

Neo-Fascism and the Resurgence of Militarism in Japan: A Revival of the Axis?

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On December 26, 2013, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited the Yasakuni Shrine, paying tribute to some of the most infamous war criminals in human history. In an action violating the basic tenets of human conscience and decency enshrined in the United Nations Charter, he showed his contempt for fierce protests and denunciations of this visit stated by both South Korea and North Korea, China, the Foreign Policy Adviser of the European Union, Catherine Ashton, the Russian Federation, Germany, the UN Secretary General, US President Obama and US Ambassador to Japan, Caroline Kennedy, among others.

The ominous implications of Abe's visit to the Yasakuni Shrine, which pays homage to Japanese militarism, are being revealed in numerous actions by Abe's right-wing government.

Among the most abhorrent of the Japanese war criminals honored by the infamous Shrine, and by Prime Minister Abe's visit, is Iwane Matsui, the main architect of the Nanjing massacre of a half-million unarmed Chinese men, women and children within a period of a few weeks, which began on December 13, 1937, and the horrific details of which are recounted in Iris Chang's devastating account, "The Rape of Nanking," which states, page 6:

"Americans think of World War II as beginning on December 7, 1941, when Japanese carrier planes attacked Pearl Harbor. Yet Asians must trace the war's beginnings all the way back to Japan's first steps toward the military domination of East Asia – the occupation of Manchuria in 1931. Just as Hitler's Germany would do half a decade later, Japan used a highly developed military machine and a master-race mentality to set about establishing its right to rule its neighbors....In 1935 parts of Chahar and Hopeh were occupied, in 1937 Peking, Tientsin, Shanghai and finally Nanking fell."

"The Rape of Nanking should be remembered not only for the number of people slaughtered but for the cruel manner in which many met their deaths. Chinese men were used for bayonet practice and in decapitation contests. An estimated 20,000-80,000 Chinese women were raped. Many soldiers went beyond rape to disembowel women, slice off their breasts, nail them alive to walls. Fathers were forced to rape their daughters, and sons their mothers, as other family members watched. Not only did live burials, castration, the carving of organs, and the roasting of people become routine, but more diabolical tortures were practiced, such as hanging people by their tongues on iron hooks, or burying people to their waists and watching them get torn apart by German Shepherds." "If an event can be held up as an example of the unmitigated evil lying just below the surface of unbridled military adventurism, that moment is the Rape of Nanking"

The grave of Matsui is only one of more than 14 Class A war criminals given honored burial at the Yasakuni Shrine. He lies in state among the graves of other Japanese war criminals who presided over horrific atrocities perpetrated elsewhere in China, Korea, Malaysia, and throughout Asia. The slaughter in China alone during the 1931-1945 Japanese aggression exceeds 35 million Chinese citizens.

It was primarily the patriotism, military and political genius and heroism of the Chinese Communist army and people, led by Mao Tse Tung, Chou En Lai and Chu Teh that finally overcame virtually insurmountable obstacles, and forced the Japanese out of China by the end of World War II.

If Prime Minister Abe's visit to the notorious Yasakuni shrine had been an isolated incident, it could have been attributed to gross insensitivity, stupidity and arrogance. But that visit was not an isolated incident, and heralded dangerous tendencies. The glorification of Japanese war criminals reveals the Japanese Prime Minister's failure to experience and express remorse and guilt, and a failure to accept the obligation to atone for those heinous actions.

This failure to express remorse reveals a dangerous tendency to repeat these crimes. Abe's recalcitrance, which produced shock-waves in much of the world, is further manifest in his revision of Japan's 1947 constitution, a revision which will re-establish and expand the Japanese army, no longer restricted for solely defensive purposes. According to the December 27 New York Times, "A new defense plan calls for the acquisition of drones and amphibious assault vehicles to prepare for the prospect of a prolonged rivalry with China." The same article states: "Washington has generally been keen for Japan to take on a more active military presence in the region to counterbalance China's growing might."

Japan's failure to accept responsibility for its horrific war crimes from 1931-1945, together with its pathological attempt to glorify its war criminals, while simultaneously attempting to whitewash their crimes, was exacerbated last week with the announcement by Yoshihida Suga, the chief cabinet secretary, that Japan will "revisit apology to wartime sex slaves."

The Kono Statement acknowledged Japan had coerced women in their conquered territories to provide sex to Japanese soldiers in World War II. Prior to the Kono Statement, Japan had doubly victimized these women by not only enslaving and violating them sexually, but then further degrading these victims by describing them as prostitutes. Although on March 15, 2014 Prime Minister Abe reversed his position, and said that his government would not revisit the 1993 apology, according to the NY Times:

"Mr. Abe's previous appeals to end what he calls masochistic views of Japan's history had raised concerns, among South Korean and other former victims of Japanese aggression, that his administration would seek to whitewash his nation's wartime atrocities.

Even before he took office, American officials warned Mr. Abe that any perceived historical revisionism could isolate Japan at a time when the United States needed its largest Asian ally to help face the challenge of a resurgent China. Political analysts said they doubted Friday's statements would be enough to appease Ms. Park, and that Mr. Abe's real target may be the United States with whom he has sought to build close ties."

One World War II Japanese war criminal neither convicted nor executed for his war crimes, but instead living comfortably on a government pension, was Shiro Ishii who ran unit 731,

Japan's clandestine biological bacteriological and chemical warfare research team in the Chinese city of Harbin. Prior to 1945 more than 2 million Chinese citizens died as a result of Japanese germ weapons used on civilians or in combat. According to Stephen Endicott and Edward Hagerman in their book, "The United States and Biological Warfare,"

"The decision of the U.S. government in 1947 to grant participants in the Japanese bacteriological program immunity from war crimes prosecutions in return for exclusive acquisition of the results, especially results of deadly experiments on human subjects, indicated how intent policy makers were on pursuing the possibilities of biological warfare. US leaders acknowledged among themselves that the Japanese experiments were actually war crimes deserving of punishment and they contemplated the risks of the US and the international public's discovering the deal..."

"What the two countries had been hiding was the record of the first major biological warfare program in the world, which had begun in 1932 and included operational uses of biological weapons against Chinese armies. More significantly, they were hiding a history of tests on at least ten thousand prisoners of war – mostly Chinese, but including some Russian and probably Americans, in the judgement of US intelligence – who were put to death after hideous experiments. Some of these experiments later came to light in all their gruesome detail: some prisoners were given inoculations of lethal bacteria and their health was monitored; if they survived, the experiments continued until death occurred. Other prisoners were tied to stakes five meters apart in a field, then fragmentation bombs loaded with anthrax, cholera, plague bacilli or gas gangrene were exploded by an electric current about fifty meters away; some died immediately from bomb splinters, but others lingered in severe torment while medical scientists recorded the course of their vital functions until they too expired. In these death factories in Manchuria, vivisections took place on live human beings. For purposes of secrecy, the people designated for experiments were kept in a special prison, and the medical scientists usually referred to them as 'logs.'"

"The program was created under the cover of water purification units. At its heart was Unit 731, led by Shiro Ishii, a medical doctor, a Ph.D, and a career officer whose efforts had carried him to the rank of lieutenant general in the Japanese Kwantung army in Manchuria. Intensely anti-communist and convinced of the inevitability of war with the Soviet Union, the Kwantung leaders advocated a 'strike to north' strategy. Opposing a move south against the colonies of the western powers, the army envisioned conquests in Northern China and Siberia."

It is perverse, indeed, to regard germ-warfare experiments conducted on live human beings as an example of Japan's glorious history. But the effort to glorify Japan's wartime atrocities provides the ideology needed to prepare for future military aggression. In Tokyo, in a quantum leap toward whitewashing World War II Axis fascism, and literally obliterating evidence of its horrors, it was reported this month that in Tokyo public libraries, 265 copies of "The Diary of Anne Frank," were recently vandalized, mutilated and destroyed, along with all books referring to her. Almost everything was destroyed, and the few remaining copies were removed from library shelves to protect them from destruction.

This world famous Diary of Anne Frank is the immortal, heartbreaking record of a remarkable young Jewish girl hidden, along with her family, in an attic in Holland, her death tragically ordained when, at the age of 15, the Nazis discovered the hiding place, and Anne

and her entire family perished in nazi concentration camps. These books had earlier been available at public libraries in Tokyo.

This ultimate form of “Holocaust Denial” could not have been an accident, or a coincidence. This calculated and systematic desecration of a poignant and beautiful diary of a holocaust victim is a historic treasure, considered by many to be a sacred document representing all holocaust victims. Its violent mutilation is a symbolic destruction of the documented memory of the horrors of fascism in Europe, the record of hideous nazi atrocities committed by Axis powers allied with Japan during World War II. “Only people imbued with bigotry and hatred would seek to destroy Anne’s historic words of courage, hope and love in the face of impending doom,” stated the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

On November 15, 2013, by a majority of 126 votes, the United Nations Third Committee adopted Resolution A/C.3/68/L.65/Rev.1 sponsored by 40 countries including the Russian Federation, Iran, Syria, Venezuela, Vietnam, Bolivia, Cuba, the DPRK, entitled: “Combating Glorification of Nazism and Other Practices that Contribute to Fuelling Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance.” The resolution states:

“4. “Expresses deep concern about the glorification, in any form, of the nazi movement, neo-nazism, and former members of the Waffen SS organization, including by erecting monuments and memorials and holding public demonstrations in the name of the glorification of the nazi past, the nazi movement and neo-nazism, as well as by declaring or attempting to declare such members and those who fought against the anti-Hitler coalition and collaborated with the nazi movement participants in national liberation movements.”

“6. Expresses deep concern at recurring attempts to desecrate or demolish monuments erected in remembrance of those who fought against Nazism during the Second World War, as well as to unlawfully exhume or remove the remains of such persons, and in this regard urges States to fully comply with their relevant obligations, inter alia, under article 34 of Additional Protocol 1 to the Geneva Conventions of 1949.”

It is consistent with the right-wing party of Japanese Prime Minister Abe’s attempt to glorify Japanese World War II war criminals that Japan did not support this resolution, and abstained, along with the European Union countries and Ukraine, which are currently hosting and supporting militant neo-nazi movements. This UN Anti-Nazi Resolution was actually opposed this year, as it has been all preceding years, by the United States (usually in virtual isolation).

“The Diary of Anne Frank” has the worldwide status of a literary monument. The desecration of almost all copies of her book, and all related books from the public libraries in Tokyo strongly implies the interest of fascist sympathizers in Japan to obscure and conceal the war crimes of Europe’s World War II Nazis, who were Japan’s Axis cohorts. and provide an unblemished reputation for Japan’s World War II alliance with genocidal Nazis.

In early February, US Secretary of State John Kerry met in Washington with Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, and asserted that the US will defend Japan against any attack, reaffirming the 1960 US-Japan Security Treaty assuring US protection for Japan. On

February 23, 2014, The New York Times published details of that alliance: “In Japan’s Drill With the U.S., a Message for Beijing”: Camp Pendleton, California,

“In the early morning along a barren stretch of beach here last week, Japanese soldiers and American marines practiced how to invade and retake an island captured by hostile forces. Memo to Beijing: Be forewarned. American military officials, viewing the cooperative action of the former WWII enemies from a nearby hillside, insisted that the annual exercise called Iron fist, had nothing to do with last fall’s game of chicken between Tokyo and Beijing over islands that are largely piles of rocks in the East China Sea. But Lt. Col. John O’Neal, commander of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit said that this year the Japanese team came with a new sense of purpose’...Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan approved a five-year defense plan that took the pacifist nation further toward its most assertive military posture since World War II. This year’s Iron Fist, Colonel O’Neal said, included drones and the kinds of air support that would be needed to protect Japanese and American troops retaking an island, though the ‘shaping’ that would normally be done in a real-world assault – when Air Force and Navy bomb intended targets before carrying out an actual ground invasion – was only implied.”

Lost, or deliberately obscured, is the fact that China has been the victim of horrific Japanese aggression which grotesquely slaughtered more than 35 million Chinese citizens in the 20th Century. The U.S. attempt to portray Japan as the victim of China is another example of the Orwellian obfuscation of history, the massacre of truth that characterizes both Japanese and United States narratives. (Japanese civilians were the victims of the US bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, not the Japanese military) The US-Japan Security Treaty of 1960 stipulates that an attack on Japan will be regarded as an attack on the United States. Prime Minister Abe is seeking to transform Japan’s constitution to permit engagement of the Japanese armed forces in aggressive wars. But it is difficult to imagine a resurgent military posture by Japan without tacit encouragement from Washington.

The highest stage of monopoly capitalism is fascism. The 2008 global economic crisis of capitalism, still unresolved, is forcing ill-advised and counterproductive “austerity measures” on decaying capitalist societies throughout Europe and in Japan, where Prime Minister Abe is restructuring the economy into the very pro-market system which is producing riots throughout Western Europe, as living standards deteriorate drastically, and the income inequality gap becomes an abyss.

On January 29, 2014, the UN Security Council held a meeting on “War, its lessons, and the Search for a Permanent Peace.” The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Oh Yoon stated:

“First, Yasukuni Shrine is a facility that enshrined not only ordinary soldiers, but also Class A war criminals from the Second World War and many Japanese Imperial Army and Military police personnel who inflicted the most unimaginable atrocities on the peoples of the region during the wars and during its colonial rule. As mentioned by the Japanese representative, Japan’s political leader recently paid tribute to the Yasakuni Shrine, despite strong appeals not to do so issued by many countries of the region and in the world. The Japanese representative conveniently said that the Prime Minister did so to make peace.

How preposterous is that? Worshiping heinous war criminals cannot bring any

peace to a region where the people have suffered so much from the heinous acts of those honored criminals. Paying tribute to the Yasakuni shrine is nothing more than an attempt to glorify its past. The explanation that the government offers can be received only as unintelligent to outsiders. If Japan truly wants to actually contribute to world peace, it is most important for Japan to face up to history and to build trust by expressing deep remorse and apologizing to the governments and peoples of the region.”

Mr. Ri Tong Il of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea stated:

“As for past crimes committed by Japan against the peoples of Korea, China and South-East Asian countries, a precedent cannot be found in the history of humanity regarding the degree of savageness and brutality. It is a common issue. It does not concern only Asian countries but all humanity. The reality is that Japan is now hell-bent on denying and covering up its past crimes. Recently, it went as far as to commit a further error by stabbing at the wounded hearts of the victims and their States. The most representative example is the visit to the Yasakuni Shrine by Mr. Abe, Prime Minister of Japan. That visit is a totally anachronistic crime intended to prompt the Japanese people to revive their militarist ambition and to incite them to commit another crime against humanity, thereby deluding the entire Japanese territory and population towards its own total destruction.”

Mr. Liu Jieyi, Permanent Representative of China stated:

“Japanese Prime Minister Abe’s visit to the Yasakuni Shrine is an affront to historical justice, human conscience and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the world’s victory over fascism and the post-war international order. During the Second World War, the Japanese army forcibly recruited large numbers of comfort women from China, Korea and other countries and committed egregious crimes against humanity...Thus far, the Japanese Government has not offered an apology or compensation for the issue of comfort women, and by rights, it should continue to be jointly condemned by the international community. Are we to understand that to pay tribute to war criminals and glorify wars of aggression is to declare a wish for peace? The Charter puts it very clearly: the founding of the United Nations was to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Are we to understand that altering textbooks and covering up the truth of history is the correct way to make future generations realize the mistakes that have been made and avoid the path of war?”

Is it a coincidence that while Japan is preparing the ideological “justification” for resurgent militarism, this year’s Munich Security Conference stated that Berlin plans to abandon restrictions on the use of military force? Is the revival of the Axis being prepared by these widespread falsifications of fact that can only be described as the rape of historic truth?

At the Davos Conference in January, Prime Minister Abe made the explosive remark that the present tension between China and Japan resembled the situation between Germany and Britain before World War I; and in another falsification of fact, he asserted that China’s increase in military expenditures are destabilizing the region. In reality, Japan’s per capita military expenditures are quadruple the size of China’s. Further, Japan is Washington’s major ally in Asia, and considering John Kerry’s reaffirmation of the 1960 treaty that commits the United States to protect Japan, (Kerry’s recent commitment to Japanese

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida that the United States would defend Japan against attack), Abe's remarks in Davos can only be interpreted as an exaggerated form of propaganda further provoking – and implicitly threatening China. With US support, Japan could well provoke, stage or fabricate an “incident,” similar to the fabricated “Tonkin Bay” incident prior to the US attack on North Vietnam

In “The Grand Chessboard,” Zbigniew Brzezinski states (page 55):

“Potentially the most dangerous scenario would be a grand coalition of China, Russia and perhaps Iran, an ‘antihegemonic’ coalition united not by ideology but by complementary grievances... Averting this contingency, however remote it may be, will require a display of U.S. geostrategic skill on the western, eastern and southern perimeters of Eurasia simultaneously.”

Today, at the United Nations, the U.S. implemented this strategy. Knowing, a priori, that their provocative resolution, based on a gross falsification of historic fact, would not be adopted, the U.S. nevertheless put the resolution to a vote, for the explicit purpose of publicly “isolating” Russia, which they knew must veto the resolution, and leaving China no realistic alternative but to abstain from voting. This was a way of driving a wedge between Russia and China, which had previously stood courageously together and vetoed UN Security Council resolutions which would have led inevitably to Security Council support of NATO military aggression in many parts of the world.

Pathetically, indeed shamefully, 13 security council members submitted to this farce, and supported the conniving resolution. The Ukrainian ambassador, previously representing President Yanukovich, betrayed his President and joined the Kiev nazi-infiltrated putch. He is now the darling poster-boy of Western imperialist aggression, pompously exceeding his mandate, and calling for the expulsion of China and Russia from their P-5 strength. He would very likely replace them with nazi sympathizers, entirely betraying, also, the purpose of the United Nations, which was established following the nazi and fascist Japanese military scourge of World War II, to prevent any possible recurrence of global fascism.

US Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland earlier admitted at the National Press Club in Washington, that the US has spent more than 5 billion dollars on NED projects, with 65 projects recently established in Ukraine alone. The United States engineered a violent neo-nazi coup against the democratically elected Ukrainian President, Yanukovich, in one of its classic operations destabilizing and overthrowing democratically elected presidents, throughout the world, who reveal independence of US NATO control. This strategy was implemented in Iran, Guatemala, Brazil, Chile, Honduras, Indonesia, etc. etc.

Having succeeded in again destroying a democratically elected government by operating, like a cancer, according to Brzezinski's prescription of “co-opting elites,” the US then accused Russia of aggression in Crimea. It would be poetic justice if Eastern Ukraine joined Crimea and opted to be incorporated within the Russian Federation, thus leaving the US puppet government in Kiev in control of a “Rump Ukraine.”

Inexorably, the Axis appears to be returning, like a metastasized cancer, to drive the world toward World War III. Perhaps the only force that can prevent this is the one Brzezinski so fears, an alliance between Russia and China. One can only hope that the leaders of Russia and China outmaneuver Brzezinski, because this game of chess is being played with the lives of the entire human species. And the suicidal nature of capitalism is driving the world

to the brink of extinction.

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