

CHAPTER IV

PRIME MINISTER SHINZO ABE AND CABINET DECISION IN THE NEIGHBOR RELATIONSHIP

In this chapter will emphasize the decision making and what Japanese people think about the Reinterpretation of Article Nine. Decisions involving the lives of many people and other countries must be taken of many considerations. Cannot be decided by certain people but requires the involvement of the community. The decision also needs to consider the position of the country and its relationship with other countries. That is because the decision can harm or strengthen relationships between countries.

A. Japan Domestic Politics Condition

In the internal parliament, there is the dilemma between to reinterpret or not. This condition happened because there are many citizens opposing this decision. On the other hand, to reinterpret this Article Nine is also important for the country in order to take bigger contribution to the global peace. The ruling party in Japan, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) yearned Japan to be regarded as a normal country like the other countries that can normally contribute in the international context such as preemptive war, peacekeeping, and do collective self-defense. In Japan also rise and grow a conservative group of right-wing who was fostering the sense of nationalism that believe that military in the Second World War did nothing wrong (Richter, 2016). Besides that, revising the Article Nine becomes the LDP's long-term goal since Shinzo Abe's grandfather was a Prime Minister.

In the parliament also emerges a dilemma because of the North Korea ballistic missile test. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said that North Korea ballistic missile test is the biggest threat since the Post World War. Abe said that the tension between both countries is getting worse because of those missile test (Lendon, 2017). Japan will have a bad time in countering that threat because lack of military technology to counter those

missiles if it strikes Japan. Because of that, Japan needs military reform to counter that.

The reinterpretation of Article Nine itself seen as an important step for Japan to contribute more to world peace. This shows after Japan reinterpret the Article Nine, Japan directly join United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in South Sudan. This shows the intention of Japan to contribute to the global peace.

Beside that the contribution in combatting terrorist also important for Japan. As we knew in 2015, two Japanese peoples became hostages and killed by one of the biggest terrorist group called "ISIS." At that year, even though Japan military is still preparing, Japan still cannot save those hostages. But in a news conference chief government spokesman, Yoshihide Suga said: "The international community will not give in to terrorism, and we have to make sure that we work together." "Our country's stance -- contributing to the fight against terrorism without giving in -- remains unchanged" (Al Arabiya News, Agencies, 2015).

This is a hard decision to take to Japan Cabinets. This decision is contra with the most of Japanese citizen though. Japanese citizens think that Japan will become aggressive like they are before, but this decision also important for future Japan. Japan need to protect their sovereignty including the life of Japan citizens abroad with their power. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said "Preserving the safety of Japanese nationals is the responsibility of the government, and I am the person who holds the most responsibility," (Linda Sieg A. S., 2015)

However, when we see a country, we also see the condition of its citizens not only the government and political parties. The citizens are representing the condition of the country whether it is good or bad. Citizen voice also affects the decision of the government. In general, the citizen has representation to voice their voice in the parliament in the House of representative. This citizen voice can affect the decision making in the many subjects such as economics, culture, education and also military.

In the case of the reinterpretation of Article Nine, the involvement of Japanese people in deciding whether it is needed to be reinterpreted is very low because Japan government decide it only by 19 members of Congress (King, 2014). The future of Japan is in the hand of all the Japanese people not only in the certain hand. This decision that already passed is without the involvement of the Japanese citizens.

In the real condition, there are many respondents did not agree with this reinterpretation. There is around 50 percent of the respondents did not agree with this agenda.

1. Japan Mass Media

One of the media that can convey voice from the public is mass media. Mass media can be a media in expressing people voice through words. The development of mass media leading the citizens to be more active in criticizing the government. Here the mass media is including the offline mass media or newspaper and online media such as news website. Both of them have the important role in aspiring the people voices to the government.

In Japan, there are many credible mass media that were collecting the Japanese citizen's voice. The top three news is Yomiuri Shimbun, Asahi Shimbun, and Nikkei. The three news did polling to the citizens in order to understand what peoples want toward this event. Actually, the government needs to use this media and polling in deciding because, in the Democratic Country, people is the one who held the biggest power in deciding a rule or law trough voting and sending the representative in the House of Representation.

2. Lack of Supporter

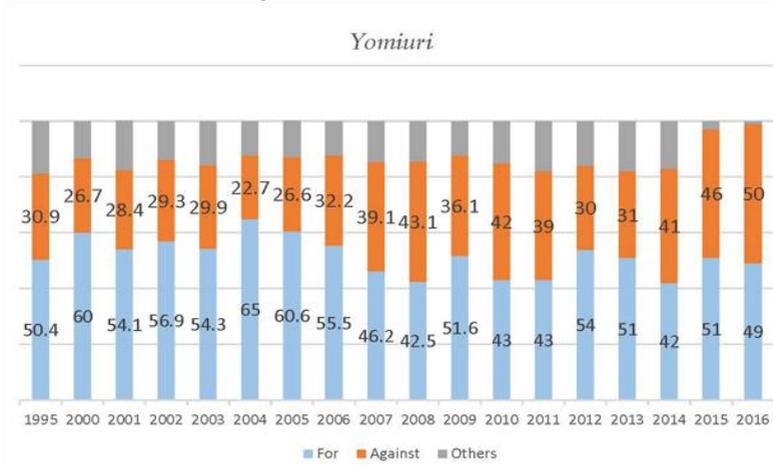
The development of Shinzo Abe reinterpretation of Article Nine can danger the life of Japan citizens. This also has the correlation with the protest of Japan Citizens because they want peace in life. Japanese citizens already experienced the thrill of war at the end of the Second

World War. It can be said that Japanese citizens have trauma from war because of what they experienced.

We see in the history of Japan the Hiroshima and Nagasaki got bombed by nuclear weapon by the United States because of their aggressiveness in the military. If these agenda trigger the aggressive of Japan military in the world, they afraid that they will experience worse than before.

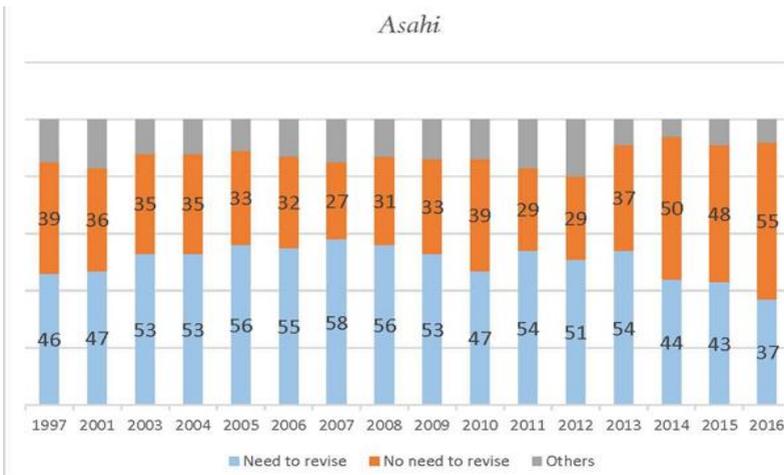
There are several newspapers in Japan did a polling for this agenda. There are The Yomiuri Shimbun, The Asahi Shimbun and The Nikkei did the polling. This polling did by those newspaper in 2016. It is reported in Yomiuri Shimbun in March. There is over 50 percent of the respondents did not agree with the agenda and became the opposition. In the Asahi Shimbun reported in May, the percentage of Japanese citizens that oppose this reinterpretation is in 55 percent. Moreover, in Nikkei reported in May, there is over 50 percent that against about it. This shows that many citizens or over half of them are opposed or disagree with this agenda (Smith S. A., 2016). Although the polling is already too late because of the reinterpretation already finished by the Japan Cabinets in 2015, there are a lot of peoples still did not agree with this agenda.

Figure 4.1 Graphic of the Polling of Constitution Change by Yomiuri Shimbun



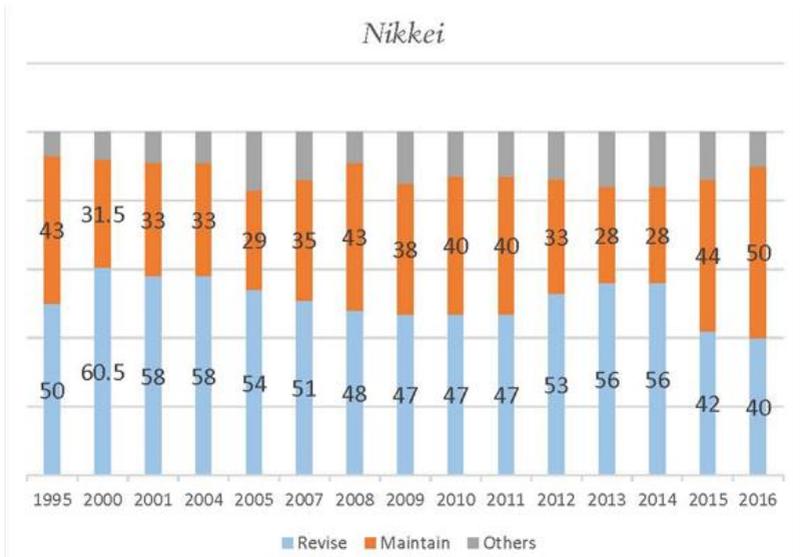
Source: Yomiuri Shimbun Polling (Smith S. A., 2016)

Figure 4.2 Graphic of the Polling of Constitution Change by Asahi Shimbun



Source: Asahi Shimbun Polling (Smith S. A., 2016)

Figure 4.3 Graphic of the Polling of Constitution Change by Nikkei



Source: Nikkei Polling (Smith S. A., 2016)

In this event, the Japanese citizens show interest in the Japan Constitution change. By those polling, the Japanese citizens who oppose this reinterpretation are more than the acceptance.

Beside from the polling did by those newspaper, Japanese citizens also did protest trough peace demonstration. This demonstration did on June 5, 2016, in front of parliament and a nearby park. Those demonstrations demand peace trough maintaining the Article Nine old interpretation. Those demonstrators also want Shinzo Abe to step down from his position.

B. Japan Economics in Supporting the Military Development

In making the decision, the government should consider many aspects of society. The society, not limited to the country citizens but also international society. The decision also needs to consider the economic condition of that country. Because the decision the country make can determine the country position in the international context.

Besides all of the dilemma inside the parliament, Japan already has big resources to develop their military. The big resources come from their economics and technology. In 2017 the GDP of Japan is 0.6 percent. It increases 0.4 percent than the GDP in 2016 that is 0.2 percent (Trading Economics, 2018). The total GDP Japan got in 2017 is \$4.884 trillion (International Monetary Fund, 2017).

Japan has the chance in developing their military into the strong one using their economics by focusing the building of military research center and military industry. It sees in the acceptance and approval of Military Budget Proposals submitted by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the Cabinet. After the signing of Japan Constitution, rather than allocating the budget into military sector, Japan allocates to the economic and industrial development. At that time, Japan prohibited to develop the military sector because of their pacifist system and create successful Japan in the economy.

However, starting from 2014 Japan creating a loophole to split from the pacifist system. Because of the reinterpretation of Article Nine, Japan budget will be allocated to the military sectors. It can be said that the economy can become a source of military power. The allocation of Japan GDP into military can lead Japan to procure a military armament, create military training, and facilitating the military research. The fully sovereign country should balance their military and economics.

A rich country has many weak points and needs the protection. Because of that, a strong military should be established in order to protect that. In the other hand, the citizens need to feel secure in order to create a peaceful country.

The other is because Japan cannot always depend on United States protection because they need to be independent as a sovereign country. United State President Donald Trump also stated that Japan needs to act by their self in protecting their country, so it has a mutual relationship.

The military condition in Japan starting from 2014 begin to change. A breakthrough made by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe about reinterpreting the Article Nine leading Japan military to change especially for Japan Self-Defense Force. Back then before the reinterpretation by Shinzo Abe, the SDF only can do a self-defense. In that era, Japan only had the capability to do individual self-defense and prohibiting collective self-defense. Stepping their feet to the other countries also prohibited for Japan Self-Defense Force.

Starting from the reinterpretation that took effect in 2015, Japan is allowed to send their military overseas. This condition gives a lot of benefits for Japan in maintaining the world peace and become peacekeeper. Japan also boost the military budget in the 2017 military budget proposal and already approved by Japan parliament. This is the starting event for Japan in developing their military capabilities in combating the outside threat.

Japan already did a good job in managing the military. There is a significant increase in the military armament and military troops. Japan also have military cooperation with United Nations in the Peacekeeping Operations and United States security alliance. Japan is also strengthening the military cooperation with India. Japan has the intention to strengthening the relationship, especially in the Indo-Asia region. Responding to the Arms Export Ban lift by Japan in 2014, New Delhi has the intention to become the first Japan arms technology recipient (Joshi, 2017).

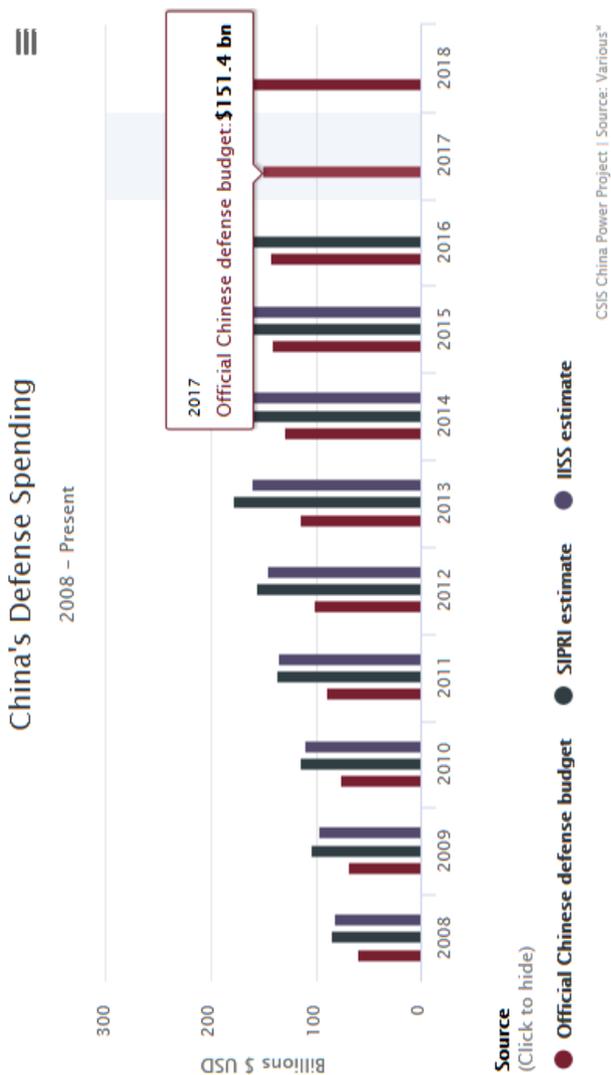
Actually, there is the other effect of reinterpretation of Article Nine beside the contribution more in maintaining the world peace. The reinterpretation of Article Nine can be a threat to their neighbor countries. The escalation of Japan military

power can trigger awareness from the neighbor countries about their military condition.

The awareness comes because Japan develops their military to the offensive military that can attack the other enemy with their modernized and strong military armament, the other countries will become wary of that power. It is the same as Robert Jarvis theory called "Offense-Defense Theory." The theory stated that a country has strong military force especially in offensive force, the country will have a bigger chance of taking over the other countries territory. The other effect is the balance of power in the world especially in Asia will be shifted. The development of military By Japan can create an arms race between the neighbor countries (Jervis, 1978).

This is same as China's case. Year by year China increases their military budget to strengthening their military force, especially in naval force. In 2016 China spent their budget in the military around \$143.7 billion and grew 7 percent to \$151.4 billion in 2017 (China Power, 2018). This spending in military lead China became the second place in the Asia Military Strength Ranking by Global Firearms (Global FirePower, 2017).

Figure 4.1 Graphic China Military Budget Spending



Source: China Power (China Power, 2018)
<https://chinapower.csis.org/military-spending/>

The China Action in increasing their military budget create the dilemma of Japan whether should increase their military strength or not. The development of China's military is threatening the Japan security without the declaration of war. The Japan awareness of China's military power shown by conducting treaties with the other countries such as the United States and Australia. The United State, Japan, and Australia through East Asia Summit in the Philippines in November strongly affirm the alliance relationship between the three countries to counter China's military activity (Amako, 2016).

North Korea action is also triggering Japan to develop their military in the defense field. The threat of North Korea ballistic missiles test that was crossing Japan territory creating a dilemma in upgrading their missile defense system. One of the budget proposal submitted by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Cabinet includes the development of Japan land-based missile defense system. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe did not have other option than upgrading and maximizing their military power.

Because of those actions did by China, Japan, and North Korea, the atmosphere in East Asia become sever. The development of military of those powerful countries can trigger the development of military in their neighbor countries. The threat of China's military development, North Korea ballistic missiles test and Japan remilitarization is the trigger of the future military development in Asia or even in the world.

C. The response in International Context

1. United States Support in Reinterpreting Article Nine

In creating or changing a foreign policy must have responses of pros and contrast from the other countries.

Starting from the pros country, there is the United States who support this reinterpretation of Article Nine. The United States concerning in this reinterpretation of Article Nine and remilitarization of Japan army because of their intention in maintaining the security of Asia Pacific region and in response to China and North Korea threats (Gibbs, 2010). There is the explanation for those reasons the United States agreeing with Japan to change:

a. Maintaining Neighborhood Security

Actually since before this event, the United States already encourage Japan to contribute more to the global security. However, Japan always uses their pacifism to avoid the heavy or complicated commitment. Because of this event, United States feels glad because Japan can contribute more to international security by reinterpreting the Article Nine and permitting Japan to do collective self-defense. The United States wants its allies including Japan to carry more burden in maintaining the peace especially in their neighborhood region (Stratfor Staff, 2013).

United State becomes the winner of Second World War which proposing the renounce of military development to Japan in the post-world war era agree with this new movement did by Japan. The United States also concerned in the security of Asia-Pacific region by the statement of Chuck Hagel as the United States Defense Secretary "The United States has an enduring interest in the Asia-Pacific's peace and prosperity, and our alliance with Japan is critical to our strategy in the region." The United States believes welcoming Japan reinterpretation of Article Nine can develop the more effective alliance with Japan. The United States also believe that this decision is an important step for Japan to the contribution in the world peace and security (Linda Sieg, 2014).

b. Emerging China's Power and North Korean Missiles Threat

The other reason the United States agree and give the green light to Japan is that of the emerging power of China in Asia-Pacific region. The United States and Japan already has a solid relationship in the security area. This movement supported by the United States as a response to Chinas military modernization. The United States and Japan also concerned in the North Korea missile threat that threatening Japan. The rise of China can create unbalance in Asia, because of that the involvement of the United States and Japan can rebalancing those power. In this context, the United States and Japan alliance became a guarantor of the Asia security. (PAJON, 2016)

In the meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Washington, President Donald Trump suggesting Shinzo Abe develop their nuclear weapons to defend their self against North Korea missile threat. The security cooperation between the United States and Japan became intense. The central feature of Candidate Trumps criticizing the payment by Japan to United States cost in providing security is not enough. There are many officials from both sides defending Japan already pay enough to the strategic benefits by did a cost-saving basing for the United States most modern military technology. There are a statement from President Donald Trump shows his support to Japan remilitarizing "*... if we are attacked, [the Japanese] don't have to do anything. If they're attacked, we have to go out with full force... That's a pretty one-sided agreement, right there... And that is a, that's a real problem.*" (Chanlett-Avery, 2017). That statement shows the United States

wants Japan to contribute to their security. Not only passive watching United State be attacked by the other countries if they are attacked. Japan should help the United States in defending the country.

c. **Selling Weapons**

The development of the reinterpretation of Article Nine opening a new land of business for the United States as Japan alliance. In the development of this issue, United States proposed to Japan to buy military weapons from them. As President Donald Trump pledge to increase the power of United States Pacific allies, United State moves closer to sell their modernized missile to Japan. This movement intended to give support to Japan to counter the missiles threat did by North Korea. This sells need approval from the Congress and estimated around \$113 million. This sells include logistic, engineering, and technical support service for the weapon (O'Connor, 2017).

President of United States Donald Trump believes that the security and defense of the country is the responsibility of its country itself. Because of that United States pursuing its ally countries to purchase military weapons and make arms sales agreement with them. Trump believes that Japan can shoot down North Korea missiles that passed Japan territory with United States weapons they purchased. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe also stated that Japan already bought a lot of military weapons from the United States in order to strengthen their defense capability (Liptak, 2017).

2. Rejection from China

Regardless of the acceptance of United States, there are some countries did not agree with this reinterpretation of Article Nine. The contrast comes from

the countries who have a big trauma of Japan colonialization in the past. China is the country openly refused the reinterpretation. There are several reasons China did not agree with the reinterpretation. The reasons are because of the rise of Japan military power can trigger unbalance of Asia region and the reinterpretation is without the support of Japan peoples.

China is the rising power in Asia countries. Even though China has power in Asia, they still not agree with the reinterpretation and have the negative response. One of China's news said that the movement made by Japan is a "brutal Violation" of their spirit of the pacifist constitution. In the first week of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announcing for the first time about the reinterpretation of Article Nine, it is suddenly booming about the commentary of this event in China, especially in official and academics.

China's negative critics come because the reinterpretation of Article Nine is arbitrary without the agreement that involving the representative of peoples voice in the decision making. Abe chooses to use the simple way and taking a shortcut of the constitutional reinterpretation by the cabinet decision. This involved only 19 members of cabinets in deciding the change of constitution that affects the people life. Despite the amendment, the relevant law to implement the reinterpretation is needed 50 percent of the House of Parliament (King, 2014).

Those critics said that Japan decision is not backed by Japanese peoples and not representing them. China sees this issue as a threat for their sovereignty by the word of China's foreign ministry spokesman Hong Lei that said Japan should respect the reasonable demand from neighbors Asia countries and not disturbing the China's sovereignty and the balance of the regional security and peace (McDonell, 2014).

This negative critic also come up because of the issue of the lack of mutual trust because of the historical politics and the insecurity of both countries. China did not forget the military aggression in Asia did by Japan in the Second World War. China's leader and peoples also aware of the historical construction about what Japan did in the Second World War will be unleashed by Japan constitution change. (Cheng, 2014)