



Antiwar March Apr 25 2004

## Lawrence Repeta (Former Professor of Law, Meiji University)

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When the Bush Administration demanded Japanese “boots on the ground” to support its 2003 invasion of Iraq, Prime Minister Jun’ichiro Koizumi ordered the deployment of a small contingent of the Self-Defense Forces in the first significant dispatch of the SDF to an active war zone since 1945. On the day following the initial deployment, three antiwar protesters distributed flyers at SDF apartment buildings that called the deployment unconstitutional. They were arrested a month later and detained in jail cells for 75 days. Amnesty International called them “Prisoners of Conscience,” the first time it applied the term in Japan.

The case presented a severe test for Japan’s judicial system. Who would stand up to support the lonely trio? Would they find adequate defense counsel? How would the courts address their claims to free speech? Would the courts rule that the deployment violated Constitution Article 9?

The author will talk about his new book, *Japan’s Prisoners of Conscience -- Protest and Law During the Iraq War*, (Routledge, 2023), that takes readers into Japan’s courtrooms and delivers rich descriptions of the lawyers and supporters who rallied to defend the three protesters.

Reference: <https://www.routledge.com/Japans-Prisoners-of-Conscience-Protest-and-Law-During-the-Iraq-War/Repeta/p/book/9781032046266>

**December 1, 2023,  
18:30-20:00 (JST)**

**In person only**

**Room 301, 3F, Sophia University  
Building 10**

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**Lawrence Repeta** has served as a lawyer, business executive and law professor in Japan and the United States. His research focuses on Japan’s constitutional law and government transparency. He is best known in Japan as the plaintiff in a suit that made constitutional history by opening Japan’s courts to free reporting. He has served on the board of directors of Information Clearinghouse Japan, an NGO devoted to promoting open government in Japan, the Japan Civil Liberties Union, and The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus.

This talk is organized by David H. Slater (Professor of Cultural Anthropology, Sophia University).

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