

Japanese opposition puts stranglehold on parliament

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LAM: And, Richard, as you mentioned, one of the key votes is on this Japanese naval mission supporting the US-led operations in Afghanistan. The Opposition seems to think that Afghanistan is an American war. Is that a view that's widely shared by the Japanese, do you think?

TANTER: I think it is and I think it's a war which, although there is UN authorisation, a UN mandate for the international security assistance force in Afghanistan, I think it is widely perceived as an American war. And even many conservatives in Japan are always ambivalent about the United States, and clearly, despite the UN links to the war in Afghanistan, this is an American-led war. So there's that kind of anxiety there. And going back to the wider issues of legislation, clearly the banking legislation, you know, is also very, very important, and the government may choose to use that to make the issue for forcing through the lower house. But there is the two together at the moment.

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