend Japan. The civilian and the military also differ in their perception of threat. The civilian thinks that there is little threat to Japan while the military perceives that there is a potential threat, which might become a real threat. The third difference is that the civilian feels that the US–Japan Security Treaty has been functioning effectively, whereas the military believes that it has not.[40]

Japanese civilian officials' knowledge regarding military affairs and weapons technology is very limited since many of them majored in legal studies. Some of the high ranking officials come from other ministries/agencies rather than the Defense Agency and return to the original ministries/agencies after completing a set tenure. Therefore, those officials have difficulty in accumulating expertise on military affairs or weapons technology. Moreover, there are no universities except the Military Academy of Japan that offer course on military affairs, military strategy, or weapons technology.

There are obvious fundamental differences between the civilian and the military. Since the civilian and the military have different roles and missions, it is natural that there are confrontations over specific defence policies, organisational interests, and perceptions of potential threats to Japan. Since the 1980s the status of the military is gradually increasing as compared to the status of the civilian within the internal bureaus. It is in the field of military technology that the military particularly increased its influence. Actually, military officials in the SDF have played a central role and taken the initiative in preparation of policy drafts since the late 1980s. Today, the civilian tends to give weight to the military in defence decision-making.

2.7 Existing Structure[41]

The Cabinet has entire authority over issues related to defence of the nation. The Constitution requires the Prime Minister and other Ministers of the State in the Cabinet to be civilians. The Prime Minister acting on behalf of the Cabinet is the commander in chief of the SDF. The Minister of Defense, who is exclusively in charge of national defence, exercises general control over SDF activities. In addition, the Security Council consisting of the Prime Minister (Chairman); Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism; Minister of Defense; the Chief Cabinet Secretary; and Chairperson of the National Public Safety Commission deliberates important national defence related matters (see Figure 1).

In the Ministry of Defense, the Defense Minister is supported by the Parliamentary Senior Vice Minister of Defense and two Parliamentary Vice-Ministers of Defense. The Senior Vice Minister of Defense can be authorised by the order of the Minister of Defense in advance to carry out the task of the minister when the minister is not present. Special Advisors to the Minister of Defense offer advice to the

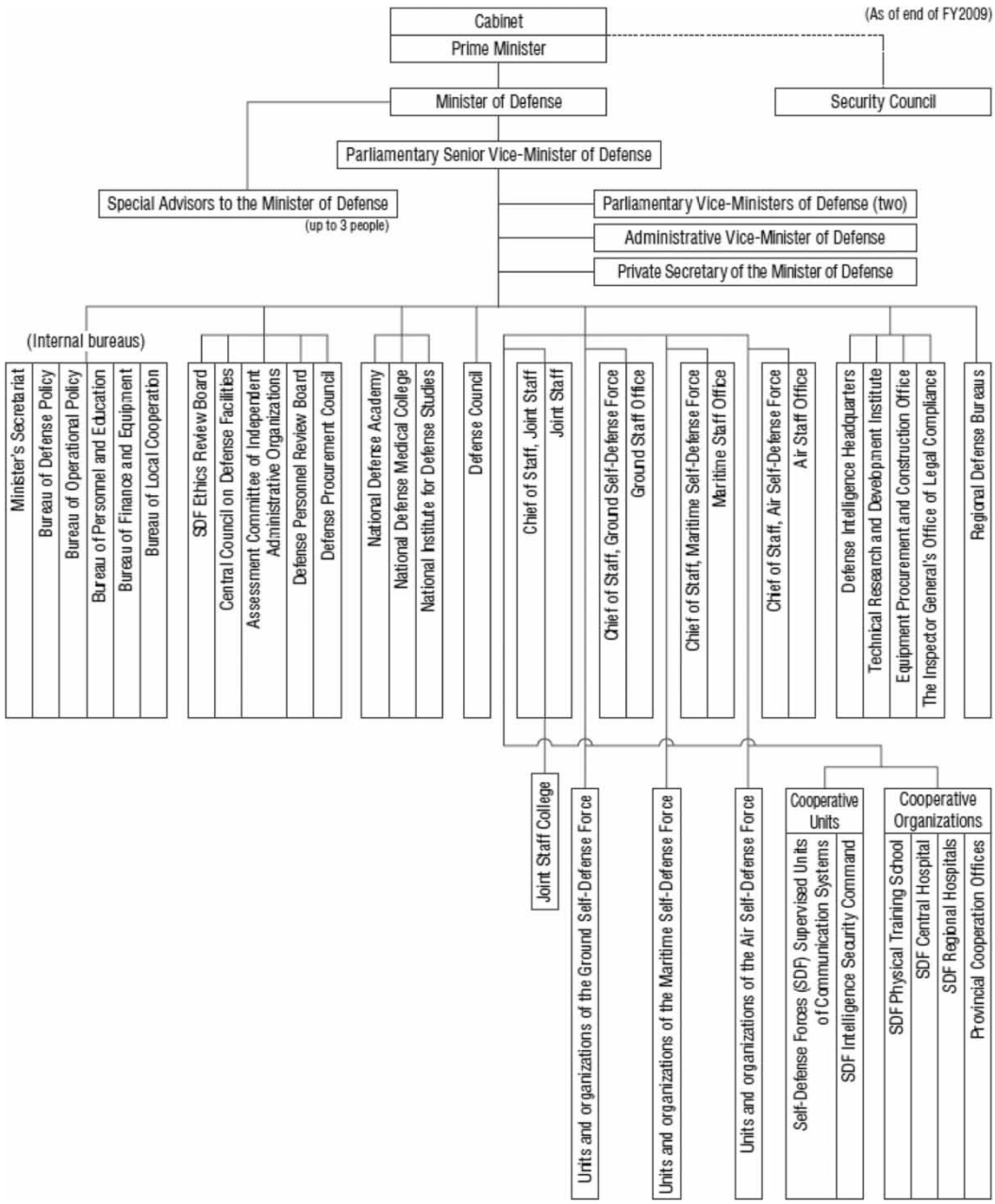

Fig 1. Organisation chart of the Ministry of Defence.
Source: Defense White Paper of Japan 2011.

Minister of Defense for the deliberation of the general policies related to the Ministry of Defense. The Administrative Vice Minister of Defense organises and supervises administrative works to support the Minister of Defense.

In 2011 there was a suggestion to introduce a new post of ''Deputy Minister of Defense'' who would be expected to organise and coordinate the tasks of various divisions related to the external affairs within the ministry and carry out the consultations and negotiations with the top level officials of the foreign defence organisations. This was introduced after realising that the missions and tasks of the ministry extend beyond the sovereign borders and frequent negotiations are required with foreign government and institutes.

The Internal Bureau, Joint Staff and Ground Staff Office, Maritime Staff Office, and Air Staff Office were established as organisations to support the Minister of Defense. The Internal Bureau is responsible for basic policies relating to the work of the SDF. The Director-General of the Bureaus, as part of their own responsibilities, support the Minister of Defense when the Minister of Defense gives instructions and authorisation to the Chief of Joint staff and the Chiefs of Ground Staff, Maritime Staff, and Air Staff. The Joint Staff is a staff organisation for the Minister of Defense concerning SDF operations. The Chief of Joint Staff supports the Minister of Defense by providing unified military expert advice on SDF operations. The Ground Staff, Maritime Staff, and Air Staff are the staff organisations for the Minister of Defense concerning their respective services except operations of the SDF, with the Chiefs of Staff for the Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF), Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF), and Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) acting as the top-ranking expert advisors to the Minister of Defense regarding these services. The Defense Council draws together the political appointees, civil servants and uniformed SDF personnel Defense Council based on their knowledge and experience.

Further, the Ministry of Defense and the SDF also consist of a number of organs in order to fulfil their mission of defending Japan. These organs include the GSDF, the MSDF, and the ASDF, as well as the National Defense Academy, National Defense Medical College, National Institute for Defense Studies, Defense Intelligence Headquarters, Technical Research and Development Institute (TRDI), Equipment Procurement and Construction Office, and the Inspector General's office of Legal Compliance (see Figure 2).

Organization	Outline
GSDF	❍ Regional Armies • Composed of multiple divisions and brigades, and other directly controlled units (such as engineer brigades and anti-aircraft artillery groups) • There are five regional armies, each mainly in charge of the defense of their respective regions ❍ Divisions and Brigades Compared to the combat troops, composed of logistics support units which support combat units and others
MSDF	❍ Self-Defense Fleet • Consists of key units such as the Fleet Escort Force, the Fleet Air Force (consisting of fixed-wing patrol aircraft units and such), and the Fleet Submarine Force • Responsible for the defense of sea areas around Japan primarily through mobile operations ❍ Regional Units The five regional units mainly guard their posts and support the Self-Defense Fleet
ASDF	❍ Air Defense Command • Composed of three air defense forces and the Southwestern Composite Air Division • Primarily responsible for general air defense duties ❍ Air Defense Force Composed of key units such as air wings (including fighter aircraft and others), the Aircraft Control and Warning Wing (including aircraft warning and control units), and Air Defense Missile Groups (including surface-to-air guided missile units)
National Defense Academy of Japan	❍ An institution for the cultivation of future SDF officers Conducts training and education for future SDF officers (including education that complies with the same university establishment standards as other universities) ❍ Offers a science and engineering postgraduate course equivalent to master's or doctoral degree from a university (undergraduate and postgraduate courses) and a comprehensive security postgraduate course equivalent to a master's degree. Conducts education and training in order to impart a high level of knowledge and research capability
National Defense Medical College	❍ An institution for the cultivation of future SDF medical officers Conducts education and training for future SDF officers who will serve as medical doctors (including education that complies with the School Education Act that universities with medical education also comply to) ❍ Offers a medical course that complies with university establishment standards for PhD programs for schools of medicine. Conducts education and training in order to impart a high ability of knowledge of advanced theoretics, application, and related-research capabilities
National Institute for Defense Studies	❍ Organization that functions as a "think tank" of the Ministry of Defense • Conducts basic research and studies related to the administration and operation of the SDF • Conducts research and compiles data on military history • Educates SDF officers and other senior officials • Manages books and documents of historical value located in the connected library
Defense Intelligence Headquarters	❍ Central intelligence organization of the Ministry of Defense, which collects and analyzes military data • Collects various military intelligence, including signal intelligence, images and other information acquired by warning and surveillance activities; comprehensively analyzes and assesses the information; and provides information to related organizations within the ministry • Consists of six communication sites and its headquarters
Technical Research and Development Inst..	❍ Central organization that conducts equipment-related research and development • Conducts R&D in response to the operational needs of each service of the SDF • Conducts R&D in a wide range of fields, from firearms, vehicles, ships, and aircraft used by each service of the SDF to equipment for responses to NBC weapons and clothing
Equipment Procurement and Construction Office	❍ Central organization for affairs related to equipment procurement and a part of the construction work required by the SDF to accomplish its duties • Necessary equipment include firearms, explosives fuel, guided weapons, ships, aircraft, and vehicles • Within the construction work related affairs, the drafting of technical standards and evaluation of plans are conducted
Inspector General's Office of Legal Compliance	❍ With orders from the Minister of Defense, checks to ensure that the tasks of the Ministry of Defense and SDF are properly carried out across the entire ministry from an independent position as well as from the standpoint of compliance
Regional Defense Bureau	❍ Local branch office that provides defense administration in the regions • Conducts administrative work related to obtaining the cooperation of local public organizations and the local people, local equipment procurement, and administration related to facilities • Bureaus established in the following eight regions: Hokkaido, Touhoku, North-Kanto, South-Kanto, Central Kinki, Chugoku Shikoku, Kyushu, and Okinawa

Fig 2. Outline of the Ministry of Defense.
Source: Defense White Paper of Japan 2011.

3. Conclusion

As the Defense Agency was upgraded to Defense Ministry, it gained a higher status within the Japanese bureaucracy. However, expanded roles and missions of the SDF and increasing power of the military are not equivalent to the resurgence of militarism in Japan, which is a return to the situation in the 1930s. Japan is a democracy with civilian control, and Article 9 does not allow resurgence of militarism. Military officials are not empowered to make defence policy by themselves or decide the SDF's overseas dispatch on their own, but have increased influence due to expanded roles and missions such as overseas dispatch and defence cooperation with US troops. As a result, the SDF became an important player in defence policy decision-making, which in turn enhanced the status of the Defense Agency within a domestic context.

Civilian bureaucrats since the 1990s have also come to share views with the military. They have become more assertive on the defence issues, and many of those who originally came from the Defense Agency have begun to think that Japan should actively use the SDF in conducting its foreign policy.

The fundamental change of power balance between the military and civilian officials is related to two factors. First, a generational change of the Japanese people, including civilian officials and politicians, is taking place. Today's Japanese people in general, young people in particular, are becoming more conservative, and nationalism in Japan is rising as Japan's economic malaise continues and people are aware of the rising Chinese economic might. The generational change and nationalism created a Japanese society which respects the professionalism of the military and emphasises ''objective civilian control''. Secondly, the expanded roles and missions of the SDF led to more influence and power of the military. As a result, the military became more confident and proud of national defence.

In 2007, the Defense Agency became the Ministry of Defense. Now the Ministry of Defense can independently submit a budget proposal without the direct control of the Prime Minister's Office. In this respect, the ministry is also equal to other ministries in the Japanese bureaucracy. Implications of transition from the Defense Agency to the Ministry of Defense are as follows. First, the Japanese government and people recognised the status of the Defense Agency as a full bureaucratic organisation. It means that Japanese society accepted the Defense Agency and the SDF. This is the beginning of Japan acknowledging ''objective civilian control''. In other words,

the Japanese society approved the military as a professional organisation. Secondly, the fact that Japan established the Defense Ministry as an official ministry further erodes Article 9. Therefore, the transition further accelerates a contradiction between the Defense Ministry, on the one hand, and Article 9, on the other hand. Finally, the transition symbolises the enhanced status of the military as compared with that of the military under the Defense Agency. Transition is also a result of expanded roles and missions of the SDF since the early 1990s. In other words, Japanese society acknowledged such activities as the SDF's participation in the UNPKO and dispatch to the Indian Ocean and Iraq although the latter dispatch might lead to the exercise of the collective self-defence. The establishment of the Ministry of Defense might further accelerate this momentum and symbolises the beginning of a new Japan with ''objective civilian control''. In times to come defence decision-making will concentrate inside the Ministry of Defense. With growing security opportunities, Japanese security in general and defence decision-making in particular will gain more significance.

Notes

1. In April 1967, Prime Minster Eisaku Sato expressed ''three no-weapons-export-principles.'' The three principles prohibit arms sales to the following cases: communist countries; countries that are or might be involved in conflict; and countries to which the United Nations prohibits weapons export. In February 1976 and again, in March 1981, the Japanese government pledged to refrain from exporting weapons to other areas in addition to the above countries.
2. According to the DPJ Diplomacy and Security Committee: 1) limit the export of finished military systems to those goods or systems that support peace-building and humanitarian interventions; 2) when involving itself in a co-development/co-production project or international consortium, ensure that the participation of the other countries in, and their support of weapons export control and management regimes is genuine and robust; and 3) these nations have good systems and standards for preventing unauthorised export to third-party nations, as well as have good capacity to maintain secrecy and confidentiality.
3. Joint statement by Prime Ministers of Japan and the UK, ''A Leading Strategic Partnership for Global Prosperity and Security'', April 10, 2012, http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/uk/joint1204.html (accessed April 11, 2012).
4. T.J. Pempel, *Policy and Politics in Japan: Creative Conservatism* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1982), pp. 3–4.

5. Nathaniel B. Thayer, *How the Conservatives Rule Japan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 251.
6. James T. Watkins IV, ''Backgrounds of Japanese Foreign Policy,'' in *Control of Foreign Relations in Modern Nations*, ed. Philip W. Bush and Martic B. Travis Jr. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1957), pp. 748–9.
7. Chihiro Hosoya, *Nihon Gaiko no Zahyo* [Coordinates of Japan's foreign policy] (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1979), pp. 205–10.
8. ''It is an attitude that begins with physical and psychic dependence for gratification on the mother and grows into psychic dependence for gratification by being enveloped in the warmth of the group and receiving its approval'', Edwin O. Reischauer, *The Japanese* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 141.
9. *Nemawashi* means ''binding the roots of a plant before pulling out'', but it usually refers to ''the practice of broad consultation before taking action'' or making a decision. Ezra F. Vogel, ed., *Modern Japanese Organization and Decision Making* (Berkley, CA: University of California Press, 1975), p. xxii.
10. Chihiro Hosoya, ''Taigai Seisaku kettei katei ni okeru Nichibei no Tokushitsu'' [United States–Japanese characteristics in foreign policy decision-making process], in *Taigai Seisaku Kettei no Nichibei Hikaku* [United States–Japanese comparison in foreign policy decision-making process], eds. Joji Watanuki and Chihiro Hosoya (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1977), pp. 1–20. During the Meiji period, the elder statesmen, or *Genro*, were in charge of both military and foreign policies to a considerable extent. During the Showa era, the military, led by lower- and middle-ranking officers, intervened in foreign policy as well as military operations and administration. Those staff officers issued orders under the name of the commander and carried out military operations, but were not forced to take responsibilities when military operations failed and battles were lost.
11. Under the Meiji Constitution, the Emperor was not in the position to override the government decision or to impose his view upon the leaders in the government although this does not mean that the Emperor was not responsible for the war.
12. The Pacific War Research Society, comp. *Japan's Longest Day* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1972).
13. Michael Clarke, ''The Foreign Policy System: A Framework for Analysis,'' in *Understanding Foreign Policy: The Foreign Policy Systems Approach*, eds. M. Clarke and B. White (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1989), pp. 27–59.
14. Kent Calder, ''Japanese Foreign Economic Policy Formation: Explaining the 'Reactive State','' *World Politics* 40 (1988): 530–1.
15. Asagumo Shimbunsha, ed., *Boei Handobukko* 1985 [A handbook for defence 1985] (Tokyo, 1985), pp. 414–6.

16. *New York Times*, March 1, 1984.
17. Asagumo Shimbunsha, *Boei Handobukko* 1985, pp. 409–11; Asagumo Shimbunsha, ed., *Boei Handobukko* 1999 [A handbook for defence 1999] (Tokyo, 1999), p. 697; and Asagumo Shimbunsha, ed., *Boei Handobukko* 2001 [A handbook for defence 2001] (Tokyo: Minsitry of Defense, Japan, 2001), p. 745.
18. *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), February 11, 2006.
19. Asagumo Shimbunsha, *Boei Handobukko* 1985, pp. 412–3; Asagumo Shimbunsha, *Boei Handobukko* 2001, pp. 736–7.
20. Hitoshi Abe, Muneyuki Shindō and Sadafumi Kawato, *The Government and Politics of Japan* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1994), pp. 126–7.
21. Ibid.
22. Ellis S. Krauss and Robert J. Pekkanen, ''The Rise and Fall of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party,'' *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 69, no. 1 (2010): 5–15.
23. Before approving bills at a Cabinet meeting, the government now must put the bills to the committee to be examined and obtain the endorsement of the committee's chairman, Maehara, a procedure that was not required in previous DPJ administrations. *Yomiuri Shimbun*, September 2, 2011.
24. *Kokubo* means ''national defence''. *Kokubozoku* means those Diet members who are active in the area of defence. There are other *Zoku* Diet members such as *Bunkyozoku* (education), *Kensetsuzoku* (construction), and *Norinzoku* (agriculture).
25. Michael J. Green, *Arming Japan: Defense Production, Alliance Politics, and the Postwar Search for Autonomy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 120–2.
26. Patrick M. Cronin and Michael J. Green, ''Redefining the US–Japan Alliance: Tokyo's National Defense Program,'' McNair Paper 31 (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1994), p. 5.
27. *Nihon Keizei Shimbun* (Tokyo), February 9, 1980.
28. Hideo Otake, *Nihon no Boei to Kokunai Seij*, (Sanichi Shobo, 1988), p. 318.
29. Chikara Kuranari and Mike M. Mochizuki, ''Nichibei Boei Sangyo Kyuryoku no Tenbo'' (A view of cooperation of United States-Japanese defense industries) in *''Mosaku'' Nichibei Shin Jidai* (United States-Japan relations toward a new equilibrium: Annual review, 1982–1983), ed. Ezra F. Vogel (Tokyo: Nihon Hyoronsha, 1984), p. 138, p. 140.
30. Yu Takaoka, ''Fujosuru Sankangun Fukugotai'' [A rising military–industrial bureaucratic complex], *Seikai*, January 1981, pp. 165–8.
31. Kazuo Tomiyama, ''Buki Yushustsu e no Kiekan na Dotei'' [A dangerous journey toward the export of weapons], *Seikai*, February 1982, p. 130.
32. Peter J. Katzenstein and Nobuo Okawara, *Japan's National Security* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1993), pp. 23–4.

33. Hirofumi Iseri, ''Anpoha' Kanryo no Taito-Gaimusho'' [The rise of the security faction bureaucrats-The Ministry of Foreign Affair]. *Sekai*, January 1981, 146–52.
34. Kazuo Yasuhara, ''Seiikika suru Boei Yosan'' [The defence budget: an untouchable area], in *Keizai Kanryo no Jittai* [The reality of the economic bureaucrats], ed. Masao Yamamoto (Tokyo: Mainichi Shimbunsha, 1972), 124.
35. Chalmers Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982).
36. Katzenstein and Okawara, *Japan's National Security*, pp. 31, 33–6.
37. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil–Military Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), p. 80.
38. Ibid.
39. The Ministry of Foreign affairs was fully aware of this attempt, and decided to set up the Security Policy committee within the Foreign Ministry in order to keep the leadership in Japan's security policy. The Foreign Ministry was strongly concerned about the situation in which only defence officials would decide security policies. Therefore, the Foreign Ministry intended to appeal its *raison d'être* by showing its strong support toward comprehensive security policies. *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), October 22, 1997.
40. Takao Sebata, *Japan's Defense Policy and Bureaucratic Politics 1976–2007* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010), pp. 80–1.
41. The following analysis is taken from the Defense White Paper of Japan, *Defense of Japan*, various years.