



July 1986

Seven Years of Discrimination in Tokyo

Displaying Discriminatory Placards and Handbills

For seven years, a man has been discriminating against a Burakumin through vicious acts and expressions. Given that persuasion has proved futile, the Buraku Liberation League is discussing taking the case to court.

"You ought to be grateful that I am at least paying attention to you new commoners." (The "new commoner" is a discriminatory term to call a class, the former outcasts, used at the Meiji Restriction.) This is just one of many examples of harassment Mr. K, a member of BLL, has endured from a neighbor, 62-year-old Ms. [redacted] for seven years.

The case began in 1979 when Ms. K constructed

a building which was not to Ms. [redacted]'s liking.

During the investigation carried out at the time by the local administration, she refused to retract a thing, saying, "What's wrong with me calling a new commoner a new commoner? ... Back where I come from (Chiba Prefecture), we never let 'kabo' cross the threshold, even today." (Like "eta" and "hinin," "kabo" is a discriminatory term for the Burakumin used in Tokyo, Yokohama and elsewhere in the Kanto area.)

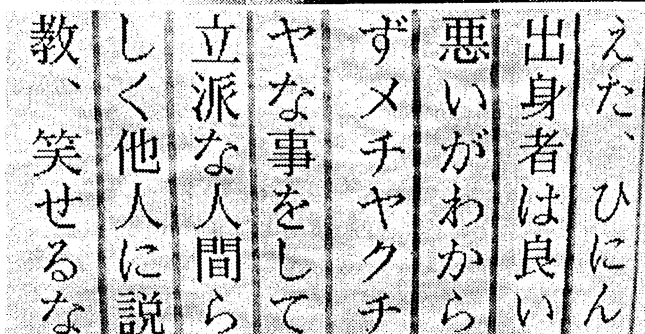
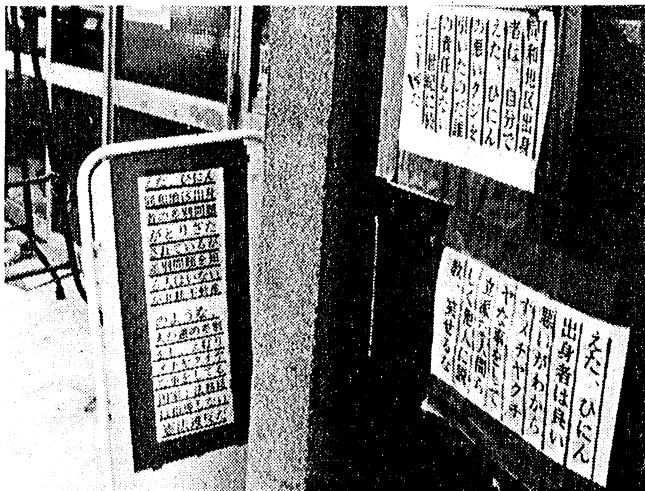
Despite her menacing attitude, the two parties concluded an agreement in July, 1985 that "each will not censure or slander the other from now on," signed in the presence of representatives from Taito Branch of BLL, the Tokyo Ministry of Justice bureau, and the local authorities.

However, even now, nothing has changed and she still continues with his discriminatory acts and expressions.

What's more, her activities have recently escalated: she is now using word processors to make placards and handbills.

The bills demonstrate his hatred through such statements as these: "People from Buraku districts just picked the wrong card when they were born."

In spite of the guidance of the Tokyo Ministry of Justice and the local authorities, Ms. [redacted] puts discriminatory handbills at his frontdoor. (June, 1986)



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It's not anyone's fault... 'Eta' and 'hinin' just don't know what's good or bad. So they get up to all sorts of things as if they were respectable human beings. It makes me laugh." (See the picture on the front page.)

Recently, she followed Mr. K's son to his elementary school, shouting "New commoner! *Eta!*" after him.

Over the years, both the local and metropolitan administration and the Ministry of Justice Bureau have given her "guidance" on eight to ten occasions — without success. She only seems to have become more aggressive: "The administration is at the BLL's beck and call." She even went to the ward office and demanded to be told the whereabouts of the nonexistent "New Commoners' Department."

There is also the issue of the responsibility of the neighbors, which the administration has avoided. For it seems that the neighbors also have a

strong sense of discrimination: in 1979 one of them told Ms. , "You are the only one who pays any attention to the new commoners."

The other day a BLL member, unable to stand it any longer, demanded that Ms. should remove the signs. And this member reported it to the police. But instead of advising him to remove them, they arrested the member, thereby only aiding discrimination.

Until then, Ms. K had put up with everything for the sake of his business. However, because the situation has become so heavy with prejudice, he says he is tired of it all.

Given that there is no longer any room for persuasion, BLL has declared that the incident should be known as "The Discriminatory Placard Case," and has decided to discuss whether to file a suit or not, not to mention pursuing the issue of administrative responsibility.

Actual Conditions in Buraku (3) ----- Education

(a) Two out of three Burakumin have only completed primary education

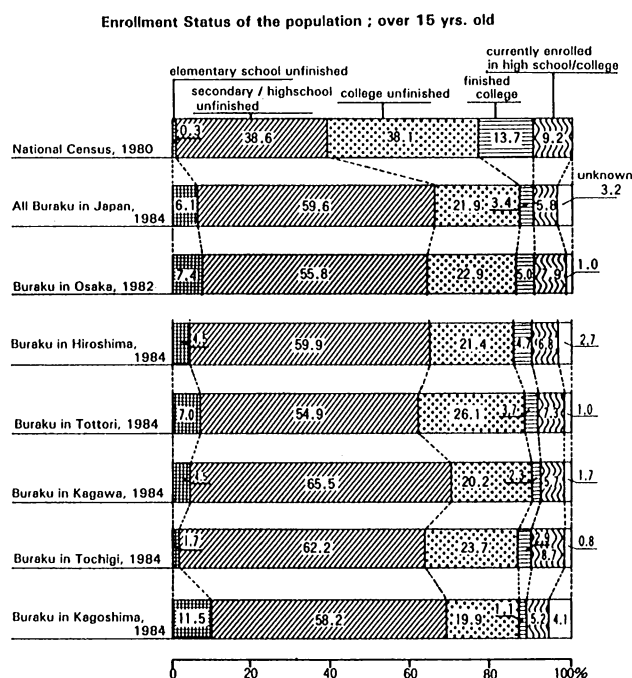
In the case of those aged 15 and above, the national average figure for children "not enrolled in schools/primary school dropouts" is only 0.3%, whereas it is 6.1% — about 20 times — for Burakumin. The figure for the category "finished primary school/junior high school dropouts, finished junior high school/high school dropouts" is 38.6% for the general population and 59.6% for Burakumin, roughly 1.5 times the national average.

In higher education, the figure for "finished college" is 13.7% for the general population, nearly four times the Buraku figure of 3.4%. A national average of 38.1% have "finished high school/dropped out from college," compared with a figure of 21.9% for Burakumin.

These consistent discrepancies vividly depict the fact that Buraku people have been seriously deprived of their rights to education.

(b) Educational achievement also differs significantly among the younger generation

To what extent has the progress of the Buraku liberation movement narrowed the gap between the





level of educational enrollment for young non-Burakumin and that for Burakumin? Data obtained from the survey reveal the persistence of a conspicuous disparity.

In the case of young people between 25 and 29, those who have only "finished primary school" account for 19.2% of the general population and 28.1% of Burakumin.

In the higher education sector, 32% of this age group have "finished college" among the general population, compared with only 12.9%, less than half the national average, in the case of Burakumin.

The proportion of those who have "finished secondary school" is largest in the case of both Burakumin and non-Burakumin. But the second largest category is "finished only primary school" in the case of Burakumin and "finished college" in the case of the general population. There are evidently a host of problems regarding the education of young people, including the lower ratio of Buraku high school students going to college.

(c) Significant gap still exists in the rate of advance to high school

The following chart illustrates the proportions of graduates of junior high school going to high school. In 1963 the national average figure was 66.8%, compared with 30% — less than half — for Burakumin. These figures climbed both for the Burakumin and for the general population, boosted by the establishment of a scholarship system and the progress of the liberation movement.

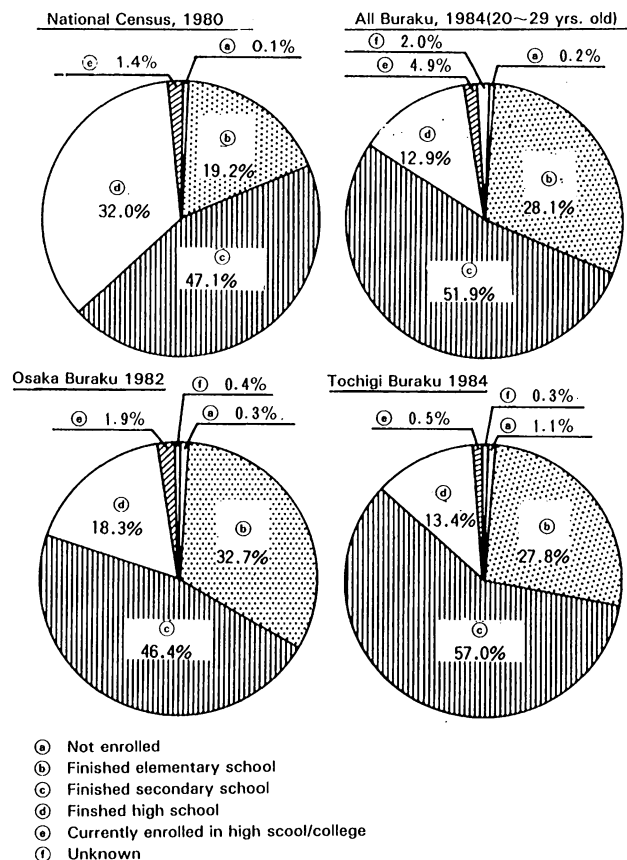
The gap between the two figures narrowed gradually but has widened again in recent years. The 1985 figures were 94.1% for the general population and 87.3% for Burakumin. But this difference of 6.8% has increased since 1975, when it was 4.4%. The same trend has been observed in Osaka, too. In Shiga Prefecture, the 1983 figure for Burakumin was 74.2%, 17.3% lower than the national average.

We must remember the fact that in some areas, such as Kagawa Prefecture and Nagoya City, the 1982 figures for Burakumin were 61.9% and 60.9% respectively, even below the national average for 1963.

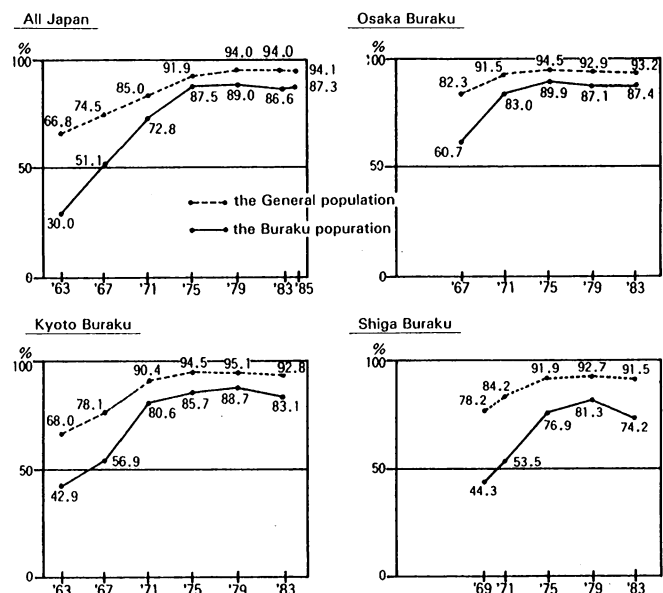
(d) Advance to college — only half the average

The rate of advance to college was 21.8% in

Enrollment Status of the population ; 25-29 yrs. old



Rate of Advance to High school





1970, reaching a peak of 38.3% in 1978. The figure for all Buraku was 14.2% in 1979, increasing to 17.6% in 1982 — less than half the national average. It is significant that unlike in the case of high schools, the gap between the rates of college entrance has hardly narrowed at all.

In Osaka Prefecture, the national figure peaked at 46.7% in 1978, subsequently decreasing to 36.1% in 1983. The figures for Buraku were 25.2% in 1978 and 17.1% in 1983, less than half the national average. In other words, the disparity remained virtually constant: 21.5% in 1978 and 19.0% in 1983.

In Nara Prefecture, the rate of advance to college was 41.0%, 5.9% higher than the national average. The figure for Buraku in Nara was correspondingly high — 27.1% in 1983, the largest percentage in any prefecture. This still left a gap of 13.9%. In Tottori Prefecture, the figure for Buraku has been declining in line with the figure for the entire prefecture, itself more than double the Buraku figure.

The 1982 figures for many prefectures are in the teens: 12.2% (Kumamoto), 13.5% (Nagano) and 14.3% (Saga), etc.

(e) Nearly four out of five colleges and universities have no courses on Buraku liberation

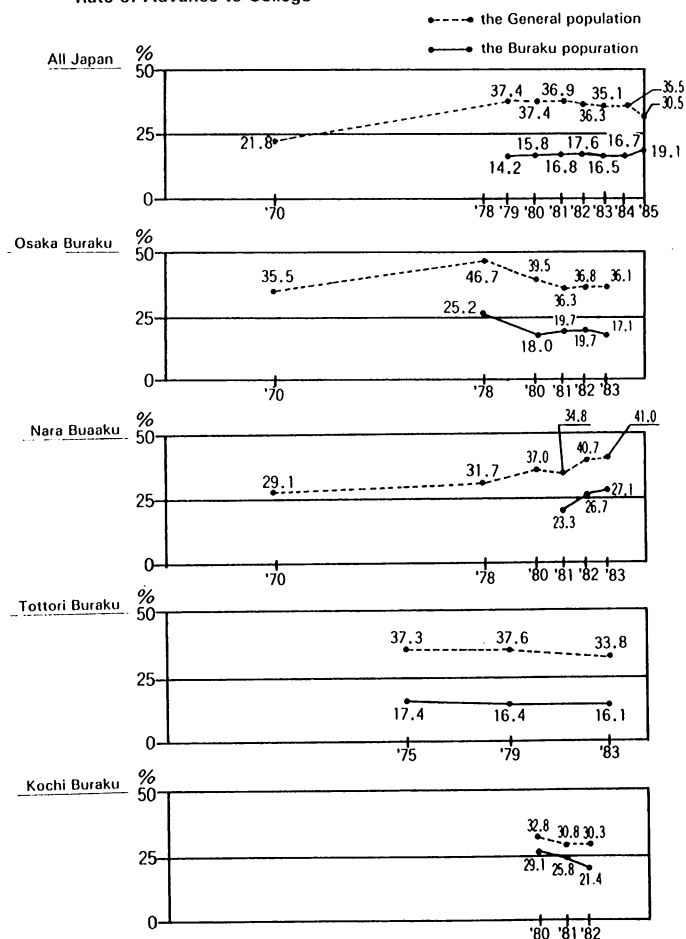
The commitment of colleges and universities to the promotion of Buraku liberation education has been surveyed by looking at the courses on Buraku-related subjects that they offer.

Nearly 80% of all institutions have no such courses. Tokyo, Aichi and other eastern prefectures in general have particularly few courses. No courses at all are offered in the Tohoku, Hokuriku and Hokkaido regions.

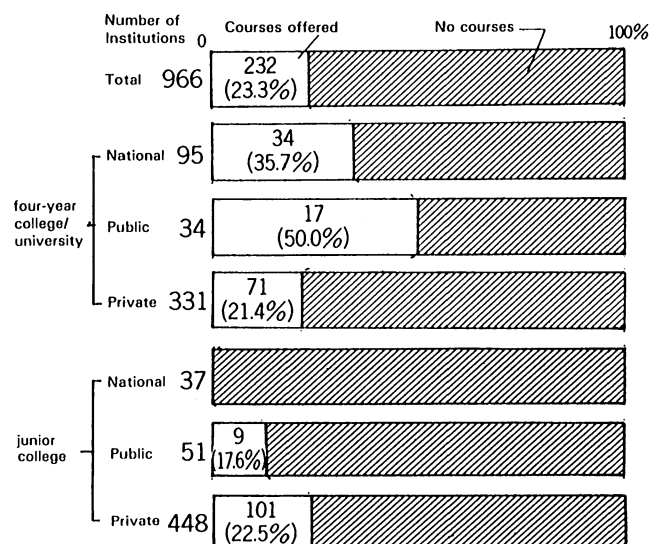
It is already 20 years since the Integration Council's Report was issued, but progress has been very slow. We particularly deplore the fact that institutions of higher education, which have a significant influence on society and from which school teachers graduate in large numbers, have made very limited attempts to tackle the Buraku discrimination issue.

Even in colleges and universities which do offer courses on Buraku-related subjects, there is scope for further improvement in the following areas: (1) contents and conditions; (2) establishment of institutions for research; (3) creation of a body responsible for implementation; (4) commitment to other human rights issues.

Rate of Advance to College



Courses on Buraku Liberation-Related Subjects in Different Higher Education Institutions





Lecture Series ; “Emperor System and Human Rights”

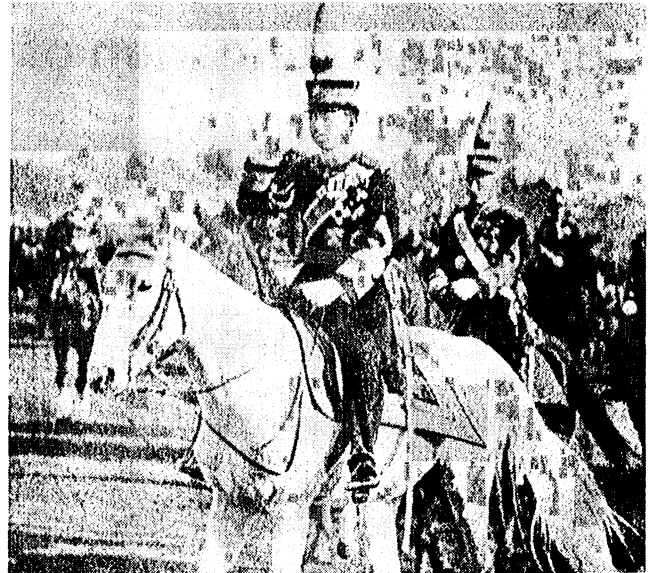
The first session of “lecture series ; Emperor System and Human Rights” was held on February 11, sponsored by the Buraku Liberation Research Institute and supported by the Buraku Liberation League, Osaka and Osaka Prefectural Citizens Joint Struggle Conference for Buraku Liberation. The objective of the series is to reconsider the Emperor System from an anti-discrimination perspective under circumstances where the 60th anniversary of the enthronement of the Emperor has been politically publicized by the government and media.

The hoisting of the *Hi-no-maru* (Rising Sun) flag, allegedly the national flag of Japan, and singing of the *Kimi-ga-yo* (Imperial Reign) ‘national anthem’, have been promoted or even forced, in some cases, by the Ministry of Education at schools all over Japan. The series will be run throughout the year to reflect on these issues.

In the first session, Kenzo Tomonaga, Secretary-General of BLRI delivered the opening address. During the past 60 years, he said, “Japanese militarism was defeated in WW II and the Japanese Constitution was established, thus transforming the nature of the Emperor System. The Emperor under the new constitution is just a symbolic figure. The enforcement of the new principles of the constitution marked the true founding of today’s Japan.”

Prof. Suetō Murakoshi of Osaka City University, Director-General of BLRI, presented a keynote speech. He emphasized the following points. “At the end of the Edo period (mid-19th century), most of the general public were unaware of the existence of the Emperor. Worship of the Emperor was created through education after the Meiji era. The Imperial family was portrayed as an unbroken line of divine descent and as sacred and inviolable. In contrast, the general public were regarded as slaves or servants of the Imperial family. In the name of ‘Protection of the state’, people were mobilized into wars and invasion of other nations. Such a system of discrimination controlled the general consciousness of the public.”

“Even the movement for democratic rights that marked the rising democracy of the Taisho era (1911-1925) was not sufficiently critical of the



Emperor Hirohito, as the “Great General of the Army” Which was the highest military officer, at a military review. (Jan.8, 1928)

Emperor System. The struggles of the Suiheisha (Levelers’ Association), the first national body of Burakumin struggling for liberation, confronted the hierarchical Emperor System with denunciation tactics which were based on principles of equality. The Suiheisha was thoroughly suppressed.”

“The Japanese constitution was established after the war, but the Imperial Household Law, framed simultaneously, stipulated as follows: Only a male child of the Imperial family can assume the position of Emperor. Two elements are discriminatory and therefore contrary to the constitutional provisions: descent and gender are specified as requirements for becoming the Emperor. Recently those in power are advocating the Emperor worship as a means of national unification and trying to avert the eyes of the public from the problems that exist today.”

In the question and answer period that followed, several important points were raised: we need to look critically at deep-seated aspects of the Emperor system in our daily life; we need to deepen our awareness of the fact that the Imperial family owns a huge area of land and spends a lot of money on many occasions (about 10 billion yen or 63 million US dollars in fiscal 1984).



Diet Debates Analyzed

Why Is the Japanese Government Reluctant over Complete Ratification of the International Covenants on Human Rights?

In 1979, Japan finally ratified the International Covenants on Human Rights after both domestic and international pressure. However, reservations were made concerning three items for Covenant A (remuneration for work on public holidays; the right to strike; gradual implementation of free higher education) and concerning optional protocols for Covenant B. A resolution was moved at the Diet regarding these reservations: "In view of various circumstances and the implementation of provisions, we will reconsider the reservations."

Nonetheless, no such reconsideration seems to be contemplated by the government.

Japan is the second biggest nation in the western world in terms of GNP. Japan was, however, the 60th nation to ratify the Covenants and she has not yet ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Japan is "underdeveloped" as regards the protection of human rights. We Japanese citizens bear the great responsibility of demanding that the government further their human rights protection policies and measures. But through this report, we would like to ask our international friends to learn about the discouraging lack of government initiative from these excerpts from deliberations at the Diet.

(Question) The Optional Protocols of Covenant B is an important instrument for international protection of human rights based on communications from individuals. Shouldn't it be ratified immediately?

(Response) Mr. Nakahira, government representative: "As you just pointed out, a resolution was moved at the Diet concerning accession to Covenant B. We are giving due consideration to it by positively examining ways to ratify the Optional Protocols. However, we still have some uncertainty about the universal applicability and effectiveness of the

system in question based on individual communications. We have so far carefully observed the implementation of the system, and detected no significant flaws." (at the House of Representatives; March 7, 1986)

(Question) Isn't it unjustifiable for Japan, enjoying the second largest GNP in the western world, to maintain reservations on "remuneration for work on public holidays", "the right to strike" and "gradual implementation of free higher education" — something done by few nations? Japan is neglecting her responsibility to the international community to play an important role in protecting human rights and peace for the world, it seems.

(Response) Mr. Nakahira, government representative: "With respect to 'remuneration for work on public holidays', the matter of whether or not wages are to be paid on national holidays should be appropriately negotiated between labor and management. We have made a reservation because we feel it is not proper to force payment of wages through legal provisions. Regarding 'the right to strike', the provision in the Covenant is not consistent with domestic provisions. This is why we made a reservation. Finally, turning to the 'gradual implementation of free higher education', private schools have a large share in Japan in higher and post-secondary education. Our policy is to achieve a fair balance in payment of tuition and fees between national / public schools and private schools. 'Free education' is not really compatible with the operation of private schools. Such considerations led to the reservation. We have reconsidered these premises on several occasions in the light of new developments in society, but we have not reached any conclusions on whether to withdraw those reservations yet."

(Question) The government made no reservations

concerning the legal protection of privacy and legal prohibition of incitement to war or discrimination, both stipulated in Covenant B. However, seven years after ratification, domestic laws for these items have not been provided yet. On the contrary, personal background investigations leading to discrimination against Buraku, illegal acquisition of copies of family registers, graffiti calling for violence against Burakumin and Koreans have all been abundantly in evidence. Shouldn't domestic laws be provided promptly?

(Response) Mr. Nakahira, government representative:

"As you said, protection of privacy and prohibition of incitement to war and discrimination are stipulated in Covenant B. We believe that privacy is duly protected by the Constitution, criminal law and

other related laws. With respect to incitement to war, current constitutional provisions and mainstream public feeling assure us that acts of incitement to war may not cause any serious violation of concrete interests. Should some concrete legal violations be anticipated in the future, we will examine the possibility of legislation to cope with the situation. As for the prohibition of incitement to racial hatred or discrimination, the Constitution and other laws guarantee the equality of people. It should happen that the present legal framework proves insufficient to control some concrete violation of legally protected interests, we will examine ways to legislate a new framework, giving due consideration to its relationship to freedom of expression and publication."

National Survey of the Ministry of Education Reports 150,000 Cases of Bullying

Seriously concerned about the increase of "bullying", the Ministry of Education published a report on February 21 based on the "National Survey on Bullying and Corporal Punishment," the first ever covering public elementary, junior and senior high schools.

The report indicates that during the survey period running from April 1 to October 31 last year, 155,066 cases of bullying occurred in 21,899 schools. Half of elementary, 70% of junior high and 40% of senior high schools had experienced bullying incidents. This drew attention to the fact that most of the cases occur between the higher grade of elementary and second grade of junior high, and that bullying is more likely to occur in schools located in metropolitan areas or large cities. If we take into account the fact that the survey was inadequate in some prefectures and a case of the boy who committed suicide last February because of bullying, it is evident that there are more cases than those reported.

As bullying had become a major social problem, on October the Ministry of Education instructed 24,796 public elementary schools, 10,346 junior high schools and 4,273 high schools to conduct a

survey of conditions over the past seven months.

According to the survey, 52.3% of the elementary schools (12,968 schools) reported 96,457 cases, meaning 7.4 cases per school. In junior high, 52,891 cases occurred in 7,113 schools (68.8% of the total); 7.4 cases per school. And 1,818 high schools (42.5%) reported 5,718 cases; 3.1 cases per school.

It is reported that 119,313 cases (76.9%) have been settled while 35,753 cases (23.1%) are still under investigation.

Figures also indicate that bullying incidents increase as elementary pupils go higher in grade: 21,394 cases occurred in the 6th grade. In junior high, first grade accounts for the majority of 20,139 cases while the numbers decrease as the grade gets higher. The highest percentage of cases seems to occur between the 5th grade of elementary school and the second grade of junior high school, and 54% of the cases involved boys.

The form the bullying takes is similar in every school: For example, "banter and tease," "use of violence," "leaving someone out of the gang," and "browbeating." Incidents are usually noticed by the students' teachers (33%) but some cases are disclosed by the victim, friends or parents.



These facts indicate the following trends: 1) human rights issues symbolized by discrimination against Burakumin and racial minorities, discrimination against the handicapped, discrimination against women, etc. are hardly taught in schools; 2) educational concern about human rights has very low priority among the guiding principles, budget and ladder of responsibility in the Ministry of Education and in the board of education; 3) because the concerns of the school and of the parents lie in the equation "test grades = scholastic ability," this "scholastic ability" creates hierarchical categories of superiority and inferiority, first and last, thereby breaking up children's friendships; 4) while the Japanese educational authorities neglect to take any

steps against this, the Ad-Hoc Education Council working under the Prime Minister has adopted an approach that encourages exclusive competition among children. This in effect means that the Japan Teachers' Union (*Nikkyoso*) has not organized an effective movement among the parents and children.

The liberation movement considers that the bullying problem has been produced by exam competition, an educational policy that neglects human rights issues and an educational administration that ignored the issue. Both the bullied and bullies are the victims of this. The Buraku liberation movement will tackle this issue in order to make true progress for both human rights education and liberation education.