

Can SDF Fight History War?

Yoichi Shimada

I was surprised to read an article on the latest issue (April 15, Vol. 732) of “Taiyu,” a journal published by a support group for the Self-Defense Forces. That is a serial column article written by Lt. Col. Chizu Kurita, a woman adviser to the special representative for women, peace and security in the office of the secretary general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The article about her meeting with Sri Lankan lawyer Radhika Coomaraswamy who visited the NATO headquarters in Brussels lacks what should have been a natural consciousness.

“A great honor” to lunch with a distorted author

Lt. Col. Kurita writes: “She (Coomaraswamy) is known well for taking charge of a United Nations report on violence against women, and its causes and results known as a ‘Coomaraswamy report’... It was a great honor to lunch with her along with the NATO special representative.” The Coomaraswamy report is a notorious document that branded comfort women as “sex slaves” recruited coercively by wartime Japanese forces based on false, distorted or exaggerated testimonies including those of Seiji Yoshida. The report is still quoted by parliamentary resolutions in various countries, continuing to expand its adverse impact.

After the Asahi Shimbun newspaper retracted articles based on the Yoshida testimonies last August, the Japanese government sent Kuni Sato, ambassador for women, human rights and humanitarian affairs, to New York on October 14 last year to ask Coomaraswamy to delete or revise quotes from Yoshida’s remarks among others. (Although it was problematic to limit the request in such way, Coomaraswamy refused to revise the report.)

Anti-Japan forces attempting to mentally disarm Japan

If Lt. Col. Kurita has no doubt about or is impressed (unbelievably) with the Coomaraswamy report, she may not be a person the Defense Ministry should send to the front of the international information war. Another problem is that the journal of the quasi-official SDF-affiliated organization headed by a former SDF Joint Staff Council chairman carried such article without checking its content. The journal editors’ consciousness should also be called into question.

Anti-Japan forces in Japan and abroad attempt to not only prevent Japan's physical defense capability buildup but also mentally disarm Japan. It may not be mentally effective for SDF members and their families to read such an article that praises the meeting with the person responsible for the document that unduly defames Japanese forces.

Lt. Col. Kurita in a contribution to the website of the Japanese Embassy in Belgium also says, "She (Coomaraswamy) was gentle and virtuous." Similar feelings have been recorded by those who met with Joseph Stalin or Mao Zedong. Anyone on the national defense front may be required to coolly analyze behaviors of their conversation partners.

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