

# **In Appreciation Of This Great (And Mostly Ignored) Gandhian Wisdom Called Article 9**

for the HAP-'99 "Japan-Day"  
May 13, 1999

at  
The Hague, Netherlands

by

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As I write this commentary in early May 1999, we are at the end of the sixth week of NATO's (USA) "surgical bombing" in the former Yugoslavia. "Surgical bombing" is a euphemism for killing and destruction called war. Television images of the misery of the Kosovo refugees haunt us. This latest spectacle of "high-tech" tragedy, folly, hubris, and absurdity in trying to resolve socio-economic-ethnic-religious conflict with the age-old inappropriate tool called military force leaves me a bit depressed. When will we ever learn that we must "talk-with-each-other" rather than "kill-each-other?" As Martin Luther King Jr. said, "We must learn to live together as brothers (*and sisters,*) or we will perish together as fools."

**We Are Most Fortunate To Have Article 9 As Our Guide So That  
We Need Not "Perish Together As Fools." Unfortunately This Great Gandhian  
Wisdom Called Article 9, Is Mostly Ignored**

Created by the victors and the vanquished and arising like a Phoenix out of the flames and holocausts of World War II, a set of new principles for peace and justice found a home as Article 9 in Japan's Constitution. This renunciation of war is such a universal and priceless treasure that the world can ill afford to lose it as a model for all our futures.

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*(The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not reflect the views or  
perspective of any organization with which he is or has been associated)*

## **The US Model Of Military Force Is Inappropriate For Japan To Follow**

In our recently published bilingual book, (Overby, Kunihiro & Momoi, *A Call For Peace: The Implications of Japan's War-Renouncing Constitution*, Kodansha International, 1997) -- I argue for the restoration of Article 9's integrity and outline a multiplicity of kinds of non-violent non-military service that Japan might carry out under its constitutional "rule of law." These are services that could do far more for world peace and justice than the rearming of Japan as has been US policy in its paranoid cold-war dance with its almost equally paranoid dance-partner the former USSR. These kinds of non-violent non-military services range from diplomacy and war prevention; to social and economic development with justice; to seeking an end to nuclear weapons and international weapons trade; to actions for reducing world population growth; to the design and production of technology systems that minimize the use of Earth's finite resources, and which do not destroy the environment; to defending the nation non-violently with Civilian Based Defense (CBD) -- and more. Please see our book for an elaboration on these possibilities. I am most pleased to report that here and there we are beginning to hear "voices-in-the-wilderness" articulate views that sound a bit like my quixotic mutterings. Please see a very recent piece by William D Hartung, titled "Preventive Diplomacy: Beyond Kosovo", *The Nation*, May 10, 1999.

### **It Will Not Be Easy**

It will not be easy for Japan to take an independent non-violent non-military road for at least two major reasons. [1] history suggests that the United States does not look favorably on nations who chose a different path from the one deemed best for them by the USA; (Do I need to provide you with a list?) and [2] some Japanese leaders who might genuinely wish for a more independent path for Japan -- but who may unfortunately also have some fantasy dreams of returning to the "power-and-the glory" of the "good-old-days" of military force.

### **The Current Most Dangerous Threat To Article 9**

The US with the cooperation of Japanese governments since 1947 have been steadily choking Article 9's clear and understandable words with cynical actions and Orwellian "doublethink" reinterpretations and deliberately ambiguous and evasive language -- the most recent and dangerous being the September 23, 1997 "**guidelines for US--Japan defense cooperation.**"

In Fall 1998 in Japan, I read a paper titled "Save Article 9 -- With Non-Military Japan-U.S. Cooperation." This paper is in support of restoring the integrity of Article 9 and in opposition to the September 23, 1997 "**guidelines.**" In it I argue that rather than accept these US initiated "**guidelines for US--Japan defense cooperation,**" Japanese citizens ought to assist and encourage their leaders to prepare and propose to the USA, a firm and concrete set of **Japan originated "GUIDELINES FOR JAPAN--US COOPERATION IN NON-VIOLENT MEANS FOR CONFLICT-RESOLUTION AND WAR-PREVENTION."**

## **What Do The 9/23/97 Guidelines Imply?**

Time and space limit me but let us look at just one dimension of this new threat to Article 9. If Japan legislates to implement these “defense guidelines” the nation could easily be sucked into a US perceived problem and resulting military conflict, anywhere in the world in a “situation in areas surrounding Japan” -- for, as the **“guidelines”** say --- “... **“The concept, situations in areas surrounding Japan is not geographical but situational.”** The US could identify a “situation” anywhere in the world as potentially detrimental to Japan’s security, thus requiring Japanese participation and cooperation. **Is there much doubt as to who would ultimately make this determination?**

Sadly even Germany, who once also had a constitutional prohibition against sending German soldiers into other countries to fight, gave up that constraint in 1994 as it caved-in to US views and perhaps some German politicians who may have fantasy visions of the glory of military force. German soldiers are now participating in war in the former Yugoslavia, the first time for them since the end of World War II. **Is this what you Japanese citizens wish for your sons and possibly daughters?**

### **Two Non-Violent, Non-Military Actions Appropriate For Japan**

Earlier I have suggested several non-violent, non-military acts that Japan might undertake to do its healthy share for world peace and justice. Let me briefly elaborate on but two possibilities [1] Take the lead in reducing nuclear arms to zero, and [2] Take the lead in developing a non-violent non-military “sunshine” approach to that starving isolated basket-case nation just west of Japan, called North Korea.

### **Lead In Reducing Nuclear Weapons to Zero**

Without question, Japan, as the only nation on earth to have felt the wrath of nuclear weapons -- has earned the right to provide leadership in this domain. Article VII of the 1970 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in symbiosis with Article 9 should be more than sufficient justification for Japan to take the lead in forming a Nuclear Free Zone” (NFZ) in Japan as did former New Zealand Prime Minister, David Lange, in the mid 1980s. Japan should then work to extend this NFZ to all of Asia. An excellent place to start would be to encourage Kochi Prefectural Governor Hashimoto as he tries to have Kochi harbor declared a “nuclear-free” harbor. The entire world would stand up and cheer Japan were she to move in this direction --- the entire world that is, except for the “nuclear powers” who should long ago have implemented Article VI of the NPT.

**Article VII of the NPT reads as follows:** “Nothing in this Treaty affects the right of any group of States to conclude regional treaties on order to assure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories.”

**Article VI of the NPT reads as follows:** “Each of the parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control”

**(Comment On Los Alamos Scientist Wen Ho Lee & “US Legacy Code”  
Theft Possibilities & The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty)**

**The North Korean Dilemma**

North Korea, a place where my B-29 crew and I dropped many “not quite so surgical” bombs in the Korean War -- is called by the United States a “rogue nation.” It’s people are starving, its economy is in shambles, and its military budget as compared to the USA’s and Japan’s military budget -- is like comparing a starving flea to an obscenely obese elephant. Paranoid US policy makers, however, know quite well the importance of North Korea. Whenever the US Department of Defense and the “hawks” in Washington need to “rattle the cage of Congress” and the American people for more money for weapons, or to justify an escalation in some military action -- they turn on the “Pentagon Propaganda Machine.” This is what former US Senator J. William Fulbright called it in his 1970 book by that name. President Johnson’s lies in the 1964 “Tonkin Gulf” incident are a classic illustration of this sad phenomenon.

Could it be possible that Japan’s Defense Agency and Japanese “hawks” have learned something useful from America’s propaganda machine? Might the North Korean missile flight over Japan last Fall make it easier for Japan to invest in the “boondoggle” proposed by the United States called “theater missile defense (TMD)?” If I were a North Korean “terrorist” bent on blasting Japan, I would surely not use an unreliable missile to do it. I’d probably rent a Ryder truck like former US Army man, Tim McVey, did when he blew up the US Federal building in Oklahoma City a few years ago -- or I would use a “suitcase” bomb. Can you imagine a “suitcase-bomb defense” (SDB) system? The US knows it will go broke trying to police the world, and make it safe for multinational firms, unless it can get other countries like Japan to share the costs of these boondoggles. Weapons manufactures in the USA and Japan, of course love these “opportunities.”

Might the recent incident with the two mysterious ships, allegedly North Korean, be used to frighten Japanese people into supporting the so-called “**guidelines**” presently under discussion in the Diet?

I think it is fantastic that for the first time ever, a woman holds the high office of US Secretary of State -- but, why did this one have to have such a “love affair” with military force? To convey a sense of why it is so difficult for America to talk and use diplomacy rather than military force let me share a little story, reported in the *Christian Science Monitor*, 13 December 1996, about the views of Madeleine Albright, US Secretary of State. She shocked former Pentagon Joint Chiefs Chairman, US Army General Colin Powell when she asked at a conference on Bosnia, “What’s the point of having this superb military you’re always talking about, if we can’t use it?”

I think that former President Carter had it right few years ago when he went to North Korea, without the blessings of the “hawks” in the Clinton administration, and talked and negotiated with the Koreans on the “nuclear issue” -- believe it or not, as if

they were humans. Carter defused a potentially dangerous threat of another “surgical” cruise missile attack by the US.

The Reverend Jessie Jackson recently also demonstrated the importance of “talking” rather than “threatening” and “killing” -- also at the displeasure of the Clinton administration ABC group (Albright, Berger, & Cohen).

### **President Kim Dae Jung’s “Sunshine-Policy”**

As another of its non-military non-violent contributions for peace and justice, perhaps Japan might join in and help South Korean President Kim Dae Jung with his “sunshine” policy of friendship and openness with North Korea. Possibly former Prime Minister, Tomiichi Muryama, in his recent visit to North Korea might have become an instrument for moving on this path.

The Clinton administration is to be congratulated for its contribution to the cessation of killing in Northern Ireland. I think the US should try the “Northern Ireland” approach with the two Koreas by bringing the two Kims, from North and South, together with Japan and China to produce a “talking” solution rather than threatening that poor basket-case nation, North Korea, militarily. Having said the above, let me add that rather than the USA unilaterally doing this, the imperfect institution called the United Nations is the vehicle through which these kinds of efforts should be carried out. Japan might try to nudge the USA into supporting the UN (at least by paying the UN what it owes) rather than insulting it as it did in the present NATO action in Yugoslavia.

### **I Am Still A Bit Depressed**

**But I still have hope that you sovereign Japanese citizens can persuade your nation to reject the “guidelines” and follow the Article 9 path of healthy non-military, non-violent contributions to world peace and justice !!!**

Let me conclude with a hopeful little story from a new-found-friend, George Gerbner, a person who founded an organization in the USA called the Cultural Environmental Movement (CEM). This organization seeks to change the unhealthy cultural environment in the USA and the media that so powerfully dominates it. In the fortuitousness that is life, Gerbner knows what a massive challenge it will be to achieve CEM’s goals. He therefore frequently ends his lectures with the following story about the way Soviet dissidents ended their secret underground meetings devoted to changing the Soviet Union during the peak period of USSR power. The dissidents would end their meetings by drinking to the following toast; **“Let us drink to the success of our hopeless endeavors.”**