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Harsh Discrimination in Former Soviet Union Reported

By Mr. Zinovy Khanin

14th Researchers Meeting & 36th General Assembly

On July 11 and 12, 1992 the 14th National Buraku Liberation Researchers Meeting, as well as the 36th General Assembly of the Buraku Liberation Research Institute were held with about 270 participants at Momoyama-so, Ayameike, Nara Pref.

The 36th general assembly opened with a speech by Mr. Sueo Murakoshi, Director of the Institute, followed by guest speeches by the Osaka Municipal government.

Mr. M. Nishikawa, a lawyer, reported on testimony made by a former police officer who had taken part in the investigation of the Sayama Case. Regarding the officer's statement he said, "We didn't find the fountain pen on the lintel during the first search of Mr. Ishikawa's house on May 23". This was submitted to the Tokyo High Court as new evidence on July 7 and Mr. Nishikawa added that the struggle since 1986 for approval of the second plea for a retrial of the Sayama Case was now reaching its most crucial aspect.

Then several bills were proposed by Mr. Kenzo Tomonaga, Secretary General of the Institute, and approved with applause by all the participants.

Following the assembly, the 14th Researchers General Meeting was held. The guest speaker, Mr. Zinovy Khanin (a former senior research worker of Oriental Studies, Leningrad branch,) who was visiting Japan, was invited by the Buraku Liberation Research Institute; he made a commemorative lecture entitled "View from Russia on the Buraku

Issue of Japan". To begin with, he talked about his own experiences as a discriminated Jew having lived in the former Soviet Union, and stated that discrimination still remains in today's Russia and that nationalistic fascist groups are stirring up anti-Semitism, resulting in the exodus of Jewish people from the country. It was under such circumstances, he explained, that he had begun studying the Buraku problems in Japan, seeking for the solution of discrimination problems in his country in studying counterpart problems in Japan.

He then talked about Mr. Boris Gorbakov, a Jewish writer who had introduced the Buraku problems to the former Soviet Union for the first time. The writer published a book, "A Man from Buraku" in 1953 (as a matter of fact it had been published in 1946 in "Nihon Shinbun", a newspaper

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for Japanese war prisoners in Sakhalin) in protest against anti-Semitism enforced by the Communist Party. In the former Soviet Union, however, the Buraku problems in Japan were utilized by the Communist Party with the view of showing off the benefits of socialism, contrasting the negative aspects of capitalism. Those problems were never taken up as a comparison with human rights problems in the country. The fundamental error made in the ethnic policies in the former Soviet Union was that ethnic problems were regarded merely from the view point of class consciousness, thinking that the problems would be solved if only the socialist revolution succeeded. And then as soon as the world revolution drew back and their ideal for constructing a socialist society began receding, the authorities started to enforce such policies as the deportation of Jews, exploiting anti-Semitism and/or racism in order to retain their power. In this respect, it was good to learn that in Japan the Buraku problems experienced by the Suiheisha (National Leveler's Association) movement in 1930s were not seen as class problems, but were taken up from a more comprehensive point of view. Other lessons to be deduced: (1) the policy regarding class conflict as sublime is wrong; (2) the policy regarding social position's benefits first is wrong; (3) retaining one's identification is essential; (4) groups of discriminated people and their organizations should establish their leadership and not commit it to political parties; (5) Japanese society, as a whole obviously has expressed the support for minorities.

Finally Mr. Khanin stated that the world has been brought together more than ever since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, though, on the other hand, ethnic conflicts have been serious. He concluded that people in the world must together make efforts to eliminate discrimination, learning from past experiences, both positive and negative. He also expressed his determination to work harder on the study of Buraku problems as a Russian historian and a Japanologist, realizing the importance of research of the Buraku problems in Japan,

After his lecture some discussion followed, and the general meeting was closed.

In the evening of the 11th, participants were divided into four sections to take part in discussion of the issues proposed as follows: Mr. Hiroshi Fukuda (Tsukuba Univ.), "Human rights education by Ralph



Mr. Khanin, third from the left.

Pettman --His Idea and Method"; Mr. Z. Khanin "Ethnic Policies in the Former Soviet Union"; Mr. Minoru Maegawa (Society for Ratification of Convention on the Rights of the Child), "Ratification of Convention on the Rights of the Child and renovation in the Country"; Mr. Fumio Iida (Osaka pref. Dowa Education Research Council), "Significance and Tasks of organizing Osaka Prefectural Research Council for Foreigners Education (tentatively named)", Mr. Toshiki Uei (Ueno-shi Buraku History Research Institute) "Process to Founding Iga-Ueno Suiheisha"

In the morning of the 12th, four more section meetings were held: Mr. Yasumasa Tomoda (Osaka Univ.) "Problems out of survey results of Minoo city administrative officials' consciousness"; Mr. Yukio Nakao (National Liaison Council of Rimpokan) "On Rimpokan Activities hereafter"; Mr. Shozo Suzuki (Buraku Liberation Research Institute) "Human Rights Education in U.S.A.: Head Start Planning"; Mr. Takehiro Kobayashi (Kyoto Municipal Historical Archives) "Suiheisha in Shizuoka Pref."

Finally, all the participants again met together and Mr. Masayuki Ohga, Director of the Research Div. of the Institute, made some reports to conclude the 14th meeting.



The Fountain-pen Was Not There At The First House Search

Defense Counsels Submit New Evidence for 'Sayama Case'

Former police officer retestified about the key evidence for conviction

The defense counsels of Mr. Kazuo Ishikawa (53 year old) of the 'Sayama Case' which occurred in Sayama, Gunma prefecture in 1963 have submitted new evidence supporting Mr. Ishikawa's innocence to the Tokyo High Court by July 9, testified a former investigator of the case. The second plea for a retrial claiming his innocence (the case ended with Mr. Ishikawa's life imprisonment) is now under examination by the Court. The former police officer testified that at the time of the first search of Mr. Ishikawa's house, they did not find the fountain pen, which is regarded as one of the most important pieces of evidence for conviction. The defense counsels believe that his statement suggests that evidence was made up by the investigation authorities.

The new evidence was disclosed by a 72 year-old man identified only as Mr. A who had served as a police officer at Sayama police station at the time.

The fountain pen owned by the high school girl was allegedly found on the lintel above the kitchen door when they searched Mr. Ishikawa's house for the third time. Mr. A testified definitely to the defense counsels, "I took part in the first house search. I groped for the fountain pen on the lintel in question, but it was not there". His written statement was prepared in triplicate and presented to the Tokyo High Court as supplemental evidence.

Mr. A once told the defense counsels that he had searched over something like a lintel in the drawing room. But when questioned again this time, he responded as stated above. He said he could not tell the truth for fear of trouble.

The defense counsels presented the second plea for a retrial in August in 1986 when they got an expert judgement that the handwriting of the threatening letter sent to the victim's family was different from that of Mr. Ishikawa's letter. They also obtained testimony from seven former investigators, including Mr. A, who had taken part in the first and the second house search; "We searched over something like a lintel but did not find the fountain pen". The Counsels have submitted this evidence as supplemental, yet it is less definite than the new evidence.

In the Sayama case three pieces of evidence: a fountain pen, a wrist watch and a bag belonging to the victim, which were allegedly found according to the confession of the accused, are regarded as crucial. Whether the Tokyo High Court accepts the plea for a retrial or not will depend upon whether they opt for a fact finding investigation under the new evidence.

Mr. Kazuyoshi Fujita, one of the defense counsels, said, "Now that it has been disclosed that the investigation authorities made up evidence, we have made a big step for a retrial".

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Editor of Buraku Liberation News



Agitating Discrimination With Hand Speaker and Placard

[Aichi Branch] The same scene was repeated in Nagoya, having occurred three times at the Nagoya station in April: a man put a placard with discriminatory messages written on it in the street, agitating loudly through a hand speaker.

This time it was May 21. The same man, identified as S, put a placard written 'Dowa Buraku People are germs', at the southeast corner of Nagoya Castle, which is located to the north of the West Office of Nagoya City Hall. He wore another placard on his back (shown in the photo) and began shouting through a hand speaker.

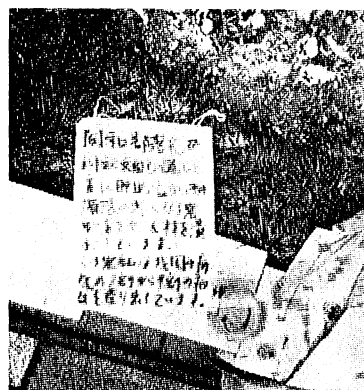
Again this time the man would not stop when the legal affairs bureau, the prefectural and city authorities tried to reason with him. Ms. Mitsuyo Kashikuma, a member of the Prefectural Assembly and director of the Dept. of prefectural Citizen's Living of Social Democratic Party, and Mr. Takeuchi, prefectural Secretary general of Joint Combat, who happened to be in the prefectural office at that time, rushed there to persuade him against continuing. But he shouted back at them through the speaker.

They were shocked to realize that they could do nothing but watch such discriminatory activity being repeated just in front of them.

The Legal Affairs Bureau, Aichi Prefecture and Nagoya City are continuing to try to persuade him, but he will not listen to them yet.



A man put a placard with discriminatory message written on it and agitating through a hand speaker.



Placard on S's back.

• White Paper on Human Rights in Japan 1984

Compiled by Buraku Liberation Research Institute

Various types of human rights situations in Japan are described: Discrimination against Buraku, Koreans, AINU, Handicapped people, Okinawans, Women, A-bomb victims, Hansen's disease and Japanese Americans.

Size : 210mm×143mm, 205 pages, Price : ¥ 2000

• Buraku Problem in Japan – Buraku Liberation News No 1~50 (1981~89) –

Compiled by Buraku Liberation Research Institute

Combined edition of English language newsletter (bimonthly), "Buraku Liberation News" from Nos. 1~50, covering the period of 1981~1989.

Size : 256mm×182mm, 442 pages, Price : ¥ 2000



Discriminatory Screening Through Application Form Requesting to Fill Permanent Address, Family Member's Occupation, Place of Work: Family Registration Paper Also Required

Denki Kogyo

An application form used by a certain company requests a job applicant to fill in his permanent address, the occupations and work places of his family members, as well as matters of household. It also defines that an applicant should submit a copy of his family registration from his permanent address. This vicious case of discrimination was disclosed on June 2 in Tokyo.

The company is named Denki Kogyo. Our Tokyo Metropolitan Union has been investigating the case with the help of the Tokyo Metropolitan Dowa Education Council and the Metropolitan High School Teachers' Union.

According to a survey on employment by the Tokyo Metropolitan High School Union in fiscal 1991, many enterprises in the Tokyo Metropolitan area still ask an applicant to provide his permanent address and/or parents' occupation during the interview, or else they use inappropriate forms instead of using unified application forms.

During the fact finding hearing, Denki Kogyo explained that in 1963 they began using an unified 'Application Form', modifying a personal resume form which used to be presented individually,

to add a few more items necessitated by personnel management. It was relabeled 'Application Form for Employment' in 1969 and, since then, they have requested employees to submit the form some time after they get informal notice of appointment and not later than when they start for their designated posts.

Important problems still remain such as clarifying whether the company requested applicants to submit the form, knowing that it was offensive the use of the unified form was begun in 1977, after publication of the 'Facilitator for Study and Training of Dowa Problems'. In the Tokyo area it was learned that 19 cities including Tama city requested applicants to fill in their permanent address on their resume forms (previously reported).

'Toren' is to work harder against such cases of offense against the unified application form in order to eliminate discrimination in employment.

The Standard of Living

1. Annual income is remarkably low

(1) Fig. 16 shows Buraku annual income (tax inclusive) compared with the prefectural level. Salary, bonus, income from house-rent, pension, business income, etc. are included in this amount. The figure for the prefectural level is extracted from the 1989 "National Survey of Fact-finding about Consumption" by Management and Coordination Agency. The object of the survey is households of over 2 family members. As can be seen in Fig. 16, households having an annual income under 1 million yen are very few and households with an income over 5 million yen are over 40% in every prefecture. It can be seen that the Buraku people's annual income is low.

(2) Our attention is drawn to the fact that householders under the age of 20, those in their 60s and particularly those in their 70 share an annual income of under 1 million yen.

(3) Looking at the householder's occupation, it is pointed out that full-time workers and those who are self-employed enjoy a high income. Therefore, in order to solve such a situation it is important that the Buraku people can work under stable job circumstances and in modern industry. According to the type of household, the income of mother-child families and disabled families is lower and in particular, the income of elderly people living alone is under 1 million yen. The percentage is 62.7%.

2. There are a lot of households exempt from inhabitant tax.

(1) According to the "Basic Survey of People's Life" by the Ministry of Health and Welfare (1989), in the whole country, non-taxable households of inhabitant

tax are 15.4%; taxable households by per capita rate of inhabitant tax are 5.3% and taxable households by the rate of income tax are 79.5%. As the inhabitant tax consists of municipality tax and prefectural tax, the households who live on welfare and similar households are exempted from inhabitant tax. The inhabitant tax per capita is taxed uniformly in spite of high or low income, and inhabitant tax by the rate of income taxation is paid according to respective income. As a result, taxable households of income taxation enjoy the highest income; however, as can be seen in Fig. 19, the most nearest percentage of Buraku to the national average is 71.7% in Gunma prefecture (national average 79.5%). Kyoto, Wakayama and Shimane prefecture are 60%. Kagawa and Saga prefecture are under 50%.

(2) On the contrary, non-taxable household of inhabitant tax are: Kyoto (42.4%), Wakayama pref. (35.2%), Shimane pref. (21.6%), Kagawa pref. (21.9%) and Saga pref. (41.3%) compared to the national average of 15.4%. Only Gunma pref. (10.3%) and Tottori (14.9%) show percentages smaller than the national average. This shows the poor level of the Buraku people's livelihood.

(3) Looking at the change of inhabitant tax situation, the households per capita rate of inhabitant tax have decreased and taxable households have increased. The taxable households by the rate of income taxation have not shown a big change. Regarding the Buraku situation in Gunma pref., the taxable households per capita has decreased and non-taxable households have increased. This is the same tendency as the national situation. In the case of Kyoto, the households per capita have decreased and non-taxable households and taxable households by income taxation have increased. In the case of Tottori pref. the trend of taxable households per



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Fig. 17 Income by householder's occupation.

(%)

		under 100 million yen	100-300 million yen	300-500 million yen	over 500 million yen
Type of employment	Full-time	1.7	26.1	34.4	35.3
	Temporary	17.2	55.1	15.4	8.9
	Day laborer	13.1	57.3	19.2	6.5
	Self-employed	5.1	27.3	27.2	33.5
	unemployed	38.2	42.4	7.8	4.6
Type of household	mother-child family	17.1	61.5	12.5	3.5
	father-child	7.5	39.5	31.3	14.3
	Elderly	14.6	45.7	15.7	18.4
	Living alone	62.7	30.3	2.0	1.3
	disabled	22.4	42.1	15.7	14.7



Fig. 15 Income by householder's age (Osaka Pref.)

(%)

	Under 1million yen	1-3 million yen	3-5 million yen	over 5million yen
Under 20s	23.2	44.9	8.7	7.2
20s	6.3	48.7	34.1	7.6
30s	3.2	26.9	38.4	28.1
40s	5.2	25.0	28.6	36.4
50s	10.4	28.5	22.0	33.7
60s	23.5	41.3	15.5	14.5
Over 70s	42.8	40.2	6.6	5.3

Fig. 16 Comparison between householder's annual income in Buraku and national average

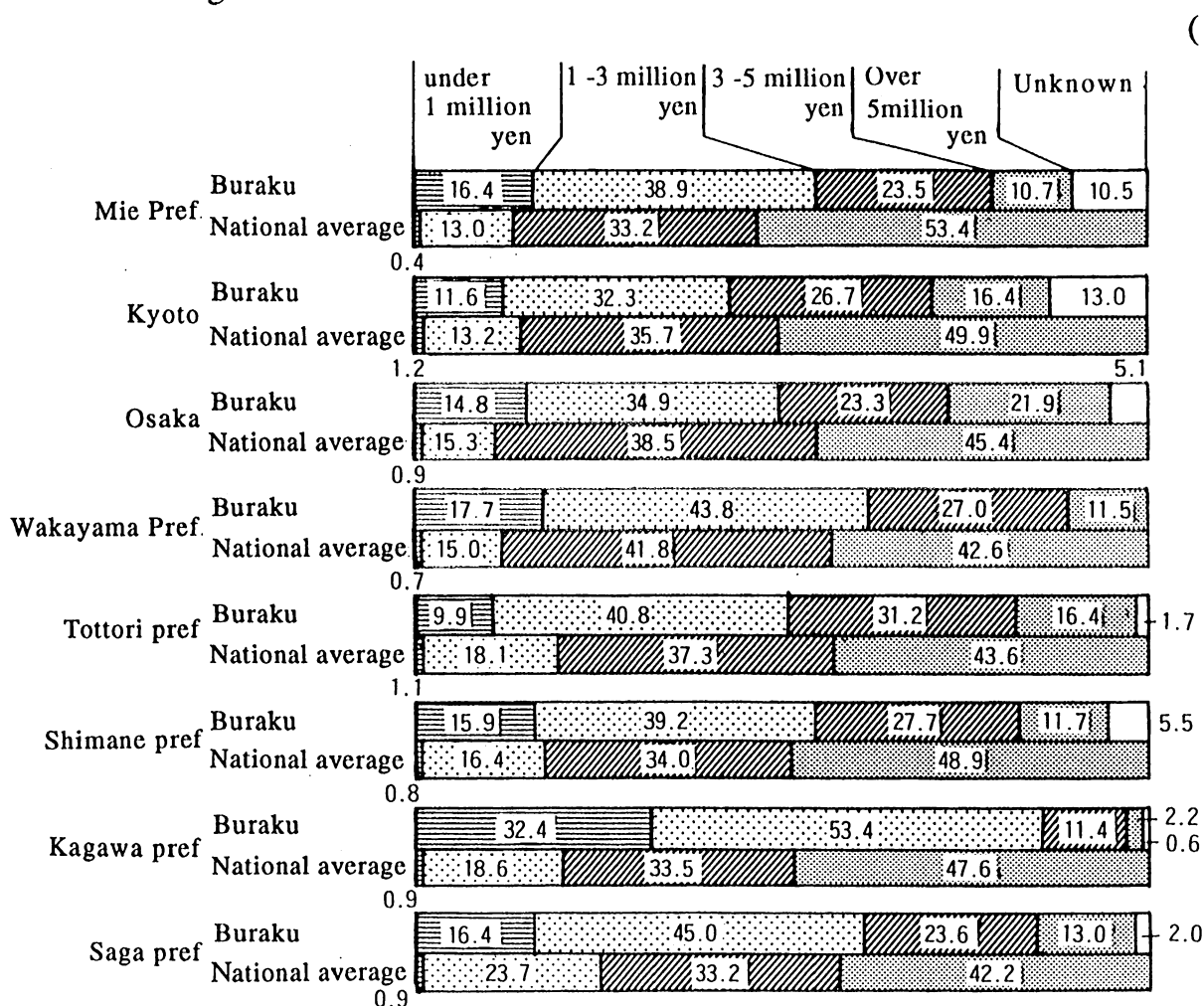


Figure for the national average was extracted from the "Fact-finding national survey about consumption" by Management and Coordination Agency (1989)



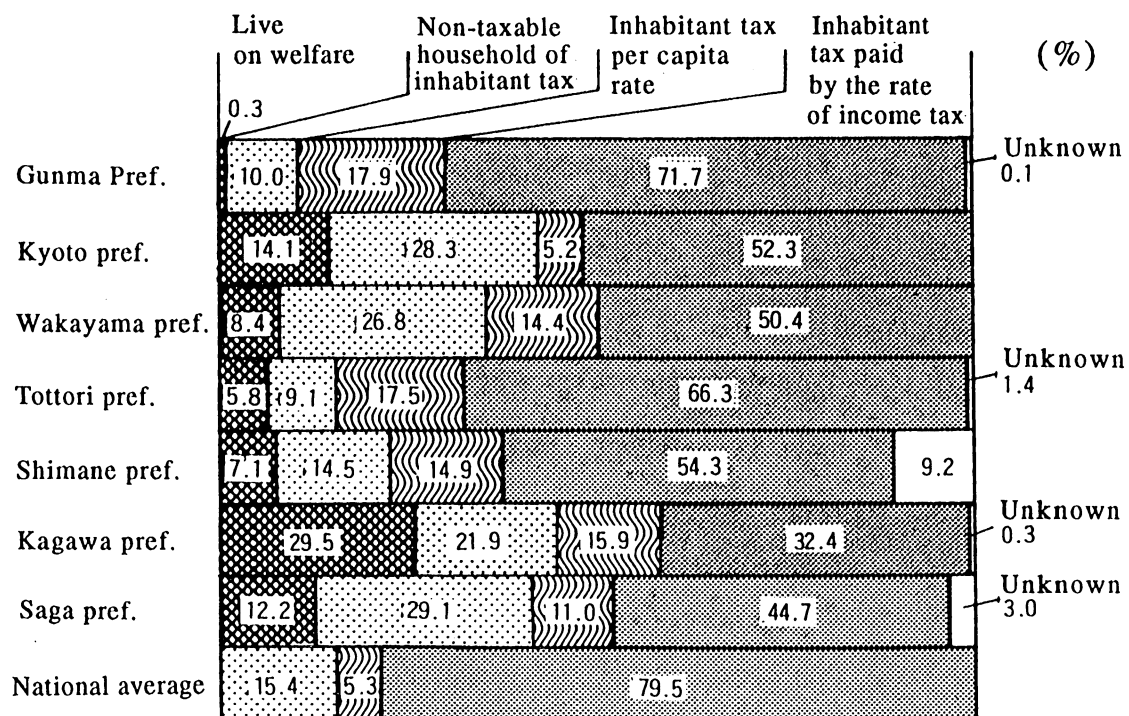
Fig. 18 Change of taxable situation about inhabitant taxation

(%)

		Household living on welfare	Non-taxable household of inhabitant tax	Taxable household of inhabitant tax per capita rate	Taxable household of inhabitant tax by the rate of income tax	Unknown
Gunma Pref.	1985	1.3	3.8	23.0	71.7	0.2
	1990	0.3	10.0	17.9	71.7	0.1
Kyoto Pref.	1970	8.9	10.5	41.5	39.2	-
	1975	10.9	9.8	31.1	48.2	-
	1980	11.3	27.3	11.2	50.1	-
	1987	14.1	28.3	5.2	52.3	-
Tottori Pref.	1974	8.9	6.7	42.6	41.7	-
	1979	7.1	15.5	19.3	58.1	-
	1990	5.8	9.1	17.5	66.3	1.4
National average	1971	8.1		16.8	75.1	-
	1974	7.0		13.4	79.6	-
	1985	11.0		7.3	81.7	-
	1989	15.4		5.3	79.5	-

[Note] Figures of national average for 1971,1974,1985 were extracted from "Fact-finding survey of people's life" and figure of 1989 was extracted from "Basic survey of people's life"(both by Ministry of Health & Welfare). In the case of Kyoto pref. , data of Kyoto city was excepted.

Fig.19 Taxable situation of inhabitant tax



[Note] Figure of national average is extracted from the basic survey of "People's life" (1989) by Ministry of Health & Welfare.