The Liberal Democratic Party has been committed to fundamental change in Japan’s constitutional order since the party was founded in 1955. In 2012, the party published detailed proposals to amend the Constitution that would sharply increase the power of the state and reduce protection for individual rights. The party attacks individual rights protection as based on “Western natural rights theory” that is inappropriate for Japan. The revisions would also impose a new set of “constitutional duties” on the people, including to respect Meiji-era nationalist symbols. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is deeply committed to this program. This chapter examines these proposals for constitutional change and how they may affect the allocation of power and the lives of the Japanese people.

Police officers have a bleak vision of the future world and of Europe. They anticipate the breakdown of law and order, with violent public order problems and tensions within social groups, particularly those which have immigrant status or ethnic/religious identity. This is likely to be largely an urban problem where polarisation between ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ will lead to confrontation. The gendarmeries of Europe are positioning
themselves in anticipation of such events. Others point to the need for police forces to become more active against on-line crime and for the recruitment of officers who have expertise in IT software and system engineering. A more general option was ‘to recruit to purpose’, thus acquiring expertise in matters like money-laundering and fraud, as well as in cyberspace.