

# How Prime Minister Hatoyama Can Stop The “Japan Bashing”

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Japan should not allow itself to be publicly humiliated by the world’s biggest human rights abuser. It has many tools at its disposal which can be used to persuade sanctimonious senators and flannel-mouth congressmen that they need to stop their belligerent grandstanding for the cameras. The new Japanese government—particularly Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama—should be proactive in defending the reputation of its premier car manufacturer and national icon, Toyota. This is more than just a matter of saving face. It’s a way to change the fundamental relationship between the United States and Japan by demanding that each partner be treated with respect and dignity. To achieve this goal, the prime minister should convene an emergency meeting of his administration and top members of the business community. They should outline the steps that will be taken if there is not a manifest improvement in the rhetoric and an end to the Japan bashing.

The Japanese central bank (BOJ) presently holds more than \$1 trillion US Treasuries and dollar-backed assets. PM Hatoyama should announce that USTs will be liquidated incrementally at 5 percent per week until the balance is zero.

The government should warn that it will temporarily close Toyota plants now operating in the United States at a pace of one per month.

There should be a thorough review of import tariff policy, with the prospect of raising tariffs on US imports by 30 to 50 percent.

US nationals working in Japan should be required to update their Visas on a monthly basis pending resolution of the Toyota controversy.

New regulations and taxes should be targeted at US industries and financial institutions operating in Japan.

Hatoyama should appoint a blue ribbon commission to determine whether US military bases in Japan should be terminated or mothballed.

Toyota should make every effort to repair its vehicles and make sure that the people who were injured or killed are fairly compensated. That said, it’s mistake for the government to sit back and allow Toyota (and Japan) to be dragged through the mud in front of the entire world. The assault on Toyota has far exceeded any response by congress to the many US corporations who pollute the air, poison the water, or destroy the environment with impunity.

The US congress—which supported a war that killed over one million Iraqis—is in no position to pass judgment on others. It is a thoroughly corrupt institution.

Japan needs to defend its national honor. It's up to Prime Minister Hatoyama, to let Washington know—in no uncertain terms— that the attacks on Toyota will stop immediately or there will be a heavy price to pay.

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