



bimonthly

# Buraku Liberation News

Buraku Liberation Research Institute

1-6-12, Kuboyoshi, Naniwa-ku, Osaka, City, 556 Japan

Tel. +81-6-568-0905 Fax +81-6-568-0714

January 1996

No.88

*With One Article Reserved*

## ***'The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination' Passed the Diet.***

### ***Ratification To Be Expected in Feb. 1996***

At the plenary session of the House of Councilors on Dec.1, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was unanimously approved.

In approving the ratification of the treaty, the Foreign Affairs Committees of both houses adopted a resolution to request the Government to make more efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination. Describing the proposition, the committees indicated that the problems of Buraku, Ainu and foreigners living in Japan still existed as definite examples of discrimination in Japan.

They reserved Article 4, which defines the punishment for spreading discriminatory ideas, because some work for integration is necessary with the definition of freedom of speech described in the Constitution. The Government will decide to conclude the treaty at the Cabinet meeting early in January. It will be officially registered at the UN in early

February.

Japan was the only nation among the so-called advanced countries to have left the treaty unratified. It is finally to be ratified in this country thirty years after the General Assembly of the UN adopted the treaty.

The treaty was adopted at the U.N. General Assembly in 1965. As of October '95 one hundred and forty-five countries have already ratified it. But in Japan, a long and hard ask of adjustment was necessary to solve the conflicts between the Ministry of Foreign

#### **contents**

*The Int'l Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination Passed the Diet (1)*  
*Human Rights Activists Welcomed the News mentioned page 1 (2)*  
*BLL's Statetemt on the Convention (3)*  
*Discriminatory Case (5)*  
*Existence of Burakus in Ishikawa Pref. (6)*  
*Regulation for Preventing Buraku Discrimination in Fukuoka (6)*  
*Literacy Work 52 (7)*  
*Buraku Problem Q & A 9 ((9)*  
*Book Review (10)*



Affairs seeking for un-conditional ratification and the Ministry of Justice reluctant to ratify on the grounds of freedom of speech.

Then last year, the United States of America, which had not ratified the treaty for the same reason, finally ratified it under the

condition of reserving Article 4. And with the positive attitude of Prime Minister Murayama, the treaty was at long last to be ratified, reserving Article 4.

### ***Finally Got Out of Developing State On Human Rights 'International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination' Passed the House of the Representatives***

*"This should be the first step toward getting out of the developing state when it comes to human rights". The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was approved on November 21 at the plenary session of the House of Representatives. It was a long waited approval; actually Japan will be the one hundred and forty-sixth country to ratify the treaty. Nonetheless, the news was welcomed by human rights activists who have been working so hard for it.*

"It was good news that the treaty was to be ratified", said Kim Dong Hoon, professor of Ryukoku University as well as Director of the Asia-Pacific Human Rights Information Center, who appraised the ratification. "With this Japan can show her intention to the world that she is willing to accept the ideas expressed in the treaty. Ordinary citizens' awareness on human rights will be affected. Discrimination is apt to be regarded as a mental problem in this country, but people will be aware that discrimination is a crime. Judicial judgements will be more human rights-oriented", the professor predicted.

The International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism-Japan Committee, a human rights organization which has been seeking for the ratification of the



*Prof. Kim Dong Hoon*

treaty, expressed their concern as well as congratulations. They indicated that the Foreign Affairs Ministry has not yet clarified whether they include Buraku problems in the definition of 'discrimination' or not. "We can



not understand why the Ministry takes such a blurry stance. We will pay attention to their further discussions".

Kenzo Tomonaga, Director of the Buraku Liberation Research Institute, commented: "The intention of the 'International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination' is exactly the same as that of the Fundamental Law for Buraku Liberation. The ratification of the treaty will surely be a favorable wind to promote the enactment of the Fundamental Law".

A variety of reactions were observed among those who are working on problems of foreigners living in Japan. Kim Su Rian, Director of Kobe Asahi Hospital, said, "The ratification is welcome news, but the most important task for the government is to make it effective in relation to domestic laws. With regard to the already ratified 'International Covenants on Human Rights' and the 'Convention on the Rights of the Child', their ideals have not always been embodied. When

the Great Hanshin Earthquake occurred, an anti-foreign sentiment emerged. The ratification should be a touchstone of realizing the idea that both natives and foreigners are equal".

Ko Chon Jya, Representative of the Ethnic Education & Culture Center, and a lecturer at Momodani Osaka Prefectural High School, said, "I hope the ratification will be a driving force toward building a society where everybody can lead a life with ethnic identity, with no need of hiding his/her original name".

Giichi Nomura, Chief Director of the Hokkaido Utari Association also welcomed the ratification of the treaty. "Japan has been labelled as a backward country on human rights at international conventions. This occasion will affect the proposed New Ainu Law. Hopefully it will be a step for Japan to overcome an image as a backward country, to say nothing of an advanced country on human rights".

**STATEMENT ON  
THE CONCLUSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE  
ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION  
BY JAPAN**

**1 December 1995  
The Headquarters of  
the Buraku Liberation League**

Today, on 1st December 1995, the Diet approved the ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (hereinafter the 'Convention'), and it will enter into force in Japan on 1st January, 1996. This is a great achievement obtained through the movement inside and outside Japan for quite a long time.

This Convention, as is well known, was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December 1965 to contain Neo-Nazism before it became serious, and to eliminate a



wide range of racism and discrimination. It is a very important human rights instrument which as many as 145 state parties have concluded. The Convention and the Declaration adopted previously, clearly point out the following:

- . the elimination of discrimination should be the basis of the establishment of human rights;
- . discrimination can not be justified by any scientific means;
- . it threatens social safety and world peace;
- . it hurts not only those who are discriminated against but those who do.

The Convention requires the following provisions to actualize its spirit:

- . discrimination is a crime, and therefore should be prohibited by law;
- . if those who are discriminated against are under serious conditions, some affirmative action is needed to improve their situation (which should be abolished when the purpose is achieved);
- . discriminatory ideas should be eliminated through education, culture and mass media;
- . effective relief measures should be taken for the victims of discrimination;
- . to recognize cultural diversity and to live in harmony.

By ratifying this convention at last, Japan has joined the international community striving for the elimination of discrimination and the establishment of human rights. Now, Japan has to make efforts to fully implement the provisions of the convention.

From this perspective, we would like to suggest the following four points:

First, to realize sincerely the Resolution adopted at the Foreign Affairs Committee in the House of Representatives (21 November) and in the House of Councilors (30 November) that requires the promotion of elimination of discrimination including that against Buraku.

Second, to propagate and publicize the contents of this Convention in school and informal education, training for public employees, judicial officers, private enterprises and those who work in mass media, as well as among non-governmental organizations.

Third, to legislate a Fundamental Law on Buraku Liberation, a Law for Ainu People, a Law on the War Reparations and Protection of Human Rights for the Natives of the Former Colonies and Their Descendants Residing in Japan.

Fourth, to withdraw the reservation to the Article 4 of the Convention which prohibits discriminatory propaganda and agitation, and to declare the approval of the Article 14 which permits individuals and groups to submit communications to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. It is essential, for that purpose, to develop dialogues with the Committee through periodical reports.

The Buraku Liberation League welcomes the ratification of the Convention and will endeavor to realize the above four points.



**"Death to 'Eta'"**  
***Scribbled under Influence of Liquor***  
***A Series of Graffiti Incidents Found in Kyoto***

---



[BLL News, Kyoto Branch] On Oct. 11 the first fact finding meeting was held at Mibu Indoor Sports Hall in Kyoto for a series of discriminatory graffiti found in Nishisanjo district and its vicinity, Kamigyo-ward, and also in Minami-ward. About two hundred were present at the meeting, including the person in question, the BLL, Nishi-Sanjo, the local residents, the union executives of the autonomous resident association, the prefectural and municipal councilors representing Nakagyou-ward, and the administrative staff. The motive of the graffiti was mainly inquired.

The first graffiti, "Death to 'Eta'" were found on the wall under the stairs of the first floor of No.4 Building of the second Mibubo housing complex, Nakagyo-Ward, Kyoto, constructed by the Housing & Urban Reform Corporation. Since then the writer, occasionally under influence of alcohol,

scribbled similar graffiti 41 times until he was caught in the act at midnight on Dec. 24,1994.

Through the four inquiries by the joint members from Nishisanjo Br., Kyoto pref. federation of BLL and the Kyoto City Association incl. the BLL, as well as four interviews by the Kyoto city officials, he admitted that he had scribbled those graffiti one after another at Nishisanjo district and its vicinity, Kamigyo-ward and Minami-ward.

As for the motive of his behavior, he explained as follows: he was passing by Nishisanjo district riding a bicycle one day, when he was almost scraped by a car. In arguing with the driver of the car, he was kicked on the leg a couple of times. Then he saw the man going into one of the houses there. As for a series of the graffiti including "cemetery janitor, coolie, and 'Eta'", scribbled in Kamigyo-ward, he told that he had done it out of a grudge against his co-worker at a snack bar where he used to work, who made fun of his nose, and he simple-mindedly combined Buraku people with the fact that the man's family business was the care of a cemetery.

"He has no common sense", "He seems not to be sorry for what he has done", some of the union executives of the autonomous residents association criticized him. One resident commented that it would take a long time until he may be corrected by repeating denunciation. The next meeting was to be held



## ***BURAKUs Are in Existence*** ***Ishikawa-Pref. Admits Officially***

---

For the first time, the Ishikawa prefectural government admitted that there are discriminated Buraku districts in the prefecture. It was disclosed by Kazuyuki Furuya, General Manager of the prefecture at the Hokuriku Action Meeting on November 14 to 15 which was held by BLL, Toyama and Ishikawa Prefectural Federation to negotiate with the prefecture. At the meeting, the BLL members indicated that people in Ishikawa prefecture are more discriminatory than the national average as shown in the Government survey of '93, and inquired of the pref. administration as to their attitude in promoting Dowa measurement works.

General Manager, Furuya admitted that there are discriminated Buraku districts

existing in the prefecture, contrary to their previous attitude of denying their existence. He said that it would be necessary to set such conditions to allow an open-minded discussion among the community.

Other than the results of the survey, they discussed some other discriminatory incidents and the government officials were asked for their principal stance on the matters. One of the topics was about a young man in Nanao city who tried to identify Buraku districts in Ishikawa pref. using a computer network system, and another was about the fact that in employment of new high school graduates for '94, 56.2% (1,970 cases) felt they were discriminated against in screening and 195 applicants were unsuccessful.

## ***Regulation Was Set for Preventing Buraku Discrimination in Fukuoka: Steady Challenge Rewarded***

---

[BLL NEWS, Fukuoka Branch] "The Regulation on Preventing Incidents of Buraku Discrimination" was approved and enacted in the Fukuoka Prefectural Assembly on Oct. 16, 1995. Fukuoka prefecture became the third prefecture to have such a regulation, following Osaka and Kumamoto.

It was in November of 1992 when the 'Fukuoka Executive Committee Demanding the Enactment of Regulation for Preventing

Investigation of Family Background Leading to Buraku Discrimination' (represented by the honorable prof. of Kyushu Univ., Mr. Encho Tamura, and also joined by the Fukuoka pref. Federation of the BLL) was organized. Their hard and steady activities were finally rewarded.

The fact that eighty-eight municipalities passed their statements in the past three years has pushed the enactment of the Regulation at



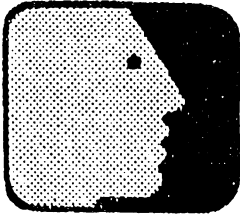
plenary session of the prefectural assembly in February, 1995.

There were some obstacles on the way including the unjustified view of the Japan Communist Party, which had declared that "Buraku discrimination doesn't exist any more. If such regulations are enacted, we will be controlled by a terrible Dowa administration"

The main points of the Regulation are: 1) Residents and employers are to owe obligation for the occurrence of discriminatory incidents in marriage or in employment on the grounds that the person was or is resident of Dowa

district, 2) Prohibiting to make inquiry of one's family origin, 3) Those who were subjected to be inquired can appeal to the Governor, 4) In case of disobeying recommendations, the authorities can make it open to the public.

On the enactment of the Regulation, Mr. Haoto, chair of the Fukuoka Prefectural Federation of BLL, commented, "We finally won the enactment through our vigorous struggles. This is a historical event".



## *Buraku Problems Q & A (9)*

### *Report on Dowa Policy Project*



What is the report of 'Dowa Policy Council' ?



The government did not formulate any policies for the Buraku problems for more than ten years after the World War II. Because of that, the National Convention was formed and led by the Buraku Liberation League in January, 1958, and demanded that the government deliberate the Buraku problems as a national policy. The Liberal Democratic Party, the Japan Socialist Party, and the Japan Communist party sent their representatives to the Convention. Later, the demanding movement was developed and the Buraku problems have got national concern.

Responding to the movement, the government held the Cabinet Members Meeting for the Dowa problem and the bill aimed at establishing the Dowa Policy Council was passed by the Diet.

The council is an organization that researches and discusses the Buraku problems seriously. The council was inquired of by the Prime Minister regarding fundamental policies to resolve the various socio-economic issues about the Dowa districts. Five years later, it submitted a report in August, 1965.

The report was an epoch in the history of the Buraku liberation. It clearly states that the Dowa problems involve the issues related to the universal principle of the freedom and the equality for all humankind, and the problems concerning Fundamental Human Rights which the Japanese Constitution ensures. It also says that the Buraku problems should not be left unsolved and that solving the problems are the responsibility of Japan and the task of its citizens.

It states that the origin of the Buraku is the social status system dating back to the feudal era, and that the reason for keeping the Buraku problems is the double structure of the industrial economy of Japan which reflects its social and cultural system. The Buraku problem still remains unsolved today. It strongly criticizes ideas such as 'The Buraku problem does not exist.', or 'The problem will be disappear naturally by just leaving it as it is.'

It says that there are two different kinds of discrimination, psychological and actual, which make the vicious circle of creating discrimination by one affecting the other. The report asserts that equal opportunity for employment and education is the way to break the vicious circle of discrimination. It also summarizes the history of the Dowa Administration with deep regret. ' Measures taken by the government has been stimulated by the serious demand and the grass roots





movement of the residents of the Dowa districts who have seriously suffered from discrimination since the Meiji Era until now, and it was usually used as an appeasement to respond to them. It also criticizes the insufficient legal control over Buraku discrimination, against which victims cannot take any actions .

The report finally suggests which direction the Dowa Administration should take. It suggests the enactment of the Law on Special Measures for Dowa Project, empowerment of the National Financial Treatment, and the establishment of the General Annual Project. The report indicates the basic understanding of the Buraku problems (and the Dowa Administration), summarizes the history, and sets out the direction for the future. The report offers a lot that can be learned as a reference for the complete resolution of the Buraku problems and for the Dowa Administration.

**DOWA EDUCATION:**

**EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGE TOWARD A DISCRIMINATION-FREE JAPAN**

edited by Yasumasa HIRASAWA and Yoshiro NABESHIMA

Published in September 1995 by the Buraku Liberation Research Institute

total 72p.

price 927yen(including consumption tax) + postage

The Buraku Liberation Research Institute has published several English-language books on Buraku issues, particularly on Buraku history and movement. Our bimonthly newsletters have been sent to nearly 1,000 readers all over the world. However, there was none specifically on Dowa education, an educational commitment to solve problems caused by discrimination against the caste-like minority group called Burakumin or Buraku people. Dowa education is also one of the broadest educational coalitions to promote the respect of human rights and democracy in Japan.

As we were receiving an increasing number of inquiries from researchers, educators, journalists and NGOs abroad on Dowa education, we decided to produce a comprehensive booklet on Dowa education to illustrate its history and pressing agenda. We believe that we need to disseminate abroad more information on Japan's human rights education activities. This publication commemorates also the start of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education.

The booklet consists mainly of two parts: Part One includes 1) Definition of Dowa Education, 2) Features of the Japanese School System, and 3) Zendokyo and Others: Teachers' Commitment to Dowa Education. Part Two includes 1) Dwa Education as Human Rights, 2) Dowa Education about Human Rights, 3) Educational Activities in the Community, and 4) Challenges for Dowa Education. These are followed by glossary and bibliography. It should be noted that all the contributions are not translations of some existing Japanese articles but were particularly written for this booklet.

We intended to cover the basic outline of Dowa education and also to add new perspectives of Dowa education; global human rights education and Dowa education; Dowa education in the community, etc. We also employed the common language of global human rights education such as 'education as human rights' and 'education about human rights' to examine features of Dowa education in comparison to other human rights education initiatives in the world. The glossary and the bibliography are both quite comprehensive and make this booklet a good springboard for those who want to study further about Dowa education.