

The Takaichi Administration and Japan's Peace Constitution

Webinar

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“Germany is no longer antisemitic –it’s high time we lifted its legal ban on Nazism.”

...Really??

International roots of Article 9

Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928)

“condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it, as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another.”

Potsdam Declaration (1943)

“self-willed militaristic advisers” “irresponsible militarism” “Japan’s war-making power” “Japanese military forces” “[industries] which would enable her to re-arm for war” = **militarism (not the emperor)**

Peace Constitution

Meiji Constitution

I. The Emperor

II. Rights and Duties of Subjects

III. The Imperial Diet

IV. The Ministers of State and
the Privy Council

V. The Judicature

VI. Finance

VII. Supplementary Rules

Constitution of Japan

I. The Emperor

II. Renunciation of War

III. Rights and Duties of the People

IV. The Diet

V. The Cabinet

VI. Judiciary

VII. Finance

VIII. Local Self-Government

IX. Amendments

Article 1 and Article 9

Article 1 “The Emperor shall be the symbol of the State and of the unity of the People, deriving his position from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power.”

Article 9 “Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained.
The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.

Postwar settlement: German-Japan comparison

Germany

- Denazification
- Division of Germany (and Berlin) itself / Cold War
- European integration and NATO

Japan

- Demilitarization (Yasukuni nationalism survived)
 - Division of Japan's former colonies and occupied territories / Hot War (China, Korea, and Vietnam)
 - US-centered bilateral alliances (hub and spokes)
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Can/should Japan defend Taiwan
in the name of self-defense?

Self-defense in spite of Article 9

Preamble ... We recognize that all peoples of the world have the right to live in peace, free from fear and want...

Article 13 All of the people shall be respected as individuals. Their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness shall, to the extent that it does not interfere with the public welfare, be the supreme consideration in legislation and in other governmental affairs.

1950 National Police Reserve

1952 National Safety Force

1954 Self-Defense Forces (SDF)

Nixon: “Asia for Asians”

Nixon Doctrine (July 1969)

“we must avoid the kind of policy that will make countries in Asia so dependent upon us that we are dragged into conflicts such as the one we have in Vietnam.”

“as far as the problems of military defense, except for the threat of a major power involving nuclear weapons, ... the United States is going to encourage and has a right to expect that this problem will be handled by, and responsibility for it taken by, the Asian nations themselves.”

Korea and Taiwan clauses

Nixon-Sato Joint Statement (November 1969)

“The Prime Minister... stated that the security of the Republic of Korea was essential to Japan’s own security.”

“The Prime Minister said that the maintenance of peace and security in the Taiwan area was also a most important factor for the security of Japan.”

Cairo Declaration (1943)

“all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa, and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China.”

Nixon goes to China (and Japan has a narrow escape)

1972. 2. Nixon's visit to China

5. Return of Okinawa to Japan

9. JSP Minakuchi Kozo's Diet question

Japan normalizes ties with the PRC

10. "1972 Government View" on CSD

1978. 9. Japan-PRC Peace and Friendship Treaty

10. Class-A war criminals enshrined in Yasukuni

1979. 1. US normalizes ties with the PRC

US Taiwan Relations Act

1982.7. US "Six Assurances" to Taiwan

Whither the 1972 consensus?

1972 consensus

Government answer to Minakuchi in Diet (1972.9.14.)

“As Japan’s actions to deal with [Taiwan or Korea contingency] situations, it is our firm stance that **the right of collective self-defense cannot be exercised.**”

Japan-PRC Joint Communiqué (1972.9.29)

“The Government of the People’s Republic of China reiterates that Taiwan is an inalienable part of the territory of the People’s Republic of China. The Government of Japan **fully understands and respects** this stand of the Government of the People’s Republic of China, and it **firmly maintains its stand under Article 8 of the Potsdam Proclamation.**”

Post-2014 breach of the 1972 consensus

Liberal “just war” and Yasukuni nationalism

2014.7.1. Cabinet decision to **lift the ban on CSD**

2015.9.19. Security legislation

(“**survival-threatening situation**”)

2021.4.16. Biden-Suga joint statement (**Taiwan clause**)

“We underscore the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait”

2025.11.7. Takaichi **“Taiwan contingency” Diet answer**

11.25. Trump told Takaichi to “lower the volume”

Trump goes to China (will Japan have a narrow escape?)

2026.3.19. Takaichi-Trump meeting
(Media reports that Article 9
was cited as a constraint on
Japan's participation in Iran war)

“Only Donald can bring peace
and prosperity to the world!”

5.13-5.15. Trump-Xi meeting



Actually.....

Must the Sun Set in the West?

The West is prone to believe that what is happening in Europe must be happening in East Asia as well, and the Japanese conservative rulers have often succeeded in obtaining an “honorary white” status in that scheme of things (anti-China/Russia and anti-communism), but this time, Japan might simply get entangled and then abandoned by its alliance with the West, if Article 9 is fully breached.



Must the Sun Set in the West?

Japan's Stunted Democracy and the American Liberal Hegemony

Koichi Nakano