

Chapter 3: Investigative Delegation Crosses UN Threshold First mission (July 2014)

B. ENCOUNTER WITH TOTSUKA ETSURO

By Fujiki Shun'ichi

Conversation with a lecturer at a university with religious ties

I participated in the summer session of the United Nations Human Rights Committee in Geneva, which commenced on July 14, 2014, as a member of an investigative team sponsored by the Alliance for Truth about Comfort Women (later renamed the UN delegation).

Also attending that session was Kaido Yuichi, the chairman of the Japan Federation of Bar Associations, who is also the husband of Fukushima Mizuho, a member of the Upper House of the Diet.

Another attendee was Totsuka Etsuro, an attorney notorious for having used the term “sex slave” to describe the comfort women. Accompanying Totsuka at all times was a man who appeared to be in his forties, clad in a happi coat emblazoned with the logo of a religious group (hereafter referred to as Mr. X).

I wondered why someone associated with a religious group would attend a session of the Human Rights Committee. I approached Mr. X at a rare moment when he wasn't with Totsuka. We exchanged business cards, and I discovered that he was a lecturer at a university operated by the religious group in question.

I asked him a question: “Since you're connected with a religious group, I doubt that you would be likely to be convinced by a one-sided viewpoint. Are you here because you approve of Mr. Totsuka's actions?”

When I phrased my question, I was careful to be specific by including “religious group.” That way he was more or less compelled to respond directly.

He was soft-spoken and gracious, unlike the typical grim-faced leftist. He made a good impression.

Mr. X replied cautiously. “I've been coming to the UN with Mr. Totsuka for 20 years now. I've learned a lot from him about the comfort women. I had no idea that there are people who disagree with him.”

There was so much media coverage that he must have known about the opposition to Totsuka's arguments. But then I thought that if he'd been keeping company with Totsuka for 20 years, maybe Mr. X was telling the truth. I didn't interrogate him any further, but

did tell him that my group had come to the UN to state our position, i.e., that there were no abductions of comfort women, and that they were not forced into prostitution. I also offered a brief explanation how we arrived at that position.

During the three days I spent at the UN, I made an effort to speak to Mr. X every time I ran into him. Since that happened every day, we had several brief conversations. I didn't think someone connected with a religious group could afford to ignore me.

When the meeting on the last day of the session had ended and the left-wing NGOs were holding a press conference in the lobby, I was walking by with Fujii Mitsuhiro, when I ran into Mr. X again. I started a conversation because I wanted to know his opinion of the session. It was easy to approach to him because we'd been talking every day.

A Japanese government representative had just responded to a query by stating that "it is inappropriate to refer to the comfort women as sex slaves" at a plenary meeting, so I wanted to know what Mr. X thought. He seemed genuinely surprised. The interchange continued as I described our position to him.

Since we'd been talking for two days, neither of us felt hostility toward the other; we were able to have a normal conversation. Totsuka Etsuro's son happened to pass by, so Mr. X introduced him to us. That was our first encounter with Totsuka Etsuro and his son.

The term "sex slaves" captures the attention of the Human Rights Committee

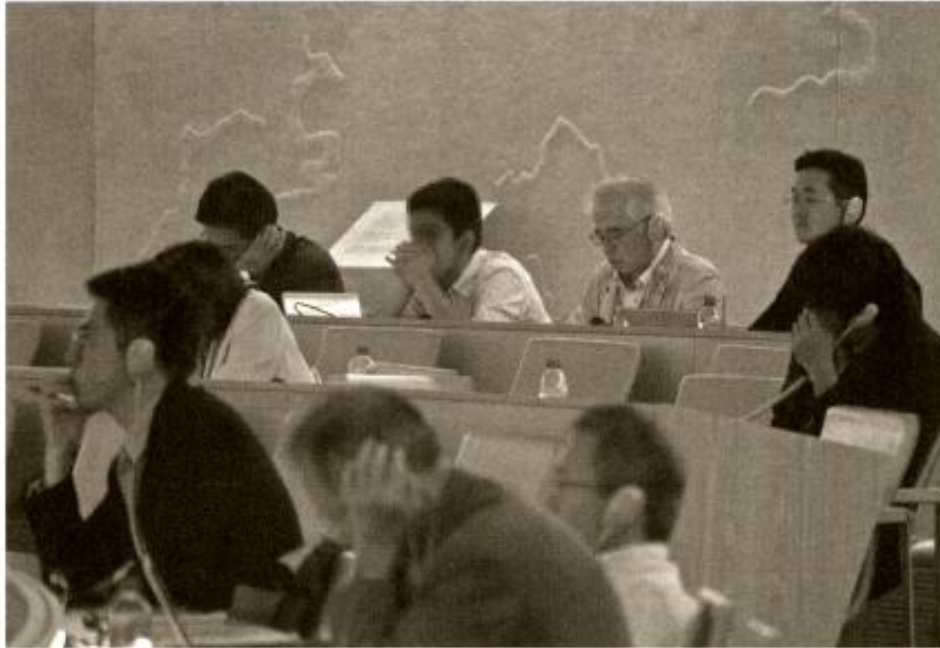
Judging from Totsuka Etsuro's age, his son must have been very young at the time. I heard he was attending an American high school.

I asked the son straight out what he thought about his father's position on the comfort-women controversy. He replied, "I'm still learning about it, so I don't know the details. I need to learn more."

His response was very polite and revealed that he was receiving a good education. I sensed also from the way he spoke that he is gentle and intelligent. I came away with a favorable impression, and found it hard to believe that he is the son of someone who is considered evil by his opponents.

Fujii and I, Mr. X, and Totsuka's son were chatting when I spotted Totsuka Etsuro. At first he passed us by, but then retraced his steps, approached us, and said, rather aggressively, "Who are you people?"

We introduced ourselves and told him what we had been talking about. I also told him what a good impression I had of his son, and what a bright future surely lay ahead of him. Hearing me praise his son, Totsuka started to assume the bearing of a typical father, and the conversation went smoothly after that.



Totsuka Etsuro at a Human Rights Committee meeting in Geneva (top row, third from left)

Unlike my previous impression of Totsuka Etsuro, which I'll admit I'd formed on my own, he seemed like a mild-mannered, ordinary, middle-aged man. I decided to ask him about the comfort-women controversy. I will do my best to reconstruct our dialogue.

Fujiki: Mr. Totsuka, why did you use the term "sex slaves" to describe the comfort women?

Totsuka: I had a hunch. A hunch!

Fujiki: Is that all?

Totsuka: That's right. Amazing, isn't it? For 34 years I've been coming to the UN. I have submitted more than 20 proposals describing Japan's human-rights violations, but they didn't adopt one of them. However, when I said "sex slaves" instead of "comfort women" in 1992, the UN committee members started listening to me. That's what I mean by amazing.

I decided to keep listening to what he had to say, without presenting a rebuttal. But Totsuka did all he could to change the subject. He didn't seem to want to talk about the comfort women, so I had to keep prompting him to get him back on track.

Fujiki: Do you enjoy doing this?

Totsuka: Not one bit.

Fujiki: Why is that?

Totsuka: Because people like you have come onto the scene.

Totsuka may have been speaking candidly here. He'd been going to the UN for all those years, and no one had placed obstacles in his path. No one had voiced any opposition. So I think he gave an honest answer.

He attempted to steer the conversation away from the comfort-women controversy, and toward the First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

He began his explanation: "The first year I came to the UN was 1984. That time I came about the psychiatric-hospital problem. I came to demand ratification of the First Optional Protocol."

In Japan the final judicial decision-making authority rests in the Supreme Court. But if the Japanese government ratifies the First Optional Protocol, when the Supreme Court hands down a judgment in connection with human rights, individuals may resort to the individual complaints mechanism established by the First Optional Protocol.

What this means is that when the Supreme Court of Japan, which should be the court of last resort, hands down a decision, the UN could overrule that decision. That would be shaking the very foundation of the nation that is Japan. Japan has yet to ratify the First Optional Protocol. This makes perfect sense, but the citizens of our nation will have to remain vigilant, as the situation might change in the future.

Backbone of ideology is the victors' mindset

After we had been standing around talking for about 20 minutes, Totsuka suggested that we go somewhere to have coffee. We entered a cafeteria inside the UN building, and Totsuka treated me to coffee in a paper cup. We took a photo of the two of us together, but Totsuka said, "I don't want this to circulate, so please don't post it on the internet." I respected his wishes.

For about an hour we traded opinions on a variety of topics. Like a typical leftist, Totsuka presented one-sided arguments and resorted to diversionary tactics. When he began to state his case, he didn't give us a chance to get a word in edgewise.

But we've jousting with leftists in a variety of situations, and have countered many attempts to veer off topic. Totsuka seemed uncomfortable.

He is mild-mannered, and there is no hint of high-handedness in his demeanor. I could



Phoenix Television (Hong Kong) interviews Fujiki Shun'ichi

imagine having a pleasant conversation with him if we were talking about something else. I tried asking him about Chuo University Professor Yoshimi Yoshiaki.

Fujiki: Do you think what Professor Yoshimi Yoshiaki says is 100% correct?

Totsuka: He's very accurate because he has verified everything he says.

But then he tries to veer off topic again.

Totsuka: Some people have written that the UN tends to attack Japan, but that's not true. Japan is a very important member state. The US pays the most, and Japan is second.

Fujiki: Yes, but remember that Japan is included in the "Enemy State Clause."

Totsuka: Of course, it is. Japan and Germany and Italy.

Fujiki: The UN's mission is to suppress them.

Totsuka: Yes, that's right. The purpose of the war was to protect human rights. They said they would fight until Japan, Germany, and Italy came to value human rights. That's why they established the UN. Because if Japan, Germany, and Italy committed acts of violence, there would be no world peace.

Fujiki: In that case, are you saying that you accept the actions of the Allied Forces as just?

Totsuka: Yes, I do. Of course, I do. I am in favor of human rights.

Fujiki: Are we talking about personal preferences?

Totsuka: That's how I feel.

Fujiki: Very well.

Thus it appears that at the heart of Totsuka's activities is not the resolution of problems, but his personal preferences. It became perfectly clear to me that he had been steeped in the victor nations' historical perception.

Totsuka: What was Japan's declaration in 1940? Japan will control Asia, that's what. Then Italy and Germany declared that they would control Europe. It's ridiculous for one ethnic group to even contemplate controlling all other nations. It was in opposition to that that the UN was established.

Fujiki: The Asian nations became the prey of the white man's enslavement policies, didn't they? So the white men were good, and Japan was bad?

Totsuka: Yes, it was bad.

Fujiki: Bad. Japan was the only nation that tried to stop enslavement policies.

Totsuka: That's not true. More important than nations are people who took action to abolish enslavement policies. I'm glad that Roosevelt was the first to champion human rights in the international community. That was on January 1, 1945. Before that the term "human rights" never appeared in any international document.

From this exchange I realized that Totsuka thought anything Japan did was bad, and was grateful for any crumbs the white men threw his way. He is a victim of postwar Japanese education. Totsuka was an excellent student, and therefore suffered serious harm.

Japan's gender discrimination is a disease

Fujiki: This isn't human rights, but until the 1950s women in most Western nations were not permitted to have bank accounts without their husbands' permission. In Japan even prostitutes were able to open bank accounts. So does that sort of gender discrimination exist in Japan?

Totsuka: Yes, it does.

- Fujiki:** Discrimination of the sort that existed in the West?
- Totsuka:** I'm not sure about that. Maybe not. But there certainly is gender discrimination. The Constitution says that there is gender equality, so I thought that had been achieved, that there was no gender discrimination. But for reasons I don't understand, women have a difficult time becoming Diet representatives. According to the Gender Equality Index, Japan ranks about 100th in the world.
- Fujiki:** I think that's fine.
- Totsuka:** The main cause is the number of Diet representatives. The US Constitution doesn't recognize women's rights. There's no provision mentioning gender equality. So every year American women appeal to the UN for equality.
- Fujiki:** Yes, of course. Because there is actual discrimination. They wouldn't need to appeal if there weren't.
- Totsuka:** It's not a matter of whether there's discrimination, but that there's no guarantee of equality in the Constitution.
- Fujiki:** The Constitution is a legal document, so if there were no discrimination, laws wouldn't be necessary.
- Totsuka:** Yes, I guess so. But there are gender-equality laws in Japan, and there's still discrimination.
- Fujiki:** What kind of discrimination?
- Totsuka:** Well, as I just said, women can't become Diet representatives.
- Fujiki:** Excuse me. It's not that they can't become Diet representatives, but that they don't get elected.
- Totsuka:** In that case, if women were compelled to vote only for women, then they'd get elected. But that's a systemic problem. I'm talking about actual problems.

Apparently the adoption of the Basic Act for a Gender-Equal Society is a huge blemish on Japan. As I stated earlier, it was nations that discriminate against women that provoked the gender-equality movement. By adopting it, Japan, with its totally different culture, history, and circumstances, has created problems that never existed before, and made its government a target for criticism. Liberals excised certain portions, and then claimed, "France succeeded. Germany succeeded, too! Therefore, Japan should adopt it, too." This kind of wish to slavishly adopt Western customs, which totally ignores Japan's traditions

and culture, is the source of the problem.

This is like the frog in the well that has no knowledge of the ocean. Since Totsuka never learned about Japan's wonderful traditions and culture, he never stopped to consider that they are absolutely not compatible with the systems of the West.

Fujiki: Since ancient times Japan has been plagued with natural disasters. If men and women hadn't each taken on their own roles, we couldn't have survived. This isn't discrimination, it's differentiation. I don't think there has been any discrimination.

Totsuka: Before World War II a woman wanted to matriculate at Kyushu University. The university considered the possibility. So whom did they consult? Have you heard of Minobe Tatsukichi? He was a Tokyo University professor, the one who espoused the "emperor-organ theory," and because of that military authorities forced him to resign from his government positions. He was known for his espousal of democracy. So they asked him what he thought about a female student in the Faculty of Law. I wrote a book entitled *The ILO and Gender: Toward a Society Free from Discrimination*.

Objection to the term "sex slaves" is like a sick person in denial

Totsuka: Isn't it strange for men to be talking about sex slaves here? The fact that we are means that there's gender discrimination.

Fujiki: Haven't you been brainwashed by GHQ's masochistic perception of history?

Totsuka: Have you read Elizabeth Kübler-Ross' *Death and Dying*? If you were told you had cancer, your first reaction would be one of denial.

Fujiki: I would say I don't have cancer?

Totsuka: That's right. Then comes anger. Then you gradually come to accept the diagnosis. There's a natural progression in that process. I think that if Japan were told it's sick, it would go into denial. It would say, "How dare you!" That's the first reaction. So that's the most natural reaction when a Japanese says, "Comfort women were sex slaves." But since the process involves gradual acceptance, you need to complete that process. That's why Japan is sick. Japan is sick.

Fujiki: Aren't you the one who is sick? You're not sick, and Japan is?

Totsuka: I am sick, too.

Fujiki: If someone who's sick tells another sick person that he's sick, he's not going

to be very convincing.

Totsuka: We might both be sick. If we point out the fact that Japan is sick, then we'll do research and find out what sort of illness ...

Fujiki: Is Japan such a stupid country?

Totsuka: Not stupid, but emotional.

Fujiki: Japan is a cool-headed nation. It's not emotional, compared with other nations. Japan is much more cool-headed than South Korea.

I became convinced from his pronouncements that Totsuka has no idea about the extent to which Japan measures up to world standards.

Boasts about introducing” “sex slaves into the comfort-women debate

Fujiki: How much money do you think Japan is contributing to the UN? It's a huge amount. Japan owns the UN. But getting back to curing Japan's illness. It's like an illness. If you go to a hospital and are told you're sick, then you start thinking, "Maybe I am sick. Let's cure this illness."

Totsuka: Then do we bring up LGBT and public housing? Whoever does that is sick.

Here Totsuka can't think of a retort, and resorts to his sidetracking tactic.

Totsuka: The First Optional Protocol is not a court, but it might as well be. Doesn't it make sense for us to discuss this together at the UN in accordance with impartial procedures, and cure the illness?

Fujiki: But it doesn't have legal force, does it?

Totsuka: It's a sickness. So if you're told you're sick, you have surgery, or you receive another type of treatment.

Fujiki: So you think Japan is sick.

Totsuka: I'm saying that parts of Japan are diseased. That's true of the US and England as well. We arrange for those illnesses be diagnosed here in secret. We cure the illnesses by pinpointing them one by one. The fact that I was the first to say the words "sex slaves" had a huge effect on the Human Rights Committee. Then the term spread throughout the whole world!

Fujiki: You did a great disservice.

Totsuka boasts that he introduced the term “sex slaves” into the dialogue at the UN.

Totsuka: So you people should tell the government to ratify the First Optional Protocol immediately.

Fujiki: What does the comfort-women controversy have to do with the First Optional Protocol?

Totsuka: Not a thing.

Fujiki: Then your whole explanation was a waste of time?

He speaks inconsistently and endlessly, and then admits that what he has said is irrelevant. Going off on a tangent or changing the subject appears to be an ingrained habit. All leftists do this.

Totsuka: Comfort women never gave me power of attorney. Nobody asked me to do this.

Fujiki: As a Japanese, as a citizen of a nation mentioned in the UN Enemy State Clause, do you feel comfortable here at the UN?

Totsuka: No, I feel very uncomfortable. Do you know why? Because you people are here (laughter). Recently I’ve felt uncomfortable because people refuse to understand my position.

Fujiki: Then we need to hold a public debate.

Here again, it’s obvious that he’s steered half the conversation off topic. When I asked him if he feels comfortable at the UN in spite of the Enemy State Clause, he replied that my presence and that of my associate makes him uncomfortable. He did not answer my question. If I had asked him simply if he felt comfortable, he could have answered no, and that would have been that. But I deliberately mentioned the Enemy State Clause, and Totsuka evaded my question.

Extrapolating 200,000 comfort women from Arafune Seijuro’s speeches

Totsuka: The figure of 200,000 isn’t taken from my own data. But I think it’s quite accurate. I was the first one to mention 200,000.

Fujiki: You were the first to mention 200,000?

Totsuka: Yes, that’s right. Do you know why? I acquired transcripts of speeches that serve as the basis for that claim. Whose speeches? Speeches given by

Arafune Seijuro, who served as deputy speaker of the House of Representatives, when the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea was concluded. At the time, I think he put the number at 142,000. Maybe there were a couple hundred more.

Fujiki: You're talking about sex slaves?

Totsuka: No, not sex slaves. Arafune said the Japanese military murdered 142,000 Korean women, or something like that.

Fujiki: 140,000?

Totsuka: That's the number of women they killed. So I said, "Then this amount of money is nothing." Given the number of soldiers at the time, they would have needed 80,000. So if you add the numbers you get 200,000. That's why I said at least 200,000.

Fujiki: That's where the "200,000 sex slaves" came from?

Totsuka: Um-hmm.

So now Totsuka says the 200,000 figure doesn't come from his own data. He doesn't really say where it comes from, but says that he provided the number. It looks as though as long as he can use it to attack Japan, he doesn't care where his information comes from.

Fujiki: In that case, what did those women's families do when 200,000 of them were turned into sex slaves?

Totsuka: I don't know. I have no idea. But there are registries that list the comfort women.

Fujiki: Where are they?

Totsuka: The military had them. There are also travel documents. They're housed at the Home Ministry. In the basement of the Home Ministry. You have to ask them to show them to you. But I don't think they will agree. If you're saying that 200,000 is too many, just go over there and check for yourself.

Fujiki: I'm asking you if there were 200,000 sex slaves.

Totsuka: Then I guess of the 194,000 women, 80,000 were sex slaves.

Fujiki: You're not allowed to invent numbers!

Totsuka: Something like 80,000. That's not my job. I just offered an estimate.

Fujiki: Then how about if I make an estimate, too?

Totsuka: Go ahead.

Fujiki: Suppose I say that there were 30,000 comfort women?

Totsuka: That's fine, but you need to produce evidence. I have evidence for my arguments. All the Japanese government needs to do is say that they conducted an investigation and came up with the number 30,000. But they don't say that, and that's why we're here now.

Totsuka says he has evidence, but doesn't provide any explanation. It's difficult to tell what he means.

Totsuka: That's why I said that I have to come here every year and report on a gross infringement of human rights. And the government provokes me, dares me to go ahead. So when the government does that, I can't back out even if I want to. A lot of time and money are involved. I thought the government would give in if I came here for two or three years. So I tried different strategies. One year I presented a protest against the substitute-prison system. Another time I brought up retrials for prisoners on death row. My biggest success was *karoshi* (sudden death from overwork). I couldn't do it by myself, so I appealed to a group of lawyers who specialize in this problem. We came here together and presented our case. After we did that two years in a row, the Ministry of Labor changed for the better. The ministry's bureaucrats didn't deny our allegations, at least not that time. They didn't say a word, because we told them that we were going to succumb to *karoshi*.

Here again, Totsuka steers the conversation to his personal exploits, and demonstrates his determination not to discuss anything outside his field of expertise.

American GIs “coerced” into patronizing prostitutes

Fujiki: Let's return to the comfort-women controversy.

Totsuka: A Diet representative told me about the problem. But it's hard to solve it in the context of domestic law, because there are no victims. Nothing has been done about it.

Fujiki: You say there are no victims.

Totsuka: And then some victims came forward. The Japanese government said that brokers recruited the women and followed the Japanese army around. They said they couldn't conduct an investigation. That's where they stumbled. They should have investigated.

Fujiki: Well, I spoke to a number of American soldiers who fought in the Korean War. They told me that in their case coercion was a factor. The coercion occurred when they left their base. They would be surrounded by prostitutes, and coerced into patronizing them. What do you think of that?

Totsuka: I think it's possible. That's a problem that needs to be addressed. You should take action to protect their human rights. How about it?

I was talking about soldiers being coerced into patronizing the prostitutes, but Totsuka didn't seem to be following me.

Fujiki: Whose human rights?

Totsuka: The people who were asking you for help.

Fujiki: Nobody was asking for help. I was talking about soldiers surrounded by prostitutes soliciting their business. A group of women was trying to drum up business. And aren't there a lot of prostitutes here in Geneva?

Totsuka: Yes, there are. But the Japanese army's comfort-women system was different.

Fujiki: It was intended to prevent venereal disease and rape.

Without demonstrating a clear difference, Totsuka insists that the "Japanese army's comfort-women system was different." It was obvious that he was determined to demonize the Japanese military.

Totsuka: It was more like the demands of that era.

Fujiki: No, it wasn't. The Koreans thought they could make money.

Totsuka: The point is that the women couldn't come forward before. I now know that there was a host of problems. I'm talking about women's rights during the war. The infringement of women's rights in wartime is a problem that was brought up here. Before you say anything more, please read my book, *Educating the Japanese About Japan's War Responsibility*. I describe the course of events in it. I urge you people to convince the Japanese government to ratify the First Optional Protocol. Once that happens, I won't come back here again.

When I press him on a point that he introduced, he tries to evade the issue by citing "demands of the times." But he seems to view his substitution of "sex slaves" for "comfort women" as a triumph.

Let the courts decide whether comfort women were sex slaves

Fujiki: But sex slaves are a different matter, aren't they?

Totsuka: Please forget about sex slaves. That issue is over and done with. You can sue if you want. You can appeal to the International Court of Justice. I can show you how to go about it. You can present your case at the International Court of Justice, one person at a time, and the court will decide who was a sex slave, and who was not. I proposed resolving the problem through that court to the Japanese government. The victims are agreeable. But the Japanese government refused. Do you see what I mean?

Fujiki: Who refused?

Totsuka: The Japanese government. People from the Foreign Ministry and the Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs. This needs to be settled at in court. The court will never recognize your claim that the prostitutes earned far more than soldiers did. They will rule that women were tricked into becoming comfort women.

Fujiki: It's impossible to determine who was tricked. Some of the women were certainly tricked by their own parents.

Totsuka: An investigation should shed at least some light on that aspect of it. But the government refused to do that. The Japanese government keeps evading the issue. They're dead set against the idea of resolving the problem via a rational system like the court.

Totsuka, who is responsible for the spread of the sex-slave argument, was intent on convincing us that he is not evading the issue, but the Japanese government is. I decided to propose a public debate, which would expose the inconsistencies in his arguments, and his very convenient double standard.

Fujiki: I think we should hold a public debate. You can share your wisdom with everyone. There are some things you can't learn from books, and some people just don't read.

Totsuka: In that case, I'll write a more accessible book.

Fujiki: A dialogue would convince more people that your arguments are valid.

Totsuka: I doubt that. I have no intention of coming here and making a lot of noise. But the Japanese government won't stop ignoring me.

Fujiki: Probably because you won't desist. If you did, then the government would, too.

It was Totsuka who approached the UN about the comfort-women controversy. The Japanese government has reacted to his allegations — nothing more. From Totsuka's point of view, the government is refusing to recognize his claims. How can he continue to present arguments whose only objective is self-aggrandizement?

Totsuka: There is absolutely no reason for the Japanese government to reject the First Optional Protocol. But that duty has been placed on my shoulders. I hate coming here. It takes money, and it takes time. There are differing opinions about whether or not comfort women were sex slaves. Only the International Court of Justice can resolve this dispute. I'm doing this to make Japan a better nation.

Fujiki: I understand your passion for human rights. I did get the impression that you're working together with South Korea and Korean residents of Japan, though.

Totsuka: South Korea is telling me to desist.

Fujiki: Why?

Totsuka: Because Japan will improve. The Koreans want to keep reproaching Japan until the end of time. They don't want a resolution of the comfort-women controversy. They don't want Japan to issue an apology.

Fujiki: People really think like that?

Totsuka: Some of them do. That's a problem. I don't like that attitude.

Fujiki: They do that to extract money from Japan?

Totsuka: No. But they hate Japan. If you look at history, you'll see why. That's why I'm asking you people to get the First Optional Protocol ratified. From coming here I learned that it won't be easy to get the question of whether the comfort women were sex slaves answered. You have to go to court.

Totsuka seems confident that his argument (comfort women were sex slaves) will not be overruled. He also behaves as though he is speaking for all the people of South Korea when he says "they hate Japan."

I have been to South Korea more than 100 times since 1987. When I first visited, Koreans weren't as hostile toward Japan as they are now. I had been told that some of the older people harbored anti-Japanese sentiments. But I didn't even hear comments that were hostile toward Japan then. Judging from my personal experience, I would say an effort was made to instill anti-Japanese sentiment in Koreans in 1988, the year the Olympics were held in South Korea. Korea claims to be a democracy, but actually operates in a state of armistice. Many North Korean agents have infiltrated South Korea. A great many

tunnels, some of which have been discovered, have been dug under the boundary between the North and South.

Fujii: Who would be the plaintiff? Who would be the defendant?

Totsuka: The Japanese government would be the plaintiff.

Fujiki: Governments don't need to file suit.

Totsuka: Then what are you going to do about that (comfort-woman) statue across from the embassy? The inscription contains the term "sex slaves." They're certain to install more of them.

Fujii: Yes, and you are responsible for them because you're the one who broadcast the term all over the world.

Totsuka: That's not my fault. It's the fault of the people who believe what I said.

Here Totsuka is shifting responsibility for "sex slaves" to people who believed him. He's very clever at dodging accusations. It's hard to tell whether he believes what he says. But at no time did he seem to take offense.

Fujiki: By those who believed you, did you mean those who were enslaved by white people? If so, they are not what I consider sex slaves.

Totsuka: Yes, but the person asking questions today isn't white.

Fujiki: No, she is from South Africa — a victim of apartheid.

Totsuka: I don't feel sorry for them.

Fujiki: The women who were forced into sex slavery?

Totsuka: It's not because I feel sorry for them, but because I think it's an international-law problem.

Fujiki: I'm of the opinion that people should do something about the problems in their own country before they criticize Japan.

Totsuka: They're doing that. But that's where we differ. Do you think Japan is losing face?

Fujiki: No, that's not what I mean. The Japanese don't think there's anything wrong with apologizing. If they think they're at fault, they apologize.

Totsuka: Really?

Fujiki: Really. Once they receive an apology, they don't pursue the matter any further. They don't ask for another apology, or for money, do they?

Totsuka: I'm not so sure.

Fujiki: I am.

Whether one likes it or not, the Japanese culture is one of apologies. When we beckon to a waitress at a restaurant, or ask someone directions, we start out by saying, "Excuse me." Also, in the context of Japanese culture, an apology can be a courageous act. In other countries, on the other hand, an apology is simply an admission of guilt.

Totsuka's conviction: sex slaves

Totsuka: The Japanese government hasn't apologized. Not yet, and not properly. For instance, you reject the concept of sex slaves. That's fine. You're exercising freedom of speech and academic freedom. But you should take this discussion to a higher level, and let the International Court of Justice rule on it.

Fujiki: That's one way of doing things.

Totsuka: Why doesn't the Abe administration do that? Because the Noda administration collapsed.

Fujiki: Suppose someone institutes suit at the International Court of Justice demanding that the comfort-woman statue be removed. If the court orders the removal of the statue, then that will be the end of it.

Totsuka: But the court will necessarily deliberate on the sex-slave issue.

Fujiki: I doubt it. The very act of installing the statue there is in violation of the Vienna Convention.

Totsuka: No, it's not. The real problem is the words engraved on it.

Fujiki: You are entitled to your opinion, but the Vienna Convention prohibits the installation of objects in the vicinity of an embassy that insult the sending state.

Totsuka: So I'm asking why they're trying to avoid a trial. A court is the only place that hands down a legal decision. The world is full of courts, so if you're certain that the comfort women were not sex slaves, then you should fight

your battle there.

Fujiki: But even if the comfort-woman statue near the Japanese embassy is removed, they'll install others elsewhere.

Totsuka: The International Court of Justice will decide whether the comfort women were sex slaves.

Fujiki: I doubt it.

Totsuka: Yes, that will definitely happen. The sex-slave issue is a matter of law, not of fact. Ultimately, problems involving legal decisions must be decided in a court of law.

Fujiki: Your hypothesis is that they were used as sex slaves, isn't it?

Totsuka: It's not a hypothesis, it's a conviction. All defenders have convictions. Courts hand down objective decisions. The UN also makes decisions that are somewhat objective.

Fujii: Then why did the UN agree that comfort women were sex slaves?

Totsuka: Because they were slaves.

Fujii: Didn't the UN simply overreact to the word "slaves?"

Totsuka: They fixated on the word because slavery is a violation of many treaties. International law forbids slavery.

Our conversation ended here because a meeting was about to begin.

In the end, Totsuka didn't seem to care whether or not the comfort women were sex slaves. Nor did he care about the facts. He finally admitted that his arguments stemmed from his personal conviction. His reasoning? Since the international community embraced that conviction, he must be right.

He is calm and composed, and his comments are peppered with words that show he seeks agreement and approval. Throughout our conversation Totsuka interrupted me, and rambled on, making it clear that to him, conversation is the act of stating his views without allowing the other party to do the same. When questioned about a particular topic, he equivocated. Our dialogue wasn't a conversation in the true sense of the word, but it was a valuable opportunity for me to hear this "pioneer" — the first person to equate comfort women with sex slaves — extemporize.



Left-wing activists engaged in anti-Japanese campaigns at the UN; note the smug looks on their faces