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THE REALITY OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST BURAKUS IN OSAKA (I)

Results of a Fact Finding Investigation of Anti Buraku Discrimination in Osaka

Since April 1, 1982, the new Law on Special Measures for Area Improvement Projects has been in force, to cover a term of five years. In October of that year, a fact-finding study was planned in order to disclose the reality of discrimination against Buraku in Osaka and to let it serve as the basis for a five-year plan for Buraku liberation.

The investigation was done by the Fact-Finding Promotion Committee of Osaka, consisting of the Buraku Liberation League of Osaka, Dōwa Measures Promotion Conferences of Osaka City and Osaka Prefecture, the Liaison Conference of Liberation Halls of Osaka, the Buraku Liberation Research Institute and others.

Consequently, the investigation was conducted by all the branch offices, to 47 in number, and those investigated included 25,900 families and 765 individuals, so that it was the largest such study ever conducted by the Buraku Liberation League of Osaka.

The investigation comprised various items, such as number of families and people, health, housing, standard of living, employment, social welfare, education, educational needs, discriminatory experiences, marriage, the handicapped, and so on. They show clearly the reality of Buraku in Osaka today. Through the investigation and the various actions or measures taken under the Law on Special Measures for Dōwa Projects to be in force for 13 years (starting a little earlier in the case of certain Burakus), advancement can be visually grasped in certain aspects. But it is realized, however, that there are serious cases or discrimination still today.

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Here, we shall introduce the results on the major news of the investigation.

Health

(1) Health Conditions (See Table 1)

23.9 percent of the inhabitants in the area are in poor health. Among them, 14.3 percent are "rather weak", 8.8 percent "liable to be ill", and 0.8 percent have been bed-ridden. According to a survey by the Ministry of Welfare in 1981, the rate of those suffering from disease or injury is 11.8 percent. From these results it can therefore be seen that Burakumin in Osaka have twice the percentage of people in poor health as the national average.

(2) Types of Diseases (See Table 2)

According to the answers given to the question on types of diseases suffered by Burakumin, 2.13 diseases per person is calculated. In the survey by the Ministry of Welfare, 1.11 per person was calculated as the national average. Looking at these figures, the Burakumin suffer nearly twice as many diseases as the national average. As for the types of diseases the following diseases afflict comparatively far more Burakumin than non-Burakumin, at ratio figured as follows. Lumbago and stiff shoulder rank 1st, afflicting 1.5 times as many Burakumin as the national average.

Digestion disorders rank 2nd, afflicting 2.9 times as many Burakumin.

Liber troubles rank 6th, at 3.2 times. Anemia, 7th, at 10 times. Eye trouble, 8th, at 1.8 times. Ear and nose troubles, 10th, at 3.5 times. The figures for lumbago and stiff shoulder show how Burakumin overwork at hard labor. Anemia results from malnutrition. And the fact that eye, ear and nose troubles afflict so many Burakumin shows just how terrible is the state of their circumstances still today.

Table 1: Health comparison (Total: 100)

	This survey (Oct. '82)	National Health Survey (Oct. '81)
Total	100.0	100.0
Healthy	75.5	88.2
Unhealthy (Bed-ridden are included)	23.9	11.8
Unknown	0.6	-



Table 2: The types of diseases (Total: 100)

		This survey (Oct. '82) A	N.H.S. (Oct. '81) B	A/B I
Total		100.0	100.0	I
1	Throat, trachea, or lung troubles	8.7	14.0	62.2
2	Digestion disorders	11.3	3.9	289.7
3	Liber trouble	7.1	2.2	322.7
4	Heart trouble	7.6	6.5	116.9
5	Kidney trouble	3.2	0.6	533.3
6	Difficulty passing urine	1.2	—	—
7	Sugar in urine	3.9	4.1	95.1
8	Hypertension	10.0	21.8	45.9
9	Anemia	6.0	0.6	1000.0
10	Palsy	1.0		
11	Lumbago, shoulder or knee pains	14.7	9.7	151.7
12	Eczema	1.8	3.0	60.0
13	Gynecological disorders	1.6	—	—
14	Eye trouble	5.7	3.1	183.9
15	Ear and nose trouble	4.2	1.2	350.0
16	Toothache	5.1	3.1	164.5
17	Others	6.2	26.2	23.7
18	Unknown	0.6	—	—





COUNCIL OF OSAKA CITIZENS FOR INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS HOLD 6TH ANNIVERSARY MEETING TO HONOR 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The Council of Osaka Citizens for International Covenants on Human Rights held a meeting on the occasion of the 6th anniversary of its founding. Gathering in Osaka on 23 March, they had as a main slogan, "Let's implement the special plans in honor of the 35th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and keep them up for one year!"

The meeting was the first such conducted in commemoration of the Declaration.

Reports on problems of Buraku, women and Korean residents in Japan were presented. Particularly, the need for complete ratification of the International Covenants on Human Rights, as well as ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women was emphasized.

In the keynote address, direction of the plans was confirmed so that the meeting was the first step in plans to honor of the 35th anniversary the Declaration, and further efforts will be made for ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, while reconfirming the purpose of peace.

At the same time, the meeting adopted an appeal to have elimination of discrimination and protection of human rights raised as issues in society, on the grounds that discrimination has become more severe and both social welfare and human rights are out of vogue now with the growing military preparations, as well as the growing number of jobless people in the inflationary situation, although movements toward elimination of discrimination and protection of human rights have been moving forward.



The 6th Anniversary Meeting to Honor 35th Anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



"DISCRIMINATION IN MARRIAGE IS ILLEGAL AND UNJUST"

— Osaka district court (28 March 1983) —

5 Million Yen Consolation Money Awarded for Broken Engagement Caused by Discrimination against Burakul

A woman living in Higashi-Osaka City brought suit against her former fiancé and his parents for an engagement that was broken for reasons of discrimination against her family's Buraku origins. She was seeking 10 million yen in consolation money.

The Osaka district court accepted her claim, and, on March 28, stating that the fault lay not only with the man himself, but also with his parents, who had intervened in their son's proposed marriage and had led him to break off the engagement ordered the man and his parents to pay her 5 million yen for discriminatory reasons, a comparatively high amount compared to other cases of broken engagements.

The plaintiff had worked for a pharmaceutical manufacturer in Osaka City and had there met the man, a fellow employee, and they started associating with each other sometime around June 1976. She confided that she came from a family of Buraku origins, and the man showed understanding and they shortly got engaged and exchanged betrothal gifts, which is one of the Japanese ceremonies done between two families before a marriage.

His parents, however, started opposing the proposed marriage because of discrimination against Burakumin, and he gradually changed his mind and asked here to break off the engagement in April 1977. At the court he explained that the break was not based on discrimination against Burakumin, but on having their fortune told. Ishida, chief judge of the court, turned down the explanation, saying that "results of fortune-telling" was simply an excuse.

He found that breaking of the engagement could be considered nothing but discrimination against Buraku, since the man had once said, "My sister will be hindered from marrying if I marry with a Burakumin."

He also judged that this arbitrary kind of break was against public order. As for who held responsibility for the illegal deed, the man as well as his parents were judged at fault engagement since it was the parents who urged him to do end for discriminatory reasons.

According to Mr. Masaru Ueno, the plaintiff's lawyer, a lawsuit for engagement broken on the basis of discrimination against Burakumin has never been brought before the court, while there were two lawsuits that dealt with divorce based on such reasons, which were won by the parties who were discriminated against.

The Osaka Prefectural Federation of BLL (Takumi Ueda, chairman), issued a statement that the decision in the case was a warning against discrimination in marriage; which still prevails in society.



SHIBUYA SHINYO KINKO'S BUYING OF "BURAKU LISTS" BARED

The Shinyo Kinko (Credit Bank) became aware of the existence of "Buraku Lists" (Buraku Chimei Sôkan") through a direct mailing and bought such lists on 8 October 1970 as "reference for personnel affairs." It was not until 28 September 1981 that the bank reported this fact to the Ministry of Justice.

Still more, the Ministry of Justice lied that there were no more firms holding "Buraku Lists" when the BLL conducted negotiations with the Ministry in December last year.

This fact invites doubts as to the good faith of the Ministry of Justice, which has been steadfastly denying the existence of "lists-buying firms" while all along knowing about such firms and keeping their identity secret in reality they are probably many in number.

Still more, no report on the following points has been given by the Credit Bank; use of discriminatory publications, the way they kept, and whether they were disposed of, and how.

It was confirmed that further investigation of these points is necessary, and facts of the case need further discussion.

DISCRIMINATION NOT YET ELMINATED IN RELIGIOUS CIRCLES

Since the former Rev. of the Zen Buddhist Sôtô Sect came out with discriminatory declaration's at the World Conference of Religionists for Peace (WCRP) in 1979, the discriminatory nature of religious circles has been taken up as a matter of great urgency.

And the fact that there are discriminatory posthumous Buddhist names for dead Burakumin in most Buddhist sects, has been disclosed. From the survey on discrimination against Burakumin in each Buddhist sect, at least the following data has come to light.

As for the Sôtô Sect, 580 temples in 18 prefectures possess discriminatory posthumous Buddhist names on tombstones. As for the Kôya-san Shingon Sect, 16 temples in 3 prefectures possess 62 tombstones with 101 such names as well as temple records registering 53 souls with such names.

The Buzan Sect of Shingonshu has 14 temples in 7 prefectures evidencing such a practice. As for the Jôdo Sect such is the case in 6 prefectures. A survey of the Ôtani Sect of Shingonshu recently revealed the fact that discriminatory name was carved on a tombstone in Kagoshima Prefecture in December 1945.

Data collected so far probably only amounts to a part of the total number of such cases. As a result religions circles are being called upon to deal with Buraku problems more seriously.



(The Editorial Staff of BLRI)

In eastern Japan, discrimination against Burakumin continues even after death in discriminatory posthumous Buddhist names on their tumb stones. The Chinese characters carved on the above tumb stones say *sendara*, a name for the Indian out-castes. Some other derogatory posthumous Buddhist names such as *chiku-otoko* (animal man) or *kawa-onna* (leather woman) were given to Burakumin. This kind of discriminatory posthumous naming still continues today.



28TH NATIONAL WOMEN'S GATHERING OPENS

The 28th National Women's Gathering was held from 12 to 14 March in Okayama Prefecture, with 2,600 women attending. The gathering was characterized by a more serious atmosphere than ever before, since reactionary thought and militarism are gaining force in current Japanese society.

On the first day of the general gathering, Kiyoshi Ishikawa, brother of Kazuo Ishikawa, claimed that the false charges against Kazuo should be cleared away with one more push, so he called for greater support.

In the keynote address, the following matters were specifically raised; the difficult conditions of women workers, the objectionable proposed amendment to the Eugenic Protection Law, the trend of decreased rate of admittance of girl into high schools.

Corresponding to these points, it was asserted that female Burakumin were apparently the worst victims of inflation in line with the government's policy of leading the country to a position of great military power. It was emphasized that efforts should be concentrated on unity towards achieving victories in the major political election of 1983, in order to win complete liberation.

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