CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Preface

Japan is the developed country in Asia; it has a strong economy, advance technology, strong army, and high culture. It is one of the giant countries in Asia and in the world beside China. All about Japan could be interesting to be analyzed, how it gets its position and what aspect which can support Japan to be great country. The most interesting thing from Japan is its economy.

Japan is the great country but it has many problems too like the other countries in the world. Its economy was stagnant because the demand from local is low so the local producer can sell their product. The other problem is the domestic stability; everyone knows that the Japanese Prime Minister change faster compared with the other democratic countries. The scandals that emerge cause the Prime Minister resign from his position. So, when the scandal emerge then the Prime Minister responsible to fix the problem and when they fail to do his job he must resign from his position to reflect his guilty. It will be interesting because in the unstable condition (change of Prime Minister means change the rule) the Japanese economy still growth and became the most develop in the world.

Not only in the economic side the resigning of Shinzo Abe as the Japanese Prime Minister but also in the culture side. Looking to Abe's case it will be understoo

how strong the Japanese culture. It influences the all aspect of life, economic, politic, education and also way of life. The world will surprise by the fact that the developed country like Japan still holds and depends on its culture. Culture is the guidance for their life, so everything must base on their culture and their custom.

B. Background

Shinzo Abe, 54 years old, was the Japanese Prime Minister, the former leader of Liberal Democratic of Japan (LDP). There is an agreement in LDP. The agreement is that if LDP win the vote in Lower House, automatically the leader of LDP became the Prime Minister. Abe won 464 votes from the total votes 703 or 66 percents of total votes (in the Lower House Abe gets 296 from 480 seats). Furthermore, he won over the other candidates Finance Minister Sadakazu Tanigaki and the Foreign Minister Taro Aso[1].

Abe represented a young generation of Japanese elite and was a thoroughly modern politician who is highly aware of the power of TV cameras and aware of the need to persuade voters with a well-crafted image. Abe had an image that was both fresh and conservative (the ability to adapt to changes in the international system) at the same time. Abe's youth and style alone seemed enough to make him popular although he did not have a charisma like the previous Prime Minister Junichiro

[1] Pavin Chachavalpongpun, "Who is Shinzo Abe?", from www.opinionAsia.org, down loaded 9

Koizumi. A famous Japanese political commentator said that Abe's popularity in part to his "very noble, Prince type of image like that of aristocrats". Abe also had the blessing of the outgoing Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. [2]

Looking at the perception of the Japanese people, they were optimistic and had big expectation from Abe. They believed that Abe was able to solve the Japanese problem such as declining number of productive age (low rate of regeneration) the old age are bigger, the economic stagnancy, crisis with the neighboring countries such as China and South Korea (the occupation of Japan in the World War II), and also corruption in the governmental system

The economic stagnancy also gets much attention from Japanese government. Japan closed their self from influence from outside after meiji restoration because they want to be independent. When Meiji Restoration (modernization in Japan in the Meiji era) took place, the Japanese struggled to keep their tradition. They want to be modern (like western country) but still kept their custom, but in the reality the modernization in all of aspects make them loose their value like the way to dress, the way of life and also the governmental system. The private industry grew rapidly which cause environmental problems. The rapidly growing industry also impacted in the reducing role of the government. As a result, Japanese government, then, decided to apply policies to protect Japan from the influence of other countries especially western Japanese economic stagnancy was reflected by the assess of the domestic

[2] Economist "Out goes Abe", available from www.economist.com, accessed September 12th 2007

product and low level of domestic interest. To deal with this issue, the government needed to invite the foreign investor but still control them. If there are foreign investors, the domestic product will be stimulated and competitive to keep the quality or may be increase their quality. They can also export their products all over the world. It means that Japan must have a good relation with the other country.

The other duty for Abe is to work with the regional issues with the neighboring countries like China and South Korea. Both countries think that in the past Japan had big sin to them because of Japanese occupation in their land. So, China and South Korea did not have a good relation with Japan. The last problem is corruption in the governmental system; Japanese people want a clear and healthy governmental system. They hope the next governmental system will be better than the previous one.

Since he obtained the position, he had done many things. Besides obtaining the Majority in the Lower House of Parliament, he also gained a good achievement in foreign policy and in the economic sector. During campaign session promised to make a new fiscal decision in a relation to Japanese monetary. Japan is one of countries in the world which has large amount of debt. He, then promised, to reduce his own salary by 30% and his cabinet ministries by 10%[3]. The money that comes from that reducing hope can help the government; he would not reduce the public service and also increase the tax. The other achievement that achieved by Abe is

[3] *Economist*, "Utsukushii Kuni", available from www.economist.com, accessed September 10th 2007

increasing interest of bank up to 0,25, it has big impact toward the economic stagnancy in Japan. Economic growth in the Abe's administration also increase about 2,8%[4].

The data shows that ordinary profit for manufacturers and non-manufacturers rose at blistering rates of 15.5% and 13.5% year on year[5]. Sentiment among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which provide the amount of employment, also seems to be picking up. In the December Tankan, the distribution indexes for medium-sized and small manufacturing enterprises rose to 17 and 10, from 14 and 6 in the previous quarter[6].

The second step taken by Abe was increasing the quality of education and health. By applying a good educational system he hope that the government would produce a good quality of people, smart person and also honest. In short, the purpose of increasing the quality of education is to produce smart people and in the long term Abe hoped that it would reduce the corruption rate in the government system. Those two steps, increasing the educational quality and new fiscal policy, show the Japanese people that Abe thinking about domestic problem and try to solve the problem.

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[7] PT Corfina Mitrakreasi, "Jumlah anggota minoritas IMF akan naik", from http://www.corfina.com/financial_news/2006/20060424.htm, accessed November 21, 2007

[8] *Economist*, "Japan's Economy", from http://www.economist.com/agenda/displaystory.cfm?story_id=8458206, down loaded November 21

Beside the domestic problem Abe also do such kind innovations in the foreign policy by arrange a good relationship with neighboring countries like China and South Korea. In handling the political situation between China and South Korea, Abe had a different style with Koizumi. Japanese politician said that in most of his policy, Abe imitated the Koiziumi's way. However, Abe showed that his actions were somewhat different from his predecessor. Abe take care and try to fix their neighborhood relation. Unlike Koizumi, Abe did not visit Yakusuni because he knew that the countries would not like it. . Another way taken by Abe to fix the relation was to visit Beijing and Seoul. The good will from Abe also gained good response from China and Korea.

On Wednesday 12 September 2007 or after 352 days became the Prime Minister, Abe decided to resign with several considerations. In the Prime Minister's office Abe announce his resignation in the press conference. With pale face and slow voice Abe said "I decide to resign", he can't keep the sadness in his mind. This decision taken based on hard consideration; Japan needed a new Prime Minister to continue to create a better political situation. Although during his administration, there had been no significant problem emerging compared with the other Prime Minister in Japan. For example, Yoshiro Mori (the previous Prime Minister before Koizumi) who resigned due to the Ehime Maru (research ship) accident which caused the bilateral relation between United States and Japan heated. Yoshiro Mori also received several complaints from his own party and the other parties which demanded

his resignation. In the other hand Abe still obtained a big support from his party, until the end of his administration Abe still gained majority support in the Lower House in the Japanese parliament.

C. Question Research

Why did Shinzo Abe resign sooner from his administration although he obtained majority support?

D. Purpose and Benefit of Research

This research has many purposes, i.e.

1. To describe the Japanese system (political system and cultural system)
2. To explain the action of Shinzo Abe (resigning of Abe from his position).

Academically, this research will provide a better understanding of current issues on Japanese system, especially the political and cultural system, as well as the factors that underline Abe's resignation.

Generally the purpose of research is to find, develop or examine the truth about one thing. In this research the writer tries to analyze to get the answer and built a hypothesis. The writer hopes this research will give knowledge for the reader

E. **Theoretical Framework**

A theory is the general explanation why something could happen and predict when it happened. The functions of a theory are to explain and base or reference to predict. A theory can explain a phenomenon, understand, analyze and also predict when or how the phenomena take place.

Based on those explanations the writer uses decision making theory especially bounded rationality tradition from Glen H. Snyder.

> "Decision making process is said to combine rational elements, value considerations in which the rational may be synthesized with the nonrational, the irrational, or the supranational, and such irrational or nonrational of factors as the physic complexes of the policymakers"[7].

In the other word it can conclude that decision made by several considerations that supported by many value such as: politic, economy, culture and also the personality of the decision maker. The decision making theorist, like most historians:

> "They would agree that biographical knowledge about policymaker including their education, religion, critical life experiences, professional training, foreign travel, mental and physical health, and previous political activities might help to cast light upon the deepest motives and values of those who make specific decision"[8].

The statement explains that the decision was influenced by the external and internal factor. The decision which taken by someone would be different with the decision that taken by the other people even in the same case.

Snyder stated that "in the bounded rationality tradition

> "One assumes that if a choice must be made between two different values (e.g., peace and national security), there is no rational way of calculating how much of one should be sacrificed to obtain a given amount of the other"[9]

It means that the decision which made by decision maker is made with consideration and combine several aspects, the external aspect and internal aspect. Internal aspects are the ratio and the way of thinking of the decision maker, external is the condition where the decision made. The aspects or the values which exist in the decision support each other.

That theory also supported by John D. Steinbuner

> "He doubts that human beings normally try to analyze complex problem by breaking them down into all their logical components (which rational theory requires them to do), or that they have access to all of the information and perform all of the calculations, especially with regard to value trade-offs (which the classic theory presupposes)"[10].

It also means that the decision was made from the logical process which consists of many values. So, at the first time when people face a problem, they use the certain value to decide. They do not use their ratio directly. It proves that the value in the surrounding of the decision maker is very important. The decision is

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[9] *Ibid*, page 478
[10] *Ibid*,, page479

made by many considerations and values, the values are not independent but they support each other.

Shinzo Abe was the Japanese Prime Minister, he resign from his position because many scandals emerge in his administration. The decreasing support from his citizens indicates that he failed to govern his state. The problems began when the record of pension fund was lost because the privatization. Then the other scandal is the corruption in his ministry, and the suicide tragedy of his ministry. The impact of these incidents decreased number of LDP's seats in the upper house, although they still became majority in the lower house.

The other reason is his personal health problem, i.e. the digestion problem. The doctor said that Abe suffered from chronical gastrointestinal inflammatin[11]. The health problem disturbs Abe in running his program, when he is stressed then his health condition drops. So, Abe cannot do the best for the government.

The case of resigning of Shinzo Abe as the Japanese Prime Minister can be analyzed by using the theory. Abe resigned because he lost the support from citizen by defeat of LDP in the upper house (due to many incident), although LDP still became the majority vote in the lower house. As a matter of fact Abe still get power to be a Prime Minister but in the reality he resigns. If analyzed using Snyder theory,

[11] *Suara Merdeka*, "Stress, Shinzo Abe Masuk Rumah Sakit", from http://www.suaramerdeka.com/harian/0709/14/int05.htm, down loaded February 2nd 2008

the decision which taken by Abe is influence by many value, political value and cultural value. Politically Abe was still admitted to be the Prime Minister because the LDP still owned majority vote in lower house and ran his program. Culturally, Abe must be responsible to all of his actions. In Japan there is a special value for the leader, in the past time when leaders failed to do their job they should commit a suicide which is also known as hara-kiri especially in the samurai era. He do this kind of think to cover the shame, they would rather die than live in shame. Harakiri (Hara = stomach, Kiru = stabbed) usually the Japanese use word Seppuku which has similar meaning with Harakiri. This custom is the knight art which called Bushido in Samurai era; it had begun since 12th century. Harakiri is not only a suicide but it should go through a special ceremony that ruled like marriage process.

Before someone done Harakiri, he must appoint an assistant as an executioner (Kaishaku-Nin). The executioner cuts the head of the man. The people who does Harakiri must not show the weak face, cannot complain and a scared face. To prevent it when the man stabbed his stomach the executioner cut his head. This way was taken because the sense of guilty (Feeling of responsibility for negative circumstances that have befallen yourself or others.)[12]. Then if someone does the wrong think he will respond to his irrational self by reinforcing his irrational thinking, giving you a sense of blame, for past, present, or future actions.

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[12] Handling Guilt, from http://jizzo.wordpress.com/2007/07/05/hamkiri-bunuh-diri. Down loaded 19

However in the modern era when leaders fail to fulfill his duty they must resign from their position. This phenomenon had made Japan special and different from the other democratic countries. The successions in the other democratic countries usually happen because of general election and coup de etat. However in Japan, the successions may take place due to general election, coup de etat, and the resigning process. It is proven by the number of the Japanese Prime Ministers. The big number emerges because when he fail do his duty the Prime Minister should resign and is replaced by the other candidate. Some politicians do the Harakiri in the modern style by resigning from his position to reflect his sense of guilty. Yoshiro Mori resigned from his position because the accident of Ehime Maru ship, he thought that the accident is his responsibility so he reflects his guilty by resigning as Japanese Prime Minister. The other example is Uno Sosuke resignation as Japanese Prime Minister after the publication his affair with a geisha. He was very embarrassed and decides to resign.

Based on Snyder statement, it can be concluded that there is no rational way to think why Abe resigned from his position although he still had power but he done. Abe resigned because his shame of his failure to fulfill his duty, this decision is influenced by cultural value. So, in the resigning decision he sacrificed his power (political value) because of cultural value or to obtain the cultural value, actually Abe still has the power to be a Prime Minister because he gets the majority support in Lower House. Political value is the ability to influence the other by using power. It

means that the use of power to influence the other people to get a certain goal. Cultural value is the beliefs, customs, practices, and social behavior of a particular nation or people[13]. So, culture is the product of society that made by the interaction of the certain people in the certain area. The culture in one place is different from the culture in the other place. In his resignation Abe says that the main reason why he resigns is because of his health problem, but it just like a lip service to cover the real reasons.

F. Hypothesis

The reason why Shinzo Abe resigned from being a Japanese Prime Minister was because of the guilty feeling. He thinks that he failed to do his job and it would be better if he resigned even he still owned the majority support in parliament.

G. Method of Research

To explain the problem the writer used library research. The writer gets the information from collecting references in form of books, magazines, newspapers, and journals. The writer also used various data from internet since some information and

data dealing with the topic forwarded are only available in internet. Then, the data collected was analyzed by using some theories.

H. System of Writing

The outline of this thesis is described following:

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A. Preface

B. Background

C. Research Question

D. Purpose and Benefit of Research

E. Theoretical Framework

F. Hypothesis

G. Method of Research

H. System of Writing

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1. The Position of Emperor
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D. PRIME MINISTER

1. The Position of Prime Minister
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1. Lost of Pension Fund
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CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION