

**Paid Advertisement concerning “Comfort Women” Run in the  
*Washington Post***

**“Facts Are Our Only Weapon”**

**SUGIYAMA Koichi, composer**

Facts are more powerful weapons than opinions. I am convinced that facts are the only ammunition Japan should use to combat the anti-Japanese propaganda emanating from China and other countries. This conviction inspired me to prepare a paid advertisement — one that would disseminate the facts —to be printed in American newspapers.

Why American newspapers? China has been using its networks to spread anti-Japanese propaganda all over the world. Such propaganda includes the film *Nanking!* and resolutions condemning Japan in the U.S. House of Representatives. When the Japanese caught on to anti-Japanese activities in China, the Chinese shifted their focus to anti-Japanese campaigns in the United States, Japan’s ally. Japan must take action against such propaganda.

As KOMORI Yoshihisa points out in the May issue of this publication, the U.S. House Resolution condemning Japan in connection with the comfort women is the product of a collaboration between Representative Mike Honda and recent Chinese immigrants to the United States. Its authors intend to place more blame on Japan by submitting this resolution to the U.S. Congress.

Their scheme calls to mind an article written by HYOMOTO Tatsukichi, a former member of the JCP (Japan Communist Party). Before Hyomoto was expelled from the JCP, he accompanied (then) party chairman FUWA Tetsuzo to China. There he heard the JCP chairman give advice to his Chinese counterpart: “The most effective, though time-consuming, way to defeat Japan is to win the European and American media over to your side.”

This is nothing short of treason. When I read that article, I felt as though I had been struck by a boulder. But that is exactly what is happening now in the U.S., in the form of House Resolution 121. It is extremely ironic that the Chinese learned their strategy from Japan.

**The Nanking “Massacre” advertisement**

In April 2007 we began work on a full-page advertisement providing evidence

that the so-called Nanking "Massacre" never took place. We intended to place the advertisement in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. The objective of our campaign, which we entitled "The Facts," was to inform the public of the facts, the most powerful antidote Japan has for Chinese propaganda. We asked Sankei Media Service to contact the two newspapers about placing a paid advertisement. The information we wished to communicate was the results of research done by Professor HIGASHINAKANO Shudo, namely: (1) all photographs purporting to be evidence of the Nanking "Massacre" are either composites or forgeries; (2) Harold Timperley, who spread the news of the Nanking "Massacre" to the entire world, held an advisory position at the International Propaganda Office of the Central Propaganda Department, a branch of the Nationalist Chinese government; and (3) the population of Nanking in 1937, when the massacre supposedly took place, was 200,000, far fewer than the alleged 300,000 victims of the massacre.

We wished to present these facts and let individual readers decide whether there had been a massacre in Nanking. However, both the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* refused to print the advertisement. The *New York Times* offered the following explanation.

While I do not pretend to be an expert on the Nanjing Massacre that took place in December 1937, I have relied on historical experts here at The New York Times who are familiar with the claims and counterclaims surrounding this incident.

Upon their review, their judgment is that the "facts" brought up in this recent advertisement do not change the long held view that the Nanjing Massacre did happen as most scholars have written. They point out for instance that calling into question the population of the city, (which has been an accepted number by historians) is similar to calling into question the number of individuals killed, and in our view, trivializes the great human suffering of the time. We will therefore, decline to publish advertisements such as this that, in our view, to call into question accepted facts.

Should the statements found in this advertisement be published in reputable newspapers and magazines as new found evidence, and not just speculation, please let us know.

Sincerely,

Steph Jespersen  
Director  
Advertising Acceptability  
The New York Times

In short, the *New York Times* believes that there was a massacre in Nanking, as has long been reported, the number of victims notwithstanding. The advertisement we proposed differs from their perception; therefore, they cannot allow it to appear in their newspaper.

**Admit in the first place that there was a massacre**

The *Washington Post* responded as follows.

The key is there needs to be an upfront statement of whatever they acknowledge did happen at Nanking. Do they admit that some Chinese civilians were massacred? What is a number they admit?

As the attorney says, we could probably run an ad that questions the numbers.

Once they have made their upfront statement, the rest of the ad is okay.

The section that reads "Cropped and Doctored Photographs"

The word Doctored has to be removed.

It should say "Cropped Photographs" in the sub-head.

It should say "Many of the photographs used to "prove" the atrocities are gross misrepresentations."

In other words, unless we admit that there was a massacre, the *Washington Post* will not print our advertisement. Once we have done that, they say, we may raise the issue of the number of victims. But we cannot acknowledge an event that did not occur.

We have learned, however, that both newspapers place more value on conventional views and Chinese propaganda than on facts.

While we were digesting the responses from the two newspapers, another issue of equal gravity arose: the U.S. House resolution calling for an apology from the Japanese government in connection with the comfort women. There was an

urgent need to address this problem expeditiously.

Therefore, immediately after our plan to run an advertisement about the Nanking “Massacre” failed, we began concentrating on the comfort women issue, and made preparations for an advertisement to be placed in the Washington Post.

### **So many facts**

We listed five facts in the advertisement. First, the Japanese military issued a notice to brokers (procurers) in the business of recruiting women for sexual services: “Do not force any woman to engage in prostitution against her will. Abduction is strictly forbidden.”

Many such notices were issued. In the advertisement, we reproduced one marked “Army Memorandum No. 2197” and dated March 4, 1938. It explicitly prohibits recruiting methods that fraudulently employ the army’s name or that can be classified as abduction, warning that those employing such methods have been punished.

Neither the Japanese military nor the government sanctioned the coercion of women. Not only were military personnel but also procurers were advised to observe guidelines. The military were indeed involved — not in abducting women, as accusations would have it, but in ensuring that brokers did not use dishonest recruiting methods.

Some argue that although there was no coercion in the narrow sense, there was in the broader sense. But the aforementioned memorandum clearly dismisses the possibility of Japanese military involvement in or approval of the abduction of comfort women by procurers.

This document is housed at the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records, the National Archives of Japan, and is accessible to anyone wishing to examine it. Therefore, it is hard to believe that government officials have failed to see it. It should certainly have been made available when the Kono Statement was issued. Why did no one mention it at the time?

The second fact confirms the first. We knew that even in the face of evidence proving that the military issued such memoranda, some might argue that they fulfilled only a nominal function. Therefore, we produced an article stating that unscrupulous procurers who violated the rules set forth in those memoranda were indeed arrested and punished.

According to the August 31, 1939 edition of the Korean newspaper *Toa Nippo* (East Asian Newspaper), the Korean police (then under Japanese control) were

ordered to arrest procurers who coerced women into serving as comfort women. The article concludes by saying that when the police arrested the perpetrators, there would be full disclosure of the methods used by malicious brokers (cajoling women into becoming prostitutes by promising extraordinarily high wages, for instance).

As the article clearly demonstrates, the military did not load reluctant women into trucks and take them away. Far from it: military officials kept a watchful eye on procurers to ensure that they followed orders.

### **Not sex slaves**

The third fact refers to an incident that took place in Semarang Island in Indonesia. Some Dutch women were forced to serve as comfort women. When it became clear that they had been coerced, military officials closed the comfort station.

This is additional proof that the Japanese military did not abduct women. If coercion was permissible, that comfort station would have never been shut down.

The fourth fact is inconsistencies in the testimonies of former comfort women. The resolution submitted by Representative Mike Honda, and other accusations against Japan regarding the issue of the comfort women, are based primarily on these testimonies. However, the testimonies have changed frequently over the years. When the women first testified, they made no reference to coercion on the part of the Japanese military; they said only that they had been recruited by brokers. However, after the anti-Japanese campaign reared its ugly head, they said that their abductors wore military or official-looking uniforms.

The fifth fact asserts that comfort women were never sex slaves. Examples illustrate that they were paid extremely well, earning wages equivalent to those of field-grade officers. Other sources tell us that soldiers who treated comfort women cruelly were punished by the military.

Furthermore, it was quite common for the army of a nation at war to establish brothels in battle zones to satisfy the sexual needs of its soldiers, and prevent assaults or rapes of local women. Why, then, are the Japanese the only ones censured for having done so?

When the United States Army occupied Japan, General Headquarters instructed the Japanese government to organize brothels for the use of American military personnel, and to maintain order and hygienic conditions therein.

Our advertisement presents facts obtained from primary resources, and

encourages readers to exercise their own good judgment. It concludes: “We are interested, foremost, in sharing the truth with the American public. Criticism of events that actually occurred must be humbly embraced. But apologies over unfounded slander and defamation will not only give the public an erroneous impression of historical reality but could negatively affect friendship between the United States and Japan. We ask only that the facts be objectively regarded so that we may share a correct perception of history.

To date, people representing every walk of life have angrily refuted accusations made by the Chinese and others, but their voices have not carried outside Japan. Japan’s arguments deserve attention in the international media. We cannot overstress the importance of presenting facts, not opinions.

As I have been working on this project between composition projects, a year has elapsed since I first decided to prepare an advertisement, which cost ¥15 million (about \$120,000). If a negative response is forthcoming, the purchase of another advertisement anytime soon would be beyond our means.

The work we are doing should rightly be done by Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. With a ¥1.5 billion budget allocation for publicity, the ministry could easily run 100 such advertisements. The truth is that, for whatever reason, our government officials do not act, preferring not to make waves.

We have received a great deal of cooperation from Japanese legislators. Many Diet members representing several political parties (Liberal Democratic Party, Democratic Party of Japan, and independents) have supported and participated in our activities, proving that facts transcend political boundaries.

### **Send messages overseas**

Some say it is better not to make a fuss over issues like the Nanking “Massacre” and the comfort women, but they are gravely wrong. If something is said that is untrue, and you don’t immediately point out that it is untrue, people may end up believing the untruth. Japan has repeatedly made this mistake, and the result is the situation we have today.

We must not allow China to demean diplomacy by using it as a tool for spreading lies and propaganda any longer. The most formidable weapons Japan has are facts, and we must use them. Where the Nanking “Massacre” and the comfort women are concerned, the facts are on our side.

The situation is so complex now that I don’t dare hope that placing advertisements in American newspapers will immediately invalidate Chinese

diplomatic treachery. But perhaps our work will awaken the Japanese people to the importance of facts as an effective weapon against propaganda.

**Author profile: SUGIYAMA Koichi**

Born in Tokyo in 1931, Sugiyama graduated from the University of Tokyo's Faculty of Education, with a degree in educational psychology. After graduation, he joined Nippon Cultural Broadcasting, serving in the news and entertainment departments. Later he moved to Fuji Television, and as a director, produced many programs, among them the "Hit Parade." In 1968 Sugiyama became a full-time composer. His works include: "*Ama iro no kami no otome*" (Girl with the flaxen hair), many songs for television commercials, and theme songs for the Dragon Quest game series. He is also director of JASCRAC (the Japanese Society for the Rights of Authors, Composers and Publishers), honorary chairman of the Japanese Backgammon Society, executive director of the Japan Composers and Arrangers Association (JCAA), and director of the Japan Composers Conference.

(Translated by Sekai Shuppan, Inc. from "Jugun ianfu mondai de Washinton Posuto ni iken kokoku: Yuiitsu no buki wa 'jijitsu'" in *WILL*, August 2007).