

2013 APHAFIC annual meeting

APHAFIC held its eleventh annual meeting at San Diego Chinese Historical Museum on June 9th, 2012. A total of 40 people attended including some AP high school students from Chinese Academy. Nancy Lo gave a brief report of the activities of APHFIC from May 2012 – June 2013 and she singled out the two events (http://aphafic.org/archives/Archive_2012.html) :

The 75th observance of Nanking massacre on December 1, 2012, featuring a talk by Ms. Matsuoka Tamaki, a Japanese film director, a retired teacher and an activist, on ‘Why I investigated both ex-soldiers and victims during Nanjing massacre’ and she showed her movie of “Torn memories of Nanking”, at the Price Center Theater of UCSD and the Seminar/Workshop on Teaching WWII History in Asia-Pacific Theater on March 20 Madison High School. (<http://aphafic.org/documents/2013/WWIIworkshop20130320edited.pdf>).

Two recent news made us think that keeping history accurate is important: regarding comfort women and Japan being an aggressor during WWII:

1. In this April, Mr. Shinzo Abe, Japanese prime minister questioned whether Japan was the aggressor during the war, saying the definition of [“invasion” was relative](#).
2. Mr. Toru Hashimoto, a co-leader of the opposition Japan Restoration Association and the mayor of Osaka, argued that Japan was being unfairly singled out for its use of so-called comfort women, and that other nations needed to examine the mistreatment of women by their own militaries before pointing the finger at Tokyo. Mr. Hashimoto’s comments followed those of a string of Japanese politicians who had recently challenged what they said was a distorted view of Japan’s wartime history.

Professor Ching-lin Wang of UC Berkeley, the invited speaker at the 2011 APHAFIC annual meeting emphasized "...POLITICAL ENGAEMENT" drafted a resolution Condemning Recent Statements by Osaka Mayor Toru Hashimoto to Board of Supervisors of the city and Country of San Francisco. Mr. Toru Hashim has cancelled his trip to US. Instead, Osaka Gov. Nippon Ishin Secretary-General Ichiro Matsui would visit San Francisco and New York. (Japan Time news 2/13/2013) (<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2013/06/12/national/san-francisco-spurned-hashimoto-amid-sex-slave-outrage/#.UbhDHPmsgnY>).

The annual meeting featured a speech on ‘Japanese war crimes: struggle for world Chinese victims’ by Mr. Barry Fisher, Partner, Fleishman & Fisher, Los Angeles followed by singing one of the famous songs during WWII in China: Great War Ballad (長城謠) (<http://blog.xuite.net/buckyin/music/628882>) led by Jack Meng and Nancy Lo with accordion played by Mr. Fisher.

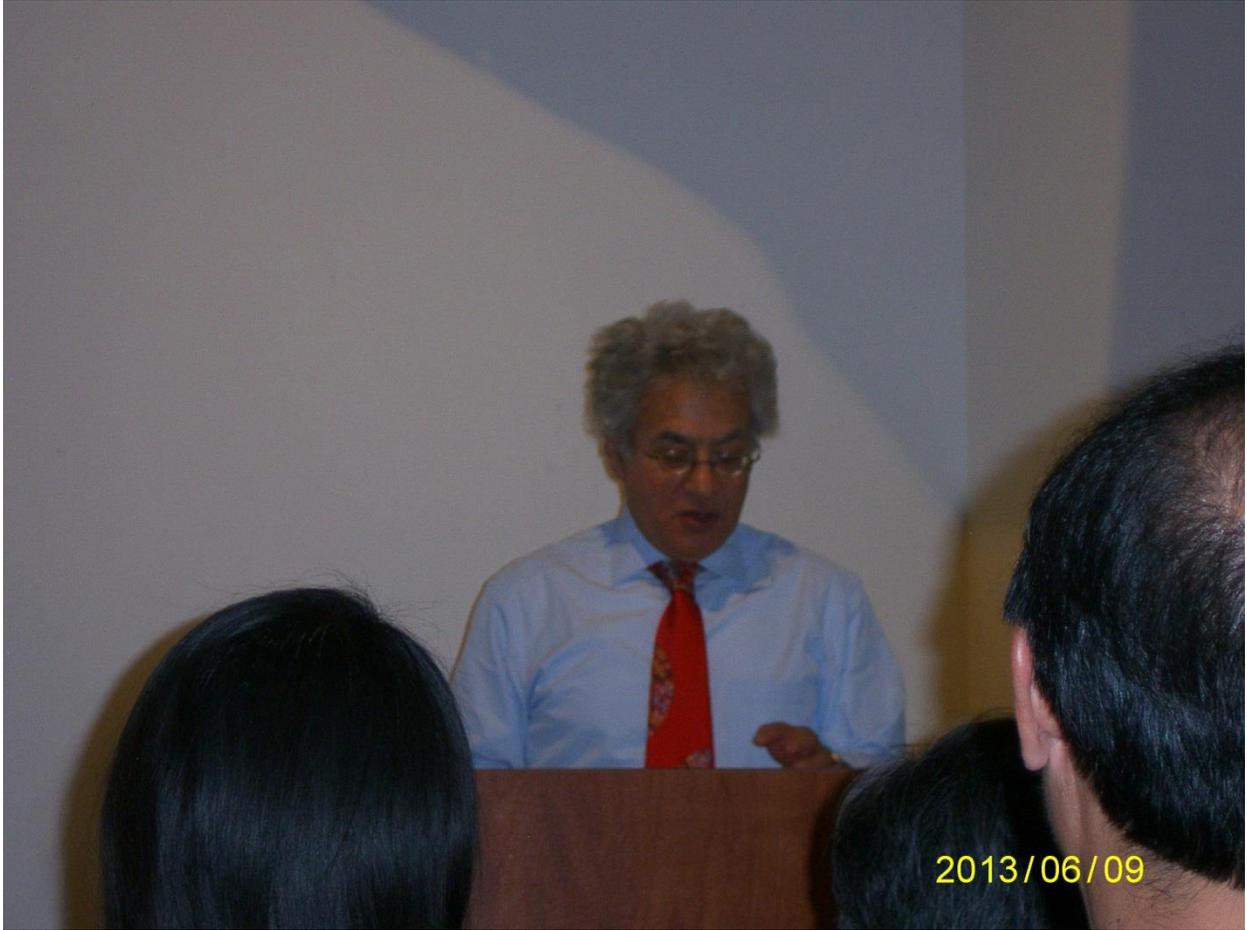
In his speech, Mr. Barry Fisher emphasized that as the 20th century ended and a new millennium began, Japan’s wartime allies Germany and Austria, along with Holocaust-profiting Swiss banks, settled all remaining victim claims for some \$7 billion, with full acknowledgment and apologies, thus trying to close the book on their stained past. This resulted from

multinational treaties and agreements for which I was a negotiator and signatory. Japan, however, did nothing, instead dragging its last century of horror deeper and deeper into the new one.

That horror is of enormous scope. Japan's Asian Pacific War, covering most of Asia and the Pacific region, began with its 1931 invasion of China, merged with World War II, and ended in 1945. But the 1931 invasion was staged from the Korean peninsula, which Japan had already brutally controlled for 21 years since 1910.

During Japan's campaign of aggression in the first half of the 20th century, Japan committed millions to slave labor and sexual slavery (so called "Comfort Women") and subjected populations to biological and chemical warfare, "medical experiments," massacres, mass rapes, wholesale looting of wealth, art, libraries and other national treasures, and vast forced displacements.

Mr. Fisher reviewed the evolution of the Japan redress movement since his first involvement in 1999 when he made contact with Chinese and Korean groups to begin an initiative parallel to the German/Austrian strategies to pursue redress from Japan. Successes continue on the Europe side including expansion of the German reparations programs and repatriation of looted national treasure and discussed will be recent Japan advances on looted art, recent important "comfort women" court development and exploration of how we can move forward to Japan redress before the world more forgets and no living victims remain. One question was raised on President Obama's position on the comfort women/sex slaves that was the topic of the evening. Mr. Fisher said that he did not know President Obama's position. In the past, President Clinton was actively pursuing the justice for the WWII victims while President Bush did not.



Mr. Barry Fisher gave his speech at the annual meeting on June 9th



Mr. Barry Fisher with APHAFIC with some of current and past at the annual meeting: Ronghui (Lily) Xu, Alex Chun, Nancy Lo with certificate of appreciation to Barry Fisher, Jack Meng, Pao chin Chu and Claudia Ma (not shown are Yeqing Chen, Mary Lee, Lilin Wang, and Michael Lee).



All attendees sang Great Wall Ballad (長城謠) with accordion played by Mr. Barry Fisher.