

JAPAN MILITARY EXPORT BAN LIFT IN 2014 UNDER SHINZO ABE ADMINISTRATION

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Abstract

This article aims to answer the reason why Japan revoked its self-imposed military export ban in 2014 despite of its ideal status quo under pacifism for more than 7 decades. One of the pacifism implementation was partial and total military export ban, consecutively in 1967 and 1976. To puzzle out the question, this journal article utilized “Balance of Power” Concept by Morgenthau and “Foreign Policy Decision Making” Model by Coplin. This research found out that Shinzo Abe grand vision for involving in arm export and transfer is to balance People’s Republic of China in East China Sea by : (1) distributing weaponries to states that were in conflict with People’s Republic of China and (2) enhancing internal military buildup, as arm export stimulated their domestic defense industry development. In influencing determinants, Japan involvement in global arm trade was caused by United States decline in Asia (international context), Japan “Lost Decade” stagnant economy during military budget increase plan (economic-military factor) and Shinzo Abe conservative Liberal Democratic Party strong dominative influence in the Japan’s parliament (domestic politics factor).

Keyword(s): *Military Export Ban Lift, Balance of Power, Foreign Policy, East China Sea*

Introduction

After Japan lost the World War 2, United States was the one who held the highest authority of Tokyo during the vacuum of power. United States main agenda during its control in Japan was to reformulate Japan’s constitutions in the name of demilitarization, democratization that leads to more open Japan (Korch, 1999). On the security matters, Washington drafted *Article 9* as the main foundation of Japan pacifism. Japan’s *Article 9* doesn’t allow the state to deploy its military abroad or

involving in any war by any forms as mentioned on its constitution (The Constitution of Japan : Article 9, 1946)

Its form of pacifism includes the refrain from providing weaponries to international conflict. In 1967, Japan National Diet adopted *Three Principles on Arms Exports*, dealing with situations in which arms cannot be exported from Japan. The three principles blocked Japan interaction in arm trade with Communist bloc countries, countries under arms exports embargo under United Nations Security Council resolutions, and to countries involved in or likely being involved in international conflicts. In 1976, the government of Japan announced the total arm export ban, even toward the states that was not restricted in the 1967 three principles, aside from some technology transfers to the United States (Japan's Policies on the Control of Arms Exports, 2013).

However, its rooted pacifism for more than 7 decades erodes regressively since conservative Shinzo Abe sits in power for the second term. In 2014, Shinzo Abe had officially lifted the Japan decades long military export ban since 1967 (Fackler, 2014). This military export ban lift then enables Japan to export weaponries and military hardware, in particular to its allies in accordance to the three principles. Seeing this situation, it caused the Japan gigantic heavy industry companies such as Mistubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd. and Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd. to be open up for business. This military export ban lift had directly welcomed by the allies such as

United States and Australia, who respectively conducted the joint research on the air-to-air missiles and submarines weaponries technology development (Pfanner, 2014). Hence, based on the problematic antitheses above this research is conducted.

Grand Vision : Balancing People’s Republic of China in East China Sea

The military export ban lift in 2014 by Shinzo Abe basically shifted the total arm export to be back using “*The Three Principles*”. However, the principles established in 1967 and the one re-created in 2014 has a major difference. The one drafted in 1967 was basically aimed to maintain the global security environment *per se*, while the 2014 one was also concerning about the Japan national security inward instead of idealistically contributing international peace maintenance (The Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, 2014).

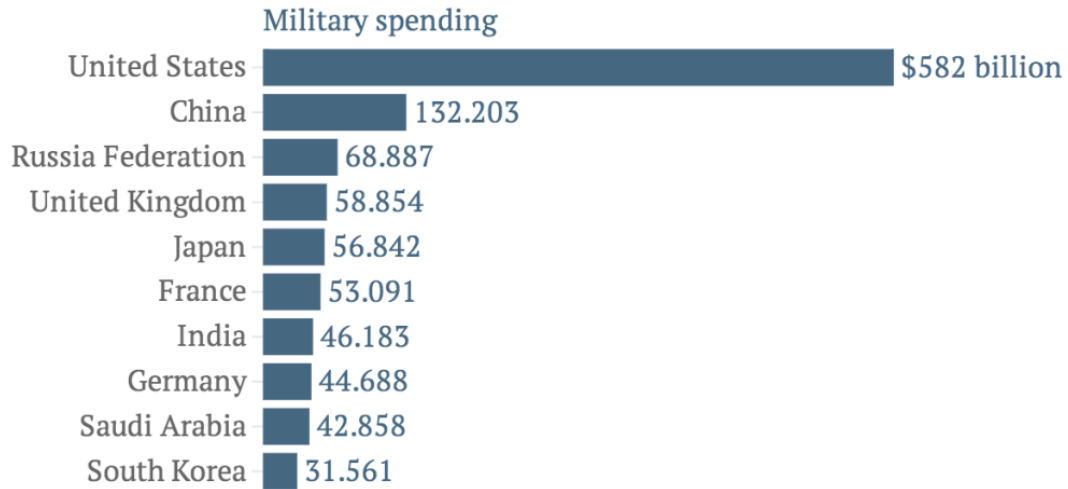
In 2013 People’s Republic of China started a massive military buildup and modernization, aiming to win the two regional conflicts, South China Sea against Southeast Asian countries and East China Sea against Japan by 2020 (Bowman, 2013). From 2005-2009, People’s Republic of China had already increased their military budget on the 15-20 rate every year, before it turned out to be 10 percent annually on the following year including the one in 2013 with 10.7 percents increase, making People’s Republic of China military budget the 2nd largest in the world after United States (Cao, 2013). The Pentagon said that this military buildup had not shown any sign of slowing down, in which by this huge budget People’s Republic of China would focus on adding more number weaponries in strengthening nuclear

deterrence and long range conventional assaults, aircraft carrier, integrated air defenses, undersea battle, increasing navigation and training on its naval, army and air forces (Baron, 2013).

The People's Republic of China excessive military buildup had created its neighbor to be anxious, especially Japan in East China Sea (Blanchar & Ruwitch, 2013). Japan's power, by People's Republic of China excessive military buildup, was oversized and dwarfed. By number in 2013, the Japan military budget was still twice smaller than the People's Republic of China military budget. It could be seen from the budget and power comparison below :

Figure 1 Top 10 Military Budgets in 2013 (Kuo, 2014)

Defense budgets in 2013



Quartz | qz.com

Data: IHS Jane

Source: Kuo, L. (2014, March 5). *Why China's new \$132 billion military budget isn't quite as scary as it looks*. Retrieved January 6, 2018, from Quartz: <https://qz.com/184204/why-chinas-new-132-billion-military-budget-isnt-quite-as-scary-as-it-looks/>

Not only from the budgeting perspective, from the weaponry number of ships, submarines and aircrafts in which very essential in maritime tension, Japan property also had been overshadowed by People's Republic of China military growth, as Japan's was stagnant or even shrinking, as the Foreign Policy Research Institute military comparison statistic on Table 1 until Table 4 shown below:

Japan and China Naval-Aircraft Power Comparison 1995-2015*

Table 1.1 China Naval Weaponries

Year	Ship	Submarines
1995	52	56
2000	60	64
2005	67	61
2010	78	56
Ordered for 2015	91	69

Table 1.2 Japan Naval Weaponries

Year	Ship	Submarines
1995	62	16
2000	54	16
2005	54	16
2010	52	16
Ordered for 2015	54	17

Table 1.3 China Aircraft Weaponries

Year	≤3G Fighters	≥4G Fighters	AEW&C	Tankers
1995	5.500	26	0	0
2000	3.138	125	0	6
2005	1.513	334	2	13
2010	1.098	507	9	13
Ordered for 2015	864	913	9	13

Table 1.4 Japan Aircraft Weaponries

Year	≤3G Fighters	≥4G Fighters	AEW&C	Tankers
1995	160	165	10	0
2000	110	160	14	0
2005	110	200	14	0
2010	65	245	14	4
Ordered for 2015	60	240	17	4

Source : Chang, F. (2013, September 5). *A Salutation To Arms: Asia's Military Buildup, Its Reasons, and Its Implications*. Retrieved January 6, 2018, from Foreign Policy Research Institute: <https://www.fpri.org/article/2013/09/a-salutation-to-arms-asias-military-buildup-its-reasons-and-its-implications/>

*This data was released in 2013; however it could also present the under-production weaponries that were expected to be launched in 2015.

By these military budget and weaponries comparison of Japan and People's Republic of China, it could be seen that People's Republic of China has a lot of advantages in number over Japan. Contextualized to balance of power concept, People's Republic of China power could dominate Japan in East China Sea, prone to

the failure to achieve stability in the region. It fits the situation where there is a need of a bigger power to balance the other state power to achieve the stability. Therefore, the status quo is prone to be called as imbalance of power that needs to be balanced by Japan.

In achieving stability, diplomatic talk had been tried. However, the situation did not get any better by the rigid and frozen diplomatic ties of Japan and People's Republic of China in deescalating the tension in East China Sea. Akihisa Nagishima, Japan Deputy Defense Minister in 2013 was even stating that they did not have any solution or any way out resolving this dispute (Ford, 2013). An analyst in International Crisis Group, Yangmei Xie, stated that since Japan nationalization of the Islands from the private in 2012, the diplomatic maneuver in resolving Senkaku/Diayou Islands dispute remained deadlock and less likely to change due to the extreme position disparity among two; People's Republic of China wanted to challenge the status quo by expecting Japan to admit that the Senkaku/Diayou was disputed while Japan wanted to maintain the status quo, pushing People's Republic of China vessels and aircraft out from 'Japanese territory'. (Domínguez, 2014). Japan firmly stood on an idea that Senkaku Islands was clearly Japanese territory and there was no point where it could be disputed with other country (Scoville, 2014). By this deadlock, other means of achieving balance of power was vital to be achieved by these two parties.

From the legal perspective, the usage of international law in resolving this dispute was also found to be unhelpful. It could be broken down into three major layers of explanation. First, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) was not accommodative in resolving Senkaku/Diayou dispute that was located in a strategic yet resourceful geographical location in East China Sea, otherwise it inflamed the conflict (Ramos-Mrosovsky, 2008). It was because based on the UNCLOS article 56-57, a country was allowed to declare an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) up to 200 nautical miles offshore to explore and exploit the natural resources within, fueling any ambition for Japan and People's Republic of China to take Senkaku/Diayou control (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982). Second, the international customary law in territorial occupation had encouraged a state to show more domination to be stated as the more legitimate owner of the territory, causing the tension more heated (Ramos-Mrosovsky, 2008). It motivated Japan and China to take control of the Islands since the first three of the 5 territory acquisition ways international customary law recognized (occupation, prescription, cession, accretion, and conquest) were relevant in the dispute (Manjiao, 2011). Third, the existing international law had allowed both Japan and People's Republic of China to take any legal basis partially and only the ones that fits their interest, discouraging them to bring this case to a higher international legal body due to the unpredictability (Ramos-Mrosovsky, 2008).

Seeing the inefficiency of diplomatic and legal approach in past actions, the hard military approach was taken by Shinzo Abe, namely lifting the decades self-imposed military export ban in 2014. According to the balance of power concept, a state may attempt to balance the other state power by the internal military buildup (Lobell, 2014). Thus, military export was aimed to accelerate Shinzo Abe ambition for Japan remilitarization agenda as the part of Japan internal military buildup (Kelly & Kubo, 2014). This military export ban lift by Shinzo Abe was believed to be a good step for Japan in modernizing its defense industry and capabilities in the rapid change situation on its surrounding in 21st century since it would trigger a more efficient production and better quality weaponries (McNeill, 2014).

The decades restriction of arm export had blocked Japan major military contractor such as Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Kawasaki Heavy Industries and IHI from their overseas market, leaving Japanese Defense Force to be the only customer they had, causing a very high production cost for those companies (Takenaka & Kubo, 2014). Narushige Michisita, a security specialist from National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies stated that by this arm export ban relaxation, it would cut the unit cost of each products and push the uncompetitive contractors out from the production (McNeill, 2014). Michisita also stated that this cost efficiency would stimulate Japan defense military technology improvement since creating high-tech weaponries by default would cost a lot more without this international arm export (McNeill, 2014). These data showed that Japan was attempting to achieve the balance of power against

People's Republic of China though a more efficient and prominent internal armaments.

Besides balancing through armaments, balance of power concept also recognizes the alliance improvement as the method of achieving balance of power (Morgenthau, 1985). By this military export ban lift, Shinzo Abe also aimed to have a closer military ties with the countries that was having conflict and prone to have one with People's Republic of China, namely Southeast Asian countries and also India. Yusuf Unjhwala, a geopolitics and strategy expert from India Defence Analysis stated that the pursuance of closer relationship would be achieved by Japanese military weaponries exports towards the conflicting countries against People's Republic of China as Shinzo Abe already planned to have \$20 billion aid and investment for ASEAN countries including the military defense projects (Unjhwala, 2014). In detail, below mentioned the Japan arm export activities as a strategic measure to balance People's Republic of China:

- India : In a short period after the release of the new principles, India had also approached Japan for the a deal in U2 amphibious aircraft (Takenaka & Kubo, 2014). Later in 2016, Indian Navy had been progressive for the deal of the U2 amphibious aircraft from ShinMaywa, aiming to project power against People's Republic of China in Indian Ocean (Nagao, 2016).
- Vietnam: In August 2014, Japan provided Vietnam with six patrol boats following its dispute with People's Republic of China over Exclusive Economic

Zone in South China Sea (Hiep, 2017). It also put an interest to purchase Kawasaki P-1 Maritime Patrol Aircraft to face People's Republic of China in Haigyang oil rig and to secure its Eastern Seaboard coastline (Mizokami, 2015).

- Philippines : Japan voluntarily lease 5 units of T-90 patrol aircraft to Manila as in March 2016 Japan and Philippines signed landmark agreement on technology transfer, as the Japan military export ban was lifted (Parameswaran, 2017). This T-90 aircrafts were strategically aimed to challenge People's Republic of China assertiveness in South China Sea (Blanchard, 2016).

By those arm transfer and export to the countries that were currently and similarly having tension with People's Republic of China, Japan arm export would be expected to contain the People's Republic of China to gain more power through its expansionism, therefore the stability could be improved (Matsumura, 2017). Therefore, the military export ban by Shinzo Abe in 2014 would lead Japan to its goal in balancing People's Republic of China since it stimulated Japan defense buildup and military ties with vital actors that were against People's Republic of China.

Influencing Factor : Overcoming the Anomalies

1. Domestic Politics Factor : Shinzo Abe Domination in Parliament

In the Foreign Policy Decision Making Model introduced by William D. Coplin, the first influencing determinant was the domestic politics factor. It explained on how the domestic political system openness within a country would allow its domestic

actors to participate and influence the foreign policy decision making. One of the domestic actor was political party, also known as partisan influencer within the system. According to Coplin, partisan influencer would influence the decision maker within the policy making by participating in the parliament, representing a party (Coplin, 2003). On the Japan military export ban lift in 2014 under Shinzo Abe administration, the context would be on the partisan influencer.

This subchapter would answer the anomaly of the ability of Shinzo Abe administration to pass militaristic policies despite of the Japanese society robust and rooted pacifism for decades. It would include the analysis on how the partisan influencer made this policy passed. Within this subchapter, this research would contextualize the partisan influencer as the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), the biggest, the most powerful and dominating party within Japanese parliament, which was also stood on conservative ideas (Crespo, 1995). The context would make more correlation to the concept when by fact Shinzo Abe was the chairman of the Japanese LDP and had a full access to channel his interest in the foreign policy decision making using his power as LDP chairman in parliament.

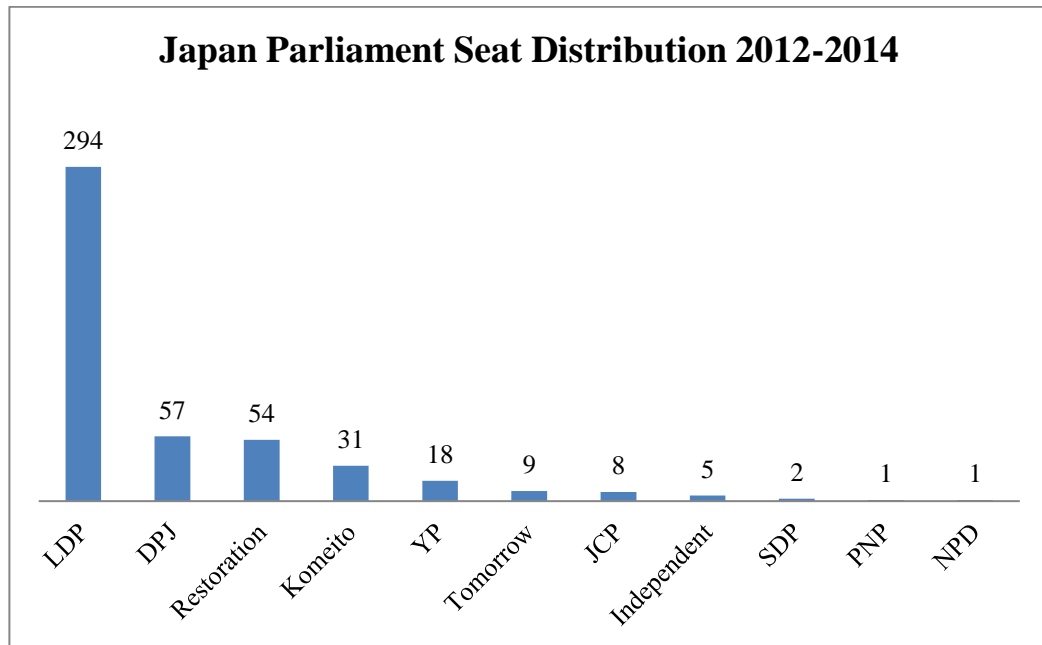
It was known that Liberal Democratic Party had been dominating Japan parliament since its establishment in 1955, as it had been sitting in power from 1955 until this research is conducted in 2018 (Costantini, 2015). The Liberal Democratic Party of Japan power was only interrupted in 1993-1994 period where the small number of the party member split to the other coalition and in 2009-2012 where the

opposition Democratic Party of Japan beaten Liberal Democratic Party in election (Krauss & Pekkanen, 2010). Liberal Democratic Party of Japan position had been very decisive in the decision making in the government, as the power is centralized within Japanese diet (parliament), where the party was dominating for decades and rarely taken over by its opposition (Crespo, 1995). Therefore, it could be understood that whoever had an access to channel its interest within this party, would also have access to put his interest in the decision making process.

On 26 September 2012, Shinzo Abe was elected as the President of Liberal Democratic Party of Japan in which on that time was an opposition party against Democratic Party of Japan, beating Shigeru Ishiba (Jingya, 2012). He later brought Liberal Democratic Party of Japan back in power after winning the general election later in December 2012 (Reed, Scheiner, Smith, & Thies, 2013). Shinzo Abe was officially sworn as the Prime Minister of Japan in 26 December 2012 as he won 328 voices out of 480 in the Diet (Fackler, 2012). Ever since, it could be inferred that Shinzo Abe had successfully pursued its ability as a powerful partisan influencer, as its party was back in domination in the parliament.

The military export ban lift decision was passed during the Shinzo Abe 2012-2014 cabinet, in which Liberal Democratic Party of Japan was strongly back in domination. It could be seen by the seats distribution after the 2012 Japan General Election below.

Diagram 1.1 Japan General Election Result 2012 (D'Angelo & Luo, 2012)



Source : D'Angelo, S., & Luo, Y. (2012). *After a landslide victory, Japan's LDP returns to power*. Brussels: European Parliament.

As campaigned, Shinzo Abe main agenda was to solve the 20 years Japan economic stagnation and bolder foreign policy against the territorial tension against assertive and dominative People's Republic of China (Lindsay, 2013). On this case, to achieve the balance against the rising People's Republic of China in East China Sea, the stance taken by Shinzo Abe and his fellow conservatives was to bring Japan to a more militarized form, by gradually rearming Japan shift from pacifism (Fackler, 2012). Here could be seen that there was a matching situation to make the militarization agenda in balancing People's Republic of China had a bigger possibility to exist; Shinzo Abe domination in parliament and his idea of

remilitarization. Therefore, it was quite bold that the Liberal Democratic Party led by Shinzo Abe would more likely winning the debate or voting in the Diet.

It is known that the majority of Japanese society is pacifist with the more than 50% percentage of them against any militaristic policies (Kohut, 2013). However, it did not constrain Liberal Democratic Party to be chosen by the majority of society and seized the huge majority of the parliament. It was because in Japan, there was no other party that had more experience in creating policies and holding the government other than Liberal Democratic Party (Ito, 2012). The Liberal Democratic Party was even more dominating when the major opposition party, Democratic Party of Japan, was losing society trust after its short 3-year period (2009-2012) due to unstable leadership and its inability to handle its reform promises (Kushida & Lipsey, 2013). Therefore, Japanese society best choice was Liberal Democratic Party, despite of its militaristic and conservative agenda.

2. Military-Economic Factor : Stagnant Economy during Military Budget Increase Plan

The second determinant was the military and economic factor. Coplin argued that this determinant was mainly about on how an economic strength improvement of a country may lead to a stronger military ability of a state. The specific of an economic strength is the production capacity and the trade balance of the state, while the military power would particularly seen as the number of weaponries, troops and also the military training quality (Coplin, 2003). On this case, this subchapter would talk

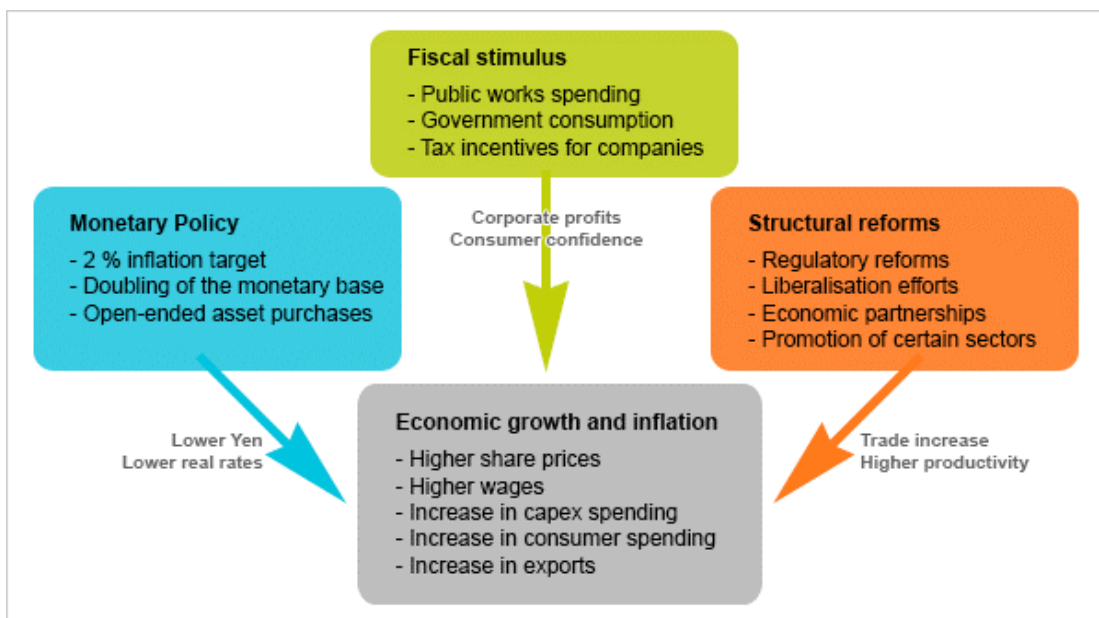
about the agenda of economic revitalization that would accelerate the Japan military budget increase through this military export ban lift in 2014.

Japan economy had been stagnant for about two decades, leaving People's Republic of China to overtake Japan's position as the second largest economy in the world in 2010 (Sharp, 2017). Also known as the "Lost Decade", Japan economic struggle since 1990s was caused by three factors; weak growth, deflation and high public sector debt (Harari, 2013). It could be seen that Japan economic growth was boldly lower than several economic giant in the world as its GDP only grew 18% within twenty years, as figure 3 shown. The slow and stagnant economic growth was mainly caused by Japanese aging population, causing a downslide of working age people by 40% in 2050, predicted (Harari, 2013).

Due to the low economic growth, the Japanese society buying purchasing power was decreasing as well, causing a low market price for goods and services, leading to the low interest for business investors (Harari, 2013). It was the parameter of the deflation in Japan during the "lost decade". Meanwhile, it caused an increase government gross debt due to the increasing demand of pension funds for aging population (Harari, 2013).

Due to the extreme stagnation, Shinzo Abe in 2012 came with an economic strategy called “Abenomics” on his second administration. Abenomics was an economic plan offered by Shinzo Abe to bring Japan from the decades-long stagnation by “three arrows” namely fiscal stimulus, monetary policy and structural reforms (McBride & Xu, 2017). The details of the Abenomics strategy were as shown below:

Diagram 1.2 Abenomics in detail (Breene, 2016)



Source : Breene, K. (2016, February 16). *Why is Japan's economy shrinking?* Retrieved January 18, 2018, from World Economic Forum:
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/02/why-is-japans-economy-shrinking/>

To be known, Abenomics served a greater political purpose compared to its economics goal: to provide Japanese society with economically good feeling as a legitimate reason for Shinzo Abe to allocate more of the state budget to pursue his militarization agenda against People’s Republic of China (Holland, 2016). The

concrete proof of this premise was the increase of military budget in 2013, just a year after Abenomics went into implementation (Mauricio, 2013). While, military export ban lift in 2014 was also aimed to achieve the political purpose of Abenomics too.

As seen from the three arrows in Abenomics, this research perceived that the military export ban lift in 2014 was contingent upon the structural reform, the third arrow. It was fit with the Abenomics third arrow since military export was a form of promotion of a certain sector that for decades could not be expanded, besides the fact that it also boldly aimed to increase trade and productivity. It would provide Japan economy a positive impact due to two reasons; (1) Weaponries, especially aircrafts, vessels and ships were high-cost major products, therefore the trade deals would bring a high profit in a short period and (2) since Japan defense industry comprised of high and secretive technologies, the production would be conducted within Japan and it would lead to the stimulation of Japanese domestic economic industry gear (Sakai, 2015). The second point would occur since the production process from parts to ready to use goods would involve so many other business sectors to supply the counterparts, like what ideally happened in manufacturing industries. Therefore, military industry designed to possess a vivid role in the championing Abenomics third arrow.

Abenomics in the following year kept on contributing toward Shinzo Abe political agenda for militarizing Japan. In 2015, Shinzo Abe administration recorded the highest military budget ever in the country history with 4.98 trillion Japanese Yen

allocation, under the framing to catch up People's Republic of China assertiveness (Panda, 2015). Not only that, the major shift of Japan security posture also occurred in 2015 as Japan passed a new legislation that possessed it with collective self-defense right, allowing Japan to send military troops abroad (Soble, 2015). This militarization agenda could not be disassociated with the economic revival that Japan had through Abenomics. It was because; the more a country had economic power, the bigger ability it had to increase its military power (Friedberg, 1991).

3. International Context : Backing Up United States Declining Hegemony in Asia

International context determinant strongly argues that what happened within the international level may affect the foreign policy of a country. Coplin specified it into geographical, economic and political circumstances within the international community (Coplin, 2003). On this subchapter, it would be contextualized in political aspect, on the United States decline and shifting grand strategy in Asia during Barack Obama administration that impacted Japan security posture.

The Japan military export ban lift policy was passed when United States went under Barack Obama administration. Barrack Obama took offshore balancing as his grand strategy in leading United States in international community (McGrath & Evans, 2013). Offshore balancing, also known as selective engagement, is a grand strategy that push United States to engage internationally but more selective, since aggressive and impulsive grand strategy such as primacy would trigger a bigger threat

toward United States itself (Worley, 2012). The major pushing factor of offshore balancing application of grand strategy was the economic constraint of United States (McGrath & Evans, 2013). Contextualized with the United States real engagement in the world, at one side United States was declining economically, while it was also still devastatingly battling out in the Middle East and Africa, causing a blurry focus in Asia-Pacific (Mière, 2013). Therefore, United States allies in Asia-Pacific, had to take the burden share of United States to maintain its hegemony in the region.

Linked out with Japan, since the end of the Cold War Japan had been faced into a dilemma and confusion of United States commitment toward the two country security alliance, which was robust in surviving the Cold War tension. The confusion came from an unpredicted situation for decades even for Japanese strategic experts; the fall of Soviet Union, which meant Japan was losing its common threat and interest with the United States for long decades Cold War (Mahbubani, 1992). Subsequently, Japan had been given more burdens to keep United States commitment in the alliance.

Obama offshore balancing kept Japan required to take more burden sharing in the Alliance. In 2010, Japan and United States signed a pact that required Japan to pay Okinawa Base maintenance expenses in supporting United States military power there, meaning United States was no longer taking the full burden and expenses in protecting Japan (Slavin & Sumida, 2010). In this notion, this research perceived that United States economy was in decline. However, in 2013, Columbia Broadcast

System reported that United States were oddly increasing its military budget instead of reducing the troops deployment (CBS, 2013). This anomaly represents the selective engagement of United States in allocating its power in engaging in global community, impacting Japan in spending more on burden sharing.

As seen, offshore balancing required United States allies to increase its military capability, in the case for Japan, it was remilitarization. In the return of Shinzo Abe into its second tenure, Japan had been a vanguard to shore up this Obama grand strategy; to face the rise of People's Republic of China (Mière, 2013). Shinzo Abe gradual remilitarization in the form of revoking military export ban in 2014 was proven to be welcomed by United States, as Japan Minister of Defense Itsunori Onodera disclosed that United States Secretary of State Chuck Hagel appreciated such policy since it was a constructive step into a deeper bilateral alliance and technology cooperation (Onodera & Hagel, 2014). United States State Department spokesperson Marie Harf also stated that Washington embraced this policy as it would allow Japan to modernize its military to take part in 21st century global marketplace. (McNeill, 2014).

Even though United States seemed to be no longer able to pay the full expenses in maintaining its military presence in Asia, particularly Japan, Barack Obama still considered Asia as an important geopolitical asset through the establishment of "Rebalancing Asia" agenda (Sugai, 2016). Obama Rebalancing Asia agenda lies on his belief on the importance of Asia-Pacific (mainly East Asia and

Southeast Asia) as the prospective economic asset for United States in the future, therefore his administration had to protect it against the challenging hegemonic power, namely People's Republic of China (Goldberg, 2016). Since it is in line with Shinzo Abe interest in achieving balance of power against People's Republic of China, supporting the United States hegemonic agenda was a must, to prevent the declining hegemony of United States in Asia.

The warm welcome by United States came with a notion that it would helped United States reducing its burden on its rebalancing Asia agenda (Hughes, 2017). This military export ban lift, that would also allow abroad defense technology hardware transfer and joint defense projects, would increase the intensity of United States- Japan security alliance as it would reduce United States defense expenses on Japan through two mechanisms:

- As Japan, subsequent to this policy, later was able to be involved in abroad joint development and production, Japan would supply its weaponries parts to United States to be assembled in United States, finally distributed to United States and Japan allies (Hirose, 2014). This joint defense project by United States and Japan would push Japan to be playing a more vital role in the defense projects instead of only relying on United States (Hirose, 2014).
- By the new three principles, Japan would also be able to attain the license of producing the United States parts in Japan in a condition where United States must be reducing or stopping producing them in United States (Hirose, 2014). It

means that Japan helped United States to cover the burden of weaponries parts, either it was Japanese or United States based product.

The major immediate breakthrough following the policy is that in July 2014, the Japan National Security Council agreed to allow Mitsubishi Heavy Industries to produce high technology sensor as the supply of Raytheon PAC-2 Aircraft, a United States weapon brand (Hirose, 2014). Therefore, based on those two mechanism, Japan military export ban lift in 2014 could strengthen United States-Japan alliance by supporting Obama agenda in balancing People's Republic of China in the sense of declining economic power of United States.

Conclusion

Since the end of World War 2, Japan, who lost the war, had been living under pacifism under United States drafted Article 9. The constitution disallowed Japan to be involved in any abroad military activities including transferring and exporting military hardware. It was known that Japan had partially and later totally restricted itself from involving in global arm trade since 1967.

The major shift came out when Shinzo Abe, a conservative prime minister, took his office back in 2012. He was gradually driving Japan back to be a “normal” country with active military, step by step abandoning Japan deep rooted pacifism. One of its militaristic policies was revoking Japan military export ban in 2014, allowing Japan to transfer and export military weaponries abroad. This was later

becoming the major research question of this article; to found out the reason behind the military export ban lift in 2014 by Shinzo Abe administration.

Japan military export ban lift in 2014 was a militaristic response by Shinzo Abe toward the assertive People's Republic of China in East China Sea. Through this military export ban lift in 2014, Shinzo Abe expected to achieve the balance of power against People's Republic of China in East China Sea. It was known that in East China Sea, there as imbalance of power among Japan and People's Republic of China. From the military budget and amount of military weaponries, Japan was far away dwarfed by People's Republic of China. Therefore, the instability due to imbalance of power was prone to be occurred.

By military export, the balance of power could be achieved through two ways; internal military buildup and increasing defense ties with countries that were similarly threaten by People's Republic of China. The internal military buildup would be achieved as through military export, Japan defense contractors could gain more profit for the military technology development and produce a bigger number of weaponries. While the increasing military ties with the allies would be achieved as Japan could distribute its weaponries toward its allies aiming to balance People's Republic of China expansion. Japan namely distribute its weaponries to India to face People's Republic of China in Indian Ocean while it also distributed Philippines and Vietnam its aircrafts to maintain the stability in South China Sea against People's Republic of China.

Beside that, there were also 3 influencing determinants to make this policy passed under Shinzo Abe tenure. First, in domestic factor, despite of the deep rooted pacifism among Japanese society, Shinzo Abe was still able to pass this policy since his Liberal Democratic Party of Japan had an unchallenged domination in parliament. So as partisan influencer, Liberal Democratic Party led by Shinzo Abe was able to influence the decision making to pass this policy. Second, in economic-military factor, despite of robust economic miracle under Yoshida Doctrine, Shinzo Abe still needed to export weaponries to stimulate Japan economy that had been stagnant for about two decades using Abenomics. Exporting weaponries would succeed Abenomics, in which the good economy would enable Shinzo Abe to increase military budget for his revisionist agenda. Third, in international context, despite of United States security umbrella for Japan, Shinzo Abe perceived that it was still necessary to gradually remilitarize using this military export ban lift in 2014 since United States economic power was declining, therefore Japan should back it up to maintain United States hegemonic power in Asia. The support of United States was conducted through joint military development, as it would ease United States burden in the Japan-United States alliance since Japan could play a bigger role and supply weaponries parts to United States.

Therefore, this research concludes that the reason why Shinzo Abe revoked this military export ban in 2014 was because Japan needs to balance People's Republic of China in East China Sea. The balance of power could be achieved as

Japan could conduct its internal military buildup and increasing the alliance to contain People's Republic of China power. It was also supported by Shinzo Abe domination in parliament, Japan stagnant economy and declining United States economic power that impacted to its position in Asia.

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