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"Making the alliance even greater": (Mis-)managing U.S.-Japan relations in the age of Trump

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ABSTRACT

President Donald Trump's "America First" policy questions the fundamentals of the global U.S.-led alliance network. Where other allies implemented hedging strategies, Japan's Prime Minister Abe Shinzō pledged to "make the alliance even greater," insisting that the bilateral ties were "airtight" and "stronger than ever before." However, Trump's approach to trade, détente with North Korea, and off-the-cuff remarks regarding nuclear weapons invigorated criticism in Japan: the U.S. is an unreliable partner and Japan needs to prepare for life after the alliance. We argue that Abe's embrace of Trump was successful in staving off the worst, maintaining stability at the cost of personal humiliation and certain trade and security interests. However, Trump's cavalier treatment of Japan has laid bare the realities of the alliance, potentially revitalizing a more autonomous discourse of alternatives to the current and often "humiliating" modus in alliance management.

Alliance Adrift Redux?

Donald J. Trump's 2016 electoral victory has become known in Japan as the "Trump Shock,"[1] echoing the "Nixon shocks" of the early 1970s. Like Nixon before him, Trump has departed from the status quo on security and trade policy, pressuring Japan on market access and burden-sharing while making unilateral and dramatic shifts in U.S. policy toward regional rivals (for Nixon it was China, for Trump it is North Korea). But where Nixon's foreign policy was amorally realist, Trump's has proved more narcissistic nativist.[2] Since his 2016 presidential campaign, Trump's "America First" policy has threatened to unravel the fundamentals of the global U.S.-led alliance networks in Europe and Asia.[3] Where other allies responded with hedging strategies, Japan's Prime Minister Abe Shinzō pledged to "make the alliance even greater,"[4] cultivating close personal ties to Trump and insisting that the bilateral relationship was "airtight"[5] and "stronger than ever before."[6] Some pundits have argued that the "Trump Shock" even represents a golden opportunity for Japan to step up and pursue leadership in securing the stability of the international liberal order.[7] This embrace of Trump, and the ensuing so-called "bromance" between the two leaders, has been lauded by both Japanese and Western commentators and analysts.[8] However, it is far from clear what results Abe's approach has yielded.

Trump's withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement and tough approach to trade negotiations, sudden détente with North Korea, and off-the-cuff remarks regarding the prospect of Japan developing nuclear weapons have invigorated a sense of uncertainty among Japan's alliance managers, raising concerns as to whether the United States is a reliable partner and whether it is time for Japan to prepare for life after the U.S. alliance.[9] Thus, 4 years after Trump's election victory, and with the United States facing another divisive presidential election, in this article we take stock of Abe's response to the "Trump Shock" and assess the state of the alliance and its future trajectory. We find

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that while Abe succeeded in forestalling any radical change in the alliance, his response to Trump's transactional approach to alliance management mutated into a spectacle of one-sided concessions and humiliations. Moreover, his handling of Trump revealed fundamental contradictions in Abe's political agenda: despite Abe's pledge to restore Japan's status as a strong and proud "tier one" nation in world politics, Trump has consistently humiliated Abe, and it is hard to see Japan today as anything but subordinate to the United States.[10]

We elaborate on this in the main body of the article, for now two examples suffice: the September 2019 trade deal, agreed under pressure from Trump – and to alleviate the effects of the U.S.-China trade dispute on U.S. farmers – threatening Abe and his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)'s economic reform agenda and the conservative's historical core agricultural support base.[11] The second is Abe's failed attempt to mediate between the U.S. and Iran. Abe ostensibly traveled to Teheran as an independent actor. However, as revealed in former U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton's memoir, in reality the Iran government correctly perceived him Trump's messenger sent on an impossible mission.[12] This undermined Abe's foreign policy credibility and jeopardized Tokyo's traditionally closer ties with Teheran.

We therefore ask, what did Abe get from Trump in exchange for his commitment to securing the alliance? We argue that Abe's Trump approach has succeeded in avoiding radical alliance shifts for the time being, at the cost of concessions across a range of issues, from security to trade. However, in its sixtieth year, the realities of the alliance and Japan's subordinate status have been laid bare by Trump's cavalier attitude, while Abe, as the leader and representative of Japan on the world stage, has endured a litany of public humiliations. This, together with the apparent "strategic incompetence" and unreliability of the U.S. as an ally,[13] has pushed Japan to demonstrate commitment by playing a more active role in the alliance, while at the same time fueling a debate in Japan on Tokyo's alliance policy, with complex and unpredictable long-term implications for Japan, the alliance, and indeed the region.[14] We conclude that, while business-as-usual may continue in the alliance short- and medium term, implications of Japan's decentering from the alliance as a result of growing uncertainty with Trump's America are profound, especially in the context of increasing distrust and bilateral crises in Northeast Asia. The trajectory is unclear, but given the regional distrust, historical animosity, and geopolitical uncertainty, the risks of a more autonomous and militarily strengthened Japan may finally point us to a region "ripe for rivalry."[15]

The article proceeds as follows: in the next section we sketch the historical context and institutional parameters that have structured U.S.-Japan alliance management. This will serve as a reminder – as do the Nixon shocks mentioned above – that crises in the alliance are nothing new, and in fact have consistently driven change in the bilateral security relationship. Next, in the main body of the article we outline and analyze Abe's alliance management over the course of the last 4 years. While the initial reviews were positive, as Abe's courting of Trump was presumed to give him some degree of influence, we demonstrate that Abe grossly underestimated Trump. Flattery and grooming – albeit through gritted teeth – have led only to concession and humiliation on almost every issue area. Finally, we return to the key question of whether the current crisis of the Trump Shock will result in Japan taking an ever more active role within the alliance or if this is the final straw, sending Japan on a neo-autonomist course.

The Politics of Crises and Alliance Evolution

International Relations theory has shown that alliance dynamics are critically shaped by fears of entrapment, abandonment, and unreliability.[16] In response to such fears, states in alliances with great powers have two options: they can either enhance their commitment to the alliance (e.g. through joint military exercises, combined command structures, or joint weapons development), or they can seek more autonomy in defense planning (e.g. through new security partnerships or enhanced military spending in power projection capabilities).[17] The formation and management of Japan's alliance with the United States during the Cold and post-Cold War years has largely corresponded to these patterns.[18]

The alliance has constituted the cornerstone of Japan's national security and U.S. strategic planning toward the Asia-Pacific and beyond, and structured postwar Japanese domestic politics.[19] Enshrined in the 1952 Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan, the San Francisco System provided Japan security guarantees in form of the "nuclear umbrella" while it agreed to host American military bases, thus placing Japan at the center of U.S. Cold War planning.[20] In the meantime, deflecting U.S. pressure for comprehensive remilitarization, the initial and 1960-renewed alliance arrangements, though domestically contested, provided Tokyo with the resources to concentrate on its economic growth while a consolidated conservative elite preserved Japan's postwar low-key military posture.[21]

In response to Nixon's 1969 Guam Doctrine Japanese security policymakers worked hard to calibrate Tokyo's alliance commitments, between fears of entrapment in the U.S.-led war in Vietnam and a bypassing of Japan's security interests after Washington's rapprochement with China. In 1976, Japan issued its National Defense Policy Outline, and revised the scope of its bilateral cooperation with the U.S. in the form of the 1978 Guidelines for Defense Cooperation. This provided the basis for Japan's formal reference to its post-1952 security relationship in terms of an "alliance" in the 1980s. Close ties between Japanese and American leaders famously illustrated by the "Ron-Yasu" relationship between Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro and U.S. President Ronald Reagan were critical in advancing the alliance. Nakasone's famous pledge of Japan serving the U.S. as an unsinkable aircraft carrier did not only play to address U.S. alliance pressure but to establish a confident Japan as an international power in its own regard alongside the United States.[22]

As we alluded to above, following the end of the global Cold War and the unfolding of the first Gulf War, the alliance rapidly came "adrift" as Washington has pushed for more active military contribution of Tokyo to the alliance.[23] Japan's economic success in the shadow of U.S. security guarantees became to highlight what many perceived as the structural contradictions of the alliance enabling a Pax Japonica to challenge U.S. global hegemony.[24] Hence, the U.S. increased pressure on Japan to "normalize" and to increase its military role as part of the alliance. Then, as now, accusations were leveled at Japan's "free-riding," accompanied by vehement demands for the opening of the Japanese market to U.S. products.

During the years of the Clinton and Bush Jr. administrations, U.S. pressure and fears of abandonment were again countered in Japan by gradual adjustments of the alliance broadening the functional scope of its mandate beyond the defense of Japan. Responding to new security threats in form of the Taiwan Strait Crisis of 1995, North Korea's Taepodong missile launch in 1998, and the post-9/11 "global war on terror," Tokyo recalibrated its role within the alliance by offering logistical support in distant conflicts, development and deployment of ballistic missile defense. Japan's militarization and the process of modifying the alliance toward a full-fledged collective self-defense framework continued and was eventually formalized under Prime Minister Abe in 2014 as part of his doctrine of a "proactive pacifism," including Japan's legalization of participating in collective self-defense operations in support of its U.S. ally and the lifting of its virtual ban on arms exports.[25] As with the Ron-Yasu relationship in the 1980s, these changes were by no small part enabled by the close personal ties which Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro established with President George W. Bush Jr. during his tenure. Abe's embrace of Trump followed this pattern of a close personal relationship with a (usually Republican) U.S. president that has served Japan's conservative elites to enact further policy change to the postwar security regime and Washington to pull Japan along the long-cherished trajectory of a strong alliance partner. Abe's "Pivot to Asia"[26] and Japan's strategic reorientation toward the Indo-Pacific was designed to strengthen the alliance as credible asset against China's growing geostrategic influence in form of Xi Jinping's "One Belt One Road" initiative. There is no small irony in the fact that, in Abe the U.S. had a leader who was both willing and able to implement almost everything the United States wanted, until Trump came along and up-ended U.S. policy preferences (at the executive level at least).

In sum, while the above presentation of events on both sides is selective, the history of alliance management shows that Japan has exhibited its ability to transform the alliance in accordance with

a changing U.S. domestic politics and global strategy and to this extent leaders in Tokyo have constantly pushed for change in Japan's postwar pacifist posture.[27] Thus in light of such accomplishments, the alliance is no longer characterized by the "bottle-cap" metaphor – restraining a presumed inherent Japanese militarism. Rather, in Korea and China at least, the metaphor is that of the "eggshell" – within which Japan safely develops its military under U.S. protection.[28] The eggshell, however, implies that it will eventually crack open, and a fully formed, militarily independent Japan will emerge. The metaphor is silent on the question of when this would happen, and what it would mean for Japan's long-term relations with the United States, and the alliance itself. We return to these issues in the conclusion. At this point it suffices to say that a close look at the historical record would lead us to assume that a Trump presidency would not by default result in the unraveling of the alliance but that both sides would find a way to moderate uncertainties to assure progress in alliance management. With this in mind, in the next section, we examine how Abe has sought to remain in the eggshell, embracing Trump and subordinating Japan's interests to those of the U.S., hoping to continue the trend of bolstering its role in the alliance in exchange for U.S. assurances of sustaining the regional security architecture.

The "Trump Shock": A Return to "Japan-Bashing" 1980s Style

"America first" was not just an election slogan, rather it has been the guiding principle of Trump's foreign policy. In a speech during the Republican primary campaign in April 2016 Trump outlined what this slogan would mean in practice: "My foreign policy will always put the interests of the American people and American security above all else (…) 'America First' will be the major and overriding theme of my administration."[29] On trade, this meant withdrawing from or renegotiating "unfair" trade deals. On security, it meant making long-standing allies, such as Japan, South Korea, and NATO members, "pay more," or risk losing U.S. protection.

Trump's "America First" instincts and what U.S. alliance experts have called the President's "alliance antipathy"[30] were formed in the 1980s, during the era of the trade deficit, "Japan-bashing" and widespread anti-Japanese sentiment in the United States.[31] Then as now, Trump called for trade restrictions on Japanese imports, increased host nation support, and increased Japanese defense spending. In the late 1980s there were rumors that he was preparing a presidential run. In a 1987 paid advertisement published in the *New York Times, Washington Post*, and *Boston Globe*, he stated that "For decades, Japan and other nations have been taking advantage of the United States (…) Over the years, the Japanese, unimpeded by the huge costs of defending themselves (as long as the United States will do it for free) have built a strong and vibrant economy with unprecedented surpluses (…) It's time for us to end our vast deficits by making Japan and others who can afford it, pay."[32] In 1988 he went on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* and *Late Night* with David Letterman, again criticizing U.S. foreign policy, stating that "we defend Japan for virtually nothing, which is hard to believe," and that "We let Japan come in and dump everything into our markets," while declaring that he "would make our allies pay a fair share."[33]

In Trump's view, the exploitation of the U.S. by Japan which he observed in the 1980s continues to this day. In 2018, when formally announcing the tariffs which marked the beginning of the trade war with China, he could not resist going off-script to criticize Japan, or rather, the smile on Abe's face: "I'll talk to Prime Minister Abe of Japan and others – great guy, friend of mine – and there will be a little smile on their face. And the smile is, 'I can't believe we've been able to take advantage of the United States for so long.' So those days are over."[34]

The present round of "Japan-bashing" began in earnest while on the campaign trail in 2015–2016. Much as before, Trump's ire was directed both at alliance itself and at Japan's "unfair" trading practices. Prior to the G20 meeting in Osaka in 2019 Trump during an interview with *Fox Business* bemoaned the one-sided nature of the alliance, noting that "if Japan is attacked, we will fight World War III," however, "if we are attacked, Japan doesn't have to help us at all. They can watch on a Sony television."[35] One of the more startling suggestions made during the campaign was that, since the

U.S. ought not to play world policeman anymore, Japan (and South Korea) should develop its own nuclear weapons in order to defend itself.[36] While campaigning he also pledged to withdraw from TPP. Although his dislike of multilateral trade deals is well-documented, as early as 2015 – before he even declared his candidacy – he was singling out Japan in relation to the TPP on Twitter: "The Trans-Pacific Partnership is an attack on America's business. It does not stop Japan's currency manipulation. This is a bad deal."[37] Japan, it seemed, was in Trump's sights.

"Trumpology" or the Art of Dealing with Trump

Trump's campaign rhetoric has raised deep concerns in Tokyo from the outset. For instance, Funabashi Yoichi, a former *Asahi Shinbun* senior editor and seasoned security expert with strong ties to alliance managers in Washington D.C. warned that "[a] Trump presidency could be the greatest challenge to U.S.-Japan relations since the end of World War II."[38] Japan's former top diplomat in charge of negotiating with North Korea during the Koizumi administration (2001–2006), Hitoshi Tanaka, went on record stating that Trump's talk of "abandoning the alliance" not only "risks undermining confidence in the US security guarantee to Japan," but eventually would "forc[e] Japanese policymakers to start more actively contemplating previously unthinkable scenarios in case the United States were to actually walk away."[39]

Despite Trump's long track-record of Japan-bashing, the Abe administration assumed a Clinton win – as did the vast majority of pollsters, analysts, and the media, and even Trump himself. Due to this assumption of business-as-usual with the former Secretary of State, no preparations were made for a Trump victory, leaving the Abe administration in shock. In fact, in September 2016, Abe arranged for a meeting with Democratic presidential candidate Clinton in New York to secure her commitment to the TPP deal.[40] As the momentum shifted toward Trump by early November, Abe acknowledged that "the competition is closer than expected."[41] Given Trump's attitude toward Japan, trade, and security, his election triggered what pundits in Japan have quickly come to call the "Trump Shock"[42] as commentators in Japan saw Abe's foreign policy legacy at stake.[43] With his security agenda centered on Japan's security relationship with the United States, Prime Minister Abe faced with deep uncertainty regarding the future of the alliance, and Tokyo braced itself for a bumpy ride during the incoming U.S. administration. Amidst this uncertainty, however, security experts in Japan did highlight that Trump's foreign policy posture, especially his pronounced hardline foreign policy vis-à-vis China and North Korea converged with Abe's own views and thus offered a set of mutual interests to advance the alliance. Despite Barack Obama's positive reception by the Japanese public, the former Democratic president's "indecisive" and "soft" approach toward China and his "strategic patience" in dealing with the North Korean missiles and nuclear programs have caused concern's among Japanese alliance managers over the U.S.'s credibility and long-term role in the region.[44]

Officials immediately began their intensive study of Trump, his style, his worldview, his tweets – a kind of "Trumpology." U.S.-based Japan security expert Andrew Oros has framed this mode aptly: "Abe's policy team spends significant time examining President Trump's rhetoric, including tweets, to mimic his language in their talking points for the prime minister and his representatives."[45] This led to the most visible of the policy responses to the "Trump Shock": the mission to develop a personal relationship between Abe and the new president. The policy is relatively straight-forward: meet Trump as much as possible, shower him with compliments, and ensure that his itineraries in Japan are carefully planned, drawing on the very best Trumpology Tokyo has to offer. No sushi, since on a previous visit in 1990 Trump declared he would not eat "fucking raw fish."[46] Instead, feed him with red meat: *wagyu*, for sure, but also actual American imported beef.[47] Make him guest of honor, provide him with symbolic "firsts," such as the creation of an entirely new "President's Cup" for him to present at the Sumo championship, or have him be first foreign leader to meet the new emperor – though it is also important to make sure to explain to him why these gestures are actually special. This spectacle of special "unprecedented" treatment of the U.S. President was acknowledged by Trump. Promised to be the first leader to meet Japan's new emperor Naruhito in May 2019 Trump: "I am the

guest, meaning the United States is the guest, but Prime Minister Abe said to me, very specifically, 'You are the guest of honor. There's only one guest of honor.'"[48] The president was easily convinced of this rare opportunity after asking Abe "how big is that event compared to the Super Bowl for the Japanese?"; told by Abe that the imperial succession if "100 times bigger," Trump assured his guest, "I'll be there. If that's the case, I'll be there."[49]

In addition to "Sumo diplomacy", Abe engaged in extensive "golf diplomacy", but always making sure not to upset Trump's ego; apparently the playbook called for everyone to allow Trump to win (except for Tiger Woods).[50] On top of the meeting there were the phone calls: in total Trump and Abe had a combined total of 37 phone calls, 14 direct meetings (and 5 golf sessions) as of August 31, 2020.[51] In sum, flatter Trump's ego, and give him everything he wants, the understanding being that, somehow, making friends with Trump – at almost any cost – will result in positive outcomes for Japan.[52]

"Trumpology" was first put into practice with the tributary mission to Trump Towers in November 2016, when Abe delivered a US$3,775 gold-plated golf club and earned the honor of first foreign leader to meet the president-elect immediately after his election.[53] As other allies were scrambling to get access to Trump's transition team, no doubt, the realization of this meeting is an example of skillful Japanese diplomacy in possession of effective informal channels of communication, in turn the product of the U.S.-Japan alliance. The purpose of the meeting was, for Abe, to persuade Trump to stay in the TPP – after the meeting, Abe went as far as to say that "the TPP would be meaningless without the United States."[54] And yet, in one of his first acts as President, immediately upon taking office, Trump withdrew the United States from the trade deal, declaring it a "potential disaster for our country."[55] The great irony was that the U.S. had spent years cajoling a reluctant Japan into joining the TPP, with U.S. analysts and officials threatening Japan that if did not join, the U.S. "will be forced to become closer to nations that have no such hesitation."[56] Moreover, it was Abe himself who finally fully embraced the deal, spending significant political capital and pushing aside domestic concerns about the impact on agriculture, labor rights, and healthcare. The failure of his trip to Trump Towers would be the first of many such humiliations.

The initial response to Abe's love-bombing of Trump was positive. Japanese media reported that Abe was doing what he had to in order to preserve good relations with the U.S. under a new, unpredictable president.[57] Internationally, media outlets took the rhetoric of friendship between the two leaders at face-value: countless articles referred to their "blossoming bromance."[58] By playing golf together, it appeared to the world that Abe had Trump's ear, and this "golf diplomacy" was even a source of envy in European capitals, at least according to a Japanese diplomat.[59] Comparisons were drawn between the "Shinzo-Donald" relationship and "Ron-Yasu" (Ronald Reagan and Nakasone Yasuhiro) and "George-Jun" (George W. Bush and Junichiro Koizumi), the two previous high points of top level affinity between leaders of the alliance. That Trump and Abe should be a good match is not a huge leap: after all, Trump's "Make America Great Again" sounds very similar to Abe's own campaign slogan of "Take Back Japan," and the two are basically conservative elites, from extremely privileged families, with a shared love of golf, and who have a propensity to denounce unflattering domestic media as fake news. Steve Bannon, Trump's far-right campaign manager, at a speech at LDP party headquarters in March 2019, even described Abe as "Trump before Trump."[60]

Losing Control: From Strengthening to Bypassing the Alliance

Although the TPP tributary mission was a failure, it still seemed as though Abe's approach would pay off, at least on security issues. In February 2017, Secretary of Defense James Mattis announced that the new administration would continue to recognize Japan's administration of the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands (though not Japanese sovereignty), meaning that they would be covered under Article 5 of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, pledging the U.S. to defend them.[61] This was confirmed by Trump himself during a meeting with Abe at the White House a few days later, with Trump stating that "we are committed to the security of Japan and all areas under its administrative control and to further strengthening our very crucial alliance."[62] It was an auspicious start. To Tokyo's relief, the meeting

confirmed an "unshakable U.S.-Japan Alliance" as "the cornerstone of peace, prosperity, and freedom in the Asia-Pacific region" and that the "U.S. commitment to defend Japan through the full range of U.S. military capabilities, both nuclear and conventional, is unwavering."[63] In Japan, this was considered a great success and a sign of enduring trust in the alliance. Yoichi Funabashi, for example, argued that the Abe government would no longer need to continue its "supplicant diplomacy" in securing U.S. commitment to Article 5 of the security treaty. At this point, it seemed that the security and trade issues were delinked.[64]

On North Korea, an issue close to Abe and his supporters' heart, again it seemed that the two were on the same page, both supporting the "maximum pressure" approach. During his visit to Mar-a-Lago, Abe and Trump coordinated their response to DPRK's missile launch in an impromptu "candlelight" situation room.[65] While Trump's initial braggadocio saw him dismiss the launch with the words "it's just nukes,"[66] Abe and Trump did subsequently jointly denounce the missile launch. This united front suggested that Trump was committed to the alliance, in order to deter the North Korean threat. North Korea was of particular importance to Abe, who built his political career on the abduction issue. As well as taking a hawkish stance on North Korea, he construed the abductions as an indictment of postwar Japan's constitution and its inability to adequately protect its citizens.[67] North Korea tested a number of missiles during 2017, including an ICBM with potential to reach the continental United States, and two shorter range missiles which flew over Hokkaido. That summer Trump threatened to unleash "fire and fury like the world has never seen" and "completely destroy North Korea." Abe embraced Trump's "all options on the table" rhetoric, as his administration in 2017 evaluated Japan's own options for preemptive strikes against North Korea.[68]

Remarkably, no signs of Japan's old fear of entrapment were visible in Abe's alliance management. Following victory in the October 2017 Lower House snap election – an election in which Abe had made the most of the North Korean threat – Abe introduced Trump to the families of the abductees, and on the same trip the pair stood together at Yokota air base in Tokyo, with Abe telling the audience that "Japan and the US are 100% together."[69] This was to be the highpoint of Abe's courtship of Trump, and appeared to vindicate his approach. During his visit to Japan in November 2017 Trump stated that "He (Abe) will shoot them out of the sky when he completes the purchase of lots of additional military equipment from the United States (…) The prime minister of Japan is going to be purchasing massive amounts of military equipment, as he should."[70] On the same visit the pair wore matching baseball caps with the words "Donald and Shinzo Make Alliance Even Greater."[71]

Consequently, in December 2017, while arguing that North Korea represents a "new level of threat," Abe approved the purchase of the U.S. Aegis Ashore missile defense system in an attempt to add another layer to Japan's ballistic missile defense system. According to U.S.-based alliance expert Mira Rapp-Hooper, "The purchase of the Aegis Ashore system was part of Abe's push, in the early days of the Trump administration, to really be a gold-star U.S. ally."[72] In 2018, Abe added another 105 F-35 stealth fighters to his shopping list. Both sides have considered arms sales a "quick fix" for Japan's trade deficit.[73] The Abe administration kept Trump happy with further spending on U.S. military imports, for example increasing the initial order of 42 F-35 fighter jets to well over one hundred, and attempting (and failing) to install the Aegis Ashore missile defense system. Standing atop the Kaga, Japan's latest aircraft carrier, Trump proudly told an audience of assembled officials, soldiers, and of course, press, that the new fighter purchases would "give Japan the largest fleet of F-35s of any of our allies."[74]

Yet, the unity displayed in 2017 did not last long. In 2018 Trump executed a dramatic U-turn on North Korea. In June he sat down with Kim Jong-un in Singapore in the first summit between leaders of the two states. This was followed by a second summit in Vietnam in February 2019, and again in North Korea in June. Trump, meanwhile, shifted his rhetoric from "fire and fury" to speaking of how the two leaders "fell in love."[75] The "bromance" was no longer between Trump and Abe, but Trump and Kim. Abe was left out in the cold, a lone voice in the region calling for maximum pressure. Assessing the state of the Abe-Trump relationship amidst this sudden change of course in the U.S. DPRK policy, U.S.-Japan alliance expert Michael Green stated that "Abe has

talked to Trump about North Korea before every summit, and the Japanese side says they have the same discussion every time;" but "Trump's view is that he knows how to negotiate and doesn't need Abe's advice."[76]

Worse was to come, as, during a press conference in May 2019, sitting beside Abe, Trump told reporters of the success of his new approach: "there have been no nuclear tests, no ballistic missiles going out, no long-range missiles going out." Further, he stated that he was not "personally" bothered by North Korea's short-range missile tests."[77] Obviously, short-range missiles do not reach the U.S., but they do reach Japan. In other words, as Trump made it very clear that he was firmly committed to his "America First" foreign policy – Trump was happy to forget about the abductees, and even about missiles that could reach Japan, if it meant he could do a deal with the North ensuring the security of the United States. Abe clearly had little or no influence, and his approach was completely disregarded.

Signing of a New "Unequal Treaty"[78]

Turning to trade, Abe's initial failure to secure the U.S.'s participation in the TPP would be just the beginning of his woes. In March 2018, Trump announced tariffs on imported steel and aluminum, on the basis of "threats to national security."[79] However, the administration also announced that key allies, including South Korea and the EU, would be granted temporary exemptions from said tariffs. Japan was conspicuous in its absence from the list, and to add insult to injury, the declaration came just as the first Trump-Kim summit was announced.

Meanwhile, Trump had been pressuring Abe and Japanese automobile manufacturers to invest more in their U.S. operations. Abe responded, and worked with top business leaders in Japan to come up with a "tweetable" figure to present Trump at a meeting in February 2017. This pressure continued, with Trump again pressing Abe for more investment at a meeting April 2019, despite "Abe's diligent 2 1/2-year effort to fan the mercurial president's ego."[80] Shortly after the meeting, at a campaign rally in Wisconsin, Trump was repeating his critique of Japan, telling the audience that "we lose 75 billion a year," and that "they sell cars, we sell practically nothing".[81] According to Trump, he had pointed this out to Abe ("no president has ever said this"), with the result that Abe agreed to put: "(…) US $40 billion into the United States for new car factories. Toyota's coming in with US$14 billion, many, many companies are coming in. And they're coming in, frankly to Michigan, they're coming back, they want to be back to Ohio, to Pennsylvania, to North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida and what's the name of this special place?"[82]

Later in 2019, at the June G20 meeting in Osaka, Abe presented a graphic map of the U.S., showing new investments by companies such as Mitsubishi and Denso, as well as previous investment by Nissan, Toyota, and other major Japanese companies. At a press conference after the meeting, Trump told Abe that he appreciated "the fact that you're sending many automobile companies into Michigan and Ohio and Pennsylvania and North Carolina – a lot of our states."[83] It is not clear the extent to which this is investment that would not otherwise have taken place, but what is clear is that Abe helped strengthen Trump's election narrative of "Making America Great Again" by focusing on the investment in battleground states for the 2020 presidential campaign. As recently as May 2019, observers were noting that Abe was "outsmarting" Trump on trade.[84]

This all took place against the backdrop of Trump's threat to hit Japan with 25% tariffs on automobile imports.[85] Despite having withdrawn from the TPP, Trump demanded that U.S. food exporters should have the same access to Japan's agriculture market as member states of the successor deal, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), which the remaining members had agreed in the U.S.'s absence. Trump doubled down on his threats when he told the *Wall Street Journal* that, while he and Abe had a good relationship, that "will end as soon as I tell them how much they have to pay."[86] Despite the bluster, he did give Abe a reprieve, waiting until after the Upper House elections of July 2019 before starting trade negotiations in earnest. Abe's attempt at a good relationship with Trump did not seem to be paying off Japan, but it had at least benefitted the LDP.

A preliminary deal was announced in late September 2019, in which the U.S. secured its demands for preferential access for agricultural exports. Unlike the original TPP, the U.S. did not drop its 2.5% tariff on Japanese automobiles.[87] Further negotiations are planned, and despite Tokyo's attempts to secure a guarantee that the U.S. would not increase auto tariffs in the future, the U.S. side has refused to take the issue off the table. On top of these ominous trade negotiations, Japan faces host nation support negotiations in fall 2020. Trump has reiterated his position that the alliance is "unfair" at the 2019 G20 summit at Osaka, and has supported the "cost plus 50 formula:" that host nations pay the full cost of bases, together with an extra 50% for the privilege. While some critics have called this a "protection racket," it is already working: negotiations with South Korea led to an extra US$800 million.[88] Reports suggest that Trump wants a 4.5 fold increase to 8 billion dollars by 2021.[89] Moreover, in what was widely interpreted as a warning to Japan and a clear linkage between trade and security, in June 2019 Trump's staff leaked his comment that the U.S. might just withdraw from the security treaty with Japan entirely. This huge increase, to 8 billion dollars, and the threat that if Japan did not pay up the U.S. would completely withdraw all troops, was later backed up by John Bolton, with the added detail that Trump felt that North Korea's missile testing made it "a good time to be asking for money."[90] These revelations make it difficult to refute the "protection racket" claim, and what one prominent U.S. security expert calls "mafioso-like threats."[91]

Abe's "Humiliation Diplomacy"

Aside from leaving Abe out to dry on North Korea and using threats and tariffs to extract concessions on trade, Abe was publicly humiliated on a number of occasions during his unrequited courtship of Trump. Trump's publicization of "the most beautiful five-page letter" that Abe sent nominating Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize ranks close to the top of the list. But perhaps the most famous is the viral handshake, when Trump squeezed Abe's hand for 19 seconds, during which he also patted the back of Abe's hand as if Abe were a child, and also pulled Abe toward him. Abe's face immediately after the handshake showed a rare moment of true emotion, a mix of exasperation and irritation. Indeed, this is the core of this policy response: flattering Trump while hiding one's true feelings. As one journalist put it, "One can almost hear Japanese officials telling Abe: 'We know he's a fool, but we need his support both in trade and national security. So it is necessary to be nice to him, however distasteful that may be.'"[92]

This "butter up Trump" approach was completely transparent and drastically underestimates Trump and his advisors. As we saw, Trump described how the good relationship they had "will end as soon as I tell them how much they have to pay," as well as referring to the "little smile" on Abe's face, which he would wipe away through a punitive trade deal. Trump may not be the most educated, erudite, or eloquent president, but he did win election to the U.S. presidency, and is a man who prides himself on his negotiation skills. He surely enjoyed the pomp and pagentry Abe affords him, but this does not mean he was unaware of Abe's transparent tactics. He was never going to make fundamental changes to his trade or security policy because Abe was nice to him.

Indeed, we can see this clearly in the repeated failure of Abe across the various issue-areas outlined above. On regional security, at first it seemed as though Abe was winning, as Trump reaffirmed the inclusion of the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in the security guarantee, and the two were united in the "maximum pressure" on North Korea. The affirmation of Article 5 is not insignificant, though it has been U.S. policy since the dispute became a serious issue during the George W. Bush administration. From Abe's perspective – maximum pressure – North Korea could not have gone worse. That Trump spoke of his lack of concern regarding short-range missile launches, in front of Abe himself, can only be described as adding insult to injury. On trade, Abe was unable to keep the U.S. in the TPP, acquire exemptions for Japan on steel or aluminum tariffs, or gain assurances on future automobile tariffs. Moreover, the interim trade deal provides the U.S. with near-TPP access to Japan's agricultural market, without the concessions the U.S. would have had to make in the original deal. Abe did win

a reprieve on trade negotiations, as Trump waited until after the July 2019 Upper House Elections to begin negotiations in earnest, but this was a victory for the LDP, not for Japan. In sum, flattery does not seem to have gotten Abe very far.

Thus as disillusionment settled, the *Asahi Shinbun* reflected critically on Abe's Trump-dealings: "How would Abe explain the fact that he has been at the mercy of Trump's whim while failing to parlay his close personal ties with the U.S. president into specific and tangible diplomatic achievements?"[93] In light of Trump's sudden policy shifts, public confidence in the U.S. alliance began to drop,[94] and the Japanese public's perception of the state of the alliance sank (albeit moderately) during 2017 and 2018 (see Figure 1). Security experts in Japan, such as Keio University's Tadokoro Masayuki have voiced their concerns that "People [in Japan] feel anxious and concerned about the alliance" as "[Trump] sees Japan as merely the counterpart in a deal (...) He doesn't place much emphasis on traditional values such as freedom and democracy."[95] At same time, however, Abe's handling of Trump to maintain the alliance boosted his international status, which in turn bolstered his domestic support, which remains at high levels (when measured against past Japanese leaders). Overall, Abe's proactive handling of Trump has ensured that Japanese public's perception of the alliance remained positive (see Figure 1).

Of course, one could argue that had Abe not sought to embrace Trump, the outcome may have been even worse: Trump's campaign trail rhetoric suggested that Japan would face a much tougher time, and so Abe, by holding his nose and holding Trump close, avoided the worst-case scenario. After all, Trump did publicly disparage NATO labeling the alliance "obsolete"[96] and eventually withdrew 12.000 troops from Germany, thus reducing the overall number to 25.000.[97] However, just under half of these troops have been redeployed to other NATO countries, most notably Poland, which unlike Germany, shares a border with Russia. Comparisons of Germany and Japan have long been useful in political science and political economy.[98] They do however face drastically different strategic situations and very different calculations for U.S. global strategy. NATO, designed to contain the Soviet Union, is today a broad but fractured alliance facing a newly assertive Russia.[99] Deeply embedded in NATO and in the European Union, German Chancellor Angela Merkel was handed more leverage to offset Trump's pressure to significantly increase German defense spending from its current level 1.3% of its GDP. Germany, however important it may be, is not Japan, which

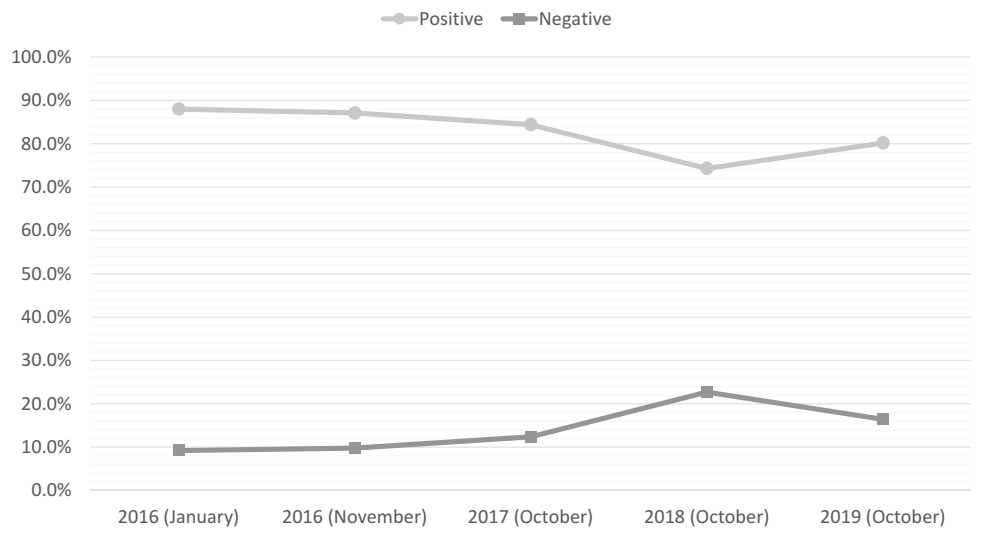


Figure 1. Public opinion in Japan on U.S-Japan relations (in %). Source: Cabinet Office (various years), https://survey.gov-online.go.jp/index-gai.html, compiled by the authors.

approximately hosts 50.000 U.S. troops. Japan remains the key ally for any U.S. administration which seeks to contain China.[100]

To be sure, Trump made a lot of noise about Japan on the campaign trail, and while Trump did temper his rhetoric somewhat after coming to power, on crucial issues including the TPP, North Korea, and bilateral trade, Abe was eventually forced to concede. Given that, having declared China to be the "enemy," Trump needs to keep Japan on board, one might have expected some more returns for Abe. Indeed, the opening of Japan's agricultural market in part provides new markets for U.S. farmers who are losing out on China due to the trade war – and bumped Trump support in the U.S. Midwest. In retrospect, it is implausible that the Sumo Trophy, the Nobel Peace Prize nomination, or even the charts of investment in 2020 battleground states, have made much or any difference to the Trump administration's treatment of Japan.

This brings us back to the nub of the issue: what could Abe have done differently, and what difference would it have made? Let's take the extreme first: Trump's long-standing proclivity for strong, authoritarian leaders is well-documented, and when Bannon called Abe the "Trump before Trump", it was Abe's nationalist, populist, strongman approach he was referring to, rather than obsequious "Trumpology," which Trump saw through from the beginning. Abe has come in for much criticism over his illiberal tendencies at home, but he is no Kim, no Putin – he is not even a Duterte. He is unlikely to have gained respect or concessions from Trump by playing strongman.

To be fair to Abe, although the attempts to cozy up to Trump have failed, this is not the only story since 2016. He promoted the Indo-Pacific strategy, expanding Japan's "strategic horizons" and developing its military capabilities.[101] He sought to maintain relations with China even as Trump doubled down on the trade war, while also strengthening relations with India. And, after the post-Trump "shock," Japan and the EU finally managed to sign a long-delayed, long-negotiated trade and security deal. With all these partnerships and activism, Abe was hailed as a potential savior of the liberal international order.[102] The irony of being in this position could not have been be lost on Abe himself: a deeply nationalist leader who lifelong-mission is to revise Japan's liberal constitution and "take back Japan" from a perceived left-liberal "elite", while coming from the most elite echelons of society and leading a conservative party which has governed Japan for sixty-one of the last 65 years. Still, if one takes a very weak, purely economic definition of the "liberal international order," an argument can be made for Abe. After all, he helped resurrect the TPP – notwithstanding that members include such notoriously illiberal states as Brunei and Vietnam – and secured the EU-Japan FTA, as well as working with China to promote economic globalization.

Abe's mission was to "make Japan great again," positioning it as a "tier one" nation, a responsible regional power, and a new pole in East Asia. This is the context in which his relationship with Trump should be judged. Even if Abe's approach failed to alter Trump's trade or security policy, one could argue that it did not do any damage. As has been pointed out, unlike other G7 leaders, Abe faced few domestic costs for publicly supporting Trump, and there were no mass protests when Trump comes to visit.[103] Yet Abe's vision of a resurgent Japan, taking its place in "tier one," is undermined by his obvious and public subordination to the vagaries of Trump. Abe's June 2019 visit to Iran is illustrative. Japan's Iran policy long highlighted the limits of Japan's independence as an international actor, as illustrated by the on-again off-again attempts to develop the Azadegan oil field.[104]

In advance of Abe's historic trip to Iran, a MOFA official briefed reporters that "we want to be able to carry the voice of the international community to Iran, not just the U.S."[105] Still, Abe went to Iran shortly after a meeting with Trump, and after Trump had announced that he was open to talks with Iran. However, MOFA sought to frame it, Abe was received as an emissary on behalf of Trump.[106] In a manner that Abe must be used to after his many Trumpian humiliations, Khamenei, with Abe sitting beside him, spoke directly to the TV cameras and said that Abe had coming bearing a message from Trump, and was wasting his time.[107] Shortly after, Trump disowned the mission via Twitter, and Abe was left naked in the spotlight.[108] John Bolton later revealed that Trump expected Abe to fail, and that when Abe spoke to Trump to debrief on the trip, Trump told him that "he should not feel guilty that he

had totally and absolutely failed."[109] To add insult to injury, at least according to Bolton, Trump immediately changed the topic to the fact that Japan needed to buy more U.S. farm products.[110]

Herein lies the inconsistency in Abe's approach to Trump: the impossibility of being taken seriously as the leader of a proud and independent nation with its own views and interests while also being seen – time and again – to subordinate Japan's interests to those of Donald Trump. Abe could not have it both ways, and in the politics of the bilateral relationship, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that, so far, Trump has got the best of Abe. Abe's attempt to capture Trump through proactive concessions transforming Japan into active ally has delivered what many alliance managers in the U.S. have hoped for pretty much since the foundation of the alliance in 1952!

Did Donald and Shinzō Make the Alliance Even Greater?

Trump's election victory in 2016 triggered fears of a major crisis of the liberal international order, if not its complete collapse. Facing an unpredictable Trump administration seeking to reduce the fiscal burden of long-standing U.S. defense commitments, U.S. allies around the world were forced to critically reassess their foreign policies.[111] As we have seen, alliance managers in Japan did not hesitate, moving quickly to embrace Trump in a (desperate) attempt to restore strategic certainty. After all, after his return as Prime Minister in 2012, Abe's security agenda centered on restoring a "strong Japan" capable of acting alongside its U.S. security ally. Early in the Trump presidency Defense Secretary Jim Mattis emphasized the "strength of the alliance", easing Japan's fears.[112] And while Mattis's sudden departure in December 2018 did cause uncertainty in Japan, his successor Mark Esper quicky reassured Tokyo of the U.S. commitment to Japan's defense.[113] Thus, in January 2020, when the top alliance managers met to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the signing of their security treaty, officials on both sides sought to clear the air and remove any signs of doubt. Trump's description of an "unfair" treaty was re-designated as an "unshakeable commitment to strengthen the Alliance and to uphold our common values and principles towards the future."[114] Theories of alliance management suggest that when states perceive a crisis in an alliance they have two options: enhance commitment or abandon the alliance. Abe followed a "Trump first" approach[115] which some in Japan have termed "embracing Trump diplomacy" (*dakitsuki gaikō*).[116] Despite morphing into a string of diplomatic humiliations, did Abe succeed in securing core Japan's interests by enhancing its commitment to the alliance?

Of course, it all depends on how one defines "Japan's interests;" in terms of Abe's own security agenda, one can point to some degree of success. Trump's pressure for a greater contribution to the alliance is in line with past U.S. administrations, going as far back even as the formation of the alliance in the 1950s. Abe's policy agenda of restoring a militarily potent and proactive Japan converged in several important ways. Since his return as prime minister in 2012, Abe invested heavily in building his own "Asia pivot" strategy as Japan is confronted by growing Chinese influence and a bellicose North Korea. The lifting of Japan's virtual ban on arms exports, the regular increases in defense spending, the establishment of a National Security Council, a formal National Security Strategy, a heavy-handed approach toward solving the relocation of U.S. military bases on Okinawa, the building of new security partnerships across the Asia-Pacific, and Japan's "Free and Open Indo-Pacific"[117] strategy are individually and in conjunction strong indicators for such a shift toward a new security posture.

Thus, Trump provided Abe with renewed momentum for implementing the 2015 security policy changes, permitting Japan to participate in collective self-defense operations. Enhancing U.S.-Japan military integration, Abe lifted Japan's virtual ban on arms exports, and increased Japan's defense budget with significant money spend on the purchase of U.S. weapons systems including new ballistic missile defense.[118] Abe also muted old fears of entrapment as he supported Trump's hardline course against North Korea in 2017, even when faced with potential preemptive strikes and war on the Korean peninsula. More recently, Japan's participation in the "coalition of the willing" to secure the Strait of Hormuz and to resolve the standoff with Iran serves as another example of Japan's willingness to step up its efforts. Finally, Trump's adoption of the "Indo-Pacific" as a pillar of his (still vague)

regional strategy to replace Obama's "Asia Pivot" stands as a rare example of Japanese influence on U.S. foreign policy.[119]

Similarly, one could argue that Abe's effort to embrace Trump has improved Japan's international standing, demonstrating a new style of Japanese leadership capable of keeping Trump on course and thus preserving the "international liberal order." Indeed, Abe's attempt to rescue the Asia-Pacific trade deal in form of CPTPP shows that, when push comes to shove, Japan is willing to go it alone – if only in matters of trade.[120] Furthermore, Japan's initial rigorous push-back against Trump's pressure to negotiate a bilateral trade agreement may have encouraged others in the region to hold their lines against the U.S. in similar disputes.[121] Thus, as we have seen, Abe became a surprise liberal darling, and even found common ground with China in terms of upholding the trade order. This has also helped to dampen fears that Abe's agenda was taking Japan back to the days of revisionist militarism.

So, one way to look at the Abe-Trump era is to see it as a great success for those who seek to further push Japan to embrace a robust defense posture as an active U.S. ally, improve Japan's standing in the region, and to continue the movement toward constitutional revision in order to restore a "strong nation." And indeed, early into Trump's tenure this was a prominent narrative as Japan security analysts saw in Trump the critical juncture that would force Japan to invest more in preserving the liberal order.

This, however, is not the only story. In 2009 the now defunct Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) was heavily criticized for proposing a more "equal alliance" – Washington and the LDP replied that this made no sense since the alliance was already equal.[122] With the demise of the DPJ, the "internationalist" strand of Japanese foreign policy appeared dead and buried – considerations of the alliance would take precedence above all else. The past three years of U.S. pressure have laid bare the fundamental inequality of the alliance and clearly exposed Japan's junior partner status within it. The consecutive political and diplomatic humiliations, the new trade deal, and now the host nation support negotiations present a second way of reading the last three years – and their implications. Historically marginal, calls for a more autonomous Japanese security posture have gained traction both in academic and policy circles, where many cite Trump's erratic behavior as evidence of U.S. unreliability. Less extreme than autonomy is a revived version of the DPJ's internationalist option, maintaining but also recalibrating the alliance, while increasing the emphasis on other partners.

Either way, Trump's explicit linking of trade and security (the "protection racket"), his pledge to scale back U.S. military presence across the Asia-Pacific region and thus to reassess the San Francisco System-rooted security architecture triggered long-held and deep-running fears of abandonment in Japan paralleling those occurring in the wake of Nixon's Guam doctrine or Clinton's Japan passing. In response, Japan has effectively developed new and existing security partnerships and quasi-alliances, most prominently with Australia.[123]

Meanwhile, Abe hitched his wagon to Trump, and the political capital is spent with the associated sunk costs. A post-Abe government may decide that, in the long-term, the costs of preserving the current close security relationship with the U.S. are outweighed by the benefits of a more autonomous trade and foreign policy. In fact, following Abe's sudden cancelation of deploying the Aegis Ashore missile defense system in July 2020 citing technical concerns, Japan has renewed its discussion over the development of preemptive strike capabilities to counter North Korean missile threats. Previously proposed as late as 2017, such a discourse entails demands for greater defense autonomy, with security experts in Japan such as Keio University's Hosoya Yuichi – who served on various expert panels for the Abe government – stating that "Now is the time for Japan to rethink its excessive dependence on the U.S. for its defense and help itself."[124] In media and policy circles this option has a long history, with advocates including the former head of the Defense Agency Ishiba Shigeru.[125] Now framed in terms of a "self-defense counterstrike" (*jiei hangeki*) option,[126] should Japan proceed and insert such policy option in a revised National Security Strategy announced for late 2020, then this would trigger concerns over a new arms race in the region.[127]

For now, though, the alliance has weathered the storm, and (so far) none of Tokyo's worst fears have come to pass, pointing to the alliance's fundamental strength.[128] In fact, the alliance remains key to the Indo-Pacific strategy and to countering China's growing military presence in the region. Tokyo has invested heavily in deepening military cooperation, for example through joint military exercises in the East China Sea, and trilateral exercises including Japanese, U.S. and Australian naval forces.[129] Cooperation at mid- and lower levels of the alliance was also strengthened, helping to offset the negative effects of the Trump presidency and reassure Japanese partners. The Trump-Abe relationship has, however, fully exposed the inequality at the heart of the alliance and Japan's lower status, and as insider details keep leaking, Abe looks increasingly weak. Thus there is evidence to support each of interpretations above, and it is not clear what the future holds as pressure on Japan to contribute even more to the alliance increases. Much depends on the tone and outcome of the host nation support negotiations,[130] the 2020 U.S. presidential election, and of course on who comes after Abe.

A Joe Biden victory would see investment in stabilizing the alliance. As vice president during the TPP negotiations, he would likely aim to return the U.S. to the CPTPP table, but may be forced – as Hilary Clinton was in 2016 – to repudiate it in order to maintain unity in the Democratic Party. Furthermore, Democratic administrations are usually greeted with a degree of skepticism in Tokyo, as they are seen as taking a soft line on China and North Korea. Still, it seems likely that a Biden administration would work to repair damage done to both the alliances with Japan and South Korea, and overall his approach to East Asia will be much closer to that of Obama than Trump.[131]

If Biden's security policy remains unclear, four more years of Trump is almost entirely unpredictable. A second term would produce a President Trump unfettered by the need to gain reelection, and much less interested in Republican senate and house elections than a standard party leader. Thus, "America First" could lead the U.S. down any number of policy avenues, from further troops withdrawals to further trade and even military confrontation with China. The contradictions in Trump's policy – undermining the very alliances he needs in order to confront China – are likely to continue, and even deepen. But with Trump, nothing is certain. Few in 2016 would have imagined that Trump would both threaten nuclear war with North Korea and then hold historic, but eventually empty, summits with Kim Jong Un. Indeed, not being Trump may well be a hypothetical President Biden's biggest asset. Key European and East Asian allies are longing for reliability, certainty, and predictability in what some have called a new U.S. policy platform to restore "strategic competence."[132]

For Abe's successors, however, uncertainty will persist regardless of election. The very fact that the American public elected Trump means that even if Biden wins, nothing is certain or sacred anymore, a reality underscored by the fact that Trump has a reasonable chance at reelection. Thus, business-as-usual may continue in the alliance short- and medium term. In the long-term, the current "humiliating" modus in alliance management may have sown the seeds of a revitalized autonomous alternative, including independent defense planning with Tokyo decentering from the "hub-and-spoke" Cold War-era security architecture. The consequences of this have the potential to fundamentally alter the geopolitics of East Asia. Even alliance critics may look back at the pre-Trump days with nostalgia.

Notes

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5. "Shushō 'Nichibei dōmei yuruginai mono ni' Toranpu shi to gorufu e [Prime Minister: 'Japan-U.S. alliance will become airtight', golf scheduled with Trump]," *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, May 26, 2019, https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXMZO45289100W9A520C1000000/.
6. "'Nichibei dōmei katsute naku kyoko' Suga kanbōchōkan, anpo kanrenhō shikō 3-nen de ['Japan-U.S. alliance stronger than ever before' Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga's comments on 3rd anniversary of new security laws]," *Sankei Shinbun*, March 28, 2019, https://www.sankei.com/politics/news/190328/plt1903280020-n1.html.
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10. "Statesmen's Forum: HE Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan: Japan is back," *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, February 22, 2013, https://www.csis.org/events/statesmen's-forum-he-shinzo-abe-prime-minister-japan.
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