



BURAKU LIBERATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE
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OPPOSE "ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM"

IS "ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM" REALLY "REBUILDING FINANCE"?

An extraordinary session of the Diet will open soon this autumn. In this session, the present trend to exploit the people -- tactically hidden under the guise of "administrative reform" -- will explode as a controversial issue. Deficit national spending continues unabated, in spite of nation-wide protest, in order to rescue monopolistic capitalism from inflation. These massive accumulated debts are now supposed to be shouldered by the people, in the name of "rebuilding finance." The national deficit now totals some 28 trillion yen, or roughly 2,800,000 yen per household.

Prime Minister Suzuki has now shifted to a tight-money policy of cutting government expenditures, which he refers to as "administrative reform." He has set forth a comprehensive exploitation program, calling for the reduction of both welfare and education budgets by cutting subsidies, strict salary controls for public servants and a drastic reduction in the number of government employees, while at the same time increasing the burden on the private citizen. However, while he is insisting on the necessity of rebuilding finance, as much as 5 trillion yen is being set aside for the military budget.

What, then, does this contradiction mean? Here the actual ugly face of "administrative reform" is revealed.

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM -- THE ROAD TO MILITARISM

The military budget inevitably destroys the life of the people. It reduces wages, destroys welfare and breaks the economy. It is right for the people to protest against this, yet when the government hears voices of opposition to militarism, it raises the spectre of "the foreign aggressor." What, the government asks, would we do if we were invaded? Why surely, they argue, defense is much more beneficial than social welfare programs, for only through strong nation defense can we lead happy, secure lives. In short, we need to see the "Russian threat" for what it is -- a ruse justifying the government's rampant militarization.

Militarization not only destroys ordinary life, but also represses the human rights of the people and gives rise to a discriminatory consciousness. The dismissal of the retrial suit in the Sayama case is but one frightening example of



the present reactionary trend as interpreted by the justice administration. One of the reasons the government fosters these ideas is that the people's dissatisfaction can be conveniently channelled into discrimination against "the other." By cultivating this "we - they" schism, the government can direct the people's unhappiness away from itself. This trend can be seen in the recent increase in unpardonable discrimination cases. Under such circumstances, the Buraku Liberation League is hard-pressed to achieve its goals.

This extraordinary Diet session will be critical in determining our nation's future. We are at the crossroads, and must choose between following the militaristic path of administrative reform or crushing this tendency and seeking the betterment of life through peace. Prime Minister Suzuki now resolutely challenges us, saying that he will stake his political reputation on this administrative reform. We should see through this and recognize that administrative reform and the road to militarism are the enemies of the Buraku Liberation Movement. Various strategies to destroy the BLL have been produced: the dismissal of the Sayama retrial suit, the increase of Buraku lists and discrimination cases, and the termination of the Law on Special Measures for Dōwa Projects, to name but a few.

PROTESTS AGAINST ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM TO BE MOUNTED

On August 31, the General Council of Japanese Labor Unions stated that administrative reform works against the laborer's lot and forces great sacrifices on the people. They decided to strike against the administrative reform in five waves when the Diet session is at its climax, and also to demonstrate around the Diet building in the latter part of October. They will set up an autumn struggle center for the first time in eight years. Secretary General Tomizuka clearly stated, "We will voice our opposition by striking for more than 72 hours, which exceeds this spring's strike."

Sharing the same feeling with this laborers' movement, the BLL has decided that we will strongly oppose the reduction of the budget for Dōwa projects and the destruction of the life of the citizen. We will carry forth with the banner "Strengthen and enforce the Law on Special Measures for Dōwa Projects" flying above us.

A passive attitude will never gain this victory. We must throw ourselves wholeheartedly into the struggle and use our creative energies on all fronts of the battle. We must never forget that the discontinuance of the Law on Special Measures for Dōwa Projects and administrative reform reflect the basic political trend of the current LDP government. We must exert ourselves to the utmost, seeing through all illusions, and struggle toward our triumph.



AUGUST 6-9: CITIZEN AWARENESS ACTIVITIES IN FULL SWING
ALL OVER JAPAN

August 6 and August 9 are the anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the beginnings of the modern peace movement. In commemoration of this important four-day period, the Buraku Liberation League brought the Sayama case, human rights and the anti-war struggle before the nation.

Various actions were taken to enlighten the public, such as having groups of children gather at schools during their holidays to learn about the Buraku problem. Other branches of the BLL chose other activities, such as study meetings, films, lectures, discussion groups, support rallies, leaf-letting and so forth. The participants in these activities gained an awareness and deeper understanding of the serious threats facing Burakumin and all mankind.

The whole of Osaka was particularly active, as each branch of the BLL responded enthusiastically by developing many activities. These included holding early morning children's meetings and over one hundred children's Buraku awareness study groups, pamphleting school gates, showing films, holding Sayama case study meetings and school assemblies, and performing plays. In addition to sponsoring peace rallies in Osaka, the Osaka BLL also sponsored a study tour to Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Museum and made strings of "1000 cranes," a symbol of everyone's undying hope for peace.

THIRTEENTH LIBERATION SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS' MEETING HELD

The 13th Buraku Liberation national meeting of high school scholarship students was held on August 11 and 12 in Nagano prefecture. "Let's realize the social situation of Liberation scholarship students and seize the initiative in the Liberation Movement in the coming generation," was the main theme of the gathering, attended by over 1,200 people.

Two guest speakers addressed the meeting. Mr. Taketoshi Nakayama and Mr. Tamio Yamanaka. Mr. Nakayama, a lawyer on the defense counsel of the Sayama case, gave a lecture entitled "The Sayama Case and I." He spoke of his career, telling how he worked his way through college and finally passed the bar examination. He continued to clean public toilets as a part-time job in order to keep acting as a lawyer for Ishikawa's defense.

Mr. Yamanaka, a member of the BLL Central Committee, spoke on "The Liberation Movement and I." Raised in Buraku,



Osaka, he and his older brother have different family names due to the fact that his brother's father divorced their mother on the basis of her Buraku origins. He sadly remembered that he and his younger sister did street fortune-telling during their childhood. These two speeches deeply moved and impressed the audience.

PROTEST AGAINST REMARKS BY PROFESSOR

We protest strongly against the discriminatory remarks of Professor _____ of _____ University, who, at the Social and Economic Development of Japan in International Relations Symposium held in West Germany in February 1981, claimed that the Buraku problem no longer exists. Indeed, this reactionary statement followed in the wake of a similar assertion by the Secretary General of the Sōtō sect, Rev. _____, at the WCRP III in August 1979. As a result of several meetings with League representatives to determine exactly what he had said, Prof. _____ has certified the contents of his remarks on that date and has promised to submit a letter affirming his new understanding of the Buraku problem.

However, Prof. _____ is not the only one who should stand accused when we consider this discrimination case. The philosophy of _____ University, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the Buraku problem should be clearly reflected in the statements of a public university professor speaking abroad.

We are currently outlining this denunciation campaign, including our comments and questions to _____ University and the involved ministries, before we proceed with the censuring struggle.

The following is a general summary of the symposium held at Berlin Free University, with a detailed account of Mr. _____'s remarks, as reported by Mr. Martin Kaneko, one of the participants.

BURAKU DISCRIMINATION DOES NOT EXIST IN EASTERN JAPAN?

--ON THE REMARKS BY PROF. _____ AT
THE SYMPOSIUM OF THE EAST ASIA INSTITUTE OF
BERLIN FREE UNIVERSITY

--BY MARTIN KANEKO

I. Introduction

The symposium entitled "The Economic and Social Development of Japan in International Relations" was held from February 5 to 7, 1981. At this symposium, the author presented "The Understanding and Development of Democracy in Japan from the Viewpoint of Governmental Minorities Policy." All papers to be presented had been distributed to the participants in advance, so we had just eight minutes to summarize the contents and proceed with the discussion. My report centered on the Dōwa(Integration) Policy. However, as there



were neither many questions nor comments directly related to this theme, we then proceeded with a discussion focused on the causes of the persistence of discrimination against Buraku in Japan. In this discussion, the chairman, Mr. Manfred Paul, asked the Japanese participants to comment on their feelings about the Buraku problem.

II. Mr. 's remarks denying the existence of Buraku

The first person called on was Mr , a professor of University. (The full text of Mr. 's remarks are appended to this article for your reference. Please read it. Because I transcribed the comments from a sometimes difficult to understand tape recording of the symposium, I assume full responsibility for any mistranslation. MK)

Mr. 's remarks surprised me very much. Although they covered various controversial issues, I will touch upon only a few points here. These comments inevitably lead us to believe that he denies discrimination against Burakumin in the eastern part of Japan exists.

He first stated, "I think the Buraku problem is no longer a minority problem. There is no problem at all in eastern Japan, and Tokyo...no longer has such great problems." He continued, "My wife is a Burakumin, but we have no problems at all." He was probably trying to assert that the Buraku problem no longer exists in eastern Japan by this last statement.

As Mr. is a university professor and, of course, Japanese, some participants in the symposium might reasonably have put more credence in his views than in anything I had to say. Moreover, no matter how relevant it was to the discussion at hand, there is no room to argue against the fact that he stated that he is married to a woman from a Buraku.

After Professor 's remarks, the chairman gave me the opportunity to refute these comments. While I was trying to explain that in the eastern part of Japan each prefecture actually has many discriminated against Buraku, I was interrupted by Professor , who declared, "No, there are no Buraku." And right after this, rather oddly, he tossed out the comment, "The word 'buraku' in Japanese simply means 'village'," which is already well-known by the foreign participants.

At this point, I quoted from "The Present Condition of the Dōwa (Integration) Policy," edited by the Prime Minister's Office in 1977, and showed concretely the number of Buraku in Saitama, Nagano and other prefectures in eastern Japan. However, Mr. assumed a defiant attitude in response, demanding, "What does 'Buraku' mean? I don't quite understand." The chairman asked me how 'Buraku' was defined by the Prime Minister's Office investigation. I explained the issue concerning the designation of Buraku areas.

Later, the chairman asked for remarks from another parti-



cipant, but Professor _____ insisted that he be allowed to continue. He then emphasized that even if there were indeed some Buraku in eastern Japan statistically, it's next to impossible to distinguish them from non-Buraku areas.

III. The mistakes and discriminatory character of Professor _____'s remarks

Basically, that's a rough summary of Professor _____'s remarks, placed in the context in which they occurred. Later, I noticed that not only I but some other participants as well regarded his remarks as a denial of the existence of discrimination against Buraku in eastern Japan. Because these remarks of Professor _____ were so clearly stated, we cannot merely dismiss the matter as a misunderstanding of some off-the-cuff comments.

I do not quite understand why he totally ignored the very concrete examples I quoted from the Prime Minister's Office's data, but rather chose to repeat in a very emotional, illogical fashion that there were no Buraku in eastern Japan. I admit that these days the Buraku have changed a great deal, and dealt with this in my paper. However, it is one thing to state that discrimination against Burakumin is being eradicated, and it is quite another to say that the Buraku are becoming more difficult to visibly recognize, or indistinguishable from non-Buraku areas.

I wonder if he doesn't know about the series of blatantly discriminatory cases which have occurred in eastern Japan--where he insists there are no Buraku. "Buraku lists" are purchased by many companies to aid in discriminatory hiring practices. Many discriminatory incidents that happened at universities in the Kanto area have been revealed, such as the scribbling of "Eta(a vicious epithet for Burakumin) should die" on the campus of Professor _____'s own University last year. According to an announcement of the Ministry of Justice, even in his own Nagano prefecture, there were 84 cases of discrimination against Burakumin taken care of by the local government or the Ministry of Justice in 1979. This means at least one incident of anti-Burakumin discrimination every four days.

It is the proper right of those who are victims of discrimination to call for the eradication of this prejudice. Professor _____'s assertions make the concept of overcoming discrimination in eastern Japan and human rights protection movements appear quite absurd, and also profanes the labor of the Burakumin and non-Burakumin struggling against this evil.

I do strongly urge Professor _____ to admit the discriminatory nature of his unfounded remarks, and to come forward against discrimination and for the protection of human rights.



POSTHUMOUS DISCRIMINATION AGAINST BURAKUMIN REVEALED
--SOTO SECT CONDUCTS INVESTIGATION & REVEALS RESULTS

The Sōtō sect, one of the largest Buddhist sects in Japan, recently conducted an investigation of their temples and revealed the results. The investigators found solid proof that special discriminatory Kaimei, names given to the dead by Buddhist priests, have been given to Burakumin so that they can be identified even after death. This practice has been going on for a very long time over a widespread area.

So far, over fifty of these discriminatory, branding posthumous names have been identified. These names appear on tombstones, on family mortuary tablets and in the temple registers; often, the vicious epithet Eta, Shinheimin, or Kyu-eta appears first, with the name of the deceased appearing as a supplementary note.

Although this investigation encompassed only areas in Nagano, Gunma, Saitama and Tochigi prefectures, the appearance of this practice throughout all these areas exposes the grim reality of religious discrimination. The Sōtō sect took the results very seriously, realizing that these discriminatory practices may prove fatal to the existence of the sect. They are currently planning a nationwide campaign to determine the full extent of this practice in the near future, in an attempt to right some of the wrong.

In an effort aimed at reform, they will immediately seal up all the discriminatory records discovered and correct all temple registers by removing all epithets and discriminatory names. After holding Buddhist memorial services, they will replace the gravestones of Burakumin suffering this eternal discrimination. It is hoped that from this ground-breaking case, new circumstances will evolve in Japanese religious practices.

Ironically, the Sōtō sect began this earnest search and purge of its discriminatory practices in response to a speech given by its Secretary General, Reverend _____, at the World Conference of Religion for Peace III (WCRP III) in August 1979. Rev. _____ participated in the U.S.-based seminar as a representative from Japan. When the conference was on the verge of adopting its conference resolution concerning the role of religion in the abolition of discrimination, Rev. _____ intervened. He insisted that there was no Buraku problem in modern Japan, indeed, that the problem was rather one of a few individuals raising a great fuss about mere trifles. His intervention resulted in the passage concerning the Buraku problem being deleted before the resolution was passed. Rev. _____'s utterance had reverberations long after the conference, for his discriminatory comments became a major controversial social issue.

The Sōtō Sect is a Zen Buddhist Sect, founded by the

priest Dogen in the thirteenth century. Its head temples are in Fukui prefecture and in Kanagawa prefecture, with 14,219 temples throughout Japan. Its followers are estimated at some 6,700,000.



(The Editorial Staff of BLRI)

Two names on a double-tombstone. The third, fourth and fifth Chinese characters in each name read "sendara," an Indian term for outcastes. Some other derogatory Buddhist names, like "chiku-otoko" ("beast-man") and "kawa-onna" ("leather woman") were also used.