

THE HISTORY

**SHALL NEVER
BE FORGOTTEN**

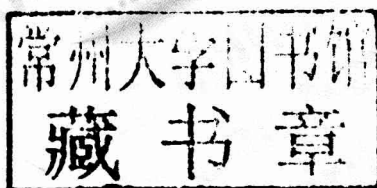
Chinese Diplomats Refuting Japanese Prime Minister
Shinzo Abe's Homage at the Yasukuni War Shrine



China Intercontinental Press

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图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

历史不容忘记：中国驻外使节批驳日本首相参拜靖国神社文集：英文 / 程永华等编著；覃朗，郭益新，鄢科译. —北京：五洲传播出版社，2014.11

ISBN 978-7-5085-2890-8

I. ①历… II. ①程… ②覃… ③郭… ④鄢… III. ①侵华事件—日本—文集—英文②军国主义—日本—文集—英文 IV. ①K265.607-53②D731.31-53

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字 (2014) 第214676号

历史不容忘记——中国驻外使节批驳日本首相参拜靖国神社文集 (英文)

编者 程永华等

出版人 荆孝敏

译者 覃朗 郭益新 鄢科

责任编辑 黄金敏

助理编辑 董智

装帧设计 北京翰墨坊广告有限公司

封面设计 八度出版服务机构

出版发行 五洲传播出版社

地址 北京市海淀区北三环中路31号生产力大楼B座7层

邮政编码 100088

电话 010-82005927 82007837 (发行部)

网址 www.cicc.org.cn

印刷 北京圣彩虹科技有限公司

开本 787mm×1092mm 1/16

印张 13.5

字数 130千字

版次 2014年11月第1版第1次印刷

定价 98.00元

Preface

On December 26, 2013, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe openly paid homage to the Yasukuni Shrine. On April 21, 2014, during the three-day spring ritual worship ceremony in the Yasukuni Shrine, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and several members of the cabinet sent offerings to the Shrine. The Abe Administration attempted to revive militarism and brazenly challenged the post-war international order, bringing the Yasukuni Shrine issue into the focus of international public opinion once again. Their actions were strongly condemned by the international community.

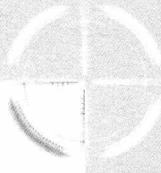
The Yasukuni Shrine, where 14 Class-A war criminals including Hideki Tojo are honored, was the symbol of Japanese militarism's foreign aggression in World War II. Japan's attitude toward Yasukuni Shrine indicates whether Japan can properly view and repent its history of aggression. People in Asian countries abhor Japanese politicians' visit to the Yasukuni Shrine and condemned it as "worship to the demons". Abe's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine seriously affronted the feelings of people of all countries that have once suffered from Japanese militarist aggression and colonial rule. His act of turning back the wheels of history has aroused high vigilance and strong concern from neighboring countries and the international community over where Japan is headed.

To refute Abe's atrocious behavior and enlist support of the international public opinion for China and other victimized Asian countries, Chinese ambassadors and diplomats across the globe wrote

and published articles in local mainstream media outlets to explain China's stance, exposing the attempt of Japanese right-wing force to whitewash Japan's history of militaristic colonial invasion, and revealing the truth of the history. These articles expound to the international community the truth of the Yasukuni Shrine issue and the root of the China-Japan dispute, exposed the truth of Abe's homage to the Shrine, and showed the harmfulness of his right-leaning policies to the peace and security of the Asian-Pacific region and the world, urging the Japanese right-wing force led by Abe to adopt the right manner to the past, stop the confrontational behavior, and abandon militarism. This book is the collection of some sixty speeches given by Chinese oversea diplomats refuting Japanese Prime Minister's homage at the Yasukuni shrine, and will be published in seven languages, which are Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish, Arabic and Japanese.

The Editors

June, 2014



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Declaring “No War Pledge” in the Wrong Place

By Cheng Yonghua

Chinese Ambassador to Japan

The fact that government leaders on behalf of Japan visiting the Yasukuni Shrine where the Japanese Class-A criminals of World War II are consecrated concerns the Japanese government’s understanding and attitude toward that past war, the political foundation of the recovery and development of China-Japan post-war relations, the feelings of the vast number of people from war-victim countries, and also bears on Japan’s national development direction in the future. The issue itself is an issue of politics and diplomacy.

China has always made a clear distinction between the Japanese militarists and the Japanese people, and between war criminals and ordinary soldiers. We believe the war launched by Japanese militarists inflicted untold sufferings on the Chinese people, and also brought misery to the Japanese people. Those who should be responsible for that war must be a handful of Japanese militarists. Japan accepted the Potsdam Proclamation and the trial by the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, which is the premise for Japan’s postwar rebirth. The Japanese government must keep its promise, taking clear responsibility for issues like the nature of aggressive war and Class-A war criminals’ responsibility for the war. We have no objections to ordinary people showing respect to their dead families. However, Japanese leaders visiting the Yasukuni Shrine concerns their understandings of the aggressive war’s nature and responsibility, which absolutely cannot be accepted by the Chinese side.

Japan could have its own concept of life and death and the view of religion, but it cannot be the excuse for the Japanese leaders paying

respects to the so-called “spirits” in which the Class-A war criminals are involved. After their death, do the Class-A war criminals become the “spirits” deserving respect? Can their crimes and wartime responsibility while alive be written off? Everyone has the minimum sense of distinguishing kindness from evil, and right from wrong, which has nothing to do with religious culture. We have never heard the German political heavyweights would claim that the war maniacs including Adolf Hitler had redeemed their guilt by death and should be worshipped on the grounds of their own concept of life and death and religious view.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe delivered a speech after the visit, claiming that they would stick to the “No War Pledge” and the visit was based on the reflection on the past. The Yasukuni Shrine is a wrong place to deliver the speech of “No War Pledge” and the people with conscience around the world have strong antipathy and questions to the related remarks. The Yasukuni Shrine was a spiritual pillar of foreign aggression for the Japanese militarism before the war; and now, it not only enshrines Class-A war criminals, but also strongly glosses over and distorts the history of aggression and preaches the false viewpoint of history which is incompatible with current international public opinion, and the “Yūshūkan” is a typical example. Shinzo Abe paid homage to the “spirits” at such a place, propagating “peaceful principle” and “no war principle” to those culprits who started the war of aggression, which can neither be accepted by the people of war-victim countries nor be trusted by the international community. Such a behavior is absolutely a blasphemy to the peace.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe stressed that he had no intention to hurt the feelings of the peoples of China and the Republic of Korea (ROK), and he, with reverence, would like to develop Japan-China friendly cooperative relations. He also hoped to get an opportunity to make a direct explanation to the Chinese leaders. In view of Japanese leaders’

visit to the Yasukuni Shrine where the war of aggression is glossed over, the international community and the Chinese citizens think of the aggressive war the Japanese militarists had launched, as well as the severe disasters they had brought to the Chinese people and China's neighboring countries in Asia when they see the "respect" and "worship" the Japanese leaders showed to those assaulters. Without taking history as a mirror, no one would be able to look forward into the future, nor would it be possible for China-Japan relations to adhere to the right development direction.

The visits to the Yasukuni Shrine paid by the Japanese leaders concern the attitudes of the Japanese government toward the war of aggression and political foundation of China-Japan relations, and bear on the political foundation of Japan's relations with its Asian neighbors and the international community. It is by no means Japan's internal affair, nor a personal issue. On the Yasukuni Shrine issue, we hope that those in power in Japan, on the basis of understanding the nature of this issue, can listen more to different opinions from the Japanese domestic peace forces, attach importance to the voice of justice of its Asian neighbors and the international community, learn profound lessons from history, persist truly in peaceful development, and genuinely keep peace and coexist with the neighbors.

From Japanese newspaper *Mainichi Shimbun* on December 30, 2013

Dangerous Tribute

By Cui Tiankai

Chinese Ambassador to the United States

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's recent homage at the Yasukuni war shrine deeply disturbed people in China and much of Asia. The dispute surrounding his actions is about more than symbolism; it goes to the heart of his intentions for Japan's future and his willingness to build an atmosphere of trust, respect and equality in East Asia.

Fourteen Class-A war criminals who were tried by the International Military Tribunal for the Far East after World War II are honored at Yasukuni. These include former Prime Minister Hideki Tojo, who launched the attack on Pearl Harbor and started the war in the Pacific that cost millions of lives, and commanders of the Nanking Massacre in China in which some 300,000 people were killed. But this is just part of the story.

The recent homage cannot be separated from the prime minister's denial of Japan's wartime atrocities, and it colors his initiative to revise Japan's constitution to transform its Self-Defense Forces into a military force capable of projecting power outside Japan. This aggressive posture imperils regional security and economic prosperity. By contrast, Japan's acceptance of and repentance for its war crimes would build a foundation for peace and security in the world's most economically dynamic region.

The Yasukuni war shrine is ground zero for the unrepentant view of Japan's wartime aggression. Established in the 19th century to honor Japan's war dead, the shrine imparted a spiritual dimension to Japanese militarism and colonial rule during World War II and became a revered living symbol of that militarism. The shrine includes a war museum, Yūshūkan, whose deliberately revisionist narrative of World War II lauds

“Japan’s salvage of Asian countries from the colonial rule of Western countries” and details “crimes committed by the United States.”

The Japanese government’s attitude toward this shrine is a test of its ability to understand and confront its legacy of militarism and war crimes. Because Abe is prime minister, his homage has implications inside and outside Japan. It is by no means the act of a private individual.

As China’s ambassador to Japan from 2007 to 2009, I witnessed many of the ups and downs of Japan’s relations with its neighbors. I also saw how the homage at Yasukuni by then Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi created tensions with China. Abe was the chief cabinet secretary in the Koizumi administration, and at one time he appeared to understand the consequences of such visits. He refrained from visiting the shrine during his first term as prime minister, which opened the door to improving Japan’s historically strained relations with its neighbors. Unfortunately, he now says he extremely regrets that decision, and his recent actions have closed the door to dialogue.

My country’s government believes that Abe’s actions since returning to power undermine his stated aim to increase Japan’s engagement in safeguarding world peace. His government’s efforts to accelerate Japan’s military buildup and his initiative to rewrite Japan’s largely U.S.-drafted Pacifist Constitution are disconcerting, particularly in the context of his assertions, when talking about World War II, that the term “aggression” has yet to be defined and that no evidence exists proving that “comfort women” were forced into sexual servitude during the war.

The prime minister has said that his changes to Japan’s constitutional military posture would only make Japan a “normal country.” Is he suggesting that the peaceful path Japan has followed is not normal? We see the homage at Yasukuni as nothing less than a challenge - not only to us but to the world. Japanese militarism brought great suffering to the Chinese people as well as the people of many other countries, including

the United States, which was forced to fight a grueling island-by-island campaign against an intractable and fanatical enemy.

Of course, the Japanese people were also victims of Japanese militarism, and today's generation is not responsible for the crimes of the war criminals memorialized in Yasukuni. But the prime minister and his supporters implicitly embrace that responsibility for themselves and their fellow countrymen by paying homage at the shrine.

Japan can embrace a constructive and cooperative future for East Asia by discarding militarism. Ensuring the continued peace and prosperity of our part of the world is in the best interest of all people and countries in this region. Abe is threatening the hard work we have all done to make East Asia the growth engine of the global economy. By listening to their neighbors and abandoning confrontational rhetoric, Japanese leaders can join with China, the United States, the Republic of Korea and other countries to continue to build prosperity and stability for all of Asia. The alternative is simply untenable.

From American newspaper *The Washington Post* on January 10, 2014

Refusing to Face up to History, Japan Will Surely Threaten Peace in Asia and the World

By Li Hui

Chinese Ambassador to Russia

On December 26 last year, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe blatantly paid homage to the Yasukuni Shrine where fourteen Class-A war criminals of World War II are consecrated, in total disregard of the opposition of people of various countries. This was an open challenge to international justice and willful trampling over human conscience. His act of turning back the wheels of history has aroused high vigilance and strong concern from neighboring countries including China and Russia and the international community over where Japan is headed.

Japanese leaders' visits to Yasukuni Shrine are under no circumstances the so-called Japan's domestic or personal affairs, nor solely the issues of China-Japan or ROK-Japan relations, instead, its essence concerns with problems as whether Japanese leaders can properly recognize and deeply reflect on their history of militarism aggression and colonial rule, and concerns with the fundamental orientation of whether Japan abides by the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and adheres to the path of peace; it is also a fundamental issue of right and wrong, aggression and counter-aggression, justice and evil as well as light and darkness; it is as well a significant principle concerning the political foundation of Japan's relations with neighboring countries and the international community.

Since taking office one year ago, Abe has relentlessly preached the theory of "the definition of what constitutes aggression has yet to be established", whitewashed Japan's history of militarism aggression and colonial rule and made important adjustments to Japan's defense policy

package including raising military spending, expanding armaments, denying Japan's Peace Constitution and speeding up political right deviation. Abe's government also created the farce of "purchasing" the Diaoyu Islands, and has stirred up a "China threat" in military and security fields with deliberation, driven a wedge among Asian-Pacific countries, generated regional tension and sought excuses for the restoration of militarism, all of which is leading Japan toward a very dangerous direction. Abe's government has become the biggest "trouble maker" in Asia.

China and Russia, as victors of the world's anti-fascist war and permanent members of the UN Security Council, have the common understanding and obligations to maintain international justice and post-war international order. As early as September 28, 2010, the heads of state of China and Russia issued a special statement on World War II, pointing out that in this war, people of both China and Russia suffered the major attacks of fascism and militarism, underwent the most brutal tests, endured the heaviest casualties and shouldered the great responsibilities of fighting against invaders. China and Russia strongly condemned any attempt to distort the history of World War II, whitewash Nazis, militarists and their accomplices and discredit liberators. On New Year's Eve of 2014, Chinese and Russian Foreign Ministers had an exchange of views on the phone about the issue of Abe's visiting the Yasukuni Shrine. Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said, Russia shares the same stand with China on the Yasukuni Shrine issue. Russia opposes Abe's visiting to the Yasukuni Shrine, and considers his act a provocation to the Asian neighbors. Such behavior shows that Japan is unwilling to deal with the past objectively, and attempt to bleach the history of militarism aggression and colonial rule.

Not long ago, the movie "Stalingrad" with the theme of World War II shot in Russian was released, which not only gained great acclaim with