



American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor, Inc.

Including all of the Defense Forces of the Philippine Archipelago, The Asiatic Fleet, Wake Island, Marianna Islands, Midway Island and Dutch East Indies

June 6, 2011

Judge Robert A. Eckels
President and CEO
Lone Star High-Speed Rail, LLC
8500 Cypruswood Drive, Suite 202
Spring, Texas 77379
(832) 698-1368

Dear Judge Eckels:

We are four World War II U.S. Army veterans writing to ask you to intercede with your Japanese clients in order to bring a final resolution to an issue that has undermined the U.S.-Japan Alliance for decades—the unacknowledged forced labor and abuse of American POWs of Japan during the Pacific War.

Last year, the Government of Japan finally addressed this issue by offering its formal apology and establishing a visitation program for its American former POWs. What is left is for Japan's private companies that purchased American POWs from Imperial Japan's military for labor in their mines and factories and on their docks and rail yards—many of which you represent—to offer their own apologies and to ensure that this visitation program is enduring.

We survived Japan's notorious prisoner of war camps and forced labor for the country's largest corporations. Two of us are also survivors of the Bataan Death March. One of us was 15 when captured. All of us endured a Hell Ship to Japan. Each of us is a past commander of the American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor, which was disbanded in 2009.

We appeal to you to help us achieve this necessary historic justice. No Japanese company has acknowledged nor apologized for the use of POW forced labor. None have answered our letters. We POWs do not seek compensation. We simply want the respect that comes with recognition, an apology, and the preservation of our history.

To anchor this apology, we ask your clients to support Japanese government efforts to fund a meaningful program of visitation, dialogue, education, and research on American POWs in

Imperial Japan. The creation by your clients of an educational foundation committed to including the POW experience in the history of the Pacific War will foster respect for our life histories and our sacrifices for peace in Asia. It also strengthens and affirms the bonds of shared values between our two countries.

The U.S.-Japan Alliance was created and is maintained by an enduring commitment of members of the American military to peace, prosperity, and democracy in Japan. The American POWs of Japan are part of this Alliance history. Corporate Japan's failure to recognize the POWs now undermines the trust supporting the Alliance.

Over 60 well-known Japanese companies profited from American and Allied POW slave labor in brutal conditions to sustain their war production. The misery we endured at the hands of the employees of these companies was comparable to, and sometimes worse than, that inflicted upon us by the Japanese military. As a result, more than one thousand American POWs (over 3,500 Allied POWs) died on the main islands of Japan alone. Nearly, 40 percent of American POWs died in captivity. Those who survived found themselves with lasting physical or mental damage.

Most of the companies you are working with to bring high-speed rail to the United States used POW slave labor. These corporations boast over 100 years of continuous operation, some spanning three centuries. All utilized labor from multiple POW camps for their mines, factories, and transit facilities. Some of the camps were in Japan's occupied territories. On mainland Japan, current research finds the number of camps, just for the following seven companies, as follows: Mitsubishi-5; Mitsui-9, Hitachi-7, Kawasaki-2, Sumitomo-5, Nippon Steel-7, and Nippon Sharyo-2.

We have personal experience with three of these companies. Dr. Tenney mined coal for Mitsui. Mr. Jackfert worked the docks for Mitsui. Mr. Levenberg repaired locomotives for Nippon Sharyo. Mr. Alexander worked in a mill for Nippon Steel.

With your Japanese clients hoping to benefit from American taxpayer dollars, we are sure you understand the urgency and significance of this matter that affects both veterans from our greatest generation and the core values of the U.S.-Japan alliance. All your Japanese clients have corporate responsibility charters that commit them to pursuing human rights, international norms, and the public interest. This is an issue of basic human dignity.

As an American Judge, you also understand the importance of righting this historical injustice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lester Tenney", written over a light blue grid background.

Dr. Lester Tenney, ADBC Commander 2008-2009

Chairman, Care Packages from Home (<https://carepackagesfromhome.org>)

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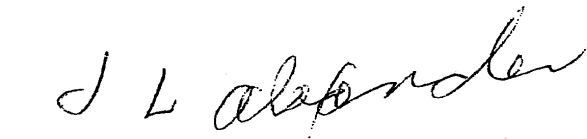
Mr. Edward Jackfert, ADBC Commander 1984-1985; 1999- 2000

Member, Board Of Directors, Brooke County Library Foundation and a Consultant to the Brooke County Library (Museum Branch , Museum of the American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor), Wellsburg, West Virginia (<http://philippine-defenders.lib.wv.us/>)
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