

Message for Asahi Evening News
special 30th anniversary issue

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I am delighted to express my good wishes to the Asahi Evening News on the occasion of its 30th anniversary. The Asahi Evening News has become a familiar and respected voice in the international community of this nation, a chronicle of an extraordinary three decades of change as Japan moved from the ashes of the post-war world to its commanding position on the current global scene.

As it happens, I spent a number of years in an earlier career as a journalist in Indonesia. So I would make a modest claim to professional kinship with the editors and others on the Asahi Evening News who have done such an excellent job of communicating the events of the daily world. The years since then have only heightened my conviction on the importance of the role of communications in helping knit together our understanding of this often contradictory, rapidly changing and frequently frightening world in which we live. The global communications system, with its phenomenal technological advances of the last few decades, has become a pervasive force in helping shape the world, for good or evil. New ideas, new values, and new perceptions now speed across the world, both stimulating and unsettling millions in the process.

Communication, by definition, is a two-way process. Therefore its practitioners have, I believe, an almost unique opportunity to respond to

and articulate some very fundamental concerns and aspirations of people everywhere in the world. Science and technology have brought many new and innovative advances. But these advances are also being shaped within the context of new levels of people's aspirations and values. A great deal of rich and original thought is arising from this process all around the globe.

A common denominator of virtually all the problems that confront the world today is change. The ability to adapt to change and to learn to live with it is one of the great challenges of our time.

The modern communications system, if for no other reason that it is such a central part of this acceleration process, ought to be at the cutting edge of that change, striving for ways to make it more orderly and humane and non-frightening. In short, to improve all our understandings of the often bewildering world we live in today. This is something that the Asahi Evening News has been seeking to do over its first 30 years - it becomes an even more important responsibility as we look down the road into the 21st century.

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