

The Truth about the Question of “Comfort Women”

It is amazing, but perhaps not so surprising, that an alleged wrong from over 60 years ago should be used to this very day as a weapon to extort moral and economic largesse. The so-called comfort women are the latest “victims” of Japanese war-time “aggression” to do just that. It is also not surprising that the real story behind these so-called comfort women is never heard and, thus, the Japanese people reflexively bow down to their demands.

United States Army records from the war clearly stated that these women were out to make money. Of course, the phenomenon of prostitutes servicing soldiers is not new and it should not be surprising that the Japanese military supervised brothels, as the Allies made use of them as well. The Soviets did not have supervised brothels -- instead soldiers on the Eastern European front were fully encouraged to rape German women. (This is one Allied wartime atrocity that will never be featured on the evening TV news.)

With the establishment of South Korea, the government did not feel the need to raise the issue with Japan until, oddly, leftist Japanese brought up the allegations. Even though the issue has been a contentious sticking point between the two countries, it is one that is entirely based in fiction.

One of the key publications that sparked the controversy was Mr. Seiji Yoshida’s book “My War Crimes”. He claimed that during the war, he was ordered by the military to kidnap Korean women for use as “comfort women.” Several years later, a local Korean newspaper tried to verify Mr. Yoshida’s allegations, but was absolutely unable to do so. Later, leading Japanese newspapers printed moving yet totally unverifiable stories of “comfort women” survivors. The South Koreans got on the bandwagon following the “admissions” of the Japanese press. Again, despite the stories of “forced work” comfort women being fabrications, the gullible public swallowed the lies hook, line and sinker. The U.N. got into the act and a report admonished Japan’s despicable war-time abuse of comfort women. However, the report was based on a book written by an Australian journalist, who collected materials from a Korean woman living in Japan. The fact that the journalist could not speak any Korean and that the book contained numerous factual errors suggested an absence of fact-checking prior to its publication. Despite such inconvenience, the psychological impact on the Japanese people was nonetheless effective.

The Japanese, particularly susceptible to any accusation that they were not repentant enough for their “numerous war-time wrongs,” reflexively showed contrition. When the “comfort women” allegations began to boil over during the 1990’s, the Japanese government feebly tried to take the middle road. On one hand, it could have plainly and emphatically stated that the allegations that the Japanese military enslaving women to serve as sex slaves were entirely without merit. On the other hand, the government could have given the charges the classic Japanese stony-silent treatment. Incredibly, the government issued a statement that “regretted” the war time action of taking of women for use as comfort women. Such weakness on the part of the government further

encouraged “comfort women” groups and their activists; to this day are still trying to pry an official “apology” and “victim status,” which will inevitably lead to compensation.