

officially resolve its longstanding historical issues will not only restore honor and dignity to the Comfort Women survivors, but bring out greater trust and cooperation among our other friends and allies in the region.

A formal apology by the Japanese government would help bring a sense of peace and healing to the women who were abused as well as to their families. Many of these innocent women were taken at a young age and suffered unspeakable and disgusting crimes that destroyed their lives. An apology cannot undo this damage, but it is important for the victims to know that the Japanese government has accepted responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner. I believe an official apology would help strengthen and improve relations between our friends and allies in the Northeast Asian region.

Without objection, I wish to insert into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD an editorial on this issue that appeared in the New York Times on Tuesday, March 6, appropriately entitled: "No Comfort."

[From The New York Times, March 6, 2007]

NO COMFORT

What part of "Japanese Army sex slaves" does Japan's prime minister, Shinzo Abe, have so much trouble understanding and apologizing for?

The underlying facts have long been beyond serious dispute. During World War II, Japan's Army set up sites where women rounded up from Japanese colonies like Korea were expected to deliver sexual services to Japan's soldiers.

These were not commercial brothels. Force, explicit and implicit, was used in recruiting these women. What went on in them was serial rape, not prostitution. The Japanese Army's involvement is documented in the government's own defense files. A senior Tokyo official more or less apologized for this horrific crime in 1993. The unofficial fund set up to compensate victims is set to close down this month.

And Mr. Abe wants the issue to end there. Last week, he claimed that there was no evidence that the victims had been coerced. Yesterday, he grudgingly acknowledged the 1993 quasi apology, but only as part of a preemptive declaration that his government would reject the call, now pending in the United States Congress, for an official apology. America isn't the only country interested in seeing Japan belatedly accept full responsibility. Korea and China are also infuriated by years of Japanese equivocations over the issue.

Mr. Abe seems less concerned with repairing Japan's sullied international reputation than with appealing to a large right-wing faction within his Liberal Democratic Party that insists that the whole shameful episode was a case of healthy private enterprise. One ruling party lawmaker, in his misplaced zeal to exculpate the Army, even suggested the offensive analogy of a college that outsourced its cafeteria to a private firm.

Japan is only dishonored by such efforts to contort the truth.

The 1993 statement needs to be expanded upon, not whittled down. Parliament should issue a frank apology and provide generous official compensation to the surviving victims. It is time for Japan's politicians—starting with Mr. Abe—to recognize that the first step toward overcoming a shameful past is acknowledging it.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2007

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I was unable to cast votes on the following legislative measures on March 5 and March 6. If I were present for rollcall votes, I would have voted "yea" on each of the following bills:

Roll 119, March 5, 2007: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 995—To amend Public Law 106-348 to extend the authorization for establishing a memorial in the District of Columbia to honor veterans who served in the Armed Forces;

Roll 120, March 5, 2007: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 497—The Brigadier General Francis Marion Memorial Act;

Roll 121, March 6, 2007: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree to the Resolution H. Res. 98—Honoring the life and achievements of the late Dr. John Garang de Mabior and reaffirming the continued commitment of the House of Representatives to a just and lasting peace in the Republic of the Sudan;

Roll 122, March 6, 2007: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree to the Resolution H. Res. 149—Supporting the goals of International Women's Day.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2007

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, March 6, 2007, I was attending to personal family matters in the District. Consequently, I missed Rollcall votes No. 121, "Honoring the life and achievements of the late Dr. John Garang de Mabior," and Rollcall vote No. 122, "Supporting the goals of International Womens Day."

If present, I would have voted "aye" on both matters.

CONGRATULATING NIAGARA UNIVERSITY MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2007

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Niagara University Men's Basketball Team on winning the 2007 Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Tournament on March 5, 2007. Their 83-79 win over Siena University clinched the Purple Eagles' second MAAC championship and NCAA tournament appearance in the last three years. Niagara University has become the first team from Western New York since the 1960s to get to the NCAA tournament twice in a three-year span.

In addition to winning the MAAC championship, Niagara University recorded its 11th straight victory, the program's longest winning streak since its 1992-93 season. Their victory

was a total team effort. Freshman guard Tyrone Lewis led the way with a career-high 24 points, earning him the tournament's most valuable player award. Senior guard Lorenzo Miles added 21 points, while classmate Cliff Brown recorded 14 points and 16 rebounds. Both Miles and Brown were named to the all-tournament squad. Junior forward Charron Fisher also posted a double-double, his sixth of the season, with 13 points and 12 rebounds.

Certainly all of the talented Niagara University players deserve praise for their part in bringing Niagara University back into March Madness. But a team is only as successful as its leader, and Coach Joe Mihalich is one of the class acts of the NCAA. Now in his ninth season at Niagara University, Coach Mihalich demands accountability from his players both on and off the court, and is a strong role model for the entire university community. Under his guidance, the Purple Eagles have advanced to the MAAC Championship game four times in the last six years, and have posted nine-straight winning seasons. Along the way, Mihalich quietly has collected the second-most wins in school history.

Madam Speaker, I could not be prouder of the Niagara University's Purple Eagles, and I wish to commend University President Father Joseph Levesque, the coaching staff and players, and students for this championship season. I will be watching the team's first round game in the NCAA tournament as they continue their winning streak and keep Niagara University on the national stage.

HONORING THE LIFE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE LATE DR. JOHN GARANG DE MABIOR

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2007

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 98, honoring the life and achievements of the late Dr. John Garang de Mabior and reaffirming the continued commitment of the House of Representatives to a just and lasting peace in the Republic of the Sudan. I thank my distinguished colleague Chairman PAYNE for his leadership in honoring a present-day freedom fighter.

Dr. Garang's lasting legacy is the Comprehensive Peace Agreement ending the thirty year civil war. But, it was against all odds that he was able to become such a leader.

It was a long journey for Dr. Garang who came from a poor family in a small Dinka village in southern Sudan. In an interview once, he told a reporter that his village was in such neglect that no one was able even to read. Thanks to a relative he was able to attend school in a nearby village and set the course for his educational advancement to eventually earn his doctorate from Iowa State University.

Yet, the plight of the people in his home country ravaged by civil strife and numerous injustices compelled him to return home. He was greeted by the Sudanese government's policies that marginalized and suppressed African communities in the South. The North had better schools, employment opportunities and infrastructure developments. Even today, you