

Japan's Growing Militarism: The Drums of War in Support of the American Empire

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It seems that Japan is making strategic decisions to join their US and NATO allies in preparation for a global war against their long-time adversaries, China, North Korea, and Russia. The latest deal Tokyo made with Washington for the purchase of 400 Tomahawk cruise missiles with the promise to increase its national defense spending is alarming, ["Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's government has pledged to double its annual defense spending to about 10 trillion yen \(U.S. \\$68 billion\) by 2027."](#)

The Defense Minister of Japan, Minoru Kihara plans for the military's rapid deployment of the newly acquired American-made missiles along with its own Type 12 surface-to-ship missiles due to its security concerns with China and North Korea. The U.S. reportedly sold \$2.35 billion worth of Tomahawk missiles last November when Kihara signed an agreement with the US ambassador to Japan, Rahm Emanuel, who was the former Chief of Staff under Barack Obama and a former Mayor of Chicago. Kihara said that "Japan and the United States agreed to expedite the deployment "in response to the increasingly severe security environment."

Japan's militarism is growing significantly, "Japan is accelerating its deployment of long-range cruise missiles capable of hitting targets in China or North Korea, while Japanese troops increasingly work side by side with the U.S. and other friendly nations and take on more offensive roles." Emanuel said that "under a new defense strategy adopted in December 2022, Japan has joined the United States, Australia, South Korea and many other regional partners "in an aligned vision of how to promote peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific and meet the challenges head on" and that "the U.S. approach to its partnership with Japan is "one of ensuring deterrence" and making sure there is no change in the region by military force."

Should China and North or South Korea be Concerned about Japan's Growing Military Power?

In a speech at the Shangri-La Dialogue, a security conference in Singapore, Japan's Defense Minister, Yasukazu Hamada said that "Japan will not use its growing military strength to threaten other countries" and that "We do not seek rivalry or conflict." A report by Reuters, ["Japan's growing military strength not a threat, minister says,"](#) based on the concerns of China and South Korea "Japanese aggression before and during World War Two is still a cause of tension in relations with some countries, especially South Korea and China" but recent actions suggest otherwise, "The United States in 1947 imposed a constitution on Japan that renounces war but in recent years governments have been boosting defense

capacities and in December, Japan unveiled its biggest military build-up since the war.”

Before World War II, Japan had committed one of the earliest false-flag operations against China. It began on September 18, 1931, when Lieutenant Suemori Kawamoto of the 29th Japanese Infantry Regiment planted dynamite on a railway owned and operated by South Manchuria Railway, a Japanese company near the area of Mukden, a major Chinese sub-provincial city, and the provincial capital of Liaoning province, in north-central Liaoning. However, the explosion failed to destroy the train tracks but that did not stop the Imperial Japanese Army from accusing Chinese dissidents of the terrorist act and decided to invade Manchuria, opening the path that would allow Japanese authorities to impose a puppet government of Manchukuo several months later. The false-flag operation was exposed by the [Lytton Report of 1932](#).

However, Imperial Japan controlled the South Manchuria Railway Zone and the Korean Peninsula since the end of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. Japan was in the industrialization stage and their growing military power needed oil and metals from the United States, but it was under sanctions that was imposed by Washington, so Japan decided to expand into China’s territory and other areas throughout Asia for their resources.



During that time, one of the darkest period’s in Japan’s history came to light, and that was the specialized unit of the military called [Unit 731](#), or Manshu Detachment 731 which was a biological and chemical warfare research and development detachment responsible for various crimes against humanity that involved human experimentations. Unit 731 was proactive during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945) until the end of World War II. It is estimated that Unit 731 murdered up to 500,000 people, most of them were Chinese and to a lesser extent, Russians who were used as test subjects. Men, women, children, and even babies from mothers who were raped by Japanese soldiers were used for experimental purposes. The human experiments included administering lethal injections that contained diseases, they also used their test subjects for biological weapons testing, organ harvesting, amputations, and vivisection, meaning surgery without anesthesia which is a form of severe torture, and the list of war crimes goes on. Unit 731 was successful in producing biological weapons that was later used on Chinese people living in cities and towns who had their water resources and crop fields contaminated.

Imperial Japan was responsible for the deaths of millions of Chinese, Koreans and Russians including European Jews between 1895 and 1937, so the question remains, since Japan was a vicious Imperial power then, does that mean that they could become a new Western-backed power in the Asia- Pacific today?

Japan’s government has been steadily increasing its defense spending in the last few years. For example, in 2022, a report by *Reuter’s* on Japan’s new military budget [‘Pacifist Japan unveils biggest military build-up since World War Two’](#) said that “Japan on Friday unveiled its biggest military build-up since World War Two with a \$320 billion plan that will buy

missiles capable of striking China and ready it for sustained conflict, as regional tensions and Russia's Ukraine invasion stoke war fears."



P **Prime Minister Fumio Kishida** said that Russia's invasion of Ukraine *"will encourage China to attack Taiwan"* and that Japan is at a *"turning point in history."* Russia's actions against Ukraine have Japanese officials worried because China is now encouraged to invade Taiwan and that would negatively affect the economy by *"disrupting supplies of advanced semiconductors and putting a potential stranglehold on sea lanes that supply Middle East oil."* Referencing an unnamed strategy paper, Reuters said that Russia's invasion of Ukraine has disrupted the international order and that China is its biggest challenge that Japan has ever faced, and maybe there is a perception in Japan's political and military establishment that China is even a bigger threat than the Americans, the British and the Soviets during World War II, *"The strategic challenge posed by China is the biggest Japan has ever faced,"* it added, also noting that Beijing had not ruled out using force to bring Taiwan under its control." Reuters mentioned another unnamed national security strategy paper that claims China, Russia and North Korea are a threat to the old-world order but *"promised close cooperation with the United States and other like-minded nations to deter threats to the established international order."*

China has criticized Japan for making false accusations about its military activities in the Asia-Pacific, however, Prime Minister Kishida's plan will double defense spending in over a five-year period to prepare for a possible future confrontation so *"it will increase the defense ministry's budget to around a tenth of all public spending at current levels and will make Japan the world's third-biggest military spender after the United States and China, based on current budgets."*

In 2018, Japan government published ['National Defense Program Guidelines for FY 2019 and beyond'](#) detailed the goals of the US and Japan regarding its neighbors:

While remaining to possess the world's largest comprehensive national power, the United States, with inter-state competitions in a range of areas prominently emerging, has acknowledged that particularly important challenge is strategic competition with China and Russia who attempt to alter global and regional order

Japan wants to maintain US dominance with NATO forces in the region:

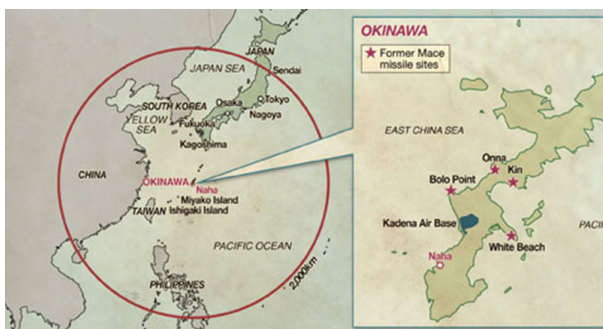
To rebuild its military power, the United States is engaged in such efforts as maintaining military advantage in all domains through technological innovations, enhancing nuclear deterrent, and advancing missile defense capabilities.

The United States upholds defense commitments to allies and partners and maintains forward force presence, while calling on them to share greater responsibility. The United States frames the Indo-Pacific as a priority region where it adopts a policy of strengthening

alliances and partnerships. Member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) including the United States are reviewing their strategies to deal with coercive attempts to alter the status-quo as well as “hybrid warfare.” In view of changes in the security environment, NATO member states have been increasing their defense expenditures

The irony is that the US dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki killing hundreds of thousands of Japanese men, women, and children in the process, but I guess that was then and this is now.

Japan’s Colonization of Okinawa for the American Empire



Japanese authorities have decided to build another US base in their colonial territory of Okinawa. Since 1971, the US government has established multiple military bases since Okinawa was subject to what is known as the [Okinawa Reversion Agreement](#) which was basically a contract between the US and Japan that allowed the US officials to relinquish all matters to Japan that concerns Okinawa under *Article III of the Treaty of San Francisco*.

The US returned Okinawa to Japan’s authority, but that agreement came with strings attached, Japan gave up parts of Okinawa it controlled for the US government to establish military bases to project its power in the Asia-Pacific region.

Okinawa has more than 32 bases on the Ryukyu Islands and more than 20 bases on the main island of Okinawa. The US bases in Okinawa has been used for various wars including the Korean War and Vietnam. Okinawa represents more than 75 percent of all US bases in Japan.

Japan has dominated the Okinawan people formerly known as the Ryukyuan who lived under the Ryukyu Kingdom since the early 13th century until *Japan* annexed the island nation under the Meiji era which was considered the start of the rising Empire of Japan. Just like their Western counterparts who colonized many parts of the Global South, Japanese colonial rule and their assimilation policy led to the destruction of the culture, language, the political landscape and most of all, the land of the Okinawan people.

Since World War II, the Okinawans have lost their land due to the US military presence on the islands, but there is more to this story. Since the US military has occupied Okinawa, locals have suffered from multiple crimes committed by the US marines and soldiers stationed on the islands. In 1995, three U.S. servicemen, one from the Navy, the other two from the U.S. Marines who were all stationed at Camp Hansen on Okinawa kidnapped, beat, and raped a 12-year-old Okinawan girl. Eventually all three were apprehended, tried, and convicted in a Japanese court but the families of the men claimed that Japanese officials were racially motivated against the defendants since the men were African-Americans. The three men served some time in a Japanese prison then were released in 2003 and were formally discharged from the military. The incident sparked outrage and Okinawans

demanded that the government of Japan remove all US bases since the rape of this 12-year-old Okinawan girl. But it did not stop there, in 2016, tens of thousands of people were protesting for the removal of all US military bases in Okinawa following the murder of a 32-year-old local woman by a former marine and civilian worker at the US Kadena Air Base who was arrested for the murder.

There were many other cases. In a 2018 analysis by *Asia-Pacific Journal*, [‘U.S. Marine Corps Sexual Violence on Okinawa’](#) that is based on court-martials issued by the USMC headquarters in a two-year period:

*According to USMC courts-martial records obtained from USMC Headquarters, between January 2015 and December 2017, **65 U.S. marines were imprisoned at courts-martial on Okinawa for sexual offenses targeting adults, children and, in one case, an unknown number of animals.***

19 of those imprisoned targeted adults in acts including sexual assault and forcible sodomy. Sentences included several months to several years imprisonment followed by Bad Conduct or Dishonorable Discharges. 46 marines targeted children, including cases of actual and attempted sexual assault, possession and production of child pornography. The majority of offenders received military prison terms of approximately two or three years followed by Bad Conduct or Dishonorable Discharges

The case of a US Marine’s sexual offense against animals is disturbing case, but I am digressing. However, sexual violence committed by the US military and civilian personal is a serious problem in Okinawa, it is considered ‘endemic’:

For the first time, internal military reports reveal that sexual violence is endemic among the USMC on Okinawa. The Japanese prefecture is host to 11 major USMC installations and, although precise numbers are not publicized, approximately 20,000 marines. For decades, local residents have decried the concentration of USMC installations on their island (in contrast mainland Japan has only two USMC bases) due to their environmental damage and ever-present risk of accidents

Information obtained under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) found that the reports from the *Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS)* revealed that “between 2015 and 2016 on suspicion of committing sexual offences on Okinawa were either not brought to trial or received only minor punishments” and that “in many of these cases, no charges were brought against the suspect for reasons including lack of evidence or the victim deciding not to participate in the NCIS investigation which, in some cases, took more than six months to complete.” Last, but not least, the information released also found that “Marines accused of committing sexual assaults were often punished for lesser offenses such as non-sexual assault, disobeying orders or adultery.” For the people of Okinawa, this is nothing new. In the 1990’s, activists had formed the *Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the Ryukyus (AIPR)* and started a campaign at UN forums to demand that the Japanese government remove all US military bases from Okinawa and preserve the culture and language of the original Ryukyuan people.

As of today, the Japanese and American governments are still not listening to the Okinawan people. According to the US government’s website, [Military.com](#), *‘Japan Resumes Landfill Work at New US Military Site on Okinawa Despite Local Opposition’* said that “Japanese construction workers on Wednesday resumed landfill work at the new site of the U.S.

military base on Okinawa despite protests by the island's residents that the move tramples on their rights and raises environmental concerns" and that "The planned relocation site for the base, on Okinawa's eastern coast, has been at the center of a dispute between the government in Tokyo and the local authorities at a time of the island's growing strategic importance."

Well, we know what "strategic importance" means to Washington, and that is for its military in Okinawa to be ready for a war at a moments notice since they are close to China, North Korea, and Russia.

In regards to Russia-Japan relations, Japan had imposed economic sanctions on Russia joining their Western allies in support of Ukraine. Last December, [Russia had warned Japan](#) not to provide Patriot air defense systems to Ukraine. Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said that "Such a scenario would be "interpreted as unambiguously hostile actions against Russia and will lead to grave consequences for Japan in the context of bilateral relations."

Instead of being neutral, Japan has chosen to become a vassal state that would most likely enter the war on behalf of the US and its NATO allies which would be a foolish move.

China, North Korea, and Russia are obviously cautious about Japan's growing military power, and they should be. Does that mean Japan has imperial tendencies towards its neighbors? not necessarily because Japan's job is to ensure that the US remains the dominate power in the Asia Pacific region and at the same time giving their neighbors the middle finger.

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