

Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact

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The Honorable Tom Lantos
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs
UNITED STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
USA

Dear Mr. Chairman:

It is our understanding that the Committee on Foreign Affairs will soon vote on House Resolution 121. We would like, once again, to ask all members of the Committee to give serious consideration to the significance of this resolution.

As stated in reference material we sent to you on April 27 (a report entitled "No Organized or Forced Recruitment: Misconceptions about Comfort Women and the Japanese Military" by Prof. Hata Ikuhiko *http://www.sdh-fact.com/CL02_1/31_S4.pdf, etc.) and in "The Facts" (a paid advertisement in the June 14 edition of the *Washington Post*), House Resolution 121 is not premised on fact, and is therefore an unjust condemnation of Japan.

Human rights are not the heart of the issue. Like you, we have enormous respect for human rights. We are concerned about the damage to Japan's reputation and the violation of the human rights of Japanese citizens that will result from a resolution that claims to champion human rights, but is based on grossly distorted historical fact.

The resolution mentions "the 'comfort women' system of forced military prostitution by the Government of Japan." But in fact the comfort women were not victims of forced military prostitution, but "nothing more than a prostitute or professional 'camp follower'" as described in **official U.S. military records** (United States Office of War Information, Psychological Warfare Team Attached to U.S. Army Force, India-Burma Theater). House Resolution 121 also refers to the "Imperial Armed Force's coercion of young women into sex slavery." However, the comfort women were not coerced. They simply chose prostitution as a way of earning a living. According to the aforementioned U.S. military records, "the girls' average total monthly earnings were 1500 yen, and 750 went to their master," which means that they were earning 10 times more than the soldiers they serviced. Army sergeants were paid ¥30 per month then. Applying the label of "sex slaves" to women who earned 25 times more than an Army sergeant both misstates the facts and insults the women themselves.

Our hearts go out to those women who suffered hardships while working in battle zones. However, we are at a loss to comprehend this denunciation of the Japanese government, especially at this late date, and despite the fact that the Japanese government is the only one in the world that has paid compensation to comfort women.

You are no doubt aware that brothels established in Vietnam during the Vietnam War were operated by the U.S. military. As stated in the aforementioned report, such brothels are described in *Against Our Will* by Susan Brownmiller. Similar brothels for the exclusive use of American military personnel operated in South Korea as well. Furthermore, during the occupation of Japan, U.S. military officials instructed the Japanese government to establish brothels for American troops. They were responsible for a significant reduction in the number of rapes. However, many Japanese women suffered greatly working in the brothels. The U.S. government has never offered them compensation, nor has any other government offered compensation to women who served its soldiers in this capacity, except for the government of Japan.

If the purpose of House Resolution 121 were to examine the problem of military prostitution and offer help to its victims, then it would discuss the circumstances of military prostitution in relevant nations, the United States included, and offer solutions. Instead, it attempts to force Japan to apologize for events that occurred more than 60 years ago, on the basis of a scenario that clearly has been fabricated.

This condemnation of Japan, ill-advised especially because it ignores the facts, is certain to arouse doubts about American fairmindedness, and even anger, among the Japanese people. Are Americans truly intent on ruining their relationship with Japan?

We earnestly hope that your wisdom and good judgment will prevail, and that you will make the right decision with respect to a resolution that is monumentally unjust.

Very truly yours,

KASE Hideaki
Chairman
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