CHAPTER - II
NAKASONE'S VIEWS ON POST-WAR JAPANESE DEFENCE

Nakasone Yasuhiro became the Prime Minister of Japan in November 1982. He was considered a "hawk" in Japanese politics. Controversies seem to have accompanied him all through his political career. His ascendance to power brought the issue of defence to the forefront of Japanese politics. In fact Nakasone had been quite outspoken when it came to the question of national defence. He had been assiduously building an image of himself that was quite unusual from a Japanese point of view. 'The nail that sticks out gets hammered down' - so says a famous Japanese proverb. But Nakasone never conformed to that and instead stood apart and away from the crowd. As Nakasone took over power, the entire nation was locked in intense discussions as to whether the man who had been articulating the most radical views on Japan's defence and security policies, would really try to change the course that the nation had adopted till then. Perhaps no other Prime Minister in the post-war era had generated that kind of speculation. He was many things to many people. In fact there seems to be a lack of understanding about his political perspectives which was perhaps responsible for generating doubts and confusions in public minds as regards his true intentions. As the present work attempts at
studying Japan's defence policy during Nakasone's tenure, it is most relevant here to make an indepth analysis of his political career that preceded his years of premiership.

Nakasone was born in Gumma Prefecture on 27 May 1918. He was the son of a rich timber merchant. A brilliant student, Nakasone completed his graduation from the most sought after law faculty of the elite Tokyo Imperial University (renamed Tokyo University after the war). Thereafter, he joined the powerful Naimusho, the Home Affairs Ministry as a career official. The brief period spent there, helped Nakasone make a number of valuable acquaintances which were to serve him well in later years.

Nakasone was assigned to the Navy during the World War II, in which he served as a Lieutenant commander. On 6 August 1945, when the U.S. dropped the first atom bomb on Hiroshima, he was not far off. In fact, from his naval base, he saw the huge smoke cloud rising up into the sky. The next bomb was dropped on the city of Nagasaki on 9 August. Japan finally surrendered to the Allied Forces on 15 August 1945. Nakasone returned to Tokyo in late August 1945 and rejoined the Home Ministry.
The war and the subsequent surrender left a deep scar in Nakasone's mind. The war had completely destroyed the Japanese economy. The cities were in ashes. Many people were rendered homeless and suffered from abject poverty and hunger. Nakasone felt greatly humiliated at Japan's defeat and the unconditional surrender. But like most Japanese he felt a big responsibility towards the reconstruction of the nation. He wrote much later,

"I wanted to help rebuild my homeland. I felt keenly my responsibility towards history. I wanted to do everything possible to restore Japan's strength, to hasten the return of independence and stability to the Japanese people".  

The Japanese were facing immense psychological and physical losses. There was doubt about the survival of the nation. Adding to the confusion was the spread of the communists, who, according to Nakasone, seemed to be thriving under SCAP's policies. The promulgation of the new constitution in November 1946 was a momentous decision for the Japanese people. Nakasone could not accept the idea of the constitution being drafted by the occupation authorities and forced on the people of Japan. He knew he had to find

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1 Nakasone Yasuhiro, *My Life in Politics*, a draft detailing Nakasone's political views and career was circulated to the members of the Foreign Correspondents Club, just before he became the Prime Minister, p.6
some other platform than his official job if he had to do something worthwhile for the people. He resigned from the Ministry and returned to his native Gumma prefecture.

Nakasone decided to join public life consciously. He knew the tremendous limitations that the occupation administration had imposed on politicians at that time. Nevertheless, he believed that he could still be taken seriously if he was able to enjoy popular support. He decided to contest for a seat in the House of Representatives in the second post World War II general elections of 1947.

Nakasone was very young and had to strive hard to carve out a political base. But that did not deter him from going all out to canvass support to win a seat from his home district of Gumma Prefecture. It was also the first national election for Tanaka Kakukei who was to become the Prime Minister of Japan years later. His campaigning style was distinctly different and uncharacteristic for that time. 'While in the 'snow-country' of Niigata, Tanaka was proclaiming how he would build bridges and roads to end the regions backwardness, Nakasone based his appeal on a revival of patriotism.' Patriotism was a very sensitive issue

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during the Allied Occupation of Japan. Any reference to the old national symbols came to be regarded as being ultra-national or radical by the SCAP as well as most political parties. Any such attempt was also considered as the revival of fascistic tendencies. But Nakasone adopted a totally nationalist platform. He travelled about the towns and villages of Gumma prefecture, delivering speeches and appealing to the young people of the prefecture. ‘At a time when most were carefully hiding their old symbols of Imperial Japan from public view, Nakasone rode a bicycle with a Rising Sun flag flustering from the handle bars.‘

He even wore a black band. It was his way of mourning for Japan's occupation by the Allied Powers. Nakasone also wrote a book *Seinen no Riso* (The ideals of youth) addressing the question of Japan's reconstruction. It sold more than 50,000 copies in a very short span of time.

Nakasone was very good at oratory and also took the issues directly to the people. During that election he entered into a public debate with the communists on several electoral issues. People appreciated the way he campaigned in the elections. Nakasone won the

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3 ibid., p. 173.
4 Nakasone Yasuhiro, n.l, p. 7.
election and became a member of the House of Representatives. At the
time of his election he was only 28 years of age and the youngest
member of the Diet.

Nakasone from the very early days showed signs of leadership.
He had good organisational abilities, independent ideas and oratorial
skills. He looked a natural leader from a very early age. He formed the
Blue Cloud School (Seiranjuku) with a group of other
nationalist-minded conservative Diet members. He had tremendous faith
in the Japanese race and believed that being a superior race they were
destined to play a role in the world. In one address to the Blue Cloud
School he said,

“Nothing can stop the continuous flow of strength of the
Japanese race revealed in the Meiji Restoration and Showa
Reformation. For building a new Japan for the Japanese
people and to create a New Order for Peace for the whole
mankind, let us pledge ourselves for exploration of the
mainstream of Showa and sacrifice ourselves for Showa Refor-
mation.”

THE THREE TABOOS

From the early years of his political career Nakasone set out to

5 Mainichi Shimbun Seijibu, “Jiminto: Tenkaki no Kenryoku”
undo the three principal 'taboos' of post-war Japan, which came to be accepted as part of Japanese political life as a result of the shame and guilt that the country had been obliged to accept. The three taboos that had stirred young Nakasone's mind were as follows:

i. **The constraint on the armed forces:** Despite the considerable growth of the Self Defence Forces, they were still a bastard army due to the ban by the post-war constitution.

ii. **The broad legacy of the War:** Nakasone wanted to revive the proud symbols of Japanese patriotism, including respect for the Emperor, and

iii. **The constitution:** Many post-war Japanese leaders wanted to change it and restore fully the nation's self-esteem. But no leader had the courage of conviction to openly proclaim it and go about it.

Nakasone was a great critic of the policies followed by the SCAP under General MacArthur and also the government led by Yoshida Shigeru. Once in the Diet, Nakasone repeatedly attacked the over cautious approach of Prime Minister Yoshida and other conservatives. He said,

"unless Japan defended itself, Americans would not come to our aid. No such country existed anywhere else in the world; so I argued that we must maintain a minimum level of armed
forces to defend ourselves - but Yoshida rejected that. I attacked Yoshida on the matters of Japanese identity and moral values, and got the message through to the public too."6

Nakasone's attack on Yoshida was in fact an attempt to make General MacArthur aware of certain Japanese sentiments that no politician of the day tried to put forth. Nakasone was quite outspoken in attacking the occupation's educational and social reforms. He was also very critical of the delay in the granting of sovereignty to Japan.

A CONTROVERSIAL POLITICIAN

These actions and utterances on the part of a young politician who was elected to House of representatives for the first time gave him a very controversial standing before the Japanese people. The war and the subsequent events generated both shame and guilty among the Japanese. The situation made the Japanese totally cynical and they left their fate at the hands of the SCAP and accepted everything that the occupation decided for them. The people were disgusted with the pre-war military and hence supported its demobilization. The politicians

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lacked the courage to stand up and criticise the occupation policies. In fact the occupation authorities did not face much difficulty in implementing their policies. This scenario in which anti-war sentiment was very high, gave birth to a unique concept of 'pacifism'. This was a totally new type of pacifism which supported the view that a nation would have no defence of its own and leave the entire responsibility to another nation. This arrangement would be totally unacceptable to any country if judged in the context of nationalism and sovereignty. But the Japanese had accepted it under the exceptional circumstances that prevailed in country after the war.

Nakasone had been a consistent supporter of Japan asserting its position as an independent and sovereign nation. He was also a vocal supporter of the Japanese values and the need to preserve those against cultural adulteration. One can find some similarities with the flamboyant Mishima Yukio who had been a constant champion of the heritage of the Yamato race. But it is not that Nakasone had desired to bring back the pre-war days. He knew that Japan could not go back on the same path.

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7 Mishima Yukio, controversial writer and ultra-right radical was a great critic of the new constitution and new political system. He wanted the revival of the Emperor's system. On 25 November 1970 he went to the SDF headquarters, Tokyo gave a highly charged speech to the SDF personnel and then committed 'Hara-kiri' by ripping open his abdomen in his own sharp dagger.
of parochial, self-centered nationalism. Rather it had to follow the universal principles which the peace-loving nations of the world understood and shared. He wrote,

"I was convinced that if Japan was to survive as a member of the international community, it was also important that our national pride be preserved and the nation's honour restored. A people who could neither love their own country nor have pride in themselves would not be able to respect other peoples, nor be respected by them. I was convinced that a people who had lost its pride could not fulfill its role as an honoured member of international society."³

Nakasone, from the very beginning of his political career took the stand that the occupation policies had distorted the course of the nation. For him the most fundamental distortion was the promulgation of the post-war constitution by the SCAP. He wanted a reform of the constitution as the first pre-requisite for change. Nakasone believed that true independence would remain an impossible dream so long as a nation depended on the military power of another nation for is own territorial security. The constitution which leaves room for doubt about the possession of one's own self-defense capability must be revised. Nakasone consistently held on to this view through his early visits abroad including his seminar course at the Harvard University in 1953. In the Diet he was a constant critic of Article 9. He also supported the

³ Nakasone Yasuhiro, n.1, p.8.
Ashida interpretation which offered Japan scope for arming in self-defence. In the mid-50s Nakasone attracted a great deal of attention by claiming that it was under his influence that the then U.S. Vice President Richard Nixon during his Japan visit in 1953 had dismissed the pacifist provision altogether as "an honest mistake".

Some people considered Nakasone's call, for a new constitution to be an anti-democratic move. He, however claimed that he wanted to make the constitution thoroughly democratic. He admitted that many provisions of the post-war constitution are expressions of universal principles, which have to be incorporated in any future Japanese constitution. In fact, what Nakasone was concerned with, was the way, the constitution was drafted and adopted. Nakasone argued at the Harvard Seminar:

"The important factors of democracy lie in methods of establishment. This constitution was drawn up in English by the Occupation forces and swallowed whole by the Japanese in their anxiety to gain independence from foreign military power as soon as possible. Such a document could hardly be called a constitution in the true sense of the term. If Lincoln's words "Government ...by the people" have any truth, a constitution for the Japanese should be made by the Japanese."

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During his visit to the U.S. in the early 50's Nakasone had met with the then Vice President Alben Barkley, Senator Thomas Connaly, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Robert Taft and many other leaders who had strong influence over American's foreign policy. It was the time when the question of a peace treaty for Japan was being considered seriously, Nakasone was trying to influence these people for a favourable peace treaty.

Nakasone was keenly observing the situation. The Cold War had spread to Asia in the form of the Korean War. In 1950 Chancellor Konard Adenauer of West Germany sought approval from the United States, Great Britain and France to establish a self-defence force. The postwar German army was established in December 1950 and was incorporated into the NATO. The developments in West Germany greatly appealed to Nakasone. He appealed to the Japanese people for the establishment of a Japanese self-defence force. Most of Japanese journalists and scholars, being moved by intense pacifism denounced him as conservative reactionary. But he held on to his views.

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11 See for details Otake Hideo, *Nihon no Boei to Kokunai Seiji: Detente kara Gunkaku e* [Japan's Defence and Domestic Politics: From Detente to Remilitarization], (Tokyo, 1983).
PETITION TO MACARTHUR

Nakasone was concerned about many issues related to the Allied Occupation of Japan. In fact he was not happy about many of those. He addressed a long petition to General MacArthur in which he discussed twenty-one issues of concern, including Japan's national security. He also put forward his own ideas on the occupation policies in this petition.

Nakasone's petition contained issues of far-reaching importance for the Japanese. Some of the major points can be summed up as follows:

1. A quick end to the occupation.
2. Complete independence for Japan and equal status in the international community. In particular, no restrictions of any kind should be placed on Japan's political system, diplomacy or national defence by the peace treaty.
3. Recognition of the historical lesson that peace treaties often became the cause of new wars; and magnanimous consideration regarding territory and reparations. Immediate repatriation to Japan of military personnel still interned abroad.
4. Recognition of the establishment of a completely independent national defence structure composed of land, sea and air forces.

5. Clear delineation of U.S. defence responsibilities towards Japan after the occupation and adoption of a fair and equal mutual defence agreement. Maintenance of the U.S. military forces in Japan for the year or so during which Japan would raise the new self-defence forces. Following the withdrawal of the occupation forces, Japan would permit the use of specified bases in Japan by the United States Military, while the United States would share in the joint defence of Japan.

6. Temporary financial aid in the form of weapons loans and other support.

7. Permission for a Japanese arms industry.  

Nakasone delivered the document to Dr. Justin Williams, Chief of Parliamentary and Political Division in the government section of SCAP. Interpreting the contents of the petition as a criticism of the occupation policies, Williams at first refused to accept it. But when told that copies of the petition had already been sent to Senators Connally and Alexander Smith, he accepted it and delivered it to General MacArthur. It was a 'highly unusual act on the part of a Diet member presenting an

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12 Discussed in Nakasone Yasuhiro n.1 pp. 13-14.
opinion paper critical of occupation policies to the Supreme Commander of Allied Powers. Reading the petition General MacArthur got angry and threw the document to the waste basket. 13

JAPAN - U.S. SECURITY TREATY

Nakasone in fact was not opposed to cooperation with the western world. He gave great importance to cooperation with the United States. But he was convinced that unless and until Japan was capable of administering and defending itself and of contributing in some measure to the security and well being of other states, true and complete independence would not come. That is why Nakasone insisted on the revision of the constitution following independence and the establishment of an independent defence system under total civilian control. Nakasone's later position on the revision of the constitution and the need for autonomous defence system could be traced to his view during the occupation period.

The peace treaty negotiations between special envoy John Foster

13 ibid, n.1, pp. 10-11.

MacArthur had tried to tear the document. But as it was thick, he could not. So he folded it and threw it to the waste basket Dr. Justin Williams later contributed that document to the University of Maryland library in the United States, where it remains today.
Dulles and Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru were conducted in total secrecy. Dulles in fact was in favour of Japanese rearmament. He offered Japan a generous peace treaty on the condition that Japan rearmed. He put considerable pressure on Yoshida to have him agree to a constitutional revision and rearmament.\(^\text{14}\) As for the U.S. Japanese ties, he said he wanted,

> "The relationship of mutual security...under which presumably the military power would be so apportioned that Japan could not itself be an offensive military threat and the relationship between the victor and vanquished would be so intimate and integrated as to make incredible a war of revenge." \(^\text{15}\)

Dulles, however could not totally succeed in his efforts despite the long and protracted negotiations. Yoshida rejected his demands for rearmament. What ultimately emerged was a unequal mutual security pact which was not marked by holding of responsibility. In September 1951 representatives of both governments met in San Francisio to conclude the Peace Treaty and the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. The Peace Treaty was no doubt fair and magnanimous. But the Security Treaty was not. As discussed earlier the treaty was totally one-sided. Japan relinquished jurisdiction over members of the U.S. forces


\(^\text{15}\) *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1951 VI, 1115.
stationed in Japan. The treaty permitted U.S. Forces to intervene in the internal disturbances inside Japan. It also lacked an expiration date.

Nakasone criticised the contents of the treaty unrelentingly in the decision-making organs of the LDP and in special committees of the Diet. He made great efforts to convince others that the security treaty was flawed when the two treaties came up for approval in the Diet, Nakasone supported the peace treaty but deliberately absented himself from the adoption proceedings for the security treaty. He along with two other Dietmen counseled a vote against the security treaty on the ground that the government had failed to give an adequate explanation, but he was overruled. As for his motive of opposition to the security treaty, he wrote,

"A people that have become used to protection of other country soon lose the will to defend themselves. They degenerate into weak and selfish materialists who put the pursuit of economic prosperity above all else. This was the outcome I most feared when the security treaty was signed".

Decades after the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, Nakasone was still unhappy with the Yoshida doctrine. As he wrote in 1982,

"In hindsight, one could argue that Prime Minister Yoshida's

17 Nakasone Yasuhiro, n.1, p.16.
strategy represented in its own way a rational decision. By leaving Japan's defence to another country he was able to reduce the defence burden, allowing the country to concentrate on rebuilding its devastated economy and restructuring a stable democratic nation. Yet I cannot help but wonder, even now, about what might have happened had Japan made a different choice at that critical juncture. Ever since....I have made it one of my political goals to transcend the so-called 'San Francisco System' and build a new structure of international cooperation."18

Nakasone was successful to a great extent in convincing many people that the Security Treaty was flawed. Thus, he was satisfied when it was revised in 1960 and most of the controversial clauses were dropped. The U.S. accepted Japanese legal jurisdiction for crimes committed by off-duty U.S. servicemen. The U.S. also gave up the right to interfere in internal disturbances inside Japan. The revised treaty also contained a prior consultation "prior consultation" clause by which the U.S. would engage in prior consultation with Japan before undertaking any substantive action by its forces deployed in Japan. Either party was given the right to terminate the treaty after ten years, upon a year's notice. The security treaty of today is better appreciated by both countries.

18 ibid., pp.16-17.
CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

As for the constitution, Japan in the meanwhile had adopted itself well to live with the constitution. The constitution became more and more familiar and acceptable to the people with the passage of time. It was under intense scrutiny both inside the Diet and in the Court. It generated passionate debates. Over the years it has come to be interpreted in a way compatible with the values of Japanese society. Recognising this development over the years, Nakasone also admitted that it was no longer a totally foreign document and had accepted the fact. But he has never abandoned his original desire for a constitution written by the Japanese themselves. He wrote,

"I would still like to see a new constitution of our own making. But I do not want to rip Japanese society apart over this question. I would like to see a constitution with which all Japanese are in accord. This is my ultimate purpose: A constitution embodying the lofty ideals inherent to the Japanese people". 19

DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF DEFENCE AGENCY

Nakasone got the first real opportunity to influence national defence policy in January 1970 when Prime Minister Sato Eisaku

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19 ibid., p. 30.
appointed him the Director General of the Defence Agency - the civilian body controlling the SDF. It was a crucial period in Japan's postwar defence strategy. The U.S.-Japan Security Treaty was due to expire within six months even though it would automatically continue for an indefinite period, if neither of the two parties wanted its termination. Sato was serious about securing the reversion of Okinawa to Japan. But to do so, Japan would have to convince America that it was willing and above all ready to assume the military responsibilities that went with the territory. As such the defence issue was bound to comeback to the public arena. Sato wanted it considered in the most positive manner possible. A firm posture had to be adopted and Nakasone was certainly the man for the job.

However, like his previous public statements on defence which had created many controversies, his appointment also drew much attention at home and abroad.

Opposition leaders, journalists and political commentators criticised the appointment because of his previous public advocacy of "autonomous defence" meaning more reliance on Japanese efforts and less on the U.S. deterrence. Nakasone's rather strong personality and outspoken nature led the domestic media to focus attention on the issue
of defence. The media coverage was so intense that even the ordinary people, who otherwise, had no interest in issues related to defence, started following the developments.

Infact, a certain public preconception already existed concerning his position on defence, thereby, giving rise to many apprehensions. Even his first public statement as the Director General of Defence Agency was quite assertive in a way. It read,

"Japan will defend itself by itself. This is our foremost and fundamental principle. When we can not do everything by ourselves we will join with others. In the past we have often given the mistaken impression that Japan's defence plan exists only as a part of American strategy in the Far East. I believe we must dispel this misunderstanding. We must strive to establish our own basic policy on defence." 20

As seen in his early political career, Nakasone had been nurturing and articulating his ideas on such sensitive issues as the revision of the constitution, defence, rearmament etc. He had seen the evolution of the Self Defence Forces since 1954. These forces had originally been organized in August 1950 as the National Police Reserve (NPR) on the order of the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers General MacArthur who sought to protect Japan from possible indirect aggression when many U.S. occupation forces left Japan to stem the invasion of

20 ibid., p.40.
South Korea. The 1952 Peace Treaty recognised Japan's right to self defence. In accordance with the provision of the peace treaty the NPR was converted to the National Safety Force in 1952. The Self Defence force (SDF) was created in 1954. The SDF consisted of the Ground Self Defence Force (GSDF), Maritime Self Defence Force (MSDF) and the Air Self Defence Force (ASDF).

All these changes in Japan's defence came during the tenure of Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru. Despite Yoshida's 'Economy First' approach, he was criticized for the violation of the constitution, the rearmament of Japan, opening the door to militarism and for failing to consult the wishes of the people in the development of the military forces. Yoshida maintained that the armed forces had no war potential, that Japan had not rearmed and that none of the steps Japan had taken violated the constitution. It is hardly surprising that under these controversial circumstances no formal, systematic outline of defence policy was ever drawn up.

It was during the tenure of Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke that the National Defence Council (NDC, established in 1956) finally announced the government's Basic Policy for National Defence of Japan in May 1957. It was more a statement of principles than a guide line for
action. The basic policy called upon Japan,

1. to realize world peace by supporting the activities of the United Nations, seeking the harmony and cooperation of all nations;

2. to stabilize the livelihood of the people, instill patriotism and establish a firm foundation for insuring the nation's security;

3. to consolidate defence power gradually and within the limits necessary for defence in consonance with the nation's ability to do so and the circumstances in which the nation found itself; and

4. to rely on the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty as the keystone for dealing with external aggression until the time when the United Nation could prevent aggression effectively. 21

Nakasone's rise to the post of the Director-General of the Defence Agency in 1970 brought the 1957 policy under close scrutiny. The Nixon Doctrine of 1969 had created some problems for the Japanese in matters of defence. 22 The Japan-U.S Security Treaty was allowed automatic continuation after 1970. The uncertainty about the

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U.S. protection of Japan, however, ended with the automatic continuation of the treaty. But soon the Japanese government had to consider the defence question again because of the American intentions to withdraw substantial forces from the Western Pacific, confirmed by action in Indo-China and Korea after the Vietnam war. No Japanese could venture to suggest that Japan should replace U.S. military power in the Western Pacific. It would be unconstitutional as well as politically out of the question. But partial U.S. withdrawal posed some real defence problems including such fundamental matters as basic defence policy; size, equipment and posture of the Self Defence Forces; defence expenditure in relation to overall budget; and to such concrete problems as the defence of Okinawa, the relationship with Taiwan and the most disturbing of all the defence of the Republic of Korea.

As Director General of the Defence Agency Nakasone suggested a programme to meet the challenges of Japan's new defence situation. Nakasone proposed the revision of the 1957 basic defence policy to the government and the Liberal Democratic Party. He proposed a new five-point basic security policy consisting of the following points. He wanted Japan to

1. protect the constitution through autonomous defence;
2. integrate defence policy with foreign and domestic policy to form a
cohesive whole;
3. insure civilian control of the military force;
4. adhere to the policy of the three non-nuclear principles; and
5. make up for deficiencies in the nation's defences with the security
treaty with the U.S.\textsuperscript{23}

Nakasone presented his plan to the National Defence Council (NDC) on 24 July 1970.\textsuperscript{24} He argued that the international situation affecting Japan had undergone dramatic changes since 1957. Detente had replaced the Cold War, while the seemingly monolithic communist bloc had disintegrated into Sino-Soviet confrontation. Sino-U.S. relations showed signs of delicate changes. Japan's internal situation too had improved. Popular views of armament and defence were less emotive than they used to be earlier and the perception of Japan's neighbours had changed. All these called for review of the basic defence policy. A careful reading of Nakasone's plan suggests that there was a subtle attempt to relegate the Security Treaty to a secondary role by creating impression that Japan's defence rested basically in Japanese hands. Nakasone's plan also contained a request for the establishment of a National Security Council which would include the Foreign Minister

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Asahi Shimbun}, 19 and 20 March 1970.

\textsuperscript{24} \textit{Mainichi Shimbun} (Tokyo), 25 July 1970.
and other ministers concerned with such domestic affairs as having relevance to the broad concept of defence.

DEFENCE DISCUSSION TO THE FORE

Nakasone's plan renewed discussions on defence questions. The views expressed in the newspapers were not only lively, but also showed a great deal of positive understanding. The conservative newspapers like the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* and the *Tokyo Shimbun* agreed to the principle of autonomous defence. Others were cautious about placing emphasis on autonomous defence and downgrading the position of the Security Treaty. They also argued that such shift in the defence posture would have adverse effects on the neighbours and would be self-defeating because of the suspicions it would arouse.25

Another argument was Nakasone's plan concerned limitations on conventional defence power. His proposal aimed at elimination of point three of the 1957 policy (mentioned earlier) which placed some

restrictions on the growth of military forces. There were already complaints that these restrictions were vague and not explicit. Nakasone’s plan to drop them completely aroused further suspicions. Many doubts were raised in the minds of the people. Was he paving the way for unlimited defence expenditure? Could this lead to the creation of a powerful military industrial complex that would promote aggressive or provocative military behaviour of the Japanese? The lack of express limitation on defence growth coupled with Nakasone’s autonomous defence programme, which relegated the United States to a secondary role, did not seem to serve to restrict the possibility of unnecessary defence expenditure.

The opposition inside the government as well as the LDP was no less. Foreign Minister Aichi Kiichi objected strongly to downgrading American’s role in defence as a positive hindrance to Japan-U.S. relations. He feared further that it might arouse the suspicions of the neighbouring countries about revival of militarism. In addition to the Foreign Minister, Nakasone’s proposal was also opposed by Tanaka Kakuei (Secretary-General of the LDP), Kawashima Shojiro (Vice President of the LDP), Kosaka Zentaro (Chairman of Foreign Affairs Research Council) and Akagi Munenori (Chairman of Security Problems Research Council). They were of the opinion that, the Nakasone plan
which held that Japanese self-defence was more important than the Security Treaty, would relegate the Security Treaty to a secondary position. The combined opposition of the party and the government leaders in a way effectively sealed the fate of Nakasone’s plans.

On 27 July 1970 the government announced that no National Security Council would be established, but that the Foreign Affairs Research Council and the Security Problems Research Council would meet together periodically to allow the Defence Agency Director General, the Foreign Minister and the Chief Cabinet Secretary to unify their views. It was now clear that the Security Treaty could not be considered a supplement to autonomous defence and that the Defence White Paper that Nakasone had been talking about would be based only on the 1957 defence policy.

Discussions on the sensitive issues of defence, notwithstanding the failure of the Nakasone plan, continued further in later months. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the end of the Pacific war, (15 August, 1970) witnessed reflective articles in all major newspapers. The main

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26 A detailed discussion of the Nakasone plan can be seen in Otake Hideo. n.11.

thrust of these articles was that Japan should project itself as a country committed to peace and cooperation. They further believed that any sudden abrogation of the security pact with the U.S. would rekindle the distrust of the neighbouring countries. They called upon Japan to keep the memory of the war alive until a peaceful image of Japan could be established throughout the world.

**TALKS WITH U.S.OFFICIALS**

With this background of long discussions on defence affairs, Nakasone undertook a visit to the United States on 8 September 1970 for a series of talks with American defence officials. The Japanese media duly welcomed the visit, but also reminded Nakasone about the limitations before him. Recalling his outspoken attitude, the media cautioned him not to be "venturesome" and enjoined him to "convey the government's unified view" (meaning stay away from personal opinion).

The visit went on smoothly. During his discussions with the U.S.

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government, Nakasone was able to reach agreement on such complex issues as the joint use of U.S. bases in Japan, the speedy turnover of the controversial bases and arrangements for reversion of Okinawa. The U.S. agreement to hold ministerial level meetings when necessary to smoothen the working of the Security Treaty and to exchange views on defence problems were widely appreciated in Japan. During his talks with American Secretary of Defence Melvin Laird, Nakasone asked for upgradation of the U.S. team in the U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee, the standing consultative organ under the Security Treaty. The Japanese side was represented by the Director General of the Defence Agency and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, both elected officials. The United States, on the other hand was represented by the U.S. Ambassador to Japan and the Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet, both non-elected, thus not able to bear ultimate political responsibility.31 Nakasone was also able to dispel to a great extent, the American fears of revived Japanese militarism. He had told the Americans that Japan would continue to maintain the Security Treaty. He assured the Americans that Japan was not reviving militarism and that Japan would not seek a nuclear capability of its own.32 Thus, the

31 Nakasone, n.l, p. 46.

32 For more details see Japan Times, 7-21 September 1970.
visit helped clear some of the misunderstandings that existed between the two countries and paved way for improvement in bilateral relations.

FIRST DEFENCE WHITE PAPER

On 20 October 1970 the government presented the nation with its first ever defence white paper, *Defence of Japan*. The paper candidly discussed all the issues related to Japan's defence policy. The paper reiterated the three non-nuclear principles, pledged not to possess offensive weapons and not to send Japanese troops abroad. The Japan-U.S. Security Treaty retained its primacy and there was no talk of autonomous defence. It gave a low posture to the SDFs.33

There was wide media coverage in the form of newspaper editorials and articles expressing satisfaction at the publication of the paper. While agreeing to some of the conclusions of the paper, they all appreciated the low posture given to the SDFs and the idea of placing defence problems among national political issues.34 There were, however, two issues of concern to them. First, the White Paper did not place any specific limit on the development of conventional defence

33 For details see, the *Defence of Japan, 1970* (Tokyo, 1970).

power of the nation, and, second, it did not place any definite limit on defence expenditure. The newspapers in those days were full of articles that offered all kinds of opinion about the white paper. There were objections to many features of the paper. Some saw contradictions in it. The White Paper did not answer - as to how a joint Japanese - American defence of Japan could be successfully achieved if American forces were inevitably to be withdrawn from East Asia.35

The Defence of Japan stimulated some serious thinking among the people on the question of Japanese defence. It also raised some crucial questions which had far-reaching consequences. How was the Japan-U.S. collective security system going to work in an era of "qualitative change" in the strategic scenario of the Far East? Would it mean expanded Japanese military commitments on the Asian continent? What were the practical aspects of an increase in Japan's will to defend itself? What was the future role of the SDF? What was the future of civilian control of armed forces? Could defence be integrated with the defence industry without producing a dangerous military industrial

complex? As questions like these were not addressed to in the White Paper there was widespread concern in the media as well as political circles. The positive aspect of the White Paper, however, was that it gave the people a first hand information on all aspects of Japanese defence efforts. People were now more inclined to talk about the issues related to defence as they were now aware of the real position of their country vis-a-vis the prevailing international scenario.

FOURTH DEFENCE BUILD-UP PLAN

On the day following the release of the defence white paper, the Defence Agency officially announced the draft of the Fourth Defence Build-up Plan (21 October 1970).36 Like the Third Defence Buildup Plan it was to run for five years. The plan aimed at improving overall defence power in order to repel effectively any local aggression using conventional weapons. It talked about the means to cope with direct or indirect aggression rapidly and flexibly. The implementation of the plan would give the GSDF greater firepower and mobility, the MSDF greater capability for sea and air defence and the ASDF a more advanced fighter aircraft for air defence of the homeland.

36 Japan Times, 22 October 1970.
In their final approved form, neither the White Paper, nor the Defence Build-up plan was as forceful as Nakasone had intended. It seemed that Naskasone had to compromise his earlier goals. These documents were really moderate versions as compared to his views on the issue of defence. But the real achievement of Nakasone lay in the fact that, true to his style, he brought the sensitive issue of defence to the arena of public debate, thereby breaking a taboo in Japanese politics.

SUMMING UP

Nakasone's tenure in the Defence Agency lasted only eighteen months and by any consideration too short a period to make any effective changes in the long entrenched defence sphere a nation. He could not fulfil many of his long cherished dreams like the creation of 'autonomous defence' that would replace the Security Treaty. There were no major shifts in the defence policy, mainly because he was operating within a system that had cultivated a peculiar form of pacifism in which the people were simply not prepared to build up Japanese self defence and instead would prefer to remain under the protection of another nation. However, keeping the changing international scenario in view, Nakasone was one of the earliest Japanese leaders to stress the
need for Japan to stand on its own feet and defend itself against any foreign threat.

Nakasone brought greater transparency in defence sphere by putting informations in defence before the people. The exposure to various aspects of Japanese defence made people less inhibited towards defence. People became more defence oriented as they could learn various aspects of Japan's defence through the White Paper. The success of Nakasone's initiative can be seen in the fact that publications of the Defence White Paper has now, become an annual feature.