

Reiwa Japan Independence Movement: Japan Must Become a Full-fledged Independent State!

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Introduction

The world is in grave circumstances today. It is possible that the global order could be rearranged against the backdrop of the exceptionally rapid rise of China, a totalitarian, authoritarian state. Considering this, we can say that Japan is facing one of the most significant crises in our history. As we stand at this turning point in world history, Japan has a range of other challenges that it must solve as well. This crisis, and these issues, call into question Japan's very existence as a nation, and they certainly cannot be resolved through shortsighted measures.

This year marks 76 years since the end of World War II. Japan's independence was taken away by the occupation army during the postwar period, and Japan is not yet a full-fledged independent state today. When the Treaty of San Francisco came into force on April 28, 1952, Japan formally (and superficially) became an independent state. However, for all practical purposes, it remains a semi-independent state because the government and citizens lacked a clear intention to regain independence.

Three important processes must be completed to transform Japan into a full-fledged independent state: establishing a self-made constitution, making the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) into national defense forces, and founding an integrated national intelligence agency backed by an anti-espionage law that should be newly established. None of the major issues facing Japan can be resolved unless it becomes a full-fledged independent state, from fixing the extremely serious problem of the declining birth rate to achieving a comeback after the past 30 years of economic stagnation or enabling nimble responses to national crises (including infection control measures). In other words, now that the Reiwa era has begun, we must launch some type of independence movement with the aim of finally restoring independence for the first time since the end of World War II. The revival of Japanese independence is an exceedingly important task. Is there a more important national issue facing Japan right now?

Of course, "independence" refers to independence from the United States of America. Without a doubt, many people will immediately balk at this out of fear regarding confrontation with the U.S. However, that is no longer a concern in the present era, as I will discuss in more detail later. The U.S. alone cannot take effective measures against the mighty China. Solidarity in the free world will be essential, centered on the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) framework between Japan, the U.S., Australia, and India. Japan must play a vital role in fortifying the stability of the free world, and the U.S. will actually need a strong, independent Japan going forward. It will also be of great importance for Japan to actively provide input in the future regarding political measures that should be collectively implemented in the free world from the standpoint of constraining China.

Japanese people's national consciousness was lost in the postwar era

The American Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (GHQ) had two major objectives for its occupation policy: 1) Making the Japanese people lose their national consciousness, and 2) Weakening the Japanese spirit. Regarding the latter, we can say that Japan's traditional culture has been fairly well passed down and developed, and that Japanese civility is still quite solid. It is well known that Japanese people are highly lauded around the globe for their sense of etiquette. Therefore, although the Japanese spirit has perhaps been partially lost, I think we can say it still survives on the whole. The problem is the former objective: the loss of Japanese people's national consciousness after World War II.

Theoretical economist and controversialist OHKUMA Nobuyuki (1893-1977)¹ was extensively active in criticism from the prewar to postwar period. In 1961 – exactly 60 years ago – he pointed out that Japan was not a fully independent state, but rather a “quasi-state” (Ohkuma [1961]). Afterwards Japan developed into a major economic power, established a position as a very important member of the Group of Seven (G7), and became one of the most influential countries across the world. Despite this, even today it remains a semi-independent state.

Ohkuma attached great importance to the fact that the new postwar constitution made Japanese people abandon their loyalty to the state (Ohkuma [2009 (1970)], p. 65). Namely, they lost their national consciousness. Ohkuma understood this as bringing about a spiritual vacuum among Japanese citizens (op. cit., p. 76).

This postwar loss of Japanese people’s national consciousness has had many harmful effects, including the dozens of years required to build one additional runway at Narita Airport, the inability to declare a state of emergency that has legal force to prevent the spread of disease, the inability to take effective measures to prevent industrial espionage, and the inability to put sufficient restrictions on land ownership by foreign citizens. All these national issues are closely related to the problem of Japanese people’s national consciousness. In other words, we must revive a healthy national consciousness among the Japanese people and become a sovereign state that is fully independent. If not, finding fundamental solutions to these problems will be an impossible task.

Loyalty is the source of vitality and radiance among members of a group, whether it is a nation, a corporation, or a family. Loyalty, patriotism, and national consciousness among the people are closely connected in a reciprocal manner. The loss of national consciousness also signifies that citizens have lost loyalty to their country. Specifically, this was caused by the policies of the GHQ, the first of which was the memorandum “Further Steps Toward Freedom of Press and Speech” (SCAPIN 66) dated September 27, 1945. Official notice of this memorandum was released on September 29. Although it totally prohibited the Japanese government from intervening in the media, it instead ordered media outlets to fully comply with commands from the GHQ. These orders completely removed the Japanese media’s duty to be loyal to its own country and forced it to obey a foreign power. This still has major and lasting effects today, and it goes without saying that this resulted in many media outlets with anti-Japanese sentiments.

Next, the GHQ made five major newspapers serialize the full text of *Historical Articles on the Pacific War* 『太平洋戦争史』, a historical propaganda textbook written by the Planning Division of the Civil Information and Educational Section (CIE)² in the GHQ, over the 10-day period from December 8, 1945. This was to demonstrate that Japan was an aggressive country, that the Japanese army and political leaders waged the war in a reckless and brutal manner, and that Japanese citizens had been deceived during the war. The International Military Tribunal for the Far East (Tokyo Trial) was conducted from May 1946 to November 1948 as one facet of the War Guilt Information Program (WGIP) to disseminate the same information to the world. Many Japanese people lost a sense of loyalty to their nation as the result of the GHQ’s campaign – or rather, as the result of its meticulous propaganda.

Japan must have the determination to become a full-fledged independent state!

We should put a stop to the way Japanese people behave as if Japan is a full-fledged independent state. We must take a direct look at historical facts. If we do not, Japan will never be able to resolve the national issues we are facing, which will certainly put our nation on the path to decline. Japanese people must recognize the reality we are in (and have a historical awareness) to understand that we are currently a quasi-independent state or a semi-sovereign nation. After waking up to this, we must strive to regain Japan’s real independence.

Let us once again listen to the remarks by Ohkuma in the last years of his life. Ohkuma was born in 1893 and was active in the world of criticism before and after World War II. In 1970, Ohkuma stated:

1 During the war, Ohkuma was expelled from his public office by the GHQ as a war cooperator in 1947, due to factors such as his position as Director of the Literary Patriotic Society (founded in December 1942). Ohkuma identified as an ethical socialist and supported the world federalism movement as an ideal (Ohkuma, Nobuyuki [2009 (1970)], pp. 377-380). I do not endorse these views in any way, but I find his discourse on topics including the true nature of the GHQ rule, state theory, patriotism, and loyalty to one’s native country to be extremely thought-provoking and worthy of close attention. After the war, Ohkuma spoke about the “postwar democracy” that was the golden rule of the left wing. He stated, “This is the ‘democratization’ of Japan, which is held in the palm of its conqueror. It is nothing more than ‘democracy’ controlled by an authority armed with military force” (Ohkuma [2009 (1970)], pp. 53). He declared that “postwar democracy” was a false political system. Ohkuma graduated from the Institute for Business Training (currently Hitotsubashi University) in 1916 and earned a Doctor of Economics degree (1941, Hitotsubashi University). He was a professor at the University of Toyama, Kanagawa University, and Soka University.

2 During the war, CIE Division Director Bradford Smith was the person in Honolulu in charge of the Office of War Information (OWI). He carried out propaganda activities targeted at the enemy of Japan. After the war he moved to Tokyo, where he continued propaganda directed at Japan. The GHQ had a War History Office with numerous staff members, including historical experts. However, Douglas MacArthur purposefully assigned the writing of *Historical Articles on the Pacific War* to propagandists rather than historians. The OWI was a white propaganda institution established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on June 13, 1942 after the start of the war.

If our national independence has truly been lost, then we must continuously implement all sorts of efforts to restore it by making the necessary sacrifices and having wisdom and ingenuity, as well as political and moral perseverance. [...] In dealing with the issue of reviving Japan's independence, first we must pay heed to the fact that, on the surface, the current Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) government has absolutely no awareness of this issue (Ohkuma [2009 (1970)], p. 366).

From that time when SATO Eisaku was Prime Minister, not one of the successive political administrations has clearly indicated that it sees reviving Japan's national independence as an issue to be solved.

In other words, the situation that Ohkuma lamented over half a century ago remains unchanged. An awareness of the need to face the issue of restoring Japan's independence is hardly to be found in the Japanese government, the ruling LDP, the mass media, or among intellectuals. Is this not a problem?

In Section 3 of *An Encouragement of Learning* 『学問のすゝめ』 (1873), FUKUZAWA Yukichi famously said, "National independence is premised on individual independence" (Fukuzawa [1942 (1872-1876)], p. 29). This means that, if a country is to be independent, its individual citizens must have an independent spirit. Fukuzawa also said that people must have the willpower to achieve independence and listed three traits of "people who lack the willpower for independence:" 1) They do not have strong feelings about their country, 2) They cannot call on other countries regarding their own right to and obligation for independence, 3) They depend on other people and commit wrongdoing (op. cit., pp. 29-34). Due to a sense of impending danger about the possibility of the Western powers colonizing Japan, many Japanese people in the Meiji period were highly conscious of independence. That is why Japan was not colonized, and why it overcame hardships to become a splendid, independent state.

It seems to me that many members of the conservative faction recognize that Japan is not a genuinely independent state. However, most people do not attempt to do anything. Why is this so? By all rights, as soon as a decent citizen realizes their country is not a full-fledged independent state, they should do what they can and take some sort of action to restore independence. I wonder if their minds go blank, because striving to regain Japan's independence means answering bothersome questions such as what to do about Japan's relationship with the U.S. and whether it should possess nuclear weapons.

As I have pointed out in other papers, I cannot help but question if any other country's history is as splendid as Japan's (Yamashita [2019], [2020a], and [2020b]). Japan has a long history as a truly unique nation with an unbroken Imperial line lasting 2,000 years. European missionaries who came to Japan during the Sengoku period in the 16th century established a global reputation for Japan as a country that was already a civilized society. The innumerable documents left behind by these missionaries testify to this. In Europe at that time, Italians were the first to join the ranks of civilized society in Europe during the Renaissance. This spread to their European neighbors. In the modern era, for instance, the Japanese government was the first in the world to propose a clause abolishing racial discrimination at the committee drafting the Covenant of the League of Nations at the Paris Peace Conference in February 1919. Japan had suffered the effects of severe racial discrimination in the international community since the Meiji period. Accordingly, it has continually acted as a global leader to abolish racial discrimination for over 100 years. It is not an exaggeration to say that World War II was fought as an extension of this³. Ethnic self-determination and national independence were achieved in more than 100 countries, mainly in Asia and Africa after World War II. Taking a look back at overall human history, are there any other nations that have accomplished such great things for human rights and humanity? Japan inspired an exceedingly large number of countries to become independent. Despite this, it is highly ironic that Japan itself remains a semi-independent state.

Considering this, of course Japan is more than amply qualified to become a fully sovereign and independent state. It is one of the world's top countries in terms of its latent total power, including economic strength and the intellectual abilities of its citizens. I think the international community as a whole will suffer major losses if Japan – which has abilities of the highest level in the world – does not become a full-fledged independent state.

The free world's strategy to constrain China

Even before this century, it was said that the issue of most interest to the overall international community was how to resolve the mismatch between China's political structure (a communist, totalitarian dictatorship) and its economic structure (a market economy). The question was whether a relatively smooth landing could be accomplished, or if a major upheaval would take place. In either case, the resolution of this mismatch was seen as an unavoidable task. The free world would be totally defeated if China survived the so-called "middle income trap" to achieve genuine economic affluence without this mismatch being resolved. This is because many countries around the world would emulate the Chinese model (of a totalitarian, authoritarian state).

In this way, the Chinese model for national growth is itself a direct challenge to the Western model of a free and democratic world. At the same time, China poses an extremely dangerous threat because of its decisively aggressive foreign policy guided by expansionism, both economic and military. Putting aside the past Chinese dynasties led by other ethnic groups (such as the

3 On January 21, 1942 (right after the war commenced between the U.S. and Japan), Prime Minister TOJO Hideki gave his "Greater East Asia Declaration," a guiding principle for establishing the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere," at the National Diet. It said that Japan would construct the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and liberate oppressed peoples across the world from the bonds of British and American imperialism. This was the official objective of Japan's war.

Yuan and Qing dynasties), the territory ruled by Han Chinese over successive dynasties was fundamentally a vertical shape along the East China Sea⁴. Today, China's territory is a horizontal shape that resembles the torso of a cow. This shows how much the People's Republic of China (PRC) has been enlarging its territory westward onto the continent since its establishment. Moreover, China is claiming territorial rights to the entire South China Sea, which is far away from mainland China, according to its "Nine-Dash Line." The nearest part of this ocean area is still 950 kilometers from mainland China – in fact, it is an ocean area belonging to Southeast Asian countries. The Nine-Dash Line around the ocean area in Southeast Asia looks a tongue hanging from the mouth of the Chinese "cow." People in China actually refer to the Nine-Dash Line as the "cow's tongue." China and its claimed territories – its cow and protruding tongue – are remarkably different from its territories in past dynasties. And in terms of its size, we can say that it is fundamentally the largest span of Chinese territory in history.

Comparing military spending, the 2020 military budget released by China is more than four times larger than Japan's. Although it is about one third the size of the American budget, some think the Chinese budget is actually higher than America's because China has not publicly announced the high-priced weapons it buys from other countries.

China's military has become remarkably strong in recent years, including qualitative advances. For instance, the Chinese navy already has more military vessels than the U.S. Navy. China is also developing and deploying anti-ship ballistic missiles that pose a dire threat to U.S. Navy ships (including aircraft carriers) in the Western Pacific Ocean. China has already developed and possesses waverider hypersonic aircraft that the U.S. Armed Forces acknowledge they are unable to intercept. In addition, some say China is hiding nuclear weapons in a system of underground military tunnels with a total length of 5,000 kilometers, called the "Underground Great Wall." These tunnels were built by the Second Artillery Corps of the People's Liberation Army (which controls its nuclear weapons) at a location hundreds of meters underground, centered in the steep mountains of Hebei Province. The U.S. and Soviet Union mostly knew the whereabouts of each other's nuclear weapons during the Cold War era. However, China does not participate in frameworks for nuclear arms reduction talks, so no one knows exactly where its nuclear weapons are located. This is a factor that causes great instability in national security issues involving China.

American President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson signed the New Atlantic Charter on June 10, 2021 at Carbis Bay, Cornwall right before the G7 Summit. This signifies a renewal of the original Atlantic Charter signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill 80 years ago on August 12, 1941. It declares unity between the free democratic powers while keeping in mind opposition against the totalitarian dictatorships of China and Russia. Some may think this is a good idea as one facet of the strategy to constrain China. However, a simple agreement between the U.S. and United Kingdom seems at this point to be somewhat anachronistic, and moreover, this is erroneous in terms of geopolitics. While Europe and the Atlantic Ocean were the main fronts in the Cold War between the East and West, Asia and the Indo-Pacific region will be the primary fronts in the New Cold War between the free world and totalitarian, authoritarian states. Furthermore, the New Atlantic Charter is extremely inadequate in terms of its content, and it cannot be used as the principal tool for creating a strategy to inhibit China, which is a pressing issue for the entire free world.

The original Atlantic Charter was explicitly hostile towards and in opposition to the three countries of Japan, Germany, and Italy. Four nations (the U.S., UK, Soviet Union, and Republic of China) agreed to its content the following year in the form of the Declaration by the United Nations on January 1, 1942. An additional 22 countries added their signatures the day after that, making it an official declaration of World War II by the Allied powers. In other words, Joseph Stalin's Soviet Union – a communist, totalitarian dictatorship – was part of this. It is a complete deception to say that the Atlantic Charter extolled the concept of democracy. Considering this, I am obliged to state that the New Atlantic Charter lacks legitimacy as a framework for opposing China and Russia.

The Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)⁵ concept proposed by Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in August 2016 as a framework for opposing China and Russia is already widely accepted across the world. As a nation advocating for a free and open Indo-Pacific, Japan should promptly draft an "Indo-Pacific Charter" on this occasion. And because this New Cold War is one of antagonism against the totalitarian dictatorships of China and Russia, it resembles the framework of the alliance of victors from the East-West Cold War that ended in 1989. This also signifies that Japan was a victorious nation in the Cold War, and that it will demonstrate leadership. We must not allow Japan to be forever stigmatized as a defeated country. And in fact, the most recent world war was not World War II; it was the Cold War that ended in 1989. The Western countries led by the U.S. were victorious in that war. The West was able to win this Cold War thanks to extensive cooperation provided by Japan and Western Europe to the U.S.

Although the U.S. boasts the most powerful military force in the world, surprisingly, it has been continuously defeated in numerous wars since the end of World War II. Harlan K. Ullman (1941-), Senior Advisor of the Atlantic Council, stated that the First Gulf War of 1991 (fought under President George H. W. Bush) was the only war that the U.S. has clearly won since the end of World War II (Ullman [2019 (2017)]). In that war, the U.S. led a multinational force to punish Iraq for invading Kuwait. It was

4 An exception was the peak of the Tang dynasty in the first half of the 8th century (during the era of Emperor Xuanzong), which ruled a vast territory including Central Asia.

5 Proposed by Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in August 2016 at the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD6) in Nairobi, Kenya. TICAD is a leader-level conference for Japan and African countries that is currently held every three years. The previous conference, TICAD7, took place in Yokohama in 2019. TICAD8 will be held in Tunis, Tunisia in 2022.

able to successfully liberate Kuwait as planned. The fighting lasted just six weeks from mid-January until the end of February. Renowned strategist Edward Luttwak (1942-) has basically the same awareness. Writing about the Korean War, he said, “The American and Korean forces had poor regulation and morale against the Chinese volunteer army offensive, and they suffered serious damage. As a result, luckily they were able to end the fight in a tie” (Luttwak [2019], pp.155). Even without referring to the opinions of these two analysts, it is clear that the Vietnam War was a defeat for the U.S. After the American military stationed troops in Afghanistan for 20 years, the Taliban successfully recaptured control of Afghanistan, and the U.S. completed its withdrawal on August 30, 2021. Considering this, was not the Cold War that ended in 1989 one of the few great postwar victories for the U.S., although it was not a “hot” war?

I do hope all of the countries in the free world end up participating in this New Cold War. Regarding the Indo-Pacific Charter, my initial hope is that the four Quad countries (Japan, the U.S., Australia, and India) will be joined by others, specifically the countries that have already clarified their stance of participation in the Indo-Pacific region (the UK, France, Germany, and the Netherlands) along with Canada and New Zealand to form “Quad+α.” Japan should serve a leading role in drafting the Indo-Pacific Charter for these 10 nations (“Quad+6”) to sign. The G7 framework is also of premium importance. In particular, the G7 nations must work in solidarity to curtail China’s actions at UN human rights meetings, such as the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva and the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly in New York.

The former Japanese army of the prewar era used its “Anticommunist Corridor” concept as a means to contain Russia (the Soviet Union), its longtime enemy. The main point of this was working to cooperate with Islamic countries near the Soviet Union, because Japan saw Islam and communism as fundamentally incompatible. I think that a similar concept might be effective today, namely, the possibility of cooperating with prominent Islamic neighbors (such as Turkey and Iran) as one facet of constraining China. Although Iran and the U.S. might have different motives, it will be essential for Japan to maintain distinctive relationships with each.

Building a new Japan-U.S. relationship

I think many Japanese people are worried that steps down the path to independence would inspire American vigilance and distrust. It does seem true that the American term “Japan handlers” refers less to people who are knowledgeable about Japan, and more to people who work to manipulate and “tame” Japan. In other words, these people appear to be pro-Japanese, but they are actually attempting to manipulate Japan for the sake of American interests. They work to prevent Japan from carrying out distinctive foreign policy, and of course they are also opposed to the independence movement in Japan. Many Japanese people are thankful for these Japan handlers, but they should not be too trusting. Rather, we must view such people as security risks to Japan’s national interests.

However, the era of the U.S. treating Japan this way has come to an end. The U.S. cannot solely oppose China, which has achieved a rapid economic and military rise. The Quad+α countries must act together in solidarity. Otherwise, I am afraid that the U.S. will eventually have to make a deal with China to withdraw from the Western Pacific. Japan must become stronger if the Quad+α framework is to function effectively. It is good that the four-nation Quad framework has been established, but there are clear issues when looking at the situations of the included countries. Australia is an affluent nation with strong scientific and technological skills. Its people are also highly aware of defense. On the other hand, its population is a little over 25 million, which is just one fifth the size of Japan’s and naturally limits the degree to which Australia can augment its military force. According to Luttwak, Australia does not seem very skilled at intelligence gathering (Luttwak [2019], pp. 176-177). India’s defense spending was the third highest in the world in 2020, after the U.S. and China. In the near future India may surpass China as the world’s most populous country, and it is possible that India can be relied upon. However, it has a history of non-alignment, and the likelihood seems low that India will someday become a full-fledged member of the West, which poses some limitations. In addition, most weapons owned by the Indian military were made in Russia.

Considering this, if Japan were to become a full-fledged independent state, and if the JSDF were converted into national defense forces, Japan would be the Quad country upon which the U.S. could rely the most heavily. The Barack Obama administration’s national defense strategy released in January 2012 clearly stated that the U.S. would “pivot” to Asia. This was to shift more importance to Asia while keeping an eye on China’s growing prominence. However, the U.S. did not actually take any effective means to that end, and it allowed China to grow significantly. For Japan and other Asian countries, it is necessary that the U.S. have a stronger commitment to Asia. In other words, the U.S. should be deeply involved in Asia, rather than “pivoting” to or having one foot in Asia. Japan must become an independent, strong nation for that reason as well. If not, the possibility exists that the U.S. might accept Xi Jinping’s proposal to divide the Pacific Ocean in two, and end up withdrawing from the Western Pacific.

Another important point is for Japan to have sufficient input in proposing policy related to Indo-Pacific strategies. Japan has suggested important policies since the Abe administration, and these have been accepted to a considerable degree. Much of the content of the current Asia policy of the U.S. originated with Japan, including Indo-Pacific strategy. Speaking frankly, the U.S. often makes mistakes in important foreign policy at each juncture. Suitable policy input by Japan will be of extreme importance going forward.

Japan is facing the serious threats of China and North Korea. On top of this, the U.S. must worry about the possibility of its self-destruction. Establishing a structure for autonomous national defense is a pressing need in Japan today. The current defense structure is exceedingly unstable and full of inconsistencies. It is also very fragile. First of all, today the Japan-U.S. alliance is Japan's primary mode of defense, while the JSDF is subordinate. This is the total opposite of how it should be. Autonomous defense for national security should be primary, and alliances should be secondary. Moreover, Japanese national security is founded on two fictions: "Security Forces Designed Exclusively for Defense" and the "Nuclear Umbrella."

I wonder if there are any other countries who incorporate "Security Forces Designed Exclusively for Defense" into their national defense principles. A nation cannot protect its citizens through "Security Forces Designed Exclusively for Defense." In Japan it is considered almost taboo to speak out against "Security Forces Designed Exclusively for Defense," but we are unable to protect our country according to this principle. Most high-ranking JSDF officers should have the same awareness.

Meanwhile, the question of the "Nuclear Umbrella" was settled 60 years ago when American President John F. Kennedy met with French President Charles de Gaulle. At that time France was independently developing nuclear weapons, and it was repeatedly conducting nuclear bomb tests. Right after assuming his office, Kennedy flew to Paris in May 1961 to put a stop to France's nuclear program. He said the U.S. would provide a "Nuclear Umbrella" in an attempt to persuade de Gaulle to abandon nuclear development. However, de Gaulle was not that easy to convince. He asked what would happen if the Soviet Union attacked Paris with a nuclear weapon – would the U.S. truly strike back against Moscow with nuclear weapons? The Soviet Union would certainly attack New York to take revenge. Would the U.S. retaliate against Moscow, even knowing what would happen? Kennedy was at a loss to answer because he could not lie outright while speaking face-to-face with de Gaulle. No country is prepared to be the target of nuclear retaliation for the sake of another country. After returning to the U.S., it is said that Kennedy told his close associates he was cornered by de Gaulle. Nuclear weapons provide deterrence between nuclear powers, but there is no "Nuclear Umbrella" that protects other states. The "Nuclear Umbrella" is a myth, a fictitious concept that does not exist in this world. Japan is not protected by the American "Nuclear Umbrella" today, nor has it been in the past. Japanese citizens must fully accept this stark reality.

National independence is essential for Japan's rebirth

The period between the Meiji Restoration and the end of World War II (1945) lasted 77 years. Seventy-six years have passed from the end of World War II until today. Many things happened during the 77 years between the Meiji Restoration and the end of World War II, including the First Sino-Japanese War, Russo-Japanese War, World War I, Showa Financial Crisis, Showa Upheaval, and the Greater East Asia War. Many other things occurred between 1945 and today. However, Japan's structure has not changed at all in the past 76 years, because it is still a semi-independent state. Japan rose from the destruction of World War II to become one of the world's leading economic superpowers. Yet the economy has been stagnant for the past 30 years, and more and more young people feel no hope about the future of Japan. I think this is because Japan has remained a semi-independent state for three quarters of the past 100 years. It is no wonder that Japanese people have lost their national consciousness, and that they do not feel a sense of pride in their quasi-independent nation. It makes sense that the country and its people have lost vitality under this continuously disgraceful framework that has lasted for so long.

As I stated previously, Japan cannot solve the national issues it is tasked with unless it becomes a full-fledged independent state. Japan was totally brainwashed by the GHQ regarding its historical awareness. Have Japanese people had no pride during the past 76 years as a semi-independent state? We must awake from our long sleep and move forward to regain national independence.

Becoming a full-fledged independent state would lead to the rebirth of Japan. Individuals who are in favor of Japan's independence should each begin by taking any actions they can. The GHQ's brainwashing stole away the Japanese people's independent spirit. That is why I have been saying since 2014 that major media outlets – which were complicit in the GHQ brainwashing – should confess to and repent for what they have done. Otherwise, it will be extremely difficult for many people to be able to escape from this brainwashing.

In this paper I discussed the issue of Japan's independence. I believe that we should finally start Japan's first independence movement of the postwar period now, in the Reiwa era. We must directly confront the issue of restoring Japan's independence, which should have been a goal after the military occupation came to an end. I find it strange and highly peculiar that the Japanese government, the ruling LDP, intellectuals, and the media have mostly ignored this issue. A political party should have been formed to work for Japan's independence, but no efforts of this sort have been made.

Japan has long been a sophisticated and civilized nation. As the missionaries from Europe in the 16th century testified, Japan was actually a more advanced civilization than Europe at that time. We should feel a sense of pride in our history and culture. It is unnatural that Japan is not a full-fledged independent state, considering its economic strength, the mental acuity of its people, and all of its other qualities. The only thing missing is motivation on the part of its citizens. They "lack the willpower for independence," as described by Fukuzawa. Contemporary Japanese people must possess a strong will to achieve independence and carry out an independence movement for the Reiwa era. If not, I believe that Japan will never be reborn.

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