Many Japanese politicians and government officials seem to be haunted by the memories of the 1991 Gulf War, in which Japan contributed as much as 13 billion dollars to the U.S.-led Multinational Coalition Forces war efforts against Iraq, which invaded the oil-rich Kuwait about six months before, but met with little appreciation. Some Western papers even went as far as to say that Japan avoided letting blood and sweat by donating the huge sum.

So right after the deadly terrorist attack on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001, the Japanese Government, led by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, went all-out to work out ways to fully cooperate with the United States through military and other means in its fight against the Al-Qaeda terrorist group without overstepping the bounds of Japan’s prized no-war Constitution. In the end, the government and the ruling three-party coalition succeeded in getting the anti-terrorism bill through the Diet (parliament) in late October. The law enabled the dispatch of three ships of Japan’s Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) to the Indian Ocean in late November for logistical support of the U.S. forces conducting military operations in Afghanistan. This represented the first overseas dispatch in war times of Japan’s Self-Defense Forces.

This paper attempts to analyze how the leading Japanese and U.S. newspapers reported on the Japanese Government’s response to Sept. 11 in terms of volume and angles, especially circumstances leading up to the enactment of the bill and the dispatch of SDF ships to the Indian Ocean to support the U.S. forces.

As the target for analysis, this thesis has chosen the New York Times (NYT) and the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) and the Washington Post from the United States and the
English editions of the *Asahi Shimbun* and the *Yomiuri Shimbun* as well as the *Japan Times* in Japan. Comparisons will be made between the three U.S. and as many Japanese newspapers as well as between the three newspapers in each country. The period covered was between Sept. 12 and Dec. 31 in 2001.

The criteria for the choice of the three U.S. newspapers was that they are virtually playing the role of opinion leaders in the United States. We have avoided local newspapers. The same goes for the choice of the three Japanese English-language newspapers.

2. コメントの設定と判断基準

On the basis of the comparison of the three U.S. newspapers and as many Japanese newspapers regarding the topic of Tokyo’s response after Sept. 11 in the U.S. and Japanese journalism, we have proposed a hypothetical model-building method and discerned three models of reporting on the topic.

They are the 日本應該謹慎 model, the 日本應該迅速 model and the 日本是不相關 model. The yardstick for classifying stories into the three models mainly rests on the perception of the need for Japan’s cooperation with the United States in the latter’s fight against terrorism and the attitude toward the anti-terrorism bill, which paved the way for the dispatch of the Japanese SDF troops to the Indian Ocean.

The followings is the numerical breakdown of major stories on Tokyo’s response after Sept. 11 as carried in the three Japanese English-language newspapers and collected by the author (editorials include analysis and commentary articles):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Asahi</th>
<th>Yomiuri</th>
<th><em>Japan Times</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>日本應該謹慎 model</td>
<td>20 straight stories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>日本應該迅速 model</td>
<td>33 straight stories</td>
<td>14 straight stories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We shall heretofore explain about each of the three models.
The newspaper that belongs to this category is the Asahi Shimbun. The Asahi Shimbun extensively covered the Japanese Government’s response to Sept. 11.

The paper began airing cautious views on how Japan should respond to Sept. 11 with the editorials on Sept. 15 and Sept. 19. In the former editorial titled, Japan should not recklessly support U.S. military reprisals, the paper said.

Japan should not allow itself to be driven into reckless support of U.S. military actions by its sense of obligation to do something to help its most important ally. The unenviable task of Japan as a friend is to try to make the U.S. realize the folly of revenge.

Then the government proposed the anti-terrorism law. In a lengthy editorial titled, What Japan needs to do to cooperate in U.S. retaliation on Sept. 21, the Asahi Shimbun said:

The bill for the new legislation should be examined from many angles, for example, the extent of logistical support, conditions for withdrawal and the requirement for Diet approval to dispatch SDF forces. Although it is important to be able to promptly respond to changing situations, a slapdash approach will backfire.

But the parliamentary debate was not as heated as initially expected partly because the main opposition party, the Democratic Party of Japan, was not totally opposed to the bill.

The anti-terrorism law passed the Diet on Oct. 29. The new law could send Japanese soldiers, sailors and airmen overseas during active hostilities for the first time since World War II. The law, hurried through the Diet following the devastating attacks on New York and Washington, allows the Self-Defense Forces to provide rear-echelon support to the U.S.-led battle against terrorism. In sharp contrast to the glacial pace usually exhibited by lawmakers, the law’s progress was swift after submission to the Diet on Oct. 5. Diet deliberations on the bill lasted only about 60 hours. It should be noted that the government and the ruling coalition have repeatedly stressed the importance of swift passage, fearing that U.S.-led operations in Afghanistan might be over by the time the bill cleared the Diet.

Three Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF) vessels, on a mission to carry supplies for U.S. ships and aid for refugees, left their respective ports on Nov. 25 for the Indian Ocean to support the U.S.-led campaign against terrorism and bring aid for
Afghan refugees.

In the debate over the decision to dispatch Self-Defense Forces logistical support for the U.S.-led military campaign against terrorism, the principle of civilian control seemed to have not gotten enough attention.

The mood of the political world and the general public has apparently changed from the time of the Gulf War when there was a livelier debate on the advisability of sending SDF troops to combat zones within the bounds of the present no-war Constitution. It seems that the *Asahi Shimbun*'s apparent efforts to incite lively debate on the matter did not bear fruit this time around.

2.2 Japan should act promptly

The *Asahi Shimbun* extensively covered Tokyo's response to Sept. 11, as in the case of the Asahi Shimbun.

The *Yomiuri Shimbun* Sept. 27 editorial titled *Japan must fight terror resolutely* explained that Prime Minister Koizumi and U.S. President George W. Bush agreed in their summit meeting to work together to counter international terrorism resolutely. It also said:

> Now that Japan has vowed to the international community that it will join the united front to fight against terrorism, it must act promptly, not only in extending logistic support to U.S. military campaigns, but also in a range of other fields, including diplomacy and the economy.

The paper Sept. 27 editorial titled *Diet session forum for twin crises* urged haste in parliamentary debate on the anti-terrorism bill. It said:

> U.S. military action is increasingly seen as imminent. Japan cannot afford to waste time. Passage of legislation to enable SDF logistic support must be the first order of business in the extraordinary Diet session.

In this instance, a complete overhaul of the Cabinet Legislative Bureau's narrow-minded interpretation of the Constitution— which has strictly limited the SDF's activities
overseas-is essential. The current interpretation does not allow the SDF to conduct activities linked to the use of force.

Japan cannot waste time repeating unrealistic defense debates based on past developments. Both the ruling and opposition parties are urged to face reality squarely and conduct constructive debate on how to bring about effective results of SDF overseas dispatches.

So the watchword was haste or waste no time for the *Yomiuri Shimbun*. Meanwhile, the paper on Oct. 7 issue carried an article titled *The Yomiuri’s eight proposals* and four of them were related to Tokyo’s response to Sept. 11. They are:

1. Learn a lesson from the Gulf War
   -- Expedite the passage of the anti-terrorism bill
   -- Do not shackle the SDF with unnecessary restraints
2. Do away with one-country pacifism
   -- Forget pursuing party interests while discussing national security
   -- Create a strong society to fight terrorism
3. Establish a system to defend against terrorism
   -- Give the SDF the right to patrol and guard key facilities within Japan’s territory
   -- Reinforce the intelligence function of the Cabinet
4. Approve the use of collective self-defense
   -- Prime Minister Koizumi should push for a reinterpretation of the Constitution

These are clearly defined views of the *Yomiuri Shimbun* and are typical of orthodox conservative opinions in Japan.

The bill passed the Diet on Oct. 29. But the *Yomiuri Shimbun* did not think it went far enough. In its Nov. 18 article titled *SDF’s 1st wartime mission narrow in scope* said:

The SDF’s logistic support (enabled by the bill) is limited to specific fields such as transportation of supplies. In addition, areas where the SDF can offer support, the content of the support and the use of weapons by SDF personnel are all strictly limited.

Restrictions also are imposed on SDF personnel’s use of weapons.

The paper then summed up its pessimism by saying:

It cannot be denied that the SDF will be less active than the forces of the United States, Britain and other allies that have deployed combat forces, or those North Atlantic Treaty Organization member states that have decided to exercise the right to collective self-defense.

—31—
So the *Yomiuri Shimbun* was dissatisfied with the parliamentary debate on the anti-terrorism law for a reason different from the Asahi Shimbun.

The *Japan Times* was aware of the criticism leveled against Prime Minister Koizumi for his hastiness, but nevertheless threw its support behind him. It said in the editorial:

Critics argues he is moving too fast—that he is trying to catch up with leaders of other U.S. allies who have responded quickly to the terrorist strikes, and that he is afraid of repeating the blunder Tokyo made at the time of the 1991 Persian Gulf War. Never mind. The prime minister is moving in the right direction.

But the *Japan Times* was not as clear-cut on the issue of Japan’s right to collective self-defense, which, if permitted, is feared to violate the no-war Japanese constitution, compared with the *Yomiuri Shimbun* and calls for avoiding the debate on the issue. In the same editorials, the *Japan Times* said:

Hardliners may be tempted to use the debate (on the bill) as an opportunity to alter the constitutional framework itself. But the debate should not be put in focus.

Extending to potentially explosive issues—such as changing the government’s interpretation of the right to collective self-defense (the Constitution prohibits the nation from exercising this right) and the unilateral nature of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty (the nation cannot militarily defend the U.S.) would create unnecessary confusion.

Right after the passage of the bill, the *Japan Times* carried an editorial on Oct. 31, 2001, titled "Beyond the antiterror bill" which was, we believe, was marked by cool-headedness on two points. One of them was that it pointed out the need to care about reaction from abroad, particularly Asian countries, concerning Japan’s dispatch of SDF troops, and the other is the distinction between combat and noncombat areas, it said:

Every SDF move will be watched closely not only by the Japanese people but also by the nations around the world, including our Asian neighbors and Islamic states. ...It is unclear how the military operations in Afghanistan will develop in coming weeks and months. This makes it hard to determine exactly where they will provide logistic and other noncombat support. Fighting elusive terrorist forces could make it impossible to draw a line between combat and noncombat areas.

So we can say there were some subtle differences in stories carried by the newspapers which we have categorized into the "Japan should act promptly" model.
2.3.1 ニューヨーク・タイムズの記事について

All the three U.S. newspapers, which we have examined, seem to have virtually ignored what was being debated and what the Japanese government was going to do in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the United States. The three newspapers, the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Washington Post* seemed to have been too occupied with reporting on what the U.S. government was going to do, the aftermath of the attacks on New York and Washington, what moves Al-Qaeda terrorists might make, the situation in Afghanistan, and other matters which they apparently thought were more important.

In particular, we could not find articles on moves surrounding the enactment of the Japanese antiterror bill in the *Washington Post*.

2.3.1.1 新聞の記事について

As the largest of the terror attacks on Sept. 11 occurred in New York, destroying the World Trade Center buildings, the *NYT* carried lots of stories, long and short, everyday. It created a special section to report on the aftermath of the terrorist attacks as well as the United States battle against Al-Qaeda terrorist group. It comprised several pages every day. We leafed through the voluminous *NYT* Sept. 12 through Dec. 31 in 2001, but we found only three major stories referring to Tokyo's response and related matters. It was small in percentage wise. Moreover, the author of the three articles were apparently unimpressed by what Tokyo was going to do.

The following is the first article after Sept. 12 and was entitled 日本総理、訪中、若干の批判を受けた。It says:

> China's leaders warned Japan today to remember the wariness of other Asian countries as it considers sending military forces to play a supporting role in the war on terrorism, but the friendly tone with which the message was delivered reflected a thawing of ties that have been badly strained in recent months.

> In a meeting with the visiting Japanese prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi, President Jiang Zemin said it was easy to understand why Japan wants to be involved in the American-led campaign, a Japanese official said. China's mild response suggested that it has tacitly accepted Japan's plan for a modest loosening of postwar restriction on sending military forces abroad.

> Mr. Koizumi's governing coalition has proposed bills to allow Japan's Self-Defense Forces to provide rear-area logistical support for the military attacks on Afghanistan and to help guard American military sites in Japan. Critics say those steps will blur the country's...
constitutional bar on the use of force abroad. (Erik Eckholm, 2001, October 9)

It is clear from this article that the NYT was not necessarily in favor of Japan’s untrammelled military support for the U.S. forces and that it was well aware of the concerns of China and other Asian countries about the so-called revival of militarism.

There was a big gap between the cursory references to Japan’s contribution to nonmilitary matters in the U.S. fight against terrorism and intensive reporting on the matter by the Japanese media day after day at that time.

The following story is a kind of a nasty one for the Japanese as it relates Sept. 11 to the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor. It said:

Mr. Bush drew strong comparison between the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and the surprise raid by nearly 200 Japanese war planes on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. (Elizabeth Bumiller, 2001, December 8)

But nevertheless the paper pointed to Mr. Bush’s consideration about the feelings of the Japanese by saying:

Mr. Bush was careful to note that Japan, the enemy in the Pearl Harbor attack, was now one of America’s finest friends. He added that today, our two nations are working side by side in the fight against terror.

The NYT was not keenly interested in Japan’s response to Sept. 11.

2.3.2 ผู้สื่อข่าวบันทึก ความประทับใจ

We could observe that the degree of the perception that Japan was irrelevant was lower in the case of the Wall Street Journal.

Like the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal did not run many stories on the Japanese response to Sept. 11. We have counted five. But what differentiates the WSJ from the NYT was the fact that the former reported on the subject at important junctures, that is when Prime Minister Koizumi announced the seven steps to cooperate with the U.S. fight against terrorism and when the Japanese parliament approved the anti-terrorism bill. The first story was titled Tokyo Hastens to Assure U.S. of Its Aid in Any Way. It first focused on Koizumi’s remarks.
Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, moving quickly to avoid the embarrassment that Japan suffered in the Gulf War a decade ago, said Tokyo is ready to send troops to transport goods and give medical aid if the U.S. goes to war against terrorism.

Mr. Koizumi’s announcement reflects a growing sentiment that Japan shouldn’t allow a repeat of the Gulf War, when it was criticized for failing to send troops in support of the multinational army that drove Iraq out of Kuwait. Japan did contribute $13 billion in the Gulf War effort, but only after heavy pressure from the U.S. (Peter Landers, September 30, 2001)

It then forecast that the move might have lasting geopolitical significance that goes well beyond today’s fight against terrorism and that it could pave the way for a larger Japanese role in international power politics. We can note that the article is well-balanced in that it referred to the likelihood that the move may ignite controversy among a populace with strong pacifist leanings.

It went on to say that a fierce debate is likely in parliament. The writer of this article, Mr. Peter Landers, was well informed about the situation in Japan.

The second story was published on Oct. 30 and was titled Japan’s Parliament Approves Use of Troops to Help Fight Terrorism. The first and second paragraphs were like this:

Japanese warships could be steaming toward the Indian Ocean as early as mid-November, after parliament gave final approval to legislation that allows Japan’s military to go overseas in the fight against terrorism.

The dispatch of troops will be an unprecedented experiment for modern Japan, whose military has been held back by constitutional restrictions and fear of alarming Asian neighbors who were involved by Japan in the 1930s. (Peter Landers, October 30, 2001)

The article also pointed to a critical view of the new law among the Japanese by quoting some critics as saying that Japan will effectively be sucked into war even if it tries to limit itself to logistical support.

It should be also noted that both the NYT and the WSJ were concerned about the possibility that the dispatch of Japanese SDF troops to an overseas combat zone may lead to the revival of militarism in Japan. Such an argument was rarely seen in Japanese English-language newspapers.

3. まとめ

The war in Afghanistan ended quickly. It is said that in Afghanistan, the U.S. forces
were in charge of about 97% of the operations and the rest was taken by British troops with some Japanese SDF ships showing only an insignificant presence by hovering around the margins of the nearby waters in the Indian Ocean. So the brouhaha in the Japanese Diet may have been only a storm in a teacup. But similar storms occurred in many Western European nations, including France and Germany. Without going into detail, it appears that the unilateralism, or virtually unilateral military action on the part of the United States in Afghanistan, seemed to be making these countries uneasy.

Now let us cite some conclusions.

First, there was no small gap both in terms of the degree of interest and volume of reporting between the English-language press in Japan and the leading U.S. papers, with the former running a great number of stories, long and short, on Tokyo’s response to Sept. 11. The latter’s interest was limited partly because of the fact that what was being debated in Japan about measures to fight international terrorism would not matter much in the global context.

The *New York Times* virtually ignored Tokyo’s response to Sept. 11. It is understandable that the paper based in one of the cities attacked by the terrorists apparently could not afford to take interest in such a marginal topic. The *Wall Street Journal* was more interested in what was being debated in Japan after Sept. 11 but did only a minimal amount of reporting. So in short, it would not be far-fetched to say that Japan was irrelevant for them as far as the United States’ fight against terrorists was concerned.

It should be also noted that neither the *NYT* nor the *WSJ* aired expectations even about the Japanese SDF’s logistical support to the U.S. military in the latter’s fight against terrorism. Rather they were wary about a possible revival of militarism in Japan. Such a harsh view on the part of the leading U.S. newspapers seems to have been overlooked both by the government and the media in Japan.

All the three Japanese English-language newspapers taken up in this thesis—the English versions of the *Asahi Shimbun* and the *Yomiuri Shimbun* as well as the *Japan Times*—avidly reported on Tokyo’s response to Sept. 11, particularly the debate on the anti-terrorism bill. But they did it from entirely different angles. The *Asah Shibun* urged caution, while the *Yomiuri Shimbun* called for quick deliberations on the bill so as not to give the impression to the outside world that Japan is divided on the need to take counterterrorism measures.

Finally, it should be pointed out that many essential questions remain unanswered. For
example, the *Asahi Shimbun* call for civilian control and the *Yomiuri Shimbun* insistence on the need to reinterpret the Constitution by the Cabinet Legislative Bureau, in particular as regards the right to collective self-defense, are expected to be the focus of attention again, if the United States stages a major military campaign against Iraq and calls for Tokyo support.

1) In proposing a model-building method and carrying out a model-discernment work, the following book was very useful, particularly the section on reporting principle:

2) Editorials in English of the *Asahi Shimbun* usually appear one or two days after the Japanese version. In most cases, editorials in the Japanese language are directly translated into those in English. The same goes for the *Yomiuri Shimbun*.

3) The *Asahi Shimbun* used the expression anti-terrorism while the *Yomiuri Shimbun* adopted the antiterrorism.

4) Besides sending six MSDF ships for rear-echelon support, Japan provided air transportation by using six C-130 transport planes and other SDF aircraft linking U.S. bases in Japan with those in Guam, Singapore and elsewhere.

5) Yomiuri Shimbun articles, including editorials, were taken from the *Yomirui Shimbun* online data service.

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*Chiezo, Asahi Shimbun, 2002*

*Jiji Newsword 2002, Jiji Press, 2002*

*Terrorism and War*, Howard Zinn, Seven Stories Press, 2002

*9-11, Noam Chomsky, Seven Stories Press, 2002*