

The Jeremiad of “Comfort Women”: Who sold us down the river?

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Author's note:

(A). “Comfort Women” refers to the groups of various ethnic women such as Japanese, Koreans, Filipinos, Vietnamese, Burmese, Indonesians and Dutch during the World War II, who were recruited by the Japanese Imperial Army for serving the Japanese soldiers in the brothels throughout the Asian Pacific region.

(B). No Koreans, scholar, historian, professor, journalist, or politician, would dare to write or publicly say something that I write in the following article, not because they do not know it, but rather they know that they would be immediately attacked a liar, criticized a sellout, pummeled a traitor, and buried a has-been in the society. As a freelance journalist who values most the freedom of information, expression, and press, I write what I know is right and correct without the fear that other Koreans shudder to escape from.

Prior to delving into the matters regarding the “comfort women”, one should also note the past historical facts:

1. As prostitution is the world's oldest profession in human history, the sexual trading in both Japan and Korea was thrived, accepted, and licensed as the legitimate business activity from the ancient society where many underclass and indigent people were forced to rely on selling their bodies as their one and only commodity. It was a means for low-caste people serving sexually high, privileged, and rich class in return for money or favor.
2. There is no way to determine precisely how many women were forced to served as “comfort women”, since there were no data or document available either in the military archives of Japanese Government or mama-san's ledgers. It is estimated by historians that there were about 200,000 women worked for sexual laborers to enhance the morale of the Japanese military, and the ethnic background of sexual workers varies, waxing and waning depending on whom you ask: the South Koreans claim 80 percent of “comfort women” were Korean women. However, a Japanese researcher breaks down as follows: 40% Japanese, 20% Koreans, 10% Chinese and others like Filipino, Vietnamese, Burmese, and Dutch, making up the remaining 30%.
3. The annexation of the Lee Dynasty (Korea) to Japan in 1910 could be paralleled to the Hawaiian Kingdom's absorption to the United States...the sovereignty of the Korean Dynasty was ceded to the Japanese Empire and Korea became a part of Japanese Empire and all the Koreans the Japanese subjects, though its legitimacy is disputed due to the Treaty was forced through by ministers threatened and bribed by the Japanese. Therefore, technically and legally, Koreans served comfort women, worked laborers, and drafted to the military as the Japanese subjects whether

Koreans like it or not. (If the Japanese won the war, Koreans as Japanese alike were becoming the masters of Asian Pacific region as the soldiers of Hawaiian aborigines do fight in Iraq as the US occupation forces now.)

4. The export of women for sexual service to the war front was not the moral opprobrium committed exclusively by the Japanese Imperial Army...the South Korean Government during the Vietnam War in late 60s did the same thing what the Japanese have done during WWII, dispatching hundreds of thousands of their professional whores to the war fronts providing the sexual pleasures for their mercenary soldiers. There was no pathological distinction between the Japanese and South Korean rationale for the “comfort women system” other than a dispute whether the women were forcibly and coercively drafted as the sex slaves or worked voluntarily for money.

5. Some Koreans attempt to compare the “comfort women” issue with the Jewish Holocaust”...seeking help from the most powerful lobby group, AIPAC, in the US...but there is one and only symmetry between them: these two issues manifested only after two or three decades after the WWII ended, as the Holocaust manifested in the US in late 1960 and the “Comfort Women” began kvetching and went gaga in early 1982...in other words, “comfort women” incident was a non-issue immediately after the WWII through 1980, because the South Korean Military Government of Gen. Park CH did not raise the matter in public, because General was satisfied with the Japanese compensation in 1965.

The ghosts of “comfort women” recently have debuted again in the political arena of the North American Continent thousands miles farthest away from where it rests in peace, and they still reverberate dancing along the corridors and the hearing rooms of the US Congress choreographed by the various NGOs from the Korean-American community.

Though they gradually are becoming an endangered species as years go by, the remaining “comfort women” refuse to vanish in oblivion and keep yelping like a Jewish yenta.

And the apparitions have manifested in the form of HR 121 Resolution at the US Congress that requires the Japanese government formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Army’s coercive activities against the “comfort women” during the colonial and wartime occupation of Pacific and Asian islands in the 1930s through the duration of WWII.

Strangely, however, the Resolution exhibits the peculiarity...contrary to the fact that we are living in the world where every quid has its quo, the Resolution does not have a single word demanding compensation for victims, “comfort women” supposedly drafted for sexual slaves pro bono.

Bringing the “comfort women” issues to the US seems like Koreans searching their lost keys under the lamp post because the light is bright there, even though they know that they lost their keys farther thousands miles away...an ingrained

characteristics of colonial subservience and obsequiousness toward the hegemonic overlord, Uncle Sam.

And the Korean NGOs are eagerly avoiding any institutional intervention like the help from the Government or Corporate underwriting in order to gain access to the power circle in the Belt Way of the Washington DC.

Cui bono?

Aside from the suspicion why the US Congress involved in business that has got nothing to do with America, one would have an impression by reading the Resolution that the Japanese Government had never done anything, reparation or apology, on the issues of “comfort women”.

On the contrary, the record shows that the Japanese Government had issued over two dozens of statement during over three and half decades since 1972, expressing their condolence, apology, and regret in the name of almost every Japanese Prime Ministers (Tanaka, Suzuki, Nakayama, Hosokawa, Murayama, Hashimoto, Obuchi, Koizumi), Chief Cabinet Secretaries, and Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

And even two Emperors, Hirohito in 1984 and Akihito in 1996, expressed in the formal meeting with the South Korean Presidents that Japan regrets an unfortunate past between two countries and it should not be repeated again.

But the South Koreans have refused to accept these statements as the official documents because it was not ratified by the Japanese Diet (House of Representatives) or by the cabinet meeting.

On the matter of reparation, it was an open and shut case according to the international law... that the Japanese and the South Korean Government have reached an omnibus settlement in the 1965 Treaty On Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea (the South Korea)

According to the document that was disclosed in 2005, the South Korean Government in 1965 requested and received the compensation of \$800 million in grants and soft loans from Japan, and agreed not to demand further reparation either at the government or individual level against the Japanese Government.

Among the \$800 million, \$364 million was specifically allocated in compensation for the 1.03 million Koreans conscripted into the workforce and the military during the colonial period, at a rate of 200 dollars per survivor, 1,650 dollars per death and 2,000 dollars per injured person.

The documents also revealed that the South Korean government claimed that it would handle individual compensation to its citizens who suffered during Japan's colonial rule while rejecting Japan's proposal to directly compensate individual victims and receiving the whole amount of grants on the behalf of victims.

During and after the Japan-South Korean Treaty, the contents of the agreement have remained in the foggy bottom of both Japanese and South Korean government archives for half a century...Japanese wanted to play dumb because they did not yet come to an agreement with the North Korea that demand a whopping \$10 billion compensation, and the military regime of the South Korea was desperate getting money, any money, dirty, bloody, fake, fraudulent, or mafioso.

The Treaty was a godsend to the money-starved Military Government of Gen. Park CH who sent his nephew to the treaty negotiation - Lieutenant Colonel JP Kim, then-Director of Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) - as an ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary.

Even the Korean Foreign Minister was out of the loop in the negotiation process that JP Kim reported directly to the President who kept the reparation money in his cookie jar disbursing as he deemed appropriate as an emperor gives out some gift to his underlings.

Few knew what the deal was except Gen. Park, KCIA, and some high-ranking lapdogs in the totalitarian regime.

Did the South Korean Government pay the \$364 million for the 1.03 million victims according to the treaty?

Nope!

After paying only about \$200 per death in compensating fewer than ten thousands of forced labor victims between 1975 and 1977, Gen. Park CH finagled the rest of money for the slush fund to buy out his opponents and other retired generals, and for seed money to build the major highways, industrial complexes, and Pohang Iron & Steel Co.

During the WWII period, General Park was the first lieutenant of the Japanese Imperial Army stationed in Manchuria serving voluntarily and faithfully as other many Korean collaborators did for the imperial military occupation in China and Pacific region.

They were obviously being provided with the “comfort women” for their R and R furlough and enjoyed their sexual services without any hesitance or compunction.

With this imperial hubris, General Park dispatched again in 1965 thousands of Korean women for the “comfort” of his fifty-thousand-odd mercenaries during the Vietnam War, stole the money through banditry from poor Vietnamese, and used the hard currency to finance for the economic development of the present South Korea.

The notorious KCIA had the task force unit for recruiting prostitutes with the help of the local police who actively participated to solicit the whores in their beat, and in addition, the Navy chipped in for the transportation and the Military Police in the war front run the comfort station under the supervision of the KCIA case officers.

The taskforce unit also had an extra job to procure the sexual services of young college girls and women in entertainment business in order to accommodate the insatiable appetite of of the General's libido.

Eventually, the blood money of "comfort women" during WWII and the Vietnam War had paved the highways, roads, and parking lots for the sake of all South Koreans whose Presidents sold the comfort women down the river.

In other words, thousands of the "comfort women" both in the colonial era and after the liberation have contributed their blood for the recovery and development of the South Korean economy.

And all the credits for the economic prosperity go to Gen. Park and his cohorts including his daughter, whose ambition to be a next El Presidente emanates from the blood-soaked hands of his assassinated father, an ex-Japanese Imperial Officer.

And voila!

The South Koreans are still barking up the wrong tree!

Instead of travelling a red-eye flight across the Pacific Ocean for appearing at the US Congress hearings, the "comfort women" should have a sit-in demonstration in front of the National Assembly in Seoul where General's daughter flirts with their blood money.

Rather than raising their wobbly arms into the air in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, they should make a protest visit to the residence of JP Kim whose agreements with Japanese have made them penniless and dishonourable.

Before condemning the Japanese who pay tribute to Yasukuni shrine, they should go to their national cemetery where Gen. Park lies in comfort and demand their blood money for selling them down the river.

It is at least bizarre and unconscionable to bring the "comfort women" issue to the US Congress where Americans endorse, finance, and execute the imperial policies of world dominion as if Japanese Empire had strived for the colonization of the Asian Pacific region.

It's like the infighting two Capos in the Mafia family seeking favor from their boss...in other words, the boss (USA) was asked by a Capo (South Korea) to pass a toothless and non-binding fiat ostensibly punishing another Capo (Japan), the boss's favourite son, and the boss has been refusing to do so six times in the past, and the chance are absolutely nil to pass in the Congress and endorsed by the US Government.

In a nutshell, the matter should be dealt in the UN jurisdiction, as in the International Criminal Court, Human Rights Commission, or UN commission on the Status of Women.

Or let the remaining "comfort women" live in peace comfortably, providing them with sufficient fund from the national coffer.

But please stop doing stupid things like sending their Toy Soldiers to Iraq and Afghanistan, bringing the “Comfort Women” issue to your overlord, USA, or electing the General’s daughter a next El Presidente.

By doing so, you are announcing loudly to the world that the South Koreans are still playing a role of lackeys in the service of the US imperialism as if their General served for the Japanese Emperor a first lieutenant who enjoyed the sexual services of “Comfort Women” in his stint in the Japanese Imperial Army during WWII.

(<http://edition.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/asiapcf/03/04/japan.sexslaves.ap/index.html>)