

**The Truth of the “Comfort Women”
Intelligence Warfare
--Information laundering by anti-Japanese fascists--
By Nishimura Kohyu, journalist/critic**

Since the end of 2012, the new-born second Abe Administration has been most despicably attacked by a part of the European and U.S. media. First all, on December 27, right after the Prime Minister’s inauguration, *The New York Times online* put an article by its Tokyo Branch chief, Martin Fackler, entitled “Japan Hints It May Revise an Apology on Sex Slaves.” This article was also put on *The New York Times* of December 28. It was filled with extremely indiscreet argument and ridiculous view worthy of no attention from the history study field in Japan.

On top of that, as a finishing touch, *The New York Times* of January 1, 2013 put an opinion “Japan Can Champion Women’s Rights” by Mary M. McCarthy, a scholar who is famous for unscholarly reasoning technique, quoting a testimony by a Dutch woman who had witnessed at a U.S. House of Representatives hearing, and thus making up a whole picture of the comfort women issue out of one very special example. Further, *The New York Times online* of January 3, and *The New York Times* of January 4 put an utterly unintelligent editorial entitled “Another Attempt to Deny Japanese History,” which discriminatively discussed the Japanese people and abused Prime Minister Abe in a most impolite language.

Also, *The Washington Post* of January 26 put an opinion entitled “Japan Must Face Its History” by Jennifer Lind, a “Japan specialist” professor, whose historical analysis is very rough. The editorial also criticized the reconsideration of the Kohno Statement. As to what lies behind these two newspapers’ anti-Japanese fascist attitudes of completely ignoring the fruitful results of the history study and ruthlessly violating the Japanese human rights, I would like to argue on another occasion. But now, I must say that it would do no good and even be critical for the United States to accuse the task of reexamining the past history for being ‘revisionism’ and to stop thinking any further.

In the first place, the very act of trying to tie the concept of sex slavery with the former Japanese Army is revisionism itself, the world of the movie Matrix and virtual reality. Many Japanese may begin to suspect that Europeans and Americans willfully intend to eternally enslave Japan in the world of such virtual reality and write off their own acts of invasion into Asia and violation of human rights. This will only do much harm in terms of the Japan-U.S. relationship.

The term of “ the Greater East Asia War” was banned by the Allied Nations General

Headquarters after Japan's defeat in the War, and instead, the term "the Pacific War" was imposed on the Japanese people to use. It goes without saying that usurping words of a state is the first stage of invasion. The Japanese had lost their words and their history, and the current events have become virtual reality. It is the "anti-Japanese system" that has put the Japanese people into such predicament.

After the U.S. occupation of Japan was over, freedom of speech was back and Japan was free from censorship. And yet, the moment the Japanese had buried the term "the Greater East Asia War" by self-imposed censorship, that disgusting system started. Just like Thomas, the leading character in the movie *Matrix*, which was made by the Wachowski Brothers, the Japanese people have been buried under the "anti-Japanese structure," without ever realizing that the world involving them eternally in whirlpools of accusation is the "*Matrix*" virtual reality.

This is not toying with literary metaphors for fun. Nor, it is not mere comparison. In fact, look at what happened in December 2011 in Korea, concerning the Japanese military comfort women issue. The bronze statue representing a comfort woman was installed in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul at a little past ten on the morning of December 14. This bronze statue was formed out of willful idea far from the actual prostitutes working in a theater of war. It is the military comfort women exactly in the world of *Matrix*. And this *Matrix* world has become the topical articles of *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. This is exactly what's going on under the current situation.

Why was the "comfort women" issue presented in America?

"In Japan, which once waged a most atrocious war of aggression in Asia, ghost of former Imperialists are coming to life again. The crime committed by the militarist Japan, in which two-hundred thousand women were cruelly ill-treated as sex slaves, was to be denied intentionally by the Abe Administration..."

This kind of thinking probably explains everything concerning the comfort women issue which had arisen out of the blue in 2007, mainly in the United States, but elsewhere as well. It may seem totally absurd and utterly improbable to the Japanese, but such a plot was actually written and directed by someone. Serious and good-natured Japanese were caught quite unguarded and unprepared--at a loss as to how to respond—and they kept their heads down and merely prayed that the rough storm passes by in due time. The Japanese could do nothing but quietly endure, hoping that repeated words of apology would soon abate the harsh attack.

To Japanese who are somewhat interested in history and politics, the main issue of

the “comfort women” is whether or not the “comfort women” were fact forced, a historical argument that took place in the past—10 years ago—and involved the major media; and the debate is already over, too absurd to address anew. Why, then, is it still a current political and diplomatic issue? Moreover, this time, the issue appeared not just among specifically interested Asian countries (South Korea, North Korea and China), but it suddenly popped up in America.

Let me state the conclusion first. The important point is that essentially this is neither a historical issue nor a matter of differing views of history. Of course, at the foundation is the issue of respective views of history, but the anti-Japanese accusations are widely and loudly made at an angle that is totally different and far from historical studies and facts. That’s the point. We must not overlook the fact that in the Japanese Diet, a bill concerning the comfort women is submitted almost every year since 2001 as a kind of political exercise. Examples of false accusations abound: the testimony that comfort women were forcibly abducted by the Japanese Army described in *My War Crime*, written by Yoshida Seiji, in which the content turned out to be completely fake (1983), an exclusive article written by reporter Uemura Takashi of *The Asahi Newspaper* about the testimony made by a comfort woman dated August 11, 1991 and a propaganda piece dated January 11, 1992, which was fabricated in cooperation with Professor Yoshimi Yoshiaki of Chuo University, claiming that the Japanese Army was involved in the forced abduction of comfort women. Though all these lies have been exposed to the light of day, bills concerning the compensation for comfort women are repeatedly submitted in the Japanese Diet. This is the most worrisome point. I will discuss the domestic comfort women-related bills that were submitted in Japan later, which are of parallel structure with the resolution that accuses Japan submitted by Representative Mike Honda (hereafter referred to as the “Honda Resolution”).

The comfort women issue presented then would never have been solved, even if it had been addressed as a historical argument and not as an issue of differing views of history. First, I would like to present the fact that two points of completely different nature are intricately intertwined.

Dots and lines that connect Beijing and Washington, D.C.

First of all, it should be mentioned that behind the “Honda Resolution” that was submitted in the U.S. House of Representatives was a conspiracy hatched by an anti-Japanese global network. Before Representative Mike Honda submitted the bill, a similar bill was proposed the previous year by Representative Lane Evans, an advocate of human rights and other causes. The bill was submitted several times beforehand and

every time it was turned down. Mr. Evans had been suffering from Parkinson's Disease and eventually retired from Congress at the end of his term (2007). An episode has been also revealed that Mr. Evans had been involved in 'comradely love' with Ok Cha Soh, the Chair of the Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues, Inc., organized by a group of South Koreans living in the United States.

On the other hand, Mr. Honda is a third-generation Japanese American and according to his biography, as a child he was in an American detention camp during the Greater East Asia War, though there is no evidence to confirm this. However, whether Mr. Honda is actually a third-generation Japanese American or he just pretends to be so is beside the point. Far more important is that he was elected to the House of Representatives from an electoral district where Chinese Americans are an extremely dominant group.

The fact has been shown to the world by reporter Komori Yoshihisa, a Washington D.C. special editor of *The Sankei Newspaper*, that donations from groups of Chinese merchants to Representative Honda's political fund amount to an overwhelmingly huge sum.

Donors to Mr. Honda include Chairman Ivy Lee of the Global Alliance for Preserving the History of World War II in Asia a Chinese-merchant body, which is said to have commanded the anti-Japanese riots in Shanghai and Beijing in 2005; Mr. Frederic Hon, advisor to the Kuangtung Province Committee of the People's Political and Commercial Cooperation Congress; Mr. Zhuhua Chou, secretary general of the Memorial Society for Asian Pacific World War II Atrocities, which impeaches Japan with committing 'atrocities'; Mr. Victor Yung, an officer of the "American Museum of the Chinese Holocaust," which plans to build a Nanking Massacre Memorial Museum in the United States. Representative Honda received huge donations from these anti-Japanese activists and organizations.

Among them, the Global Alliance for Preserving the History of World War II in Asia is connected to anti-Japanese South Korean American bodies as well as the North Korean intelligence organization. The "Global Alliance" also assisted in funding the production of the anti-Japanese film *Nanking*, based on Iris Chang's *Rape of Nanking* and produced by AOL Vice-President Ted Leonsis. Without doubt, such anti-Japanese organizations are in close cooperation with the Chinese Communist Party. So, behind the Honda Resolution is the Chinese Communist Party.

The true nature of the "Honda Resolution" is a conspiracy by an anti-Japanese global network, submitted as a part of psychological warfare, solely intended to degrade and weaken Japan. So, it is self-evident that these anti-Japan groups had nothing to do with

historical facts in the first place. There lies an undercurrent of anti-Japanese fascism targeting Japan by specific Asian countries, namely, China at the center and South and North Korea.

Therefore, though it is quite straightforward to deal directly with the “Honda Resolution” through debating the historical facts on the basis of a correct view of history, if we fail to analyze the conspiratorial aspect and to be equipped with enough information against the ‘psychological war’, we will end up suffering the same defeat as we did seventy years ago.

At the Tokyo Trials, *What War Means—Terror of the Japanese Army in China*, written by Harold Timperley in 1938, was held up as decisive proof of the “Nanking Massacre”, but the fact is that the book was a part of the global propaganda scheme plotted by the International Propaganda Office of the Chinese Nationalist Party. The global propaganda effort at that time engulfed United States and Great Britain, which significantly influenced American and British thinking in terms of the relationship between Japan and China. We Japanese should truly learn from this lesson of history.

Terrifying scheme of information laundering

It is absolutely necessary to examine how the informational war is actually carried out. Why did the entire U.S. media hysterically criticize then-Prime Minister Abe (since Abe is currently Prime Minister, hereafter “then” will be omitted) who said that he would re-examine the “Kohno Statement”?

On March 1, 2007 Prime Minister Abe, asked by a group of reporters how he intended to deal with the “Honda Resolution,” emphasized that there was no clear evidence that proved that the Japanese Army was involved in the forced abduction of women and that in that regard the Kohno Statement was defective. “There was no testimony or evidence to prove a forcible act. Therefore, we should rethink the matter over on a different premise that the definition of forced abduction be changed fundamentally.”

That was all Abe said in responding to a question asked by reporters surrounding the Prime Minister during an informal interview, but the Prime Minister’s Office could not confirm the content. I will detail the situation later, but in this incident alone, Japan’s inferiority in the handling of information is apparent. In October 2006, after having clearly stated that he would follow the Kohno Statement during a meeting of the House of Representatives’ Budget Committee, Prime Minister Abe explained that ‘forced’ in a narrow sense means that ‘they broke into the person’s house and forcibly took the person away,’ and in a broad sense ‘the person was not willing to go, but ended up

going with them somehow.’ Abe responded that firm proof has yet to be produced that shows that forced abduction in the narrow sense actually happened.

This comment by Abe is quite adequate, based on historical fact, and on March 1 of the following year, in 2007, he made nearly the same comment. Consequently, the Japanese media, except the *Jiji Press* and the *Sankei Shimbun*, did not treat it as big news.

The *Sankei Shimbun* reported what Abe actually said in full detail on March 2, 2007, with the headline “Prime Minister Hints at Reconsidering the Kohno Statement”. The *Jiji Press* distributed an article, dated March 1, at 22:30:

<Comfort Women, No Evidence of Forced Abduction. Prime Minister does not Deny His Intention to Reconsider the Kohno Statement>

Prime Minister Abe, on the evening of March 1, regarding the Kohno Statement of 1993 in which Kohno apologizes about the comfort women issue, said, “Fact is that we have found no evidence to prove forcibility, in the sense as defined, in the first place.” This showed his view that there is no evidence to prove that the former Japanese Army forcibly collected comfort women and controlled them. Also, as to whether it is necessary to reexamine the Statement, he said, “On the premise that the definition of ‘forced’ has drastically changed, we need to think about the issue,” and he did not deny the possibility of reconsideration. Prime Minister responded to questions of reporters. [omitted thereafter]”

All at once the U.S. media snapped up this statement, as a hungry goby does after bait. This situation was reported by the *Kyodo News Agency* two days later on March 3.

<Kohno Statement Ready for Reconsideration Reported by U.S. Paper Regarding the P.M.’s Statement>

12:23 on March 3, 2007[*The Kyodo News Agency*]

[Washington D.C., March 2, *Kyodo*]—*The New York Times* of March 2 reported that Prime Minister Abe Shinzo said that there was no evidence of forcibility by the former Japanese Army in the comfort women issue. The Prime Minister was prepared to reconsider the Kohno Statement of 1993, which admits the involvement of the former Japanese Army in the matter, and he showed his intention to do so more clearly than ever before.

“*The Washington Post*, dated March 2, also printed an AP (Associated Press) dispatch from Tokyo. Prime Minister Abe’s statement was inconsistent with the

Japanese Government's view up to then and would surely incur wrath from China and South Korea.”

What happened during the three days?

During the three days between March 1 and March 3, some trick was set up in the circuit that circulates media information and there was a big change on the front in terms of the information war. The result was an adverse effect—a negative image imposed on Prime Minister Abe and Japan.

First of all, *The New York Times* (hereafter *NY Times*) ran an article with the vulgar and willful headline, “Abe Rejects Japan’s Files on War Sex,” by Norimitsu Onishi, whom I call an ‘anti-Japanese agitator-sprinkler’. The headline is a product of information manipulation and Onishi’s article is as horrible as can be:

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe denied Thursday that Japan’s military had forced foreign women into sexual slavery during World War II, contradicting the Japanese government’s longtime official position. Mr. Abe’s statement was the clearest so far that the government was preparing to reject a 1993 government statement that acknowledged the military’s role in setting up brothels and *forcing, either directly or indirectly, women into sexual slavery*. That declaration also offered an apology to the women, euphemistically called “comfort women.” “*There is no evidence to prove there was coercion, nothing to support it,*” Mr. Abe told reporters. “*So, in respect to this declaration, you have to keep in mind that things have changed greatly.*”...
[italics added by Nishimura]

What Prime Minister Abe said during the informal interview is not at all an official governmental statement, but Onishi here intentionally made it look like an official one so that fierce anti-Japanese criticism would spring up--and he further writes that even the 1993 Kohno Statement was also a “government statement”. The article is full of astounding fabrications of malicious intent. “Oh, no! Not Onishi again,” some people may think and that is quite all right. But it does not stop there, and with more bias added, the ill intention spread all over the world. To make the matter worse, this time the AP in Tokyo performed as enthusiastically as Onishi in damaging Japan.

Fabricated article by Tabuchi Hiroko (presently of the *NY Times*)

The Associated Press distributed an article with the headline “Japan’s Abe: No Proof

of WWII Sex Slaves” at 23:37 on March 1. The article was credited by a Japanese reporter named Hiroko Tabuchi. The article, *starting with an interview of a person from CHUKIREN* (the Association of Returnees from China), is filled with errors and doubts.

Yasuji Kaneko, 87, still remembers the screams of the countless women he raped in China as a soldier in the Japanese imperial army in World War II. Some were teenagers from Korea serving as sex slaves in military-run brothels. Others were women in villages he and his comrades pillaged in eastern China. “They cried out, but it didn't matter to us whether the women lived or died,” Kaneko said in an interview with The Associated Press at his Tokyo home. “*We were the emperor's soldiers. Whether in military brothels or in the villages, we raped without reluctance.*” [Italics added by Nishimura]

CHUKIREN is composed of people who were captured on the Chinese front and were later sent to a concentration camp in Fushun, in which P.O.W.s were thoroughly brainwashed by the Chinese Communist Party, and then returned to Japan to act as an agitprop unit in order to turn Japan Red. Their testimonies are highly dubious in the first place and the witnesses’ statements about ‘military-run brothels’ are completely groundless. It is also highly probable that Tabuchi Hiroko herself made up the story. Altogether, the content of the interview cannot be true.

Whenever I hear this kind of story, like the Nanking case, for instance, I cannot help but think that if a perpetrator is telling the truth, he should be immediately executed as a war criminal. For the honor of the Japanese Army, whose rules and regulations were very strict, and above all, for the sake of many innocent (Class B and C) war criminals who were executed on account of false charges, they should voluntarily stand before the VAWW-NET (Violence Against Women in War-Network Japan) “Women’s International War Crimes Tribunal”. Kaneko Yasuji should have apologized to the entire Japanese nation and to victims by committing suicide in front of the Imperial Palace.

Let’s go back to the maliciously written article by Tabuchi Hiroko. She writes as follows:

Historians say some 200,000 women—mostly from Korea and China—served in the Japanese military brothels throughout Asia in the 1930s and 1940s. Many victims say they were kidnapped and forced into sexual slavery by Japanese troops, and the top government spokesman acknowledged the wrongdoing in 1993.

Now some in Japan's government are questioning whether the apology was needed.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Thursday [March 1] denied women were forced into military brothels across Asia, boasting renewed efforts by *right-wing politicians* to push for an official revision of the apology.

"The fact is, there is no evidence to prove there was coercion," Abe said.

Abe's remarks contradicted evidence in *Japanese documents unearthed in 1992 that historians said showed military authorities had a direct role* in working with contractors to forcibly procure women for the brothels...[Italics added.]

The italicized parts were entirely and intentionally fabricated by Tabuchi Hiroko. What is worse is that Prime Minister Abe was not correctly quoted, just like in the *NY Times* article.

How is a maliciously intended article fabricated?

"There is no evidence to prove there was coercion, nothing to support it," Mr. Abe told reporters. "So, in respect to this declaration, you have to keep in mind that things have changed greatly." (Norimitsu Onishi/ *NY Times*)

"The fact is, there is no evidence to prove there was coercion." (Tabuchi Hiroko/AP)

At that time the Japanese media reported that "By the initial definition of the word forced, it is true that there is no evidence to prove forced abduction" and that "On the premise that the definition changed drastically we should think about the issue."

And these two parts are completely omitted from the above two articles. Did reporters Onishi and Tabuchi, both of whom have good command of the Japanese language, fail to understand the word "definition"? Or, were their understanding of Japanese so poor that they chose to work for foreign media outlets? No, this was a fully-intended act of omission in order to report Prime Minister Abe's comment in a distorted way to overseas readers.

After all, *these articles are not "reports"*, but the *most malicious propaganda*, made up of dubious witness claims and false information in order *to intentionally distort Mr. Abe's comment* concerning the reconsideration of the Kohno Statement and *to aggravate the image of the atrocious Japanese military*.

Articles distributed by the AP are reported by the global media. Japan's and Prime Minister Abe's false image were spread all over the world through the 'wind of malicious bias'.

In other AP articles, statesmen and historians who support Prime Minister Abe's

comment were referred to as ‘nationalist politicians and scholars’, while scholars who maintain that there was forced abduction were called ‘historians.’ Clearly manifested here are entirely ignorant prejudices and discrimination against the Japanese people.

Which side are readers of the world who are not at all familiar with the Japanese situation ready to take, that of ‘historians’ or ‘nationalists’? If ‘historians’ are referred to as ‘scholars with anti-Japanese views’ and ‘nationalists’ as ‘patriotic scholars of history’, it is likely that current images will completely change. To reporters Onishi and Tabuchi, their reliable ‘historian’ is Professor Yoshimi Yoshiaki of Chuo University and manipulation of information was actually carried out in multiple cases.

On top of that, Tabuchi Hiroko either did not know or forgot that the historical document discovered by Professor Yoshimi in 1999 was *China Area Army Notice No.745: Secret*, in which was *actually an order to admonish bad businessmen and panders not to forcibly abduct women*. But she appeared to intentionally ignore this fact. The true nature of this military memo is that it was meant to show the Japanese military’s intention to criticize Japanese and Korean enterprisers who actually conducted the ignoble business of forcibly abducting comfort women, who, the anti-Japanese mob accuse, were really abducted by the Japanese military, and to prohibit and thoroughly crackdown on such wrong business dealings that would greatly tarnish the prestige of the Japanese military and may cause grave social problems.

Condescending attitude to write an interview without actually covering it in person

We should also pay attention to the timing of the AP dispatch. At 22:37, only seven minutes later than the *Jiji*’s dispatch, an article of enormous volume was sent. It is not certain when the interview at the beginning of the article was held, but it would be a good guess that it was a part of an article that was planned and written beforehand, a sensational and appealing piece with a non-objective and self-serving interview of a unreliable witness. Prime Minister Abe’s comment was quickly inserted to the prewritten article as soon as the *Jiji Press* sent the article on the Prime Minister’s comment, and the effect was as a fish catches bait in a fishing pond.

An even bigger doubt comes from the fact that Prime Minister Abe’s distorted comment of reconsidering the Kohno Statement, which was simultaneously reported by both the *NY Times* and the AP, was not the same comment obtained through the informal interview held by reporters who surrounded the Prime Minister. Neither Onishi nor Tabuchi was there among the reporters at the Prime Minister’s Official Residence on March 1, 2007. Reading the *Jiji Press* article, the Prime Minister’s comment in the article was secondhand, or there was someone working as a messenger, who relayed the

Prime Minister's comment back to the two reporters, among the reporters at the Prime Minister's Official Residence.

In either case, such terrible 'information laundering' is actually taking place and with it is a system in place to send articles worldwide around the clock, thereby unilaterally damaging national interests that are at the very heart of Japan.

The front of the information war waged at that time was not only Japan proper, but of all places, the Prime Minister's Official Residence.

Thus, for two months, between March and April of 2007, reports blaming Prime Minister Abe and Japan for the comfort women issue permeated the entire world. Prime Minister Abe said, "On the premise that the definition of 'forced' has drastically changed, we need to think about the issue," but this part of his comment was not reported. Instead, a campaign that spread a negative image of Japan's withdrawing its acceptance and the apology it had once made was further promoted by the AP and the *NY Times*, and the media the world over repeatedly reported Japan's *distortion of history*, over and over again.

As a consequence, *The Los Angeles Times* published an article—insensible, stupid and totally unintelligent—asserting that the Emperor should apologize. Additionally, major papers like *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Post* strongly criticized Japan in their editorials.

On March 24, *The Washington Post* printed an editorial with the insulting headline "Shinzo Abe's Double Talk," which perfectly reflected the effect of information manipulation by Onishi and Tabuchi:

... Mr. Abe has a right to complain about Pyongyang's stonewalling. What's odd -- and offensive -- is his parallel campaign to roll back Japan's acceptance of responsibility for the abduction, rape and sexual enslavement of tens of thousands of women during World War II. Responding to a pending resolution in the U.S. Congress calling for an official apology, Mr. Abe has twice this month issued statements claiming there is no documentation proving that the Japanese military participated in abducting the women. A written statement endorsed by his cabinet last week weakened a 1993 government declaration that acknowledged Japan's brutal treatment of the so-called comfort women...

Based on such totally incorrect knowledge of history, the U.S. decided to strongly disapprove of the movement to reconsider the Kohno Statement on the part of Japan. This is the true face of American liberalism and exactly what is meant by 'double talk.'

The role of *The Asahi Newspaper*: arsonist

The most ridiculous of all was *The Asahi Newspaper*. The paper printed the following article on March 3. *The Asahi Newspaper* is an arsonist, which really set the comfort women issue on fire, doing exactly the same foolish act that a *NHK* reporter did, who was arrested for reporting a fire he himself had set.

<<Asking Japan for Correct Historical View—South Korean Government on Prime Minister Abe’s Comment>

At 19:20 on March 3, 2007

Concerning Prime Minister Abe’s comment on the comfort women, the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade issued a criticism by the Ministry’s staff on March 3, saying that the South Korean Government expresses its grave regret. The criticism goes on: “In spite of the repeated manifestation of Japan’s position that it will follow the Kohno Statement, it is highly doubtful if Japan’s self-reflection and apology are truly meant,” and it asks Japan’s political leaders ‘to have correct historical views.’

The influential *JoongAng Ilbo*, dated March 3 printed an editorial criticizing Prime Minister Abe’s comment as a ‘random remark.’ ‘History of any kind cannot be concealed. Being ashamed of it, the more it distorts its history, the more shameful that nation will become,’ the editorial writes ironically.

Furthermore, the *Asahi Newspaper* printed a sensationalist article, filling up a lot of space, in its morning edition of March 10. The newspaper itself was a “burning ember” regarding the comfort women issue in 1991, and this time in particular, it became a horrendous arsonist, pouring gasoline onto the flames that were stoked by the *NY Times*, which, in turn, used the burning embers that are the *Asahi Newspaper*. And the purpose was to weaken the Abe Administration.

<Prime Minister Abe’s Comment on Comfort Women Issue. No Way Containing Influences in US>

In the United States there is no stopping of the impacts of the comfort women issue from spreading. Major newspapers like *The New York Times* wrote editorials and articles criticizing the Japanese Government and, at the seismic center, the House of Representatives of the US Congress, a resolution asking Japan to apologize, is gathering wide support. Given these circumstances, among those

Americans who are familiar with Japan are showing more and more concern and they are beginning to ask the Abe Administration to take some countermeasures.

**Spreading impact*

The New York Times of March 8 printed an article, headlined “Denial Reopens Wounds of Japan’s Ex-Sex Slave,” on its front page. Prime Minister Abe’s comment, reported in the middle of the long article, “denied the military’s role in coercing the women into servitude,” incurred renewed anger among former comfort women. The paper had just run an editorial a few days earlier on the 6th, criticizing Abe’s comment and asking the Japanese Diet to manifest a forthright apology and sufficient official compensation.

The Los Angeles Times published a university professor’s essay entitled ‘Japan Can’t Dodge This Shame’ on March 6, and on the next day it ran an editorial asserting that ‘the best person to repair the damage is [the] Emperor... himself.’

The 2007 comfort women resolution, proposed in the U.S. House Committee for Foreign Affairs offered a direct occasion to bring the comfort women dispute this time to the surface, and supporters of the resolution are increasingly hearing Prime Minister Abe say, ‘The fact is, there is no evidence to prove military coercion’ on March 1.

Dr. Michael Green, former senior director of Asian affairs at the National Security Council and special assistant to the president for national security affairs until the end of 2005, said, ‘I barely managed to persuade some of the Representatives into opposing the resolution last week, but this week (after Abe’s comment) all of them turned favorable for it. The U.S. Department of State stopped briefing on Japan’s handling of the issue this week.’

**Americans versed in Japan are also worrying*

Ex-Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asia and the Pacific Kurt Campbell, who just returned from Japan on the March 6 said, ‘Japan watchers and supporters in the States are disappointed and dismayed.’

He points out, ‘Though I highly appreciate that Japan issued many statements (including the Kohno Statement) in the past, the problem is there are doubts about Japan’s attitude among China, South Korea and other countries critical to Japan,’ ‘If things go on like this, the support toward Japan in the States will surely collapse,’ warns Mr. Campbell.

Dr. Green, who was in Japan at the time, pointed out, ‘It [the comfort women

issue] has nothing to do with the issue of whether they were forcibly abducted or not. Nobody outside of Japan is interested in this aspect. The point is those comfort women had to bear a terrible time, and yet politicians at Nagata-Cho are totally oblivious of this fundamental fact.’

Consequently, a new problem arose, the claim that ‘We hear no words of sympathy and care from Japan toward the victims at all.’ In the Japan-American relationship, this problem is riskier than the problems of ‘exported [U.S.] beef and U.S. bases in Okinawa.’

Dr. Green mentioned the following three approaches that Japan should take in handling the problem: (1) not to refute the U.S. House of Representatives Resolution if it is adopted, (2) not to make any correction to the Kohno Statement and (3) to express in some way or other understanding and sympathy toward the victims directly from the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and others...

By the way, let me add that the mantra, of *two-hundred thousand comfort women*, to which reporters Onishi and Tabuchi always refer, has in fact been completely rejected by academic studies. This number is so often cited that media in Europe and America also recite *two-hundred thousand* in unison as if it were the only words that they ever learned. But I wonder if they rely solely on ‘historian’ Professor Yoshimi’s view. Without any academic evidence, allowing the number *two-hundred thousand* stand as fact is the same trick used with the number *three-hundred thousand*, the alleged number of victims at Nanking.

Modern-history Professor Hata Ikuhiko, in his academic paper entitled *End of the Comfort Women Issue*, clearly states: the total number of comfort women was actually twenty thousand, and 40% of them were Japanese. (Hata Ikuhiko, *End of the Comfort Women Issue, Political and Economic History Study #438, 439, 2003 February-March Issue*)

In spite of that, on March 16, 2007 reporter Karl Frere of the AP reports in his article, headlined “Japan’s Cabinet says no evidence establishing coercion of ‘comfort women,’” that the forced abduction of *two-hundred thousand* proved correct by historians is ignored by the Japanese Government. Also, *The New York Times* of March 31 obstinately used a full page in the international section to print an interview of Professor Yoshimi Yoshiaki, who promotes the “historical basis” of “sex slaves”.

Then, a month later, on April 17, a new anti-Japanese agitator, Tabuchi Hiroko of the AP, happily reported on a press conference attended by Professor Yoshimi and others held at the Foreign Correspondents’ Club in Tokyo. The press conference was to show

that there were numerous testimonials of forced abduction among the court materials used at the Tokyo Trials. They were in fact extremely dubious court documents regarding Class B and C war criminals, and even if they were taken up as evidence, what difference would it make? The trials were already held and legally they were completely settled by the San Francisco Peace Treaty. Or, are these people so ambitious as to overrule the Tokyo Trials?

The same structure as seen some seventy years ago

We must go back to the original question asked at the beginning of this essay: Why did the comfort women issue come up in the United States at this particular time? To those who make much fuss over the comfort women, “military-run comfort women” is an eternal, original sin borne by the Japanese people and accordingly the Japanese must accept as their destiny the hardship and burden associated with historical issues. This partly suggests the characteristic of the anti-Japanese fascism with its unique historical view focused on Japan’s original sin, which sees every bit of pre-war Japan as evil. But this time, it is more complicated and entangled in civilizational and geopolitical aspects.

In the eighties, Japan overpowered the United States in an economic war, and at that time the latter displayed anti-Japanese sentiment by crushing Japanese-made automobiles out of spite. Today, however, American companies, whose labor unions support the Democratic Party, are in a predicament in which they can no longer batter Japanese companies as they did in the eighties. During the “Lost Nineties,” after the collapse of the bubble economy, the Japanese economy once again fell behind that of the U.S. In the first ten years of the 21st century, the U.S. automobile industry fell behind Japanese companies again.

Moreover, the paradoxical reality, that local, American affiliates of Japanese companies hire large numbers of American workers and help to boost the American economy, greatly perplexes Americans. Logically, now that they can no longer bash Japanese companies, the alternative is to vent their frustration on what Japan used to be more than sixty-five years ago.

However, a bigger factor is the issue of North Korea. Japan’s policy toward North Korea in the Six-Party Talks can be, in a way, an obstacle to the U.S. and China. For the current strategic goal of America and China is to keep Japan from acquiring a nuclear arsenal for all of eternity as well as to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula.

According to one theory, on the occasion of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and China in 1972, a secret agreement was reached between Nixon and Mao Tse-tung. What is important is that even if that secret agreement is

merely a rumor, at this point the two countries share the common goal of denuclearizing Japan. However, now that efforts to denuclearize North Korea have ended up in abject failure, both the United States and China now need a new tool to lower Japanese resistance to ignore the issue of North Korea kidnapping Japanese citizens, in order to alleviate the strong policy Japan is now taking toward North Korea, while on the other hand allaying fears of an inevitable nuclear-equipped Japan.

It is possible that the “Honda Resolution,” which just so happened to be proposed by Mike Honda, may have been used to serve the purpose of weakening Japan’s policy stance. The current structure is exactly the same as the one used some seventy years ago. One simply replaces Chiang Kai-shek with Hu Jintao, Franklin D. Roosevelt with George W. Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. The picture today was the same picture drawn by the United States then, using China to sandwich Japan, which eventually leading to the China Incident and the Greater East Asia War.

Also, to the United States, the view presented at the Tokyo Trials is absolutely vital and while hoping for strengthened U.S.-Japan security cooperation, powers in the United States are automatically working to prevent Japan from becoming truly independent and self-reliant. The Abe Administration put its greatest emphasis on changing the structure of the post-war regime, and not just as a top policy goal but also as a key national strategy, and so logically, confrontation with the United States is inevitable a priori.

In the United States, exhausted through its occupation and governance of Iraq, more and more people may have begun to entertain the notion that Japan is a threat. Another possibility is that if America tries to cooperate with China, Japan, with its potential, may turn out to be a stumbling block between the two countries.

However, it will certainly not lead to a separation between Japan and America, but rather, it will be a step forward in establishing a more mature bilateral relationship between Japan and the U.S.A. Nevertheless, we must bear it in mind that from now on various and repeated attempts will be made, in the form of intelligence warfare, to take advantage of the rickety balance that exists between Japan and America.

Return of the zombie, the Okazaki Tomiko Bill

Once again, we must now turn to the domestic situation at the time. Though, at that time, our attention was largely captured by the United States Congress, the Japanese Diet was in a more serious situation, where the submission of bills on comfort women, like zombies, were revived no matter how many times they were put to rest. A bill to promote the “Resolution of Issues concerning Victims of Wartime Sexual Coercion”

was submitted by Councilor Okazaki Tomiko and others from the Democratic Party of Japan during the 164th regular session of the Diet in 2006. It was the seventh submission to the Diet and the bill was submitted at almost every session—and rejected every time. Representative Takahashi Chizuko of the Japanese Communist Party and others also proposed a “Petition of legislation for the solution of the comfort women issue” on numerous occasions.

Councilor Okazaki Tomiko participated in an anti-Japanese demonstration held in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul and joined in chanting, standing before a placard that said “Japan, No!” in February of 2002 while the Diet was in session. (Refer to “Revival of the Zombies—Resolution on Comfort Women, *WILL*, May 2003 issue.) Her action was also reported by weekly magazines and criticism against her exploded in many blogs on the Internet. However, she has never resigned from her seat and is still a Councilor. Ironically, the definition of “coercion” by the Japanese Army is the same as the one used in the Resolution against Japan adopted by the U.S. House of Representatives, which certainly clues us into a series of international plots. Furthermore, the Democratic Party of Japan took up this bill as fundamental policy, which led to the “Kan Statement” on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the Japanese Annexation of Korea in 2010.

The “Okazaki Tomiko Bill” is as follows:

Article 1. Based on the fact that during the time of the previous war and preceding incidents leading to it, with the participation of the former Japanese Army and Navy, systematic and continuous sexual violence was forced on women and thereby women’s dignity and honor were tremendously impaired, this Law ...to express regret and apology for this historical fact and to take necessary measures in order to redeem victimized women’s honor on the responsibility of this nation.

Article 2. In this Law, war-time sexual enforcement refers to the systematic and continuous enforcement of sexual conducts forced on women against their will with direct or indirect participation by the Japanese Army and Navy during the time of the previous war and preceding incidents leading to it.

(2) In this Law, war-time victims of sexual enforcement refers to women on whom damages were inflicted by war-time enforcement of sexual violence and who were other than those registered under the regulation of the old Registry Law (1914, Law #26).

The reason why I said that that the comfort women issue is not an issue in terms of

historical view is quite clear here. This proposed bill stipulates that “with the participation of the former Japanese Army and Navy, systematic and continuous enforcement of sexual violence was done” or that with “direct or indirect participation of the former Japanese Army and Navy sexual conducts were forced on women collected against their will.” These are wicked and fierce words and phrases of propaganda—too low-leveled to argue as an historical issue.

Discrimination against Japanese people seen in the Democratic Party of Japan Bill

Moreover, much to our surprise, this bill applies only to women “other than those registered according to the regulations of the old Registry Law.” In other words, it only applies to women who are not Japanese. Japanese comfort women who actually, by far, outnumbered those of other nationalities were excluded from relief measures. The bill is nothing less than a discriminative one based on a dubious sense of human rights held by the proposers of the bill. Frankly speaking, this is exactly racial vengeance taken out on the Japanese by non-Japanese peoples with the undercurrent of anti-Japanese sentiment.

“Forcibility in a narrow sense” as is often mentioned applies to ‘direct participation’ of Article 2, and forcibility in a broad sense to ‘indirect participation’. But Article 1 stipulates that ‘with the participation (of the Japanese Army), systematic and continuous sexual violence was forced on women.’ Therefore, it makes no distinction between coercion in a broad sense or in a narrow sense, and the bill, in high-tones, condemns the forced abduction by the Japanese Army regardless. We understand that the bill, a dangerous one, was born out of a very particular and extremely narrow-minded ideological view, and not at all based on historical facts.

South Koreans, who were conscripted under the wartime draft, which simply fell on every citizen’s shoulders, and who were treated in exactly the same manner as Japanese citizens, were described as having been forcibly abducted. The bill is written in such a deceptive manner from beginning to end, understandable only among the Koreans.

Prime Minister Abe’s comment at that time, though he admitted coercion in a broad sense and did not admit to coercion in a narrow sense, has proved to be extremely effective: now the dispute over the comfort women issue has been settled and the word ‘military comfort women’ has been deleted from all the junior high school textbooks. However, an ingenious plot to use his comment negatively was staged overseas. At the same time, the tragic result partly came from Prime Minister Abe’s belief that the media is essentially good and trustworthy.

In the first place, coercion, in both the broad and narrow senses, were “words” created by Professor Yoshimi, who was the major figure behind the plot in 2007, closely

working with the *Asahi Newspaper* in order not to admit that forced abduction was a lie. They were merely sophistic words a third-rate lawyer would think up. In addition, we must realize that the Resolution adopted in the U.S. House of Representatives, regardless of “coercion” in the broad or narrow sense, should be seen as violent terrorism, just like Article 1 of the Okazaki Tomiko Bill.

The Prime Minister’s Official Residence abandoned information dissemination

Now, let’s talk about how to prevent and cope with anti-Japanese terrorism. We need to handle this on two different dimensions. First, as I have often pointed out, it is urgent that Japan’s information capacity be markedly improved as quickly as possible. I define “information capacity” as the ability both to disseminate information (intelligence) and to collect and analyze information. To fully facilitate the dissemination of information, it is necessary to develop, build and establish public diplomacy.

We must notice, let alone the so-called Nanking Massacre of 1937, how the various propaganda campaigns implemented during the 1930’s stirred up anti-Japanese sentiment in the United States, are structurally related to the present crisis. The most fundamental task of public relations should be to clearly analyze how Prime Minister Abe’s comment, “there was no forced abduction in a narrow sense,” was conveyed to overseas media and what kind of reactions were made as a result.

For example, during that particular year, as of May 10, 2007, the number of the Prime Minister’s speeches and press conferences posted on the Home Page of the Cabinet Office was only 15, listed below. The content of the informal press conference in question at the Prime Minister’s Official Residence of March 1, 2007 was greatly distorted and trapped in a whirlpool of information laundering, as I have described in detail.

Statement by the Prime Minister on the Occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Enactment of the Constitution of Japan (May 3, 2007)

Press conference by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe Following His Visits to the United States and Middle East Countries (May 2, 2007)

U.S.-Japan Joint Statement on Energy Security, Clean Development and Climate Change (temporary translation) (April 27, 2007)

U.S.-Japan cooperation to Tackle Global Trade, Energy and Environment Challenges (April 27, 2007)

Prime Minister’s message to President Bush regarding the [random shooting] Incident at Virginia Tech University (April 17, 2007)

Japan-Italian Republic joint press conference (April 16, 2007)
Prime Minister's press conference on the approval of the fiscal 2007 budget (March 27, 2007)
Japan-Australia joint press conference (March 13, 2007)
Message from Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, to Mr. Bertie Ahern TD, Taoiseach of Ireland, on the 50th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Ireland (March 5, 2007)
Prime Minister's comment (on the launch of H-11A Rocket 12) (February 24, 2007)
Policy speech by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to the 166th session of the Diet (January 26, 2007)
Statement by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on the "Direction and Strategy for the Japanese Economy" (Cabinet Decision) in Response to the Report by the Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy (January 25, 2007)
Press conference by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe Following His Visit to Europe (January 13, 2007)
New Year's Press Conference by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (January 4, 2007)

The above being all that were disseminated, the Cabinet Office may well be chided for abandoning the task of effective information dissemination. Though the website of the Prime Minister's Official Residence at that time had English language pages, it is a disgraceful failure that not one bit of information regarding the military comfort women was released.

As the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is useless, with its poor public relations ability, at the very least, what the Prime Minister says daily to the reporters during the informal interviews should have been posted on the website of the Prime Minister's Official Residence. After the beginning of the Abe Administration, a proposal to open the informal interviews did not materialize due to the objection from the Reporters' Club. However, it should be a top priority to make this proposal effective and that every second of each press conference should be available on the Internet. The media's arbitrary and piecemeal reporting of interviews is one of the biggest factors that impinges on the people's right to know.

Establishment of a think tank is urgently needed

Japan has nearly abandoned the important role of public relations, which is the most effective tool in correcting misunderstandings concerning Japan overseas. On the U.S. Department of State website, senior government official comments are quoted almost in

their entirety (such as text of press conferences and comments on TV). This well-serves the purposes of avoiding misunderstandings and prevents biased reporting by the media. Now is the time, even under the Democratic Party of Japan Administration, to establish a new public relations system for sending primary, first-hand information to the Japanese people and the entire world without relying solely on the media as an informational source. Before implementing public relations overseas, it is absolutely necessary for the government to exercise public relations domestically. How many Japanese people believe what they are told by newspapers and TV stations is true?

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should do what it is fundamentally required in order to perform. At the time of the (first) Abe Administration, what significant difference could it have made in the information war waged from March to May 2007 by merely—and foolishly—repeating the excuse of how many times Japan apologized regarding the comfort women issue?

Looking at the comfort women-related information page in the website of the Embassy of Japan in the U.S. (<http://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/english/html/cwl.htm>), I cannot help but doubt nothing has changed for at least the past ten years. There has been no responding to accusation from South Korea, China and others of forced abduction. To what country on earth does this Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Embassy serve?

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has not changed its apology-only line taken by the Miyazawa and Hashimoto Cabinets in the nineties, which is counter to the facts and quite disadvantageous in dealing with the media. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ignoring the views and positions of the people, the Diet and the Cabinet, stick to the apology-only line. I fear this may lead to more diplomatic friction.

What is most needed now is to establish a think tank that can effectively perform the vital function of public relations. The think tank would disseminate information with the idea of dealing with Europeans and Americans who are fond of and well-versed in Japanese matters. It should be run half officially and half privately. This is a project to be viewed in the long term. For instance, it will take five to ten years to handle the comfort women issue and the Nanking Incident. Only by accumulating disseminated facts will misunderstanding slowly begin to melt. We are now at the critical moment of setting out on this difficult and trying task.

The following is an idea I heard from Mr. Nishioka Tsutomu at that time. In response to the “Honda Resolution,” we will set up a research institution to study mass human rights violation incidents worldwide, and the staff, mainly composed of Japanese, will carry out research and study issues of mass human rights suppression throughout world history. We will promote this study as an international project, covering all of

Asia, Africa, the Americas and Europe. Thus, the think tank will make it possible to probe and raise issues of North Korean refugees in China, the suppression of human rights in Tibet and Uighur and present-day “sex slaves” among females in North Korea. We could use them as strong cards against the Chinese Communist Party and North Korea.

Moreover, we can respond to the distorted issues of the comfort women and Nanking currently found in textbooks used in the United States, and we can also put the solution of the issue of the Japanese kidnapped by North Korea within range.

Verification after three years—Ex-Prime Minister Abe had not apologized

Here is something I really want to add in connection with the report saying that while visiting the United States in April 2007, Prime Minister Abe apologized to President Bush about the comfort women issue. The story started with a conference held at Camp David, where President Bush said, “...I accept the Prime Minister’s apology..His statements were very straightforward and from his heart,” in response to a question asked by a Japanese correspondent, “What was discussed concerning the comfort women issue?”

However, reporter Abiru Rui from the *Sankei Shimbun* had serious doubts and after continuously covering the issue over time, he found out that *the issue of the comfort women had not been mentioned between the two heads of state*. At that time, the impact of Prime Minister Abe’s making an unnecessary apology was quickly and widely disseminated and he was harshly criticized for this. So, I feel it necessary to add here what Mr. Abiru learned then to clear the air.

On September 19, 2007, in the midst of political confusion brought about by Prime Minister Abe’s sudden resignation due to his poor health, *The Sankei Shimbun* printed a political reporters’ round-table discussion entitled “Story of the Abe Administration told by reporters-2: Successor with negative legacy”:

Ishibashi: What we had not at all anticipated was betrayal on the part of the United States. Their shift toward the dialogue-line with North Korea shook Japan’s “dialogue and pressure” line. Although it was an event in the U.S. Congress, the Resolution, an anti-Japanese accusation, regarding the comfort women issue was quite a blow to Japan.

Abiru: At that U.S.-Japan summit in April, it was reported that the Prime Minister apologized to President Bush for the comfort women issue. In fact, there was no mention of the comfort women issue during the talks. At the beginning of the press

conference, Mr. Bush only said, “Let us presume that we have talked about the comfort women and the resumption of beef exports to Japan.” But during the press conference, asked by a reporter, Mr. Bush unilaterally answered, “I accept Abe’s apology.” That is the truth.

It was as simple as that. Mr. Bush’s careless comment led to the unreal apology from Mr. Abe. What matters is the risk management ability of the Prime Minister’s Official Residence under such unexpected circumstances. The careless comment by Mr. Bush is not the question of his ignorance, but it clearly shows that Americans were not at all interested in the comfort women issue and are still indifferent to it now. The Japanese side should have done something about it—immediately after the press conference, Japan should have made arrangements with the U.S. and held a briefing to correct the comment in question.

It is equally crucial that the moment he was asked a question of no significance at all, the ex-President promptly and naturally answered that he received an apology, which shows how totally overwhelmed the U.S. media was by anti-Japanese propaganda and engulfed in an extremely biased world of information.

Thus, this after-the-fact tale sharply points out the true nature of the comfort women issue.