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The 37th BLRI General Assembly

Researcher Of Hyongpyongsa Movement in Korea is Guest Speaker

On February 20 and 21, 1993, the 37th General Assembly of the Buraku Liberation Research Institute and the 15th Researchers Meeting were held at Momoyamaso, Ayameike, Nara Pref. with about 240 participants.

Following the guest speeches by the Osaka municipal government and the BLL Osaka Pref. Association at the 37th General Assembly, several proposals were brought up towards the 25th anniversary of the Buraku Liberation Institute. They were: to be replete with the director system, to expand the advisor/councilor system, and to readjust the staff system (re-organization and increasing of the staff), as well as to revise the Articles of Association of the Buraku Liberation Institute required for the above proposals, to pursue further development, and the tour project of 'Attending the International Scientific Conference to Commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Hyongpyonsa' to be held in Korea on April 23, 1993. Those proposals were unanimously approved.

At the 15th Researchers Meeting which followed, the guest speaker, Mr. JOONG-SEOP KIM, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Kyongsang, gave a lecture entitled "The Steps of the



Hyongpyong (equal human society) Movement. A Retrospective View-to Coincide With the 70th Anniversary of the Hyongpyongsa". Then followed intensive questions from the participants and discussion with the lecturer (See page (2) for further details).

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In the evening section meetings were held as follows:

"Enlightenment Center --The Present Status and Tasks", presided by Mr. Ken Motoki(Professor of Osaka University) and Mr. Kenichi Tatsumi (Secretary General of BLL Hyogo Pref. Association) at the Enlightenment/Movement Section; "Ex-changing Views with Prof. Joong-Seop Kim" and "Review on Proposal Draft prepared by the 'Theory of Exchanging Views with Prof. Joong-Seop Kim" and "Review on Proposal Draft prepared by the 'Theory of Dowa Administration" Section, BLL Central Theoretical Committee presided by Mr. Kenzo Tomonaga (Secretary-General of the Buraku Liberation Institute) at the Human Rights/Administration Section; "Public Education in Asia-Cambodia" presided by Ms. Yuka Takayama (Volunteers Association of Sodo-shu Sect) at the Education/Regional Section; "Significance of Publishing' Modern Times and the Discriminated Buraku' by Kasuke Akisada" presided by Mr. Toshio Watanabe (the Institute) at the History/Theoretical

Section, opinions were exchanged at the respective section meetings until late at night.

At the General Meeting of the Researchers on 21th February, each section presented individual study subjects for 1993: the Enlightenment/Movement Section presented their study tasks by subsections; the Human Rights Administration Section reported on 'How to deal with Dowa administration from here on'; the Education/Regional Section reported on tasks of creating new liberation education; and the History/Theoretical Section presented the study of "History of Buraku in Osaka" and "The investigation Report on Folklore Traditions of Buraku Liberation". Some discussion was made after those reports.

Then, Mr. Takeo Matsumoto, a lawyer, gave a special report on the struggle concerning the second plea for the re-trial of the Sayama Case, which is now in its crucial stage. Finally, Mr. Masayuki Ohga concluded the two days meetings.

The Steps Of HYONGPYONGSA-- A Retrospective View To Coincide With Its 70th Anniversary

Hyongpyongsa will celebrate the 70th anniversary of its foundation in 1993. This movement was organized on April 24, 1923, in Korea, as a liberation movement for the discriminated Korean people, 'Paekjong'. To commemorate the occasion, various projects including the International Scientific symposium are under way around the City of Chinju, the birth place of the organization. Mr. JOONG-SEOP KIM is now working on the project as the central figure of the commemorative activities. The following is a summary of Mr. Kim's speech given at the Researchers' Meeting, entitled 'Historical Lessons of the Hyongpyongsa

Movement'.

(1) Hyongpyongsa was founded in 1923 in an upsurge of social movements such as the 3.1 Movement for Independence in 1910. The City of Chinju, where the organization was formed, was also an important place historically. Hideyoshi was defeated here when he tried to invade Korea and a farmers' strike was broken up in the mid-19th Century.

(2) The people of Chinju who organized Hyongpyongsa were composed of professional social activists of non-Paekjong and influential Paekjong with money. Later there was a discrepancy of



opinion among the people of Hyongpyongsa in regard to the policy of activity. People mostly from Chinju were called 'Moderate' or the 'Chinju' Group, and their struggle was focused on the discrimination of social status, while those mostly of Seoul origin who were interested in the economical problem of the Paekjong, were called the 'Reformer' or 'Seoul' Group. At the Regular Assembly held in 1925, however, the unity of the general headquarters was confirmed.

(3) Hyongpyongsa has made a lot of achievements in spite of various anti-Hyongpyong movements in Chinju and other places. For instance, they succeeded in revising the family registration in which Paekjong was apparently revealed. It became the best formed organization among social groups of those days in the nation.

(4) The leadership of Hyongpyongsa was gradually taken up by radical activists. In 1927, the leaders of the organization were arrested for an incident involving the Korai Revolution party, after which it became more and more radical. In the 1930's the radical group insisted upon the dissolution of the organization.

(5) Many young activists of Hyongpyongsa were arrested and indicted Vanguard League affair made up by the Japanese imperialists. From then on, the leadership of the Hyongpyongsa was taken over by a moderate group. In 1935 the organization was renamed 'Tae Dongsa' and it tried to maintain the exclusive privilege of dealing with meat and hides through cooperation with Japanese imperialism. However, this turned out to be impossible. The activities of the organization can be confirmed up to 1939 through data and information of those days.

(6) After the independence of Korea, Chang Yongje, a son of Chang Chipil who was a leader of Hyongpyongsa, organized the 'Pyguhoe' (Equal Friends Society), but it was not successful. The class called 'Paekjong' no longer exists in today's Korea.



Mr. Kim

In addition the old Paekjong villages had already been dissolved, which made it impossible to find the class in family registration. Thus the specific social treatment or discrimination against them have not been revealed.

(7) Yet the ideal of the Hyongpyongsa, namely, the defense of human rights and respect for the dignity of man, is still needed for the society of today. It should be worthwhile to revive this ideal and consequently, the commemorative projects were planned to take over the spirit of the Hyongpyong Movement.

Some questions and discussions followed the lecture. As expected, the biggest interest among the participants was in the present status of discrimination of Paekjong. Mr. Kim added some comments as follows:

(8) There are two ways to abolish discrimination. One is the positive way through an elevated human rights awareness among people and the other is the negative way through the spreading out of discriminated people so as to be undiscernable for various reasons. The discrimination against Paekjong has disappeared by way of the latter. This negative way, however, cannot hold in all situations, especially in the case of the Buraku in Japan. Primarily, the other,



positive way should be followed, resulting from an elevation of human rights awareness among people. We learned a lot from the Reeachers' Meeting with Mr. Kim. First, the Hyongpyong Movement is similar to the Suihei Movement (National Leveler's Movement), which developed, making various mistakes or deviating in the process. The Hyongpyong Movement has experienced a similar historical process. Different from the Suihei-sha, the Hyongpyongsa was organized by non-Paekjong as well as Paekjong.

Secondly, both the Hyongpyongsa and the Suihei-Sha have many differences in spite of their many similarities. Above all, the Hyongpyong Movement had to struggle under the oppressive situation of the colonization of Korea by Japan. They had to fight against class discrimination, against a class-dominated society and also against colonialization. This aspect gave the movement more complex elements resulting in conflicts in its policy. Besides, the movement of Suihei-Sha, though it was restricted historically, was carried out through projects such as the Buraku improvement projects and integration (integrational education), helped by social trends against discrimination toward the Buraku. On the other hand, the Hyongpyongsa's direct enemy was the

Japanese government (the Governor-General of Korea) and they had to struggle without any integrational projects at all. From the start they met a much severer 'anti Hyongpyongsa' movement than the Suihei-Sha had. It cannot be explained simply by the 'backward sense' of the Korean people.

To Mr. Kim's statement that there is no discrimination against Paekjong any more, many expressed their fear that it may stand for 'Dispersion of Buraku'. The stark reality is that so far only Mr. Kim Yonde, who came to Japan five years ago, has declared officially that he is from 'Paekjong', suggests that discrimination does still exist. At the same time, his statement itself reminds us of the suffering of the people during Korean War and the colonization of the country by Japan (plunder of land from the Korean people, the resulting influx of over three million Korean people in Japan, forced migration to China and Sakhalin, kidnapping, and the giving of Japanese names etc.). These things have impacted heavily on Korean society, destroying its customs and traditions. We must realize that they have suffered much more than we Japanese can imagine. Therefore, the Paekjong and the Hyongpyong Movement should not be so easily compared to the Buraku problem.

Divorce Due To Mother's Native Place Marriage Discrimination Case in Kochi Prefecture

A new case of marriage discrimination was revealed in Kochi. A man who got married in 1991 was divorced by his wife just after their honeymoon on the grounds that he had not told her that his mother was a Burakumin. They saw each other at an arranged meeting in May, 1991 and got married on the tenth of October, with their new home prepared in Kochi city. When the

wife called her mother just after returning from their honeymoon, she was told that her husband's mother was from a Buraku and that her brother's wife declared that she would leave the house with her two children if she didn't get a divorce from her husband. Later the wife proposed a divorce. They separated on November 3rd and then divorced.



The case was revealed in January, 1992. At first the prefectural Board of Education gave guidance to them with the hope of helping them reconcile. The wife, however, would not listen to them, insisting that all the responsibility was on him, who had deceived her, concealing the fact that his mother was from a Dowa district. Under such circumstances, the Board of Education drew back from the case and the relevant

self-government bodies took it up to investigate it as a discrimination case. The relevant bodies, including Kochi City, already stated that it was a very grave incident of marriage discrimination.

The Kochi BLL Association has decided to hold a fact-finding meeting to make the case clear in detail and to inquire as to who is responsible for the case.

Discriminative Tombstones Left For Years In 'Undesignated' Buraku in Saga

As many as eighty discriminative tombstones and Buddhist names were found in an 'undesignated' Buraku in Takeo city, Saga Prefecture three years ago and they still have been neglected. The discriminative Buddhist names had been given by Saidai-ji Temple of the Jodo Sect. They were found in the family roll of deaths registered from the 1740s to 1871. The discriminative tombstones were found by the Saga Prefectural Executive Committee of the 'Fundamental Law' in preliminary research of the fact finding investigation on the 'Undesignated' Buraku in September, 1989. More and more such tombstones were found in the following investigations.

BLL initially did not made the news open, complying with the request from the temple and Takeo City, as well as considering the circumstances of the 'undesignated' Buraku, but watched how the temple and the city would deal with the



Discriminative words carved on a tombstone.

matter. However, they did not shown any developments nor taken any sincere measures in identifying the donors of the discriminative tombstones ,as well as in disposing of those stones. BLL decided to make the problem open to the public and to work on it as a movement.



Provisional Agenda for the World Conference on Human Rights Regional Meeting for the Conference in Asia Is To Be Held in Bangkok At The End Of March.

The provisional agenda for the World Conference on Human Rights was finally adopted in the General Assembly in December 1992. The Conference will be held during the period of June 15 to 24, 1993 in Vienna, Austria, after a 25-year interval since the International Human Rights Conference in Teheran in 1968. It is sponsored by the United Nations in commemoration of the 45th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and top-level government officials from all over the world will participate in the Conference.

The purpose of the Conference is to reconsider the development of the human rights field in the past and to suggest a system which will internationally guarantee human rights in the future. In the preparatory meetings began in September 1991, there were discussions of opposing opinions among countries regarding the above-mentioned topics. Under the circumstances for a while there was a voice of fear of the opening. The following items have finally been adopted in the UN General Assembly last year. (Items 1 to 8 omitted.)

9) General debate on the progress made

in the field of human rights since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and on the identification of obstacles to further progress in this area and ways in which they can be overcome.

10) Consideration of the relationship between development, democracy and the universal enjoyment of all human rights, keeping in view the inter-relationship and indivisibility of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights.

11) Consideration of contemporary trends in and new challenges to the full realization of all human rights of women and men, including those of persons belonging to vulnerable groups.

12) Recommendations for:

(a) Strengthening international cooperation in the field of human rights in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and with international human rights instruments;

(b) Ensuring the universality, objectivity and non-selectivity of the consideration of human rights issues;

(c) Enhancing the effectiveness of United Nations activities and mechanisms;

(d) Securing the necessary financial and



other resources for United Nations activities in the area of human rights.

13) Adoption of the final documents and report of the Conference.

Preparatory Meeting in Asia

Until now preparatory meetings were held in Africa in November 1992 and in Central/South America in January 1993. In the region of Asia, though there was a voice of fear about the opening, it was finally decided to hold a meeting in Bangkok from March 29 to April 2, 1993. This regional conference in Asia will consist of a 'General debate' by international agents or NGOs, and a 'Meeting of the drafting committee'. The latter makes a final proposal of a regional declaration draft which will be

adopted by the Conference in June. Only government high officials will be able to attend the committee meeting.

The negative attitude of the regional conference in Asia has been pointed out by other preparatory meetings for the World Conference on Human Right, and NGOs have also expressed the same sentiments .

In Japan, in order to wake up interest in the Conference and in an international guaranty system for human rights, the Buraku Liberation Research Institute, as a member of the "NGO Liaison Office for the World Conference on Human Rights", will join UN activities for human rights, such as the publication of newsletters, opening of lecture meetings once a month until June, and intervention with the Japanese government.

Toward the World Conference On Human Rights Joint Appeal From NGOs In ASIA.

The Asia/Pacific Human Rights Meeting held in June 1992 adopted the recommendation from Asia toward the World conference on Human Rights to be held in June 1993. Based on the recommendation, Dr. Chandra Musaffar, human rights activist and director of JUST(Just World Trust) made a draft of the appeal and submitted it to NGOs in Asian

countries. At present he has received the approval of over 200 organizations. We, the Buraku Liberation Research Institute, are one of the ones who expressed approval.

We would like to introduce the contents of the recommendation as follows:

Recommendations

Arising from our concern for, and



commitment to, human rights in Asia, we have chosen to submit the following recommendations to the World Conference on Human Rights.

Asian NGOs hope that the World Conference will persuade:

1. Asian governments (which have not ratified the two principal covenants) to ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social & Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights and its optional protocols. The few countries which have already ratified the two covenants should ensure their effective implementation.

2. Asian governments to ratify some of the other UN conventions like the Convention Against Torture, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. These governments should also be persuaded to ratify relevant International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions. Ratification, needless to say, should be followed by effective implementation.

3. Asian governments to revoke laws and eliminate policies which are detrimental to

the full realisation of the economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights of their people. They should instead try to formulate strategies of development which are compatible with the whole gamut of human rights. These should be part of a development paradigm which seeks to enhance human dignity rather than maximise profits.

Enhancing human dignity and promoting human rights would also require other measures. It would be important to ensure the independence of the judiciary, to protect the freedom of the media and to strengthen public accountability. Certain minimum norms of democratic conduct should be observed by all administrative and judicial institutions. At the same time, Asian governments should take immediate steps to establish a regional inter-governmental mechanism for the promotion and protection of human rights. As an initial move, a study should be commissioned which would examine various aspects of such a mechanism. Asian governments should facilitate the active involvement of NGOs in the preparatory stages as well as in the functioning of an inter-governmental regional mechanism as and when it is established.

4. Asian governments to undertake major structural changes and initiate fundamental social reforms which will strengthen human



rights and enhance human dignity. In this connection, it is important to stress that wherever there are contemporary forms of slavery, the governments concerned should establish a clear time frame for their total and complete eradication. All governments in the region should also be persuaded to eradicate or at least reduce substantially, poverty and illiteracy within a certain timeframe.

Asian NGOs hope that the World Conference will urge:

1. Major industrial powers and important lending agencies in the North to write off the external debts of chronically poor nations in the South. Other debtor-nations in the South should be allowed to re-schedule their debt payments. In this way, the poor in the South will have a better chance of enjoying some of their basic rights as human beings.

2. Powerful states which control the UN to help re-structure the UN Security Council so that it becomes a truly democratic institution capable of reflecting the genuine aspirations of the vast majority of humanity. Towards this end, the veto and permanent membership within the Security Council should be abolished. Security Council

membership should take into account present demographic realities and the need for effective regional representation.

The powers of the UN General Assembly, which represents all nations and peoples, should also be enhanced especially in matters pertaining to international security, politics and economics. Only the General Assembly should have the authority to mandate the UN to use force in the resolution of any international conflict. International economic institutions should be brought within the purview of the General Assembly and a restructured Security Council. The UN should play a bigger and more important role in global economic management.

Asian NGOs hope that the World Conference will advise:

1. The UN to give equal attention to all aspects of human rights and to develop methodologies for evaluating the various types of human rights. This would be consistent with the letter and the spirit of the principal human rights documents formulated by the UN itself. The UN should also avoid a selective approach in the monitoring of human rights violations.

2. The UN to increase the budget,



strengthen personnel resources and upgrade administrative structures connected with human rights work. There should be more effective monitoring of human rights violations brought to the attention of the UN Commission on Human Rights. In this connection, NGOs should be allowed to play a more important role in documenting, investigating and monitoring human rights violations. The role they have played so far in the development of human rights standards should also be acknowledged.

Asian NGOs hope that the World Conference will encourage:

1. NGOs in the North to use the democratic space available in their societies to increase public awareness of how Northern control and domination of the international system curbs and curtails the basic human rights of people in Asia.

2. Asian NGOs to continue their struggle against oppression and exploitation in their own societies and control and domination within the international system which threaten, in different ways, the human rights and human dignity of millions of human beings in Asia.

Conclusion

Whatever the state of human rights in various parts of Asia, NGOs are deeply conscious of the fact that the values and principles which have inspired the rights of human beings are very much a part of the illustrious moral and spiritual traditions of the continent. Indeed, it was in Asia, at the very dawn of history, that the quest for human dignity first began.

As we enter the 21st century, Asia should seek to fulfil its destiny by ensuring the triumph of human rights and human dignity.

• 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, AINJ, 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