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## 16th Buraku Researchers Meeting & 39th General Assembly

### *Discussions Regarding the Current Situation of Buraku and Future Education for Buraku Liberation*

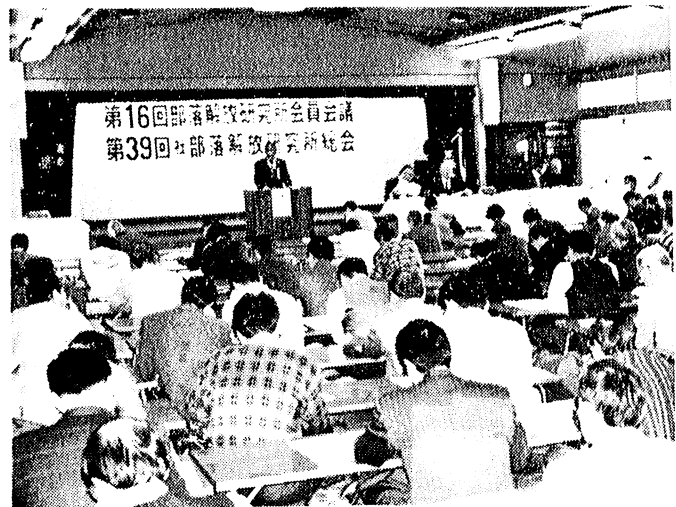
On February 19 - 20, 1994, the 16th National Buraku Liberation Researchers Meeting, along with the 39th General Assembly of the Buraku Liberation Research Institute, was held with about 260 participants at Momoyama-so, Ayameike, Nara Prefecture.

The 39th General Assembly opened with a speech by Mr. Sueo Murakoshi, Chairperson of the Institute, followed by guest speeches by Mr. Masato Takahashi, Buraku Liberation League, Secretary-general of the Osaka Prefectural Federation, and by Mr. Shinji Shibazaki, dept. manager of Osaka Dowa Policy.

Mr. Ekiro Yamagami, a lawyer, spoke about the second appeal for a retrial of the Sayama case, as it was reaching its most crucial aspect.

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

1) An interim project report for fiscal 1993.



- 2) An interim statement of accounts for fiscal 1993.
- 3) Proposals for the plan of activities

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- 4) Proposed budget for fiscal 1994
- 5) Proposal regarding organizational structure
- 6) Basic schedule of 1994's activities

Following the assembly, the 16th Researchers General Meeting was held. Participants divided into groups relating to three themes to discuss of the issues proposed.

The first theme was the proposal to the examining committee about "The second basic policy for educational development concerning Buraku liberation and human rights." As the reporter, Mr. Toshiaki Katoh, Chief of the Consciousness-raising & Planning Dept. of the Institute, emphasized the importance of consciousness-raising based on the subject of how to deal with "Education for Adults " and "Awareness about Buraku Discrimination".

As the commentator, Prof. Ken Motoki of Kawamura Gakuen Women's College requested participants to focus their attention on the study made in cooperation with psychologists, which have already gone beyond the 1st proposal. He then led the participants in an active question and answer exchange .

The 2nd theme was the proposal to the Central Commission concerned with the Future of the Buraku Liberation Movement on the subject of "Education for Buraku Liberation". Mr. Tamura, who is in charge of this section, reported on the proposal.

According to the report, there are many children in the Buraku communities who, because of their poor scholastic ability are not interested in human rights issues including the Buraku problem. Therefore, he raised the point that it is necessary to consider this matter from its roots in order

to resolve the current situation. As the commentator, Mr. Shozo Suzuki, a director of the Buraku Liberation Research Institute, stressed the importance of the "Declaration of the Levelers Association" and stated that the general principles will be included in future policy for education concerning Buraku Liberation.

The 3rd theme was the proposal to the same commission about the actual situation of the Buraku, reported by Mr. Seiji Nakamura, who is in charge of this section. He explained that regarding the two aspects of Buraku living standards and the awareness of people outside Buraku concerning the Buraku people if one compares the present with the 1960s. There are some areas where development has occurred and other areas which still have problems to be resolved. He pointed out that it is necessary to study the actual situation from different angles and to make this subject clearer.

As the commentator, Mr. Kiyohide Ishimoto of Kansai University pointed out the mistakes by ZENKAIREN (All Japan Federation of Buraku Liberation Movement). It is not correct to insist that ZENKAIREN evaluated only the "quantity" aspect on the basis of statistical data alone and disregarded the "quality aspect". There is a vicious circle in the relationship between Buraku discrimination and the actual situation. Participants actively expressed their opinions and the discussion was fruitful.

On the next day, February 20, 1994, Mr. M. Ohga, Research Dept. manager at the Institute, raised a question about the Buraku liberation movement in the future and the subject of the research activities. After that



participants were divided into four sections to discuss the issues of: 1) Consciousness-raising for Human Rights, 2) Investigation /Administration, 3) Education in the Community and 4) History/Theory. Mr.

Ohga appealed in his speech that all participants actively express their opinions about each proposal so that all possible ideas can be gathered for the elimination of Buraku discrimination.

## **Discriminatory Case(1)**

### ***Elementary School Teacher Repeats Discriminatory Statements in Spite of Colleagues' Advice.***

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In order to make good lessons on discriminatory cases which occurred in an elementary school and to produce better education for Buraku liberation, a meeting on revealing the truth of discriminatory cases was held on January 25, 1994 at the Osaka Prefectural Welfare Center in the Dowa (Buraku) area.

About 400 people from BLL Osaka, school and administration participated in the meeting. Various activities against discriminatory cases were reported on at the meeting among them, the case of Elementary School teacher, Mr.M. A colleague of his reported Mr. M's repeated discriminatory statements and stated with anger such teacher with discriminatory consciousness has been teaching students for long time. He also pointed out the weakness of enlightenment system to school teachers and responsibility of administration.

According to the report Mr. M. firstly made discriminatory utterances in March 1992. A member of the Personnel Dept. of

Elementary School asked him to take charge of education for Korean students living in Japan but he rejected the request. As the reason he referred to his experience at an elementary school in Ward,

Osaka City. He said, "I was betrayed by some Korean students and their parents. I do not want to associate with Korean people. I can immediately distinguish Korean peoples by their looks." After that he repeated these false statements from time to time at a fact-find meeting on his case and during conversational exchanges between his colleagues saying things like , "It is natural that Korean people are discriminated against." " I feel like vomiting when I see CHIMACHOGORI(Korean women's traditional dress)." "At the school where I formerly taught, my statements caused no problem." In spite of the BLL, branch or his colleagues' warnings, he has not changed his mind or improved his attitude, yet he is still working as a teacher.

Mr. Fujioka who reported on this case at the meeting said that Mr. M's statements were a typical example of the discriminaion that exists in society. He said, "I don't understand why he has never been denounced so far. I suppose there is a big difference in human rights consciousness between the school which is promoting Dowa education and other general schools. He strongly insisted on the responsibility of Osaka City Board of Education.



## Discriminatory Case(2)

### *INTERNATIONAL CO. Investigated Personal Backgrounds In Employment And Further Made Discriminatory Saying.*

When two public high-school students in Osaka applied for a job to International Co., which is well-known as a discount seller of men's wear, they were asked about their personal backgrounds. Further it was revealed that one of the managing made discriminatory comments. As the company strongly denied the accusation, the Buraku Liberation League (BLL), Osaka Prefectural Federation pursued the case and on January 24, 1994 hearing was held to report the true facts of the case. At the meeting a class teacher appealed that we could not admit such a case.

One of the persons who had been asked about their personal backgrounds was a student (male) of Takatsuki-Minami High School, the other was a student (female) of Niwadani High School in Sakai. According to the concerned schools and the Osaka prefectural administration, the two students applied for jobs at the International Co. in September, 1992. Soon after they submitted their application papers to the Company, neighbors of the two students were asked over the phone about their personal backgrounds by companies of different names. Contents of the inquiries were: "Relationship of friends?", "Whether he(she) is gaily dressed?", "Parents' income and living situation?", "What about absence from school for one year on account of illness?", "Experience of motor-bicycle rider?", "Was he(she) part of a motorcycle gang?".

On the 21st and 22nd of the month, rejection notifications reached them. The two are currently working at other companies. As their parents were informed by neighbors about this matter, they claimed it respectively. As a result this case was revealed and the students and part of the concerned schools protested this matter. On October 3, 1992 Mr. T, under section chief of visited Takatsuki-Minami High-School to explain the circumstances of the rejected employment. He said the reason for the rejection was that the two students' impression at the interview was not good and he denied that they had investigated any personal backgrounds. He said he understood that it is not good to investigate applicants' personal backgrounds. He also said particularly in the Kansai area and Hiroshima prefecture the subject of DOWA(Buraku) and "international affairs" were sensitive matters. Therefore, in order not to be criticized by any "strange organization", his company has treated this matter very carefully. In response to his explanation, part of the school asked "What organization did you mean when you said the strange organization?" and insisted that his comments were based on prejudice about human rights questions. Mr. T apologized for his comments and said "It's my misunderstanding."

At the first fact-finding meeting held in June, 1993, Mr. T and Mr. , chief of personnel administration, attended. At the meeting we pointed out that 1) The two



applicants applied only to the company at that time. So, therefore, no other company except should be investigating them. 2) Points such as "elder sister's job" or "reason for school absence" were facts known only to the company, yet the man who made the phone inquiry knew it. In spite of the objective facts, the two gentlemen from did not show any intention of clarifying this matter. Regarding the discriminatory remarks, the gentlemen explained that: 1) until now no study course about Buraku problems has ever been held at the Co.; 2) did not even know the name of the BLL. Therefore, they could not have referred to the BLL as a "strange" organization; 3) When they mentioned "international affair" they had been referring to the matter of Korean residents in Japan. They had used their word "touchy" in the meaning of "sensitive", intending to say that those people were acting positively to eliminate discrimination. They insisted they did not have any discriminatory feelings. On the other hand, however, they stated they have an impression that these "strange" organizations were frightening because the organizations members come as a team.

Notification signed by lawyers who have close relations to the Japan Communist Party has reached us, stating that officials would not attend the next fact-finding meeting. After the first fact-finding meeting, the BLL made the following requests: 1) submission of evidence in writing stating that had not investigated the two applicants' personal backgrounds, as Aoki insists. 2) submission in writing by Mr. T of a statement of his own feelings about his remarks in June; 3) attendance of the next fact-finding meeting

by the top officials of the company. In spite of the request, the BLL has not received any reply from them. Though the municipal government has continuously recommended that the accept the BLL's request, they have expressed their intention not only not to submit any papers but also not to attend the meeting. Furthermore, they have withdrawn the admissions made by Mr. T on his visit in October, 1992. They have not taken any responsibility.

After the first fact-finding meeting, Takatsuki-Minami High-school and Niwadani High-school submitted their draft petitions to Osaka Prefectural Board of Education, on December 1 and 2, 1993 respectively. Petitions contained the demand for immediate declaration of a job discrimination case. In addition to the petition, the Osaka Prefectural Labor Relation Div., the Osaka Prefectural Board of Education and BLL Osaka Prefectural Federation directly sent their requests and protests to . However, the BLL received a notice from them sent by lawyers who have a close connection to the Japan Communist Party and dated January 20, 1994, in which it is stated that did not investigate the two applicants' personal backgrounds and that Mr. T's remarks were not discriminatory. The similar content of the notice came to the Osaka Prefectural Labor Relation Div. and the Osaka Prefectural Board of Education directly from the President of , who stated he will neither attend the meeting nor meet any BLL officials.

The BLL judged the reply as insincere and appealed for a disclosure of the truth to the concerned parties.