

Japanese Deputy Prime Minister and Financial Minister Taro Aso's statement regarding the Nazi regime concerning constitutional revision.

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Japanese Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Taro Aso gave a speech at a monthly study meeting of the Japan Institute for National Fundamentals on July 29 regarding Japanese constitutional revision which mentioned Nazi Germany: "Adolf Hitler appeared through democratic ways and obtained a majority vote at the assembly. Often people think that he took power by military force. This is wrong." and "Constitutional changes should be carried out calmly. The German Weimar constitution changed to the Nazi German constitution without being noticed. Why don't we learn from that technique?"¹

On August 1, Mr. Aso withdrew the statement by saying, "It is regrettable that my words caused a misunderstanding. What I tried to convey was the importance of having discussions in a calm environment, especially on matters of constitutional change. To emphasize this, at the symposium I referred to the Weimar Constitution under the Nazi government as a bad example, in which a constitutional change occurred amid political confusion, without gaining national consensus or holding national discussion. If my entire statement is read, it should be clear that I look very negatively at Nazi Germany. I would like to retract my remarks in which I cited the Nazis as an example, as it has ended up leading to misunderstanding."²

Retracting the remarks is a matter of course, the remark made on July 29 which mentioned Nazi Germany, stating "Why don't we learn from that technique?" shows clearly that he used them as a bad example.

2

Nazi Germany's fascist political power caused World War II and brought the worst violation of human rights in human history; Jewish persecution, detention to concentration camps, a massacre, oppression of freedom of expression and opposition groups and a large number of war crimes. Upon reflection, a basic consensus of the international community is that after World War II we do not repeat the mistake of fascist ideology which denies the right of democracy and leads to a violation of human rights again. Giving a positive evaluation to the reaching process of Fascism and making suggestions such as "Why don't we learn from that technique?" is absolutely inadmissible. In addition to that, statements affirming Nazi Germany are unacceptable as it is a speech and behavior unworthy of a leading government official for a democratic nation.

Japanese Deputy Prime Minister and Financial Minister Taro Aso should apologize to all people who became victims to Fascism as well as resign his position.

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Japanese Deputy Prime Minister and Financial Minister Taro Aso stated "The German Weimar constitution changed to the Nazi German constitution without being noticed."

In fact, the Nazi German constitution does not exist, and the Weimar Constitution as well as its constitutionalism were suspended by the arrival of the Fascism and Enabling Act of 1933(Law to Remedy the Distress of People and Reich); however, its process was not carried out calmly. There is a history that people who opposed the movement were subjected to suppression of human rights and their freedom of expression was taken away. At great lack of understanding of processes that established the worst human rights violation in history, leads to a movement of discussing revision of the Japanese Constitution and promoting it is a matter of great importance. The Constitution is the fundamental law of Japan which establishes respect for human rights, constitutionalism and democracy and it is quite impossible to be changed without anyone noticing and without sufficient national debate. Mr. Aso's statement shows a great lack of understanding about both constitutionalism and democracy.

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Asahi newspaper/statement's details

<http://www.asahi.com/politics/update/0801/TKY201307310772.html>

2

Sankei newspaper

<http://sankei.jp.msn.com/politics/news/130801/stt13080114060009-n1.htm>

A Tokyo based international human rights NGO, Human Rights Now, strongly protests the outrageous statements of Japanese Deputy Prime Minister and Financial Minister Taro Aso and in view of the importance of his statements we request him to resign immediately.

At the same time, to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, we officially criticize Mr.Aso's statement which confirms the arrival process of Fascism and lacks understanding of constitutionalism and democracy as well as request the government to show a basic stance regarding the statements to both inside and outside of the country.