



BURAKU LIBERATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE
1-6-12, Kuboyoshi, Naniwa-ku, Osaka City, 556 Japan.
TEL (06)568-1300 FAX (06)568-0714

November 1994

Towards Creating A New Theory

The 28th Buraku Liberation National Research Meeting Held

The 28th National Buraku Liberation Research Meeting was held from September 24 through 26 in Fukuoka. The theme of the meeting was "Let's discuss further to create a new 'theory and implementation' of the new Buraku Liberation Movement under the slogan: 'Independence, Symbiosis and Creation'. The Proposals presented by the Central Theory Committee of BLL at the meeting last year had been discussed for one year, and were now to be taken into further deliberation by the 13,000 participants along with the theme of the year.

On the first day of the meeting, Saichiro Uesugi, President of the executive committee of the 28th Buraku Liberation National Research Meeting, made an opening speech. Following the guest speeches by the Governor of Fukuoka Prefecture and the Mayor of Fukuoka, a keynote address was given by Akinobu Tanimoto, the Deputy Secretary of the executive committee of the meeting. He commented on the ten main targets under the new stage of the Buraku Liberation Movement: including the enactment of the Fundamental Law, the realization of a retrial of the Sayama Case, and international



solidarities against discrimination.

After the speech, a symposium entitled 'The future trend of Dowa administration' was given by these panelists: Shigeru Sumitani, the Chief of District Measures; Kenji Hishiyama, committee member of the District Measures Council and Prof. of

— contents —

28th BL National Research Meeting(1)
19th Western Japan Summer Course(4)
Literacy Work 46 (5)
Literacy Work 47 (6)
Buraku Problems Q & A 3 (7)



Tsukuba University; Kazuo Fukuhara, Director of Dowa Measurement Department, Fukuoka Pref.; and Kenzo Tomoaga, Director of Buraku Liberation Research Institute. The Deputy Secretary Tanimoto took the chair of the symposium.

On the second day, opinions as well as good will were exchanged at each of the ten sectional meetings.

At the over-all meeting on the third day, the following reports were given: (1) Campaigning for enactment of the 'Regulation for Elimination of Buraku discrimination and Declaration of Human

Rights Protection' and Reviewing and Reforming of Dowa Measure Enterprises: Akio Komai, Vice President of the Central Headquarters; (2) The current situation of living and welfare in Buraku in Osaka and approaches to concrete measures of the 'Gold Plan' proposed by government : Tomiyuki Tomita, Executive Committee member of Osaka Pref; (3) The facts on 'Undesignated Districts' throughout the country and the Buraku Liberation Movement in Kyushu: Shigeyuki Kumisaka, member of the Central Executive Committee.

Host Speech

by Saichiro Uesugi,

President of the Central Executive Committee, Buraku Liberation League

At the research meeting of last year, we released the proposals on four sections(movement, actual situation, administration and education) made by the Central Theory Committee. The proposals have been studied and discussed for one year. Our basic vision was to clarify a concrete task for 'Creation and Implementation' in the Third phase of the Buraku Liberation Movement. We have reached a new stage on the historical turning point of the age.

In this respect, it should be emphasized that we rid ourselves of the frame of mind in which we tend to take the 'specific' period we have had under the Law on Specific Measures for granted as a 'normal' period. Standing on the vision of developing the 'Suihei-sha Movement in the world' and indicating the way to concrete movements for full-fledged liberation, our basic stance has been stressed in liberating ourselves from the old view of Buraku and old

fashioned strategies, shaking off stagnation and conservatism'.

The controversy on the 'Proposals from the Central Theory Committee' has created a substantial stir and invited ardent discussions both inside and outside the Buraku Liberation Movement. We have to admit that the process has brought forth some confusion, bewilderment and more or less pain in our organization. I myself, however, have a strong belief that we have to endure the labor pains to produce the 'Creation and Implementation' of the third phase of the Buraku Liberation Movement and that we will be able to break through to the future for a new adequate movement.

To begin with, I do want to ask each of you to take part in the study of the Proposals in detail on your own ground in order to enrich the contents. The second subject is the issue of the campaign for the enactment of the Buraku Liberation Fundamental Law. We have been undertaking a full scale



campaign in the hope of laying the Fundamental Law before the extraordinary Diet session starting in the end of September. We are now enforcing the strategies in a big hope that the Fundamental Law will be enacted by all means under the Murayama Government.

Since the Murayama Government started, we have been energetically appealing to the opposition parties as well as the ruling parties, preparing political conditions by collecting signatures of the Diet members, and taking actions toward the government and the 'District Measures Association'.

I would like all of you to pay attention to the fact that the crucial time is now for the struggle for the enactment of the 'Fundamental Law', not when the current law will expire. It is important for us to campaign for the enactment while the current Law is still in effect.

It is quite possible to take this strategy. The fundamental law we are seeking for will be a law of a higher level, different from the present law in quality. Therefore, there will be no theoretical contradiction in enacting the Fundamental Law before the present law expires.

Whether we will be successful in the struggle or not will depend on how much we commit ourselves in the future struggle.

In this respect I would like to emphasize in appealing to you that you should take approaches to combine struggles on the local level with the ones on the central level. That is, the Fundamental Law should be worked on at the state level, Regulations and/or Declarations should be in local parliaments, the 'New Principles of the Integrated Plan for Buraku Liberation should be in local governments, and the

'New White Paper on Demand' based on the 'Movement for Reviewing and Reforming Dowa measure Enterprises' should be in districts and branches. We need a comprehensive approach to develop struggles for the enactment of the Fundamental Law, connecting local-level struggles with those on the central level.

Fortunately, at the 'Liaison Meeting Considering the Status Quo of Dowa Problems (Do-Gen-Ren', consisting of relevant Buraku organizations) held in the middle of last August, we arrived at a consensus on taking actions for early realization of the enactment of the law. We can say that we have formed a unified front of Buraku organizations.

I am strongly convinced that the struggle for the enactment of the Fundamental Law will be the one with a big possibility as well as reality under the Murayama Government, if we can make use of the united force effectively with an organic bond between the local and the central struggles.

The third issue concerns the campaign for the retrial of the Sayama Case. As all of you may have known, in reply to the question by Ms. Mieko Mieno of the Social Democratic Party in the Upper House Budget Committee Meeting on June 13, the then Judicial Minister Nakai stated, " the legal procedures are now smoothly under way", thus suggesting the probability that Mr. Kazuo Ishikawa would be paroled. Then quite an optimistic view prevailed on us as some mass media reported the news in speculation that he would be paroled either in August or in September.

I think this kind of optimism is not good because the fact that they have moved to parole him does not always mean that they



have decide on his parole.

It may be important for us to hole on to slow but steady strategies, making up favorable conditions step by step for our victory in the Sayama Case. The fourth topic is the issue of 'The Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Center'. Thanks to the support from all of you, the Center was to be established as part of our activities of the 'world wide movement of Suihei-sha' and the 'International movement against discrimination'. Its juridical foundation was acknowledged by the Osaka

Prefecture on July 22, and the Center will be officially opened in December. We think it is very significant to have the Center established at this time when next year we celebrate 50 years since the end of World War II. In concluding my speech, I urge all of you present here to participate in discussions giving your ardent and candid opinions regardless of your standpoints, in order to eliminate discrimination, to establish human rights, and to break through the ground of the third phase of Buraku Liberation Movement.

The 19th Western Japan Buraku Liberation Summer Course

Discriminatory Expression and Self-imposed Controls by Mass Media

In July, 1993 the Japan Epilepsy Association demanded that the 'Kadokawa Shoten' which published a high school text book, withdraw their option and use of the text book. The Association claimed that the text book carries the literary work 'Mujin Keisatsu(Police station without policemen)' by a science fiction writer, Yasutaka Tsutsui, in which they found some expressions that might enhance discrimination against epileptics. the Kadokawa Shoten, however, flatly rejected the demand.

In September, Mr. Yasutaka Tsutsui himself declared he would quit writing in protest against the current attitude of publishing circles and the mass media. the writer claimed that they have made excessive self-imposed controls on 'discriminatory words', and in such a climate, he said, it would not be possible to write a novel without reservations.

The incident has brought about various opinions and arguments from various circles

and fields on such matters as 'discriminatory words', 'self-imposed control', and the friction between the freedom of expression and the elimination of discrimination. Some even held the opinion that the Buraku Liberation League was to be blamed for the 'self-imposed control' because the league had impeached strictly against 'discriminatory words'.

At the 19th Buraku Liberation Summer Course held in Okayama on August 29 and 30, the issue was discussed at a symposium entitled "discrimination problem and 'Freedom of Expression' ":

Facts on 'Self-Imposed Control' Opinions Exchanged at Western Japan Buraku Liberation Summer Course

Taking part in the symposium as one of the panelists, the writer Yasutaka Tsutsui talked about the 'self-imposed control' on mass media and publishers through his



experiences relating to his declaration that he would quit writing. Shigeyuki Kumisaka, the Central Executive Committee member, also joined the discussion as a panelist.

Mr. Tsutsui explained how 'self control' was imposed, quoting an example in publishing circles. (1) proofreaders usually check manuscripts just in case any reader may call in protest. Under the situation a writer may change an expression without due consideration, just as casually as 'Oh, we cannot use that word'. In this way the self-imposed control has prevailed; (2) As for expressions which are liable to invite protests, the publisher would have the writer change the expressions with tactful threats or tearful persuasions.

He criticized such self-control starting that "it might result from the editor's 'safety first' principle. in fear of impeachment, or rather from the fear that the sense of discrimination on the part of the publisher (or the editor) might be disclosed".

The Central Committee member Kumisaka pointed out that the mass media and publishing circles themselves are lacking in understanding as well as a fundamental recognition of discrimination problems and that such a situation is in the background of their 'safety first'. He added

第19回 部落解放西日本夏期講座



from left to right: Messrs. Murakoshi, Kumisaka, Tsutsui, Namase and Yokota.

that we do hope to talk with people of those circles to prevent unnecessary self-imposed control.

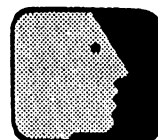
He commented, 'It is not enough just to change a word; we must think further to clarify the historical background and discriminatory quality of the word in order to change the biased society which has allowed the underlying presupposition'

"As to the 'Mujin Keisatsu', we hope more discussions between Mr. Tsutsui and the Japan Epilepsy Association will be made", he added. And the writer revealed that they were reaching mutual consent for further talks.



BURAKU PROBLEMS: Q & A (3)

Buraku Liberation League



Q

What kind of organization is it?

A

The Buraku Liberation League (BLL) is a grass roots organization formed by Buraku people to work toward their liberation and to fight against discrimination. Currently, the BLL has 200,000 members and 2,200 branches throughout 39 prefectures in Japan. BLL's antecedent, the National Leveler's Association (Suiheisha), was established in 1922. Before its establishment, Japanese society did not recognize discrimination against Buraku people as a 'social vice' and efforts were made to 'correct' the way Buraku people wore their clothing and the way they talked.

Confronting the social attitude toward Buraku people, Suiheisha claimed that discrimination against the Buraku was a social problem, and demanded economical and Suiheisha then developed a policy that sought a thorough impeachment of all social norms that led to discrimination against Buraku people. It adopted its founding declaration, as well as the first human rights declaration in Japan, which closes with the statement, "Be Warm-hearted to All!, May Light Be upon All Humankind!" .As a result of its impeachment campaign against



discrimination, people gradually restrained from making discriminatory remarks in public.

Suiheisha helped to end the practice of overt and public discrimination in schools and the military. For example it denounced the guilty verdict of a man who refused to state that he was a Buraku person when he proposed to a woman for marriage. The Suiheisha held that the case in Takamatsu prefecture in 1933 was a clear example of discrimination, and turned the trial into a nationwide campaign demanding the cancellation of the verdict. It succeeded in convince the court to overturn the verdict.

The Suiheisha also developed a campaign that demanded the construction of improved housing and community facilities for Buraku people. This effort achieved significant results with the opening of new community centers and public bath houses. In spite of the achievement, a strong oppression was imposed on the campaign with the start of World War II, resulting in the Suiheisha being forced to dissolve. Its leadership, however, did not file official dissolution papers, but decided to allow a natural breakup.

With the end of the war, the National Committee of Buraku Liberation was inaugurated. The next day, the Buraku Liberation People's Meeting was held and representatives from several political parties were in attendance, including: the Progressive Party, the Liberal Party, the Social Party, and the Communist Party. The National Committee began an anti-discrimination policy campaign following such legal proceedings as the "All Romance" Case and the impeachment campaign against discrimination to Mr. Nishikawa, a member of the Wakayama Prefectural Assembly. With those efforts, the campaign for improving the situation of Buraku gained more support.

The National Committee changed its name to the Buraku Liberation League in 1955 and actively developed its movement. Later, new and different Buraku organizations were formed. The appeasement policy by the Liberal Democratic party produced the National Conference On The Buraku Problem For National Reconciliation in 1960. The Japan Communist party formed the All Japan Federation Of Buraku Liberation Movement, because it was dissatisfied with the BLL's refusal to follow its view.

The BLL has been developing campaigns for improving the environment of Buraku and supporting people's life and securing jobs and equal opportunities of education. The BLL has been working on demanding the enactment of the Buraku Liberation Fundamental Law, and also the release of Mr. Kazuo Ishikawa who has been detained on a murder charge despite overwhelming evidence to prove his innocence. In addition, the BLL developed various movements including campaigns for the complete ratification of International Covenants on Human Rights; the ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial discrimination and anti-reference of personal background.

In 1988, the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism(IMADR) was organized under the leadership of the BLL, in corporation with other organizations and individuals against discrimination in and out of the country. The IMADR supports all the movements not only in Japan, but throughout the world, which seek equality and aim at eliminating discrimination.