

# The Renunciation of War – A 69-year record.

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Seeing is believing.  
One truly grasps  
War's horrible brutality  
Only when seeing  
Each appalling corpse,  
Each stolen life,  
Killed by weapons of war.

In wartime,  
Family members, neighbors, kind people  
Become savages  
And do what?  
Media reporting never conveys  
The true terror of war.  
Enemies, too, become savages.  
And savages kill each other...

They kill each other  
With weapons that  
Multiply their killing power  
Many times,  
Many thousands of times.  
But nuclear weapons are the worst.  
In nuclear war

Civilians, the elderly,  
Children, even newborns  
Are slaughtered. Not just soldiers.

Yet,  
The Japanese media has never shown actual corpses from war.  
“They are too shocking.”  
“They would embarrass the bereaved family.”  
“They would be an offense to the deceased.”

Near the end of WW II ,  
Having lost its conscripted male population,  
Japan instituted home front “student mobilization,”  
Drafting even elementary school students.  
Subsequent bombings killed them in droves.

Although Japan’s killing started the war,  
It was we Japanese  
At the war’s end  
Whose life spans fell to  
23.9 years for men, 37.5 years for women. ✖  
Worse yet, 60% of Japanese soldiers  
Who died on the battle front  
Died of hunger.  
And as is well-known worldwide,  
21 million died in neighboring countries,  
20 million of them civilians.

Since then, for 69 years,  
No Japanese has killed  
A single foreigner with weapons in war.  
Japan’s new postwar constitution swore,  
“Japan will never again use force to settle international disputes,” ✖  
A resolution wrought in

The terrible experience  
Of massacring  
And being massacred.

Japanese were rumored abroad  
To be working themselves "to death" like ants.  
Yet present day 2014 Japanese life expectancy  
Has more than doubled  
To 80 years for men, 86 years for women.

"Living" means  
A newborn becoming a child, an adult,  
An elderly man or woman.  
Accident, illness sometimes halts it,  
But all humans consider it their right.  
Mutual killing, war  
Cannot violate that right.



Our young prime minister  
Minimizes Japan's role in starting the war.  
But in reality, he knows nothing,  
Understands nothing,  
Tries to learn nothing  
About the war victims and their deaths.  
He has instigated a crisis, swearing that he is  
"Protecting the people of Japan."  
He prepares Japan for war,  
Prepares Japan for more killing,  
Shortening the time until  
Humans hands will  
Pile up mounds of corpses  
Made of friends and foes alike.  
Now, without Diet or citizens consultation,

Only a cabinet vote  
Could reinterpret our constitution  
To abolish our renunciation of war.

The exceedingly horrible footage  
Of radiation victims' corpses  
Has long been sealed.  
No words of remorse were spoken  
At the 8/15 remembrance ceremony.  
Instead, to the families of the dead, they said,  
"They paid the ultimate price for their country."  
To us civilians, they said,  
"It was war. There was no other choice,"  
Then, at the end, they said,  
"Rest in peace. May our world also have peace."

Unsatisfied with only economic might,  
Japan aims for military might.  
Preparations for war,  
Preparations for Japan to kill again,  
Move forward.  
The Japanese media, in concert with  
Generations of clever politicians,  
has always implicitly agreed  
In deceptive kindness  
Never to broadcast  
Pictures or images of the dead  
From any country at war,  
No matter how far away.



From now on, I want us to have  
The wisdom to discern  
When our politicians lie.

Nations should bind themselves,  
Not to wartime treaties  
For safety and security  
But to treaties of friendship.  
We must have  
Interpersonal bonds  
That transcend national boundaries.

No matter how gut-wrenching,  
The government's and media's duty is  
To show all photographs, all images,  
Of each and every wartime death,  
Whether of friend or of foe.  
It is in turn  
Our duty to view  
Every one.  
Release them all!  
We don't need elegantly phrased lies  
For the repose of souls.  
Nor do we need  
Chest-thumping reports of military victories.

Let's take seriously the lives  
That war has stolen away.  
Make renunciation of war a given.  
Let's transcend our savagery  
And be human again.

Notes:

❖ 1 From the August 15, 2014 edition of the Asahi newspaper

❖ 2 **The Constitution of Japan**

## **Chapter ii. Renunciation of war**

article 9.

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.