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Restructuring the U.S.–Japan Alliance

TOWARD A MORE EQUAL PARTNERSHIP

Edited by Ralph A. Cossa

CSIS

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The Pacific Forum CSIS, based in Honolulu, operates as the autonomous Asia-Pacific arm of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Founded in 1975, the thrust of the Forum's work is to develop cooperative policies in the Asia-Pacific region through debate and analyses undertaken with the region's leaders in the academic, government, and corporate arenas. The Forum's programs encompass current and emerging issues in political, security, economic/business, and ocean policy issues. It collaborates with a network of more than 30 research institutes around the Pacific Rim, drawing on Asian perspectives and disseminating its projects' findings and recommendations to opinion leaders, governments, and publics throughout the region.

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and think pieces, were vetted during the two major joint meetings alone (April 1996 in Washington and January 1997 in Tokyo); all in all, over 100 scholars, security analysts, and government officials participated. Several have contributed works to this volume, which draws heavily from presentations at the January 1997 Tokyo meeting.

This volume, not unlike the study on which it draws, attempts to advise the current debate regarding U.S. and Japanese efforts to restructure or revitalize their nations' bilateral alliance in light of emerging post–Cold War strategic realities. It is predicated on the assumption that the alliance has served and, if properly managed and maintained, can continue to serve the national security interests of both nations.

Not all analysts believe that a post–Cold War alliance is in Japanese or U.S. interests, and passing consideration was given to these views, if only to meet the need to explain the converse. Such views are regularly articulated by critics on both sides. But the near-consensus view of this project's participants is that the risks and costs to both Japan and the United States of going it alone make such a choice dangerous if not destabilizing.

The volume is set out in three sections. Part 1 examines the overall East Asian geopolitical environment to place the alliance in its proper strategic context. Part 2 looks at the alliance itself in an attempt to better define its current and future role. Finally, part 3 examines existing and potential new challenges to the alliance and addresses future Japanese roles and missions to ensure a more balanced partnership as we enter the twenty-first century. The volume is a blend of short commentaries and longer analytical assessments. The views presented are those of the individual authors and not their parent organizations, institutions, or governments.

Part 1 begins with Professor Ezra Vogel's commentary on how current U.S. attempts to develop more cordial relations with the People's Republic of China have influenced and may continue to influence Japanese attitudes and the U.S.-Japan alliance. Vogel also lays out the fundamental challenge facing U.S. and Japanese policymakers as they work to reaffirm and reinforce their mutual alliance; namely, how to improve U.S.-Japan relations without simultaneously increasing Sino-U.S. or Sino-Japanese tensions. He concludes that efforts aimed at reducing mutual suspicions and establishing a relationship of trust among all three states should be at the center of the U.S.-Japan security dialogue.

In chapter 2, security analyst Chung Min Lee takes a step back from this important trilateral relationship to examine the broader post–Cold War East Asian security environment. He argues that the end of the Cold War has brought with it an end to the predominance of U.S. strategic thought as the driving factor behind regional national security strategies. This has caused a "strategic awakening" in East Asia that may fundamentally change how the nations of the region relate to one another. Economic and political considerations, as well as more traditional defense-related factors, will also play a greater role in shaping emerging security perceptions. A principal determining factor will be U.S.-China relations and how other states in the region contend with this potentially volatile, shifting relationship. The U.S.-Japan relationship and Japan's perceived commitment to the alliance as an alternative to a more independent (and potentially threatening) military capability will also play a key role as the states of East Asia increasingly take the lead in shaping the future geopolitical landscape.

In chapter 3, Professor Matake Kamiya examines various multilateral security arrangements—common security, collective security, and cooperative security—to assess their feasibility and applicability to East Asia. He concludes that only cooperative security, in the form of an improved ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), has a chance of playing a relevant role in the foreseeable future in East Asia. He predicts, however, that soon no emerging framework for security cooperation will be able, by itself, to effectively ensure peace and stability in East Asia. Kamiya therefore prescribes a double-layered security system with two complementary components: the ARF, to promote mutual understanding, trust, and reassurance; and the U.S.-Japan alliance, to secure the U.S. military commitment to the region and to be prepared to cope with military conflicts if the ARF fails to prevent them.

Part 2 begins with my own assessment, in chapter 4, of the current state of U.S.-Japan relations, in which I try to separate fact from some of the popular fictions or misperceptions about the alliance and where it is heading. The alliance remains viable because it continues to serve the vital national security interests of both nations. It does not prevent Japan from becoming a "normal" nation, as some critics maintain. Nor does the current revitalization effort require Japan to remilitarize or to play a more aggressive military role in the region. Most important, I contend,

the reaffirmation process currently under way is not aimed at containing China or at threatening any of Japan's neighbors: The goal is to enhance the prospects for future regional peace and stability by ensuring continued close security cooperation between the United States and Japan into the next century. The chapter also includes some basic facts regarding the controversy over U.S. bases in Okinawa to set the stage for the discussions in chapters 8 and 9 on this sensitive issue.

In chapter 5, Professor Yasuhiro Takeda concludes that an alliance that depends on shared interests alone is vulnerable; he believes that a firm shared commitment toward the promotion of democratic values stands as another important key to the alliance's success. He identifies and attempts to reconcile the different approaches that the United States and Japan continue to follow in pursuit of this common goal, while cautioning us not to confuse alternative approaches with any basic differences in fundamental values or desired outcome. Takeda recommends measures that both countries can adopt in order to avoid discord and confrontation while promoting democratic values abroad.

U.S. American security specialist Patrick Cronin, in chapter 6, examines some near-term external events that could have a specific impact on the U.S.-Japan alliance. These include the U.S. Defense Department's Quadrennial Defense Review; the potential for both forward and backward movement toward peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula; and the fate of Russia as it confronts the external reality of NATO enlargement even while it continues to face the internal reality of potential political instability. Cronin also takes us back to Ezra Vogel's debate in chapter 1 about "the year of China" to address more specifically its impact on the alliance. Cronin concludes that, given the above uncertainties, efforts to strengthen the U.S.-Japan alliance and increase its flexibility to respond to crisis are essential. This increases the significance and urgency of the Japan-U.S. Defense Guidelines Review as a vehicle for improving both countries' deliberate planning processes.

In chapter 7, Japanese businessman Minoru Makihara notes that in today's world, topics such as economics, security, social affairs, and politics cannot be compartmentalized. As a result, private and public sectors, governments, and companies from different countries will have to undergo constant adjustments in their roles and find new forms of cooperation. He notes that a healthy U.S.-Japan security relationship requires more than a

security treaty and strong and decisive political leadership. It also requires harmonious economic relations. Makihara maintains that the only way the United States and Japan can improve global prosperity and achieve security is through steady economic engagement with each other (at both the private- and public-sector levels) and with, and in, third countries. By incorporating potential trouble spots into the global economic order, and by contributing to their development and reducing their susceptibility to economic crisis, he concludes, Japan and the United States together will be creating a more stable world order at minimum cost and with maximum benefit to all.

Part 3 opens with a thoughtful review by Professor Haruo Shimada, a distinguished economist and chairman of the Okinawa Problem Committee, of the largely domestic complexities involving base issues in Okinawa. The committee was commissioned by Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan for hearing and responding to the needs of the people in the Okinawan municipalities housing U.S. military facilities. Shimada notes that, while weapons and ammunition are important, security rests ultimately on trust between people. He concludes that a solid relationship—the foundation of security—has not yet been fully established between the people of Okinawa and Japanese mainlanders or between Okinawans and Americans. He calls for an end to the "siege mentality" on Okinawa and the establishment of firm trust in three layers: among Japanese citizens (including Okinawans); between Japan and the United States; and among related nations.

This is followed in chapter 9 by a comprehensive review of the rationale for a continuing U.S. Marine presence in Okinawa. Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force Colonel Noboru Yamaguchi lays out many of the arguments against the utility of ground troops (marines) and then shows, from a military perspective, why these forces still play a critical role not only in the defense of Japan and in response to regional contingencies, but for peacetime confidence-building, humanitarian assistance, and the preservation of regional stability. He concludes that what we must do now is promote measures to reduce the burden on Okinawa while keeping the U.S. Marines forward-based there so that they can continue to play their important roles. The successful handling of the Okinawa base issue will, he notes, require better public support and understanding; an extensive and open discussion is essential to greater public awareness of the importance of the U.S. military presence in Okinawa and elsewhere in Japan.

In chapter 10, an up-and-coming expert in Japanese politics, Dr. Michael Green, attacks head-on one of the more contentious regional security issues, that of theater missile defense, or TMD, with special attention to Chinese complaints about prospective cooperation between Japan and the United States in developing better missile defense systems. After setting forth the reasons why he believes TMD is an essential component of future U.S.-Japan defense cooperation, Green identifies and then presents the counterarguments to China's primary complaints about TMD; namely, that TMD undermines China's nuclear deterrent, will lead to an independent Japanese nuclear deterrent, will provoke changes in China's nuclear doctrine, undermines arms control, and is "aimed" at China. For China to substantiate its accusations, Green asserts, requires more strategic dialogue and transparency about Chinese nuclear forces and doctrine. In the meantime, the United States and Japan should focus on strengthening interoperability as extended air defense systems come online, while initiating joint research on technologies that leave maximum flexibility for future use.

Professor Masato Kimura, in chapter 11, argues that the time has come for the Japanese people to engage in a thorough, informed debate on Japan's future security. This task is made difficult, however, by the general lack of awareness of military or broader security issues, which grows out of the historic assumption that, somehow, even discussing such issues could promote Japanese militarism. In explaining why he believes this assumption to be false and self-defeating, Kimura provides useful insights into Japanese pacifism, past and present. He maintains that Japan's "economy-first" outlook has caused Tokyo to also approach politics, security, and international relations from the standpoint of economic efficiency rather than Japanese national interests, thus making Tokyo unprepared to deal with events such as the 1991 Persian Gulf War. He concludes that Japan urgently needs an active program of security-related education to preserve it as a major power, well-balanced in military, economic, and cultural fields.

In chapter 12, Pacific Forum analyst Torkel Patterson argues that, given a lack of national will and natural resources, plus the fact that its self-defense forces are defensive in nature, Japan is not and will not become a military superpower. Patterson believes that Japan can best serve its national interests by continuing to maintain a complementary and fully interoperable military force structure with the United States. This said, he

nonetheless argues that the roles and missions of Japan's Self-Defense Forces rightly include the Middle East and that the Japanese government should develop and adopt the legal regulatory environment that will allow its self-defense forces to operate there, in close conjunction with the United States or the United Nations (while recognizing that the political decision to do so will be made on a case-by-case basis). He sees restrictive constitutional interpretations relating to collective security and collective self-defense as anachronistic in the post–Cold War world; they weaken Japan's moral and political authority in the international community.

In the final chapter, former senior Defense Agency official Noboru Hoshuyama picks up on Patterson's argument and calls for significant reinterpretation of the Japanese constitution to permit Japan to exercise its sovereign right of collective self-defense. He believes it is time for Japan to develop new legislation to address the planning and training needs of its defense forces in the face of likely national security emergencies. Japan's parliament should both legitimize Japan's collective right of self-defense and define for the government the terms and conditions of its use. Hoshuyama cautions, however, that this must be done in a manner that reassures other states in the region that Japan will never engage in acts of aggression, which remain illegal under both Japan's Peace Constitution and international law.

As these summaries show, while most of the authors of this volume are committed to maintaining the U.S.-Japan alliance as the linchpin of East Asian security, they offer many different approaches and recommendations. The intent has not been to develop a single solution, but merely to stimulate much-needed debate to help ensure the alliance's relevance and resilience into the twenty-first century through well-informed public support.

The Pacific Forum CSIS, the Okazaki Institute, and the Policy Study Group are committed to forwarding this debate. All three institutes are deeply grateful to the U.S.-Japan Foundation, the Japan Foundation, and the Yomiuri Shimbun for the generous support that has made this effort possible. The editor would also like to thank Georgette Guerrero and Annelise Chock of the Pacific Forum CSIS and, especially, Akira Ogawa of the Okazaki Institute for their tireless efforts behind the scenes.

RALPH A. COSSA
Honolulu, August 1997

Contents

Part I

The Geopolitical Environment

1

U.S.-Japan Relations in "The Year of China"

Ezra F. Vogel

The years 1996 and 1997 are likely to be seen as years of improvement in U.S.-China relations. In the election campaign of 1992, candidate William Clinton criticized President George Bush for not pushing harder on human rights. Once he assumed office, President Clinton was thus obligated to take a tough stance toward the People's Republic of China. This led to great tension in the U.S.-China relationship, reaching a climax in the spring of 1996 when China, following the triumphal visit of President Lee Teng-hui of Taiwan to the United States, began shooting missiles into target areas near Taiwan.

China's determination to regain Taiwan, reflected in the missile exercises, raised the specter of hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops going to Asia and possible clashes with China. This sobered Washington. Many members of Congress, without concern about the geopolitical consequences, are still ready to praise Taiwan and criticize China to appeal to voters at home. Since the missile crisis, however, there has been a noticeable shift in the U.S. administration and among responsible members of Congress toward thinking about the implications of tense relations with China.

By the summer of 1996, both U.S. and Chinese officials were showing indications of a desire to improve their relationship, and in his election campaign in the fall of 1996 President Clinton restrained his criticism of China's human rights practices. In early 1997 Vice President Al Gore visited China, to be followed in the fall by a visit by President Jiang Zemin to Washington and, a few months after that, a visit by President Clinton to China. Past presidential visits have greatly increased favorable public opinion in both countries toward each other, and this exchange of visits is likely to be no exception.

Earlier in the century, when U.S. relations with Japan improved, relations with China grew more difficult. Can the United States maintain good relations with China and with

Japan at the same time without having an enemy like the Soviet Union to bring them together?

Japanese Doubts about China and U.S.-China Relations

Already the Japanese press is beginning to talk about the similarity between 1971 and 1997. In 1971, when Henry Kissinger and President Richard Nixon began to improve relations with China, Japan, fearing that it might be left behind, rushed to improve its relations with China. Some Japanese press articles raise the question whether Japan is again falling behind and whether Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto can help Japan catch up in improving its relations with China as his predecessor, Tanaka Kakuei, did in 1972.

Since 1995, when the Chinese media began using the thirtieth anniversary of the end of World War II to remind their reading public of the dangers of Japanese military activity, Sino-Japanese relations have gone through a period of high tension. Japanese efforts to withhold aid to China to push it to stop nuclear testing encountered such strong resistance in China that Japan eventually yielded, allowing aid to continue even before China agreed to stop testing. During and after Lee Teng-hui's visit to the United States, China kept up a strong campaign to discourage Japan from allowing Taiwan's president to visit Kyoto University. Chinese responses to the Clinton-Hashimoto reaffirmation of the U.S.-Japan security relationship in April 1996 have also been overwhelmingly negative.

These frictions come on top of widespread problems facing Japanese companies in the China market. Chinese officials announced plans to collect taxes on Japanese investments that were previously tax-free, and some local officials collect "miscellaneous taxes" (which some would translate as "corrupt" requests for handouts) that reduce the profitability of Japanese firms in China. Other Japanese firms in China fear that their technology and "know-how" are being acquired by Chinese joint-venture partners. Japanese companies that make little or no profit in the China market are questioning whether to remain in that market and how much technology to transfer.

Just as some Chinese officials are talking with their Japanese counterparts about their common interests in resisting American hegemonic behavior in Asia, so are some Chinese asking Americans why the United States did not make greater efforts in 1945 to keep the goodwill of the Chinese communists. The clear