Japanese Responsibility 
for War Crimes 

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[I] A formal Speech by Mr. Hitoshi Motoshima, Mayor of Nagasaki City, on the Showa Emperor's War Responsibility and the Speech's Repercussions

On the 7th of December, 1988, in reply to a question by a member of the municipal council of Nagasaki City, Mayor Motoshima expressed his belief in the responsibility of Showa Emperor (who is called Showa Tenno in Japan and who is simply denominated as the Tenno in this article) for Japanese war crimes. His answer gave a big shock to the journalists who were observing the debates in the city council as a matter of routine. Television news programs and newspapers made striking reports on the Mayor's answer locally and nationwide.

At the time of the Mayor's reply to the member's question, the other members, especially those who belong to the conservative parties, did not take notice of its importance. Stupidly they noticed its seriousness only after they watched television news programs and read newspapers. Then at the next day's debate in the council, they raised their voices in a flurry of protest against Mayor Motoshima.

At the same time, the conservative and right wing people began to blame, reproach, condemn and attack the Mayor with much ado. Their clamor became louder and louder in and out of Nagasaki City.

Every day after the news of his talk circulated, to the Mayor rushed a
storm of protest by telephone calls, telegrams, postal cards and letters. In addition to this protest, there came not a few intimidations by the extreme conservative and right wing people. They violently demanded that he should withdraw his formal speech with threats and pressure. Day after day for many months thereafter, all of the telephones of the secretaries, the exchange room and night duty room of the city hall as well as of his residence had been engaged by those intimidations, threats and denunciations.

Mayor Motoshima was struck with the feeling of uneasiness, solitude, loneliness, fear and terror. He confessed that he was at those times “sad and solitary”, “dejected” and “isolated” without any support and help. The main members of his private supporters’ association advised him to make some explanation to soften the protest and threatening. He did not follow their advice, because his formal speech was the result of his own belief embraced for 44 years since the Japanese surrender.

Fear and terror swelled in him on the occasion when so many right winger’s black sound trucks stormed to Nagasaki City and cried out “Motoshima is irreverent to His Majesty Tenno”, “Motoshima is not a Japanese”, “Kill Motoshima” and so on, surrounding the city hall and driving along every street of Nagasaki for many days. He was very sorry for their sound trucks’ causing noise and traffic congestion and creating terror in Nagasaki citizens.

It was on the 15th of December that not a few people including me declared a statement which supported Mayor Motoshima’s expression of Tenno’s responsibility as quite right, respecting freedom of expression as the basic right of democratic society and insisting on the necessity of reflecting upon Japanese military aggression and of freely discussing the Tenno system and the Tenno’s war responsibility. And we appealed for people to sign our statement. On that day, the Mayor watched the television news of our announcement of the appeal. At that time, he felt so glad that tears
came into his eyes.

He regained his self-confidence, because he found there were people who understood him and who thought his answer was not wrong. He was encouraged to decide never to withdraw his conviction concerning the Tenno's war responsibility.

Soon after our appeal, he also received the support of the labor-union of the members of the city hall administration staff.

At this time, the circumstances surrounding him have changed dramatically, although there still have been a lot of disturbances, threats, right wingers' propaganda cries and the pressure of the conservative parties, the Liberal Democratic Party and so on. In addition to the right wing, the extreme conservative people in Nagasaki formed an organization against Mayor Motoshima. The organization demanded that he should retract his opinion of the Emperor's war responsibility, and if not, to resign as the Mayor.

In spite of these disturbances and threats, the situation has completely changed. The telephones calls, telegrams, postal cards and letters which supported and encouraged him began to rush to him and to our group of citizens.

Our group of citizens was formally organized as the result of the extension of our citizens' supporting activities. Day by day, a lot of signatures poured into our small office from all over Japan even after the time limit for our collecting signatures. We thought that it was necessary and useful for us to make an organization to continuously collect signatures, give support to the Mayor and pursue democratic freedom of thought and expression. The name of the organization was denominated as "Nagasaki Citizens' Group for Pursuing the Freedom of Expression".

There were discussions among us when we intended to decide the name of our group. As above mentioned, our statement has three items of
appeal. The three items are as follows. (1) The Mayor's remarks are quite right, (2) the freedom of thought and expression should be established in Japan, and (3) it is necessary for us Japanese to reflect upon the Japanese aggression in Asia and to freely discuss the Tenno system and the Tenno's war responsibility. Considering these three points, it would be the best to nominate the group as "pursuing the Tenno's war responsibility". The main target of our activities is to make clear the Tenno's war responsibility. But after discussion, we decided to nominate our group by the means of seeking after the Tenno problem. We had to consider the anti-democratic and anti-humanistic violence of right wing figures.

At the same time, we discussed selecting the person who would be the representative of the group. He might be threatened severely and attacked by the right wing and extreme conservative people for a long time. After short discussion, I accepted the position of the representative.

Our organization became widely known by our direct sending of our statement to groups and individuals not only in Japan but also in some European countries. A great many signatures which vigorously supported Mayor Motoshima and our group were sent to our office day after day like a flood. We were heartily encouraged by those accumulated signatures with donations from supporters.

Not a few journalists of newspapers, magazines and televisions not only of Japan but also of the U. S. proposed to interview us as well as the Mayor. Many people got to know about our activities and proposed to put their own signatures to our statement.

This phenomenon is an extraordinary important social and political movement of the mass of the people in Japan, which we have never had in the history of the Tenno system.
The outcries of the mass of the people

By the end of the summer season, we obtained a remarkable number of signatures which approved the Mayor’s remarks and supported our activities. The number of the signatures has mounted to 382,313, which have come not only from all over Japan but also from some European countries.

I must point out, however, this number is not so large when we compare it with the whole number of the Japanese people. Some newspapers have recently taken surveys of public opinion about the Japanese and the Tenno’s war responsibility. According to these surveys, the percentage of the people who consider the Tenno bears the war responsibility is about 25, and is a little less than that of the people who do not consider that to be the case, excepting those of no response. Therefore, we cannot say it is most of the Japanese people that support the Mayor’s remarks and our statement. Notwithstanding, we were convinced, through our collection of the signatures to our appeal, that the mass of the Japanese people did not forget the suffering, hardship and distress of wartime which were brought about by the Tenno and that they eagerly wanted to have freedom of thought and expression about the Tenno problem, although they did not seem to have a clear idea of their own part in Japanese aggression.

I thought we should explain our idea of the Tenno system and Japanese war crimes and the significance of our activities to foreign people, especially to foreign press persons. But I was too busy to write about the system which committed war crimes and the situation of the Mayor and our group.

One day in December, 1988, Ms. Susan Chira, New York Times reporter in Tokyo, came to Nagasaki to interview the Mayor and some of our group. It was a very good chance to report our ideas and our hard situation to foreign people through mass media.
Her article was published in the N. Y. Times of December 29, 1988. But it did not refer to my long speech on my reflections on the aggressive war, based on my hard experience during and after the war. She seemed to have few concerns about the history of suffering of the Japanese common people under the absolute Tenno system and their earnest reflections on the aggressive war. Excepting that of the Mayor, she referred only to speeches of young people who did not have war experience.

It may be, however, helpful for the readers to understand the objective situation of the Mayor and our group to quote here some parts of Ms. Chira's article.

The title of her article is as follows: Is Hirohito Free of War Guilt? The Risks of Defying a Taboo.

The beginning of the columns is as follows:

NAGASAKI, Japan, Dec. 27 — People have been threatening to kill the Mayor of Nagasaki.

Three weeks ago, the Mayor, Hitoshi Motoshima, violated one of Japan's most delicate taboos by publicly suggesting that Emperor Hirohito bears some responsibility for World War II.

Since then, a man has been arrested trying to break into his office with a can of gasoline; right-wing figures have threatened him and his family, and the police have warned him that it is too dangerous to take his daily morning walk.

He has been attacked not only by the far right but also by the governing Liberal Democratic Party, which ousted him as an adviser to its Nagasaki party branch and pledged not to cooperate with him on city policy. And he was dismissed as chairman of a local patriotic association.

And then, Ms. Chira explained her observation on the present situation of Japanese democracy, as follows;
The furor over his statement reflects issues still unresolved here: the complex, emotional symbol that is the Emperor, his role in postwar Japan and the latent passions of a devastating war. It also suggests some of the anomalies in Japan’s democracy, where the principle of free speech is tempered by unspoken agreements to avoid certain highly charged subjects.

It is not that some Japanese do not agree with the Mayor. They just usually do not say so publicly. Even when the Emperor was in good health, most Japanese obeyed what they call the Chrysanthemum taboo, which covers information about the Emperor or his family, his wartime role or what happens when he dies.

The Mayor’s comments have particular resonance here in Nagasaki, where the Americans dropped a second atomic bomb in August 1945 to jolt Japanese officials into agreeing to surrender. On the aims of the American dropping of the atomic bombs and their real effects on the Japanese political and military leaders, there must be many discussions and reflections. But here, these are beside the points, and so will follow the next parts of her column.

As Hirohito lies gravely ill, and most Japanese heed a tacit agreement not to criticize him, Mr. Motoshima’s frankness is doubly shocking.

“I didn’t think that in a democratic society with freedom of speech, this would become such big news,” he said, sitting in his office and flanked by security guards who even check the rest-room before he uses it. “But I feel as if I have thrown a stone in a pond — at a taboo issue and at the issue of free speech — and the ripples have been spreading.”

Mr. Motoshima threw his stone during a city assembly meeting, when a Japan Communist Party legislator asked him about
the Emperor’s war responsibility. The 66-year-old Mayor replied, in language that struck many Japanese as blunt:

“If I look at the descriptions in Japanese and foreign histories, and reflect on my experiences in the military in the educational training of soldiers, in that regard I think the Emperor has war responsibility. But based on the will of a majority of Japanese and Allied countries, the Emperor escaped and became a symbol in the new Constitution, and we have to act under that understanding.”

This part shows the brief essentials of the Mayor’s remarks in the city assembly on the 7th December, 1988. And then Ms. Chira explains about the debates on the Tenno’s war responsibility among scholars in and out of Japan.

Scholars in and out of Japan still disagree about the extent of Hirohito’s influence of the conduct of the war. Many say he, like most of his ancestors, was a figurehead. Others say that at a time when the Emperor was so glorified that all Japanese were forced to bow and avert their eyes when they passed the Imperial Palace, he should have used this mystique to oppose advisers who wanted the war and should have stepped in earlier to stop it.

In this description there is a big question. I don’t think many scholars regard Tenno Hirohito as only a figurehead. His mystique was so majestic that Japanese common people were willing and eager to obey his orders without regarding their own security. Emperor Hirohito, however, listening to his advisers, had no objection to mobilize his own army and to start war both in China and in South East Asian countries, US, UK and the Netherlands. It is estimated that the number of the scholars who said the Tenno was only a figurehead is not so large. It was the Tenno’s own wish not to have opposed the outbreak of war.

The article in the New York Times continues, as follows;
The Mayor said he has received more than 3,000 letters, postcards and telegrams, with more than 80 percent praising him for his forthrightness or recounting painful memories of relatives who died in the Emperor's name. A Nagasaki citizen's group that was formed to support the Mayor collected nearly 14,000 signatures in one week.

The paper briefly refers to the formation of our citizen's group but does not introduce the name of the group nor the name of the representative. It is obvious that this way of description does not give an outline of the group. The reporter does not show so much concern for the citizen's group itself. But she seems to take a great interest in the tendency and character of the Japanese democracy and freedom of expression. Consequently it should be quite natural, I think, to describe the group a little more minutely.

The next paragraph shows the situation of the Japanese journalism:

Japanese newspapers published editorials criticizing those who would try to silence the Mayor, even though the press ordinarily avoids discussion of the Emperor's wartime role and has devoted scant coverage to many small-scale protests denouncing Hirohito, generally presenting a portrait of a nation united by respect.

It is natural that she has much criticism towards the mass media in Japan.

The editorials and the Mayor's supporters say the issue of free speech has taken on more urgency now, when the nation is facing the prospect of a new Emperor and fresh debate about what his role should be in an economically powerful Japan.

In this paragraph, the reporter's primary concern has become obvious. The issue of free speech in Japan seems to be the most interesting matter for her. Then historical facts of the suffering, hardship and distress
of the mass of the Japanese people under the Emperor system before, during and after the aggressive war do not seem to be her primary concern. It should be noted that the repression against free speech in Japan had been traditional during the period of the absolute Tenno system and that the same condition have continued even under the new Japanese Constitution, so far as the Tenno and his family are concerned. Lack of free speech regarding the Tenno system has long been common even after the war. It is the system that has caused the repression of free speech for a long time throughout the Japanese history.

In the next three paragraphs, Ms. Chira quotes the talks of my younger colleagues, Mr. Yasunori Takazane and Mr. Keiichi Tsuneishi, referring to free speech and democracy. I would like to omit those paragraphs.

After these three paragraphs, she describes the violent activities of the rightists, which are the most typical destruction of freedom of speech and democracy.

In the weeks since the Mayor spoke out, nearly 100 sound trucks have descended on the streets of Nagasaki, blaring threats against the Mayor couched in the same phrases used to identify targets for the waves of political assassinations that set Japan of the path to militarism in the 1930’s. The trucks brought traffic to a standstill and prompted the city’s schools to post signs asking for quiet, at least in school districts.

After this description, she refers to other groups which stand against the Mayor, but opposing the violent tactics of the right wingers. The genuine sentiment of those groups seems to represent the feeling of most Japanese people who are against the Mayor’s attitude and remarks. She quotes the speech of one member of such groups:

“We just think it’s improper to debate it when a person is ill in
Mr. Kitamura said he does not oppose debate on the Emperor at an appropriate time, but believes that the Emperor's special place in Japanese hearts prevents them from discussing questions like war responsibility. "For Japanese, the Emperor itself might be a subject unsuitable for debate. . . . People may not feel it consciously, but they have a vague feeling of security because the Emperor is there. If we debate, people might feel this security was threatened."

For such kind of feelings, as calling on the Mayor to retract his words or resign, suppression of the Mayor is not a question of free speech, but one of propriety, as Mr. Kitamura said. For the Japanese, the problem of speech concerning the Tenno and the Emperor system is beyond the problem of free speech itself, because it should be solemnly restricted by the mystical and majestic character of the Emperor system which is beyond democracy.

Ms. Chira concluded her article by quoting my friend Takazane's speaking of his own feelings:

I don't think we will go back to prewar days. People's feelings and hopes for democracy and freedom are now much more deeply rooted in Japan. That's how I felt collecting these signatures.

It is evident that she might be most interested in the future tendency of Japanese free speech, better or worse, which can be foreseen by some vigorous activists, because this is the most attractive point for the journalists.

But for my own part, her article is not adequate, because it did not dig deeper for the reason why free speech has long been so weak in Japan. It is, however, not an academic article but a journalistic column, which has no mission to dig for the historical causes but only to briefly inform of the present conditions and the probable future tendency of Japanese free speech and democracy to the common readers in foreign countries who have been
unfamiliar with those problems.

It is not my purpose in this essay to criticize one column written by one journalist of foreign newspaper. But it is very useful for us to make the point of review as clear as possible. Especially Japanese freedom of expression is not so simple that the methodology of western civilization which has developed freedom and democracy throughout history is valid.

According to the methodology of western civilization, the value of freedom of speech, discussion and expression is unconditionally important among the common people who have equal human rights. But in Japan, the value of freedom is conditionally and comparatively important among the common people who do not have equal human rights compared with the Tenno and his family.

Therefore, the case of Mayor Motoshima's remarks should not be considered on the level of freedom of expression but on the war responsibility of the Emperor himself.

Before going further, it may be useful to refer to the communications of other foreign newspapers concerning Mayor Motoshima's remarks and their repercussions. The Japanese newspapers have sometimes informed of the reports of the Motoshima problem published in foreign newspapers. According to those descriptions, the Chinese correspondent for Xinhua News Agency has often reported about Motoshima's remarks, the oppositional violence by the right wingers and the supporting activities by the civilians. On 24 of December, 1988, the Shin Hua Shiye reported that Professor Shigetoshi Iwamatsu and his citizens group had declared the statement which approved the Mayor's remarks to be quite right and which severely criticized the violent trampling of the freedom of thought and expression and his group had presented more than 13700 signatures which they had collected from supporters living all over Japan to the Mayor on that day. Furthermore, it reported three organizations of teachers and scientists in
Nagasaki had issued the statement supporting the Mayor and some other organizations of lawyers and women had been preparing their own supporting activities. At the same time, it reported the right-wingers had still been continuing the violent opposing activities.

[III] The connection between the freedom of expression and the Emperor system

The lack of freedom in Japan comes from the undemocratic character of its society in which both the common people and the royal families exist.

We should think over the real causes of the Japanese war crimes against peace and humanity, originated by the spirit of the Japanese people who dedicated themselves to the Tenno Emperor. The problem of Japanese freedom of expression should not be discussed in the dimension of freedom but on that of the political society, democratic or undemocratic. The criticism of the right-wingers and conservative groups toward Mayor Motoshima comes from their political and social attitude towards the Tenno system, not from their attitude towards freedom of expression. They say that they respect the freedom of expression, as one virtue of the democracy, but they cannot forgive the Mayor Motoshima’s speaking concerning the Emperor’s war responsibility, because, for them, the problem of the Emperor’s innocence is far beyond the freedom of expression.

I already described the formation of the denomination of our citizens group “Nagasaki Citizens’ Group for Pursuing the Freedom of Expression” as our second best selection. Our choice is strictly connected with our own lives, especially with my life, being the delegate of the group. It was supposed to be highly probable for us to be assassinated by the rightist groups, if we named our group as “Citizens’ Group for Pursuing the Tenno’s War Responsibility”. For them, the prominent people pursuing the Tenno’s war
responsibility would deserve death. Mayor Motoshima was severely criticized and attacked by the right wing faction and conservative administrative party, not because of their restriction of expression but because of their strict loyalty to the Emperor system.

[M] The frailty of the Japanese people reflecting upon their own war crimes

Showa Tenno was, apparently, the most critical criminal in imperial Japan, because of his supreme status of power. At the same time, it is clear that the Japanese people should assume the responsibility for the aggressive and cruel war. They should be to blame for the aggression and cruel acts through their loyal dedication to the Emperor. The Japanese people have absolutely respected the Emperor as the Supreme Being. They have been taught and trained to have great respect for the Emperor as God since the Meiji era (1868–1912). The Emperor has been revered as a descendent divine being not only by the Japanese people but by the Korean people since the Japanese colonial rule of the Koreans. During the Japanese aggression and rule of China and South East Asian countries, those Asian people had to revere the Tenno as God and prayed to him living in Tokyo for his blessing and benevolence.

The Japanese army and navy believed themselves as those belonging to the Imperial Tenno. Their fighting and war had been carried on by the royal order which should be absolutely right. The Japanese war should be the "Holy War" which was regarded as based on royal justice.

Every deed which had been performed by the Japanese forces was to be regarded as absolute good. The Japanese had, therefore, no idea of "war crimes". Nothing wrong could be done by the Japanese people, they thought. The Japanese considered themselves as keeping to the right. For them, the imperial orders which the commanding officers issued in the bat-
tlefields had been sacred and righteous.

The Japanese soldiers had no military education concerning international law, especially war crimes, though the officers had studied every kind of higher education at military school.

The soldiers were kept innocent and prohibited from protesting or disobeying the commanding orders in any case, which they were forced to consider as the imperial orders. The responsibility of the part of officers is much more important than that of soldiers.

It becomes clear, now, what the real cause of the Japanese war crimes was. That should be called as the Emperor system.

[V] The Tenno system as a dual structure of assaulters and the Japanese people as a dual structure of assaulters and sufferers

The war crimes which the Emperor system committed during the war could be summarized as a dual structure — one is a horizontal assaulter and the other a perpendicular one, which I designated nine years ago in my Japanese book, “Anti-Nukes and War Responsibility” published by San-ichi Shobo in 1982.

The horizontal assaulter is the Japanese aggression and cruelties to foreign people and foreign countries.

The perpendicular assaulter is the violence which the imperial system had done to the Japanese people and to the Korean and Chinese people living in Japan.

The reason for my pointing out the dual structure of assaulters is to make the crimes performed by the Japanese ruling organization plain.

The horizontal assaults by the Japanese ruler should be very easily recognized. It is, however, not easy to perceive the perpendicular relation between the ruling organization and the common people in Japan. And the
recognition of this relation is essential for us to understand the Japanese social and political structure of making the aggressive war.

The imperial system, which has been standing on the top of the society, ordered war against foreign peoples in the name of “Holy War”. The Japanese common people faithfully obeyed the imperial proclamation and committed every kind of war crime without recognition of crime the understanding of the system of relationship between rule and obedience prevailing in Japan is essential for perceiving the dual structure of the mass of the Japanese people. It should be noticed that the rule and obey system is not single but stratified. The lower people have more fetters of stratified systems. At any rate, the people have committed crimes against other peoples only through their faithful obedience to the Emperor.

The people’s commission represents their character of the assailant, and their faithfulness of obeying the royal orders represents the injured character.

The multitude of Japanese have a dual structure, assaulters and, at the same time, sufferers.

The Japanese people have been very conscious of their being the injured. But it should be noticed that their consciousness of the casualties was restricted to the economic, material and familial dimension. They never forget their own loss and damage.

They have not criticized the Emperor and Emperor system, even though their damage afflicted by the war was so severe. After the war, they have appealed for no more war, no more Hiroshima, and no more Nagasaki. They have, however, not criticized the imperial proclamations and orders, his status, and his system.

The “peace” appeal of the Japanese people came from their agony which they had during their experience as the war wounded, prisoners, repatriates, war widows, war orphans, sufferers of air-raids, sufferers of
atomic bombs and other war victims.

It was very difficult for the mass of the Japanese people to understand that the original cause of their suffering and damages was the Emperor system. They had been too patriotic and loyal to criticize the royal system.

Their patriotism and loyalty to the Imperial Tenno have urged them to think over their war against Asian countries, USA, UK, Holland, Australia, NZ, and so on, as the "Holy Wars" with "a causus belli" made by the imperial proclamations. Patriotism and fidelity have prevented them from being conscious of their own position as atrocious assailants.

The various kinds of pacifism for which the Japanese government and people have appealed to the world after the war stand on the viewpoint of the aggrieved sufferers by the battles and combats.

As I already pointed out, I have long been a critic of the Japanese way of thinking. In order to find the way to criticize such way of thinking, I invented the terminology of "dual structure of assailters" of the Emperor system and of "dual structure of assailters and sufferers" of the Japanese people.

The incompleteness of the peoples' consciousness of their standing point of the sufferers has prevented them from thinking over their own brutal aggressors. Their consciousness of holy wars with a casus belli did afford no scope for reflection and discussion of their position of aggressors and assailters against foreign peoples.

Such paradoxical logic of the Japanese incompleteness in their consciousness of the sufferers has prevented them from understanding their own position of aggressors. I found this paradoxical logic concerning the relationship between sufferers and aggressors as well as the dual structures of the imperial system and of the mass of people. If the Japanese people could be exhaustive in thinking of the agony of the sufferers, they would have found their own position as fiendish aggressors, because there were no
sufferers without aggressors.

Japanese peace appeals should not come from the atomic bombing to Hiroshima and Nagasaki but from deep self-reflection of their aggression. This is my own important principle which I, one of the atom bomb sufferers, gained through my long working for peace. At the same time, I have been convinced that the Japanese political and mental life is dominated by self-preoccupation and egocentricity.

[V] Japanese aggression against Asian peoples

Japanese people have much concern about the connection with USA, but have very little concern about the Asian peoples, except trading in economic resources and destroying the natural environment. They have remembrance of Pearl Harbor but have no knowledge of Kota Bharu.

I had a chance to meet and talk with Ms. Maureen Yeow three Years ago, who came to Japan from West Malaysia. I had much time to talk with her not only on the war but also on Japanese economic aggression in the present time. After her return to Malaysia, she tried to get the stories of elderly people who had experienced the Japanese occupation.

She wrote to me in November, 1988, as follows:

Many elderly people broke down and cried when they were asked to write about their experiences. It is very, very painful for many of them and many still cannot forgive the Japanese for killing their families. All of them say, "The bomb saved us."

This letter gave me a great shock. My asking for their writing about the war experiences which they had had during the Japanese diabolical aggression gave them unendurable grief.

Besides, it is shocking to know that all of them said "the bomb saved us". The bomb means the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
As I already mentioned, I am one of the atom bomb survivors who suffered from the Plutonium 239 bomb at the distance of 1,300 meters from the hypocenter, which was too near to survive without something to shade and protect me from the three critical effects of the unclear fission — heat-rays, shock-waves and radiation.

My idea, however, is very different from that of the other atom bomb sufferers. As I have repeated, the essence of my thoughts on peace is that the Japanese people are, at first, atrocious aggressors against Asian peoples and countries, and, secondly, war sufferers. The Japanese suffered from the bombs, because they took up arms and trampled Asian countries under foot.

The Japanese have appealed for peace without nuclear arms and testing for a long time. For about almost 30 years, I have made another appeal — the Japanese should recognize themselves as brutal aggressors, apologize to the Asian, Pacific and other peoples for their war crimes, and then appeal for no nukes. I have criticized the atom bombs sufferers' appeal which is based on the viewpoint of a victim. We are primarily not victims but aggressors.

It has been very difficult for the Japanese to understand my idea. Recently not a few Japanese have told me that my idea is quite right, after their having read my above mentioned book or after their having heard my lectures and speeches.

The remarks by the Malaysian people are very valuable advice to us Japanese. The Japanese have repeated, "No more Hiroshimas", "No more Nagasakis", without regarding their own aggression. It is understood that the Asian people would like to have cried out "More Hiroshimas", "More Nagasakis".

It is quite natural, also, that they cannot forgive the Japanese for killing their families, for their war crimes and for their lack of reflection upon their own war crimes.
Now I will introduce some parts of the two reports which were sent by Ms. Maureen Yeow. One is written anonymously and the other in the writer’s own name, which I will keep anonymous here.

The essence of one report is as follows:

It was a clear beautiful day filled with the most beautiful sunshine when I was going on a road which skirted a graveyard. The road was on a lower level and the graveyard was higher than and a short distance from the road.

On that calm beautiful day, as I was going along the road I was bent on looking at where I intended to go and was not at all interested in the graveyard nor any other thing. At that time, my thoughts were clearly concentrated on the possible future effects on my life and on those of my family as a result of the disruption caused by the war, which had now entered into the third year.

All of a sudden, I seemed to hear the most distressful type of wailing and crying, coming out of the blue, that I have ever heard in all my life. I was very shocked to hear it. It was so totally unexpected, at least on that calm, beautiful day. The sounds seemed to me, after the initial shock, to have come from the direction of the graveyard. So turning my head round and looking through the distance, I saw a group of men, women and children and even babies in their mothers’ arms being marshalled along in the graveyard by some Japanese soldiers. The whole group was crying and wailing most sorrowfully as it moved forward.

I immediately stopped myself from proceeding further to give my eyes a clearer fix on the scene. I noticed the Jap soldiers, about six of them, stopped the group and proceeded to arrange it into a row, all facing in one direction with the little children, some below the age of ten, merged in between. I could see that the men had their hands tied behind their backs. I im-
mediately sensed that something unpleasant was going to happen. The group in all totalled about forty of fifty and from the look of the faces, I saw that they were all Chinese. It was indeed a pitiful sight to see many small children crying and clinging on to their mothers and fathers while the adults were all wailing out their very souls, so to speak. I could not help them.

I was just silently observing all this when suddenly I heard the staccato bark of a machine gun. I saw men, women and children topple down. The wailing stopped immediately, a silence followed but was immediately shattered by a bark after which three or four Japanese soldiers leapt forward swinging samurai swords and began to slash and butcher what was left standing in the row. When the butchery was over and none were left standing, some more Japanese soldiers moved forward to slash and butcher the corpses with bayonets fixed to their rifles. In a short time that downright savagery was all over.

I immediately left the scene, reaching home cold and shivering, feeling very sick with the horror of what I had just witnessed.

It was about one or two months later that I could go back to the graveyard, to the very spot where I had witnessed Japanese barbarism. I saw two rectangular spots of freshly dug yellowish and brownish earth framed by green grass around them. That was positive proof that I did witness the carnage perpetrated by those arrogant “Sons of Heaven” as the Japanese so fondly delude themselves they are.

As I stood there rooted on the spot, looking at the two mass graves, I prayed then and there that not only should the Japanese lose the war but that they should pay dearly for the crimes they perpetrated in the countries they overran.

This report shows the Japanese brutal crime of massacre vividly. In
spite of such crimes, the Japanese has not paid for their perpetration for about half a century.

The essence of the second report is as follows:

I had an uncle whom I loved very much. He was a very congenial man. His hobbies were photography and fishing, just like mine. He and I got on very well together.

After a fortnight when it was time for him to leave us to go back to his family, he pleaded with my mother to allow me to stay with him for some time. He had noticed how small and weak I was and he could afford to give me better food.

So I followed him back to his hometown of Teluk Anson which to this day stands at the mouth of the Perak river. My uncle treated me very well. He gave me the best bed in his house and treated me like one of his family even though he himself had three sons. In this way, I lived with my uncle and his family for more than a month. It was wonderful then. I did not have to cut firewood and carry it home for long distances. I didn't have to plant sweet potatoes and didn't have to go the jungle to collect wild vegetables.

After one month, I began to long for my own family and in particular my mother. So, one day, I gathered up enough courage to tell my uncle that I missed my mother very much and that I wanted to go back to her. He agreed reluctantly, seeing that I had made up my mind to go home. And so I left his cosy home and went back to my mother and to the world I was used to.

Later I heard that my uncle was dead, having been killed by the Japanese. He was brutally tortured before he died, all because someone told the Japanese that he had been listening to Allied broadcasts on the radio. There was no proof that he did this but during those troubled times everybody thought only of his own safety even to the extent of betraying a
friend. My uncle was arrested by the Kempeitai and put in prison where he was badly beatened and had electrodes pushed under his fingernails. He was so badly tortured that he told my mother that he could not stand the torture any more and preferred to die. Two months later, he and some other prisoners were taken to the bank of the Perak river where it joins the sea. There Japanese soldiers bashed their heads in, using the butts of their rifles as clubs, and kicked their bodies into the flowing river. All the bodies floated out to sea except my uncle's. When everything had quietened down a week later and in the dead of the night his sons went to collect his body and to give it a decent burial.

My uncle is dead, and so are thousands of Japanese from the atomic bombs that fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. If you ask me, I will answer that is no accident. That was the hand of retribution for all the cruelties that the Japanese soldiers had committed in all the lands under their occupation, especially in China. It is time that the Japanese people learn one thing: and learn it fast: they cannot pursue their own aggrandizement alone without caring for the welfare of others. Even their own religion, Shintoism, forbids it.


This report shows how brutal Japanese persecution killed a citizen who was living a tranquil life.

The above two reports severely and properly point out the Japanese barbaric war crimes in wartime as well as arrogant egocentric inhumanity after the war. Two atomic bombs were regarded as the retribution for all the savagery and carnage that the Japanese had committed, although the extent of the disaster brought by the atomic bombs seems to be underestimated. Without understanding the agony and torture of all Asian people, the Japanese cannot appeal for peace from Hiroshima and Nagasaki. They must reflect upon the cause of their aggression and must be deeply
ashamed of being dead to their own sin.

The Japanese barbaric war crimes started at their blowing up their own controlled railway near Shenyang city on September 18, 1931. A few days ago, Professor Liao Shaolian, Director of Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Xiamen University, sent me a copy of the “China Daily”, 18 September, 1991. In the paper, an article “‘September 18 Incident’ atrocities on exhibition by our staff reporter” was publicized.

An extract from the article is as follows.

To mark the 60th anniversary of the “September 18 Incident”, an invasion launched by the Japanese army, an exhibition revealing the cruel deeds of the Japanese invaders is currently on show at the Memorial Hall of the Chinese People’s War of Resistance against Japan in Beijing.

During the invasion, the Japanese 731 bacteriological army stationed at Pingfang region, Harbin, in China’s northeast Heilongjiang Province, carried out barbarous experiments on the living people and spread the bacterium, which brought great disaster to the people in China and the Asia-Pacific regions. Statistics show that more than 3,000 people were killed during the experiment and thousands of lives were claimed by the bacteriological war.

The exhibition showing the criminal activities of the Japanese 731 army reveals “a concealed chapter of history”. Many pictures and documents displayed at the exhibition tell facts unknown to the world.

In another development, a group of leading officials and veteran army generals gathered in Beijing recently to attend a commemorative symposium marking the 60th anniversary of the “September 18 Incident” or “Mukden Incident” in 1931.

The incident marked the beginning of increased Japanese inva-
sion of China. According to historical records, the Japanese army, which was well entrenched in northeast China at that time, issued secret orders for its own troops to blow up the Japanese controlled “South Manchurian Railway” near Shenyang city, Liaoning Province. The Japanese army then used the incident as a pretext to occupy the whole of Liaoning Province. The incident also triggered off China’s eightye year war against the invading Japanese army.

Very few Japanese people remember “September 18 Incident”, in spite of the fact that the Japanese were the cruel invaders. The Japanese are not ashamed of their own unconsciousness of the invasion as well as their own barbarous war crimes.

[VII] Mayor Motoshima was shot by one of the rightists

Most of the Japanese people have no pricks of conscience for having long inflicted pain upon the peoples of Asia, the Pacific, and other countries including the USA, Canada, UK, Netherland, Australia, NZ and so on, some of which the Japanese had ruled, controled and fought in the name of the imperial holy war to construct the “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere”.

Japanese people of conservative parties and right-wing organizations have the same ideology as that of the war time. They have been obedient and dutiful to the imperial system ever since then.

They have severely criticized Mayor Motoshima, because of his statement of the Emperor’s responsibility. One of them shot a pistol at him after their period of mourning for the late Emperor.

It was at 3:05 p.m., January 18, 1990, that he was shot in front of the Nagasaki city hall. A man shot him from behind at the distance of 1 or 1.5 meters. A bullet entered into his left chest from the back shoulder and went through it. Immediately after being shot, the Mayor sat down on the back seat of his official car and asked secretary Noriaki Matsumoto not to pursue
the criminal. He asked the secretary to call an emergency ambulance. Mr. Jiro Yamasaki, the driver of the car, read the plate number of the car by which the criminal made his escape in great haste, and then sent an emergency call.

There was only one witness of the shooting. It was secretary Matsumoto. The distance of the criminal from the Mayor was testified to by the witness. After the shooting, the secretary was standing by the Mayor, being watchful and guarding him with much sorrow.

Mr. Hiroshi Sekiguchi, NBC broadcasting company, was the first journalist to have noticed the sound of gunfire. One minute before, he had parted from the Mayor after a short interview. Immediately after having heard the sound, he looked back and ran toward the Mayor. He saw a fair amount of blood spit from the Mayor's mouth three or four times. At this moment, he was convinced that the Mayor had been shot by a criminal. He dashed to the phone, and made an urgent report to the news desk. The company promptly reported the shooting incident on TV and radio. This was the first information. It was about 3:15 p.m. Mr. Sekiguchi had no camera with him, and yet a TV camera-team for whom he urgently called by phone did not come in a few minutes.

For a while, the other journalists did not understand the exact meaning of the sudden tumult. Two newspapermen came there without understanding the incident. They were shocked when they learned about the shooting, and took many pictures of the Mayor.

One of the most serious cases of terrorism in Japan has occurred. The Mayor who admitted the Emperor's war responsibility was shot. The lives of the majority who deny or have no concern about the war crimes and responsibility have been made safe. This represents the Japanese situation concerning the most serious problem which they had had to reconsider and self-criticize.
It was about 3:20 p.m. that I was informed of this grave news by Mr. Shigeyuki Anan, a member of our citizens group, who reported to me while watching the news on television. I had always been afraid of the Mayor being shot by some rightists. At the urgent news, I was convinced that he would soon die. I was caught with sorrow.

The next moment, the silence was broken. The phone in my laboratory began to ring in succession. Many journalists requested me to make an interview, because I was the representative of the citizens group. Many of the members had tried to talk with me but most of them could not, as the line was busy. Every journalist and friend had believed that the criminal must have been a rightist.

Mr. Masayoshi Hosokawa, a member of our group, told me, “The next target of the right-wingers is you, professor. Therefore, don’t go back home and stay at some hotel with your wife for several days. I will make arrangements with her to leave your house. I will bring the necessaries for your work from your house. At present, it is very dangerous for you to return to your home”. I expressed my gratitude for his deep consideration, and I admitted that I was second to Mayor Motoshima as to the shooting target. But I declined his offer with thanks, as I thought it would cause serious inconvenience to us and, at the same time, would make the burden too heavy for my comrades.

He proposed the second best plan to me, which meant the prompt despatch of several young members to protect my life in the laboratory. I accepted his offer with thanks.

Five members came to my room with the message of protection. We discussed and decided to hold the urgent citizens meeting in order to protest the shooting on the next day. I began to compose a manuscript of the urgent declaration against the shooting, the others to make communication with other members in the city.
After the terror incident, one of the young members of our group guarded me on my dark way home for a week.

The terrorism was, at once, begun to be informed about not only in Japan but also in the world by TV and newspapers. The name and photograph of the arrested criminal, one of the rightists, was widely reported.


Mayor Who Faulted Hirohito Is Shot

By DAVID E. SANGER

NAGASAKI, Japan, Jan. 18 — The Mayor of Nagasaki, who broke one of the nation's most sensitive taboos by saying a year ago that Emperor Hirohito bore some responsibility for World War II, was shot today, and the police arrested a 40-year-old ultranationalist.

The Mayor, Hitoshi Motoshima, was reported in critical condition but out of danger tonight after two hours of surgery. Mr. Motoshima, 67 years old, who received many threats after he refused to retract his unusually blunt comments about the Emperor, was shot once in the chest at close range as left City Hall at 3 p.m. today.

Within five hours, the police had arrested Kazumi Tajiri, whom they identified as a sub-chief of a small right-wing group, the Spiritual Justice School. They said that Mr. Tajiri had been apprehended at an inn not far from City Hall, and that he had immediately volunteered, "I shot Mayor Motoshima."

The shooting sent a chill through Japan, a seeming echo from the 1930's when Tokyo was thrown into near-anarchy by a wave of assassinations by right-wing military officers.

But Japanese officials tonight discounted comparisons to that era, saying the shooting was the work of a fringe group and not a
sign of any resurgent nationalism in Japan.

Political assassination attempts are now rare here, though one Prime Minister was stabbed 30 years ago, as was Edwin O. Reischauer, who was American Ambassador in the 1960's.

Mr. Sanger reported the general situation concisely and compared the shooting with the old Japanese assassinations. The information about the discounting of the Japanese officials is valuable. I will continue to quote his article.

Mr. Motoshima is a popular figure in Nagasaki, and his comments, like those of the Mayor of Hiroshima, carry particular moral weight. Because the two cities were targets of atomic bomb attacks in August 1945, they are now centers for peace groups, and their mayors often speak about militarism and international affairs.

If poll data and random interviews are an accurate indication, many Japanese appear to share Mayor Motoshima's views about Hirohito's responsibility for the war, or at least his failure to rein in military leaders acting in his name. Nonetheless, questions of his role in the war are rarely discussed.

The question has been a matter of dispute for decades. In the few times he discussed it, Hirohito said he had little advance knowledge of most of the acts committed in his name. But historians who note that he was present at important military meetings say they believe that he was informed and made little effort to intercede, though he may have been powerless to change the course of events. After the war, Gen. Douglas MacArthur and other American officials decided not to place him on trial, believing that he was more useful as a symbol of unity as they tried to rebuild Japan.

Mr. Motoshima shattered that silence in December 1988, as Hirohito lay dying and the country struggled to come to terms with
the violent and militaristic first third of Hirohito's 62 years on the Chrysanthemum Throne.

At a city meeting, a Communist Party member asked Mr. Motoshima about the Emperor's war responsibility. The Mayor said: "If I look at the descriptions in Japanese' and foreign histories, and reflect on my experiences in the military in the education training of soldiers, in that regard I think the Emperor has war responsibility. But based on the will of a majority of Japanese and Allied countries, the Emperor escaped and became a symbol in the new Constitution, and we have to act under that understanding."

While mild to American ears, the comments touched off furious debate here, both about whether he was right and whether he should have spoken out, particularly in Hirohito's last days. Shortly after his comments, the threats began; a man was arrested trying to break into the Mayor's office with a can of gasoline, and right-wing groups in soundtrucks circled City Hall, blaring slogans. Even the governing Liberal Democratic Party ousted him as an adviser, though the party was embarrassed into backing down later.

For a while Mr. Motoshima was heavily guarded, but he apparently felt the controversy was finally simmering down. In December, he asked the police to discontinue his 24-hour guard, saying the threats had tapered off.

Mr. Sanger's article proves his quick investigation and sound view on the matter of the Emperor's war responsibility.

Mr. Steven R. Weisman wrote on the right-wing groups minutely in the issue of Jan. 20, 1990, of the same paper. In it, he analysed several views of the shooting presented by specialists or organizations.

6 days latter, the same paper published an article written by Mr. Sanger, titled "Elements of Japan's Far Right Praise Shooting of Hiroshima
Mayor". There was, of course, a big mistake of changing Nagasaki to Hiroshima. But his analysis of the right-wing is instructive.

But in a meeting on Wednesday in Fukuoka, not far from Nagasaki, the national federation of rightist groups agreed that the shooting had been "inevitable" because the criticism of the Emperor posed "a grave threat to the state" and an "abuse of freedom of speech." ......

The widespread condemnations of the shooting led many to assume that the rightist groups, fearful of being isolated, would stay out of sight for a while and say little. But perhaps because this is a critical year of imperial ceremony, including the formal enthronement of the new Emperor, Akihito, in the fall, they have instead clearly tried to catch the spotlight, and the police say they fear further attacks.

Certainly, the right appears to be growing bloder. One right-wing organization, for example, went ahead with its annual New Year’s party at a Tokyo hotel on Monday, and according to Japanese press reports the head of the Zenaikaigi[the name of the headquarters of the rightists’ umbrella group]said at the event that the shooting was “an action of justice.”

Others were quoted as saying Mr. Motoshima had received “heaven’s punishment.” Another was quoted as saying that “freedom of speech can become poison if it gets excessive.”

It is clearly understood that the right-wing groups had fierce hatred of the Mayor because of his comment about the Emperor’s war responsibility and that they had fear of the freedom of speech.

On March 24, 1991, an article “In Nagasaki, An Election As Catharsis” by S. R. Weisman was published in the New York Times. He had stayed in Nagasaki and investigated the general situation surrounding the
Mayor one year after the shooting event.

The attack, in retaliation for the Mayor’s suggestion that Emperor Hirohito bore some responsibility for World War II, shocked people throughout Japan. But these days the Mayor is emotionally telling audiences that it also led to his own spiritual rebirth.

“I thought I was dying,” Mr. Motoshima said recently in a hushed voice to a rapt crowd. “I was on the brink of death for two days. On the third day I recovered, and a flood of ideas came to me. I decided to dedicate myself to making Nagasaki a great and happy city.”

Even many of Mr. Motoshima’s critics acknowledge that the ruling party wants to punish the Mayor for his comments about the late Emperor, which broke a longstanding taboo and had a special impact because of Nagasaki’s having undergone an atomic bomb attack a few days before the end of the war in August 1945.

The criticism of Mr. Motoshima’s comments mostly came from Japan’s rightist fringe, which still reveres the Emperor and feels that the nation has little to apologize for in World War II.

According to the next paragraph, the rightist fringe seems to cover the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. As I already stated, my view is the same as his regarding their reverence for the Emperor and their failure to apologise to the people of invaded countries. He continues to explain the idea of Japanese responsibility embraced by the Mayor.

Mr. Motoshima has not simply criticized Emperor Hirohito. He has also antagonized the national Government by insisting that Japan generally bears responsibility for the victims of wartime aggression. This expression may be the same as my thesis concerning the war crimes of the Japanese people. Mr. Weisman analyses the ideas of the ruling party and the businessmen who are persistently supporting the ruling
party. They are opposing the Mayor on the basis of their reverence of the Emperor and of their action principle of dominance of economy and money.

"Whenever he opens his mouth, it’s always peace, peace, peace," said Chojiro Nakabe, president of the Nagasaki Chamber of Commerce and Industry. "Everybody respects peace, but the Mayor should also be promoting economic development."

He quotes some talks of other politicians and businessman who stand against the Mayor on his economic and administrative policies. For instance, Mr. Masakazu Miyagawa, a former Deputy Mayor, criticizes the Mayor, in asserting his loss of Tokyo’s confidence.

But to the Mayor’s supporters, the ruling party’s behavior is a powerful reminder that Japan’s leaders have still not come to terms with the past. They view the party as still in the grip of the right wing and uneasy about demands that Japanese feel guilty about, or responsible for the war.

"Motoshima is saying things that the Liberal Democratic Party does not want to hear," said Shigetoshi Iwamatsu, a social studies professor at Nagasaki University. "The party doesn’t want to talk about the issue of war responsibility. They don’t even want to think about it."

Mr. Weisman describes, at the end of his article, the issue of war responsibility in connection with Nagasaki as concerns a film directed by Akira Kurosawa, "Rhapsody in August," which will be released in December in the United States.

Mr. Kurosawa’s film, "Rhapsody in August," takes place in this city and features four young cousins who learn about how their grandfather died during the atomic bomb attack of Aug. 9, 1945, in which tens of thousands of people were killed.

The movie will be released in December in the United States,
where it is considered certain to provoke a controversy because of the proximity to the 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

The film's characters refer to the atomic bomb attack by the United States, but not to the aggression by Japan that led to it. Its dramatic centerpiece is an apology — not by any Japanese, but by an American, played by Richard Gere, to the grandfather's widow. As he points out, this film must provoke controversies not only in the United States but also in the other countries, especially those which have suffered from Japanese aggression and brutality. He refers to the defence of Mr. Kurosawa, as follows:

At a recent screening and news conference in Tokyo, Mr. Kurosawa defended himself against criticism that he had omitted references to Japanese responsibility for World War II. He said most people at the time were ignorant about Japanese aggression or helpless to do anything about it.

"It's very difficult to have guilt feelings about something you weren't even aware of, or can't relate to," the director said, arguing that the war was not between individual Americans and Japanese but between their political and military leaders.

It is very difficult for the Japanese to comprehend the facts and logic of Japanese aggression. It is urgently necessary for them to be provoked by the international controversy on their own aggression and brutality.

Mayor Motoshima's comment may be said to have provoked the Japanese people to reconsider the Emperor's responsibility for the war, but they could not use the chance to discuss and think over the war responsibility not only of the Emperor but also of the people. Mr. Weisman points out the very important problem by raising the paradoxical example. Mr. Kurosawa's remarks represent the general feeling of most Japanese people,
and so the issue of the Japanese responsibility for the war, including both the Emperor and the people, is delicate for the Japanese. Therefore, among the Japanese people, discussion of this issue would not be brought about if international controversy should not provoke them to do so.

The Chicago Tribune, August 12, 1990, published an article written by Mr. Ronald E. Yates. Its title is “Japan confronts issue of war-crime guilt.” I will make an abstract of the article, as follows:

Hiroshima and Nagasaki. For millions of Japanese the two cities have been symbolic reservoirs of the nation’s wartime suffering, the Justification for Japan to view itself as a victim of World War II rather than an aggressor.

This shows the general sketch of the Japanese feeling. But Mr. Yates explained an extraordinary case of apologizing for war crimes.

But as the only cities in the world ever attacked with atomic weapons observed the 45th anniversary of their destruction last week, a survivor of the bombing stood up at the ceremony in Hiroshima and apologized for crimes Japan committed during the war.

“As a Japanese, I deeply apologize for those crimes,” Shigetoshi Iwamatsu, 62, now a professor at Nagasaki University, told foreign delegates in the first-ever apology during ceremonies commemorating the nuclear holocausts.

“Unless the Japanese people thoroughly criticize themselves for crimes they committed in their aggression against other countries in Asia, such anti-war movements in Hiroshima and Nagasaki will ring hollow to others.”

Mr. Yates described the recent tendency of admitting the war crimes in Japan.

Newspapers and television stations ran self-flagellating accounts of atrocities committed by Imperial Japanese Army soldiers in
China, Southeast Asia and Korea. Tearful veterans recalled bayonet­
ting women and children in Nanking, China, and the cruel treatment
of American and British prisoners of war in places like Burma,
Singapore and the Philippines.

Letters to the editor columns were filled with commentaries
urging the nation to be more honest about its aggression in the 1930s
and 1940s.....

And the Japanese government last week released heretofore
secret documents listing the names of almost 80,000 Koreans forcibly
brought to Japan as slave laborers during the war. Some 20,000 of
those Koreans, forced to work in defense plants, died in the
Hiroshima attack.

For foreigners and Japanese who have watched modern Japan
wrestle clumsily with events in the first half of this century, the gush
of guilt has been a remarkable event.

Unlike Germany, Japan’s wartime iniquities have gone largely
unpunished. There have been no Simon Wiesenthals to hunt down
Japanese war criminals, and only a relative handful of Japanese
military leaders were put on trial for atrocities.

Mr. Yates objectively described the Japanese situation and yet the ob­
jective description severely pointed out the important problem for the
Japanese. His objective description continues as follows:

As a result, at least two generations of Japanese have grown up
with only the sketchiest knowledge that Japan may have done
something wrong in the 1930s and 1940s and that the bombings of
Hiroshima and Nagasaki were considered by many to be justifiable
retribution.

He referred to the feeling of the Asian people, to which the Japanese
have paid very little attention. As mentioned above, he explained about the
Japanese Responsibility for War Crimes

Koreans who were forcibly brought to Japan as slave laborers. But the Japanese have not clearly defined them as slave laborers. It must be a matter of the Japanese conscience.

Anti-Japanese feeling still exists in places like China and Korea where the heavy boot of Imperial Japan was most in evidence. During a visit to Japan in June, South Korean President Roh Tae Woo received an apology for Japan's 35-year occupation of the Korean peninsula from Emperor Akihito, the prime minister and parliament. But for many Koreans, none of the apologies went far enough.

Mr. Yates introduced some of the Japanese, including Mayor Motoshima, who had come to realize their role of aggressor in the latter half of his article.

"I would say it has taken almost 50 years for the Japanese to understand that they were aggressors... and that they caused other people to suffer.”[Takashi Koshida]

“For example, the army's 5th division, which was from Hiroshima, committed terrible atrocities against thousands in Malaya. It is the civilians who are the real victims in war... though innocent civilians like me and other victims of Hiroshima can be on the side of aggression.”[Suzuko Numata]

Mikazuki said there needs to be “a period of sober self-reflection... a national awakening of sorts to the past.”

He referred to Mayor Motoshima as follows:

Nagasaki Mayor Hitoshi Motoshima, who has been the target of Japanese rightists because of his frequent criticism of the late Emperor Hirohito for failing to admit his responsibility for the wartime suffering caused by Japan, urged the government to apologize and provide assistance for non-Japanese victims of the bombings.
[VIII] A conclusion

I have raised the case of Mayor Motoshima’s comments and the rightist’s terrorism against him as a symbolic example of the Japanese lack of consciousness of the responsibility for their own aggressive and brutal war. My thesis which I would like to present here is not simply about the freedom of expression but about the frailty of self-reflection upon their own war crimes of the Japanese people. The Japanese people committed aggression and barbarity through their devotion of their lives to the Emperor. They have been inclined to think over themselves as having no necessity of reflecting on their own deeds during wartime, owing to their loyalty to the Emperor system.

It is the Emperor system and the popular loyalism that they have always taken account of. Here is a sufficient reason for them that Mayor Motoshima should become the focus of criticism and of a shooting. I am also another target of their reproach. They have scarcely noticed that they had committed their own war crimes through their devotion of their lives to the Emperor.

The frailty of reflection upon their own war crimes is, thus, inseparably bound up with the Emperor system and the popular loyalism. It would not be so effective for promoting the Japanese peace spirit to make concentration of criticism against the frailty of reflection upon their own war crimes. Emperor-ism and loyalism prevent the people from reflecting upon their guilt for war. The same ideas also prevent them from their learning and investigating innumerable facts of war crimes. It is proved by the Japanese government’s prevention of pupils’ learning of the war crimes through public education.

—The End—