

OPEN QUESTIONS FOR PRIME MINISTER WEN JIABAO: CAN YOU PROVE THERE WAS A MASSACRE IN NANKING?

Moteki Hironichi Committee for the Examination of the Facts about Nanking

PRC Prime Minister Wen Jiabao arrived in Japan on April 11, 2007. In his April 12 address to the Diet, Japan's parliament, Wen said that he had undertaken this visit in the hope that it would ease tension between China and Japan. But no sooner had those words left his mouth when he launched into the sort of lie that we've come to expect: "Japan's aggression caused great sufferings and tremendous human and economic losses to the Chinese people."¹

The CCP (Chinese Communist Party) bears the ultimate responsibility for the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War. The conflict was triggered by a communist plot, which involved arranging for Chinese troops to fire on Japanese soldiers in the Marco Polo (Lugou) Bridge Incident. The Comintern then issued orders to the Chinese Communists as follows:

1. Do all possible to obstruct a local resolution of the incident; it is imperative to bring about full-scale hostilities between Japan and China.
2. Use any and every means available to accomplish objective stated in 1; we authorize the elimination of any person in a position of leadership who would betray the movement to liberate China by advocating a local resolution or making concessions to the Japanese.²

Moreover, the Communists repeatedly violated a formal truce.

Today we have access to reliable resources that substantiate this assertion. Nevertheless, the Chinese still have the effrontery to insist that Japan waged an aggressive war. Even more disheartening was the sight of Japan's Diet representatives nodding their heads in agreement with Wen, and even applauding his speech.

But perhaps the biggest lie of all is the allegation that the Japanese perpetrated a massacre in Nanking, which the Chinese continue to make. They have even built a shrine in Nanking dedicated to the memory of the victims of a massacre that never was. More than a few Japanese are angered by representatives of the PRC who spout platitudes about Japan-China friendship in one breath, and in the next utter vile propaganda of this sort.

We wished to benefit from the opportunity of Prime Minister Wen's visit to Japan. We wanted to tell him that his government's schizophrenic stance on Japan is absurd, especially since recent scholarly research proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that there was no "Nanking massacre." We wanted to ask the prime minister what his thoughts are about this problem. To that end, we prepared a document that contains our queries in the form of open questions, with some background information.

1 *People's Daily Online*, 12 April 2007.

2 Political Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Asian Development, *Basic Materials about the Comintern and the Soviet Union's China Policy* (Tokyo: Political Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Asian Development, 1939).

How will Wen Jiabao respond?

We expect that 2007, marking the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Nanking as it does, will be a critical year. Reports have it that at least 10 films relating to the incident are in the offing. A myth that has already been given far too much credence threatens to become imprinted on the global memory for all time. To combat these lies, Mizushima Satoru, president of Channel Sakura, has begun a fund-raising campaign for a film to be produced this year under the (provisional) title *The Truth About Nanking*. It will be a documentary that exposes the lies that have been disseminated over the years.

In connection with this campaign, we formed the Committee for the Examination of the Facts about Nanking, on March 13 of this year. The committee is an organization dedicated to communicating the facts about 1937 Nanking, rationally and comprehensively, to the public, both at home and abroad. Our chairman is Kase Hideaki, who is assisted by Secretary Fujioka Nobukatsu and 13 other members. This writer is honored to be one of them.

On April 9, our open questions, translated into Chinese, were delivered to Prime Minister Wen in care of the Chinese Embassy. On the same day, we distributed the document (in English and Japanese, in addition to Chinese) to leading media companies, along with a press release. We sent the same package to each of the 80 members of the Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan.

We have already received several requests for interviews from representatives of overseas media organizations. From Wen Jiabao, however, we have heard not a thing. We are not surprised. After all, it would be impossible to defend a proposition built on lies, as the “Nanking massacre” was.

Then, will the prime minister admit that the accusations relating to Nanking were made in error? We don’t think so. Even if his conscience told him to do the right thing, he could not utter words that might tear the fabric of the communist regime to shreds.

That being the case, Wen Jiabao will probably opt to remain silent. Still, these are open questions. The entire world knows that they have been submitted to the Chinese prime minister. If he ignores them, everyone will know that the PRC government is dishonest and rude, and that its silence proves that the “Nanking massacre” was fabricated.

The document submitted to the prime minister, which follows this article, consisted of five questions and one request. Here, we would like to offer some commentary for each question.

1. No mention of “Nanking massacre” by Mao Zedong

In this question, we refer to the fact that Mao Zedong never alluded to a massacre in Nanking, not in any of his writings or his correspondence. In *Mao: The Unknown Story*, author Jung Chang berates the Chinese leader posthumously for failing to mention the “Nanking massacre.”³

3 Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, *Mao: The Unknown Story* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), p. 207.

Mao is an estimable work in that it contains 500 interviews and often draws on valuable information gleaned from declassified Soviet documents. But as far as Japan is concerned, the author is stuck in the old, stale “aggressor nation” mindset.

Mao Zedong did not fail to mention a massacre in Nanking because he was out of touch with current events. Even when the Communist Party fled to Yan’an, its underground network encompassed all of China. Since the Battle of Nanking was fought during the Second United Front, Mao would have been well informed about events in Nanking, the capital. In fact, he wrote his observations about the Battle of Nanking in *On Protracted War*: “Japanese troops surrounded many, but killed few” (the Japanese generally freed prisoners of war).

It is the height of foolishness to assume that Mao Zedong would have neglected to speak out if Nanking had actually been the scene of the massacre of the century.

2. 300 press conferences

Prof. Higashinakano Shudo discovered vital information at the Museum of Chinese Nationalist Party History in Taipei, in a document entitled *Outline of Operations: International Propaganda Department, Central Propaganda Office*. For details, see his *Understanding the Nanking Incident with the Aid of Top-Secret Nationalist Documents*.⁴

The document states that 300 press conferences were held in Hankou between December 1, 1937 and October 20, 1938. On average, they were attended by 50-60 people, 35 of whom were members of the foreign press and embassy personnel. Not one of those 300 press conferences held over a 10-month period that straddled the Battle of Nanking was devoted to, entirely or in part, descriptions of Japanese troops murdering civilians or killing prisoners of war unlawfully. Nor did a foreign journalist even once pose a question about the “Nanking massacre.”

If there had indeed been a massacre in Nanking, what is the likelihood of press conferences sponsored by the International Propaganda Office skirting the subject? Could the International Propaganda Office have been so extraordinarily incompetent as to be ignorant of events that transpired in Nanking? Not if one is to believe the accounts in John Rabe’s *The Good Man of Nanking* that mention a large number of officers (among them Long, Zhou, Han and Luo), who were hiding in the Safety Zone, where they engaged in covert activities.

Moreover, Miner Searle Bates, a Nanking University professor who was also an advisor to the Nationalist government (and a member of the International Committee for the Nanking Safety Zone) was only one of the foreign residents of the city who collaborated with the Nationalists. They would certainly have been prolific communicators of information about a massacre.

The reason for not referring to the “Nanking massacre” at the aforementioned press conferences is simple: no information about such a catastrophe had been received. The International Propaganda Office had no choice but to manufacture the catastrophe, selecting

⁴ Higashinakano, Shudo, *Nankin jiken: kokuminto gokuhi bunsho kara yomitoku* (Understanding the Nanking Incident with the aid of top-secret Nationalist documents (Tokyo: Soshisha, 2006).

as its accomplice Harold Timperley, a newspaper reporter (an inspired choice, since journalists are assumed to be neutral) as a secret agent. Timperley was hired to produce *What War Means: The Japanese Terror in China*, a propaganda book intended for foreign consumption. The aforementioned top-secret document attests to the fact that the book was, in its entirety, a product of the Chinese propaganda machine.

Apparently, Timperley spent a great deal of his career acting as the henchman of conspirators. He later became the head of Trans-Pacific News Service, a news agency based in the U.S., which also pretended to be neutral.

3. Nanking's population increases

One would expect a decrease in population in the aftermath of a massacre. However, *Documents of the Nanking Safety Zone* (hereafter DNSZ) paints a different picture. DNSZ is a logbook describing the International Committee's activities, issued by Shanghai publisher Kelly & Walsh in 1939 under the supervision of the Chinese government. Therefore, it would have toed the Nationalist Party line.

For the population prior to the fall of Nanking, DNSZ relies on Wang Gupan, head of the National Police Agency. Wang reported a population of 200,000, which according to DNSZ, remained unchanged throughout December 1937.

It would be impossible to take a census during the upheaval of war. But there are statistics for December 1937, and they were recorded by the International Committee for the Nanking Safety Zone. (It was the International Committee that saw to the needs of the Nanking's residents, who had gathered in the Safety Zone, after the city's government officials had fled.)

The committee members continued to record the population as 200,000 even after the city fell. But the story doesn't end there. According to DNSZ, by January 14, 1938, a month into the Japanese occupation, Nanking's population had expanded to 250,000.

The Japanese military, aided by the Self-Government Committee, had been issuing civilian passports in connection with efforts to track down Chinese military personnel hiding in the Safety Zone. During this process, it became clear that there were many more people in Nanking than originally estimated. Consequently, the International Committee made an upward revision to 250,000.

If there had been a massacre in Nanking, the population would have decreased. It did not decrease. If it had, the International Committee would certainly not have recorded an increase. We would appreciate Wen Jiabao's attempt to explain away that increase, which appears in DNSZ, a publication supervised by the Nationalist government. We imagine that here, too, he will maintain silence.

He could, like Iris Chang, superimpose fiction on fiction by first manufacturing a population of 300,000 outside the Safety Zone and then claiming that it was obliterated in a massacre. In fact, that would seem to be his only option.

4. 26 murder cases

Many people may believe that there was wholesale slaughter in Nanking, even though there may not have been enough victims to cause a population decrease. We know that there were not sufficient murder cases to justify the International Propaganda Department's breathing a hint of a massacre at even one press conference. To that information we can add the fact that only 26 murders are recorded in DNSZ.

The Safety Zone was established in an area of Nanking 3.9 square kilometers in area (less than 40% of the size of Chuo Ward, Tokyo Prefecture's smallest administrative district or less than Central Park in Manhattan). Since 200,000 refugees crowded into that small space, it would have been nearly impossible to commit a violent crime *and* escape the scrutiny of 400,000 eyes.

With very few exceptions, Japanese military personnel were not permitted to leave their barracks at night. Chinese troops who had taken refuge in the Safety Zone ruled the streets at night. Japanese soldiers with criminal intent would have had to exercise it in broad daylight, when there surely would have been witnesses.

The International Committee received numerous complaints from Chinese. Committee members were unable to investigate all of them, but they did type up a report for every complaint received. The reports were compiled into "Cases of Disorder", a section of DNSZ. Some of the cases reported by Chinese strain credibility, or at least seem suspicious.

An analysis of every case listed in DNSZ yields only 26 murders. Only one murder was witnessed; it involved the lawful killing of a soldier who tried to escape when stopped for questioning. Therefore, this case cannot be considered a crime.

The remaining 25 allegations of murder lack witnesses, or are based on hearsay. Normally, the presence of a corpse tells us that a murder has been committed. Only in three of the cases is a corpse mentioned, and in those cases, there was no evidence that would implicate Japanese military personnel. So much for the murder cases described in a book produced under the supervision of a Chinese Nationalist government organization.

At the Tokyo Trials, Tsukamoto Koji, who had been judge advocate of the Shanghai Expeditionary Forces, testified that between December 1937 and February 1938 he had handled two or three murder cases. The military police referred all crimes committed by Japanese soldiers to Tsukamoto.

His testimony is largely in agreement with the case records in DNSZ, especially when one takes into consideration the fact that a body was present at the crime scene in only three of the 25 alleged murders. Therefore, there cannot have been even 10 murders.

The Chinese government may counter this question with what they claim are the testimonies of massacre victims. But if they are not consistent with contemporary records, they are not worthy of discussion. Such testimonies, especially those that run counter to information provided in Questions 2, 3 and 4, should not be accepted as fact.

5. No photographic proof of a massacre

Our fifth question relates to photographs used as evidence in Iris Chang's book and in many other works that purportedly expose the "Nanking massacre." The Massacre Memorial Museum in Nanking, along with other "history museums" in China displays photographs they would have us believe bear witness to a massacre.

However, *Analyzing the "Photographic Evidence" of the Nanking Massacre* addresses those photographs. The authors analyzed 143 photographs that appear frequently in books and museums, applying the strictest scientific standards. Their conclusion: not one of them attests to a massacre in Nanking.⁵

Most of the photographs made their first appearances (in connection with the "Nanking massacre," that is) in *Record of Atrocities Committed by the Japanese Enemy*, issued by the Nationalist government's International Propaganda Department in July 1938, and *Japanese Atrocities Witnessed by Foreigners* (the Chinese version of Timperley's *What War Means*). They later made their way into other publications. Some of them were distributed to the Trans-Pacific News Service (headed by the aforementioned Timperley) as news releases, and even reputable agencies like the AP (Associated Press) used them.

One of them is advertised as showing a Japanese officer engaged in sword practice on a prisoner of war tied to a cross. The Japanese government lodged a protest with the AP. The agency insisted that the photograph was authentic, but eventually was forced to back down. The story of this particular photograph is told in the January 1939 issue of *The Lowdown*, an American magazine.

The history of that one picture is interesting, in that it throws light on the history of most such pictures. It was first placed on sale, as a post card, in Shanghai in 1919. At that time it was presented as propaganda against one of the war lords who was ravaging an interior province. A year or so later it was brought out again depicting Communist Chinese officers torturing a Chinese prisoner of one of the northern provinces. It did not rest for long, as it was soon hauled out again as propaganda against the Japanese when they went into Manchuria. When the Manchurian crisis had ceased to be news it was put away only to be unearthed again to illustrate the atrocities committed by the Chinese Soviets when Chiang Kai-shek was attempting to wipe out the Chinese Red Army in 1934.

In its most recent appearance it was used for the customary purpose of enlisting American sympathies — arousing anti-Japanese sentiment in this country.⁶

As incredible as it may seem, this same photograph, which was discredited prior to World War II, has been exhumed and now serves as evidence of the "Nanking massacre."

5 Higashinakano, Shudo, Kobayashi Susumu and Fukunaga Shinjiro, *Nankin jiken: "shoko shashin" wo kensho suru* (Analyzing the "Photographic Evidence" of the Nanking Massacre) (Tokyo: Soshisha, 2005).

6 "Words Breed War" (by Joseph Hilton Smyth) in *The Lowdown* (New York, January 1939), p.19.

One of the photographs in Chang's book shows corpses floating near the banks of the Yangtze River. It turns out to have been taken by former Japanese Army soldier Murase Moriyasu, so its provenance is not in question. The 11th Company, 45th Regiment had been engaged in a bitter battle near Xinhezhen. Some of the defeated Chinese jumped into the river, and their bodies were carried by the current to the site where the photograph was taken. Obviously, this photograph has nothing to do with a massacre.

Murase reported that the city of Nanking was, for some reason, declared off-limits to his company (a transport unit) for two weeks. He is of the opinion that military authorities kept them out of the city so they wouldn't see the massacre. This is a case of woeful ignorance. At that time, 130 journalists were combing the city for stories and shooting roll after roll of film. And in fact, no one came forward after World War II, claiming to have taken photographs of the "massacre."

In our open questions, we invite anyone in China with photographic evidence of the "Nanking massacre" to produce it, but we are not expecting any response. The North Koreans sent human ashes to Japan, claiming they belonged to the abducted Yokota Megumi. DNA testing revealed that they did not. But the Chinese are not so foolish as to claim faked photographs are genuine.

Close the Massacre Memorial Museum

We believe that the Chinese will be unable to respond to any of our five questions. With good reason: there never was a massacre in Nanking.

We will not insist that China respond directly to our questions. But if the PRC government truly desires amicable relations with Japan, it must shut down an institution that unjustly speaks evil of Japan and perpetuates a myth: the Massacre Memorial Museum.

How can China promote friendship with Japan, and at the same time vilify Japan in the worst way possible? Such behavior is bound to have an extremely adverse impression on not only the Japanese, but on visitors who gather in China for the Olympic Games next year.

It is difficult to believe that China is serious about designating the Massacre Memorial Museum as a World Heritage site; doing so would be a grave mistake, and nothing short of self-destructive. We have more than enough evidence to convince the world that the "Nanking massacre" was a huge lie. Stating otherwise would be only adding another strand to the web of lies already spun.