

## Comfort Women Memorial Support Packet

### Contents:

- Resolution urging the City and County of San Francisco to establish a memorial for "Comfort Women"
- *Revised* Resolution urging the City and County of San Francisco to establish a memorial for "Comfort Women"
- Letter of support from Rep. Michael W. Honda, California's 17<sup>th</sup> Congressional District
- Letter of support from Karen Korematsu, Founder & Executive Director of the Fred T. Korematsu Institute
- Letter of support from Emi Koyama, Co-Founder of the Japan-U.S. Feminist Network for Decolonization (FeND)
- A Report on Japanese Right-Wing Opposition to the "Comfort Women" Memorial in San Francisco, FeND
- A Fact Sheet on Japanese Military "Comfort Women", FeND
- "Comfort Women" Denier Talking Points DEBUNKED!, FeND

1 [Resolution Urging the Establishment of a Memorial for "Comfort Women" in San Francisco]

2  
3 Resolution Urging the Establishment of a Memorial for "Comfort Women" in San  
4 Francisco.

5  
6 WHEREAS, According to most international historians, the term "comfort women"  
7 euphemistically refers to an estimated 200,000 women and young girls who were kidnapped  
8 and forced into sexual slavery by the Imperial Japanese Army during its colonial and wartime  
9 occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War  
10 II; and

11 WHEREAS, During the 15 years of invasion and occupation of Asian countries,  
12 unspeakable and well-documented war-crimes, including mass rape, wholesale massacres,  
13 heinous torture, and other atrocities, were committed by the Japanese Imperial Army  
14 throughout the occupied countries and colonies; and

15 WHEREAS, Of the few top Japanese military leaders who were investigated and  
16 convicted as war criminals in the postwar War Crime Tribunals in Tokyo, Nanjing, Manila,  
17 Yokohama, and Khabarovsk, many escaped prosecution; and

18 WHEREAS, In 2001 the San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed a resolution  
19 urging the government of Japan, on the 50th anniversary of the US-Japan Peace Treaty, to  
20 fully acknowledge and apologize for Japan's wartime atrocities and provide just compensation  
21 for the surviving victims of its aggression; and

22 WHEREAS, In 2007 the U.S. House of Representatives passed Rep. Mike Honda's  
23 bipartisan resolution H.Res. 121, which also called on the Government of Japan to formally  
24 acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility for its Imperial Armed Forces'  
25 coercion of young women into sexual slavery; and

1           WHEREAS, In 2013, the San Francisco Board passed a resolution condemning  
2 Japan's denial of its system of sexual enslavement during World War II and calling for justice  
3 for "comfort women"; and

4           WHEREAS, The year 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II  
5 (1941-1945) and the Pacific War (1931-1945) and the defeat of Japanese imperialism and  
6 militarism by the Allies; and

7           WHEREAS, Several cities in the U.S., including, Glendale and Rohnert Park, CA; Long  
8 Island, NY; Palisades Park and Union City, NJ; Fairfax, VA; and Michigan City, MI have  
9 already erected memorials to help remember the "comfort women" during Japanese  
10 occupation in the Pacific War; and

11           WHEREAS, Today, human trafficking of women and girls is a form of modern day  
12 slavery with 20 million victims worldwide, including an estimated 1.5 million victims in North  
13 America alone, forced to perform labor and sexual acts; and human trafficking is a market-  
14 driven criminal industry based on the principles of supply and demand, and

15           WHEREAS, San Francisco is not immune to the problem, and has been considered a  
16 destination for human trafficking due to its ports, airports, industry, and rising immigrant  
17 populations; and

18           WHEREAS, Leaders of the Japanese American community have worked closely with  
19 the broader Asian Pacific Islander community in the past decades to strengthen relationships  
20 and build trust, understanding, and community for civil rights and social justice; and

21           WHEREAS, San Francisco is a city of immigrants and their descendants, many of  
22 whom have ancestral ties to Asian and Pacific Islander nations and have direct or indirect  
23 experience with Japan's past system of sexual enslavement; and

24           WHEREAS, A growing coalition of immigrant communities, women's organizations, and  
25 human rights groups have organized to establish a memorial for "comfort women" and the

1 millions of victims of the Japanese military in San Francisco to ensure that the plight and  
2 suffering of these girls and women will never be forgotten or erased from history; now,  
3 therefore, be it

4 RESOLVED, That appropriate City and County agencies will work with the community  
5 organizations to design and establish the memorial; and, be it

6 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San  
7 Francisco during the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II expresses its strong support  
8 of creating a memorial in memory of those girls and women who suffered immeasurable pain  
9 and humiliation as sex slaves and as a sacred place for remembrance, reflection,  
10 remorsefulness, and atonement for generations to come.

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14 ~~driven criminal industry based on the principles of supply and demand, and~~

15           WHEREAS, Today there are an estimated 20.9 million victims of human trafficking  
16 globally, of which 55% are women and girls; forced labor and human trafficking worldwide is a  
17 \$150 billion dollar criminal industry based on the principles of supply and demand, and

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19 destination for human trafficking due to its ports, airports, industry, and rising immigrant  
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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

July 20, 2015

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEES:  
COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE  
LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,  
EDUCATION  
SENIOR WHIP  
CONGRESSIONAL ASIAN PACIFIC  
AMERICAN CAUCUS, CHAIR EMERITUS  
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT  
COALITION, VICE CHAIR  
LGBT EQUALITY CAUCUS,  
VICE CHAIR

Board of Supervisors  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
City Hall, Room 244  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

Dear Board of Supervisors:

Thank you for your continual support of human rights, both in San Francisco and worldwide. I am grateful for this Board's history of fortitude, courage, and leadership in calling for justice for "comfort women" in San Francisco. I write to you today to strongly support the resolution to establish a memorial for "comfort women". This statue will honor the unwavering courage of the 200,000 women whose youth and innocence were so horrifically taken away when they were trafficked from their home country and forced into sexual enslavement.

Human trafficking is not merely a historical issue; it is a modern day human rights issue. This memorial would denounce not only the historical act, but also serves as a message against modern sexual slavery and trafficking. As a former educator, I know the importance of teaching our next generation, in a clear and unflinching manner, the lessons we learned over the course of history. The issue of human trafficking is still a sad reality of our society today—not just abroad, but in our own backyards. Nearly 40% of all human trafficking on the West Coast enters through the Bay Area. This is why we must never forget these atrocities and learn from them, so that we might eradicate this human rights atrocity from our community.

Of the 200,000 women who were forced into sexual enslavement during the war, 55 remain in Korea, 26 in the Philippines, 5 in Taiwan, and a handful of others across the Asian and Pacific region. Patience is a commodity which these few remaining survivors cannot afford. This memorial would be a symbol of a community's call for peace and reconciliation. I am moved by the strength and grace of these women who have endured unimaginable pain and yet tirelessly fight for their long-overdue justice. They fight for their sisters who have since passed away; for their lost youth; and for the future generation; so that such horrors will never be repeated.

This is why I strongly encourage the Board of Supervisors to pass this resolution. Once again, I want to thank you all for your unwavering commitment to human rights.

Sincerely,

Michael M. Honda  
Member of Congress



September 1, 2015

Members of the Board of Supervisors  
City and County of San Francisco

Dear Members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors,

I am writing to give my strong support to the "comfort women" resolution before the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. It is befitting for a city like San Francisco to have such a monument to commemorate a historical travesty and injustice to women sexually enslaved by the Japanese Imperial Army during the Pacific War, 1937-1941. The Imperial Japan, through its military government's policy of institutionalizing the sexual enslavement of at least 200,000 women of Chinese, Korean, Filipino, Indonesian and Dutch background during WWII, participated in the largest form of sexual trafficking in the last century. This dark chapter should not be forgotten. George Santayana said: **"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."**

My father, Fred T. Korematsu, worked closely with Japanese American giants like, Dr. Clifford Uyeda, Sox Kitashima, often known as the "godmother" of Japan town, Gordon Hirabayashi, and Chinese American leaders like Judge Lillian Sing, Judge Julie Tang, and Professor Ling chi Wang to bring about peace through justice by urging the Japanese Government to do the right thing – i.e. for the government through the Diet to apologize for the atrocities the Japanese Imperial Government inflicted on her Asian neighbors during WWII. When they did that, they were not denigrating the Japanese American community or Japan bashing but were working towards peace through justice.

I now also urge this body to do the right thing and vote to approve the "Comfort Women" resolution. This memorial is not only about dignifying the suffering of a particular group of women who were victimized by the Japanese military, it is also about peace. Jewish Holocaust memorials are being built all over the world to commemorate the suffering of the Jews during WWII in the hands of the German Nazi government. In the same spirit, we should preserve historical truth and raise consciousness about the suffering of the "comfort women". In my father's spirit I urge you to vote yes to support this resolution.

Sincerely,



Karen Korematsu

Founder & Executive Director

Fred T. Korematsu Institute

# FeND

Japan-U.S. Feminist Network for Decolonization  
脱植民地化を目指す日米フェミニストネットワーク  
www.fendnow.org  
info@fendnow.org

Emi Koyama, Co-Founder  
Japan-U.S. Feminist Network for Decolonization (FeND)  
PO Box 40570  
Portland, Oregon 97240

July 20th, 2015

The Honorable Edwin Lee  
Mayor  
City and County of San Francisco  
City Hall, Room 200  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, California 94102

The Honorable London Breed  
President of the Board of Supervisors  
City and County of San Francisco  
City Hall, Room 244  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, California 94102

Dear Mayor Lee and the Members of the Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of Japan-U.S. Feminist Network for Decolonization (FeND), I am writing to express our wholehearted support for the Board's effort to memorialize the victims and survivors of Japanese "comfort women" system during the WWII.

FeND is a network of U.S.-based individuals who have roots in Japan, and those who support our goals. We are activists, teachers, researchers, and other community members who came together in 2014 to counteract the rise of antagonistic nationalism and historical revisionism in some corners of Japan and within (mostly first generation) Japanese communities in the U.S.

I am sure that you are already receiving dozens if not hundreds of messages from members of far-right Japanese nationalist groups in opposition to the proposed memorial. As individuals who have roots in Japan, we want to assure you that these antagonistic nationalists and historical revisionists do not speak for us.

We appreciate your interest in addressing this very important and timely issue. We are hopeful that the Board of Supervisors will hold firm to its support for the victims and survivors of the women harmed in the "comfort women" system, in accordance with our shared belief in peace, justice, and human rights for all.

Best,

Emi Koyama, Co-Founder  
Japan-U.S. Feminist Network for Decolonization (FeND)  
<http://www.fendnow.org/>  
[info@fendnow.org](mailto:info@fendnow.org)

# A Report on Japanese Right-Wing Opposition to the "Comfort Women" Memorial in San Francisco

This report profiles individuals who have traveled from out of town to attend the July 21st Board meeting of the City and County of San Francisco and voice their opposition the resolution endorsing the establishment of a "comfort women" memorial in San Francisco's China Town. The list of out-of-town speakers, who are have all been born and raised in Japan before migrating to the U.S. as adults, is a Who's Who of the far-right Japanese nationalist organizing in the United States.

In addition, this report provides background information on the Japanese right-wing activities in the U.S., and debunks the right-wing mischaracterizations of some of the documents they often employ.

## I. Profiles of Out-of-town Speakers Opposing "Comfort Women" Memorial

Koichi MERA

Mariko OKADA-COLLINS

Terumi IMAMURA

Yoshi TAGUCHI

## II. Individuals Affiliated with Out-of-town Speakers

Yumiko YAMAMOTO

Tony MARANO & Shunichi FUJIKI

Shiro TAKAHASHI

Yujiro TANIYAMA

Michael YON

Jason MORGAN

Yoshiko SAKURAI

## III. Examining Right-Wing "Evidences"

U.S. Army Japanese POW Interrogation Report No. 49 (1944)

Interagency Working Group Report (2007)

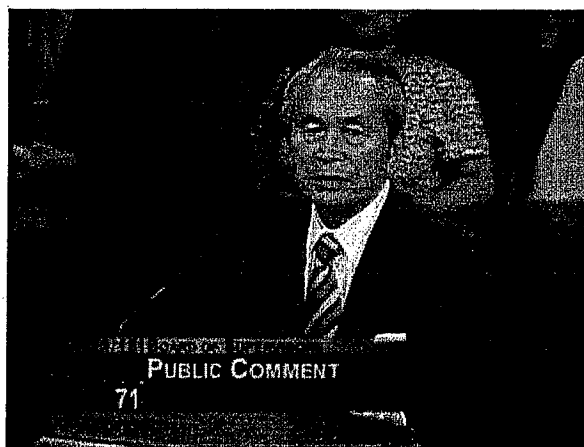
## IV. Timeline of "Comfort Women" Denialism during the first and second Abe administrations (with a focus on U.S.-related incidents)

## I. Profiles of Out-of-town Speakers Opposing "Comfort Women" Memorial

Koichi MERA

My name is Koichi Mera. I live in Los Angeles. I had a pleasure of listening more than three hours of debate in this chamber about jails and housing and so forth and that is a proper task of this chamber. Now, I'm talking about comfort women issue. This is international issue. That is a issue which is between Korea and Japan, and also U.S., Korea, and Japan. This issue should be dealt by Federal government in the case of U.S. City government should not be intervening in this issue. That's one point. Second, this issue is really dividing people. U.S. is a country with immigrants coming from various places. They should be living together in harmony. This comfort women issue will divide people. And that is not really good. In addition, one point I would like to make is that the usual comfort women story is a fabricated story. In fact, those women were not sex slaves, they were paid well. They had very good life and

they have lots of income. [brief interruption due to audience laughter in disbelief] Now there are at least two U.S. documents which proves that comfort women were usual people, not sex slaves. One is written in 1944 during the war in Burma. 20 Korean comfort women were interviewed and that says... [time out]



Mera was born in Korea during Japanese occupation and graduated from University of Tokyo before studying and getting teaching positions at U.S. universities including University of Southern California and Harvard University in business and economics. After retirement from USC, in 2006 Mera founded the Study Group for Japan's Rebirth, a monthly study group for Japanese residents in Los Angeles area about Japan's recent history. His book, Japanese People, Wake Up from MacArthur's Curse! was published by a right-wing publisher in Japan and is quite anti-U.S. In 2012, Mera founded Global Alliance for Historical Truth days before filing a lawsuit against the City of Glendale, California to seek the removal of its "comfort women" memorial. GAHT's cases have been dismissed by state and federal courts, with the state judge even ruling the lawsuit as a SLAPP, but Mera is appealing the decisions.

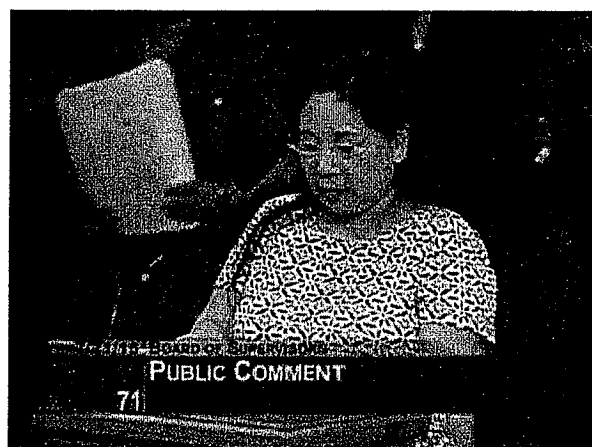
GAHT is incorporated and is accepting donations both in Japan and in the U.S. Notable leaders of GAHT in addition to Mera include Yumiko Yamamoto (ex-Zaitokukai, Nadeshiko Action), Nobukatsu Fujioka (Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform), Shiro Takahashi, and Genki Fujii (conservative foreign policy analyst).

Mera has co-presented at "comfort women" denial events in the last several years with Yamamoto, Fujioka, Mitsuhiro Fujii (Rompa Project), Mariko Okada-Collins, Yujiro Taniyama, and others.

### Mariko OKADA-COLLINS

My name is Mariko Okada-Collins. I'm talking about comfort women statue. San Francisco has a troubled history with races and ethnic hatred. As much as the City is proud of its recent history with inclusiveness and resistance to the hatred and racism, it still has not erased its dark past regarding ethnic Japanese racism. This statue represents a return to the dark days when the San Francisco mayor Eugene Schmitz and neo-fascists Sons of the Golden West organization were active in many anti-Japanese activities supported by fact, so-called fact, and M.H. de Young's San Francisco Chronicle published headlines like "Brown Men, an Evil in the Public Schools," "Japanese, a menace American women," etc. Then the school board supported by the Mayor and the City Council joined with the racist American South and segregated San Francisco schools for Japanese students saying the same illogical statements that were not about harming Japanese American relations but responding to the fact in the history. Nothing much seems to have changed in San Francisco other than that white racists have the opportunity to ally with Uncle Tom-like Asian collaborators in modern day

racist campaign to assume that Japanese are sex-crazed rapists. It appears to be like current Supervisors are set to continue the tradition in the 21st century. The City Council set to vote in a statue that promotes ethnic and racial hatred, promotes exaggerated claim against the Japanese while overlooking equal violations by Americans, Koreans, and Russians, and as seen in Glendale and Union City does absolutely nothing to raise awareness to save one woman from the human trafficking. So, I don't think you want this to be voted yes. Thank you.



Mariko Okada-Collins is a Japanese language lecturer at Central Washington University. Born and raised in Japan, she has migrated to the U.S. to live with her American husband. In April 2015, Okada-Collins used her position at the university to organize a film screening and lecture by Yujiro Taniyama and speeches by Koichi Mera, Jason Morgan, and others. Okada-Collins has published how she uses every opportunity in her language class to discuss the "truth" of Japan's recent past (i.e. historical denial of Nanjing Massacre and "comfort women"), and complains that her students punish her by giving her negative reviews. Okada-Collins also stated that she had been disciplined by the university for showing the preview of Taniyama's film in her class.

In response to the screening, students and faculty organized alternative educational events about "comfort women" on campus, which was attended by hundreds. The denialist event organized by Okada-Collins attracted a couple of dozens at most. Read about the CWU event here:

<http://www.japanfocus.org/-Norma-Field/4323/article.html>

<http://www.japanfocus.org/-Emi-Koyama/4324/article.html>

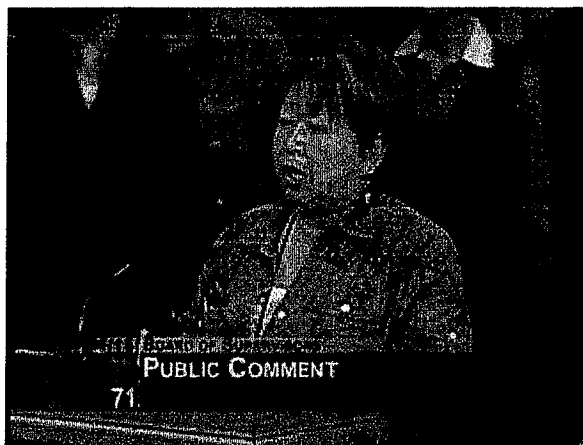
[http://www.japanfocus.org/-Chong-Eun\\_Ahn/4325/article.html](http://www.japanfocus.org/-Chong-Eun_Ahn/4325/article.html)

Okada-Collins seems to have had parted ways with Taniyama after the event because of Taniyama's attitude toward the American audience, including her students. She is associated with Koichi Mera, Michael Yon (American writer), and others.

Terumi IMAMURA

My name is Terumi Imamura. I'm also here to oppose the comfort women statue to be built here. I have several concerns and asking myself why, why is it in San Francisco, why is in America, why is it targeting Japanese? My biggest concern is that Japanese and Japanese Americans who live in here in America, are we being targeted because of our nationality? Again? Many of us remember those painful camp days in the wartime. Is that going to be happening again? We are scared. We are concerned, we are worried. Besides that, these claims that they have on comfort women—200,000 women and children were forcibly abducted, tortured, sex slaved—there is no sold evidence to it. And here I have the report umber 49, the report titled Japanese Prisoners of War Interrogation of prostitution, reported by United States Office of War Information,

Psychological Warfare Team, which reported in 1944. Also, the newer one is Nazi War Crimes and Japanese Imperial Government Record, final report to the United States Congress in April 2007. Neither of them indicate... [time out]



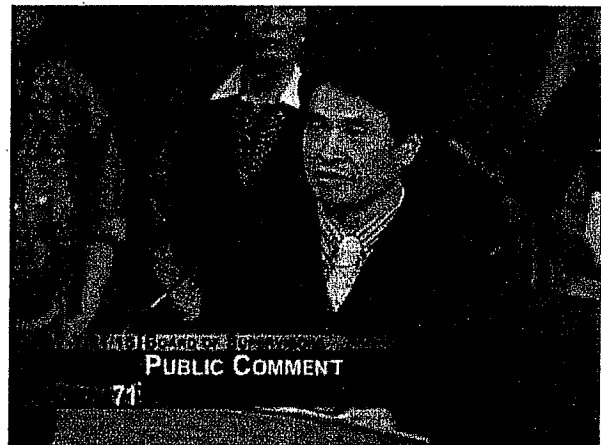
Terumi Imamura claims to be a housewife in Los Angeles area. Imamura heads a local "comfort women" denialist group True Japan Network. Imamura is said to be the originator of the completely baseless claim that the establishment of "comfort women" statue in Glendale, California resulted in widespread bullying and harassment of Japanese children in the area. Imamura's claim has been uncritically repeated by right-wing media and politicians in Japan, but nobody (local and national/international media, schools, police, Japanese American groups, the Japanese consulate, and even the very right-wing politicians that are making such claim) can find a trace of evidence.

It is telling that even Imamura did not mention the supposed existence of widespread anti-Japanese bullying in Glendale as an argument against the San Francisco memorial, despite the fact it might have been an effective argument if it existed. Koichi Mera of GAHT also did not claim anti-Japanese bullying as a concrete harm caused by the Glendale memorial in his lawsuit against the city, so there appears to be a pattern: they do not make this particular claim when it might be verified.

Yoshi TAGUCHI

Hello Supervisors, my name is Yoshi Taguchi of Happy Science. And do you know IWG document entitled the Nazi War Crimes and Japanese Imperial Government Record? It is originally signed by President Clinton on October 8, 1998 to investigate the crimes of Nazi, then on May 23, 2000 Dr. Michael Kurtz announced that the IWG will take steps forward to declassification of records related to Japanese war crimes. It has over eight million pages and spent 30 million dollars. This is the one [shows a flip], and you can see the detail through this site in the internet. And finally, in April 2007 they submitted the final report to the United States and that is a kind of summary of the investigation. This is the document, and it has 125 pages. The chairman of this committee, Steven Garfinkel, concluded his opinion in the preface, "Among the disappointed will be those who had hoped for a voluminous release of U.S. records

relating to Japanese war crimes. ... Many people around the world had hoped that the IWG would unearth records that would help them document Japanese atrocities. ... The IWG uncovered and released few Asian theatre records... [time out]



Yoshi Taguchi works for Happy Science (Koufuku no Kagaku) and lives in New Jersey. Taguchi is known to have arranged venues for many Japanese right-wing events in the U.S., including lectures of Yumiko Yamamoto, Koichi Mera, Tony Marano, Shiro Takahashi, Mitsuhiro Fujii, and others in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York City.

Happy Science is a new (founded in 1986) Japanese religion based loosely on Buddhism. Its political stance is far to the right of Prime Minister Abe's Liberal Democratic Party (which is pretty conservative), and said to have financed many of the "comfort women" denial activities outside of Japan through affiliated Rompa Project (run by Mitsuhiro Fujii) and through its foreign missions.

## II. Individuals Affiliated with Out-of-town Speakers

### Yumiko YAMAMOTO

Yumiko Yamamoto is the former secretary general and vice president of Zaitokukai and is the founder and president of "comfort women" denialist group Nadeshiko Action, ironically also referring to itself as "Japanese Women for Justice and Peace" in English. Yamamoto organizes mass email campaigns against foreign cities and legislatures that are considering taking a position on "comfort women," including the City and County of San Francisco.

Yamamoto was the secretary general of Zaitokukai, a notorious anti-Korean racist group, when the group "demonstrated" in front of a Korean elementary school in Kyoto, banging on its gate and screaming "you Korean cockroaches," and "your parents are North Korean spies" at schoolchildren. Zaitokukai organized or participated in many similar "demonstrations" against Korean neighborhoods and community institutions under Yamamoto's leadership.

Yamamoto founded Nadeshiko Action and resigned from her leadership position in Zaitokukai in 2011 to focus on Nadeshiko Action. In a book she published in 2014, Yamamoto states that she left Zaitokukai because the organization (Zaitokukai) had grown to the point that others could take care of it. In other words, Yamamoto has not yet renounced her support for the positions of Zaitokukai at least as late as 2014.

Yamamoto is the vice president of the Japanese portion of Global Alliance for Historical Truth, a denialist group headed by Koichi Mera. Yamamoto also chairs "Japan's collaborative team" of the Alliance for Truth About Comfort Women, which lobbies the United Nation Human Rights Commission, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, and other international regulatory bodies. !

### Tony MARANO & Shunichi FUJIKI

Tony Marano, also known in Japan as "Texas Daddy," is an American video blogger. Marano first found fans in Japan for criticizing environmental group Sea Shepherd's anti-whaling campaigns, and was approached by Japanese businessman Shunichi Fujiki (who also goes by "Shun Ferguson"), who became his Japanese representative. Since then, Marano has published many books and columns in Japan that glorify the nation and absolve Japan of its war responsibilities, including over the "comfort women" issue. Marano is frequently flown to Japan to give lectures about "comfort women" and other issues there, and to various U.N. meetings across the world, despite having no expertise or background on the topic.

When confronted in English, Marano does not seem to be able to sustain an argument, and frequently contradicts his own statements published in Japanese media under his name. Marano and Fujiki often collaborate with Mitsuhiro Fujii (or "Mitt") of Rompa Project. Marano also appears in a dialogue with his frequent co-presenter Yumiko Yamamoto in Yamamoto's 2014 book.

### Shiro TAKAHASHI



Shiro Takahashi is a prominent conservative education scholar in Japan whose work has focused on the importance of "traditional" family structures and gender roles. As a former vice president of the Japan Society for History Textbook Reform, Takahashi also advocates for the teaching of history that restores national pride. In 2013, Prime Minister Abe appointed Takahashi to the Council for Gender Equality, an advisory body within the Cabinet.

In December 2014, Takahashi joined Yamamoto, Mera, Marano, and others to speak at the "comfort women" revisionist event and a press conference in New York City. He also visited Los Angeles, where he claims to have heard stories about vandalism committed against conservative Japanese residents who were involved in revisionist activities.

#### Yujiro TANIYAMA

Yujiro Taniyama is a filmmaker and a failed 2011 candidate for the Governorship of Tokyo, receiving 0.2% of the total votes. In spring of 2015, Japanese language instructor Mariko Okada-Collins invited Taniyama to Central Washington University to show "Scottsboro Girls," his fauxmentary film about "comfort women," and to give a lecture introducing "a new perspective" on the issue. Taniyama's film is endorsed by Yoshiko Sakurai, an influential conservative journalist.

When Okada-Collins faced oppositions to the screening in the days before the event from within the university, Michael Yon reached out to her and introduced her to additional speakers, Koichi Mera and Jason Morgan. University community overwhelmingly rejected Taniyama, who showed a shortened version of the film (the full film is over three hours long) to an almost empty room for two days. Taniyama and Yon got into a major online battle afterwards, with Okada-Collins taking Yon's side.

#### Michael YON

Michael Yon is a former member of the U.S. Army Special Forces and a writer specializing in Thailand and military. Yon became interested in "comfort women" issue in 2014, and is credited with calling attention to the 2007 U.S. Interagency Working Group report on Nazi War Crimes and Japanese Imperial Government Records, which he (falsely) claims proves Japan's innocence in the "comfort women" affair.

After the failure of Yujiro Taniyama's film screening at Central Washington University, Yon publicly criticized some members of the conservative establishment including Yoshiko Sakurai who have endorsed Taniyama's film. In return, conservative figures in Japan exposed that Yon had received large payments from Japanese conservatives with the expectation that he would publish articles in mainstream English media that refute the "comfort women" issue, but failed to deliver; Yon denies that there was any such expectation and insists that his pen is not for sale.

#### Jason MORGAN

Jason Morgan is a University of Wisconsin history Ph.D student who has spent years in Japan, including on a Fulbright. Morgan was heralded by the American conservative media when in

2013 he refused to take part in a diversity training that was mandated for all teaching assistants. He views American academia as dogmatic and stifling, and prefers Japanese academia where scholars are free to speak truth, especially his belief that "evidence is overwhelmingly on" the side denying the "comfort women" issue. Morgan is now celebrated as a fresh new voice of the true American scholarship by Japanese conservative media such as Sankei Shimbun and by conservative think tanks that are affiliated with Yoshiko Sakurai.

#### Yoshiko SAKURAI

Yoshiko Sakurai is a conservative journalist and internet news host/commentator. As the director of Japan Institute for National Fundamentals, a private think tank, Sakurai is highly influential within Japan's conservative politics. On her internet news, Sakurai hosts conservative politicians including Eiko Yamatani, Tomomi Inada, Jn Matsubara, and others; and commentators including Shiro Takahashi, Koichi Mera, and Yujiro Taniyama.

### III. Examining Right-Wing "Evidences"

U.S. Army Japanese POW Interrogation Report No. 49 (1944)

What the right-wing says: The report is based on interviews with 20 Korean "comfort women" detained by the U.S. Army and states that they were simply prostitutes who were highly paid and lived in luxury.

The report is actually based on interviews with two Japanese "house masters" (i.e. owner/managers of the brothel) and 20 Korean "comfort women." The report clearly states that the women were recruited under false pretenses and held in debt bondage. In addition, many of the 20 women were underage at the time they were sent to the "comfort stations."

A part of the report does state that women were paid well. Another part states that the women had to give back much of the earnings for debt repayment and living expenses (they had to procure necessities from the house masters) and struggled. Historians believe that the first part comes from the testimonies of the "house masters," while the latter are from the women themselves.

Since mid-1990s, the report has been understood by historians to be one of the evidences that show that women were forced to become "comfort women" against their will and that the Japanese military was actively managing and operating the system. The right-wing interpretation relies on selective reading of several isolated sentences from the report.

Interagency Working Group Report (2007)

What the right-wing says: Interagency Working Group of the United States spent eight years and 30 million dollars to find evidences for Japan's war crimes related to "comfort women," but could not find any, which means that the allegations against Japan are false.

The Interagency Working Group studied classified documents to uncover new historical materials related to the war crimes of Nazi Germany and the Japanese Empire. However, most documents from the Pacific theatre had been declassified a long time ago, IWG mostly analyzed and then released documents related to the Nazi Germany.

In April 2007, the same month Interagency Working Group's report was finalized, the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress issued its own report, "Japanese Military's 'Comfort Women' System," which used previously released materials to conclude that Japanese government and military were responsible for a system of enforced military prostitution known as "comfort women." In July of that year, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution demanding Japan to "formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility" for the "comfort women" issue.

While it is true that the IWG report did not uncover any previously classified document related to Japan's "comfort women" issue, it is clearly not the case that the U.S. government interpreted the IWG report to mean that Japan was innocent.

#### IV. Timeline of "Comfort Women" Denialism during the first and second Abe administrations (with a focus on U.S.-related incidents)

##### Part 1: 2006-2007

2006-09-26	Shinzo Abe becomes the 90th Prime Minister of Japan
2007-01-16	U.S. declassifies documents and releases expert essays on upcoming IWG report
2007-01-31	H.Res.121 introduced with six co-sponsors, led by Rep. Mike Honda
2007-03-01	PM Abe denies forced recruitment of CW by Japanese military
2007-03-02	Deputy Sec. of State Negroponte criticizes Abe's statement
2007-03-05	PM Abe once again denies Japanese military responsibility
2007-03-09	Opponents of H.Res.121 change their position, number of co-sponsors grows
2007-03-16	Abe administration formally state that no evidence exists that points to forced recruitment of CW by Japanese military
2007-03-24	Washington Post criticizes Abe in editorial
2007-03-25	Abe's Deputy Cabinet Minister states on radio that CW were sold by their parents, and that Japanese military was not involved
2007-03-26	Deputy Spokesman for Department of State urges Japan to continue to address CW issue
2007-04	IWG report finalized and made available to public
2007-04-03	U.S. Congressional Research Service releases the report "Japanese Military's 'Comfort Women' System" by Larry Niksch
2007-04-03	PM Abe calls Pres. Bush to ask for "understanding"
2007-04-17	PM Abe justifies his statements in interviews with Newsweek and Wall Street Journal, promise to uphold Kono Statement
2007-04-20	Former Minister of Education and Science Nariaki Nakayama criticizes H.Res.121, arguing that prostitution was legal and profitable at the time
2007-04-27	PM Abe visits Pres. Bush, issues a vague apology for CW
2007-05-17	Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara denies Japanese military's involvement in the recruitment of CW
2007-05-25	MP Jn Matsubara denies the CW issue
2007-06-14	Dozens of conservative politicians and prominent opinion leaders in Japan place a full-page ad ("The Facts") on Washington Post
2007-06	Many members of U.S. House of Representatives join as co-sponsors of H.Res.121 including House Committee on Foreign Affairs Chair Rep. Tom Lantos
2007-07-30	H.Res.121 passed
2007-09-12	PM Abe abruptly resigns
2007-10	First CW memorial built in the U.S. in Palisades Park, New Jersey
2007-11-08	Dutch parliament passes resolution urging Japan to confront CW denialism and make further efforts to address the issue
2007-11-28	Canada's House of Commons passes resolution urging Japan to confront CW denialism and make further efforts to address the issue
2007-12-13	European Parliament passes resolution urging Japan to confront CW denialism and make further efforts to address the issue

## Part 2: 2012-present

2011-12	Yumiko Yamamoto of Zaitokukai forms CW denialist group Nadeshiko Action
2012-05	Japanese diplomats offer cherry blossom trees in return for removing Palisades Park, New Jersey CW memorial; the city rejects
2012-05-24	Nikon Corp. cancels photo exhibits about CW under right-wing pressure
2012-12-26	Shinzo Abe becomes the 96th Prime Minister of Japan
2013-01-10	PM Abe appoints Shiro Takahashi to the Council for Gender Equality
2013-05-13	Osaka Mayor Toru Hashimoto argues that organized prostitution was necessary at the time, and suggests that the U.S. military should utilize legal sexual services to reduce sexual violence committed by the U.S. servicemen in Okinawa
2013-05-16	U.S. Department of State spokesperson Jen Psaki calls Hashimoto's statement "outrageous and offensive"
2013-05-22	San Francisco asks Hashimoto to cancel sister city visit due to the furor caused by his remarks
2013-05-27	Hashimoto retracts his comment about the U.S. servicemen while insisting that the Japanese military was not involved in the trafficking of CW
2013-06-18	City and County of San Francisco passes resolution condemning CW system in response to Hashimoto's statements
2013-07-09	Glendale, California approves the establishment of CW statue in its Central Park after heated discussions
2013-07-30	Glendale unveils the CW statue; Japanese American leaders from Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress and the San Fernando Valley chapter of Japanese American Citizens League attend in support
2013-09	Yumiko Yamamoto and others form Alliance for Truth about Comfort Women
2013-12-16	Koichi Mera, Tomoyuki Sumori (True Japan Network, Volunteer Group for Fight Against Comfort Women), and three Japanese MPs (Mio Sugita, Yuzuru Nishida, and Hiromu Nakamaru) meet with representatives of NCRR and JACL-SFV; Sugita dismisses Japanese American representatives as "left-wing"
2014-01-08	JACL-SFV chapter formally adopts a statement supporting CW statue in Glendale
2014-01-16	Members of (Japanese) National Association of Municipal Legislators Against Comfort Women Statue visit Glendale to protest the CW memorial; they hold a sign that reads "Children Need Heart-Warming Memorials"
2014-02-20	Koichi Mera founds Global Alliance for Historical Truth and files a lawsuit against the City of Glendale
2014-05-05	Japanese American Bar Association of California and Korean American Bar Association along with dozens of other law associations issue a statement supporting the CW memorial and opposing GAHT's lawsuit
2014-06-06	Japan-U.S. Feminist Network for Decolonization (FeND) formed
2014-06-20	Abe administration releases a report on the "process resulting in Kono Statement," widely seen as a first step to repealing it
2014-07-06	Mera and Nobukatsu Fujioka of GAHT hold an event in Los Angeles; read a letter from Yamamoto is read
2014-07-14	Yamamoto, Mera, Mitsuhiro Fujii, Shunichi Fujiki, Tony Marano, and other members of ATCW visit Geneva to lobby the U.N. Commission on Human Rights

2014-08-04	GAHT's federal lawsuit against the City of Glendale is dismissed
2014-08-05	Asahi Shimbun retracts decades-old articles about forcible CW recruitment by the Japanese military in Jeju Island, Korea
2014-08-13	Fullerton, California passes resolution recognizing CW
2014-09-03	GAHT files a state suit against the City of Glendale
2014-09-04	GAHT appeals the decision of the federal case to the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals
2014-10-15	The Historical Science Society of Japan issues a statement criticizing Abe administration's denial of historical facts of CW
2014-10-30	Japanese MPs form the Special Committee to Restore Japan's Honor and Trust in order to refute allegations on CW
2014-12-13	Yamamoto, Mitsuhiko Fujii, and other revisionists hold an event in Redwood City, California near SFO; coalition of peace and human rights activists holds a protest
2014-12-14	Yamamoto, Mera, Fujii, and other revisionists hold a panel in Torrance, California
2015-01	Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs demands American publisher and historian to alter the description of CW in college-level world history textbook
2015-02-18	Three Japanese residents in Los Angeles area join in a lawsuit in Japan against Asahi Shimbun
2015-03	20 U.S. historians publish a letter in support of Japanese historians in response to MOFA's attempt to censor textbooks
2015-03-09	Yamamoto, Fujii, Shunichi Fujiki, Shiro Takahashi, and other revisionists hold an event in New York City; original venue, Japanese American Association of New York, cancels their reservation due to a protest by peace and women's groups
2015-03-10	GAHT and ATCW members Mera, Takahashi, and others hold a press conference in NYC to counter the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women sessions
2015-03-17	Group of conservative scholars led by Ikuhiko Hata holds press conference to demand "corrections" to an American history textbook over CW
2015-03-27	PM Abe refers to CW as victims of human trafficking in an interview with Washington Post without admitting Japanese military's role in it
2015-04-28	Mariko Okada-Collins organizes a screening of Yujiro Taniyama's film, "Scottsboro Girls" at Central Washington University; Mera, Jason Morgan, and others join Taniyama
2015-04-29	PM Abe delivers a speech at the joint session of U.S. Congress without mentioning CW
2015-05-04	GAHT's state lawsuit against the City of Glendale is dismissed; City files for attorney's fees under anti-SLAPP statute
2015-05-07	"Open Letter in Support of Historians in Japan" released with 187 signatures by historians, Japan scholars, and others (mostly in the U.S.); the number of signatories grows to 464 within a week
2015-05-25	16 associations of historians and history educators in Japan issue a joint statement criticizing CW revisionism
2015-07-21	City and County of San Francisco considers a resolution establishing CW memorial; Mera, Okada-Collins, Terumi Imamura, and others speak in opposition
2015-07-23	Osaka Mayor Hashimoto criticizes SF resolution as "unfair," plans to send a letter
2015-07-27	Nadeshiko Action and ATCW members visit Geneva to lobby the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

# A Fact Sheet on Japanese Military "Comfort Women"

## Who were "comfort women"?

"Comfort women" is a historical term referring to women who were forced to provide sexual service to Japanese soldiers at military brothels "comfort stations" established by the Japanese military in its occupied territories between 1932 and 1945. "Comfort women" were taken from all over Asia and the Pacific, with Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, Chinese, Filipina, and Indonesian women comprising the vast majority. Many women were considered underage. Experts estimate the number of "comfort women" at tens or hundreds of thousands.

## How were "comfort women" recruited?

At the very beginning, women were recruited primarily from existing brothels in Japan by offering them a way to repay their debt more quickly. But the concern over venereal diseases and the demand for a greater number of women led to the recruitment of women outside of existing private brothels. In Japan's colonies (Korea and Taiwan), the Japanese government licensed contractors to recruit or procure women under collaboration with local governments and police departments. Women were typically deceived with a promise of lucrative jobs and were held in debt bondage, unable to leave after realizing the nature of the "work" expected of them. In other areas such as the Philippines and Indonesia, the military kidnapped local women or ordered local leaders to provide women for them.

## What were the conditions in which "comfort women" worked?

Women who were held in debt bondage earned a percentage of the fees paid by Japanese soldiers, but their earnings were confiscated for debt repayment and living expenses. They were forced to have sex with many men each day, and very few were allowed to return to their home after their debt was retired. Other women who were forcibly taken to the "comfort stations" were held for a period of time, and forced into sexual servitude, often without pay.

## How was the Japanese government/military involved?

Some Japanese nationalists claim that "comfort stations" were no different from any other brothels, which were legal at the time, but there are clear differences. The "comfort stations" were established by the Japanese government, and the women were recruited primarily by contractors licensed by the government. The Japanese government issued a special permit for the women to travel, and transported them on military vehicles and ships. The government built buildings for the "comfort stations," set policies, fee structures, and schedules, and provided military doctors to check the women for venereal diseases periodically.

## How did the issue surface in the 90s?

Following the democratization of the Republic of Korea (South Korea), a Korean former "comfort woman" came forward publicly for the first time in 1991, seeking a formal apology and reparation from the Japanese government. Her action led hundreds of other women in Korea, the Philippines, and elsewhere to come forward. Links to some of their testimonies can be found at the end of this document.

## What has Japanese government done since the 90s?

At first, Japanese government evaded responsibility for the human rights violations in "comfort women" system, blaming private contractors and individual traffickers. But as more historical evidences were discovered by Japanese and other historians, the government was forced in 1993 to issue the so-called Kono statement, which acknowledged Japanese government's direct involvement in the establishment and operation of "comfort stations" and the use of force and deception in the recruitment of "comfort women." In 1995, Japan established Asian Women's Fund, which distributed the Prime Minister's signed letter of apology along with "atonement" money funded through donations from Japanese people. Some victims received the atonement money, while others refused it,

criticizing it as an attempt to avoid providing formal reparations.

## What are former "comfort women" seeking?

There are four main demands made by various groups working for the former "comfort women": First, an official apology accompanying the Cabinet or Diet (Parliament) resolution (rather than something that can be and have been construed as one leader's personal view, such as the Prime Minister's letter); second, formal compensation to the victims of the "comfort women" system; third, the teaching of "comfort women" issue in the country's history classes and textbooks; and finally, the investigation and persecution of responsible parties.

## What is the international dispute about?

There are factual as well as legal and political disagreements over the issue of "comfort women." The factual disputes involve the actual number of "comfort women" and their ethnic backgrounds, and the extent to which Japanese military was directly involved in the deceptive or forceful recruitment of the women. Legal and political questions include whether Japan has sufficiently accepted responsibility for the atrocity with the establishment of Asian Women's Fund, and whether Japan's legal obligations to compensate the victims have been dissolved by the 1951 Treaty of Peace between Japan and the Allied Powers or by bilateral treaties between Japan and its neighbors (Republic of China in 1952, Republic of Korea in 1965, and People's Republic of China in 1972 and 1978). Some Japanese nationalists including members of the Parliament reject any wrongdoing or culpability on the part of their government or military.

## What has the international community said about the issue?

United Nations Human Rights Committee, Economic and Social Council, Human Rights Commission, Commission on the Status of Women, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and Committee Against Torture have issued reports and advisories demanding Japan to agree to some or all of the victims' demands. Congresses of the United States (House), the Netherlands, Canada, European Union,

South Korea, and Taiwan have passed similar resolutions, as did the State of California, New York Senate, and other legislative bodies around the world.

## Online Resources

Fight For Justice  
<http://fightforjustice.info/>  
Women's Active Museum on War and Peace  
<http://wam-peace.org/en/>

e-Museum for the Victims of Japanese Military Sexual Slavery  
<http://www.hermuseum.go.kr/english/>

## Books

Yoshiaki Yoshimi, *Comfort Women* (2002).  
Yuki Tanaka, *Japan's Comfort Women* (2001).

Maria Rosa Henson, *Comfort Women: A Filipina's Story of Prostitution and Slavery under the Japanese Military* (1999).

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson, *Silence Broken: Korean Comfort Women* (1999)

Jan Ruff-O'Herné, *Fifty Years of Silence: The Extraordinary Memoir of a War Rape Survivor* (2008).

C. Sarah Soh, *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan* (2009).

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# "Comfort Women" Denier Talking Points DEBUNKED!

"Comfort women" is a historical term referring to the women who performed sexual labor in Japan's military brothels ("comfort stations") across Asia and the Pacific during its imperial wars, 1932-1945.

Experiences of "comfort women" were varied: some women, especially in the early years, were recruited from existing brothels in Japan as a way to pay off their debts faster; other women, mainly from Japan's colonies (Korea and Taiwan) and occupied territories, were deceived with the promise of lucrative career, or were outright kidnapped and forced into the system.

Below are some of the most commonly encountered Japanese "comfort women" denier talking points, and the facts according to actual historians.

**TALKING POINT:** "The 1944 U.S. military report says that 'comfort women' are just prostitutes!"

**FACT:** They are taking a sentence out of context. The same document clearly states that most women were deceived with the promise of a good job and forced to perform sexual acts on Japanese soldiers under debt bondage.

**TALKING POINT:** "The 1944 U.S. military report also says that 'comfort women' received exceedingly high salaries!"

**FACT:** According to the same document, many women suffered in poverty because their nominally high earnings were taken away by the Japanese "house masters" as debt repayment and living expenses, which the women had to procure from them.

**TALKING POINT:** "Korean newspapers at the time published ads recruiting 'comfort women,' which proves that they were voluntary!"

**FACT:** Most Korean women who became "comfort women" were not literate, so the ads were not designed to entice them. The ads (and only two such ads have been discovered) were placed by contractors to entice private recruiters and subcontractors to go out and recruit the women.

**TALKING POINT:** "News reports from the era show that Japanese government arrested and prosecuted contractors that kidnapped and trafficked Korean women!"

**FACT:** Japanese government prosecuted kidnappers and traffickers in general, but those were not contractors that are kidnapping and trafficking women on behalf of the Japanese military (except for recruitment in Japan—see the next point).

**TALKING POINT:** "Japanese government issued a directive ordering the military to carefully select contractors to avoid those that engage in kidnapping and trafficking!"

**FACT:** The 1938 directive was issued in response to an incident in which local police in Japan detained a contractor recruiting women as "comfort women" for the Japanese military. The local police did not realize that Japanese military was directly involved in establishing and operating brothels, and assumed that the contractor was falsely claiming to be working for the military. This incident led to the directive urging greater coordination between military contractors and local police departments and requiring the contractors to conceal their ties to the Japanese military publicly so as to not embarrass the military. The directive only applies to recruitment in Japan, and excludes its colonies of Korea and Taiwan. There are no comparable directives addressing deceptive or illegal recruitment outside of mainland Japan.

**TALKING POINT:** "If any kidnapping or trafficking happened, it was done by private businesses operating brothels, and not by the Japanese military! Or they were simply sold by their parents to pay off debts!"

**FACT:** Japanese military built or requested contractors to build "comfort stations," provided special documents to women who did not otherwise have legal documentation to travel out of the country, transported women on military vehicles, established fees, policies, and schedules for the "comfort stations," etc.—all of which are considered human trafficking under current as well as historical standards, especially since

many of the women were underage. Debt bondage, or forcing women to work in order to pay off their debt, is also considered a form of slavery under current as well as historical standards.

**TALKING POINT:** "The whole 'comfort women' story was invented by Asahi Shimbun newspaper, which recently retraced the fabricated testimonies of 'professed' 'comfort women' recruiter Seiji Yoshida!"

**FACT:** Yoshida's testimonies have been refuted and rejected by virtually all historians in the 1990s, and is not the basis for Japanese government's Kono Statement (1993), the United Nations' report on "comfort women" by the special rapporteur Radhika Coomaraswamy (1996), or the U.S. Congressional Resolution 121 (2007). Asahi's retraction makes no difference to our current conversations on the topic.

**TALKING POINT:** "Former Asahi reporter Takashi Uemura, who wrote articles about former comfort women's lawsuit against Japan, was biased because his mother-in-law was suing the Korean group that was suing the Japanese government on behalf of the women!"

**FACT:** The organization Uemura's mother-in-law was involved in had nothing to do with the lawsuit at the time. Uemura also never quoted Yoshida, or wrote articles that alleged direct "talking" of Korean women by the Japanese military. A third-party review of Uemura's reporting found no wrongdoing on his part.

**TALKING POINT:** "Interagency Working Group of the United States spent 30 million dollars and seven years to search for evidences supporting the testimonies of 'comfort women,' but could not find anything incriminating Japanese military!"

**FACT:** IWG was tasked with reviewing then-classified WWII-era U.S. official documents to find records of German and Japanese war crimes. Most documents were related to the Nazi Germany, because many documents about Japan were not classified. The search did not result in the discovery of any new evidences documenting Japan's war crimes related to "comfort women." Prior to IWG's review, however, there were many publicly available U.S. government documents, including the 1944 U.S. military

report mentioned earlier, that shows Japan's wartime violations of human rights and international law in its management and operation of the "comfort women" system.

**TALKING POINT:** "Some Korean scholars such as Ahn Byong Jik and Park Yulha question the allegation that Korean women were forcibly taken by the Japanese military!"

**FACT:** There are some disagreements in terms of how much blame should be assigned to different parties, including the Japanese military, Korean brokers who did the actual recruitment, etc., but neither Ahn or Park deny that Japan bears responsibility for the trafficking and exploitation of women under the "comfort women" system even if the military did not directly kidnap the Korean women.

**TALKING POINT:** "Former comfort women's testimonies are unreliable because they have shifted in the past!"

**FACT:** Testimonies of survivors of severe trauma often shift and change, and it should not be considered a reason to dismiss their testimonies altogether. Historians do not rely on any single document or testimony for their understanding of historical events; rather, they look at many different documents and testimonies to corroborate what actually took place. Regardless of the accuracy of any particular claim or any particular testimony, it is undeniable that tens or hundreds of thousands of women were forced into sexual servitude by the Japanese military.

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