

## Two Things Have Changed

*By Suzy Hopkins*

1. In Japan, ever since the end of World War II, companies have demanded from their employees very long hours of overtime. They were not paid for these hours because you were supposed to be loyal to the company and that was how you kept your job or got promoted. This was how the employees expected work-life to be. Their social or family life was non-existent. This created a condition called *Karoshi* - death by overwork. In 2015 more than 2,150 people committed suicide because of horrible work conditions and 96 people died from strokes or heart attacks for the same reason.

A new law has recently been established that states you are *not allowed* to work overtime. Many companies ignore the law by not showing records of anyone working overtime even though it remains. Greed is a killer in Japan.

2. In the past Japanese women did not work after marriage because it was a reflection on their husband's inability to support them. Their lives were endlessly lonely so the suicide rate soared for these women.

These days the young women won't marry the men who just work. Many Japanese women remain single. Married women who have jobs lose them as soon as the boss finds out about the pregnancy. This means the birth rate is lower every year since the 1950's. This has caused an 11-million-person worker shortage.

The Japanese people are slowly disappearing.