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OPEN LETTER

March 2, 2008

Mayor John Ernst
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City Council Members:

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City of Brookhaven
4362 Peachtree Road NE
Brookhaven, Georgia 30319

Dear Mayor and City Council Members of the City of Brookhaven:

It has been eight months since your city had a controversial comfort women statue installed in your Blackburn Park. We regretted the installation and still are regretting it for


very good reasons. Now the Cherry Blossom Festival is planned in this park later this month, and we would like to urge you to reconsider the decision you made last year.

The reasons why we consider your decision inappropriate are as follows:

1. Historical records show that the inscriptions on your monuments are false. The comfort women were not coercively recruited, nor were they treated as slaves. The number of the comfort women was much, much less than hundreds of thousands.
2. The Government of Japan should not be blamed for human rights violations because even the Interagency Working Group of the United States Government could not identify any in its report in 2007. (<https://www.archives.gov/files/iwg/reports/final-report-2007.pdf>)
3. The comfort women issue had been settled finally and irreversibly between the Governments of Japan and of the Republic of Korea in 2015.
4. The monument accuses Japanese and Japanese-Americans without any good reason, and thus divides citizens into those accused versus those accusing.
5. Cherry Blossoms are cherished by Japanese people dearly. Holding a Cherry Blossoms Festival in a park in which the comfort women monument is placed is a serious blasphemy. All Japanese would be upset with this news.
6. The monument is a high risk object in a public space. It might cause bodily injuries and bloody fights among opponents and defenders, if not mentioning costly lawsuits. Even the cost of maintenance and insurance protection would not be negligible.

Thus, we urge you to reconsider the decision and remove it from public spaces. We will be distributing this letter to all those concerned to refresh their understanding of the monument in your park.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Koichi Mera', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Koichi Mera, Ph. D.

President