

CHRISTOPHER W. HUGHES

The Democratic Party of Japan's New (but Failing) Grand Security Strategy: From "Reluctant Realism" to "Resentful Realism"?

Abstract: This essay challenges the dominant negative critiques of the foreign policy of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). The DPJ possesses a coherent grand strategy vision, capable of securing Japan's national interests in an age of multipolarity and centered on a less dependent and more proactive role in the U.S.-Japan alliance, strengthened Sino-Japanese ties, and enhanced East Asian regionalism. However, the DPJ has failed to implement its policy due to domestic and international structural pressures. Consequently, the DPJ is defaulting back into a strategy in the style of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Japanese and U.S. policymakers should recognize the risks of a strategy characterized not by "reluctant realism" but by more destabilizing "resentful realism."

The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) assumed office in September 2009 pledging fundamental change from the previous Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) regime, not only in domestic but just as crucially in foreign policy. The DPJ has already encountered significant resistance and setbacks in domestic policy, not least in its unsure response to the "3/11" disasters, but it is arguably in its foreign and security policy that it has provoked the most sustained criticism and counterpressures. The DPJ has found itself embroiled

The original outline of this essay was inspired by time spent as the Edwin O. Reischauer Visiting Professor of Japanese Studies at the Department of Government, Harvard University. Subsequent presentations were made in 2009–10 at Harvard, George Washington University, University of Southern California, and the University of Washington. For the invitations to speak, incisive comments on the outline, and overall help with the project, I would like to thank Susan Pharr, Dick Samuels, Llewellyn Hughes, Mike Mochizuki, Saadia Pekkanen, Robert Pekkanen, Kenneth Pyle, Ellis Krauss, Saori Katada, Kōda Yōji, and Amy Catalinac. Any errors of interpretation or fact are my own.

in fierce controversy over its impact on the future trajectory of Japan's international orientation *vis-à-vis* the United States and East Asia. The degree of controversy over foreign policy has been so great as to threaten to spill back and overwhelm the domestic agenda, as demonstrated by its contribution to the downfall of the first DPJ prime minister, Hatoyama Yukio, in June 2010 over the imbroglio on the relocation of the U.S. Marines' Air Station Futenma and then the precipitous decline in public support for his immediate successor Prime Minister Kan Naoto following tensions with China and Russia over territorial issues in late 2010. Meanwhile, Noda Yoshihiko, Kan's successor since September 2011, has clearly taken heed of the implications for domestic stability and thus far moved cautiously in the foreign policy field.

The DPJ has triggered debate on the future course of Japan's foreign and security policy on a number of levels, with most analyses marked by an extraordinary degree of fear and loathing of DPJ policy in Japan itself, as well as in the United States and other partner countries. The Japanese and international media have been at the forefront of efforts to ladle criticism upon the DPJ for its foreign and security policy, naturally supported by opposition policymakers in Japan, and those prepared to defend the DPJ have been few and far between.¹

Consequently, the debate on DPJ foreign policy has been dominated by two sets of highly negative discourses, which at times have come close to caricaturing the administration as a collection of fools and knaves.² The first has characterized DPJ leaders as essentially foolish due to their naive and wrongheaded foreign policy prescriptions which fail to recognize the realities and challenges to Japan of the current international system, and most especially Japan's limited ability to influence U.S. security strategy and to promote compensatory new forms of cooperation in East Asia. In a similar vein, the DPJ has been criticized as simply confused in its foreign policy, really possessing no coherent or consistent international strategy, as demonstrated by the disarray of Hatoyama and eventually the party over the Futenma issue. Meanwhile, the second discourse has characterized the DPJ as knave-like in seeking to renegotiate the international pledges made to the United States under the preceding LDP administration, and, perhaps concomitantly, having elements of its leadership holding a hidden agenda to dismantle the U.S.-Japan alliance.

These discourses conclude not only that the DPJ has thus far botched its

1. For one view defending the DPJ which has found its way into the mainstream, see George Packard, "The United States-Japan Security Treaty at 50," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 89, No. 2 (2010), pp. 92–103.

2. For U.S. officials allegedly viewing Hatoyama as "hapless" and "loopy," see Al Kamen, "At the Summit, There Are Leaders and There Are Leaders," *Washington Post*, April 14, 2010, p. 17.

immediate management of foreign and security policy but that it has also initiated, whether deliberately or inadvertently, a process of longer-term shift, and drift, in Japan's strategy. The DPJ is now thought to be diverting Japan from the trajectory laid down by the LDP—a trajectory which in recent years, and especially under the premiership of Koizumi Jun'ichirō, has generally been seen as setting a benchmark to be emulated of close U.S.-Japan alliance ties and concomitant Japanese international proactivity. In turn, the conclusion of these discourses is that any DPJ deviation from this trajectory is by definition a fundamentally negative development for U.S.-Japan ties, and, by logical extension, anything detrimental to the bilateral relationship as the foundation of Japanese foreign and security policy must be detrimental to Japan's overall international position.³ The final conclusion appears to be that the DPJ needs, then, to be nudged back onto the correct pathway for international policy and that inevitably it is the duty of the United States, as the prime international partner, in "tough love" fashion, to cajole, or if necessary coerce, Japan back onto the straight and narrow. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates attempted to do something akin to this when he visited Japan in October 2009 and expressed opposition to the DPJ's stance on Futenma.⁴

In the midst of this maelstrom over the DPJ's foreign policy, more sober and nonpartisan academic analyses have been in short supply.⁵ This article is an attempt to deliver a more detailed, nuanced, and objective analysis of DPJ foreign policy. It grounds its analysis on deeper and more wide-ranging empirical evidence than presented to date on the DPJ's international outlook and contextualizes the administration's moves thus far within the larger sweep of Japanese international policy so as to divine just how much the party has deviated or is likely to deviate from the LDP's postwar trajectory. The essay further considers the overall possible implications for Japan's grand strategy.

The article argues that, contrary to much of the near-universal condemnation of the DPJ, the party does in fact possess a grand strategy, or at least a *vision* of grand strategy, worthy of serious consideration and potentially capable of promoting Japan's national interests and role as a key international actor. This grand strategy certainly differs in many respects from that of the LDP, but it is explicit in its framing, with no hidden agendas, and indeed

3. Michael J. Green, "The Democratic Party of Japan and the Future of the U.S.-Japan Alliance," *Journal of Japanese Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (2011), pp. 91–116.

4. Michael J. Green, "Tokyo Smackdown," *Foreign Policy*, October 23, 2009, http://shadow.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/10/23/tokyo_smackdown. All websites accessed September 24, 2011, unless otherwise indicated.

5. For sound academic analysis of the DPJ before it took power, see Leif-Eric Easley, Tetsuo Kotani, and Aki Mori, "Electing a New Japanese Security Policy? Examining Foreign Policy Visions within the Democratic Party of Japan," *Asia Policy*, No. 9 (2010), pp. 45–66.

has been openly articulated by the DPJ's top leadership for a number of years, including the last five party presidents prior to Noda—Okada Katsuya, Maehara Seiji, Ozawa Ichirō, Hatoyama, and Kan—and those other party members most actively engaged in foreign policy and security issues. Those critics who feel the DPJ has ambushed the United States with its agenda simply appear to have been overly fixated on the LDP while failing to read the Japanese tea leaves and to prepare for the possibility of domestic and international policy transition.

Moreover, the DPJ's grand strategy is remarkably coherent in that, despite inevitable internal factionalism, most of the key elements have been shared by the party's top leadership, thus making its policy in many ways as feasible as that of the LDP ever was. Furthermore, the DPJ vision appears sophisticated and realistic, shorn of much ideological sentiment (in contrast to recent LDP administrations dabbling with emotive historical revisionism and value-oriented diplomacy) and instead attempting to carefully rethink and calibrate Japan's international ambitions and capabilities against its external challenges.⁶ The DPJ's vision, if examined in depth, I argue, is also not necessarily problematic for U.S. strategy and in many ways may be more complementary and beneficial than that of the LDP.

Hence, the DPJ can be argued to possess a relatively plausible and viable foreign policy, one certainly no less credible in inception than those of previous LDP administrations. In this sense, the advent of the DPJ certainly does contain the potential to shift Japan in new strategic directions. However, the more prosaic part of the DPJ foreign and security policy story is that, even though the party might envision a grander reorientation for Japan internationally, it has struggled and will likely continue to struggle to implement such a strategy due to a combination of domestic policymaking and international structural pressures. The final outcome is that, bedeviled by these difficulties—many of its own making—the DPJ risks defaulting back to the easier international strategy practiced by the LDP.

Yet, there is here an interesting sting in the tail. Even as the DPJ might acquiesce or be coerced into returning to a path of so-called “reluctant realism,” its fundamentally different vision and recognition of the perils of this LDP-style strategy vision will lead it to kick, probably forlornly, in frustration at the extinguishing of its hopes for greater international autonomy.⁷ The result will be more a sense of “resentful realism” and storing up of further tensions between Japan and the United States.

6. For the definitive account of contending LDP foreign policy strands, see Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007).

7. Michael J. Green, “U.S.-Japan Ties under the DPJ: Reluctant Realism Redux,” *CSIS Commentary*, August 7, 2009, <http://csis.org/publication/reluctant-realism-redux-us-japan-ties-under-dpj>.

DPJ Grand Strategy Vision: Finally Facing Up to the Realities of Multipolarity

The DPJ—unsurprisingly, and in little contrast to the LDP—has argued consistently in its manifestos and elsewhere for the last decade that it seeks a position for Japan as a proactive and responsible international power.⁸ Nevertheless, the DPJ's policy prescription, even if similar to that of the LDP in terms of overall ambitions, diverges more strongly in terms of the administration's analysis of the international environment and the subsequent measures taken to strengthen Japan's position. The DPJ has not only been less reticent than the LDP in critiquing U.S. unilateralism under the George W. Bush administration but also has been more explicit in indicating that the travails of the United States in Afghanistan and Iraq are manifestations of a deeper and long-term malaise in U.S. power. The DPJ leadership talks more openly about U.S. relative hegemonic decline and the already apparent limits to its ability to manage single-handedly the international system.⁹ Similarly, DPJ policymakers are more willing to acknowledge as inevitable the rise of China to great power status, or even hegemonic status, and are even not shy to discuss Japan's own recent relative economic and political decline *vis-à-vis* the United States and China. There is also a strong acceptance of the "rise of the rest," in the shape of India, a resurgent Russia, a stronger South Korea, and, further afield, Brazil and a more integrated European Union (EU).¹⁰ In short, the DPJ leadership, although not often using the terminology openly, perceives the potential passing of U.S. unipolarity and a concomitant shift in the balance of power toward multipolarity.¹¹

8. *Minshutō seisaku Index 2005*, http://www.dpj.or.jp/policy/manifesto/seisaku2005/08_01.html; *Minshutō seisakushū Index 2009*, <http://www.dpj.or.jp/policy/manifesto/seisaku2009/08.html>; *Minshutō seiken seisaku 2010*, <http://www.dpj.or.jp/special/manifesto2010/data/manifesto2010.txt>.

9. Ozawa Ichirō, "Kōkai shokan, ima koso kokusai anzen hoshō no gensoku kakuritsu o: Kawabata Takiyotaka-shi e no tegami," *Sekai*, No. 771 (November 2007), <http://www.ozawa-ichiro.jp/massmedia/contents/appear/2007/ar20071023094628.html>; Nagashima Akihisa, "Hatoyama seiken no gaikō anzen hoshō seisaku," in Morimoto Satoshi, ed., *Hyōryūsuru Nichbei dōmei: Minshutō seikenka ni okeru Nichibei kankei* (Tokyo: Kairyūsha, 2009), pp. 23–24.

10. Hatoyama Yukio, "Kongo ichinen 'tsuyoi Nihon keizai' e no taimu rimitto," *Voice*, January 2000, http://www.hatoyama.gr.jp/masscomm/001226_05.html, accessed August 17, 2010; Hashimoto Gorō, "Okada Katsuya, Minshutō daihyō. gaikō bijon o kataru," *Chūō kōron*, July 2005, p. 120; Foreign Policy Speech by H. E. Mr. Seiji Maehara, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, "Opening a New Horizon in the Asia Pacific," January 6, 2011, http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/juk_1101/speech1101.html; Kan Sōri "Gaikō ni kansuru enzetsu: 'rekishi busuirei ni tatsu Nihon gaikō,'" January 20, 2011, <http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/kan/statement/201101/20speech.html>.

11. Hatoyama Yukio, "Sofu Ichirō ni mananda 'yūai' to iu tatakai hatashirushi," August 30, 2009, <http://www.hatoyama.gr.jp/profile/fraternity.html>; Okada Katsuya, "Okada

The DPJ's recognition of multipolarity is seen to pose immediate regional challenges for Japan. DPJ leaders readily admit that Japanese and U.S. interests now and in the future may not always coincide and hence that Japan cannot as in the past unhesitatingly entrust its security to the United States.¹² Moreover, the DPJ has sensed that as the international ground shifts under Japan's feet, it faces the risk of becoming trapped between a rising China and a United States desperate to maintain international primacy. For Japan this entails the risk of becoming embroiled in a Sino-U.S. conflict, or, just as worryingly, being marginalized in a Sino-U.S. regional condominium, as in talk of G2 governance.¹³

LDP administrations were certainly not blind to U.S. relative hegemonic decline and the shift toward multipolarity, as shown by the diplomatic and security demarches to India and Russia under Koizumi and his successors.¹⁴ However, for the DPJ the analysis of Japan's necessary response to the changing international system is significantly different. Whereas the LDP toward the end of its period in government became increasingly fixated on the backward-looking (and somewhat contradictory) agendas of ending the postwar era (*sengo dakkyaku*) and of tackling U.S. hegemonic decline while maintaining the status quo by merely investing deeper in the bilateral alliance, the DPJ has shown a more forward-looking posture. The DPJ has arguably leapfrogged ahead of the LDP in attempting to move beyond debates on ending the postwar period and to instead begin a rather belated process of contemplating how to extricate Japan from the more recent legacies of the cold war era and to now look to address the issues presented by the emerging realities of a new international system.¹⁵

The DPJ thus advocates that the key for Japan in meeting its international challenges and responsibilities is not, in LDP fashion, to replicate past patterns of foreign policy behavior but to begin to break out of these constraints. Just as the DPJ has called for a revolution in domestic policy in terms of escaping reliance on the bureaucracy, so it has called for some-

gaimu daijin no Nihon gaikoku tokuha'in kyōkai ni okeru kōen gaiyō," August 25, 2010, http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/enzetsu/22/eokd_0825.html.

12. Hashimoto, "Okada Katsuya, Minshutō daihyō. gaikō bijon o kataru," pp. 122–23; Sutō Nobuhiko, Maehara Seiji, Ubukata Yukio, and Shinba Kazuya, "Gaikōnaki Nihon kara dakkyaku, senryaku, rinen no kōchiku o," *Minshu*, No. 2 (2002), p. 38.

13. Hatoyama Yukio, "Seijika ni okeru aikoku to wa," *Nihon no ronten 2002*, <http://www.hatoyama.gr.jp/masscomm/011109.html>, accessed August 17, 2010; Hatoyama, "Sofu Ichirō ni mananda 'yū'ai' to iu tatakai hatashirushi"; "Exclusive Interview: Ozawa Declares 'War,' Calls Party Election His 'Final Battle,'" *Asahi shinbun*, September 7, 2010, <http://www.asahi.com/english/TKY201009060235.html>.

14. Christopher W. Hughes, "Japan's Response to China's Rise: Regional Engagement, Global Containment, Dangers of Collision," *International Affairs*, Vol. 85, No. 4 (2009), pp. 837–56.

15. Hoshi Hiroshi, "Hatoyama, Okada gaikō okure-base 'datsu reisen' no muzukashisa," *Asahi shinbun*, October 24, 2009, p. 15.

thing akin to a revolution in international policy by breaking Japan's past dependence on the increasingly rickety crutch of U.S. hegemony. DPJ leaders argue that Japan throughout and since the cold war period has been to varying degrees dependent (*izon*) or overdependent (*kajo na izon*) upon or blindly devoted (*tsuizui*) or even clinging (*bettari*) to the United States.¹⁶ The result has been that even though the U.S.-Japan bilateral relationship has enabled Japan to develop certain types of international responsibilities, usually in line with U.S. priorities, at other times Japan's easy reliance on the United States (*Amerika makase Nihon no gaikō*) has meant that it has been able to shirk or defer commitments to the United States if these are seen as particularly risky, as well as obviating the need to develop a wider set of cooperative foreign and security relations with other powers.¹⁷

In turn, Japan's ability to always fall back on the cushion of the U.S.-Japan relationship has allowed it to develop a form of "closed," "warped" (*kussetsu*), or "U.S.-dependent" (*taibei izon*) nationalism, whereby its policymakers have fiddled with issues of historical revisionism safe in the knowledge that they are insulated from the full consequences and wrath of East Asian neighboring countries by U.S. security guarantees.¹⁸ The DPJ further argues that the LDP's comfortable dependence on the United States enabled Japan to pass up opportunities for enhanced East Asian cooperation. Japan instead pursued policies akin to "blocking regionalism"—deliberately overproliferating regional cooperation frameworks as a means to dilute and check China's concentration of power in any one regional forum, rather than a genuine attempt to build durable and effective frameworks to lessen Japan's dependence on the United States.

Japan's perilous overdependence on the United States and the international situation, as seen by the DPJ, carries clear implications for its future international strategy. Japan must redress its dependence on the U.S.-Japan bilateral relationship, not by weakening or abandoning the alliance but by moving to develop a broader set of complementary and counterbalancing international ties and by exploiting the opportunities of emerging multipolarity. Japan must maneuver to strengthen bilateral relations with a rising China and, for some DPJ leaders, try to reestablish a more symmetrical triangular balance of power (*seisankakukeiron*) among itself, the United States, and China.¹⁹ In many ways, the DPJ is advocating just a recentering of Japanese diplomacy to establish more equidistance between the United

16. Hatoyama Yukio, "Ushinawareta 20 nen o soshi seyo," *Nihon no ronten 2001*, http://www.hatoyama.gr.jp/masscomm/001226_04.html, accessed August 17, 2010; Kan Naoto, "Kyūoku-teki jiritsu gaikō shian," *Gendai*, September 2002, p. 234; Sutō et al., "Gaikō naki Nihon kara dakkyaku," p. 38.

17. Sutō et al., "Gaikō naki Nihon kara dakkyaku," p. 36.

18. Hatoyama, "Seijika ni okeru aikoku to wa."

19. Hatoyama, "Sofu Ichirō ni mananda 'yūai' to iu tataakai hatashirushi." Other notable DPJ advocates of this thesis are Ozawa, Yamaoka Kenji, and Koshiishi Azuma.

States and China so as to maximize its potential intermediary role, a tradition of diplomacy upheld by the LDP until the perceived disastrous stewardship of Koizumi.

In similar fashion, the DPJ champions renewed efforts in East Asian regionalism. In contradistinction to the LDP, though, the DPJ leadership shares a stronger “cognitive” rather than “tactical” attachment to regionalism, viewing the growth of regional frameworks not simply as a means to hinder the rise of China while the real efforts of Japanese diplomacy are devoted to the U.S.-Japan alliance. Instead, the DPJ views regional frameworks as a viable international strategy in their own right, as already demonstrated in other regions such as Europe, well suited to bringing effective governance to an increasingly multipolar international order. Hence, for the DPJ, the concept of the East Asian Community—strongly shared by nearly every leading member of the DPJ at least until recent tensions with China and the advent of Noda—even if never viewed as usurping the U.S.-Japan alliance in the set of Japanese international priorities, is seen as more than a diversionary tactic and offers Japan a useful alternative to increasingly exclusive dependence on the United States and an opportunity to build an “open” form of nationalism conducive to improved ties with regional neighbors.

The DPJ’s assessments of the changing international structure are given coherence above all by a shared belief in the restoration of a more autonomous (*jishu-teki*) and independent (*jiritsu-teki*) Japanese diplomatic posture. The DPJ contends that the only effective path for Japan to increase its international contribution and, in fact, become a more reliable or “normal” ally and partner is not for Japan to shield behind the United States as under the LDP but instead to step out from the shadow of the United States and to undertake greater international responsibilities in a more self-reliant fashion.

U.S.-Japan Alliance: Seeking Balanced Autonomy

DPJ interest in rearticulating the U.S.-Japan relationship has been interpreted as predicated on anti-Americanism, a view fueled by an abridged translation of Hatoyama’s article originally intended for the September 2009 edition of the Japanese journal *Voice* but which appeared in the *New York Times* in August 2009 and in which he criticized U.S.-inspired globalization and free-market fundamentalism.²⁰ Setting aside the fact that Hatoyama’s

20. For the *New York Times* version of Hatoyama’s article, see Yukio Hatoyama, “A New Path for Japan,” *New York Times*, August 26, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/27/opinion/27iht-edhatoyama.html?pagewanted=all>. For the full Japanese version of Hatoyama’s September 2009 article in *Voice*, and an accompanying full official English translation, see Hatoyama, “Sofu Ichirō ni mananda ‘yūai’ to iu tatakai hatashirushi,” and “My Po-

critique of globalization is unique neither to the DPJ, to the LDP, nor to domestic opinion in the United States itself and other countries, the DPJ's willingness to re-examine ties with the United States should not be seen as a simplistic reaction against U.S. domination or as an expression of hope for the winding down of the relationship. On the contrary, the DPJ leadership, by raising questions about the future of the U.S.-Japan relationship, sees itself engaged in a constructive attempt to resolve deep-rooted and long-avoided issues in the relationship and to thereby better sustain and strengthen the alliance for the longer term.

Indeed, it is ironic that the DPJ in openly pondering the means to rationalize and sustain the alliance has attracted near-universal criticism, whereas its LDP predecessor has received universal praise in its management of the bilateral relationship. This is despite the fact that the LDP, more often than not in its half-century in power, and even under Koizumi, resorted to expediency, buck passing, and minimalist security commitments in managing the alliance (as seen in the dispatch of the Japan Self-Defense Forces [JSDF] to support the United States in the "war on terror"), and, to boot, demonstrated toward its end increasing signs of erratic neonationalism—all traits that do not argue for the long-term structural strength of the alliance.²¹ The open and relatively thoughtful efforts of Hatoyama and other DPJ leaders to rearticulate the basis of the U.S.-Japan alliance contrast sharply with the mantra-like, yet still opaque, justifications for the necessity of the alliance purveyed by Koizumi and many other LDP leaders.

The DPJ's agenda for re forging the U.S.-Japan alliance is largely transparent and certainly does involve scaling back bilateral commitments in certain areas. The DPJ, in light of what it views as the willful stretching of alliance cooperation to encompass JSDF dispatch to support ill-advised U.S.-led coalition operations in the "war on terror," has made it clear that it intends future U.S.-Japan alliance military cooperation to be predicated upon tighter functional and geographical interpretations of the constitution and the security treaty.²² The DPJ leadership is fond of advocating a so-called "close and equal U.S.-Japan relationship" (*kinmitsu de taitō Nichibei kankei*) or "equal alliance" (*taītō na Nichibei dōmei*). This alliance vision eschews the LDP's simple expedient followership of the United States in out-of-area military operations and instead focuses on a more forthcoming Japanese military role alongside the United States in East Asia itself. This

litical Philosophy," <http://www.hatoyama.gr.jp/profile/fraternitye.html>. For the analysis that drew attention to Hatoyama's comments and possible implications for U.S.-Japan relations, see Mark Landler and Martin Fackler, "With Shift in Japan, U.S. Sees a Stranger as Partner," *New York Times*, September 2, 2009, p. 8.

21. Christopher W. Hughes and Ellis S. Krauss, "Japan's New Security Agenda," *Survival*, Vol. 49, No. 2 (2007), pp. 157–76.

22. Okada, "Minshutō daihyō. gaikō bijon o kataru," p. 119.

focus addresses the purport of Articles 5 and 6 of the bilateral security treaty and completes much of the 1990s agenda of alliance strengthening for regional contingencies which the LDP in the end hedged away from. Hence, the DPJ administration in the wake of the 2010 clash with China over the Senkaku Islands was relatively comfortable in opening discussions with the United States over the possibility of remodeling the “common strategic objectives” of the alliance first laid down in 2006, and even possibly the U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines, in order to respond more effectively to China’s rising military presence.²³

Alliance Adjustments and New Supports. The DPJ, in order to fulfill its vision, has a specific program of modifications to alliance cooperation, with which it has experienced varying degrees of success. After internal debate and hesitance in regard to the U.S. reaction, the DPJ, in line with its consistent manifesto pledges and opposition over the last decade to the deployment of the Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) in the Indian Ocean to provide refueling in support of the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan, allowed the Replenishment Support Special Measures Law to lapse in January 2010 and terminated the MSDF mission. The DPJ instead instituted a U.S. \$5 billion package over five years for civilian support for Afghan reconstruction in the areas of police training, employment of former combatants, and development of agriculture and energy. The DPJ has argued that this type of large-scale civilian contribution was more suited to Japan’s own national capabilities and the immediate needs of the coalition on the ground than a continued or new JSDF mission with a highly circumscribed military mandate and requiring the investment of great domestic political energy simply to pass the National Diet legislation required for dispatch. The United States for its part, despite viewing the MSDF mission as an important symbol of U.S.-Japan alliance solidarity and Japanese military support for the struggle in Afghanistan, accepted that cessation of the JSDF mission was largely inevitable and relatively insignificant in terms of the overall military effort surrounding Afghanistan.

If the DPJ’s ending of the MSDF Indian Ocean mission proved relatively straightforward for alliance management, then far greater travails have awaited attempts to review U.S.-Japan base agreements in Okinawa. The DPJ’s interest in renegotiating elements of the May 2006 U.S.-Japan Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI) and Roadmap for Realignment Implementation relating to the planned relocation of the U.S. Marines Corps (USMC) Air Station Futenma from Ginowan City to Camp Schwab and

23. “Japan, U.S. to Launch Talks to Bolster Defense,” *Japan Times Online*, November 18, 2010, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20101118a4.html>; “Anpo kyōryoku kyōgi shinten de itchi Beikoku bōchōkan, Maehara gaishō to kaidan,” *Asahi shinbun*, January 13, 2011, <http://www.asahi.com/politics/update/0113/TKY201101130238.html>.

Cape Henoko near Nago City has been construed as an act of Japanese duplicity. This is not least because of the fact that the United States had been engaged in three sets of protracted negotiations for close to 13 years over the potential new site for Futenma, and because the previous LDP administration had already concluded in February 2009 an agreement on joint funding of the relocation of approximately 8,000 III Marine Expeditionary Unit personnel and 9,000 of their dependents to Guam, the movement of which has been seen as the precondition for shifting other USMC assets in Okinawa including Futenma. The LDP, moreover, had gone so far as to interpret the Guam International Agreement as essentially a treaty, gaining National Diet approval in May 2009.²⁴ Furthermore, the DPJ's potential renegotiation of the Futenma agreement has been interpreted as part of a longer-term conspiracy to unravel the entire U.S. base infrastructure in Japan, a desire allegedly traceable back to Hatoyama's advocacy since the late 1990s of moving toward a regional security environment which would allow the creation of a U.S.-Japan security pact without the need for the stationing of U.S. forces (*chūryū naki anpo*).²⁵

Once again, leaving aside the fact that the United States for its part would find it hard to regard the Guam International Agreement as a binding treaty given that this necessitates Congressional approval, and the fact that Japan as a sovereign and democratic state with a change of domestic administration is entitled to renegotiate international agreements, the DPJ's actions in seeking to review the Futenma relocation should not be interpreted as underhanded or part of a hidden agenda.²⁶ The DPJ has asserted in various iterations of its *Okinawa bijon* (Okinawa vision) since 2002 that it seeks a major reduction of the disproportionate burden on Okinawa Prefecture of hosting 75 per cent of U.S. bases in terms of land area and indicated first in 2005 and then again in 2008 that it preferred the relocation of Futenma outside Okinawa, or even outside Japan itself in line with changes in the international security environment.²⁷

In addition, although it is true that certain members of the DPJ top leadership question the degree of necessity and actual operational functions for

24. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Nakasone gaimu daijin danwa: zai-Okinawa kaiheitai no Guam iten ni kakawaru no teiketsu no kokkai no shōnin ni tsuite," May 13, 2009, http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/danwa/21/dnk_0513.html.

25. Hatoyama Yukio, "Dai 38 ki Hitotsubashi Fōramu 21: Nikkan kankei kako kara mirai," May 26, 1998, <http://www.hatoyama.gr.jp/speech/ot01.html>.

26. Gavan McCormack, "The Battle of Okinawa 2009: Obama vs Hatoyama," *Asia-Pacific Journal*, November 16, 2009, <http://www.japanfocus.org/-Gavan-McCormack/3250>.

27. Minshutō, "Okinawa bijon," August 26, 2002, <http://www.dpj.or.jp/news/?num=10686>; Minshutō, "Minshutō Okinawa bijon kaitei," August 3, 2005, http://www.dpj.or.jp/news/files/BOX_KOA0022.pdf, pp. 3–4; Minshutō, "Minshutō Okinawa bijon," July 8, 2008, [http://www.dpj.or.jp/news/files/okinawa\(2\).pdf](http://www.dpj.or.jp/news/files/okinawa(2).pdf), pp. 4–5.

the defense of Japan and the surrounding region of the USMC presence—Ozawa Ichirō, most notably in talks with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in February 2009, commented that the presence of the U.S. 7th Fleet alone might be sufficient for the alliance—it is not the case that they view revisiting the Futenma agreement as a means to weaken the alliance. Indeed, Hatoyama and Okada had long stated publicly that the DPJ had abandoned the policy of a U.S.-Japan security pact without bases.²⁸ Instead, the DPJ perceived itself engaged in an effort to strengthen the long-term durability and fundamental basis of the U.S.-Japan alliance by seeking to remove once and for all the nagging thorn of Futenma in the side of the bilateral relationship. In this sense, the DPJ shares the LDP's sensibility in being seen to lessen the burden on Okinawa but has diverged in its belief that the current U.S.-Japan plans for a new facility at Henoko serve more in reality to consolidate and intensify in apparent perpetuity the U.S. presence in the prefecture. The DPJ considers these agreements not only inequitable but also politically unsustainable in Okinawa and in the rest of Japan and thus ultimately counterproductive to alliance solidity.

What is true, though, is that the DPJ leadership once in government lacked the discipline and skill to handle the volatile Futenma issue. Hatoyama failed in the first months of the DPJ administration to contain his own and key cabinet ministers' open musings about the possibility of revisiting the Futenma agreements and alternative sites for relocation in other parts of Okinawa, mainland Japan, or outside Japan. Hatoyama poorly coordinated policy with his Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ) and People's New Party coalition partners and further agitated local political opinion in Okinawa at the National Diet representative, gubernatorial, prefectural assembly, mayoral, and municipal assembly levels. In turn, the DPJ's one-sided ruminations understandably began to ring alarm bells about Japanese intentions in the Barack Obama administration, with the United States then compounding these problems with its seemingly poor communication with the new DPJ administration via press spokesmen, divisions between the State and Defense departments over the best means to respond, and then Gates's robust stance during his visit to Japan in October 2009—all precipitating the mini-crisis in U.S.-Japan relations.²⁹

Insufficient space prevents this essay from cataloguing the litany of mistakes made by the Japanese and U.S. sides in trying then to dig the alliance

28. "Jōji chūryū naki Anpo wa 'fūin' Hatoyama Shushō," *Asahi shinbun*, December 16, 2009, <http://www.asahi.com/politics/update/1216/TKY200912160427.html>.

29. "Joint Press Conference with Japanese Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates," U.S. Department of Defense, October 21, 2009, <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4501>.

out of this crisis, but those mistakes culminated in Hatoyama's resignation in June 2010. The DPJ has arguably, though, proved neither more nor less wise than the LDP in managing the Futenma issue, essentially repeating the same mistakes over the past 14 years of publicly pledging to relocate the base without first deciding where the new site should be or consulting sufficiently with the local populations of alternative sites and resorting to stimulus packages to buy local support.³⁰

Moreover, the DPJ has progressively acquiesced in following the LDP plans for relocation. Hatoyama upon resigning in June made it clear that he had come to accept the deterrent arguments associated with the USMC presence in Okinawa (although in February 2011 he claimed that his legitimization of the base agreement using the importance of the USMC was a simple political "expedient" [*hōben*] he never believed in); and even Ozawa, a known critic of the plans for landfill relocation at Cape Henoko, in his DPJ presidential leadership debates with Kan in September 2010, accepted the need to respect the existing bilateral agreements.³¹ Kan, for his part, seemed to have largely bought the relocation arguments, although he was clearly attempting to delay implementation given the mounting domestic political obstacles.

If the Futenma debacle has proved to be a crucial stress point for U.S.-Japan relations, it should not be seen as fully illustrative of the condition of the alliance or the DPJ's wider plans for bilateral cooperation. For instance, in regard to the DPRI and realignments outside Okinawa, the DPJ has not sought to interfere with but to actually support the process. The DPJ has continued to push Iwakuni City to accept the relocation of the U.S. carrier wing from Atsugi, a crucial piece of the DPRI puzzle; and meanwhile other U.S. realignments continue unimpeded at U.S. Air Force Yokota and Camp Zama (although interestingly it is the United States which apparently has backed out of DPRI agreements relating to the Japanese mainland by scaling down plans for the relocation from Washington State of the U.S. Army's I Corps command structure and accompanying capabilities for rapid deployment in the defense of Japan and other contingencies, choosing instead only to relocate command capabilities).³²

30. Sotoka Hidetoshi, "Kenshō Futenma isetsu o meguru 13 nenkan," *Sekai*, No. 801 (February 2010), pp. 177-94.

31. "Futenma Plan OK: Ozawa," *Japan Times Online*, September 3, 2010, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100903a1.html>.

32. "Kansaiki iten 'Yotei-dōri' Bōeishō, Iwakuni shichō ni rikai motomeru," *Asahi shinbun*, February 20, 2010, <http://www.asahi.com/politics/update/0220/TKY201002200266.html>; "Kyanpu Zama iten chūshi, daiichi gundan, Bei tsugō de 'saihen' henkō," *Tōkyō shinbun*, December 9, 2009, <http://www.tokyo-np.co.jp/article/politics/news/CK200912090200101.html>.

The DPJ was also thought likely to have pressed the United States on host nation support (HNS) and the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). The DPJ promised in its election campaign to review Japan's high commitment compared to other U.S. allies of up to 75 per cent of the costs of U.S. military facilities.³³ The DPJ did attempt to pare away at the HNS budget, with the Ministry of Defense (MOD) budget request for 2011 including a modest reduction of one per cent.³⁴ The DPJ's stance in this regard, though, was little divergent from the LDP, which itself engineered a total reduction of 25 per cent in the HNS budget between 2001 and 2009.³⁵ However, in the end, the DPJ, while not acceding to U.S. requests for an actual increase in HNS, was wary of alienating its ally in the midst of the security scares in late 2010 and agreed to maintain the same level of HNS at ¥188 billion annually for 2011–15.³⁶

Similarly, the DPJ has maintained a long-term interest in revising the SOFA—again mentioned in its manifestos and the *Okinawa bijon* as part of creating a more equal alliance—but since taking power has restrained its immediate ambitions.³⁷ The DPJ has advocated a clause in the SOFA to obligate the United States to hand over at the request of the Japanese authorities military personnel who are unindicted suspects of any crime, rather than the current practice of the United States only agreeing to look favorably upon Japanese requests in extreme criminal cases such as murder and rape. The DPJ has further argued for a clause obligating the United States to accept Japanese environmental inspections and to restore any damage to the environment on its bases. The DPJ's SOFA plans in some ways might privilege Japan over other allies in the area of criminal indictments, while bringing it more in line on environmental measures.³⁸ The first area of proposed revision is clearly difficult for the United States but might be resolved with changes to Japanese procedures for the detention and questioning of

33. Kent E. Calder, *Embattled Garrisons: Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 192–94.

34. "Omiyari yosan 'Bei ni iwareru sujiai nai' Bōeishō hanpatsu," *Asahi shinbun*, October 1, 2010, <http://www.asahi.com/politics/update/1001/TKY201010010174.html>; Bōeishō, *Waga kuni no bōei to yosan: Heisei 23 nendo gaisan yosan no gaiyō*, 2010, <http://www.mod.go.jp/j/yosan/2011/yosan.pdf>.

35. Nishihara Masashi and Tsuchiyama Jitsuo, *Nichibei dōmei saikō: shitte okitai 100 no roten* (Tokyo: Aki Shōbō, 2010), p. 125; Bōei Nenkan Kankōkai, ed., *Bōei nenkan 2004* (Tokyo: Bōei Media Sentā, 2004), p. 373; Bōei Nenkan Kankōkai, ed., *Bōei nenkan 2010* (Tokyo: Bōei Media Sentā, 2010), p. 354.

36. "Omiyari Yosan, 5 nenkan wa genjō iji Nichibei ga gōi," *Asahi shinbun*, December 14, 2010, <http://www.asahi.com/politics/update/1213/TKY201012130410.html>.

37. Minshutō, "Minshutō Okinawa bijon," p. 4; "DPJ Eyes SOFA Environment Tack," *Japan Times Online*, August 27, 2009, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20090827a2.html>.

38. "Kiso kara wakaruru Nichibei chii kyōtei," *Yomiuri shinbun*, October 1, 2010, p. 11.

criminal suspects; the United States has indicated that it is relatively open-minded on the need to incorporate environmental clauses.³⁹

Nuclear (Non)Issues? The DPJ's stance on nuclear issues has been regarded as problematic for the U.S.-Japan alliance, but in fact the evidence thus far is that the DPJ is just as, if not more, in tune with current U.S. nuclear strategy as the LDP. The DPJ after assuming power launched investigations into U.S.-Japan secret pacts (*mitsuyaku*), forged by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) under LDP administrations in the 1960s and 1970s and involving the transit of nonstrategic nuclear forces (NSNF), or tactical nuclear weapons, through Japanese territory in contravention of the third of the Three Nonnuclear Principles. MOFA in the investigations attempted to defend its stance with the line that the United States and Japan simply had divergent understandings of whether the introduction of nuclear weapons was covered by bilateral prior consultation under the security treaty, whereas an expert panel concluded that MOFA had maintained tacit agreements with the United States to allow the transit of nuclear weapons and thus a secret pact in the "general" sense, even if not in the narrower sense of a formal written agreement.⁴⁰

The DPJ extracted its pound of political flesh from the LDP and MOFA over the secret pacts but most interestingly has not used the investigations to push for fundamental change in nuclear policy. Hatoyama responded to the investigations by simply restating Japan's commitment to the nonnuclear principles. Foreign Minister Okada indicated that Japan had no intention to codify the principles into law, a type of policy often proposed by the SDPJ. Then Prime Minister Kan did indicate that Japan might want to consider codification of the principles but made no substantive initiatives in this direction.⁴¹ Hence, the DPJ has shifted little from the ambiguities of the LDP line: Japan retains its nonnuclear stance, somewhat strengthened by the new transparency it has shown on alliance misdemeanors in the past but retaining the flexibility to breach these principles if necessary.

Most crucially, the DPJ has not allowed the investigations to impact U.S. nuclear strategy and extended deterrence in the Asia-Pacific region. It was feared that for the DPJ the logical outcome of the investigations might be to pressure the United States by insisting on full prior consultation on the movement of NSNF, even to the point of insisting the United States

39. "Omoiyari yosan no taisakuhi, Bei ga gimuka yōkyū Nihon wa kyōhi," *Asahi shinbun*, October 22, 2010, <http://www.asahi.com/politics/update/1022/TKY201010220198.html>.

40. For the full *mitsuyaku* reports, see "Iwayuru 'Mitsuyaku' mondai ni kansuru chōsa kekka," March 2010, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/mitsuyaku/kekka.html>.

41. "Shushō, hikaku sangensoku hōseika ni shinchō shisei 'keii fukume kentō,'" *Asahi shinbun*, September 23, 2010, http://www.asahi.com/politics/update/0809/TKY_201008090287.html.

abandon its “neither confirm nor deny” policy for the deployment of nuclear weapons.⁴² DPJ policymakers, however, seem to have had little intention to provoke the United States. Okada even stated in the National Diet after the release of the secret pact reports that Japan might still consider the introduction of U.S. NSNF in a major contingency; and the Prime Minister’s Council on Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era Advisory reported in mid-2010 that it might not be wise to use the nonnuclear principles to constrain U.S. nuclear strategy.⁴³ In part, the DPJ’s relaxed stance on “neither confirm nor deny” reflects the fact that the United States since 1992 has withdrawn all NSNF from its naval vessels and aircraft in the Asia-Pacific region, and the United States has informed Japan that it will retire by approximately 2014 its submarine-based Tomahawk Land Attack Missile/Nuclear (TLAM/N). But in part its stance reflects a pragmatic flexibility on the part of the DPJ to work around U.S. nuclear strategy.

Other aspects of the DPJ’s nuclear stance initially deemed obstructive to U.S. strategy have proved to be in broad conformity. The DPJ has advocated attempts to persuade the United States to adopt a no-first-use nuclear posture, and the International Commission on Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament initiated by Japan and Australia in 2009 recommended that all nuclear-weapon states should accept this stance, seeking to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons to support U.S. initiatives for a “nuclear free world.”⁴⁴ However, Japan and Australia at the 2010 Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference jointly proposed merely that nuclear-weapon states should provide stronger negative security assurances not to use nuclear weapons against nonnuclear states in compliance with the treaty, a measure fully in line with U.S. proposals in the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review.⁴⁵

42. “Gates Leery on Probe,” *Japan Times Online*, October 22, 2009, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/print/nn20091022a3.html>; Ralph Cossa and Brad Glosserman, “Question for Tokyo: Remember ANZUS?” *PacNet Newsletter*, No. 71 (November 3, 2009), <http://csis.org/publication/pacnet-71-remember-anzus>.

43. “Ippō-teki ni Beikoku no te o shibaru koto dake o jizen ni gensoku toshite kimete oku koto ga, kanarazushimo kenmei de wa nai.” “In-Country Nukes a Crisis Option: Okada,” *Japan Times Online*, March 18, 2010, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100318a3.html>; Arata na Jidai no Anzen Hoshō to Bōeiryoku Kondankai, *Arata na jidai ni okeru Nihon no anzen hoshō to bōeiryoku shōrai kōsō heiwa sōzō kokka o mezashite*, August 2010, <http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/shin-ampobouei2010/houkokusyo.pdf>, p. 13. Hatoyama prior to the 2009 elections had taken a similar stance, later retracted to avoid offending the SDPJ, that the third nonnuclear principle might be breached in times of emergency. See “Hatoyama daihyō, hikaku sangensoku no minaoshi niten santen tōnai ni konwaku mo,” *Asahi shinbun*, August 11, 2010, p. 3.

44. International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, *Eliminating Nuclear Threats: A Practical Agenda for Global Policymakers*, 2009, http://www.icnnd.org/reference/reports/ent/pdf/ICNND_Report-EliminatingNuclearThreats.pdf, pp. 172–73.

45. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan, *New Package of Practical Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Measures for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty*

Furthermore, the DPJ has been far more cooperative toward U.S. disarmament initiatives than the LDP. MOFA officials were reported in the May 2009 Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States to have opposed plans for any scaling back of the uses of nuclear weapons for deterrent purposes and to have requested the United States retain NSNF including TLAM/Ns and low-yield nuclear weapons and B-52 aircraft in Guam.⁴⁶ In contrast, Okada as foreign minister made it clear that the Japanese government, while denying that MOFA under previous LDP administrations had expressed an opinion on the appropriate level of the U.S. nuclear inventory, no longer opposed the withdrawal of nonstrategic nuclear forces, thus in effect freeing up a key plank of U.S. disarmament initiatives.⁴⁷ In addition, and perhaps most crucially, the DPJ has assisted U.S. nonproliferation strategy simply by abandoning the type of LDP saber-rattling talk about Japan acquiring its own nuclear deterrent.

Meanwhile, if nuclear issues under the DPJ have proved no real barrier to U.S.-Japan alliance ties, it is apparent that bilateral cooperation has continued quietly to roll forward in other vital areas unaffected by the spat over Okinawa. The DPJ has remained committed to U.S.-Japan ballistic missile defense cooperation, perhaps the key driver over the last decade of bilateral integration of military doctrines and capabilities. Moreover, the United States and Japan moved ahead with an agreement in March 2010 for a bilateral information security consultation framework as part of earlier efforts started under the LDP to expand exchanges of military information, arguably a key facet of a more “normalized” relationship for the United States with any of its allies.⁴⁸

East Asian Regionalism: Antidote to Unipolarity and Multipolarity?

The DPJ has often liked to portray its strong vision of East Asian regionalism within Japan's grand strategy as a total break from the LDP's policy. DPJ accusations run that the LDP under Koizumi and his successors first disrupted East Asian relations with issues of historical revisionism and then largely neglected the region to the exclusive pursuit instead of U.S.-Japan

on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, working paper submitted by Australia and Japan, March 24, 2010, http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/un/disarmament/npt/review2010-4/dfs/wokingpaper1005_01.pdf.

46. Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States, *America's Strategic Posture: The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2009), http://www.usip.org/files/America's_Strategic_Posture_Auth_Ed.pdf, p. 26.

47. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan, “Kurinton Beikokumuchōkan oyobi Geitsu Beikokubōchōkan ni taisuru rettā,” December 24, 2009, http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/kaiken/gaisho/g_1001.html#4-C.

48. Naikaku Kanbō, “Jōhō to jōhō hozon,” May 2010, <http://www.mod.go.jp/j/approach/agenda/meeting/seisakukaigi/pdf/14/3-2.pdf>.

ties. However, the DPJ is in part caricaturing LDP policy because its own East Asia strategy certainly draws continuities in concepts and mechanisms proposed for regional integration. Most notably, the East Asian Community (EAC) concept trumpeted by Hatoyama first originated in Koizumi's regional diplomacy, and other key regional cooperation mechanisms the DPJ administration has committed to, such as the economic partnership agreements and comprehensive economic partnerships agreements for trade liberalization and economic harmonization, were first promoted under LDP governments.⁴⁹

Nevertheless, the DPJ can justifiably argue that its vision of regional policy has differed significantly from that of the LDP in regard to its determination to fully develop these concepts and mechanisms and to position East Asian regionalism as a stronger and more viable component in its own right within overall grand strategy. Hence, the DPJ argues that the LDP maintained an overly simplistic East Asia policy predicated on the assumption that as long as U.S.-Japan relations were healthy, then positive Japan-East Asia relations would follow. The DPJ disputes this axiomatic logic given that under Koizumi U.S.-Japan relations were allegedly at their strongest, but Japan found itself at serious loggerheads with China and South Korea over issues of history, and that the LDP's perceived concentration on U.S.-Japan relations was seen to erode Japan's leadership capacity in East Asia. The DPJ further argues that LDP administrations, while maintaining a nominal commitment to East Asian regionalism through sponsoring of new frameworks such as the East Asian Summit (EAS) and the Japan-China-South Korea Trilateral Cooperation, were in reality seeking to proliferate regional forums and thereby prevent China from concentrating its rising power in any one framework. Consequently, for the LDP the game in East Asian diplomacy was to frustrate rather than foster effective regional frameworks.

The DPJ, by contrast, argues that it is fully committed to East Asian regionalism as a core component of Japan's grand strategy and is prepared to concentrate Japanese efforts in the EAC as the prime vehicle for achieving effective regional institutionalization. In advocating the EAC, however, the DPJ clearly has no intention of ceding regional leadership to China. Instead, the DPJ's strategy is to enmesh China (*Chūgoku o koritsu sasezu, Ajia no naka ni makikomi*) within a more effective macroregional framework in order to provide the necessary collective leverage among East Asian states to actively engage against any shift toward Chinese unipolarity while also avoiding attempts to pursue a containment policy.⁵⁰

49. Speech by Prime Minister of Japan Junichiro Koizumi, "Japan and ASEAN in East Asia: A Sincere and Open Partnership," January 14, 2002, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/pmv0201/speech.html>.

50. Hashimoto, "Okada Katsuya, Minshutō daihyō: gaikō bijon o kataru," p. 120.

The DPJ's East Asia policy has attracted considerable skepticism. U.S. policymakers took umbrage at DPJ concepts of the EAC which appeared to exclude the United States entirely and to relegate its role in an emergent region to providing security guarantees. For others, the EAC has simply been regarded as lacking practical substance and as reliant on vague ideas such as Hatoyama's *yū'ai* (fraternity). It is arguable, though, that criticisms by the United States and others of the EAC have been based on misreading DPJ intentions. It is clear that the EAC concepts held by Hatoyama and the DPJ have been predicated on credible and sophisticated principles as tested in East Asia and other regional contexts.

In the first instance, the EAC concept draws upon traditions of "open regionalism" in the Asia-Pacific which are designed to foster integration not by instigating a regional bloc but by lowering barriers to external interaction with other regions and the global political economy.⁵¹ While the DPJ has advocated the EAC as the core regional format for integration, this does not preclude continued cooperation with other formats such as APEC and certainly does not raise barriers to deeper cooperation with the United States.⁵²

Second, the DPJ's concept of the EAC is founded upon a long tradition of functionalism in regional cooperation. Hatoyama in articulating the EAC concept after the November 2009 Singapore APEC Summit emphasized that further integration should spring from gradual "multi-layered functional cooperation" in the areas of economic development, the environment, and protecting human life, including combating infectious diseases, responding to natural disasters, and enhancing maritime security.⁵³ In addition, Hatoyama's functionalist approach to EAC was underpinned by a set of common values that extend beyond just the heavily vilified *yū'ai*. The DPJ and Hatoyama have advocated the general values of openness, transparency, and inclusiveness, alongside functionality.⁵⁴ These lack the specificity of earlier and more ideologically charged values for regional cooperation as proposed by LDP administrations, which included the so-called "univer-

51. "Address by H. E. Dr. Yukio Hatoyama Prime Minister of Japan at the Sixty Fourth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations," September 24, 2009, http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/hatoyama/statement/200909/ehat_0924c_e.html.

52. Keynote Speech, Seiji Maehara, president of the Democratic Party of Japan, at American Enterprise Institute, "Agenda for Strengthening Japan-U.S. Alliance: Achieving World Peace and Happiness through Prosperity," October 25, 2005, <http://www.dpj.or.jp/english/news/051029/04.html>.

53. Address by H. E. Dr. Yukio Hatoyama Prime Minister of Japan, "Japan's Commitment to Asia: Toward the Revitalization of the East Asian Community," November 15, 2009, http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/hatoyama/statement/200911/15singapore_e.html.

54. "Chairman's Statement of the Fourth East Asia Summit," October 25, 2009, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/eas/state0910.pdf>, p. 5; "Dai 16 kai Kokusai Kōryūkai Kaigi 'Ajia no mirai' Hatoyama naikaku sōri daijin supiichi," May 20, 2010, <http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/hatoyama/statement/201005/20speech.html>.

sally recognized” values of democracy and human rights, the rule of law, and a market economy. However, the DPJ would argue that the types of values outlined by Hatoyama are attuned to the realities of East Asia’s political economy and thus represent a more pragmatic way forward in regional cooperation but at the same time are open enough for the engagement in EAC of the United States and other regional frameworks. Indeed, the DPJ’s less ideologically driven approach to East Asian regionalism and near total lack of interest in issues of revisiting the colonial past, demonstrated by the party hierarchy’s discipline in refraining from visiting Yasukuni Shrine, contrasts strongly with the LDP’s fixation on issues of nationalism and historical revisionism and provides a much firmer basis for Japan to exercise leadership in regional cooperation.

If the DPJ’s regionalist vision is correctly interpreted, it is not necessarily injurious to U.S. engagement and interests in East Asia. In fact, it might be supposed that an integrated and functioning region, more open and stable economically, and attempting to moderate Sino-Japanese rivalries over history and resources through effective multilateral cooperation, would be beneficial to U.S. interests. Moreover, even if the DPJ’s regionalist vision is not inherently threatening to U.S. interests, it is apparent that, in similar fashion to other DPJ foreign policy initiatives, its level of implementation has not matched its level of ambition. Hatoyama set the cat among the pigeons with his comment at the Trilateral Summit in early October 2009 that, while the U.S.-Japan alliance was important, Japan in the past had been “too dependent on the United States” (*Beikoku ni izon shisugi ita*) and needed to create a more Asia-focused policy.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, out of consideration for U.S. concerns, Hatoyama at the Japan-ASEAN Summit later in the month took the unusual step in a bilateral context of commenting on third-country relations, stressing that the U.S.-Japan alliance remained the central axis of Japanese diplomacy and U.S. engagement was crucial to the EAC.⁵⁶

Indeed, the DPJ government since Hatoyama’s resignation, although continuing to promote the EAC vision, has increasingly slipped in its commitment for active realization. Kan’s government became preoccupied with Japan’s hosting of APEC in 2010 and responding to renewed U.S. leadership initiatives in Asia-Pacific regionalism through the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement. At the same time, U.S. accession to the East Asian Summit in 2010, alongside the revitalization of the Trans-Pacific Partnership concept,

55. “‘Kitachōsen, tainichi kaizen nozomu’ On shushō setsumei Nitchūkan shunō kaigi,” *Asahi shinbun*, October 14, 2009, http://www.asahi.com/politics/update/1010/TKY200910100165_01.html, accessed August 17, 2010.

56. “Shushō, Bei e no hairyō de ‘Nichihei dōmei ga kijiku’ to kyōchō,” *Yomiuri shinbun*, October 24, 2009, <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/politics/news/20091024-OYT1T101104.htm>.

raises question about how far the EAC can progress as the core format for regional integration; and China's continuing preference for the ASEAN Plus Three framework over the EAC throws doubts upon whether it is possible for Japan to shift the region away from the previous pattern of proliferating and competing formats for cooperation. The DPJ's vision of the EAC, while potentially sound in conception as a means to enhance Japanese autonomy, to manage the rise of China multilaterally, and to maintain U.S. engagement, as yet looks difficult to implement.

Sino-Japanese Frustrations. Similarly, the DPJ's stewardship of key bilateral relationships in East Asia offers a story of opportunities to pursue new directions in foreign policy, but these have been frustrated in implementation by external pressures and lack of DPJ policy competence, with the result that Japan has shifted little from the inherently problematic positions of the LDP regime. The DPJ was regarded as particularly intent on shifting Sino-Japanese relations onto a more cooperative track. LDP leaders, following the debacles of the Koizumi era, had in fact moved to stabilize bilateral relations through creating a "mutually beneficial partnership based on common strategic interests" (*senryaku-teki gokei kankei*).⁵⁷ Nevertheless, the DPJ charged that the LDP had failed to tackle the underlying structural problems in the relationship such as historical revisionism, resource competition, and Japan's ready dependence on the United States in managing security tensions, with resulting dilemmas of alliance entrapment and abandonment. The DPJ instead depicted itself as the true party of engagement with China and claimed it would seek to manage ties through deepened bilateral cooperation, a more symmetric U.S.-Japan-China strategic triangle, and most especially the advancement of the EAC.

The DPJ's critics feared in the early stages of the administration that its enthusiasm for Sino-Japanese relations, combined with the desire to establish greater autonomy *vis-à-vis* the United States, would lead to Japanese bandwagoning with rising Chinese power. Then DPJ Secretary General Ozawa Ichirō's courting of and by China's top leadership was especially cited as evidence of this behavior. Ozawa led a delegation of 45 DPJ National Diet members and 390 other general participants to China in December 2007, and then led the largest delegation ever of 143 DPJ Diet members and 496 general participants to China in December 2009. Similarly, Hatoyama was identified by China as the leader of a potentially pro-China administration, and Hatoyama reciprocated with his determination to remove issues of his-

57. For a fuller description of this concept, see Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Joint Statement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Comprehensive Promotion of a 'Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests,'" May 7, 2008, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/china/joint0805.html>.

tory from the bilateral agenda and statements in favor of placing China and East Asia more at the center of Japan's foreign policy.

The DPJ has undoubtedly sought to prioritize improved relations with China, but it is not the case that it has sought to bandwagon with China or consequently adopted a soft line in defense of Japanese national interests. On the contrary, the DPJ for much of the first year of its administration adopted a highly pragmatic and hardheaded stance, far less influenced by ideology than certain previous LDP administrations, and at times as tough, if not tougher, than the LDP. The DPJ has continued to pressure China over transparency in its military expenditures and buildup. Ozawa, during his supposed bandwagoning visit to Beijing in December 2009, remarked to Minister of National Defense Liang Guanglie that China's military modernization generated a "China threat thesis in Japan, which deepens thinking about Japan's military strengthening," thereby offering an oblique caution for China to moderate its military behavior.⁵⁸ In a similar fashion, Hatoyama at the opening session in February 2010 of the Prime Minister's Council on Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era stated that it was necessary for the panel to consider, "without taboos," "views regarding Japan's response to military modernization by surrounding countries," again shooting an oblique reference to the potential threat from China.⁵⁹

The DPJ has demonstrated similar resolve toward China over territorial disputes and maritime security. Okada as foreign minister warned his counterpart in January 2010 that any Chinese violation of bilateral agreements over the joint development of gas fields in the East China Sea would oblige Japan to "take necessary action," implying Japanese exploration of its own part of the disputed area.⁶⁰ Since February 2009, the DPJ has considered submitting National Diet legislation that would obligate the government to maintain the low-tide lines of the furthest-flung Japanese islands, directly in opposition to Chinese claims that atolls such as Okinotori-shima cannot be classified as islands and thereby acquire surrounding exclusive economic zones.⁶¹ Likewise, the revised 2010 National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG) clearly identify the need to shift JSDF assets southward to garrison outlying islands in Okinawa Prefecture against Chinese incursions.

Despite the intent to improve relations through proactive but tough-

58. "Chūgoku, zehi senshū bōei de' Ozawa kanjichō ga kokubō ni yōsei," *Asahi shinbun*, December 11, 2009, <http://www.asahi.com/politics/update/1211/TKY200912110439.html>.

59. "Chūgoku, Kita no kyōi taisho, shinbōei taikō e giron kaishi," *Yomiuri shinbun*, February 20, 2010, <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/politics/news/20100218-OYT1T01247.htm>.

60. "Gasuden Kaihatsu 'shinten mirarenu' Okada-shi, gōi jishū unagasu," *Asahi shinbun*, January 17, 2010, <http://asahi.com/politics/update/0117/TKY201001170172.html>, accessed August 17, 2010.

61. "Protection of Remote Islets Eyed," *Japan Times Online*, February 4, 2010, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/print/nn20100204a6.html>.

mindful engagement, the DPJ has found that its China policy risks replicating the record of failure of LDP administrations. The DPJ's failures can be ascribed to a lack of basic policy competence but also to the simple fact that China's rise is exerting near-relentless strategic pressures on Japan, with the result that the DPJ administration has slipped very much back into the default policy positions of the LDP. The vulnerability of the DPJ's policy in the face of Chinese pressure was graphically demonstrated with the bilateral dispute in late 2010 over the Japan Coast Guard's arrest of a Chinese trawler captain in the vicinity of the Senkaku Islands in September. Japan's subsequent release of the captain—most probably at the political behest of the DPJ's then Chief Cabinet Secretary Sengoku Yoshito in response to Chinese “retaliatory measures,” including intensification of an embargo on vital rare earth exports—generated an image of Japanese weakness. This impression of “weak-kneed” diplomacy was then reinforced by Japan's perceived scramble to restore dialogue with China, only resulting in Chinese cold-shouldering at the Asia-Europe Meeting (with an “accidental” meeting between Kan and Wen Jiabao having to be engineered as a “corridor summit” in a conference center in Brussels) then at East Asian and APEC summits in October and November. The DPJ's mishandling of the arrest and then the leaking by the Coast Guard of a video of the trawler incident compounded the image of a lack of diplomatic competency and backbone in dealing with China, especially in the eyes of the Japanese public.

The critique of the DPJ's handling of the incident is probably overblown, given that China damaged its own diplomatic standing in the region through its assertiveness. Moreover, Japan was able to extract in September and again in October speedy and the highest-level-yet guarantees from Clinton and Gates that Article 5 of the bilateral security treaty did cover the Senkaku Islands. Nevertheless, the ready willingness of Kan and the DPJ administration to fall back on reliance upon the United States in dealing with China signifies a failure to carve out new strategic options and autonomy, and a concomitant falling back to LDP foreign policy positions.

Multipolarity Opportunities Lost. Japanese policy toward North Korea under the DPJ reveals similar continuity with LDP administrations and thus a lack of ability to break out of past cycles of diplomacy, with resultant questions for pursuing autonomy and national interests. The DPJ's accession to power triggered apparent North Korean hopes for a softening in Japan's stance on the abductions and nuclear issues, given that previous LDP administrations (with the possible exception of Fukuda Yasuo) had been perceived as hard-line and that the DPJ entered into coalition with the traditionally pro-engagement SDPJ. Hatoyama even spoke in December 2009 of his willingness to, in Koizumi fashion, visit North Korea if it might produce momentum on the abductions issue.

Nevertheless, despite the LDP's accusations during the September 2009

election that the DPJ would be soft on North Korea, the opposite has again proved to be the case. The DPJ government in October 2009 abolished the LDP's Abductions Task Force, establishing instead the Headquarters for the Abduction Issue, directed on a day-to-day basis by the minister of state for abductions with an increase of personnel from 30 to 40. The DPJ initiated the visit of the North Korean defector Hwang Jang Yop to Japan in April 2010 to discuss the abductions issue, and former North Korean agent Kim Hyon Hui paid a high-profile visit for the same reason in June. The DPJ as a party overall has shown a similar level of interest in pressuring North Korea on the abductions—most notably, the cross-party Dietmembers' League on Abductions was reported to have increased its membership post-September 2009, indicating that declining LDP numbers were compensated for by increased DPJ participation.⁶² The DPJ has hotly debated whether to exert leverage on the North Korean community in Japan by excluding North Korean high schools in Japan from a national tuition waiver program because of the failure of their textbooks to acknowledge Japanese positions on the abductions issue.

The DPJ administration in respect of the nuclear and other North Korean-related security issues has maintained, in close coordination with the United States and South Korea, a similarly hard line to the LDP. The DPJ in May 2010, in the wake of North Korea's suspected sinking of the South Korean navy's corvette *Cheonan* the previous March, passed legislation to enable Japanese inspections of North Korean ships suspected of carrying weapons. This legislation was originally slated by the LDP in 2009, although the DPJ's bill devolved inspections to the Japan Coast Guard to the exclusion of the MSDF. The DPJ extended existing sanctions on banning the acceptance of North Korean exports and began to further tighten financial remittances from Japan to North Korea. Kan immediately pledged Japan's diplomatic support to South Korea and the United States following North Korea's bombardment of Yeonpyeong Island in November 2010. Kan in December 2010 even raised the extraordinary idea of investigating revisions of the JSDF Law in order to enable the JSDF to dispatch troops to North Korea to extract the abductees in the event of a Korean Peninsula emergency.⁶³

The efficacy of DPJ North Korea policy remains as equally open to question as the policy under the LDP. Even though Hatoyama and Kan after assuming office engaged in the immediate ritual of meeting Japanese

62. "Rachi giren renmei ga taikita kyōkō shisei o kakunin, seiken kōtaigo no hatsukaigō," *Yomiuri shinbun*, November 17, 2009, <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/politics/news/20091117-OYTIT00972.htm>.

63. "Yūji nara Jieitai de rachi higaisha kyūshutsu? shushō hatsugen ni tōwaku no koe," *Asahi shinbun*, December 10, 2010, <http://www.asahi.com/politics/update/1211/TKY201012110206.html>.

abductee families, their true devotion to the cause compared to the zeal of LDP predecessors has been doubted. This is not least because the new Headquarters for the Abduction Issue has been slow to devise fresh policies to pressure the North and has dropped the LDP's attempts since 2006 to oblige North Korea to hand over the persons responsible for carrying out the abductions.⁶⁴ In mishandling the abductions issue, though, the DPJ is not unique, given the LDP's previous catalogue of failures and fitful attention. Moreover, the DPJ demonstrates continuity with the LDP not only in its hard-line position on the abductions but also in the failure to stake out a more autonomous position on Korean Peninsula diplomacy. The DPJ has defaulted, as did the LDP, to making the abductions issue a precondition for improving ties with the North and has found little diplomatic room because of the ongoing nuclear issue and the *Cheonan* and Yeonpyeong incidents to depart from the common front with the United States and South Korea on security issues. The DPJ's reliance on the LDP position serves Japan's immediate security and diplomatic interests in a situation of deadlock with North Korea. However, the DPJ is likely to find its diplomatic policy toward North Korea as hidebound as that of the LDP if negotiations with the North are returned to and Japanese policy autonomy remains constrained by the focus on the abductions issue and reliance on the United States for diplomatic leverage in these negotiations.

If China and North Korea policy under the DPJ does not look dissimilar from that of the LDP in execution, then this story carries over into other strategic relationships. Japanese policy toward Russia in the latter stages of the LDP had begun to show greater strategic responsiveness to the changing international structure. The Japan-Russia Action Plan of 2003 sought to reverse the previous pattern of predicating improved ties upon the reversion of the Northern Territories and was designed instead to deepen political, economic, and security ties which would then later create the necessary bilateral consensus and conditions for a resolution of the territorial issue. Japanese policymakers focused on joint projects for energy development, the promotion of trade and investment, and defense exchanges, all with a look toward employing Russia as a strategic partner to counter China's rise and to influence events on the Korean Peninsula.

Nevertheless, despite steady progress in this long-term strategic agenda, LDP administrations found it increasingly hard to avoid the short-term distractions of the Northern Territories issue. Prime Minister Asō Tarō by the

64. For the change in Japan's position from 2006 to 2010, see Rachi Mondai Taisaku Honbu, "Rachi mondai ni okeru kongo no taio hōshin," October 16, 2006, <http://www.rachi.go.jp/jp/shisei/old.housin.html>, and Rachi Mondai Taisaku Honbu, "Rachi mondai no kaiketsu ni mukete," November 29, 2010, http://www.rachi.go.jp/jp/shisei/taisaku/images/dai4kai_shiji.pdf.

time of the May 2009 Japan-Russia summit was already stating that Russian movement on the Northern Territories was necessary before relations could be moved to a “higher level,” thus hinting that a resolution to the territorial issue was once again becoming a precondition for improved ties and undercutting the strategic logic of the bilateral action plan.⁶⁵ The advent of the DPJ was thought to presage a possible breakthrough in Japan-Russia ties, given Prime Minister Hatoyama’s close personal interest in Russia and the efforts of his grandfather, Hatoyama Ichirō, to normalize diplomatic relations in 1956. However, Hatoyama rapidly defaulted to a strategy similar to the LDP’s—demanding the same formula that Russia should return all four islands and linking Japan’s maintenance of economic cooperation with Russia to progress on the territorial issue. Japan-Russia relations then dipped dramatically with President Dmitry Medvedev’s visit to Kunashiri in the Northern Territories in November 2010, with Kan adhering to a hard line by describing it as an “outrage difficult to forgive” (*yurushi-nikui bōkyō*).⁶⁶

Japan’s attempt to revitalize relations with Russia should have been part of a DPJ strategy to exploit the potentialities of a multipolar world and enhance strategic autonomy. The DPJ, however, has been unable to utilize these opportunities, and relations with other key partners exhibit a mixed record. The DPJ has been able to follow up on some of the successes of the LDP in improving strategic ties with a rising India, even though much of the initial impetus under the LDP was linked more to strengthening trilateral ties with United States. During his visit to India in December 2009, Hatoyama affirmed the Japan-India Strategic and Global Partnership and concluded an action plan to advance the bilateral Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation. Japan subsequently concluded a comprehensive economic partnership agreement in October 2010.

However, the extent to which the DPJ can exploit Japan-India relations to pursue greater autonomy remains dubious due to India’s notoriously autonomous tradition in foreign policy and to the unlikelihood that it would allow itself to be easily utilized for Japan’s strategic ends, especially *vis-à-vis* China. Finally, Japan under the DPJ might have thought to energize relations with the EU as another potential extraregional pole, sharing a similar attachment to multilateralism, moderation in the use of military power, and addressing issues such as development and climate change. The DPJ government, though, has shown only limited interest in the EU, and the April

65. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan, “Asō sōri to Pūchin Roshia shushō to no kaidan,” May 12, 2009, http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/russia/visit/0905_sk.html.

66. “Heisei 23 nen hoppō ryōdo henkan yōkyū zenkoku taikai naikaku sōri daijin aisatsu,” February 7, 2011, <http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/kan/statement/201102/07aisatu.html>.

2010 Japan-EU summit designed to reinvigorate the bilateral action plan created only limited momentum for more substantial cooperation, with the slow initiation of negotiations for an economic partnership agreement and more binding agreements on political and security cooperation.

DPJ Defense Policy: Unchanged Trajectory

The LDP in the September 2009 election campaign and since has attempted to make great play out of the accusation that the DPJ is essentially weak on defense policy, not least because of its past association with the SDPJ, and thus unable to protect Japan from the provocations of North Korea and other neighbors. Nevertheless, the DPJ's track record demonstrates that, while it has intended to take a slightly different tack on how to channel Japan's military power, it is no less interested in defense matters and indeed, faced with the same structural pressures, has largely conformed to the trajectory of LDP defense policy.

The DPJ, in line with the more multilateralist vision of Hatoyama, Ozawa, and Okada, had pledged to enhance Japan's cooperation in security affairs with the UN, even including where necessary the use of military force to restore international peace and security under Article 42 of the UN Charter.⁶⁷ The DPJ administration has explored since October 2009 the possibility of revising the five principles for JSDF participation in UN peace-keeping operations (PKO) to enable dispatch of its forces in a wider range of scenarios. However, despite the recommendations of the Prime Minister's Council on Security and Defense Capabilities in the New Era Advisory in September 2010 and the revised NDPG of December 2010, the DPJ has yet to introduce revisions.⁶⁸ Instead, the DPJ administration has followed the LDP in shying away from JSDF participation in hazardous UN PKO and opted for continued low-risk UN PKO and disaster relief in Haiti, Pakistan, East Timor, and South Sudan.

The DPJ has thus failed as yet to launch Japan on the more radical multilateral and collective security path of the type advocated by Ozawa. Instead, the DPJ has devoted most defense policymaking energy to pushing ahead with the strengthening of Japan's existing military capabilities and external military relationships. The DPJ's procurement plans in the defense budget of 2009 appeared largely indistinguishable from previous LDP administrations, with the same emphasis on qualitative upgrading and the potential for

67. *Minshutō seisakushū Index 2009*.

68. Arata na jidai no anzen hoshō to nōeiryoku mondankai, *Arata na jidai ni okeru Nihon no anzen hoshō to bōeiryoku*, pp. 41–42: "Heisei 23 nendo ikō ni kakawaru bōei keikaku no taikō ni tsuite," December 17, 2010, http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/kakugikettei/2010/1217b_oueitaikou.pdf, p. 5.

regional and global power projection.⁶⁹ The NDPG was if anything stronger than past LDP-guided versions, confirming that the JSDF would abandon the basic force defense concept of the 1970s and switch instead to a posture predicated on a “dynamic defense force” seeking to counterbalance specific threats and capabilities.

Similarly, the DPJ has forged ahead with the external military partnerships first developed by the LDP. The DPJ government, despite withdrawing the MSDF from the Indian Ocean, has maintained MSDF dispatch on antipiracy missions in the Gulf of Aden and assented to the building of Japan’s first overseas base in Djibouti. Japan signed an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement with Australia in 2010, its first such agreement to provide logistical support for noncombat missions to a partner other than the United States. The JSDF has continued also to explore links with South Korea, the other key U.S. military partner in the region, with its military personnel observing U.S.-Japan exercises in the Sea of Japan in July 2010 and MSDF personnel observing U.S.-South Korean exercises in December.

In addition, the DPJ, although not interested short-term in challenging the antimilitaristic prohibitions of Article 9 or the ban on collective self-defense, has exhibited pragmatism in challenging other military taboos. The DPJ in 2010 went further than any previous LDP administration in seeking to officially overturn the arms export ban in favor of a system of licensed exports in order to preserve Japan’s indigenous defense production base, although eventually it failed in this objective due to its need for SDPJ support in National Diet budget negotiations.

Conclusion: Toward “Resentful Realism”?

The DPJ’s domestic difficulties in implementing its agenda are legion. The intent in this article has not been to provide a systematic catalogue and analysis of these, but they have obviously included *inter alia*: coordination problems among top leadership on the instrumentalization of policies, seen most clearly in Hatoyama’s inability to control Futenma relocation; the difficulties of agreeing on a common front on U.S. bases with the SDPJ and the People’s New Party coalition partners; questions over the extent of Ozawa’s influence on foreign policy and his involvement in policy energy-sapping domestic scandals; a possible DPJ focus on being seen to rectify the past misdemeanors of the policymaking process to the extent that it has led to

69. For instance, the MSDF is to procure a new DDH-22 helicopter carrier, which at 20,000 tons is a third larger than the previous DDH *Hyuga*-class and the largest ever MSDF vessel; and the MSDF’s submarine fleet is to be increased by more than a third to its largest ever number of 22 vessels.

posturing *vis-à-vis* key bureaucratic actors such as the MOFA and MOD and *vis-à-vis* the United States to the detriment of consistent and informed policy implementation; a simple lack of DPJ experience in how to govern and overall concentration on domestic policy priorities; and finally a failure to communicate and expand on guiding concepts of foreign policy such as Hatoyama's *yū'ai* which are often seen to lack applicability.

Even more important, though, the DPJ in its attempts to implement a new grand strategy has found itself quickly constrained by, in ways not so different from the LDP, international structural pressures; and it is these which are likely to prove the greatest obstacles to any new Japanese international orientation. The DPJ, most obviously, has already run into a near brick wall of U.S. resistance to certain aspects of its attempts to rearticulate the basis of the bilateral alliance. In a similar fashion, China, while indicating an early preference for cooperation with the DPJ over the increasingly testy past relations with the LDP, has already demonstrated its continuing ability to impede the new administration's longer-term plans for maintaining Japan's influence in East Asian regionalism projects and to encroach upon core national territorial interests. Likewise, North Korea, even if it cannot necessarily exert over the longer term the same degree of international structural pressures as China, has demonstrated its capacity to spook DPJ policymakers over security as it did their LDP predecessors and to consequently push Japan further into, even if uncomfortably, the arms of the U.S. security relationship.

Thus, the first overall conclusion of this essay is that the DPJ, in encountering such early and stiff resistance, has shown, and will increasingly show, a propensity to edge away from attempts at implementing a more daring grand strategy. The DPJ leadership is already acquiescing in nondecisions and satisficing in regard to the toughest foreign and security policy choices, and has curtailed many of its grander ambitions in order to avoid costly international and domestic controversies. Indeed, the DPJ, despite its instincts to the contrary, is already defaulting and is likely in the medium term to default to a grand strategy not that dissimilar in essence from that of the LDP, as any other options to diverge from this trajectory simply prove too difficult to implement. The result is that the DPJ is affecting for Japan an international profile just as dependent, or as overdependent, on the U.S.-Japan relationship as under the LDP. Conversely, Japan's options for a more balanced set of international relations through enhancing East Asian regionalism are likely to remain just as underdeveloped as during the LDP regime. In this sense, the DPJ, despite offering brief glimpses for Japan of enhancing its international stance, may simply oversee the final closing off of grand strategy options and final entrapment in the U.S.-dominated bilateral alliance.

Noda's accession to the premiership appears so far only to confirm this trend of reverting to LDP-type policies. As an attempt to restore party unity, his leadership lineup includes figures close to Ozawa and regarded as more pro-China, such as DPJ Secretary General Koshiishi Azuma, but it is clear that for now the party internal balance of power has shifted in favor of a more traditional pro-U.S. stance largely indistinguishable from that of the LDP. Although Noda's earlier pronouncements in August 2011 that Japanese Class A war criminals were not legally convicted by the Allies have undertones of LDP revisionism, his pragmatism is such that he is unlikely to antagonize Japan's neighbors on issues of history. Instead, Noda has indicated that he intends to focus energy on strengthening U.S.-Japan relations, including abiding by the existing Futenma agreements and advancing an Asia-Pacific vision of regionalism.⁷⁰ Noda's stance is likely to receive strong support from his fellow Matsushita Seikeijuku graduates, the new foreign minister, Genba Kōichirō, and the new chair of the Policy Research Committee, Maehara Seiji.

Nevertheless, there is still likely to be a sting in the tail in the story of the DPJ's grand strategy. The first conclusion should not be taken to argue that the DPJ's foreign policy will completely relapse into business as usual in foreign policy or a mode of "reluctant realism" whereby Japan acquiesces in structural pressures, docilely accepts the ineluctability of reliance on the U.S.-Japan alliance, and pushes its international interests centered on the strategic logic of the past decade.⁷¹ Instead, the DPJ, due to the fact that it can at the very minimum perceive perils and opportunities of multipolarity and strategic alternatives, is likely to be tempted in the medium to longer term back into revising ambitions and initiatives for increased autonomy. However, as noted earlier, the DPJ, even when it has learned from its miscalculations in policy implementation, is unlikely to have the resourcefulness to be able to significantly depart from Japan's past and current trajectory due to the near crushing weight of international structural pressures and its own domestic policy shortcomings. This resultant tension between the DPJ's strategic ideals and the realistic limits of its capacity to implement them is likely to generate friction with the United States and other international partners over the longer term.

Hence, U.S.-Japan relations in early 2011, as a side-product of the "3/11" disasters and the joint JSDF and U.S. military Operation Tomodachi relief efforts, may have strengthened in terms of military-to-military cooperation and Japanese perceptions of the importance of the U.S. military presence, and even of the USMC bases in Okinawa. Nonetheless, there is a risk

70. Noda Yoshihiko, "Waga seiken kōsō," *Bungei shunjū*, September 2011, pp. 94–103.

71. Michael J. Green, *Japan's Reluctant Realism: Foreign Policy Challenges in an Era of Uncertain Power* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 4–9.

that this cooperation in the short term has done little more than paper over many of the major cracks in the bilateral relationship. Operation Tomodachi clearly will not create grounds for a resolution of the Futenma relocation issue where it most counts—on the ground in Okinawa itself. The U.S. and DPJ administrations remain seemingly blindly committed to the existing Henoko relocation plans in the face of likely intractable local political opposition and continue to postpone a genuine resolution of the Futenma issue.

More important, even though the Futenma issue can probably be prevented from contaminating the overall relationship, it is emblematic of the need for Japan and the United States to confront larger strategic questions in their alliance. The DPJ's forced and uneasy acceptance of dependence on the United States as part of a trend of "reluctant realism" may only accentuate existing concerns over entrapment and abandonment, and may destabilize the alliance. The DPJ's current regression to a grand strategy nearly indistinguishable in execution from that of the flawed LDP policy and reliant on the United States has merely delayed addressing the long-term challenges of a rising China, Korean Peninsula instability, developments in East Asian regionalism, and a multipolarizing international system. Moreover, Japan's dependence on the United States is likely to be unsustainable in any case, as U.S. power progressively wanes in the Asia-Pacific region, thus only enhancing Japan's desperation that it has been constrained from fully articulating a complementary or alternative grand strategy. All of this may compound Japanese frustrations and feed more unpredictable strategic behavior—on a far larger scale than the final Futenma fiasco—as it rails against the perceived domination of the United States and being squeezed by a rising China.

The outcome may then not be a Japan that accepts the pathway of "reluctant realism" in train with the United States as under Koizumi, nor may it be a Japan that reverts either to a path of remodeled antimilitarism or internationalism in the form of "cautious liberalism" as under Koizumi's predecessors.⁷² Instead, the DPJ's failed grand strategy and subsequent steady erosion of its international standing may lead to a more assertive but also insecure, obdurate, and cantankerous Japan. Medium term, therefore, the need may be to think more in terms of "resentful realism" characterizing Japanese foreign policy behavior, with a forcible outlook, borne of the insecurity of a trapped and declining power with few international options, and random frustrations expressed toward both Japan's ally and its regional neighbors. In this instance of Japan acting as a potential source of instability in the region, the United States may wish to take a fresh look at the

72. Thomas U. Berger, "Japan's International Relations: The Political and Security Dimensions," in Samuel S. Kim, ed., *The International Relations of Northeast Asia* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), p. 137.

rationality of the DPJ's original vision of grand strategy and its applicability to resolving challenges for Japan's international situation. Rather than constraining Japanese autonomy, the United States may allow it to develop in service of the bilateral partnership and thus put the alliance and Japanese foreign policy on a truly and mutually sustainable track.

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK