

A call for reform in Japan

In my opinion, Japan needs four fundamental reforms — a reduction in government regulation; priority given to consumers' needs; a devolution of power to local authorities; and a drastic change in the education system to emphasize creativity.

First of all, Japan's government-led corporate development system is not appropriate for a developed nation. This system must be transformed and government regulations and intervention reduced.

Second, the "industry and manufacturers come first" doctrine, which suited the goal of industrialization and catching up with the West, should be changed into a "citizens and consumers come first" doctrine.

Third, though the centralized power systems of government and administration were effective while Japan was a developing country, they should now be transformed into decentralized systems and more power transferred to local governments.

Finally, education in Japan needs drastic reform. When Japan was undergoing industrial development, a content-based education system was effective for assimilating information from advanced countries. From now on, however, it is necessary to switch to an education system that places more emphasis on creativity, appreciation of nature and cultures, dignity, and morality. I discussed my ideas in relation to this in more detail in my book, entitled "~~Plan for Building a New Country: Toward an Ethical Nation~~", published in 1992 by ~~Keizai Inc.~~

If Japan successfully implements these reforms, I think it can establish a true partnership with the US and the EU and become a

country that displays global leadership throughout the 21st century.

Even if Japan joins ^{question} other world nations in addressing global problems, the ~~subject~~ of cultural differences will remain. If common objectives are shared while respecting cultural differences, however, it should be possible to combine efforts to live and work together for the common good. We must recognize the fact that we have no time to waste in resolving the major problems that the world currently faces, which are overpopulation, depletion of resources and deterioration in the quality of the environment.

Kyosei — the guide for a new world order

I have described kyosei as a corporate creed and as a philosophy for a new Japan. However, I believe that kyosei also encompasses a much wider scope, that is, it is also appropriate as a guiding principle for forming a new world order.

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Not long after the end of ~~the~~ the Cold War and the ideological conflict between capitalism and communism, there has been an outbreak of disputes between ethnic groups and religions as well as clashes between nationalistic groups. The entire world is now concerned about the problem of how to form a new world order.

There are many very sound principles guiding the world today. For example, the ideals expressed in such documents as the American Declaration of Independence and the French Revolution's Declaration of Human Rights clearly express the need for human rights, equality, liberty, democracy and peace, each of which is ~~very~~ *highly desirable* ~~wonderful~~. However, I think that these ideals alone will be insufficient for resolving the problems emerging on this planet.

To create the new world order that encompasses all people on earth, I think that a comprehensive yet fundamental guiding principle is needed. In my opinion, the philosophy of *kyosei* fits this description.

It is difficult to find universal concepts that all people, despite their cultural backgrounds, can relate to. Often what are considered universal principles are interpreted differently in different cultures.

For example, the concept of justice, which seems to be a universal principle, is interpreted in different ways by various cultures. Muslims hold up what is known as Islamic justice; whereas other concepts of justice exist in the world, none of which have been globally accepted.

Another example is the principle of human rights. In the United States there has been talk of tying the human rights issue with the Most-Favored Nation status for China. But China's Council Premier Li Peng has said to Americans: "Your concept of human rights is different to ours. What we mean by human rights is to feed, clothe, house and give jobs to 1.2 billion people." The Chinese perception of human rights, as well as democracy, is not quite the same as the concept talked about in America.

Because of the problem of the various interpretations associated with existing guiding principles, what is needed is a new concept and philosophy that can draw all people on the earth together and guide them to live and work for the common good. In my opinion *kyosei* is such a suitable new concept.