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Comfort Women *an unfinished ordeal*



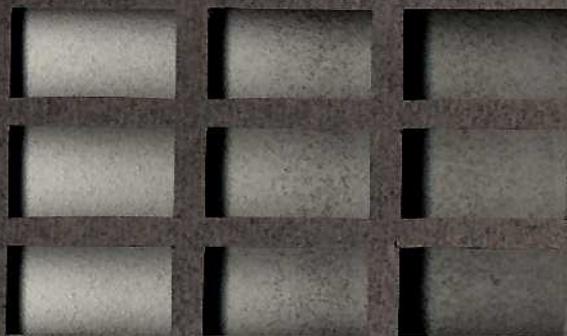
Report of a Mission

International Commission of Jurists
Geneva, Switzerland

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Report of a Mission

by
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Preface

As mentioned in the introduction, this is the story of people everyone tried to forget. The matter has been raised before many fora, including those of the United Nations. Much has appeared on the subject in the media. Yet very little concrete action has been taken to provide relief to the victims: the Comfort Women from Korea, the Philippines, and other countries in Asia, whose numbers range between 100,000 and 200,000. Why human rights violations on such a massive scale were not discussed in any meaningful way for more than 40 years is inexplicable.

It is for this reason that the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) sent a mission in April 1993 to the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and to Japan. The mission inquired into the circumstances concerning sexual services obtained from Korean and Filipino women by the Japanese military during World War II. It also inquired into what responsibility the present Japanese Government bears towards these women and, what steps must be taken and by whom, to resolve issues concerning these women. The preliminary report of the mission was issued in May 1993.

The mission consisted of Ms. Ustina Dolgopol, Lecturer, School of Law, The Flinders University of South Australia and Ms. Snehal Paranjape, an Advocate of the Bombay High Court, India. The mission interviewed over 40 victims, three former soldiers, government representatives, representatives of non-governmental organizations, lawyers, academics and journalists.

Based on documents reviewed and interviews held, the mission concludes that it is clear that the Japanese Imperial Army initiated the setting up of a vast network of comfort stations for the exclusive use of the Japanese Imperial Army, before and during the Second World War. Chinese, Dutch, Filipino, Indonesian, Korean, Malaysian and Taiwanese women and girls were targeted, put into these comfort stations and sexual services were extracted from them under duress.

The Japanese military was responsible for the setting up, use, operation and control of the comfort stations. Detailed regulations were framed by the Japanese military in this regard.

The mission also found that life in the comfort stations was living hell for the women. They were beaten and tortured in addition to being repeatedly raped day after day by officers and soldiers. Living conditions were cramped and shabby, food was usually of a poor quality and in short supply. Although medical check-ups by army doctors took place, many women were afflicted by sexually transmitted diseases. When they were brought to the comfort stations, they were healthy in body and spirit. They left the comfort stations, diseased in body and crippled in spirit.

The report also shows that the suffering of these women did not end after the war. After being abandoned by fleeing Japanese soldiers, some of them reached home, only to live lives of isolation. The pain they have endured has continued throughout their lifetime.

The ICJ is grateful to the Governments of the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Japan for having met the mission. The ICJ would also like to thank the Task Force for Filipino Victims of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, in the Philippines; the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, and Dr. Tai Young Lee from the Republic of Korea; the Democratic Lawyers Association of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; the Japan Civil Liberties Union, the Japan Federation of Bar Associations, and Mr. Totsuka, Mr. Uesugi, Mr. Aitani, Ms. Naomi Hirakawa, and especially Professor Yoshimi from Japan for their hospitality and the invaluable assistance they gave to the ICJ mission. We are very grateful to Mr. George Hicks for having given us useful information on the subject and we also sincerely thank Dr. Christian Tomuschat, Ms. Monika Lake and Mr. Hans-Peter Gasser, for their very useful comments on the legal issues.

And, of course, our deepest gratitude to the women, who, despite all the pain and anguish they have been through, with dignity and courage allowed the mission to interview them.

In August 1993, the Japanese Government, for the first time admitted that "the then Japanese military was directly or indirectly involved in the establishment and management of the comfort stations and the transfer of comfort women". The government also admitted that recruitment and transportation of the women were carried out against their will by deceit and pressure and that the military personnel directly took part in the recruitments. It also stated that "it is apparent that there existed a great number of comfort women" and that life at the comfort stations was miserable. The Japanese Government has recognized that "this was an act that severely injured the honour and dignity of many women" and it apologized to all these women.

On 2 September 1994 a draft of the report was sent to the Governments of Japan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea inviting them to comment on the report. Written comments have only been received from the Government of the Philippines, most of which have been reflected in the report.

Considering the evidence that has come before the mission it is imperative that the Government of Japan take immediate steps to provide full rehabilitation and restitution to the victims. The ICJ sincerely hopes that this report will make a contribution to provide immediate relief to the victims and to ensure that they do not remain forgotten, forever.

Adama Dieng
Secretary General

November 1994

Major military brothels



Sources: The Japan Times, August 5, 1992

- — — Region under Japanese control in 1942
- × Locations cited by individuals
- o Locations shown in documents released July 6 by the government

Chronology of Dates and Events

- 1894-1895 Sino-Japanese War
- 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War
- 1905 Korea is made a protectorate of Japan.
- 1910 Japan annexes Korea.
- 1914-1918 World War I
- 1925 Japan ratifies the Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children, with reservations as to the application of the Convention to its colonies, i.e. Korea, Taiwan and Kwantung and as to the setting of the age of minority, making it 18 instead of 21
- 1927 Japan withdraws its aforesaid reservation about the age of minority and accepts the age of 21 set out in the Convention
- 1931 Japan invades Manchuria
- 1932 Japan sets up military controlled comfort houses/stations in Shanghai
- 1937 Japan takes Nanking in what is notoriously referred to as the "Rape of Nanking", also marking the beginning of the systematic establishment of military comfort stations in China and elsewhere.
- 1941-1945 Asian and Pacific War
- 1942 Japan occupies the Philippines
- 1937-1942 The Japanese military sets up a network of comfort stations wherever it sends its troops
- 1943 Cairo Declaration (Refers to the status of Korea indicating that it should be free and independent)
- 1943 Moscow Declaration as to German War Crimes (foreshadows war crimes trials at the close of war). Also refers to the status of Korea
- 1945 Potsdam Declaration (foreshadows the creation of an international war crimes tribunal for Japanese war criminals and sets out crimes to be charged: crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity)

2 Sept. 1945 Japan signs the instrument of unconditional surrender, and World War II ends

1945 The Cairo, Moscow and Potsdam Declarations indict Japan and Germany for their war of aggression, war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes against peace, during World War II

1945 The United Nations Organization is established

15 Nov. 1945 The Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces submits his report (released by the allied translator and interpreter section), entitled: "Amenities in the Japanese Armed Forces", which contains detailed documentation on comfort stations of the Japanese military

19 Jan. 1946 Proclamation establishing the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE) to try Japanese war criminals (Class "A")

1946-1948 Allied nations also create "satellite" tribunals in Asia and the Pacific to try Japanese war criminals (Classes "B" and "C")

1948 The Batavia Trial is held in Indonesia, includes a trial of Japanese military personnel who forced about 35 Dutch women to become comfort women

1951 The San Francisco Peace Conference is held. The treaty of San Francisco between Japan and the Allied Powers is signed

1956 Japan is admitted as a member of the United Nations

1965 Japan enters into a bilateral treaty with the Republic of Korea

1970-1980 There is considerable public unrest and opposition to the 1965 treaty in the Republic of Korea

1988 Women's organizations in the Republic of Korea hear of the institution of comfort stations in the Japanese military, and demand an investigation

June 1990 Motooka Shoji, Senator, Socialist Party, Japan, demands, in the Budget Committee of the Japanese Diet, that the government look into the matter of military comfort women

June 1990 The Japanese Government responds that the comfort women issue was the work of neither the Japanese government nor the military, but rather that of private entrepreneurs

17 October 1990 An open letter to the Japanese Government is sent by the Korean Women's Association (an NGO), demanding an apology, a memorial and a thorough inquiry

November 1990 The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Sexual Slavery by Japan (an NGO) is formed in the Republic of Korea

April 1991 The Japanese Government replies to the Korean letter, stating that there is no evidence of the forced drafting of Korean women as comfort women, and thus there is no question of any apology, memorial or disclosures by the Japanese Government

August 1991 Kim Hak-soon, a former comfort woman in the Republic of Korea, testifies in public that she had been forcibly taken as a comfort woman by the Japanese military

November 1991 Yoshida Seiji, Japanese ex-labour mobilization director, of Yamaguchi Prefecture confirms in the newspaper "Hokkaido Shimbun" the wartime employment, by force and deceit, of comfort women by the Japanese military

November 1991 Mr. Watanabe, Press Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, states on NHK Television that evidence was insufficient to warrant an investigation

December 1991 A lawsuit is filed by Kim Hak-soon and others against Japan, in the Tokyo District Court, for damages and other compensation

December 1991 The Government of the Republic of Korea requests the Japanese Government to conduct an investigation

12 Dec. 1991 The Japanese Government initiates an investigation

January 1992 The "Asahi Shimbun" publishes the research results obtained by Professor Yoshimi, a well known Japanese historian and researcher, establishing the direct role of the Japanese military in the comfort women issue

13 Jan. 1992 Chief Cabinet Secretary Kato expresses "deep remorse", and admits for the first time that the Japanese Imperial Army was in some way involved in the running of comfort women facilities

February 1992 The Comfort Women issue is raised at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights

- May 1992 The Comfort Women issue is raised at the United Nations Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery
- 13 July 1992 The Task Force on Filipino Comfort Women (an NGO) is formed in the Philippines
- July 1992 The Japanese Government makes public its interim findings, releasing 127 documents admitting the involvement of the Japanese military in providing comfort facilities
- August 1992 The issue is raised at the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities
- September 1992 Lola Rosa speaks out in public, the first ex-comfort woman to do so in the Philippines
- December 1992 An international public hearing is held in Tokyo, where ex-comfort women and forced labourers testify about their experiences. International law experts meet to discuss the relevant international legal issues
- February 1993 The issue is once again raised at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights
- May 1993 The issue is once again raised at the United Nations Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, and the Japanese Government once again repeats its stand that all claims have been settled under bilateral treaties and that Japan is not bound legally to pay compensation to individual victims
- 4 August 1993 The Japanese Government issues an apology admitting its involvement in the establishment and management of comfort stations and the forcible recruitment of women
- August 1993 The issue is raised at the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities

(Events up to December 1993 only have been included)

Chapter One

Introduction

This is the story of people everyone tried to forget. It is inexplicable that human rights violations on such a massive scale were not discussed in any meaningful way for more than forty years. Even now, after extensive inquiries no significant action was taken to acknowledge the victims' pain or to provide relief to them. Perhaps the only reason for this silence and inaction is the fact that the violations were perpetrated against women.

Beginning in the early 1900s and extending to the end of World War II, the Japanese Government, on the advice of its military officers, set up a system of military brothels, euphemistically called "comfort stations", staffed with young girls and women who were tricked, coerced, and in some cases abducted, to provide sexual pleasure to Japanese soldiers. These unfortunate girls and women were called "comfort girls" or "comfort women" (*Jugun Ianfu* or *Ianfu* in Japanese).

Life in the comfort stations was unmitigated misery for these women. They were confined in cubicles of three feet by five feet, where long queues of soldiers violated them day and night. The women were heavily guarded, and could not leave the comfort stations. The security surrounding the comfort stations made it impossible for them to escape. In addition to the degradation of being raped, many of them were beaten and tortured.

Their agony did not end after World War II. There were mass killings of the former comfort women by Japanese soldiers; others were killed because they were put into underground shelters which were bombed. Many of the women were abandoned by the fleeing Japanese soldiers and left to perish in the jungles, succumb to starvation, or reach their homes by whatever means they could find. No one knows the number of women who did not reach home. Of

those who did, many had significant medical problems including bodies riddled with sexually transmitted diseases. The vast majority of the women felt an all-pervasive, but misplaced, sense of shame and guilt. They were pushed into an abyss of isolation by strict social mores. Many were denied sympathy and understanding. A large number of those who married could not bear children, others bore a total aversion to sex and men. For over four decades they have silently suffered the after-effects of the brutality meted out to them.

In April 1988 an international seminar on women and tourism was organized by the Korea Church Women United in South Korea. This seminar was addressed by Professor Yun Chung-Ok, who had been investigating the issue of the comfort women since 1980. In 1980 Professor Yun had met Pae Bong-Ki, the first known Korean former comfort woman who lived in isolation in Okinawa.¹ Soon after the seminar women's organizations in Korea demanded an apology and reparation from the Japanese Government. Then, in June 1990, a member of the Japanese Diet raised this issue at the Budget Committee of the House of Councillors in Japan, demanding that the Japanese Government look into the matter of military comfort women. In 1991, similar demands were made in the Philippines. This issue is now being increasingly raised in both national and international fora.

A disturbing facet of this story is that the Allied Powers had compiled extensive documentary and other evidence, immediately after the war, about the comfort stations, the manner in which the women were recruited, and the vicious nature of the control the Japanese military had over the women. They also knew that comfort stations had been established throughout the Asia-Pacific Region and that Dutch, Korean, Chinese, Taiwanese, Filipino, Indonesian, Malaysian and Burmese women had been victimized.

As recommended by the United Nations War Crime Commission, international military tribunals were created throughout the Asia-Pacific Region. Class "A" criminals were tried at the International

1 Pae Bong-Ki died four years ago.

Military Tribunal for the Far East established in Tokyo (also called the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal). Some Class "B" and "C" war criminals were tried before other international tribunals; these operated pursuant to rules issued by the Allied nations responsible for their creation. However, when the International Military Tribunal for the Far East² was established, the crimes perpetrated against these women were not considered at the trial. The plight of some of the Dutch women who had been victimized in Indonesia was brought into the open by the Batavia Trial held in Indonesia and several Japanese military men were tried and convicted for these crimes. Sadly, the local Indonesian women, who had been similarly victimized, were ignored at the Batavia Trial.

A comparison between Germany and Japan in the matter of post-war reparations is inevitable. Germany has paid more than DM 78 billion³ (US\$ 50 billion) in restitution over the past four decades to the victims. In stark contrast Japan has paid only 364,348,000,000 yen (US\$ 1012 million) to four Asian countries, Burma, Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam (South) and an additional US \$ 300,000,000 to the Republic of Korea.⁴

Germany, moreover, has suitably amended its municipal laws to extend the period of statutory limitation so as to allow trial and punishment of German war criminals even today. Several trials have been conducted by German authorities in Germany against German war criminals.

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- 2 By its instrument of surrender, Japan accepted the jurisdiction of the Allies to try those government and military officials who had committed war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes against peace. The Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal had aims similar to those of the Nuremberg Tribunal and the Charters of the two tribunals contained almost identical language.
 - 3 Annex G to the Submission made by the War Amputations of Canada to the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in August 1992.
 - 4 See Japan Civil Liberties Union "Report on Post War Responsibility of Japan for Reparation and Compensation" (April 1993).

Japan, however, has adhered to its 15-year period of limitation in its municipal law, and has avoided paying compensation to individuals on the ground that all claims have been settled under bilateral treaties. Not a single Japanese war criminal has been tried by Japanese authorities.

After interviewing almost 40 victims and three ex-soldiers, and after talking to lawyers, government officials and members of NGOs in all these countries, the ICJ mission concluded that the women who have come forward thus far were forced to provide sexual services to the Japanese military; the women the mission interviewed, were either kidnapped or deceived into believing they were being given jobs in China, Southeast Asia or Japan; that the Japanese military had sanctioned and was the initiator and controller of a vast network of comfort stations; and that it was responsible for taking these and other women from Korea, China, the Philippines and elsewhere by force and deceit, to serve in these comfort stations. The Japanese Government should therefore take full responsibility for these gross violations of fundamental human rights.

Each of the women interviewed was questioned at length and it is the belief of the ICJ mission that the women were sincere and truthfully recounted their experiences. They have suffered untold misery by reason of the fact that they were forced to work as comfort women in the 1930s and 1940s.

The ICJ mission is of the view that these women are entitled to the fullest possible relief permissible in international law. The Japanese Government cannot shirk its responsibility in this regard. In addition to taking measures to fully rehabilitate the unfortunate victims, the Japanese Government should apologize to them and record history correctly in Japanese textbooks. Above all, the Japanese Government must carry out a thorough investigation into its behaviour, with respect to women during World War II, and make public the results of this investigation.

It is necessary to ensure justice to these women as soon as possible; any delay in doing so will only make a mockery of their fortitude in coming forward to reveal their ordeal.

This report contains the historical background to the period when these atrocities were committed by Japan; examines the establishment, staffing, operation and control of the comfort stations; and gives a picture of the life in these comfort stations. It also sets out relevant excerpts from documents in the possession of the Allied Powers; the jurisdiction of the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal and conduct of the Batavia Trial are also discussed. The testimonies of both victims and ex-soldiers are reported, as is the stand taken by the governments of each of the concerned countries. This report then proceeds to analyse the legal issues with reference to Japan's responsibility under international law. The work done by several NGOs in each of these countries has also been recognized and reported.

The ICJ has endeavoured in this report to focus on the enormity of this tragedy, its unprecedented nature, the vastness of its scale as well as the sheer ruthlessness of those responsible. The ruination of human life that occurred cannot be overstated.

Chapter Two

Historical Background

At the end of the 19th century Japan embarked on a plan to once again expand its influence in China and the Korean Peninsula. The policies it adopted to fulfill these ambitions had repercussions in the form of the virtual enslavement of hundreds of thousands of women across Asia and the Pacific. In the following pages we trace, albeit briefly, the events which form the historical backdrop to this tragedy.

Over the centuries Japan had tried to control or dominate Manchuria and the Korean Peninsula.¹ In his speech to the Parliament of the Republic of Korea in January 1992, the Prime Minister of Japan made the following remarks:

“... We must not forget that our two countries have been linked for thousands of years. Regrettably, during much of this time, my country has historically been the aggressor and yours the victim. I take this opportunity to once again express my most heartfelt apologies for the unbearable pain and suffering brought upon you by my country in the past. Especially with the matter of comfort women coming to light, I am filled with pain and remorse.”²

In 1905 Korea was made a Protectorate of Japan. Many Koreans are of the view that this treaty was void. In 1910 the Treaty of Annexation was signed; under its terms the Korean Emperor ceded all sovereign power over Korea to the Japanese Emperor. The treaty stated that henceforth Koreans were to be Japanese subjects. Many scholars,

1 Chong-Sik Lee, *Japan and Korea - The Political Dimension*, Stanford, California, Hoover Institution Press, 1985).

2 Inter-Ministerial Working Group on the Comfort Women Issue, Republic of Korea, *Military Comfort Women Under Japanese Colonial Rule*, Interim Report (Seoul, July 1992).

Korean and non-Korean, are of the view that this treaty was forced upon the Emperor of Korea and is therefore void under international law.

What distinguishes the period from 1905 onwards in the minds of Koreans is the attempt made by Japan to subjugate Korean culture to that of the Japanese and to eliminate the distinctive identity of the Koreans. Through a series of decrees Japan took control of the system of education, making Japanese the language of instruction and introducing measures for teaching Japanese to adult Koreans. Koreans were also forced to change their names so that they more closely resembled those of the Japanese.³ For Koreans this was a particularly onerous obligation as names denoted ancestry and clan affiliation; to change their names meant breaking with family tradition and fundamentally affected the way in which family honour could be maintained.⁴

The Japanese ruled Korea through a Japanese Governor-General who was usually a high-ranking military officer. The police and gendarmerie were controlled by the Japanese and included some Japanese nationals. Local village offices continued to be run by Koreans, but these officials were not regarded by the Korean people as being independent. To the ordinary citizen, Japan appeared to control the country. Many of the people we spoke with had vivid memories of this period, and described the methods of control used by the Japanese, including the organization of villages into small units, so that strict surveillance could be maintained and any dissent stifled.

Further, Japan exercised effective control over the Korean economy, using Korea's produce and natural resources. Over time Japan began to regard Korea as a potential source of manpower for its general workforce and military. In the 1930s, a purportedly voluntary mobilization programme was introduced, the purpose of which was to marshal the human and material resources of Japan and Korea for national defence. Under this programme many Koreans were taken to

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

Japan to work in mines, factories and agriculture.⁵ This programme was enlarged in 1939 and, in 1942, a programme of "collective mobilization" was begun; although supposedly voluntary, the general resentment of Koreans against the Japanese, the number of people required by the Japanese and the methods used to "recruit" people, suggest that the programme was not and could not have been voluntary. Furthermore, strict security measures were used to ensure that these Korean men could not leave their place of work.

An important cause of the decline in Japanese rice imports from Korea in 1939 was the movement of Korean labour from agriculture to industry to supply Japanese military needs in China.⁶ From 1939 until 1942 somewhere between 258,666 and 294,467 men were conscripted and an additional 282,000 men were mobilized "voluntarily".⁷ In 1944 a compulsory labour mobilization system was put into place; the figures for the years 1943 to 1945 indicate that somewhere between 502,616 and 858,366 men were forcibly conscripted and another 481,000 men were "mobilized".⁸ These men were taken to Sakhalin, Southeast Asia, South Pacific Islands and Japan; as is well known, not all were repatriated after the war.

With respect to the armed forces, Japan initially adopted a policy of voluntary enlistment into the armed services pursuant to the special volunteer enlistment system. By 1943 there were 6,300 Korean soldiers in the Japanese army.⁹ However, because of the increasing strain on the Japanese labour force and the expanding war in the Pacific, Japan introduced a compulsory draft system in 1943. At the

⁵ *Id.* Park, Chio-Bong and 34 others vs. The Government of Japan, Memorandum in Support of Complaint against the Government of Japan for Damages Submitted by the Victims of the Asian-Pacific Theatre of World War II, submitted on 6 December 1991.

⁶ Alan S. Milward: *1935- War, Economy and Society, 1939-45* (Harmondsworth Penguin 1987)

⁷ Chong-Sik Lee, *supra* n. 1

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Chong-Sik Lee, *supra* n. 1 at 13 and Japan Civil Liberties Union, *supra* n. 4 of Chapter 1 of this Report.

end of the war there were over 200,000 Korean soldiers and civilian employees in the armed forces; approximately 22,000 Koreans died during the war.¹⁰

Women were also regarded as a potential source of labour. As for the men, the programmes for "recruiting" women were nominally voluntary; it is said that women were in fact forcibly recruited or recruited by deceit.¹¹ The programme for women began in 1937 with the all-out mobilization of volunteers. A specific ordinance was passed in 1941 which stipulated that women between the ages of 14 and 25 were to participate in the National Labour Service Corps for 30 days or less per year; in 1943 this was changed to 60 days. Ultimately, in 1944, the ages were revised to between 14 and 45. There was also a "volunteer corps" which had as its purpose the long-term mobilization of women, usually for a period of one to two years.¹² Many women were sent to work in factories, particularly war industries in Korea and in Japan.

It is within this context that the taking of women for the comfort stations has to be understood. By the late 1930s Japan was forcibly conscripting both women and men. Such forcible conscription was tantamount to slavery. Given this situation, it was inevitable that when Japan took the decision to establish comfort stations, Korean women would be taken and forced to submit to sexual slavery in those stations. What distinguished the situation of the women taken for the sexual gratification of the Japanese military from those men and women who were forcibly conscripted or mobilized to work in war industries was the inability of the women to fit into Korean society upon their return. The shame and degradation brought upon them ensured that they would live lives of isolation and would consider themselves to be misfits within their own society.

Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and its subsequent march into China in 1937 appears to be the precipitating factor for the

10 *Id.*

11 Memorandum in support of complaint, *supra* n. 5.

12 *Id.*

creation of the comfort stations. Numerous documents describe what has become known as the "Rape of Nanking". The description is both a literal and figurative one; Japanese soldiers ransacked Nanking and the surrounding area and literally raped hundreds of Chinese women. One former soldier poignantly described a song that was sung on the streets of Nanking and Shanghai during this period, which described women selling flowers in the streets of Shanghai. He said it was obvious that the women were not selling flowers and that the title of the song was a euphemism for the fact that women were forced to sell their bodies because of the economic destruction wrought by Japan.¹³

The actions of the Japanese in Nanking brought about an international outcry. Conscious of its image, the Japanese military and Government sought to find a way to avoid such events in future. The ex-soldiers the mission spoke to, as well as Professor Yoshiaki Yoshimi, referred to the attitude of the military towards such actions. It was their view that this attitude made it possible for the Japanese soldiers to conduct themselves in such a brutal way. They said that you would often hear statements in the military that you were not really a soldier unless you could rape a woman. In addition, it was the view of some military officers that soldiers were entitled to rape women as part of their "payment" for being soldiers.

What had happened to the Filipino women must also be understood in the context of the war that had engulfed their country, a war neither they nor their country had chosen to enter. In its judgement, the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal made the following statement:

"The evidence relating to atrocities and other conventional war crimes presented before the tribunal establishes that from the opening of the war in China until the surrender of Japan in August 1945, torture, murder, rape and other cruelties of the most inhumane and barbarous character were freely practised by the Japanese Army and Navy. During a period of several months the tribunal heard

13 See the testimony of Kouki Nagatomi, in Chapter 5.

evidence, orally or by affidavit, from witnesses who testified in detail to atrocities committed in all theatres of war on a scale so vast, yet following so common a pattern in all theatres, that only one conclusion is possible - the atrocities were either secretly ordered or wilfully permitted by the Japanese Government or individual members thereof and by the leaders of the armed forces."¹⁴

In its judgement the tribunal makes specific reference to massacres perpetrated in anticipation of the Japanese withdrawal from the Philippines. The following description is given of a massacre at the Manila German Club:

"Japanese soldiers surrounded the club by a barricade of inflammable material, then put gasoline over this barricade and ignited it. Thus the fugitives were forced to attempt to escape through the flaming barricade. Most of them were bayoneted and shot by the waiting Japanese soldiers. Some of the women were raped and their infants bayoneted in their arms. After raping the women the Japanese poured gasoline on their hair and ignited it. The breasts of some of the women were cut off by the Japanese soldiers."¹⁵

Files captured by the Allies contain explicit instructions for the killing of Filipinos.¹⁶

With respect to the use of indigenous people in the prosecution of the war, the tribunal made the following comments:

"Having decided upon a policy of employing prisoners of war and civilian internees on work directly contributing to the prosecution of the war, and having established a system to carry out that policy into execution, the Japanese went further and supplemented this source of manpower by recruiting labourers from the native population of the

14 *Id.*, Judgement at 49, 592.

15 *Id.*, Judgement at 49, 640.

16 See text of Judgement at 49, 643-49, 644.

occupied territories. **This recruitment of labourers was accomplished by false promises, and by force.** After being recruited, the labourers were transported to and confined in camps. Little or no distinction appears to have been made between these conscripted labourers on the one hand and prisoners of war and civilian internees on the other hand. **They were all regarded as slave labourers to be used to the limit of their endurance.**"¹⁷ (Emphasis added)

Throughout the judgement the tribunal made it clear that the highest ranking members of the government and the military condoned and endorsed the actions being taken by military officers in the field and that the government failed to punish any of those committing such atrocities.

Before closing this chapter it must also be noted that, sadly, for reasons ranging from intimidation to personal gain, some Koreans cooperated with the Japanese authorities and acted as "recruiters" of women. In the statements found in Chapter Four, some of the victims indicated that they were initially taken by Korean civilians. These people cannot have been ignorant of the reasons why the Japanese wanted them to assemble large groups of young girls and women. Unfortunately, the same is true in the Philippines; it is evident from the statements that some of these women were originally kidnapped by Filipinos. It should be clearly understood that we do not see these facts as in any way diminishing the responsibility of the Japanese Government. However, in order for these women to obtain full redress, there must be recognition within their own countries of the pain and the suffering they have endured and a consideration of why such events were allowed to happen. Only in this way can the cause of women's rights be truly furthered.

17 *Id.*, Judgement at 49, 693-49, 694.

Chapter Three

Comfort Stations

Introduction¹

In an era when women were regarded as inferior to men, the expansionary policy of the then Japanese Government set the perfect background for the gross abuse and humiliation of women, initially in the Korean peninsula and later on in the Philippines and other occupied territories.

Hundreds of brothels were built, staffed, operated, controlled and supervised by the Japanese Imperial Army and Navy, wherever Japanese troops were stationed. These were euphemistically called "comfort stations". The unfortunate women "recruited" to serve there were called "comfort girls" or "comfort women", their sole reason for existence being to provide sexual pleasure to the Japanese Imperial Army. Made to live in unhygienic, cramped conditions with no avenue for escape, these women, many of them minors, were repeatedly raped, for periods ranging from three weeks to eight years. At the end of the war, most of them in active combat zones were abandoned to their fate, whilst their Japanese captors fled during the onslaught of the Allied forces.

Some women were used as bullet shields to deceive American soldiers, others died of starvation in the jungles of Burma (now Myanmar), in China and elsewhere, or were left to return to their homes, only to suffer a lifetime of isolation and fear of social rejection.

Japan had waged a successful war with China in Manchuria in

¹ Copies of the documents referred to in this chapter were given to the ICJ mission by Professor Yoshimi, who explained the relevance of these documents. He also shared material information about Japan in the 1900's.

1894-1895, and had captured the port of Lushun (Leda) from the Russians in the Russo-Japanese war in 1904-1905. It is common knowledge that Japanese troops during the latter war numbered about 200,000. Given the geography of the region it is probable that the Japanese army was stationed in the Korean peninsula.

Japanese military regulations denied overseas leave to the soldiers. Most of the soldiers were aged between 20 and 25. Fierce battles had raged during these years and, during the Siberian war (1918-1922), the Japanese troops had been on a rampage of rape and plunder, leading to decimation of their numbers, *inter alia* as a result of venereal disease.

Japan had colonised Korea in 1910, and had stationed a large number of troops on the Korean peninsula, on a more or less permanent basis. The administration of Korea was carried out by the Japanese Government through a Japanese Governor-General, who exacted the cooperation of the local Korean village headmen.

In those days, it was customary in Japan to purchase the services of young girls from poor families by payment of a lump sum to their families, and the girls had to work either as maids or prostitutes until the "loans" to their families had been repaid. "Geisha" houses were also common in Japan, in addition to innumerable houses of licensed prostitution which were established with the permission of the local police.

The "Rape of Nanking" in 1937 attracted international criticism of Japan. In addition, Japanese troops had stirred up considerable hostility amongst the Chinese, and the security of Japanese troops was under grave threat.

Comfort Stations in China

A combination of the various factors outlined above, of which the "Rape of Nanking" was the most significant, led to the setting up of comfort stations in Manchuria as well as Shanghai. Instructions for that purpose emanated from the top echelons of the Japanese Imperial Army.

The Official Log of the 9th Brigade Infantry, the troops of which numbered several thousands at that time, refers to a circular sent out by the Chief-of-Staff of the North China Expeditionary Army, Naosaburo Okabe (Lt. General of that Unit), dated 27 June 1938, which was issued to all its units. The circular cautioned that security was jeopardized in North China, the main reason being the increase in rapes committed by the Japanese troops. It stated that the Chinese would resent such conduct and take revenge by killing Japanese soldiers. In order to appease Chinese sentiments and to stop the rapes, the circular went on to state that setting up of comfort houses at the earliest was under consideration.

That these instructions were immediately issued and implemented is clear from the statement of Mr. Nagatomi, who was interviewed by the ICJ mission.²

The reminiscences of Mamoru Iinuma, the Chief-of-Staff of Forces sent to Shanghai, in the form of a diary entry dated 19 December 1937 (which is a contemporaneous recording of events and has high probative value), show that upon receipt of documents from the Central China Expeditionary Army, Iinuma had implemented the Comfort House Scheme. In another entry he sets out that he had requested an officer named Isamu Cho to set up comfort houses without delay. Isamu Cho was a member of the Chief-of-Staff Office and was reported to be notorious for his aggressive and violent tendencies.³

The most striking feature is that these comfort houses were set up without any delay and it is very likely that Chinese women were used for this purpose.

Subsequent documents bear eloquent testimony to the proliferation of comfort stations in Southern China as well as Northern China.

A report dated April 1939, prepared by the 21st Army Unit deployed in Southern China, states that there were 850 comfort women under its control, and in addition, 150 comfort women were

² See Chapter 5.

³ The Diary excerpts were reproduced in the book, "Document on Battle of Nanking" published by "Kaikosha", a club of Army officers in 1989.

controlled by various troops, which troops were in turn under the supervision of the 21st Army Unit. In conclusion, the report also states that comfort houses controlled and managed by the Security Division and Head of the Military Police, which were meant for officers, were also open to soldiers. It must be noted that the estimated strength of the 21st Unit at that time was 50,000 to 100,000, which means that either there were more comfort women under their control, documents in that respect not having come to light, or, even worse, that these unfortunate 1000 women had to service more than 30 soldiers a day.

The research report dated 15 November 1945, prepared by the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (the allied translator and interpreter section), entitled "*Amenities in the Japanese Armed Forces*" (hereinafter referred to as the Allied Report), was based on captured documents and statements of prisoners-of-war. It refers to regulations governing the use of the Special Brothel in the South Sector Billet, and the regulations governing its operation, issued by the South Sector Guard Headquarters, probably in the Shanghai Area.

Regulations in the South Sector Billet

Relevant excerpts read as follows:

"USE".. "2. Those, other than military personnel, civilian employees, and persons with special permission, those who commit violence through intoxication, those who annoy others, and are dangerous, are strictly forbidden to use this brothel."

.. "4. Inspection of the brothel is prohibited to any one except officers authorised by the Billet Commander."

.. "5. Rates are fixed as per the following chart."⁴

.. "10. The Senior Medical Officer of Regimental

⁴ The chart enumerates different rates for different ranks of officers, depending also upon the nationalities of the girls, that is, Japanese, Korean and Chinese, with Chinese being the lowest paid. It also by implication permits overnight stay from 2200 hours till 0600 hours of the following morning for officers and warrant officers, on payment of higher rates. Non-commissioned officers and privates were not permitted an overnight stay. A daily schedule specifying the days on which various troops and their officers could use the brothel was also part of clause 7.

Headquarters will conduct a venereal examination of the prostitutes and a physical inspection according to paragraph 3 on Thursday morning of each week."

.. "12. The inspecting Officer will report the results of the venereal examination each time to the billet commander."

.. "13. The prostitute will possess licences made as follows :

BUSINESS LICENSE

... Brothel Entertainers' Name

This is to certify that the above person is permitted to conduct business.

SOUTH SECTOR BILLET COMMANDER

"OPERATION".. "4. Prostitutes found unfit by the medical officer will post a placard written "unfit" at the entrance to their rooms; they will rest and recuperate, and will be prohibited from making any contacts until permission is granted."

.. "7(c). Prostitutes will wash their private parts each time."

.. "10. In accordance with the form in the annexed chart, the operator will make out a work statement (two copies) as per chart 1 for each individual and submit it to the billet commander every Saturday."

The regulations leave nothing to one's imagination and every conceivable detail is mentioned. Ex-soldier Suzuki recalled⁵ that the results of medical check-ups would be communicated to the troops, with ratings for each woman.

Given that records in duplicate were required to be kept of every activity - from the opening of the brothel, to keeping a list of employees, their earnings, etc., every week, week after week, for at least five to six years, it is hard to accept the Japanese Government's assertion that none of these documents exist today.

⁵ See Chapter 5.

Comfort Stations in Occupied Territories

Philippines

Japan occupied the Philippines in 1942, which resulted in the devastation of the economy and brought misfortune upon Filipino women.

The Allied Report annexes as Appendix A and B respectively the forms required by Manila brothels, and a police report on Manila brothels. The Allied Report also quotes extensively the regulations issued by Lt. Colonel Onishi, Manila, District Line of Communication Squad, concerning the functioning of comfort stations in Manila.

Manila regulations

The Manila regulations were issued in February 1943 by Lieutenant Colonel Onishi, Manila District Line of Communication Squad, and were entitled "Rules for Authorised Restaurants and Houses of Prostitution in Manila". They were contained in a bound, printed booklet.

The pertinent part of the Manila Regulations reads as follows:

- ..“1. In these regulations, authorised restaurants will be taken to mean those places **designated** by the Officer-in-charge of Manila Sector Line of Communications Duties, with the **sanction of the Army Commanding-General** as eating places for soldiers and Army Civilian Employees. Houses of relaxation should be taken to mean **those places designated** by the **sanction** of the officer-in-charge..., with the **sanction** of the Army Commanding-General, will maintain hostesses (geisha or waitresses) **for the entertainment of soldiers and Army Civilian Employees**” (emphasis added).
- ..“2. Managers may close down or suspend the operation of their establishments only with the permission of the Officers-in-Charge.....”

- ..“4. Authorised Restaurants and Houses of Relaxation will be used only by soldiers and Army Civilian Employees.”

Part Two: Business Operations.

- ..“5. Persons planning to operate authorised restaurants or houses of relaxation must submit the following documents to the officer-in-charge..... Managers must be Japanese who have had some business experience.

- a. Application for permission to open business: 3 copies (App A Form 1)
- b. Statement of Business Plans: 3 copies (App A Form 2)
- c. Affidavit: 3 copies (App A Form 3)
- d. Personal History: 3 copies

... Business Personnel List: 3 copies (App A Form 4)

... When preparations are complete the Officer-in-Charge ...will be informed, and business may commence after the inspection of the establishment and the physical examination of the employees.”

- ..“9. The location of and the buildings used as.... houses of relaxation must have the approval of the Officer-in-Charge...”

Part 3: Management

- ..“12. Managers will refuse admission to all persons who are not soldiers or army civilian employees. Authorised Restaurants and Houses of Relaxation will have separate facilities for officers and high ranking officers, privates, junior and other civilian officials and others. However, the facilities for non-commissioned officers, privates and juniors, and other civilian officials (except for special individuals), will be

taken over by officers and high-ranking civilian officials after 2100 Hours.”

..“13. Managers will present guests of the houses of relaxation with a “relaxation.. ticket” in exchange for an army ticket and will record all receipts of these relaxation tickets by the hostesses.”

These Regulations further specify the hours of operation, once again strictly specifying when and which rank would use the comfort stations, as also the rates of pay. The managers were required to make reports daily, setting out the time of visits, the number of persons of which rank who visited the number of girls available, how many were ill and so on. A monthly business report also had to be sent by the managers to the Officer-in-Charge.

Hygiene was to be looked after by the Army physician, who carried out check-ups once a week and reported in the prescribed form.

The fact that the comfort girls had no freedom at all is amply evident from regulations 29 and 30, which read as follow:

..“29. For the purpose of maintaining good order, the officer-in-charge.... will have officers (army physicians) carry out inspections of the establishment from time-to-time. **When necessary, the assistance of the military-police will be enlisted.**” (emphasis added)

..“30. Hostesses (Prostitutes and Waitresses) may not leave the designated area without permission from the line-of-communications officer.”

..“35.E Bills will be paid with Army Tickets.”

..“36.D Hostesses will not be kissed.” (And the concluding regulation 37, warned that the infraction of these rules will entail withdrawal of permission to continue business.)

The police report, also part of the documents captured by the Allies, indicates that the military police executed stringent control over

all the comfort stations and the relevant reports. This is also reinforced by the statements of the three ex-soldiers interviewed by the ICJ mission.⁶

It is evident that comfort houses, modelled on the Shanghai lines, had been systematically set up in the Philippines, in areas as remote as Davao, Tacloban and Iloilo.

Tacloban Regulations

The Allied Report refers also to the “Tacloban Brothel Regulations”, issued by the Matsunaga Force, in a bound mimeographed file. These are once again as detailed as the other regulations discussed above. A significant change is found in Regulation 3, perhaps due to the local conditions. Regulation 3 states:

..“3. The Commanding Officer and the **adjutant of the garrison unit** will have control over the supervision and direction of the brothels, and they will have Japanese Associations operate them.” (emphasis added).

They were intended to operate from 20 June 1942.

Similar regulations are found for Burauen, in a bound, hand-written and mimeographed file, entitled “Brothel Regulations”, dated August 1944, issued by the Burauen Sector Brothel and reproduced by the 114th Air Field Battalion. The relevant portions read as follows:

..“1. This brothel is opening in Burauen Town under the supervision of the Tacloban Sector, Air-Sector Commanding Officer.”

..“2. Use of the brothel is limited to military personnel, or army civilian employees of air and related forces... Request for the use of the brothel by ground-troops of this sector can be granted after consultation by the committee upon receipt of an authorisation from the sector-commanding officer.”

6 See Chapter 5.

..“3. The following officers will be placed in charge of the brothel and 98 Air Field battalion will be responsible for its operation.”

These regulations then set out by name and designation the various officers who would form the committee for supervising that brothel.

A strict hierarchy was in force, distinguishing comfort stations for the army and the navy. It is evident that these comfort stations were staffed by Japanese and Korean women, as well as by Filipino women.

Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Pacific

Japanese troops also occupied Burma (now Myanmar), Indonesia, Malaysia and countries of the Pacific. Comfort houses were set up in these areas, and some documents on this subject are reproduced in the Allied Report.

One such document pertains to a Navy brothel at Rabaul (Papua New Guinea), containing instructions with regard to brothels there.

..“1. The Navy Brothels (special warehouses) are as follows.... (refers to a separate diagram).

a: Higashi Rashunso (above Navy Warrant Officers), Takeishi Unit (Navy Petty Officers), Kita Rashunso (employees and labourers),

b: No.1 Tokiwaso (senior officials), No.2 Tokiwaso (officials of Hanin Rank), No.3 Tokiwaso (workers and transport gang).”

..“2. The Navy Petty Officers and No.2 Tokiwaso had trading hours fixed at 0800 to 1800. Officials of Hanin rank alone could remain till 0600 the following morning.”

..“3. Rates:” (The chart indicates that there were Japanese and Korean Comfort Girls only).

The Allied Report also sets out an interview with a prisoner-of-war, a civilian brothel owner, captured with his wife and 20 army prostitutes near Waingmaw(Wakema), on 10 August 1944:

“Prisoner-of-War, his wife and sister-in-law had made some money as restaurant-keepers in Keijo, Korea, but with their trade declining, they looked for an opportunity to make more money, and applied to Army Headquarters in Keijo, for permission to take comfort girls from Korea to Burma. According to the prisoner-of-war, the suggestion originated from Army Headquarters and was passed on to a number of similar Japanese “business men” in KOREA.

Prisoner-of-War purchased 22 Korean girls paying their families from 300 to 1000 Yen according to the personality, looks and age of the girl. These 22 girls were of ages from 19 to 31. They became the sole property of prisoner of war and the Army made no profits from them ... Headquarters, Korean Army, gave him a letter addressed to all military Headquarters of the Japanese Army, requesting them to furnish any assistance he might require, transport, rations, medical assistance, etc.

...Prisoner-of-war and his wife, with their 22 girls, embarked at FUSAN on 10 July 1942 in a group of 703 girls, all Korean, and some 90 Japanese men and women, all of them of the same base sort as himself. They sailed on a 4000 ton passenger ship in a convoy of seven ships. Free passage tickets were provided by Army Headquarters, but prisoner of war paid for all meals during the voyage. They called at FORMOSA, where 22 other girls bound for SINGAPORE were taken on board, and at SINGAPORE, they transferred to another ship, arriving at RANGOON on 20 August 1942.

At RANGOON they were divided into groups of 20 to 30 girls in each and dispersed to various parts of BURMA, each group being attached to various regiments, units or formations, so that each had its own brothel(s).

...Prisoner of war's group was attached to 114 Infantry Regiment. They spent some months at GOUNGOO, MEIKTILA, and at MAYMYO, following their trade, and

then arrived at MYITKYINA (January 1943). There were already two brothels (there), so altogether there were three brothels with 63 girls in all: 42 Korean, and 21 Chinese girls who had been purchased from CANTON on the same conditions as the Koreans).

...The scale of charges and time-table was fixed by instructions from the regiment, the time-table being so contrived that officers, non-commissioned officers and men would not meet each other at the same time. The schedule was strictly adhered to... Payment was made on a ticket system, the girl retaining the ticket, which was of cardboard about 2 inches square, bearing the name of the house, the regimental seal, and the price of the ticket.

...The house was controlled by 114 Infantry Regiment, Captain NAGASUE of regimental headquarters being the liaison officer in charge. Usually 2 men of regimental headquarters were detailed to the house for the purpose of identification of those frequenting the brothel, although men of other regiments were permitted to visit the brothel if they happened to be in a party of 114 Infantry Regiment men. A military policeman was also on patrol duty at the house. The daily attendance at prisoner of war's house was 80-90 non-commissioned officers and men and 10 to 15 officers.

...In MAYMYO... owing to the large number of units stationed there, some of the houses had definite scheduled days for specific units."

Other interrogations by the Allied forces, set out in their Report, reveal that comfort stations were operated in Akyab, Hparabyin, Alechangyaw (with Korean girls) in Burma, and in Belawan in Sumatra (with Chinese and native girls), as well as in Rabaul (100 Korean and Japanese girls) and on the Trobriand Islands (Papua New Guinea).

In addition to these documents, pioneering work done by Prof. Yoshiaki Yoshimi, the well-known Japanese historian, has brought to

light other documents regarding the sending of comfort women to Southeast Asia.

Extent of and Manner of Recruitment

A telegraphic message dated March 1942, from Rikichi Ando, Commander in Taiwan, addressed to the Minister-of-War (who at that time was Hideki Tojo), requested the issue of travel permits to three outside recruiters who had been chosen in view of the request made by the deployed forces that 50 comfort women should be sent to Borneo.

A reply sent to this states that, as per the Order of the Minister-of-War, approval had been granted to the request made on 12 March by the forces in Taiwan.

Another telegraphic message dated June 1942, from the Japanese forces in Taiwan, states that all 50 women had been sent to Borneo but in view of the shortage, they would like to have sent 20 more comfort women, as there was a real necessity. The message therefore sets out a request for a permit, explaining that one of the earlier-mentioned three recruiters would be taking these comfort women.

An article in the Japanese monthly magazine "Bungei Shunju", (published in December 1955) by Minoru Shigemura, who was a Commander in the Japanese Navy, entitled "Unit by the name of Special Service Personnel Group" (Tokuyoin, which is another expression for "comfort women"), refers to a document of the Japanese Navy, dated 30 May 1942, which had been co-signed by two Director-Generals of the Naval Affairs Bureau. It is addressed to the Chief-of-Staff for the South-West Pacific and specifies that concerning the second stage of advancement of the Special Service Personnel, the following things will be prepared by the Navy:

- accommodation facilities;
- mattresses, bed linen, blankets;
- comfort houses will be of two kinds, one for Officers, the other for Petty Officers and soldiers;
- the comfort houses will be privately operated, but under the supervision of the Navy.

This document also sets out the number of "personnel" sent and their destinations:

- 50 to Penang on the Malaysian Peninsula;
- 45 to Makassar on the island of Sulawesi(Celebes), Indonesia;
- 40 to Balikpapan on Borneo;
- 30 to Java, Indonesia;

Number not determined for Singapore and Ambon.

This immediately raises the question as to who these women were, and by whom, how, and from where they were taken to these comfort stations.

Extremely telling indications can be gathered from two out of the hundreds of documents carefully researched by Professor Yoshimi, to the effect that though initially a number of Japanese women already engaged in prostitution were used in military brothels, the attempt had to be abandoned because of stringent regulations issued in Japan, and because these women were in advanced stages of venereal disease. The most natural choice was therefore the use of virgin Korean girls, recruitment being made very easy by colonization.

It had been discovered by Dr. Tetsuo Aso, a doctor in the Japanese Army who had examined 1000 comfort women, that the Japanese women were seriously infected with venereal disease, whereas the Korean girls who were virgins when brought, were in a better position to resist infection; he said that in comparison, the Japanese women were "dubious gifts to the Imperial Army".

A letter dated 23 February 1938, issued by the Director-General of Police, Ministry of Home Affairs and bearing his seal, addressed to the Governor of each Prefecture with a copy endorsed to the Foreign Affairs Ministry, was about the "handling of women going to China". It stated that women to go into prostitution were being recruited/collected in Japan. In view of the current circumstances in China, the sending of women to China was inevitable and necessary. However, care had to be taken as such conduct might be in violation of international conventions and treaties. The following conditions had to be met for the travel of these women from Japan to China:

- they had to be engaged in prostitution;
- they had to be above 21 years of age;
- they had to be free of any venereal disease.

If these conditions were fulfilled, the women would be allowed to go by the authorities. Women going for such a purpose were to present themselves to the police authorities and obtain identity cards. The condition for issue of such I.D. cards was the consent of the girl's parents which would prove that no act of trafficking or kidnapping was involved.

~ Another circular letter, dated 4 March 1938, issued by the Chief Secretary of the Army War Ministry, in Tokyo, cautioned about the manner of recruitment, stating that it had become a social issue, that actual recruiters resorted to methods bordering on kidnapping, and that some of them had been apprehended by the police; it stated that given these circumstances, local army authorities should be careful in selecting people for recruitment. In identifying recruiters, the letter cautioned that the Army should contact the local police and the military police. This concerned the recruitment of comfort women in Japan.

A book entitled *Burma - The Untold Story* by Won-loy Chan⁷, a combat intelligence officer on the staff of General Joseph W. Stilwell during World War II, recounts his wartime experiences. Colonel Chan, a Chinese American and a Japanese language specialist, had taken part in the battle for Myitkyina in June-August 1944. He personally interviewed the Korean comfort girls imported and then abandoned by the Japanese Army. He states:

"There are no official records of the Korean comfort girls. No one knows how many of these unfortunate young women were forced into prostitution by the Imperial Japanese forces during World War II. Estimates run as high as 200,000. Mostly daughters of Korean farmers and peasants - although some came from the city slums and some may

⁷ Chan, W., *Burma-The Untold Story*.

have practised the oldest profession previously - between 1935 and 1945, **they were rounded up by the kempeitai** and sent to China, Burma, Guam, Malaya, the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies, in fact anywhere in the vast Pacific theatre of war where Japanese troops were garrisoned. Thousands were killed during the bloody fighting in the Pacific, Southeast Asia, and elsewhere. (Emphasis added).

...The comfort girls were organized by the Japanese into what they euphemistically called the Women's Volunteer Labour Corps. They were grouped down to platoon level of about 50 girls each. Some were exclusively for the pleasure of Japanese officers. Others served NCO's (Non-Commissioned Officers) while the least attractive were forced to cater to the lowly private soldier of the Emperor. Each platoon-sized group was commanded by a Mama-san, usually a middle-aged Japanese woman who spoke Korean. When the girls weren't engaged in their primary occupational specialty, or were ill, they acted as washerwomen and barracks maids in the troop rest areas."⁸

Yet another Allied Report, unearthed from the US National Archives by the Kyodo News Service, contains a report dated 10 October 1944, based on the interrogation of 20 Korean comfort girls taken as prisoners-of-war along with two Japanese civilian prisoner-of-wars (POWs); this report had been prepared by the US Office of War Information, Psychological Warfare Team, attached to US Army forces, India-Burma Theatre.

These persons were captured by the US Forces around 10 August 1944, in mopping-up operations after the fall of Myitkyina in Burma.

Under the sub-heading "Recruiting", this Allied Report records its findings thus:

"Early in May of 1942 Japanese agents arrived in Korea for the purpose of enlisting Korean girls for "comfort service" in newly conquered Japanese territories in Southeast Asia.

⁸ *Id.* at 93.

The nature of this "service" was not specified but it was assumed to be work connected with visiting the wounded in hospitals, rolling bandages, and generally making the soldiers happy. The inducement used by these agents was plenty of money, an opportunity to pay off the family debts, easy work, and the prospect of a new life in a new land - Singapore. On the basis of these false representations many girls enlisted for overseas duty and were rewarded with an advance of a few hundred yen.

The majority of the girls were ignorant and uneducated, although a few had been connected with 'oldest profession on earth' before."

The method of "recruitment" left very little scope for a free, informed decision by any of these girls with regard to work as comfort girls. Ex-soldier Ichikawa⁹ has in his interview with the ICJ mission also talked of local police and Japanese military police accompanying these recruiters in Korea at the time of recruitment.

Not only Chinese, Korean and Japanese women, but also women from Taiwan, the Philippines and Indonesia, were used in these military brothels. Some documents also show the use of Dutch women.

In interviews and memoirs, ex-soldiers have disclosed that the nationalities of the comfort women, especially in Southeast Asia, varied. One lieutenant recounts having had relations with women from Spain and Russia, and states that women forced into prostitution included Vietnamese, Thais, Burmese, Dutch and Americans.¹⁰

The Japanese military also tried to force Australian nurses into becoming comfort women, but they were able to resist, due to the timely intervention of the Red Cross.¹¹

⁹ See Chapter 5.

¹⁰ Kim-il-Myon "*Emperor's Army and Korean Comfort Women*", 1976.

¹¹ Records maintained by Major-General G. Lloyd have been unearthed by Professor Yuki Tanaka, University of Melbourne, from the Australian National Archives.

The above documents highlight that the top brass in the military and the government were aware of the manner in which the women were recruited; that recruitment was forced; and that the military police, i.e. the kempeitai, had an important role to play in the matter, along with the local police. The testimonies of all the persons interviewed by this mission, including ex-military personnel of the Japanese Imperial Army, victims and others, make a special mention of the kempeitai as overseers of the recruitment of and/or the transportation of the women to comfort stations.

It is also apparent that there was strict segregation of comfort houses for the Navy and the Army, as also for officers and for soldiers. Regulations existed for "Special Clubs" within the Manila sector, as well as for other military brothels.¹²

A very telling regulation, No. 11, reproduced in the Allied Report, expressly sanctioned the use of minor girls as comfort women in these special clubs:

.. "11. The officer in charge..... will as a general rule, not permit the employment of minors as geisha or waitresses. In certain circumstances, however, minors may be employed as maids. The permission of the officer in charge is required for any employment of minors as geisha, waitresses or maids.

.. "12. When managers request permission to employ minors, the matter will be handled in conjunction with the duty officers of the Manila Sector Line of Communications."

As the war spread and showed no sign of ending, recruitment of minor Korean girls was facilitated by the Labour Mobilization Laws proclaimed by the Governor-General. The Korean women were also taken to areas as remote as China, Manchuria, Borneo, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Ryuku Islands (Okinawa), the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and Burma.

¹² See Regulations (reproduced in the Allied Report) of 15 November 1945.

The Filipino women interviewed by the ICJ mission stated that they had been kidnapped by Japanese soldiers, confined in garrisons, and forced to provide sexual intercourse to Japanese soldiers. In the case of Gertrude Balisalisa, there is a clear reference to a Shanghai-type comfort station with a weekly medical check-up by a military doctor.¹³

Transportation of Korean girls was in trains, and thereafter in military trucks, and, when taken overseas, by Japanese naval ships, sometimes sailing in convoys of seven or eight. The train travel expenses were borne by the Japanese Army.

Comfort houses/stations were either constructed by the Japanese Army or consisted of houses and structures captured by the Army.

Comfort stations were also set up near the battlefields and consisted of tents or makeshift wooden houses. Comfort women assigned to combat troops had to follow the troops wherever they went. The food and clothing of the comfort women at the front or near camps was provided by the Army. In other comfort houses in the rear, food and clothing was the responsibility of the manager, who was a private person.

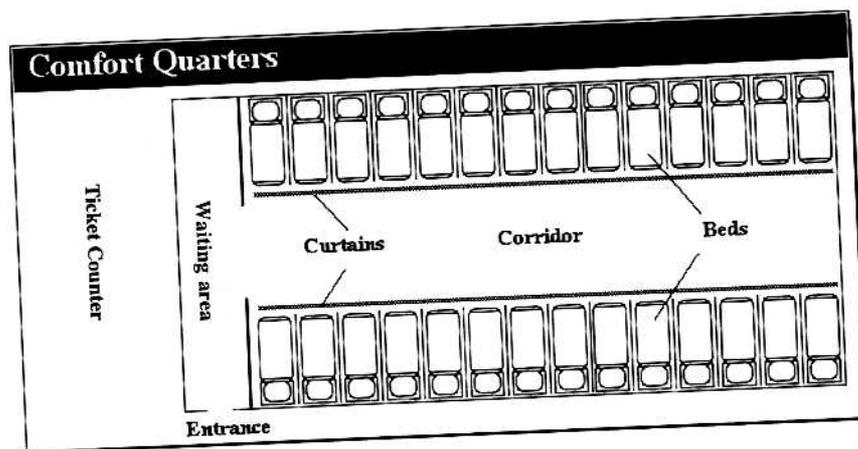
The fact that some houses of prostitution operated by private persons existed, must not be confused with, or be permitted to shift the focus from, the well-planned and executed comfort stations of the Japanese Imperial Army. The majority of the comfort stations were controlled by the Army. Even those managed by private persons were held in a stranglehold by the Army and the kempeitai with regard to their functioning.

The documents referred to above, the documents contained in the Allied Reports, as well as the testimonies of victims, unambiguously point to the vice-like control of the Japanese military over the establishment, operation and control of the comfort stations. The establishment, staffing, conduct and operation of these comfort houses were at the behest of the Japanese military, and were planned and executed by them.

¹³ See Chapter 4.

Life in the Comfort Stations and Subsequently

A cross-sectional diagram of a typical comfort station of the Japanese military would look like this :



Within a tiny cubicle of 3' x 5', a comfort woman had to live, sleep and serve.

If they were "lucky" they would have to serve about 10 foot soldiers a day (each allowed to stay up to one hour). However, because of the abundance of troops, they were usually forced to provide sexual pleasure to 20 - 30 soldiers a day, and then to one or two officers for the whole night, up to the following morning.

Kikuichi Fukuyama, 71, was a fighter pilot in the Japanese Army. He had this to say: "The number of drafted soldiers was huge, so the comfort women must have had a hard time... Their bodies must have been worn out. Soldiers usually had no women around them, so they must have acted like beasts at the comfort quarters".¹⁴

That there were long unending queues of Japanese soldiers and officers has been stated by the witnesses interviewed by the ICJ mission. Many also spoke of regular medical check-ups by army doctors, but bitterly complained that this was only to prevent the spread of venereal diseases, whereas injuries suffered by the women as a result of kicking, bayoneting and other forms of brutality were ignored by these doctors.

Mitsuyoshi Nakayama, 78, who served as a military surgeon between 1941 and 1944 in Huaide, Manchuria, said: "Surgeons only checked the women for visible symptoms caused by diseases such as gonorrhoea and syphilis. Some women possibly had internal diseases such as endometritis (an inflammation of the membrane lining the uterus) or clogged oviducts. We did not examine the women for these diseases. I think many of them have become unable to bear children".¹⁵

Ken Yuasa, 77, of Tokyo, said he was assigned to check comfort women in Lu'an in Anhui Province in April 1945. Through weekly medical check-ups, military surgeons came to realize how badly the women suffered from providing sex to such a large number of men. Few surgeons used military brothels, he said.¹⁶

Treatment of the women who had contracted any sexually transmitted diseases, was at military expense; this included the giving of "606" injections, which at that time were extremely high-priced.

A number of witnesses from the Republic of Korea told the ICJ mission that they were severely afflicted with venereal disease even though they had been healthy virgins when they were forcibly taken to

¹⁴ *Japan Times*, 5 August 1992.

¹⁵ In an interview with the *Japan Times* of 7 August 1992.

¹⁶ *Japan Times*, 7 August 1992.

serve at comfort stations. Many of them became incapable of bearing children. Hwang Kum-Joo, a former comfort woman from the Republic of Korea, showed the ICJ mission the scars on her body resulting from an operation performed on her to remove her uterus. A Dutch comfort woman also stated that she was forced to have an abortion to ensure her availability for sex for Japanese soldiers.¹⁷

Appendix "D" to the Allied Report of 15 November 1945 sets out *in extenso* police reports on Manila brothels. The most significant part of the police reports relate to the greed of the private managers of these military brothels. ".... Many managers are interested in nothing beyond their own profit and do their job with no other purpose. They exhibit no concern for the welfare of the geisha, maids or hostesses, nor bother themselves with their health or sustenance nor with such matters as bath facilities. Their selfish conduct requires restraint".

It appears that little was done by the Army authorities or the military police to improve this state of affairs.

The general living conditions of the comfort women were extremely bad. They were provided just enough food and water to enable them to survive. The testimonies of witnesses interviewed by the ICJ mission amply bear this out. They were virtual prisoners at the comfort stations; most were not permitted to leave the premises without permission. Some comfort stations, especially in battlefield areas, were in military camps, surrounded by barbed wire fencing. Regulations for military brothels issued on 22 November 1942 by the Iloilo office of the military administration of the Philippines to the military police at Iloilo and other places¹⁸, *inter alia* stipulated: "Women employees are allowed to take walks between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. Permission from the office chief is necessary for walks at other times". There was also a map annexed to these regulations showing areas permitted for such "walks".

17 Jan Ruff, at the International Public Hearing, Tokyo, December 1992.

18 Disclosed by Prof. Yoshimi at the International Public Hearing, Tokyo, December 1992.

The comfort women were kicked, beaten, tortured, maimed and brutalised by Japanese soldiers to ensure that they continuously provide sexual gratification to them. Gertrude Balisalisa¹⁹ gives a graphic description of this cruelty, and says "the Japanese were cruel to a point I have not seen". Her statement is supported by that of the Australian nurses interviewed by the Allied forces, as recorded in documents found in the Australian National Archives. They said: "The Japanese were very strict about bowing. Every time we met a Japanese guard or even a native guard we were forced to bow. Sister Oram on one occasion did not see a guard and did not bow, and was made to stand in the sun for one hour without a hat."²⁰ During the time of the military regime a good deal of face-slapping and punching of women's faces went on. On one occasion I saw one woman with her face completely blackened with the blows, and she had lost several teeth in the process. These punches were meted out for very small offences, and frequently the victims were entirely innocent".²¹

The end of World War II brought no solace to these comfort women. They were abandoned by fleeing Japanese soldiers. Reaching home was the beginning of yet another phase of misery for them. They are still living with bitter memories of a sorrowful past, fearing rejection by the society in which they live, trying to pick up whatever shreds of their lives they can still salvage.

Perhaps the most vivid description, apart from the statements of the victims²² themselves, is to be found in *Burma - The Untold Story* by Won-loy Chan: "No one knows what has become of those who survived the war. Most would be in their early or mid-sixties today. United Nations troops in Korea between 1950 and 1953 reported that some of the girls-continued to practice the profession after returning to Korea. Some also did that on Okinawa. For the vast majority, however, the stigma and shame resulting from what they had been forced to do

19 See Chapter 4.

20 These nurses were in a camp in Palembang, Sumatra, Indonesia in April 1944.

21 See *supra* n. 9.

22 See Chapter 4.

prevents research and the absence of official records leaves one to conjecture as to the fate of those still living".²³

Won-loy Chan has given a graphic account of the 20 Korean comfort girls he interviewed in Burma in 1944. He says:

"The 18th and 56th Imperial Japanese Army Divisions in northern Burma each apparently had a platoon of comfort girls attached. Most were kept in the headquarters areas, principally in Myitkyina, and Bhamo. When Myitkyina fell on 3 August 1944, some twenty-one of the girls were still there. How many had attempted to raft down the Irrawady could not be determined. Undoubtedly, many who tried were killed by Allied marksmen from the river banks along with the fleeing Japanese troops. Others probably died from starvation and exposure in the jungles of north Burma"...

..."The girls were young, eighteen to twenty-four was my guess. Some, despite their makeshift clothing and lack of even rudimentary grooming, were still attractive. Their expressions varied. One or two appeared defiant, but most wore looks of fear and anxiety. Some obviously had tears in their eyes or running down their cheeks while some with their heads bowed low appeared to be praying. None exhibited the coquetry usually attributed to camp-followers..."

..."She (their Mama-san) removed the obi (Japanese sash) and took from it neatly wrapped bundles of paper currency that she placed on the ground in front of us."...

..."Grant and I each picked up a bundle of the money. The bills were each for ten rupees... they were Japanese occupation scrip ... It was a paper promise by the Japanese Government to pay by some unspecified date the amount of ten Burmese rupees. With the loss of northern Burma and what appeared to

²³ Chan, *supra* n.7 at 93-94.

be the eventual total defeat of the Imperial forces, the scrip was undoubtedly worthless."...

..."Mama-san explained the whole caper to her girls. Some laughed, some cried, and when I thought of what these girls had endured to earn this worthless scrip I was heartsick"...

..."Grant and I then interrogated the girls again.... They were not courtesans or Mata Haris, and if any of their bed partners had revealed anything, it had meant nothing to them. Taken forcibly for the most part from their families farms and homes in far-off Korea, they were there only for the pleasure of the Imperial Japanese troops. As soon as transportation could be arranged, they were turned over to British custody in India. The Allied press made a big thing of the comfort girls in sensational releases. But I felt only sorrow for them".²⁴

²⁴ *Id.* at 94-97.

Chapter Four

Statements of Victims

Preface to the Statements

Although the documents make it clear that comfort houses were established in the Philippines, the majority of the women interviewed there were not in what one might call a typical comfort house, as that institution evolved in China. Many of the women in the Philippines were taken into military camps and placed either in a room in an established barrack or lived with soldiers inside a tent or, in the case of one woman, inside a tunnel. This pattern may on the surface appear to be different from the experience of the Korean women. However, it was the existence of Japanese Government policy favouring the establishment of comfort houses which led soldiers stationed in the Philippines to kidnap, or have others kidnap for them, Filipinas. Because of this, we see no difference in the responsibility of the Japanese Government towards Filipinas as compared with their responsibility toward Korean women.

The statements taken in all three countries, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea¹, indicate that the majority of women interviewed came from economically disadvantaged families and were particularly vulnerable to force and deceit. The tragedy these women endured must be understood in the context of the societies in which they lived. At the time the women were taken by the Japanese, their societies placed heavy emphasis on chastity and therefore the acts of brutality committed against these women go beyond the immediate suffering of having to endure a continuous rape. What was done to them also meant that the women came away from that experience feeling a

¹ This report contains extensive summaries of the statements of 17 women.

profound sense of shame and viewing themselves as lesser human beings. The pain these women endured has continued throughout their lifetime. Most of them felt unable to reveal their experiences to anyone, including members of their immediate family. This forced them to carry alone an enormous emotional and psychological burden and many of the women interviewed made clear that this secret had made them keep their distance both from relatives and friends for fear they might reveal their shame. The pain of what they endured was evident in their language and the great emotional strain which each woman showed during the interview. The violation of their human rights has to be understood as something more than an act for a defined period of time; it was a violation which continues to affect their lives even today.

The ICJ mission was impressed by the enormous courage shown by each of the women and their willingness to testify in detail about their experiences. Each time a woman testified you could see her reliving the experience; we are deeply indebted to each of the women for their forthrightness and their generosity of spirit.²

Statements From the Philippines

Francisca Austari, aged 70

Ms. Austari was born in Santa Cruz, Laguna, on 2 December 1923. She was the eldest child in her family; her father was a tenant farmer and because of the family's economic circumstances she was only able to attend school from first to third grade.

Sometime in 1941, a Filipino approached Ms. Austari while she and some other girls were washing clothes by a river bank. She heard the other women scream out "the Japanese are coming"; they all began to run but she was too slow and a Filipino man grabbed her. He told her she was going to go and wash clothes for the Japanese soldiers who were

² The statements are presented as they were recorded by the members of the ICJ Mission, either in the first person or in narrative form.

camped in the nearby town. Japanese soldiers were present when this occurred. For the first three months that she was at the encampment Ms. Austari did wash clothes and was told by the Filipino (referred to by Filipinos as a Makapili, which denotes someone who collaborated with the Japanese or is a supporter of the Japanese) that money was being given to her mother for her work. He said that the money being given to her mother came from the Japanese but was handed over by him.

After about three months she was told that no more money would be forthcoming; at this point she refused to wash clothes any longer. Following this the Japanese soldiers took her inside the barracks and raped her. That night five or six Japanese soldiers, one after the other, had forcible intercourse with her. She attempted to resist their attacks on her and was beaten by the soldiers. At various times in the month that followed she would try to close her legs and prevent the Japanese from having intercourse with her. Each time that this happened she was hit and the soldiers would pound on her, particularly her legs, and force her to have intercourse. When questioned about the manner in which intercourse occurred, Ms. Austari indicated that she was forced to have intercourse in different positions with the Japanese, although most commonly she was forced to have her legs raised in the air.

This occurred each night for the next two or three months. She was the only woman in the military camp and was kept inside a room; she was not allowed to go out and was accompanied by a guard when she went to the toilet. Each night soldiers, sometimes two, sometimes five, would come to her room already naked and have forcible intercourse. After two months she was allowed a period of one month's rest. During all of this time it was the Makapili who brought her food; she was most emphatic that there was never any discussion of money. When she asked the Makapili why he had kidnapped her he answered that he was made to get women by the soldiers and had been threatened that if he did not help, he would be hurt.

After the one month's rest she was again forced to have intercourse with the Japanese soldiers. This lasted for three or four months; after this period of time she began to bleed profusely and was taken to a local hospital where her ovaries were removed. The interviewer was shown the

scar from the operation and also the deformity caused in the abdominal area by the operation. After being released from the hospital she was taken home; it was then that she discovered both her parents had died while she was in the military camp. This was obviously one of the worst memories for her since, while she was in the camp, she had held on to a picture of her parents and thought continuously about being able to see them again when she was released from the camp. She described herself as being numb while in the camp and said that, because of her isolation, she began to talk to herself. The only human contact she would have in the daytime was short conversations with the Makapili. After her release she was nursed back to health by her aunt. She has ongoing medical problems as a result of what happened to her.

As both her ovaries were removed during the operation she was unable to have children but did eventually marry when she was thirty years old. She described her husband as being very supportive; when he initially proposed marriage she indicated that she did not want to get married as she had been taken against her will by the Japanese, although she did not describe what had happened to her in detail. Her husband told her she should not feel ashamed as she had been taken by force.

When asked about what she would like to see happen now, Ms. Austari was quite clear that each of the women ought to be compensated directly and that it would not be sufficient compensation to her for the Japanese Government to put money into some sort of foundation or to pay it to the Philippine Government. She emphasized that all of the women were now quite elderly and that action needed to be taken quickly.

Julia Porras, aged 64

Ms. Porras was born on 31 January 1929 in Davao City in the province of Santa Ana. Prior to the war her father owned a piece of land which he farmed with some help and her mother took in laundry. She had five brothers and four sisters.

When the Japanese initially occupied Davao, Ms. Porras and her

family were not afraid, as there had been civilian Japanese working in that area for many years. The military camp was about a kilometre and a half from her father's farm; there were also various outposts and tunnels in the area. Initially, one of the Japanese who had lived in the region for a number of years came to her father's house and said that he would not have any trouble with the Japanese. He put a piece of paper on their door with a character on it which he said would indicate to the Japanese that her family should not be harmed in any way.

However, as Filipino resistance to Japanese occupation began to mount, the Japanese became increasingly brutal towards the civilian population. One day, as she was cooking a meal for the family, she heard her sister who was washing clothes downstairs shout "run". At this point her father was down at the river and her mother was downstairs with her sister. She was surprised at what she heard and looked out of the window. She saw some Japanese men dressed in camouflage outfits moving in the grass towards their house. She saw her sister running and instinctively jumped out of the window and cut her leg on a tree stump near the house. Because she had cut her leg she was slow to get up and as she began to move away from the house, a Japanese soldier caught her by her hair and pulled her to the ground. She began to bow and to shout out that she had surrendered, at which point she was slapped by the Japanese soldier and her mouth and nose began to bleed. Her hands were tied with a handkerchief and she was dragged into the woods where two trucks were waiting. One truck was full of soldiers and the other seemed to be a patrol truck, as it only had a few soldiers. She was thrown into the second truck. At this point the soldiers began laughing at her. The truck took her and the soldiers to a tunnel which was full of military equipment, including machine guns, rifles, bullets and canned goods as well as some cots to sleep on. Ms. Porras described the space to the interviewer; it would have been approximately seven feet in diameter and ten to twelve feet in length; as to height, the tunnel was just large enough to stand in. When she arrived, there were two other women there.

She was forcibly dragged into the tunnel and placed in a corner where she sat for a short while, until the soldiers changed into their uniforms. The first person that came over to her was an officer who she

believes had indicated to the other soldiers that they ought to stay away from her. He untied her hands and began to kiss her; at first she thought that he was trying to calm her down because she was so young and then later realized that his actions were somewhat different from those of someone showing sympathy. As she attempted to evade his moves he grabbed her and slapped her face. At this point he put his hand under her dress and began to pull down her underwear, pushed her down onto a tarpaulin and pushed her legs apart. As she was attempting to keep her legs closed he continued to beat her all over her legs. During all these events the soldier did not take off his own clothes. She continued to shout during the rape as she was in great pain. After it was over she said she was unable to stand and curled up in a corner of the tunnel feeling as if her entire body were in pain. She was bleeding and continued to cry.

After the officer another four soldiers raped her. After this Ms. Porras began to think of committing suicide.

When questioned about any Filipino witnesses to the event, she indicated that the only person who knew that she and the other women were there was a local boy who brought drinking water to the tunnel. Although the space inside the tunnel was extremely small she and the other women were not permitted to talk with one another and were placed in separate areas of the tunnel.

Ms. Porras cannot remember how many soldiers she was forced to have intercourse with each day; she just remembers that each time one soldier was finished she would be forced to wipe herself with a cloth before the next soldier came to her.

During the day she and the other women would be forced to clean the tunnel, fix food for the soldiers and repair the uniforms. Because her clothing had been ripped by the soldiers she was forced to spend the eight months in the tunnel wearing a towel. The rapes continued on a nightly basis and sometimes occurred during the day. In addition to the soldiers in the tunnel she was sometimes forced to have sex with soldiers patrolling their area. As it was dark in the tunnel and the women were forced to keep apart from one another, Ms. Porras does not know what experience the other women had,

but was aware that they were, like her, crying most of the time. There were fifteen to twenty soldiers in the tunnel on a permanent basis.

In the same way with other victims, Ms. Porras described herself as entering into a state of numbness while in the tunnel; she thought constantly about seeing her parents.

When questioned about the issue of money, Ms. Porras said no offer of money had ever been made.

When American bombardment of the Philippines began, many Japanese soldiers fled to the city in order to surrender. At one point, one of the men who had been guarding her and the other women took out his sword and it was her belief that he intended to behead them. Another soldier stopped him, saying they had "given services". At this point the two Japanese soldiers laughed. She waited for a while before running from the tunnel. When she left she headed into the forest and ran about seventeen kilometres back to her family house. There was no one there and a neighbour came by saying that her parents had moved to a different area; she asked him to find her parents and tell them that she was there. While waiting for her parents she again thought of committing suicide as she believed herself to be worthless. Her parents arrived and asked what had happened, but she was unable to answer them and just cried continuously. She believes that her mother knew what had happened, although they never spoke about it. For a period of time after leaving the tunnel she would just sit in her room; she was unable to sleep. She would not go out of the house; the sensation of numbness continued for a long while. Every time a man came to their house she would run and hide. Her parents did not take her to a doctor but her mother did make some boiled guava leaves and told her to put them on her vagina, which was inflamed.

In response to questioning about her expectations of the Japanese Government, she indicated that the victims should be compensated individually and that the money should not be given to the government for distribution. She was also quite clear in her mind that the Task Force should continue to work directly with the women.

Ms. Porras did eventually marry; she was unable to tell her husband about what had happened to her until recently. Her husband had been a member of the Philippine resistance movement and when she finally did tell him, he was very supportive. Some of her children were against her coming forward and telling her story; one daughter was very supportive and said to her "it is good that you lived; you should tell your story". Obviously the pain of what has happened to her has not gone away, and as with many of the other women interviewed, Ms. Porras still feels an element of shame, even though intellectually she knows that none of this was her fault. Ms. Porras is indignant at those people in Japan or in the Philippines who have insinuated that the women went voluntarily. She notes that she was thirteen years old at the time this incident occurred; it is obvious to anyone speaking to her that she continues to feel much pain and regret at having lost a part of her childhood in this way.

Violeta Lanzarote, aged 68

Ms. Lanzarote was born on 7 August 1925 in Iloilo. Her parents were small-scale farmers near a town called Estancia. One day in 1942, when she was seventeen years old, she was walking along the road to Estancia in order to buy some food for her family. It was about 9 in the morning. She encountered a group of approximately ten Japanese soldiers who asked her where she was going. When she replied she was headed to town to buy something, they responded by saying "you will not go to town but will come with us". The Japanese pointed bayonets at her; she was then taken to the local garrison in Estancia. (Ms. Lanzarote said that her parents were aware that she had been taken by the Japanese, as there was a small boy tending some animals along the side of the road and he ran to them after the Japanese went away).

The first day at the garrison she was made to cook food for the soldiers. She saw approximately ten other women although she did not recognize any of them. That night three Japanese officers, Captain Takemoto, Lieutenant Iko and Sergeant Takahashi, came to where she was and all three assaulted her sexually. She spent the next three years in the garrison being forced to have intercourse with these three men.

During the day she would be forced to cook for the soldiers and then each night one or more of the three officers would come to the room where she was staying. This occurred every night except during her menstruation period. She was kept alone in the room and was not allowed to talk to any of the other women. It is her recollection that the building she was in had many small rooms and that in each room there was a woman. The kitchen was near her room and she was only allowed to move between it and her room. She was not permitted to walk around the camp. The only other person she had contact with was a man who helped her do the cooking. He was a Filipino prisoner; the guards did not allow them to speak with one another. She says that sometimes she could hear the other women crying. She also saw some women sweeping the yard but does not know if these were the same women that were in the house with her. She believes that some of the soldiers at that particular camp were Korean.

Although, as shown in Chapter 3, the regulations issued by the Japanese Government for comfort stations indicated that there should be periodical medical examinations of the women, Ms. Lanzarote stated unequivocally that no doctor ever came to examine her. She sometimes suffered from fever; the Japanese officers would provide her with medicine (Biogesic) but never sent a doctor to examine her. Despite the government regulations ordering that condoms be worn, none of the officers ever wore them. Because the three men were officers there was never any time limit as to how long they could stay in her room. The usual length of time that each officer stayed was one hour.

When questioned about the manner in which intercourse occurred, Ms. Lanzarote with much anxiety indicated that she had been forced to have intercourse in varying positions, including anal intercourse. Although she was not beaten, when she refused to have intercourse with the officers they pointed their guns at her.

When she was released she did tell her parents and her brother and sister what had happened to her. Initially she was very reluctant to marry, saying that she could not give the gift of virginity to her husband, but was eventually persuaded by her older sister to get

married. Prior to her marriage she told her husband what had happened to her and he accepted this, saying that none of it was her fault. They had five children but none of the children were told until recently, when she decided to contact the Task Force and make her story public. Her eldest child tried to stop her from coming forward but she went forward believing it necessary that her story be told. It is clear that these events have a continuing impact on Ms. Lanzarote, she frequently suffers from depression and is unable to form close relationships with neighbours and relatives because she does not want to talk about these events.

Juanita Jamot, aged 69

I am Juanita Jamot. I was born on 12 November 1924, in Calbayog City in Samar. I had six brothers and sisters. My father was a fisherman, my mother just a housewife. We were very poor and therefore, being the third eldest child in our family, when I was 12 years old I had to go to Manila in or around the year 1936 to work as a housemaid. My employer was a ship's captain. I had been working for two months when my employer tried to molest me. He wanted me to become his mistress although he had a wife and children. Out of fear that he would molest me I looked for another family where I could work. I found a job in a bakery in Divisoria. This was some time in the year 1942, when the Second World War had already been going on for two years or so. I was 18 years old at that time. After a couple of months the owner of the bakery courted me. We lived together for about five months in a rented room. Suddenly one day, 15 soldiers of the Japanese Imperial Army barged into the building. There were other tenants in other rooms in that building. I was two months pregnant at the time. The Japanese soldiers forcibly took all the men they found in the building, including the person I was living with. Five soldiers stayed behind and took charge of rounding up all the women, including myself. There were at that time five women, including myself. We had gathered at the top of the staircase to find out what the soldiers were doing to the men. Some soldiers, who were dressed in white uniforms, dragged all of us women outside. One of these soldiers singled me out and started touching me all over my body in front of the other four women. This

soldier then started forcibly taking off my clothes and kissing me. I was trying to resist but he had pinned me down to the ground. All this was being done in front of the other four women. This soldier then dragged me outside the house and took me to a nearby hillock. The soldier pinned me to the ground and forcibly took off my clothes. Whilst pinning me to the ground he was simultaneously undressing himself. This way he ensured that I would not escape. He then raped me. I was thereafter brought back to the building by that soldier.

Then all of us five women were forced to board a military truck. We were taken to a place called Oraca Building. This building was located in a place called Divisoria in Manila. When we reached the Oraca Building I saw about ten other women inside the building. I noticed that these ten other women were also Filipino women. I also noticed that these other women, ten in number, were of different ages, some young and some a little older. The soldiers who had brought us to the Oraca Building did not allow us women to talk to each other. Even so I managed to talk to these women who were already in that building and I discovered that they had been held there for almost two months.

In the Oraca Building all of us women, totalling about 16, used to wash the uniforms of the Japanese soldiers and would have to cook food for them. We were also raped by the Japanese soldiers. Some soldiers would come in the morning, some in the afternoon and others in the evening. There were about ten or more soldiers who would rape me each day. I remember feeling numb and helpless during those days of my confinement in the Oraca Building. Since myself and the other four or five women with me were new entrants in the Oraca Building, the Japanese soldiers would force themselves on us more often. There was always a guard in that place where we were confined. There would be a change of guard but the place would still not be left unguarded at any time. Even the soldiers who were guarding this building sexually abused us women and raped us. Most of the Japanese soldiers were also staying in the Oraca Building. Nobody was allowed to enter the building, no Filipinos nor any other persons except Japanese soldiers were allowed entry. Food supplies were brought into the building by the Japanese soldiers themselves and nobody apart from them could enter or leave the building. We were given food by the Japanese soldiers

which was similar to what they themselves ate. No money whatsoever was paid to any of us. I remember that we did not even have soap to wash ourselves or our clothes with. We therefore used to use the same soap which was given to us for washing dishes, to wash ourselves and our clothes.

I cried a lot during those days because I felt totally helpless as the Japanese soldiers were so powerful. I felt that it was impossible to fight back when the soldiers attacked me sexually. When Oraca Building was being heavily bombarded, and when the Japanese learnt the Americans were coming, we were put in a military truck and taken to Intramuros. I was brought to Fort Santiago, in Manila. However, while I was in Intramuros one Japanese soldier raped me even as the bombs were falling. Fort Santiago was a Japanese garrison at that time.

As there was no medical facility available in the Oraca Building, on my request the Japanese soldiers would collect some guava leaves and I would boil the same in water and with that water I would clean my vagina. In order to bring down the swelling of my vagina I used to apply these leaves internally. This helped to bring down and control the swelling and the pain. Because the soldiers were always in a hurry the areas around my vagina, my thighs and other surrounding areas were bruised.

I was the only one who was taken to Fort Santiago. I did not see any of the other women in Fort Santiago. In Fort Santiago there was heavy bombardment. There were pieces of broken glass, rubble, stones and other building material lying scattered all over. Even in this situation, the Japanese soldiers would come and rape me one by one. I felt severe pain because I was forced to lie down on glass pieces and other building material which had crumbled because of the heavy bombardment. It was physically extremely painful for me, more so because of the situation in which I was caught. I remember that three Japanese soldiers sexually abused me even when Fort Santiago was being heavily bombarded. The second soldier was extremely bulky and he forced himself upon me. As his penis was extremely large it tore my insides and I started bleeding profusely. This second soldier continued to rape me even though bullets were flying overhead and he

was watching them fly. After the second soldier left, I was bleeding profusely and I was lying down exhausted on the floor in Fort Santiago. Soon thereafter, the third soldier came and even though he saw that I was bleeding he forced himself upon me. I could not bear the thought of another sexual assault, and I held his penis between my thighs. I did this in order to avoid any further sexual contact. This soldier did not even realize that he had not penetrated my vagina. He was in a terrible hurry. There were bullets, bombs and various materials flying over as a result of heavy bombing by the American forces. Even in this condition he insisted on forcing himself sexually upon me. At that time I also covered myself with my dress because I thought that I should not die naked.

I was at Fort Santiago for the whole day, after which I was taken by the Japanese soldiers to Saint Augustine Church. Saint Augustine Church was full of men who were heavily guarded by Japanese soldiers. I was very frightened. I forced myself into the middle of this big crowd of people and I lay myself flat on the floor. Heavy bombing started and the soldiers, who were Japanese, opened fire on the crowd inside Saint Augustine Church. I soon started feeling the bodies falling on top of me. I covered myself with blood so as to be mistaken for a wounded or dead person. Disguised in this manner I managed to stay alive by evading the scrutiny of the Japanese soldiers who were guarding us at that time. I then lost consciousness. When I regained consciousness I heard the moaning sounds of wounded persons around me. I then covered myself with blood and ran away from Saint Augustine Church. After I ran away I hid behind a few buildings and finally I saw the Americans and I surrendered myself to them. There were six wounded soldiers around at that time and the Americans first attended to those six soldiers and then attended to me and thereafter put all of us on a raft. We were helped to cross the river and we were brought to Divisoria by the Americans, who just left us there. We were taken to Divisoria because there was no bombardment in that area, only sniping.

After the war I took up employment as a housemaid. (She was asked whether she was able to find a husband after the war was over. However, she broke down uncontrollably and was unable to

answer that question for quite some time, until she regained her composure).

I was not able to find the person I was living with earlier, I was not able to find my brother, I had suffered a miscarriage when I was taken to Intramuros because I was raped when I was three months pregnant. I did not tell anybody about anything that had happened to me during the Japanese occupation.

After seeing Lola Rosa (another comfort woman) on a television programme, I was able to talk about my experience for the first time with the members of the Task Force for Filipino Comfort Women (TFFCW).

My sisters learned of my whole story only when I submitted details to a radio programme which was aimed at encouraging ex-comfort women to speak up. Prior to that I had not told anybody about my ordeal.

I lived together with a person who was employed as a driver, in the year 1968, when I was 44 years old. I did not tell him about my past. Even then whilst having sex with him, I found that I was severely restrained and bore an aversion to sex. I had nightmares about my past experiences. My terrible past experience severely crippled my normal sex life. I have separated from my second husband. I also could not bear children and I had several miscarriages and had to be operated upon.

I feel that money is not enough to bring back my youth. Money cannot be sufficient to repay the price I have paid. I feel that the Japanese Government is responsible and should do something for me. I did not have the strength to talk about my past experiences except with the motivation provided by Lola Rosa. I also expect the government, both my own and the Japanese Government, to resolve this problem immediately. It is not a matter of money, because what I have suffered can never be compensated by money. I am medically not well, I have a heart murmur and I have also severe pain in the joints. I cannot afford medical treatment, as I can barely survive. As I am so old now, I am not able to take up any employment, even as a housemaid.

The ICJ mission was taken on a site visit along with Juanita Jamot to the Oraca Building in Manila. The building is now converted into a government office of the Geological Survey Department. When we entered the building, Juanita pointed out to us the place where she was kept confined. It was a huge room with a mezzanine level opposite the area where she slept. She also pointed out to us the place where she and the other comfort women had to cook for the Japanese soldiers. She took us outside to the compound behind the building where she pointed to a spot where she said there was a tap and she told us that the comfort women, including herself, would have to bathe in the open with the soldiers watching them and mocking them. After that Juanita Jamot took us to another room adjoining the main hall where the women were confined. This other room was a small six by three feet cubicle which is now an office.

During this site visit, Juanita pointed out to us that there used to be a cot in this small cubicle and the Japanese soldiers would bring in one comfort woman at a time and rape her by placing her upon this cot. Juanita also remembered that on one occasion she was dragged to this cubicle and was pushed onto the bed with such force that her head banged against the wall. The Japanese soldier who was violating her was not bothered about the pain which Juanita was suffering. On another occasion, Juanita told us that the soldier was in such a hurry that he did not even wait for Juanita to lie down on the bed but he stood her up against the wall and had sex with her standing up. Juanita could do nothing about it except submit to his wishes because she would have been severely beaten and kicked by that soldier. On recounting all these experiences to us Juanita was extremely disturbed and inconsolable.

Gertrude Balisalisa, aged 74

My name is Gertrude Balisalisa. I was born on 17 November 1919. My father was in the civil construction business. My family consisted of my parents, two brothers and a sister. I was the eldest of the family. My brothers were officers in the Philippine army. My brothers were killed in Fort Santiago by Japanese soldiers. My sister is living today.