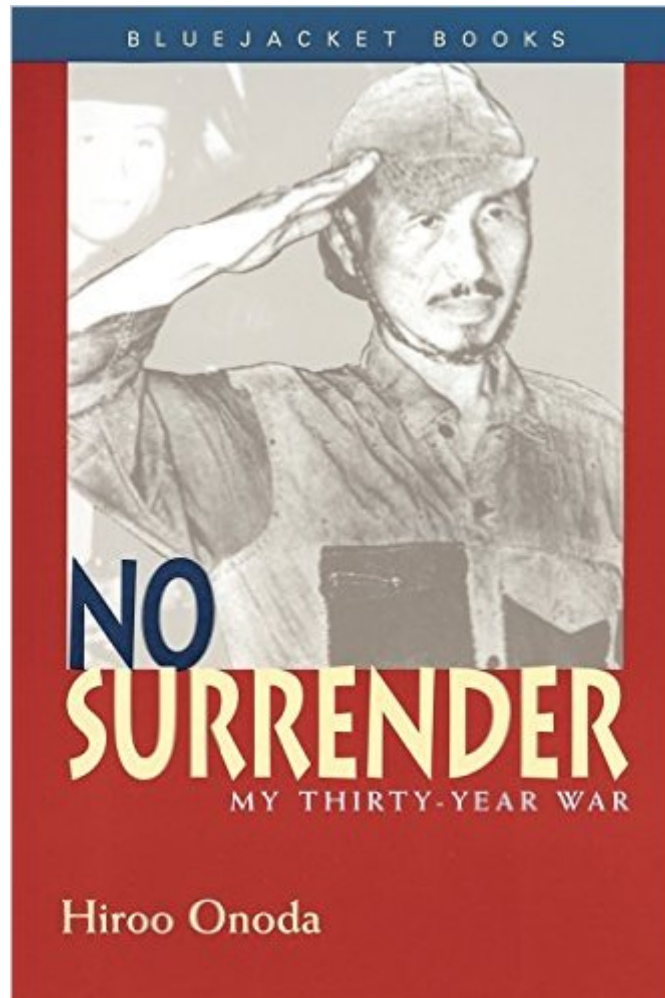




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No Surrender: My Thirty-Year War



Synopsis

In the Spring of 1974, 2nd Lt. Hiroo Onoda of the Japanese army made world headlines when he emerged from the Philippine jungle after a thirty-year ordeal. Hunted in turn by American troops, the Philippine army and police, hostile islanders, and eventually successive Japanese search parties, Onoda had skillfully outmaneuvered all his pursuers, convinced that World War II was still being fought and waiting for the day when his fellow soldiers would return victorious. This first-person account of those years of evading capture and trying to stay alive is filled with drama, tension, and excitement. Readers learn about Onoda's early life, his training as an intelligence officer, and his final assignment to the Philippine island of Lubang. When American forces take over the island, he retreats into the mountains and life becomes a constant battle against the elements as well as the enemy. The description of his selfless dedication to a cause allows us a rare glimpse of the invincible spirit of the human being, and his ingenuity in adapting to primitive surroundings is a commentary on man's resourcefulness. Even after the Japanese forces surrender or are killed, courage and conviction allow him and his few comrades to continue until he alone returns to civilization. A soldier who fought and survived the war's longest, loneliest battle, Onoda became a hero to his people and his account of events, first published in Japan in 1974 and in English in 1975, has enjoyed an approving audience ever since. Currently no other English edition is in print.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Text: English, Japanese (translation) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A fine work and a testimony to the dedication, loyalty and supreme sense of duty in a model Japanese soldier. Coming from a humble background and resigned to military service as a junior enlisted man, Hiroo Onoda unexpectedly found himself in guerilla-warfare training school as an officer-candidate. Because of the exigencies of the war deeply in progress by 1944, Onoda and his classmates graduated early on an expedited training schedule to be able to be put into combat quickly. Onoda and a handful of other officers, along with about forty enlisted men were put on Lubang Island in the Philippines, an Island strategically-located near the entrance to Manila Harbor. While Lubang remained under Japanese control, it was necessary for Japan to guard, fortify and keep it under Japanese control since the Americans were clearly intent on returning. The Americans had started to gain the upper hand in their quest to get back the Philippines. It was unclear if the natives on the Island would continue to reluctantly cooperate with the Japanese occupiers, switch their loyalty over to the Americans or perhaps, pursue a path to independence by playing off one side against the other. Amazing to think about today, Onoda and his small group of four chose to "hold out," even as the majority of Japanese soldiers on Lubang decided to take their chances and surrender "en masse" to the Americans. Even in 1945, it was still unclear as to who would win the war in the Pacific. Onoda and two of the other three surviving comrades would make their bet on Japan and chose to hold out for a long time. One of the two remaining Onoda comrades was shot and killed ten years into the hold-out period. The other comrade would hold out with Onoda for twenty-seven years, almost as long as Onoda. When he arrived there in 1944, Onoda was a young, junior officer, just 22 years old. When he finally came out in 1974, he was 52. So how did Hiroo Onoda manage to hold out for thirty years in the jungle on an Island occupied by Philippine natives, who hunted, fished and farmed? This is the story of "No Surrender: My Thirty-Year War." Onoda was convinced that Japanese surrender propaganda was simply that, propaganda perpetrated by the Americans. Over the years, both he and his surviving comrades became aware that Japan was again prospering. Remarkably, they chose to believe that it was Japan and not the United States who had won the war, even as Lubang had been taken by the Americans. At different times and in different ways, Japanese officers and government officials, as well as members of his own family made appeals for him to surrender. Onoda, however, believed these were subtle, well-crafted hoaxes designed to bring him in and to prevent him from continuing his sworn-to mission as a guerilla fighter. "No Surrender" is at its best in revealing the techniques and tricks that Onoda had to devise, test and master to eat, stay healthy and to not be detected or captured. Much of what is in "No Surrender" would constitute best practices in a Survival Manual for jungle living. Amazingly,

when Onoda finally did choose to surrender and return to Japan, in spite of all the privations he endured over thirty years living in the jungle, his general level of health was superior to that of the typical Japanese man of the same age who would have lived in Japan for that time. When Onoda finally came in, he surrendered his most important possession, his prized Samurai sword to Ferdinand Marcos, President of the Philippines, who graciously returned it to him. When Onoda returned to Japan, he was welcomed back as a hero.

Very interesting indeed! One thing is clear- that is how thoroughly he was inculcated with wartime Japanese propaganda. He actually believed that the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" was something real created for the greater benefit of all East Asian peoples lead by a benevolent Japanese government. Also he was so imbued with the wartime ethos that he would not even believe his own brother. There is dedication to duty but despite his obvious intelligence, he never bothered to THINK. The forward or a review said there was nothing of fanaticism in it. I have to consider dedication to duty WITHOUT thinking, fanaticism. Some things he left out I would have liked to have known were his reactions to new technology such as the first time he saw jet aircraft. I do have one real gripe and that is no fault of the book's content. I received the book as shown. It was stamped inside "Not for resale- THIS IS A FREE BOOK." and some organization in Baltimore. I only paid \$3.50 + shipping but, it's the principle of the thing.

This is basically an awesome novel that happens to be nonfiction. Any history buff or outdoorsman would probably find a lot to appreciate in this text. Most of it isn't really about war, but about being self-reliant and surviving a seemingly impossible situation through wit and perseverance. Obviously, the efforts of Onoda and his small (and slowly shrinking) group of soldiers was pointless; the war was over and they were fighting and dying for nothing. And it's quite wrenching to see how Onoda reacted to learning this--reflecting on the deaths of his comrades after learning that they died over an incredible misunderstanding. But how they managed to keep at it against incredible odds is very inspiring--possible only because these were some seriously tough dudes with an astonishing degree of self-discipline and excellent jungle survival skills. It's fascinating and most bizarre to read about the way Onoda's unit reacted to news they got from papers dropped by airplanes and from radios that they stole from villagers. The thought of Japanese defeat being inconceivable, they had constructed this entire alternate history to try to explain what they were seeing and why the "propaganda" lied about some things and not others. They weren't entirely frozen in the 1940s, being aware of numerous technological advances--not least of which were the pilfered transistor

radios--and the development of a democratic government in Japan. It's hard to believe at first that a guerilla soldier could keep fighting a long-concluded war for decades, and still have hundreds of rounds of ammunition and a functional rifle after thirty years, but to read about how and why it happened is a unique and enlightening experience. This is a serious historical document.

At what lengths will the human body go to maintain itself in the most horrid of environments? How long can a man maintain his integrity and stay true to a cause, an ideal, or a belief? Hiroo Onoda, an officer in the imperial forces of Japan, gives his own account of how he fought on soon after WWII's end. Under the belief that the war had not ended, and that the United States was simply trying to woo him with propaganda, Hiroo fought on for almost 60 years. It amazed me, simply because I had never heard of his story, but rest assured this personal account will not dissappoint. I really enjoyed this book and found myself glued to the pages on a daily basis. It is an eye opening historical treasure, that I think, paints a realistic picture of the Japanese soldier in WWII. I've definitely grown to admire their fighting spirit, tenacity and unwavering loyalty from this account, which I must say is one for the history books.

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