

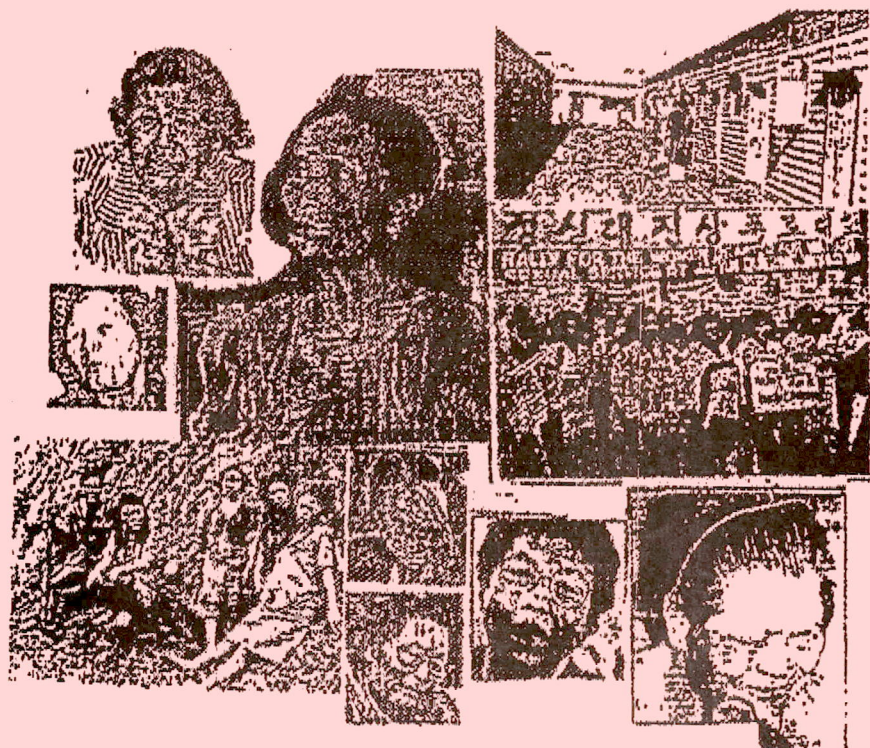
"JUSTICE FOR THE MILITARY COMFORT WOMEN"

*"Individual Criminal Responsibility of the Japanese for Mass Rape
According to International Law"*

by
Won Soon Park, Esq.

*"The Civil Lawsuit Brought by the 'Korean Comfort Women' in Japan:
The Limits of Redress in the Japanese Courts"*

by
Takaki Kenichi, Attorney for the Korean Comfort Women



Friday, March 25, 1994 @ 12:00 noon
Columbia Law School, 116th and Amsterdam Ave.
Case Lounge, 7th Floor

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The Columbia Asian Pacific-American Law Students' Association and
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NATIONAL

Center to probe war issues sought

By NAOMI HIRAKAWA
Staff writer

The establishment of an international center to probe human rights issues would be "very useful" in shedding light on the plight of people victimized by the Japanese military before and during World War II, a panel of legal experts said in Tokyo Thursday.

Theo van Boven, a professor at the University of Limburg in Netherlands, proposed the establishment of both a national and international center for the purpose of clarifying the reparations issues.

He also proposed the creation of an institute to keep a permanent public record of the truth about wartime atrocities committed by the Japanese military.

"They would gather and collect information ... and other materials on relevant national experiences, and promote an exchange of experiences," said van Boven, who also serves as a Special Rapporteur for the United Nations Subcommission on Human Rights.

Van Boven made the comments at the International Public Hearings Concerning Postwar Compensation of Japan.

He was in Japan to attend the two-day symposium on War and Human Rights—Legal Analysis on Postwar Settlement, which was held Wednesday and Thursday in Tokyo.

He said he will submit a comprehensive report on the matter to the U.N. next August. The report will deal with

a range of issues, including that of women who were forced to provide sex for Japanese soldiers during the war.

He was to visit Seoul today to meet more witnesses and researchers on the "comfort women" issue.

The Japanese government at one time technically denied that government organizations were directly involved in the recruitment of comfort women in occupied countries.

South Korean lawyer Won Soon Park, told reporters it was "necessary and possible" to initiate prosecution against suspected war criminals who forced women and girls to become comfort women.

He felt there was a need to set up an international tribunal on the matter.

Karen Parker, a U.S. lawyer and chief representative to the U.N. International Educational Development Inc., agreed there was an immediate need to compensate war victims, including comfort women, considering that most are now advanced in age.

She suggested that the Japanese National Bar Association administer a fund for the victims through a special committee, and said that it could initiate a campaign on behalf of the victims and solicit public donations.

Another panelist, John Humphrey, an author of the 44-year-old Universal Declaration on Human Rights, accused the Japanese government of applying political pressure in the U.N. to thwart public discussion about compensating former comfort women and other victims of the war.

"The Japanese government is making every effort to prevent these questions from being sent to the Human Rights Commission, and so far has



Jeanne O'Herne

been successful," he said. "But Japan has certain responsibilities under international law, including obligations arising from the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the U.N. Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and humanitarian law which bind Japan."

An optional protocol to the covenant gives citizens of a signatory country the right to petition the world body concerning atrocities committed by the country, he said.

But Japan has not ratified the covenant. If it had it would be conceivable that comfort women could appeal,

he said.

Both Park and Humphrey said that the Japanese government's attitude of not making reparations, including monetary compensation, harms the country's image.

Ameur Zemmal, a legal adviser to the International Committee of the Red Cross who attended the symposium in a private capacity, said Japan has an international obligation to compensate war victims in light of humanitarian law and accepted international practices.

Park said Japan, which is seeking a permanent seat on the Security Council and a

leadership role in world politics, will never realize its goal without rectifying its past wrongdoings.

No country will trust and follow the leadership of Japan, which has not cleared its image tainted by gross violations of human rights, he said.

Woman is relieved

A Dutch woman who told an international public hearing in Tokyo Wednesday about her experiences as a "comfort women" in Java said Thursday that she was "happy to hear" another Dutch woman had publicly revealed she had been forced to provide sex for Japanese soldiers during the war.

"It was what I was hoping for," Jeanne O'Herne said of the second Dutch woman to reveal she was a comfort woman in Java in 1944.

"I want to go to Holland," said O'Herne, now an Australian resident. "I think all the girls (who were with her in the military brothel in Java) will speak up. I want to have a reunion."

She said she hopes that since former comfort women have been stepping bravely forward to recount their experiences, former Japanese officers and soldiers would also speak publicly about their deeds.

"After forgiveness, healing can start," she said. As a Christian, she cannot keep hate in her heart, she added.

Yet, until she came to Japan, every time she saw Japanese male tourists in Australia, she would relive her nightmarish experiences of the war.

She will go to Tokyo's national memorial park dedicated to the war dead in Chidorigafuchi, Chiyoda Ward, today to place a wreath and meet some former Japanese soldiers there.