

*Can Tokyo keep faith with a "no war" constitution and avoid charges of a "free ride"?*

## IN DEFENSE OF JAPAN

by Robert W. Barnett

Threats to the security of Japan and the world are manifold, but for Japan the "enemy" is war.

For thirty years a United States bearing global strategic responsibility and a Japan committed to "no war/no collective security" have, despite apparent differences and frequent setbacks, collaborated so successfully that East Asia has become the growth miracle of the developing world. During these years the backdrop for Japan's strategic calculations—and its hesitations—has been its concept of "Comprehensive National Security." It is important, then, for us in the West to understand just what this concept means.

Comprehensive Security has become a Japanese term intended to suggest how Japan can help to forestall, to prevent, or to limit war. But it is also a document. In April, 1979, Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira requested that a task force headed by Dr. Masamichi Inoki, former head of Japan's Defense Academy, prepare a study of "Comprehensive National Security." The task force's report was submitted to Acting Prime Minister Ito in July, 1980, shortly after Ohira's untimely death. The report dealt with Japan's relations with the United States, its position in the Pacific Region and in the world, its vulnerabilities with respect to energy, food, and natural disaster, its structural economic and social weaknesses at home and internationally, and the inadequacies of Japan's military "denial force."

The task force report demonstrates Japan's awareness that as a superstate it bears responsibilities in a global economic system, and that as a major power in an East Asia/Pacific neighborhood it bears somewhat different responsibilities. Washington and Tokyo make different assessments of that shared environment.

Washington considers the Soviet Union the enemy and expects others to share the burden of mutual security. Washington deplors any confusion of mind about what it sees as a self-evident common military purpose.

Tokyo considers the Soviet Union a potential adversary, of course—very heavily armed, yet otherwise vulnerable. Tokyo recognizes that burden-sharing is necessary but be-

lieves it should not be measured solely by the possession of weapons. Tokyo also believes that a lack of precise articulation of common purpose can often be a source of safety.

Japan's threat perceptions have differed from Washington's over time in part because the Japanese never really accepted the notion of a coherent Sino-Soviet bloc, never considered China to pose any significant threat, and never thought probable a direct attack by the Soviet Union against Japan. Among Tokyo's own long-standing fears are those of losing access to overseas food and energy sources, of American indifference to Japan's need for vital imports and access to U.S. and other markets, of losing acceptability as an active partner in the economic growth of Southeast Asia, of a breakdown of the international system, and of surges of disorder anywhere.

In addition there has been a fear of Soviet strategic miscalculation, symbolized by Russia's "irrational" creation of military installations on the Northern Islands, its downing of KAL flight 007, its handling of Japanese fishing rights, its behavior in Kampuchea and Afghanistan, its behavior with respect to Poland, and so forth. Japan retains the memory of a major war fought and won against czarist Russia eighty years ago, as well as of recurrences of seriously troubled relations with Moscow throughout this century. Tokyo is today well informed about Russia's current buildup of naval, air, and missile capability in East Asia but less inclined than Washington to attribute to Moscow unremitting or irreversibly sinister intentions. It attaches great importance to keeping channels open for talk.

### PRIORITIES AND PROCESS

The 1980 report had its roots in the much earlier and far more loosely formulated "Yoshida Doctrine," which evolved within the framework of the "no war" Article 9 of the Constitution, the U.S.-Japan security treaties of 1952 and 1960, creation of the Self-Defense Forces in 1954, resumption of "normal" relations with the USSR in 1956, enunciation of the three nuclear principles—no production, possession, or introduction of such weapons—and normalization of relations with the People's Republic of China in 1972. With the growth of Japan's formidable economic powers came recognition of Japan's responsibility to enter into bilateral aid commitments, to make large contributions to the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and other financial institutions, to strengthen and stabilize the world economy by other appropriate measures, and to make

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constructive diplomatic responses to crisis situations abroad. All of this preceded publication of the report.

In considering the actual national commitments called for by the broad concept of Comprehensive National Security, Japan keeps faith with Article 9 of its Constitution, avoids behavior likely to excite alarm elsewhere in East Asia—notably in Korea, China, and the ASEAN area—and contributes to the effective functioning of a worldwide, nondiscriminatory, competitive economic system through aid, trade liberalization, and collaboration in making structural adjustments in the system. Japan has understood, of course, both the benefits and the obligations flowing from the U.S.-Japan security treaties. It has understood the necessity of trying to anticipate tactical requirements of conventional military engagement with the Soviet Union. And, with increasing bewilderment and frustration, Japan has tried in various ways to forestall growth of the virulent “free-ride” charges made against Japan in the U.S. and elsewhere.

The concept of Comprehensive Security often requires reconciliation of conflicting interests and purposes. As a practical matter, that reconciliation takes place every year during a bureaucratic and legislative budget process in which Japan’s central concern has always been the competitive power—even survival—of Japan’s vulnerable/dynamic economy. It is the budget process that has defined and still defines Japan’s national priorities.

The bedrock of Japan’s own security and Japan’s greatest contribution by far to the security of other countries in the East Asian Region is the administration of a stable, growth-oriented, and reliably outward-looking/interdependent economic system. This can be asserted with great confidence because Japan, as a buyer and seller of goods, capital, technology, and management, has been the most steady external contributor to effective planning for economic growth throughout the entire East Asian neighborhood—and thus to the legitimacy of its leaders’ governing authority.

Whereas Japan’s growth, low rate of inflation, low interest rates, high rate of savings, low rate of unemployment, and brilliant achievements in management and technology have together presented pace-setting challenges to the United States and other highly industrialized countries, for East Asia the Japanese “locomotive,” even under strain, has been seen as an anchor of security and a source of hope for continued growth. This was noticed particularly in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when uncertainties about United States growth, interest rates, inflation, unemployment, and protectionist inclinations carried threatening implications for other East Asian countries.

Japan’s East Asian trading partners, respecting Japan’s growth achievement, also desire, perhaps even more than the Common Market countries, easier access to Japan’s “protected” markets. They also believe that Japan should extend more and easier aid along the lines referred to in the report on Comprehensive National Security. The U.S. State Department’s 1980 estimate of aggregate aid and defense expenditures as percentage of GNP (U.S. 5.8 per cent; U.K. 5.4; France 4.6; West Germany 3.6; Australia 3.3; Japan 1.3) places Japan in a bad light. This is particularly so when Japan enjoys large surpluses in the U.S.-Japan trade account. But a critical difficulty in judging Japan fairly as trading partner and as aid donor is the

overstrong dollar and the weak yen, causing an exchange rate that Japan deplors and for which it is not to blame.

An underlying assumption of Japanese thinking about national interest and effectiveness is that the possession of voluminous, accurate, and usable information is a paramount strategic asset. Japan's educational system, the sophistication and knowledge of its business community, its close attention to the potentials of technology and to quality control, and its avid interest in cultural and technological borrowings worldwide—starting with China over a thousand years ago—confirm the nation's commitment to the idea that knowledge is power.

Japan now recognizes its interdependence and its consequent responsibility, but Japan's requirement for contributing its economic, scientific, technological, and human resources to other countries is that it have specific knowledge of the use to which those resources will be put and their likely consequences. This requirement explains in part Japan's preference for "tied aid," which must be spent on the purchase of Japanese goods, and accounts for its high quality. But precise foreknowledge also restrains initiatives that, more boldly designed, might help to restructure the world community. Comprehensive Security invites no such daring.

One result of this approach is that some Japanese aid remains unpublicized. For example, hardly noticed by anyone, even in Japan, is its substantial Comprehensive Security aid to Egypt, Turkey, Pakistan, and Thailand.

#### **LONG EARS AND PORCUPINES**

Japan faces a dilemma: If it presents a low military profile, it invites charges of "free ride" from Americans and some Europeans; if it declares the intention of investing more heavily in weapons, it provokes from others—both friends and adversaries—fears of Japanese remilitarization and/or destabilizing superpower aspirations. Therefore Japan must undertake only those military projects that can demonstrate the reality of increased military effectiveness without violating the "only for defense" interpretation of Japan's "no war" Constitution—an interpretation that all of Japan's neighbors want Japan to respect.

Prime Minister Suzuki's promise to undertake the defense of a thousand nautical mile radius alarmed several of Japan's neighbors and prompted backtracking explanations to the Japanese Diet. Washington applauded Suzuki's commitments to expand Japan's military responsibilities; but if those commitments—reconfirmed by Prime Minister Nakasone—continue to provoke excessive anxiety within Japan and elsewhere, Washington should explore ways in which Japan could gain better combat effectiveness within an unassailably "defense only" framework.

Japan might, for example, advertise a conspicuous reliance on a high-cost AWACS system—located, perhaps, in Hokkaido and Kyushu. This would be a shorthand way of advising all of Japan's neighbors of its intention to acquire an elaborate, comprehensive, high-technology capability for gathering exhaustive and swiftly retrievable military information strictly for defensive purposes. Japanese and American negotiators are already moving toward something like such a system—upgrading BADGE (Basic Air Defense Ground Environment) and buying E2Cs and P3Cs—though so far without using "AWACS" as the term

to characterize its great capability and its "defense only" usefulness. Washington should—and would, of course—encourage Tokyo to go on and develop as efficiently as possible just such a threat-analysis capability. If this capability were, over time, to become as good as our own, all would gain. Knowledge is one cure for paranoia.

Nakasone's 1970 Defense White Paper was the first Japanese proclamation dealing explicitly with the problem of security. Nakasone, then head of the Defense Agency, challenged the proposition that great economic power necessitated great military power. And to him has been attributed the concepts of Japan having "long ears" and being a "porcupine." AWACS should be talked about as serving these purposes only.

Japan should use all of its rich intellectual, diplomatic, political, economic, and scientific resources to forestall proliferation of nuclear weapons and the calamity of nuclear war. So far Japan has stood back somewhat from supporting various worldwide arms control proposals and from taking a public stand on such difficult issues as "no first use" of nuclear weapons. However, in many informal ways Japan is committed to moving in nonnuclear, peace-promoting, war-preventing directions.

#### **A WORKING AGENDA**

Two events of 1983 tested the relevance and adequacy of Japan's basic concept of national security. The first test came with the hawkish-sounding rhetoric of an English-speaking Japanese prime minister during his carefully crafted, widely publicized, and highly successful visit to Washington in January, 1983. The second came with Japan's sober reaction to the downing of the Korean Air Lines 747 by an interceptor of the Soviet Air Force on September 1.

The Inoki Report on Comprehensive National Security that was published in 1980 at the direction of Prime Minister Ohira attempted to articulate in truly comprehensive terms the strategic concepts that should guide Japan's international behavior. The United States, Europe, and the countries of Southeast Asia had never before seen anything of comparable conceptual coherence come out of Tokyo.

Japanese opinion was divided from the first over what the Inoki study group really intended vis-à-vis an increase in Japan's military capability and Japan's assuming greater national responsibility for the effective functioning of a worldwide political and economic system. Some viewed the report as presenting a rationale for a substantial arms buildup, others as an elaborate rationale for not doing so.

Actually, the report became the comprehensive working agenda for an ongoing review of Japan's tactical options within broadly settled policy guidelines. It did little more than invite marginal changes in assigning priorities for the use of national resources to meet medium and long-term requirements to sustain Japan's competitive powers in an uncertain and sometimes hostile world environment. As usual, it was the annual budget process that revealed Japan's calculation of national security requirements at home and abroad. No prime minister could escape the harsh logic of numbers screened by flinty-eyed computer operators at the Ministry of Finance. Ironically, Nakasone did not ask for a greater increase in the 1984 defense appropriations than had been requested by Ohira in 1980 or by Suzuki in 1981 and 1982. The actual figure, approved in January,

is 6.55 per cent, 4.8 per cent adjusted for inflation.

Tokyo has tried to separate politics from economics for thirty years, and it still tries to do so. Japan's framework for assessing military danger is regional; it is the capabilities and intentions of nearby neighbors that are subjected to scrupulous analysis, with relatively less attention given to global implications of the presumed ideological compulsions of Moscow, Pyongyang, Hanoi, or Peking.

The American framework for assessing military threat, by contrast, is global and deeply influenced by Washington's perception of the Soviets' ideologically motivated intentions in every troubled corner of the world. Perhaps perversely, Japan is less wont than America to fear Russian adventurism in the Pacific Region.

Though their threat analyses differ, both Washington and Tokyo regard their alliance as the linchpin of security in the Pacific Region. But linchpin notwithstanding, late 1982 was a time when Washington and Tokyo confronted each other angrily over many economic and defense issues. Economist Fred Bergsten offered an explanation: There has been such anger, historically, when the value of the dollar is too strong—largely because of Washington's fiscal and financial responses to structural vulnerabilities in the American economy. Though in fairness Japan could not be held responsible for Washington's management of fiscal and financial policy—budget deficits, high interest rates, tax cuts, and so on—Japan was nevertheless widely blamed for their consequences—the loss of America's competitive strength and unemployment. In late 1982 mutual distrust and recrimination between Washington and Tokyo had become intense and dangerous.

Seen in historical context, that distressing confrontation had its silver lining. Japanese and Americans learned to talk about their problems openly and as friends. When Nakasone and Reagan met in Washington and in Williamsburg, the mere exchange of frank opinions did wonders in clearing the air—and even prompted speculation that a new and daring entente between Tokyo and Washington was in the making. At the so-called Shimoda Conference held outside of Washington in September, dialogue between Americans and Japanese was refreshingly open and amiable. Notably, Masashi Nisihara and Richard Betts advanced the helpful recommendation that both countries start with the assumption that there will be *two coordinated strategies* rather than *one common strategy* and then try to expand the area of concerted action.

Shortly after Prime Minister Nakasone's January conversations with President Reagan in Washington, some senior officials in Tokyo forecast the early demise of the concept of Comprehensive National Security. They had perhaps forgotten that the view of weapons in Nakasone's first Defense White Paper of 1970 matched that of the 1980 Inoki report. They had forgotten also that Nakasone had addressed a symposium at Tokyo University in 1978 in which what he had to say about comprehensive security anticipated almost word for word the Inoki report.

By August, 1983, Prime Minister Nakasone had convened a newly created eleven-member study council to consider questions related to peace. At this time it had become a political necessity for him to declare to the Japanese voter that he embraced much the same strategic doctrine as his predecessors. Yet, whether in study groups, councils, or elsewhere, there is one subject that the Jap-

anese rarely, if ever, discuss among themselves: war fighting by Japanese forces. I made this discovery in Tokyo during January, 1983. Even Japanese favoring significant increases in Japanese defense spending were unable to discuss how a nonnuclear Japan could, as a practical matter, fight a limited conventional war. Alone, even in a "skirmish" in Japanese waters or Japanese airspace with a Soviet adversary, it could not be sure to keep the encounter contained. Japanese combat scenarios assume that only in combination with U.S. strategic capabilities could Japan consider engaging the Russians. But if a truly effective American force—including, of course, its nuclear elements—was present and ready to fight, a large Japanese combat capability might actually be redundant.

In the aftermath of Flight 007's downing it became clear that Japan had a significant—and heretofore unnoticed—capability to deter, and one that did not require flaunting a war-fighting capability. Japanese monitoring facilities gathered information that made possible precise reconstruction of the event. Had Moscow known that Tokyo possessed and exercised this capability, the tragic event of September 1 might not have occurred.

The main agenda item for Americans and Japanese talking through common security interests should thus be an exploration of how Japan's unwillingness to contemplate military combat on its own may be reconciled with Washington's proclaimed readiness to fight strategic wars over global concerns. Such discussions—with the participation of legislators and representatives of labor and other interest groups in both countries—should aim at determining how both allies can benefit from burden-sharing without abandoning their different concepts of strategic necessity, or even without really trying to "coordinate" those concepts.

Any such accommodation would require that Japan not only reconsider how to spend its \$12-13 billion defense appropriation but that it commit all of its nonmilitary instruments to the task of forestalling economic and social turmoil and preventing war—and do so with the imagination and on something like the scale of the United States effort after World War II. Conscious that Washington and the Third World look to Tokyo for such leadership, Japan has already set forth the possible uses of a multibillion dollar global infrastructure development fund to which it would be a disproportionately large contributor.

On the American side, such an accommodation would require Washington to invest its skills and power in the pursuit of worldwide arms control and disarmament arrangements, recognizing that Japan will take no great comfort in merely bearing witness to the growth of American strategic war-fighting capability to deter the Soviet Union.

A rereading of the Inoki Report on Comprehensive National Security shows that Japan is prepared conceptually to collaborate with the United States in such an effort at burden-sharing. Rather than causing Japan to reverse or revise its declared strategic purposes, Washington should encourage Tokyo to flesh out its own basic concept of security, to pay the cost of its own commitments, and to take the lead in devising imaginative uses of nonmilitary instruments to preserve the peace. [VV]