

# **Creating A Counterterrorism Policy: Why Has Japan Had A Weak Response?**

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## **Abstract**

Since September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, fighting terrorism has been a major concern for the international community due to the influence of the United States. Major allies have become involved in the “War on Terror” began by the United States and some allies of the United States, such as England and Spain have become targets of Al Qaeda. Japan is an ally of United States and they know the consequences of a terrorist attack due to the Tokyo subway attacks in 1995. However, Japan has had a weak response in creating a counterterrorism policy. This paper presents a model to determine the actions that a democratic country will take when creating a counterterrorism policy. After receiving a catalyst event that spurs the need for a policy, a country will work within their constraints and create one of three types of responses: a radical and quick response, a moderate response, and a slow and weak response. The reasons behind Japan’s weak response towards creating a counterterrorism policy will be examined in depth in this paper.

## **Introduction**

The terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 greatly altered the course of American politics and foreign policy. September 11<sup>th</sup> was the single deadliest terrorist attack in United States history (Grace 2002). The United States put pressure on other countries to adopt strategies to combat the terrorist network of al- Qaeda. Regions where the United States is heavily influential, such as Southeast Asia, were especially pressured to take action. Other countries highly involved with the United States, such as Britain and Spain, have been subjected to al-Qaeda terrorist attacks. Given its cooperation with the United States and its greater

international involvement, will Japan list among al-Qaeda's secondary targets, and is it highly susceptible to a terrorist attack?

In the wake of the terrorist attacks in the United States and the subsequent attacks in England and Spain, countries are stepping up their security and making plans in the event of a terrorist attack. After the London attacks, Rome started drills to prevent attack and prepare the city should it happen. Should Tokyo be making such plans and conducting drills? Geographically, Japan is closer to the countries of interest named by the United States. President Bush named North Korea as part of an "Axis of Evil" when his administration was identifying potential "hotspots" for terrorists. Japan has the issue of geography with which to contend more so than some other United States allies when considering their reactions to the potential for terrorist attacks.

Unfortunately, Japan has not had the best response when it comes to international cooperation on combating terrorism. Questions also arise about Japan's prevention efforts and contingency plans in the event of a terrorist attack within their own country. What factors lead Japan to such a lame response? Japan knows the impact of a terrorist attack. On March 20, 1995, the domestic religiously-based terrorist group known as Aum Shinrikyo organized a massive attack on the Tokyo subway system utilizing the chemical neuro-toxin sarin gas. The group staged five coordinated attacks that ultimately killed only twelve people, yet injured approximately six thousand more. Currently, this is the most severe attack on Japan since the end of World War II. The Tokyo subway system is one of the world's busiest commuter transport systems, and transports millions of passengers daily, which could easily make it the target of another terrorist attack (Ttabashi, Ogawara, and Leheny 2002). The knowledge officials gained from the response to this domestic terrorist attack should help their response and their desire to create a proactive policy on terrorism.

This paper first seeks to explain Japan's actions and response to the threat of terrorism. Second, this paper seeks to examine why the Japanese response to terrorism has been so weak. There are many factors that contribute to Japan's weak response towards developing a counterterrorism policy, which can also be found in other democracies. A model will be presented which explains the constraints on counterterrorism policy making. Certain characteristics of democracies make developing an effective counterterrorism policy more difficult. The structure of the Japanese government and the makeup of the bureaucracy make

Japan a “reactive” rather than “proactive” government. Therefore, any response they have to terrorism will likely be after the event has occurred. However, the United States is likely to have enough influence as a hegemonic power to convince Japan to create a more proactive policy. Yet the United States has thus far not taken a very proactive role in the fight against terrorism in Asia.

### **What is Terrorism?**

The problem of terrorism is much different than the security dilemmas faced in the past. During the Cold War, big and powerful states, such as the Soviet Union, were a problem for the United States. With terrorism, weak states and non-state actors became the source of security concerns for countries such as the United States. The best response to terrorism is international cooperation, which can be difficult to achieve on something like terrorism because it is still an issue which is being conceptually developed.

Terrorism can be defined as “the use of violence against civilian targets by state or non-state actors in order to achieve political outcomes by causing insecurity, fear, and panic among a nation’s population.” However, this definition is not agreed on by all countries, as some classify actions by countries such as the United States as terrorism (Grace 2002). Terrorism presents new and unique problems that are different than past military and social problems in the international arena. Policies to combat terrorism have been very difficult to create and effectively implement.

Experts believe that a proper response to terrorism requires a two-front strategy. Domestically, intelligence agencies and law enforcement agencies are the first line of defense against terrorism. Both require sufficient resources and legal authorization to monitor and protect its citizens. Externally, countries may use force against terrorist bases and the countries that support them (Grace 2002).

### **Why Japan Should be Worried?**

Partially due to their strong support of the United States and their own fear of terrorism, Japan supported the United States following the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. September 11<sup>th</sup> revealed the United States’ susceptibility to terrorist attacks, but it also introduced a potential threat for the Japanese, especially considering Japan’s close alliance with the United States. Terrorist attacks are not a new threat for Japan. Japan has been victim to indigenous terrorism from

certain religious cults. In addition, Japan may now face threats from external terrorist groups, such as al-Qaeda (Ryu 2005).

Al-Qaeda has shown that it is an international terrorist organization that has no boundaries and is capable of co-opting various independent terror organizations in order to meet regional objectives. In October 2001, Al-Qaeda topped the U.S. State Department's list of top terrorist organizations (Grace 2002). Since the attacks on the United States in 2001, their activities have been thrust into media attention. Investigations of attacks and claims by al-Qaeda leadership have linked the organization to attacks in Madrid, London, and most recently Bali. Despite the lack of a large Muslim population, it has been confirmed since 2001 that al-Qaeda has a permanent or semi-permanent presence in Japan (Gunaratna 2003).

The al-Qaeda network existed in Southeast Asia prior to the start of the War on Terrorism. However, initial efforts to eradicate the al-Qaeda network from Southeast Asia have been relatively unsuccessful, except in Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Jemaah Islamiyyah, once an Indonesian Islamic group, has been taken over by al-Qaeda and developed into a terrorist network that extends from Malaysia to Japan. Prior to 2001, it seems that al-Qaeda was already orchestrating attacks in Japan and foreign intelligence agencies, such as the CIA suggested more were being planned. In attempts to bomb United States passenger airplanes in the region, a proclaimed al-Qaeda operative boarded a plane in Manila in route to Tokyo armed with explosives. The blast, not as successful as intended, killed one Japanese passenger and injured eleven others. In addition, it now seems that al-Qaeda abandoned an attack in Japan or South Korea that was to occur at the same time as the attacks in the United States in September 2001 (Gunaratna 2003).

So it seems that al-Qaeda is alive and well in East Asia, particularly Japan. It also seems that al-Qaeda has the motivation to attack Japan. While there are reasons for Japan to be prepared, there are difficulties to Japan's response to terrorism leaving it weak. First, the domestic workings of the Japanese government seem to hinder their response to terrorism. For example, Japan operates with great uncertainty and has a large bureaucracy so it is slow to respond and cannot take an international role as a major player (McCargo 2004). These difficulties will be examined in greater detail later in the paper.

Terrorism is a particular problem for Japan due to how they define national security. To the Japanese, national security goes beyond simply the traditional notions of military security.

They also include a political and economic aspect when defining their national security interests (Katzenstein and Okawara 1993). Particularly, terrorism has the capability to attack the political and economic system of Japan. Terrorist attacks have dealt great financial blows to the United States and England.

### **A Model for Creating a Terrorism Policy**

Terrorism presents unique challenges to policy makers and analysts. There are hundreds of terrorist organizations in all parts of the world, and a firm victory against all types of terrorism is difficult to achieve. The most countries can hope for in their efforts to combat terrorism is to eradicate the well-organized and dangerous groups, monitor and collect information on others, and protect their citizens from domestic attacks (Grace 2002). Although it is hard to fight, there are certain elements that make-up the terrorism policy process and determine the type of outcome of such policies.

The United States was directly affected by the terrorist attacks on September 11<sup>th</sup>, so it responded to the attacks somewhat differently than the rest of the world did. The response of foreign governments to September 11<sup>th</sup> depends first on how they conceptualize the terrorist threat to their own state security. Unlike the United States where the terrorist attacks were viewed as war, most of the international community views terrorist attacks as a criminal matter (Katzenstein 2002). However, as al-Qaeda claims responsibility for more terrorist attacks in all parts of the world, a strong counterterrorism policy is making its way onto political agendas in many countries in many different regions.

In order to arrive at a policy against terrorism, the agenda must be set so that terrorism is the focus of a policy maker. One such way to identify that a policy is needed is for a catalyst event to introduce the need for such a policy. In this case, the catalyst for a terrorism policy was the large scale attacks against the United States on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Other countries have had domestic or regional catalysts to make action a necessity. However, other attacks have not been to the scale of September 11<sup>th</sup>, especially considering that the United States is one of the world's superpowers.

The response to creating a terrorism policy will be different depending on the type of regime that constitutes the government. Figure 1 describes the steps towards getting to a terrorism policy. Only authoritarian and democratic forms of government are considered in this

model but it could be expanded to include other types of political systems. What is important in considering policies is the main difference in the structure of each type of rule. Authoritarian rule is characterized by centralized power, while democratic rule is characterized by separation of powers.

Under authoritarian leadership, a strong leader is free to drive policy. The policy that this leader creates is constrained by any international agreements they may have entered, the level of domestic opposition they face, and the strength and type of economic system in their country. Authoritarian leaders control their military and are free to use any type of intelligence gathering methods. In fact, many authoritarian regimes in Southeast Asia have been accused of using policy needs of counterterrorism as a means of strengthening the power of their regime (Chow 2005). A primary concern for an authoritarian leader is maintaining their own power. Counterterrorism allows some authoritarian leaders to create a situation for abuses of power. A policy response to terrorism is initiated as soon as a leader decides the policy direction they selected and can navigate the constraints of their system.

The focus of this paper is the particular type of policy created in a democratic government. Many institutions are responsible for creating policy in democratic institutions. Powers are separated between various institutions that also check the use of power by the other institutions. While each democracy is organized somewhat differently, the main institutional branches, both formal and informal, are the executive branch, the legislative branch, the judicial branch, and the bureaucracy, including the military.

There are many more constraints on enacting a policy in a democracy than in an authoritarian system. The policy itself must be created by many different branches before being enacted. These institutions derive their power from the people, who also constrain the actions that are taken by their government. Other constraints include the media, history, political parties and interest groups, strength of the economy, hegemonic relationship, norms and culture of society, and international agreements.

After navigating the constraints, there are three basic types of policy outcomes: a radical and quick response, a moderate response, and a slow and weak response. An authoritarian system of government will only have a radical and quick response or a slow and weak response. The moderate response will only occur in democracies because the inherent nature of separation of powers in a democracy is designed to lead to moderate changes in policy. Since the nature of

democracy is to elicit a slow, checked, and balanced result, most democratic countries will likely offer a moderate response, even in the short term. Even if a country begins in a radical phase, the institutions of democratic government, such as the judiciary, will pull the response of the government into the moderate category over time. Democratic countries that exhibit a radical and quick or a slow and weak response in the short term will gravitate towards a moderate response in the long run.

A radical and quick response would be enacted within a few months of a catalyst. The “quick” element of this statement provides a timeline meaning it will occur immediately, but only last in the short run. A radical response means the government is willing to depart from common customs and patterns in their society. Leaders are able to use rhetoric to convince the public and political parties of the need for quick and decisive actions. Responses in this category include strikes against states that sponsor terrorism, a crack down on terrorist groups, introducing new legal standards to deal with suspected terrorists, and introducing efforts to strengthen intelligence gathering capabilities. The new legal standards and actions push the limits or push past the limits of the average citizen’s public opinion, domestic norms, or international norms. Long held standards and traditions will be violated in the short run. At least three of the “branches” of government must be behind the counterterrorism policy in order for it to be achieved. There must be few constraints to stop the success of the policy. Some countries that have seemed to exhibit a radical and quick response to terrorism are the United States and Britain.

A moderate response is the democratic goal and will be most common for democracies even in the short term. It supports public opinion and abides by all international norms and laws. In the short term following the event, the government will enact short term policies and laws to curtail the activities of terrorist. Standard legal conventions will be maintained, such as maintaining full protection of civil liberties for all citizens. More funding will be devoted to a counterterrorism policy and police patrol, military readiness, and intelligence agencies will be strengthened. At least one substantive piece of legislation will be passed that takes a stance and requires action regarding a counterterrorism policy. Awareness of the problem will be promoted both domestically and internationally. International alliances and agreements will be made to share information and strengthen counterterrorism capabilities. Suspected terrorist will be caught and prosecuted in a court of law rather than attempts to bomb them. Two of the

“branches” of government must support this counterterrorism policy in order for it to be successful. Some constraints will exist which keep the policy moderate. Some countries that seem to exhibit a moderate response are Spain and Italy.

Countries that exhibit a slow and weak response will be focused on rhetoric instead of policy. Leaders make speeches denouncing terrorism, but the government fails to enact any policies that do more than denounce terrorist activities. The legislation and action of the leaders provide little to no change in the counterterrorism policies of the country. These countries are all talk and no action. Only one or no “branch” of government will be capable of creating an active policy. Many constraints exist in the country, which makes action nearly impossible. This paper seeks to show and explain why Japan is a country that has had a weak response to developing a counterterrorism policy.

### **What has Japan’s Response to Terrorism Been?**

Since the end of World War II, Tokyo has enjoyed a reputation as being one of the safest and most secure metropolitan areas in the world. However, the attacks on the Tokyo subway system on March 20, 1995 by Aum Shinrikyo shocked the international and domestic community and tarnished Japan’s image of safety. In the subway attacks, 12 people were killed and 5,500 were injured. Nearly a year earlier, the Aum terrorist organization staged a previous subway attack on June 27, 1994 which killed 7 and injured about 150 people (Itabashi, Ogwara, and Leheny 2002).

Despite these catalyst events, Japan is still accused of having a lax response to terrorism. Two years after the 1995 subway attacks, a Peruvian organization, the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) attacked the Japanese ambassador during a celebration for the birthday of the Japanese emperor. In modern times, Japan has been seen as an economic power, but its low political profile left the impression they were safe from terrorist attacks. However, the amazing economic power, participation in globalization, and cultural exchange of Japan makes its citizens susceptible to terrorist attacks (Itabashi, Ogwara, and Leheny 2002).

Japan did attempt to respond to the threat of terrorism after the 1995 subway attacks. The public wanted a swift response from the government to the threat of terrorism after the 1995 attacks. The government proposed a wiretapping bill which would increase intelligence gathering and law enforcement capabilities, as well as applying an anti-sabotaging law to Aum,

which would have strengthened the capabilities of law enforcement against this particular organization. However, both of these proposals failed to pass after opposition in the Diet (Itabashi, Ogwara, and Leheny 2002).

The Japanese government's stance on terrorism supports the G-7 and G-8 agreements. Their stance "is opposed to all forms of terrorism, that it must fight against terrorism in a resolute manner, that it must not make concessions to terrorists, and that it must bring terrorists to justice for their crimes." While the Japanese government endorses this statement, their actions do not support it. The people of Japan prefer that above all the citizens of Japan be protected from terrorists. The Japanese government was accused of paying a ransom as a concession to the terrorists to save four Japanese geologists who were captured by the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) in 1999 (Itabashi, Ogwara, and Leheny 2002).

Some new positions were created in the government after the terrorists' attacks in 1995. The position of Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary for Crisis Management was created in 1997 under the agency of the Cabinet Office for National Security and Crisis Management. This position was to assume a leadership role should the country be subject to another terrorist attack (Itabashi, Ogwara, and Leheny 2002). The effectiveness of this office cannot be tested unless Japan is attacked.

September 11<sup>th</sup> did not mark any drastic shifts in Japanese policies. Instead, it elicited a response very similar to the response following the Aum terrorist attacks in 1995. The measures taken by the Japanese government following September 11<sup>th</sup> were rather weak in terms of terrorism prevention. Instead, many of the policies were rather symbolic measures of action, such as granting the Diet more power in the instance of a terrorist attack in Japan. The Japanese government also took the political and symbolic move of immediately sending troops to support the United States efforts in Afghanistan. Following September 11<sup>th</sup>, police and airlines tightened security. Counterterrorism policy in Japan is more involved with defining the role of the government rather than prevention (Katzenstein 2002).

The attacks in London and Madrid set a pattern of al-Qaeda striking allies of the United States. Since these events, the Japanese government has not taken any actions to prepare themselves in case Tokyo becomes a target. The trend has developed and a clear danger is there. For the sake of its citizens, the Japanese government needs to be developing an effective counterterrorism policy and outlining what actions need to be taken in the event of an attack.

Tokyo has been safe thus far, but just because it has not happened yet does not mean that it never will.

### **Basic Problems in Creating a Counterterrorism Policy in Democracies**

There are a few unique problems in democracies of creating an effective counterterrorism policy. One of the most important aspects of an effective counterterrorism policy is intelligence gathering. Intelligence provides policy makers and military officials with needed information to take the proper actions. However, it is hard for intelligence agencies to gather information on terrorist organizations. All countries have difficulties gathering information about terrorist organizations.

Apparently, no intelligence agency thought that any terrorist cell was capable of launching an attack such as September 11<sup>th</sup>. The Israeli Mossad is considered one of the best intelligence agencies in the world, and they have been unable to completely prevent terrorist attacks. Billions of dollars are spent on counterterrorism intelligence worldwide, but the threat still remains. Gathering intelligence on terrorist groups is difficult because of the outdated Cold War mindset many countries approach intelligence gathering from, rivalry between intelligence gathering agencies, and failure to infiltrate terrorist groups. The problem of intelligence gathering is particularly a problem in democracies because it breaks with democratic tradition of transparency and puts too much faith in institutions with no public oversight (Grace 2002).

In addition, it is hard to create an effective counterterrorism policy because of legal problems. Terrorism is hard to define and there is no single internationally accepted definition of terrorism. Broad definitions of terrorism would include actions by the major powers. Since there is difficulty in defining terrorism, it is hard to properly negotiate treaties. When dealing with terrorism, it is hard to abide by conventional international norms and laws, such as the Geneva Conventions, since they were created with states being the main players rather than a group of non-state actors. Irregardless, multilateral cooperation is essential, especially when the goal is to impose sanctions (Grace 2002).

### **Applying the Model to Japan**

Japan has had many catalysts to spur their creation of a strong counterterrorism policy. They have been dealing with terrorist attacks for decades. Yet, there still remains a very poor

response to counterterrorism. Many scholars have cited a weak response to terrorism by the Japanese government (Katzenstein 2002; Itabashi, Ogwara, and Leheny 2002). However, I believe that the Japanese response to terrorism is actually the result of constraints in their democratic system and reflects a slow and weak response. It also seems that Japan is developing the ability to move into a more moderate policy over time.

Scholars have explained the policy-making process in other areas in Japan by a few defining characteristics. There is a strong government and bureaucracy. In Japan, the boundaries between the state and society are blurred. Social groups have been integrated into government. Political parties are the mediators between government and interest groups. The government in Japan has been penetrated by mediating organizations, such as political parties. To gain power over the policy-making process, interest groups form alliances with political parties and bureaucratic agencies (McCargo 2004).

Japan is a democracy characterized as a separation of power within the government. Japan has a federal system of government, which includes governors and mayors. However, everything must be approved by Tokyo and ministers have removal powers of local offices. Power is centralized in Japan, but local governments have long struggled for their own autonomy. The Constitution, written after the end of World War II, emphasizes that the power of the government rests in the hands of the people (McCargo 2004). When making policy, Japan faces many constraints similar to the constraints faced by other democracies.

First, every country needs to react to the catalyst event and define the issue. Before September 11<sup>th</sup>, Japan had a difficult problem in creating a strong counterterrorism policy. Terrorism in Japan is not viewed as its own unique problem but rather a subset of other political and policy problems (Itabashi, Ogwara, and Leheny 2002). The policies in Japan relating to terrorism approach the issue from a crisis management standpoint and not a preventative policy-making area. Much of this view reflects a strong mistrust of the military in the postwar era that is a legacy of Japan's pre-war militaristic past.

## **Institutions in Japan**

### **Executive**

Unlike the United States, which has a very strong executive branch, the executive leader in Japan is not a very powerful person. In theory, the Japanese prime minister should be a very powerful person. Yet in reality, Japanese Prime Ministers have found themselves heavily dominated by the political, corporate, and bureaucratic interests which provide their support.

The Prime Minister appoints a Cabinet, but that Cabinet is not accountable to the Prime Minister. The Cabinet is accountable to the Japanese Diet (the equivalent of Parliament). The Cabinet can be brought down by a no-confidence vote in the Diet. The Cabinet has seventeen members, who on average last only nine months. During the 1980's, 57 percent of cabinet ministers lasted less than a year and 77 percent lasted less than two years. In addition to short tenure in the Cabinet, while they are in the Cabinet the members tend to be very weak. Cabinet meetings tend to be about 15 minutes, because all of the decisions have already been made by the controlling political party leaders (McCargo 2004). The Japanese executive lacks clear leadership, making it particularly difficult for the executive branch to drive the policy making agenda.

Often, a country needs a historical pattern to rationalize a particular action. In Japan, there is no historical precedent to justify such actions by the prime minister. Debate continues in the postwar era as to the proper role of the Japanese prime minister. Popular sentiment suggests that Japan does not want a powerful executive branch because of the problems during World War II. Many accused the emperor of deception and leading the country down an aggressive path (Mockaitis and Rich 2003). The country does not want a powerful executive leader, including when it comes to the creation of a counterterrorism policy (Katzenstein 2002).

Japan has a weak executive leader, and it seems that it will maintain that tradition for a long time. Therefore, the executive will have great difficulty getting any type of counterterrorism policy passed, even if they wanted to. It seems that radical policies are usually initiated by strong executive leaders, such as Prime Minister Tony Blair in Britain and President George Bush in the United States. The Japanese Prime Minister has used his position to make speeches in support of the fight against terrorism. However, these speeches have not influenced a majority of the people or the government.

## **Legislative**

The legislative system in Japan closely resembles the British parliamentary system. The parliament in Japan is referred to as the Diet. Like Italy, Belgium, Israel, and the Netherlands, Japan has a coalition-style of government. Many different political parties fight for control of the legislature since Japan is a multiparty system (McCargo 2004).

The legislative branch in Japan is not capable of creating a strong counterterrorism policy. They are reactive based on the current needs of the day. They are also very responsive to the desires of political parties, interest groups, and major corporations. Unless a strong counterterrorism policy becomes a priority for them, it will not be a priority for the Japanese legislature.

The Japanese Constitution affords the legal system power and independence. Since its creation, the Japanese Supreme Court has maintained a low-profile role. The Supreme Court has fifteen members appointed by the Prime Minister. All are subject to regular reelections, but all sitting judges have been confirmed in elections. The Supreme Court is more conservative than lower level courts, but the judiciary as a whole tends to make rulings which favor the government. Some of this is attributed to the fact that all judges must serve as prosecutors before becoming judges. Nearly all who are brought to trial in criminal cases are convicted. However, the judicial system is characterized by lengthy procedures. This limits the ability of the judiciary to act swiftly and effectively (McCargo 2004).

The judiciary in Japan is slow, yet seems to be very capable of maintaining law and order. Crime rates in Japan have traditionally been very low. For example, there were 6.5 times as many murders per person the United States compared to Japan in 1987. Currently, the prison population in Japan is 20 percent of that in the United States. Crime prevention is the essential role for the police (McCargo 2004).

The strength of the judiciary in Japan is crucial in the fight against terrorism. Based on their crime fighting capabilities, it seems that Japan will be fully capable of apprehending suspected terrorist and are very likely to receive a conviction of these individuals. However, the judiciary is not capable of making policy, so they will only be able to prosecute and convict suspected terrorists if proper laws are in place. The slow nature of the judiciary also prohibits any immediate action, but will likely help Japan move towards a more moderate response in the long term.

## **Bureaucracy**

The bureaucracy has a lot of power in the Japanese government. Most bills are created by the bureaucracy. The function and goals of government, the ruling party, the bureaucracy, and interest groups have been merged together. Power in Japan belongs to the political, bureaucratic, and corporate elite. The power of the bureaucracy creates considerable tensions between national-level politicians and bureaucrats. The Japanese bureaucracy is relatively small and inexpensive considering the power that it yields. Members of the bureaucracy are characterized as being arrogant, rule-bound, and inflexible (McCargo 2004). The problem of creating a strong policies is bureaucratic infighting in areas of overlapping jurisdiction.

Constitutional limits on military powers limit the capability of the Japanese government in dealing with terrorism. In addition, Japan does not have any intelligence gathering organizations, such as the FBI or the CIA in the United States. The few intelligence gathering organizations in Japan, such as the Ministry of Justice and the Defense Agency, are highly constrained by constitutional limits and public opinion. This leaves intelligence capabilities to prevent terrorist attacks severely lacking (Itabashi, Ogawara, and Lehny 2002). Following September 11<sup>th</sup>, the Japanese government passed a law which allowed the SDF to conduct intelligence gathering missions. However, even this has proved a very limited improvement because of the lack of training, coordination, and the stipulations restricting the size of the SDF intelligence gathering force (Katzenstein 2002).

The Japanese government has a strong bureaucracy, but it is not very strong in counterterrorism areas. The strength and nature of the bureaucracy makes any policy making a slow and very long process. The intelligence gathering agencies and the military are both extremely weak. The bureaucracy will operate in the legal standards established by the international community and the domestic government bodies when fighting terrorism. The closed nature of the bureaucracy, corporate elite, and interest groups means that the bureaucracy will not take actions not desired by the corporate elite or interest groups. Any policies directed by the bureaucracy will be within the wishes of the corporate elite and interest groups, which are not likely to endorse a costly or evasive counterterrorism policy. The bureaucracy will respond to terrorism over time if it has to, and more events, such as the Bali bombings, are making a response a necessity.

## **Additional Constraints on Policy Making**

### *People*

The Japanese people have lost some faith in their government. Corruption scandals and the collapse of the economy in the 1990s have left the Japanese public with less trust in their government. The Japanese people are strongly opposed to secretive agencies, such as intelligence gathering agencies, due to memories of deception during World War II (Itabashi, Ogawara, and Lehny 2002). However, the Japanese government has been very critical of their own government's response to terrorism (Mockaitis and Rich 2003). A majority of people are ashamed of the lack of recent actions taken by the Japanese government in some areas of foreign policy. Disappointment after the first Gulf War left the people feeling ashamed of their weak response and made them want to take a stronger war in future endeavors (McCargo 2004).

The people still do not have a very strong impression of the Japanese government. They lost a lot of faith in the government in the 1990's. Scandals, the Aum terrorist attacks, and the Kobe earthquake disaster all showed big problems in the government's ability to function well.

### *Media*

Typical of democratic countries, the media in Japan is free. However, the mainstream elite media is very close to the government. There are very few media outlets in Japan. Those outlets are for the most part located in Tokyo and very close to the government. One important aspect of the media is promoting democratic functions. Due mainly to its closeness to the government, the media does not monitor abuses of political and state power (McCargo 2004). Japan has a tiny, active media but the mainstream media has special access to the government that sometimes ties their hands.

Following September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, Japanese newspapers included extensive coverage on the attacks. In fact, Japanese newspapers were the first to make the comparison between September 11<sup>th</sup> and December 7, 1941, evoking a lot of emotion in the Japanese people (Mockaitis and Rich 2003).

The media is unlikely to call for any particular policies regarding counterterrorism because of their ties to the government. There are many other news stories that call for their attention. They are also unlikely to question the response to the Japanese government regarding a counterterrorism policy. The media will leave the Japanese government free to make decisions

regarding the counterterrorism policies of the nation. However, coverage regarding terrorism will make the issue part of public discourse. The media makes it possible for Japan to have a slow and weak response because they do not offer a check on the government.

### **Political Parties and Interest Groups**

Political parties in Japan are very factionalized, which makes forming coalitions easier. Even though it is considered a multi-party system, one party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has dominated the Japanese government since the 1950s except for a brief period in 1993-94. While parties are very powerful actors in the Diet, most local politicians do not have close ties to political parties.

Political parties and other interests hold a lot of power in the Japanese government. One particular interest that holds a lot of power in Japan are corporations. The strength of political parties and interest groups makes creating a strong counterterrorism policy more difficult. When political parties and interests feel a stronger counterterrorism policy is needed, it will be created. Corporations will need stricter standards if terror concerns increase in the global corporate environment.

### *History*

Japan has a long and interesting history that spans from its imperial beginnings through its international domination early in World War II, and ultimately its defeat and rebirth as an economic world competitor. Since the end of World War II, the United States has come to dominate the region and Japan. Japan has tried to establish itself as a passive global player. After the end of World War II and the Cold War, the US devoted international attention to combat the problem of terrorism, while Japan and many other nations did not.

Since the end of World War II, Japan has had only a defensive military force, rather than an offensive force. This tendency has been attributed to a backlash against the imperialist tendencies of its WWII manifestation, which led to the tragic use of nuclear weapons to end their conquest. However, during this time, the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF) has been used in various United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions. Japan's neighbor-states, while fearing Japanese regional domination, have accepted the deployment of Japanese defense forces. Nevertheless, these states, as well as the Japanese polity, still do not support offensive troop

deployment. During the first Persian Gulf War in 1991, Japan used its self-defense force to provide logistical support for the United States and its allies. This assistance continued when the United States launched its War on Terrorism in Afghanistan, and later Iraq, in 2001 (McCargo 2004).

Japan has preferred to keep a weak executive due to its history. World War II left the Japanese people in shame and created a strong distrust of the emperor and military who lead them down such an aggressive path. Thus, the Japanese people are suspicious of an aggressive leadership style. Japan has a tradition of consensus articulation. They prefer to keep a strong bureaucracy in relation to the executive branch to stop aggressive actions and reach decisions through a series of agreements. Negotiating is an important quality to the Japanese people (McCargo 2004).

The military conquests and the defeat in World War II left the country and its leaders with a dislike of aggressive military forces. Under the Constitution written after the end of World War II, the Japanese military, known as the Self Defense Force can only attack if the country is attacked. Even when it does retaliate, the military is only allowed to take the minimum actions required for defense. The military is not allowed to take offensive moves or use strategic weapons. The Japanese military is also rather small compared with other nations, although still a powerful force. In 2001, the Japanese army had a force of 2,398,000 while the United States military had a force of 13,677,000 (McCargo 2004).

Historically, Japan has tried to stay away from military action after World War II. However, the goal of the military has been from a defensive standpoint. If Japan looks at terrorism as more of a military problem, they will have a stronger counterterrorism policy. The view of the military in Japan is also changing somewhat from what it once was and society is becoming more approving of military action. The changing attitudes in Japan will make it more capable of creating a counterterrorism policy over the long term.

### *Economy*

Fighting terrorism can be very expensive, as we have seen in the United States. Does Japan have the economic capabilities to fight a lengthy war on terrorism given their economic problems in the mid-1990's? In the wake of the initiation of the war on terrorism by the United States, Japan spent \$416 million for emergency anti-terrorism measures in 2001-2002. They

have also contributed \$1 million for efforts for the Asian Development Bank (ABD) to help the region in anti-money laundering efforts and port security. Japan contributed \$300 million alone to Pakistan to help its efforts to stop terrorism (Ryu 2005). Japan is beginning to play a limited role in military activities, such as UN peacekeeping missions in Cambodia and East Timor (McCargo 2004).

Financially, Japan has been a great supporter of the United States in its wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Between 2002 and 2006, Japan has pledged to provide the Afghan government with \$500 million in aid. After the transitional administration was in place in Afghanistan, Japan provided support of about \$42 million. The United Nations has received \$144 million from Japan for Afghan refugees and internally displaced persons (Ryu 2005). This does not include the support provided in Iraq. How long can the Japanese government sustain this type of support, and can it simultaneously afford to take additional steps at home to safeguard against terrorism?

After the end of World War II, the Japanese economy was in shambles. However, with the help of the United States, the Japanese economy recovered and moved closer to the Western economy. By the 1980's, the Japanese economy was booming. For instance, in 1997, Tokyo alone had a GDP relative to that of all of Canada. However, in the mid-1990's, the Japanese economy suffered from a recession, and has yet to fully recover (McCargo 2004). The Japanese economy had still not improved by 2001, and many economists feared it would cause a global recession (Mockaitis and Rich 2003).

Fighting terrorism is very expensive and requires many different measures. Unlike conventional warfare, the realist perspective of an arms build-up and balance-of-power do not work. The costs of fighting terrorism are enormous, both to the government and the private sector. The global economy is negatively impacted by terrorism because additional security measures have to be taken, such as restricted travel into countries, increased shipping rates, and increased red tape. In 2005, the United States government estimated the homeland security budget to be about \$40 billion and that sum could double over the next few years as terrorists enhance their methods. In order to pay for increased security, governments are going to have to increase taxes. There already exist large "underground" economies in Italy and Germany that operate in order to avoid government red tape and taxes, which is likely to only increase with new terrorism requirements and increased taxes (Rogoff 2004).

Countries, especially democracies, in the globalized world economy prefer to spend their money on “butter over guns” as the analogy goes. In its current economic state, Japan is not in a situation to devote large amounts of money to a counterterrorism policy. They are sending aid to fight the War on Terrorism and develop Afghanistan, which leaves little money to strengthen domestic counterterrorism. The economic problems of the 1990’s are still present in Japan today and they are trying to regain their economic success prior to the recession. Spending large amounts on counterterrorism policies would hurt their economy in the short run. However, the implications of a terrorist attack on their home soil would hurt their economy even more. There are also many more matters which pose a threat to the Japanese economy, such as the avian flu. Until Japan regains its economic mightiness, developing a strong counterterrorism policy is unlikely because the short term costs are simply too great.

### *Hegemonic Relationship*

Since the end of World War II, Japan has had a very close relationship with the United States despite being enemies during the war. The United States and the other allied powers helped Japan, among other nations, rebuild after the war. Even today, the United States still has many military bases in Japan. Since Japan does not have an aggressive military, they rely on the United States for aggressive protection (McCargo 2004). However, given their alliance, the United States often calls on Japan for support. Japan is very supportive of U.S. policies and desires. Unlike Britain, Japan will not take actions that it feels the U.S. would not support (Mockaitis and Rich 2003). Due to the interdependence between Japan and the United States, Japan often responds in agreement to the preference of the United States when creating and implementing their foreign policy (Miyashita 1999).

During the first Gulf War in 1990, Japan provided much economic support, but no military support. The Japanese people and factions of the government felt shame for only being a cash dispenser in 1990. Later, the Japanese military helped coalition forces in United Nations (UN) missions in Cambodia and East Timor. Anti-terrorism legislation in October 2001 allowed for the use of the SDF with the United States efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq (McCargo 2004). September 11<sup>th</sup> was a symbolic event that allowed Japan to demonstrate their support of the United States (Katzenstein 2002).

The relationship between Japan and the United States made action necessary. The United States expects Japan to support its actions and take a leadership role in Southeast Asia. Japan has taken actions to support the United States in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, thus far it has not called by any specific actions for Japan to take domestically or in the region. The relationship between Japan and the United States makes the stance taken by Japan possible; it thus far has not required particular actions in the region or country.

### *International Agreements*

September 11<sup>th</sup> gave the Japanese government the chance to become more of an international player. Japan supported the United States in their efforts to stop terrorism and ratified a number of international agreements regarding terrorism. The Japanese government ratified the United Nations (UN) Conventions for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings which was adopted by the UN in 1997 and signed by Japan a year later (Katzenstein 2002).

The actions taken by the Japanese government after September 11<sup>th</sup> helped increase their role as a regional power player. The United States had made various security arrangements with Japan during the 1990's. The goal of these various agreements was to make Japan more visible in dealing with matters of peace and security in the Asian Pacific region. As a result, these agreements led the Japanese government into particular actions following September 11<sup>th</sup> (Katzenstein 2002).

The Self Defense Forces (SDF) is no longer strictly bound to actions on Japanese soil. Instead, they will provide humanitarian aid, refugee assistance, grant aid, share intelligence, participate in international police efforts, work with banks to restrict the funds of terrorist organizations, and help establish a government in Afghanistan (Katzenstein 2002).

Regional acceptance and cooperation has been difficult to achieve in the Pacific region. Following World War II, the Southeast Asian region became suspicious of Japanese military power due to wartime occupation. However, the region did not object when Japan deployed the SDF forces for UN peacekeeping mission (McCargo 2004). Yet, every Asia country does not approve of Japanese military activities. China feels that the United States and Japan are using the War on Terrorism to build a stronger alliance and Japanese military presence in the region to contain China (Buckley and Fawn 2003). Conflicts between China and the Japanese and United States alliance create a security dilemma in the region (Christensen 1999). This makes creating

an effective counterterrorism policy more difficult because Japan has to be aware of their relationship with China and maintain strong ties.

ASEAN made efforts following September 11<sup>th</sup> to strengthen the region's response to terrorism. The group took efforts to strengthen the counterterrorism of the region, but there are many differences in the region. These differences are regarding perceptions of terrorism and what actions need to be taken. The region is not in full support of the United States actions in the War on Terrorism. Attempts have been made from changing the approach to terrorism from a domestic to a more regional approach, but there is a long way to go. As the region become a victim with the Bali bombings in 2002, it is likely that more actions will be taken. Obtaining cooperation in the Southeast Asian region has been a difficult task (Chow 2005; Leavitt 2005).

Many of these actions mainly support the wishes of the United States and do little to enhance Japanese capabilities in dealing with their own terrorist threats or to participate equally in the War on Terrorism. The War on Terrorism is spreading to Southeast Asia, and Japan has not been able to assist in efforts to combat terrorism in their own region. Due to recent efforts, Japan seems interested in improving their position in the long term. Japan is willing to enter and support various international agreements, both with the Western countries and in the Pacific region. While they have an interest in strengthening international agreements, regional disagreements make coming to an agreement on counterterrorism policy more difficult. It will take more time for regional agreements to be developed.

### *Norms and Cultures*

The Japanese culture is very complex and difficult to completely understand and many Japanese scholars do not have an accurate description of what defines Japanese culture and society. However, certain core values and beliefs are generally emphasized from a culturist approach to understanding Japan. The values of Japanese society include collectivism, consensus, and hierarchy. Collectivism is an emphasis on the interests of the family, village, company, or nation rather than on those of the individual. Consensus is a preference for harmony and agreement over open dissent and disputation. Hierarchy places importance of seniority and status (McCargo 2004).

The nature of the Japanese culture and norms are in direct conflict with terrorist activities. Japan wants to support their families and nation rather than the desires of an

individual. However, Japan would prefer to reach a consensus on a counterterrorism policy rather than subjecting it to months or years of debate. Therefore, it seems that a counterterrorism policy will develop over time as terrorism presents itself to be more damaging to society.

### **Conclusion**

Thus far, Japan has had a very weak response to terrorism. The political institutions are not equipped to create a radical or quick response to the problem of terrorism. As the problem of terrorism remains a threat, Japan will create a more moderate policy. Some of the infrastructure is already present, such as a strong judiciary and criticism from the public regarding the counterterrorism policy. These factors will help Japan reach a more moderate policy. Over time, the goal of any democracy, including Japan will be to reach a moderate policy. As terrorism impacts more countries, creating an effective counterterrorism policy will be the goal of all nations.

While this model implicates some potential problems with democracies in creating a response to terrorism, it in no way means to underlie the democratic process. Democracies are important systems of government and have provided a valuable outlet for its citizens. The difficulties of creating policy in a particular policy have been highlighted, but democracies ensure that moderate policies will always be taken.

## Political Systems

### Authoritarian



Political

### Centralized Power:

Executive Leader



Catalyst (i.e. Terrorism)



### Constraints on Response:

International Agreements

Economic Situation

Domestic Opposition

Hegemonic Relationship



### Rationalization\Survival\Self-Interest<sup>1</sup>



Radical\QuickSlow\Weak

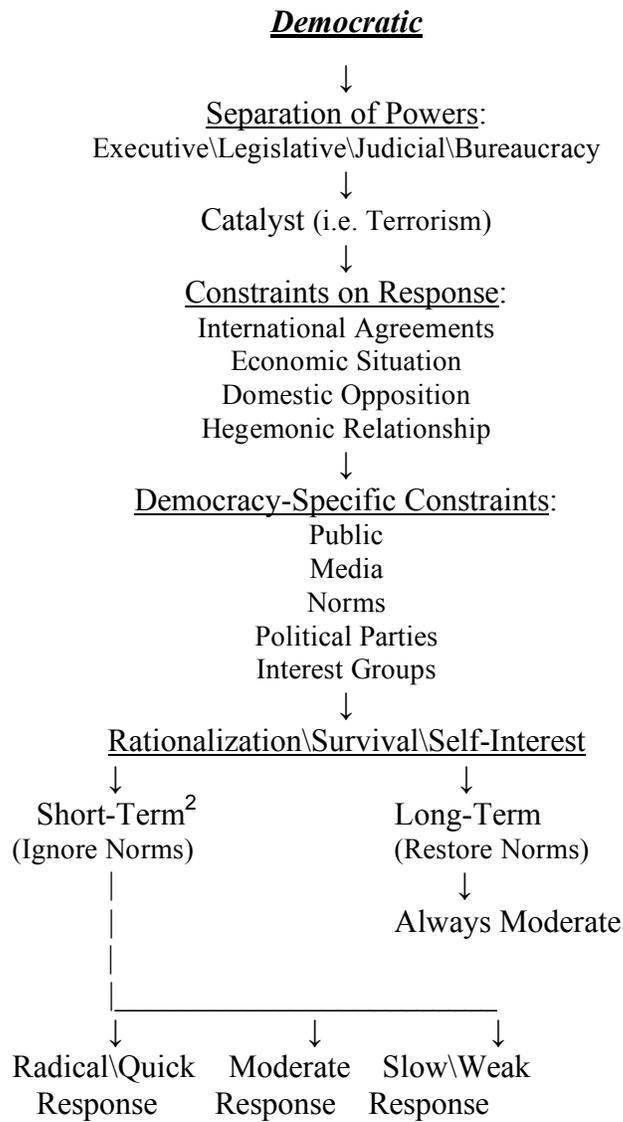
ResponseResponse



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<sup>1</sup> There is no differentiation of a time-frame beyond this point since fewer constraints and more central authority mean more ability for the Executive to continue the same policies and ignore norms in both the short and long-term.

## Political Systems



<sup>2</sup> The short-term differentiates from the long-term since political rhetoric and other factors convince the public that in this brief period the end justifies the means, even when they deviate from society's norms.

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