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Resolution of Japanese Communist Party 23rd Congress

Adopted on January 17, 2004

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Resolution of the Japanese Communist Party 23rd Congress

Adopted on January 17, 2004

The Japanese Communist Party 23rd Congress discussed and adopted the historic revised JCP Program. In an effort to make the best use of the adopted draft JCP Program in the immediate domestic and international struggle, the Resolution sets forth the main issues concerning the analysis of the present-day international and domestic situations and the JCP's initiatives as well as the tasks of the struggles.

Part One: Struggle to Build Peaceful Order in the World

(1) In analyzing the world situation three years ago, the Resolution of the JCP 22nd Congress held in November 2000 presented a view on the issue of two conflicting international orders as follows:

"Two conflicting international orders are clashing over what the world in the 21st century should be. One is an order of war and oppression which accords with the U.S. policy of tyrannical domination, and the other an order of peace under the U.N. Charter. Humankind is faced with a choice between these two orders."

The world has been in a state of turbulence during the last three years with events shaking the whole world including the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the retaliatory war against Afghanistan, and the war of aggression against Iraq. These events have shown clearly that the issue of "two conflicting international orders" is one of the fundamental issues relating to the course of humankind in the 21st century and that the JCP 22nd Congress Resolution had foresight in grasping the core of the world situation. Everyone now knows which one of the two international orders has a future.

(2) The new military strategy which the United States under the Bush administration has formulated and carried out is composed of several elements that are extremely dangerous in that they fundamentally destroy the international principles established in the U.N. Charter for peace. The elements are as follows:

- A preemptive attack strategy ostensibly to counter "terrorism" and "weapons of mass destruction";
- Unilateralism that denies the role of the U.N. and asserts the U.S. right to use force arbitrarily;
- A new form of colonialism that involves overthrow of foreign governments by military force, territorial occupation, and imposition of a regime change;
- A strategy of unilaterally using nuclear weapons with the development of new types of usable smaller nuclear weapons; and

- A policy of attacking countries that are potential U.S. competitors.

The crux of ideas that runs through these elements is that the United States must maintain a "military that is strong and ready to meet both present and future challenges", and that the United States has the resolve "to shape a new century favorable to American principles and interests" (*Rebuilding America's Defenses*, a report published in September 2000 by the Project for the New American Century, one of the think-tanks with a strong influence on the Bush administration). Clearly, the United States is now trying to force the world to accept "a world order in which war and oppression are predominant". This represents the blatant ambition of the United States to dominate the world by imposing its hegemony.

However, this strategy to establish hegemony throughout the world is failing. The war of aggression against Iraq was the first real application of this strategy. Although the United States and Britain with their overwhelming military power destroyed the Saddam Hussein regime, the judgment of history has already been passed on their lawless acts of violence. The United States and Britain invaded Iraq alleging that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction were the threat, but they haven't discovered any such weapons in Iraq, thus deepening the suspicion that the allegations about Iraq's WMD were a total fabrication. The illegal occupation by the U.S. and British forces continues to provoke popular resistance and violence, and the state of affairs in Iraq is more difficult and complicated than ever. The stark reality in Afghanistan and Iraq is evidence that war only incubates terrorism and violence instead of serving as the answer.

However unrivaled the U.S. military strength is, it cannot create an international order based on military strength alone. A country may be able to be victorious in war, but one country alone cannot build peace. The U.S. attempt to establish its hegemony has no future.

(3) The first three years of the 21st century have seen a significant growth of movements opposing the dangerous and lawless adverse current and calling for an international order for peace based on the U.N. Charter, increasingly influencing international politics.

- Concerning the Iraq War, anti-war calls were loud in many countries and a worldwide anti-war movement was present on an unprecedentedly large scale even before the war's outbreak. In no time in the past have millions of people joined forces in such a manner to prevent a war by a superpower from breaking out.

- About 70 percent of the world's governments expressed opposition to the war. An anti-war current took shape even among the Group of Eight Summit members, France, Germany, and Russia. These countries were in solidarity with the non-aligned countries and Islamic Arab countries, and cooperated with China. Thus, a de facto international common front against the lawless war was formed.

- In the U.N. Security Council, intense diplomatic battles took place and the Council more than ever discharged its role and function in pursuit of a peaceful resolution of the conflict in line with the U.N. Charter. Unable to persuade the United Nations into recognizing that the war was legitimate, the

United States had to go to war against Iraq after the serious diplomatic debacle.

These developments represent the great historic progress humanity achieved at the turn of the century.

Following the tragic experiences of two world wars, humanity founded the United Nations and adopted the U.N. Charter, which set the aim of establishing an international order of peace, including the illegalization of war. However, this was not immediately translated into a realistic power for world peace.

During the U.S. war of aggression against Vietnam in the 1960s and the 1970s, the United Nations was powerless. Initially, the Vietnam War was opposed only by a few governments in the world. The Vietnamese people's undaunted struggle and the popular struggle that developed throughout the world against the war of aggression, which was getting bogged down in a quagmire, drove the U.S. forces into a historic defeat. The process that led to the U.S. defeat shows what the historical conditions and restrictions peculiar to the 20th century were like.

It is also a fact that in the 20th century, progress was registered toward establishing an international order for peace thanks to the international struggle against the war of aggression against Vietnam and the hard fact of the U.S. defeat in Vietnam, along with the worldwide collapse of the colonial system. The non-aligned movement increased its influence. The idea that all countries, large and small alike, are equal under the U.N. Charter came to be openly discussed in international politics, and the ban on the use of force and the defense of the right of nations to self-determination became a trend that grew steadily. In the 1980s, the U.S. invasions of Grenada, Libya, and Panama encountered U.N. resolutions condemning the aggressor country by name for violating the U.N. Charter.

The 21st century world builds on struggles carried out over the years by people in defense of peace and the right of nations to self-determination. The popular struggle in each country provides the power to establish U.N. Charter-based rules for world peace. The enormous upsurge of the peace movement that opposed the Iraq war continues to grow, even after the claimed end of the U.S. lawless war, as a movement calling for an international order of peace in opposition to U.S. hegemony. If this people power is further developed, the 21st century will be a hopeful century in which any attempt at a lawless war by the superpower will be thwarted.

(4) In the 21st century, the current for peace has made "international cooperation among governments, organizations, and individuals" a reality.

The struggle against the Iraq war confirmed that the possibility is increasing globally that a large movement can be built for cooperation by the world's popular struggles and a majority of the world's governments in the common cause of establishing a U.N. Charter-based international order of peace.

It is also important to note that the World Conference against A & H Bombs, calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons, is developing with government representatives taking part along with representatives of peace organizations and individuals from around the world.

During the last three years of upheaval, in which the major issue was the world's course in the 21st century concerning "war or peace", the Japanese Communist Party has taken part in grassroots peace actions throughout the country, and carried out opposition party diplomacy by reaching out to many foreign governments. It is noteworthy that peace-loving young people have developed many movements in Japan. Without doubt, these activities waged in solidarity with the huge global movement for peace will produce the power to achieve a peaceful future.

The JCP will continue to do all it can in and outside of the country to establish an international peace in accordance with the U.N. Charter and in opposition to U.S. hegemony.

Part Two: Struggle to Break Away from 'Extraordinary Subordination to the United States'

(5) The new JCP Program defines the state of Japan as "extraordinary state subordination to the United States", and regards ending this subservience as a major task facing Japan in the 21st century. The Japan-U.S. Security Treaty setup stands out in the present-day world because of Japan's extraordinary subservience to the United States.

The JCP 22nd Congress Resolution pointed out that the 1999 War Laws provide the legal basis for the "Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation" and that the "New Strategic Concept" of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) "have together brought the danger of the two U.S.-led military alliances onto a new stage." It criticized the War Laws and the "New Strategic Concept" for (i) throwing away the stated cause of "common defense against attacks" to transform themselves into interventionist military alliances that mobilize its allies and (ii) openly declaring that they would launch military attacks against other countries even without U.N. resolutions.

However, subsequent developments show a stark contrast between NATO and the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. The European Council in December 2003 adopted a document entitled "A Secure Europe in a Better World - The European Security Strategy" that states: "We are committed to upholding and developing International law. The fundamental framework for international relations is the United Nations Charter. The United Nations Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Strengthening the United Nations, equipping it to fulfil its responsibilities and to act effectively, is a European priority," clearly revealing that its approach is different from NATO's "New Strategic Concept". This reflects a new development in the international situation after the Iraq war.

By contrast, Prime Minister Koizumi and President Bush in the Japan-U.S. summit meeting in May 2003 reaffirmed that the Japan-U.S. security setup represents close relations between the two countries "not just in the context of a bilateral relationship, but also in the global context." Strengthened literally as "a global alliance", the Japan-U.S. security setup unconditionally supports any lawless war waged by the United States in any region of the world and accelerates the moves toward building a mechanism for Japan to cooperate and participate in

U.S. wars. An Asian news agency expressed concerns and criticism saying that the Self-Defense Forces will go anywhere in response to U.S. requests. The Japan-U.S. security setup, as an aggressive military alliance in which Japan is forced to be subordinate to the United States, is extraordinary in the present-day world.

(6) After the Iraq War, public criticism has been increasing regarding the actual state of the Japan-U.S. military alliance. Many people are groping and exploring an alternative course Japan should take, questioning the state of Japan that cannot show any diplomatic independence from the United States. Those forces who believe that the present setup is everlasting, with the military alliance binding Japan, maintaining huge military bases, and mobilizing the nation for U.S. lawless wars, are not qualified to talk about national independence and the country's future.

The Japan-U.S. security setup is the source of all evils arising from Japan's subordination to the United States in the military, diplomatic, and economic affairs. Supporting the U.S. preemptive attack strategy, it promotes a revival of militarism in Japan, which is the source of dangerous military tension in Asia and the rest of the world. The JCP will work even harder to expose the harmful effects of the Japan-U.S. security setup and take active part in discussions to show the public that an independent, non-aligned, neutral Japan free from the military alliance can pave the way toward a peaceful and friendly future for Asia and the world. To this end, it will make every effort to win a majority of the Japanese people over to our call for the abrogation of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. This is an essential task we must fulfill in building a majority force with the goal of establishing a democratic coalition government.

(7) Opposing the strengthening of the structure of the Japan-U.S. military alliance for aggressive purposes, the JCP will develop struggles for the following tasks:

Oppose SDF dispatches to Iraq -- Opposition to the dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) one of the burning issues facing us in national politics. Japan is deploying fully equipped SDF units to the battleground for the first time since the end of World War II, and this has a very serious bearing on Japan's course in the 21st century. The SDF dispatch to assist in the lawless war of aggression and illegal occupation is in flagrant violation of the Japanese Constitution. It is also an act that goes back on the wishes of the world people who oppose U.S. hegemony and unilateralism and call for a peaceful world order to be established in accordance with the U.N. Charter. It will also force Japan into a path that would destroy Japan's friendship with Islamic Arab countries. We will do everything possible to increase the national struggle to halt and cancel the reckless plan to dispatch the SDF to Iraq in contravention of international law and the constitutional principles of peace.

Oppose the scheme to build a nation that dispatch troops abroad -- The enactment of the Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law, the Contingency Wartime Legislation, and the Law to dispatch the SDF to Iraq, shows that the moves to build a SDF-dispatching nation have entered a new stage. Preparations for permanent legislation are under way to enable Japan at anytime to send the Self-Defense Forces abroad. These are attempts to enable Japan to exercise the right of collective self-defense by joining with the U.S. forces in using military force abroad in violation of the Constitution.

The 2003 "Defense of Japan" white paper stated, "International missions are now one of the major areas of SDF activities." This shows that the Japanese Self-Defense Forces are throwing away their traditional "exclusively defensive defense" policy in terms of its role, function, and equipment to become armed forces that perform their roles mainly abroad. At this juncture, the task now is to continue to strengthen the struggle to prevent the unconstitutional SDF dispatch law from being invoked or expanded.

Struggle to break away from being a nation structured on U.S. military bases -- Under the new global strategy of the Bush administration, U.S. bases in Japan, which served as stepping stones for attacking Afghanistan and Iraq, are being further strengthened as key bases for projecting forces to fight wars throughout the world. The JCP opposes plans to reorganize the U.S. expeditionary forces that include: a new state-of-the-art base to be constructed in Nago City in Okinawa Prefecture, a nuclear aircraft carrier to be deployed to the U.S. Yokosuka Naval Base in Kanagawa Prefecture, an amphibious assault ship to be deployed to U.S. Sasebo Naval Base in Nagasaki Prefecture, and the U.S. plan to reinforce strike forces. As crimes are frequently committed by U.S. military personnel creating danger for local residents, the national demand is that the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement be revised to end extraterritorial rights for U.S. forces in Japan. Japan's expenditure for supporting the stationing of the U.S. forces is 1.6 times the total amount paid by the other 24 U.S. allies combined for similar purposes. The JCP demands an immediate abolition of the so-called "sympathy budget" for funding the stationing of the U.S. forces in Japan. The "sympathy budget" (272.5 billion yen, FY 2003) has been increased to 1.3 times the funding for small- and medium-sized businesses.

Block Japan's participation in missile defense strategy -- The U.S. Bush administration's missile defense project is aimed at neutralizing enemy missiles and securing U.S. nuclear supremacy. It is a dangerous plan to establish U.S. dominion of space in that it would enable the United States to preemptively attack other countries without having to worry about retaliation. The Japanese government has decided to participate in the development and deployment of the missile defense system. Participation in the project is not only costly but amounts to exercising of the right of collective self-defense in violation of the Constitution and will also incorporate Japan into the U.S. global nuclear strategy. China and Russia have expressed strong concerns about and criticism of the missile defense project, indicating that Japan's participation in the project could increase tension between Japan and Asia-Pacific countries. The JCP opposes the U.S. missile defense plan and strongly demands that the government cancel its participation in it.

The struggle to end Japan's extraordinary subordination to the U.S. has international significance in that it will contribute to establishing an international order of peace in line with the U.N. Charter. We will join hands with many peace-loving people in the effort to make Japan a stronghold for world peace instead of one for U.S. lawless wars.

Part Three: Peace and Stability in East Asia -- For Resolving North Korea Question

(8) The JCP 22nd Congress Resolution took notice of "two decisive moves for peace" in East Asia, one in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the other on the Korean Peninsula.

In the last three years, the ASEAN has increased cooperation with many countries in Eurasia, including China, India, Russia, and European Union (EU) countries, in defending the international peace based on the U.N. Charter. It now plays an increasingly influential and important role as a powerful international source in the movement for peace and social progress.

Building on the development of the ASEAN, an effort is under way towards establishing a community covering the whole of East Asia, including Japan, China, and Korea, the biggest aim being to establish regional peace based on mutual respect for each other's identities and diversity, and help develop regional economic and cultural cooperation. It is important that the concept is designed to create an East Asian community based on the principle that it would (i) maintain friendship with the United States but without allowing its domination; (ii) not allow any country to establish hegemony; and (iii) call for Asian affairs to be dealt with by Asians.

Japan in the 21st century must join in this effort as an Asian country for peace and friendship and play an active role in developing economic relations that will enable every country to prosper together based on equality and reciprocity.

(9) With North Korea's nuclear weapons program becoming a major issue since October 2002, the situation on the Korean Peninsula is complicated and dangerous.

The resolution of the North Korea question is an essential task for peace and stability in East Asia.

This question is a powderkeg that could trigger a war in the region. If North Korea goes on developing nuclear weapons and continues with "brinkmanship" playing the "nuclear card", it will only give the United States a pretext for making a lawless preemptive attack. No one can deny that military confrontation may escalate into war and affect neighboring countries.

Should a war break out on the Korean Peninsula, it will cause hundreds of thousands of casualties. This is what the United States, a party concerned, has estimated. War must be prevented by all means from breaking out.

The international community must give top priority to making a concerted effort to eliminate all causes of war and avoid military clashes as its top priority task. The question of North Korea must be resolved by diplomatic and peaceful means, and it is important to thwart all moves leading to war.

In late August 2003, an important step forward was made at the six-party talks. Although major differences remained unsolved, the United States, North Korea, China, Japan, South Korea, and Russia shared the common view that they will do

their utmost to peacefully resolve the Korean nuclear issue through dialogue and maintain peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula in order to pave the way for a lasting peace on the peninsula. The JCP strongly hopes that this diplomatic process will continue and make progress toward the solution of the problem.

(10) Knowing that prospects of diplomatic negotiations are unpredictable, the JCP believes it important for the international community to work towards solving problems by standing firmly for the following principles:

(i) In solving the issue of nuclear weapons, it is important to develop diplomacy to convince North Korea with reason that its nuclear armament policy is most dangerous and that nothing is more important than abandoning its nuclear development and establishing stable diplomatic relations with the international community for the sake of its own national security.

The JCP has criticized the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) for providing a regime that allows a few nuclear weapons-possessing countries to maintain their monopoly over nuclear weapons. We have done so in line with the demand that nuclear weapons be swiftly abolished throughout the world, and our criticism does not mean allowing more countries to have such weapons. On the contrary, whatever the reason, it is unacceptable for a country that declared that it would not have nuclear weapons as a party to the NPT to unilaterally announce its withdrawal from the treaty and embark on the road of nuclear weapons development. In addition, given the agreement North Korea has concluded with South Korea, the United States, and Japan to the effect that it will not seek to have nuclear weapons, its unilateral revocation is unacceptable.

The logic behind North Korea's quest for nuclear weapons development is that its national security can be secured only by maintaining "a tremendous military deterrent force". However, North Korea is isolating itself from the international community because of its pursuit of nuclear arms buildup based on the "deterrence" policy, thus exposing itself to great danger. If North Korea abandons this policy and accepts fair international inspections, it will prevent any country from inventing a pretext for attacking it.

(ii) North Korea's stable diplomatic relations with the international community can only be established when North Korea atones for its many lawless activities.

Although North Korea is a United Nations member and has diplomatic relations with many countries, these relations are far from being stable. The biggest obstacle to North Korea's stable external relations is its failure to atone for lawless acts it has done throughout the world, including the terror bomb explosion in Rangoon, Burma (now Myanmar), the shooting at a Japanese fishing boat, the KAL (Korean Air Lines) explosion, the trafficking in illicit drugs, and the abduction of Japanese nationals.

A successful solution to the abduction issue will be important not only for the abductees and their families, but for the settlement of all the lawless activities North Korea carried out throughout the world. The point is that North Korea has admitted some of the facts of kidnapping Japanese nationals and offered a formal apology, however imperfect. The need now is for North Korea to go farther than this first step toward settling all its lawless acts. This approach will make it possible to seek

a solution to the abduction issue not just as a bilateral Japan-North Korea issue but as an international task to be tackled by the international community.

The international community should remind North Korea with reason that it can establish stable diplomatic relations with its neighboring countries and the rest of the world and join the international community in the true sense of the words only when it atones for its international lawless acts and that that is the main assurance of peace and security.

(iii) It is important for all the parties concerned to seek to stop the vicious circle of military responses.

The U.S. Bush administration is militarily intimidating North Korea as part of its so-called "axis of evil" stating it may be a target of its preemptive attack strategy. No country has the right to make preemptive attacks on any country whatsoever. North Korea, by playing its nuclear card, only increases the threat to peace. This cycle of military confrontation gives rise to a more dangerous situation.

Both the United States and North Korea should restrain themselves from taking any action that would heighten the cycle of military confrontation. All the countries concerned, including Japan, are called upon to work to prevent the United States and North Korea from pursuing military confrontational approaches instead of promoting them.

In this respect, it is important to note that the announcement made after the six-party talks in August 2003 pointed out that "all the parties should refrain from stating or acting in a manner that gives rise to turmoil in the course of peace talks," and that "all the parties concerned called for the Korean Peninsula to be made nuclear-free and recognized the need to explore a solution by taking into account North Korea's security and other concerns." It is necessary for all the parties concerned, including North Korea, to stand for and comply with the principles of national sovereignty and non-violation of each other's territory.

(11) Firmly standing for sovereign independence, the JCP has played the leading role in severely criticizing Korea's activities that have nothing in common with socialism, including its attempt in the late 1960s to invade the South; the imposition of the personality cult of Kim Il Sung in the 1970s; and a number of international lawless acts in the 1980s.

As North Korea has become an issue crucial to peace and stability in East Asia in the last several years, the JCP has been active in making specific proposals for solving problems with reason, including opening a negotiating channel between the government of Japan and North Korea and seeking to comprehensively solve the issues of nuclear weapons, the abduction of Japanese nationals, and Japan's colonization of Korea.

A reasonable solution to the North Korea problem could pave the way for peace, prosperity, and friendship in East Asia. For the Japanese people, it could mean making progress toward a peaceful environment, in which forces for the revival of militarism would lose their cause. At home and internationally, the JCP will continue to strive for reason to prevail in the effort to solve the issue of North Korea.

Part Four: JCP' Opposition Party Diplomacy

(12) The JCP's opposition party diplomacy has made remarkable progress for these several years since the JCP 21st Congress in 1997 adopted a policy that places emphasis on relations with other Asian countries. The normalization of JCP relations with the Communist Party of China and their summit meeting in 1998 laid the groundwork for the implementation of this policy. In developing the opposition party diplomacy, the 4th Central Committee Plenum in June 1999, adopted landmark guidelines. The guidelines enable the JCP to be active in developing relations with other political parties, ruling or opposition, beyond the past framework of relations between communist parties, and with any foreign governments, based on mutual interest in opening political exchanges in the cause of world peace and social progress.

JCP activities under these guidelines began with a tour of Southeast Asian countries (Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, and Hong Kong), followed by a tour of Middle Eastern countries (Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates), South Asian countries (India, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan), and Tunisia in Northern Africa. These visits greatly increased the JCP's relations with foreign governments and governing parties. JCP representatives participated in the International Conference of Asian Political Parties in Thailand, the Non-aligned Summit in Malaysia, and the First East Asian Conference (also in Malaysia), and the OIC summit, either as delegates or as guests.

At the time when war on Iraq was imminent, JCP representatives visited China, the Middle East, and South Asia, and confirmed its agreement with those governments on the need to make efforts to achieve a peaceful solution to the crisis. The JCP also conveyed to embassies in Japan its views on the Iraq question at each turning point. The JCP's opposition party diplomacy has thus paved the way for its increased effort to directly influence international politics. Through these firsthand interchanges, the JCP has been able to more comprehensively understand the present-day world.

Furthermore, these activities have provided us with an opportunity to take a fresh look at problems in Japan's politics and foreign policy. Every country the JCP visited is engaging in building its country on its own, despite the difficulties and contradictions they face, to achieve their independent goals for the 21st century. By contrast, Japan, bound by diplomacy subservient to the United States, remains without goals or prospects in its own self-reliance.

(13) The opposition party diplomacy of the JCP is accepted in every corner of the world because the JCP works in the 21st century standing for a "universal axiom" being shared by a majority of the world's countries. In its opposition party diplomacy, the following theories and political views the JCP established have been very effective:

- *Defend the world order of peace based on the U.N. Charter* -- In an effort to win a broader international agreement in opposition to the Iraq war, the JCP has emphasized the importance of exploring cooperation in opposition to acts that destroy the world peace based on the U.N. Charter.

Keeping this approach in mind, the JCP's opposition party diplomacy proved that many governments throughout the world could share common views with us.

- *Strive for an equitable and democratic international economic order* -- The JCP 22nd Congress Resolution rejected a simple "anti-globalization" slogan and adopted a policy of demanding a fair and democratic globalization which guarantees every country economic sovereignty in opposition to profit-first globalization centering around U.S.-led multinational corporations and international finance capital. This policy has proven to be effective in dialogues the JCP has had with governments of developing countries because it specifically concerns problems facing them.

- *Promote coexistence and dialogue between cultures with different values* -- The JCP's opposition party diplomacy has paved the way for exchanges with many of the governments in the Islamic world. Our position of seeking coexistence and dialogue between cultures with different values has played a key role in bringing us to heart-to-heart discussions with them. Given the prevailing tendency to consider a particular value as an absolute and impose it on the whole world, it is significant to hold fast to the position of respecting Islam's history of social development and its pursuit of democracy and social progress and of promoting dialogue and coexistence with the Islamic world.

(14) Through its opposition party diplomacy, the JCP has found that the "anti-communist walls" between the JCP and any country have been brought down everywhere. For example, the JCP has expanded exchanges with many Islamic countries in which communist parties are banned or do not exist. JCP delegations have visited these countries and succeeded in establishing close relations with them.

How is it possible for the JCP to build reliable and interactive relations with these and many other countries? There may be various factors. Discussions the JCP has had with many countries convince us that the JCP's history, in particular its consistent opposition to the war of aggression by Japanese militarism and defense of sovereign independence against great-power chauvinism by any country, is the source of trust in the JCP. We are very proud that the JCP's political line and history are becoming more effective in the present-day world.

In our discussions with different people around the world, many showed their surprise when they learned that the JCP has a membership of more than 400,000 working in 25,000 branches, an Akahata readership of nearly 2 million, 40 seats in the Houses of Representatives and Councilors and about 4,200 JCP members in local assemblies throughout Japan, and that the JCP is closely connected with the public in its grassroots activities. Indeed, the JCP's diplomacy is supported by this grassroots strength of the JCP.

The JCP's diplomatic activities will increase in the future. In this area, the JCP will further develop party activities to achieve greater results.

Part Five: Devote Struggles to Get Rules Established to Defend Living Conditions

(15) With the failing economic policies by LDP politics reaching an impasse, the Japanese people's living conditions are in a state of crisis which is deeper than any in the past. Look at the 30 months of the Koizumi Cabinet. It has used the "structural reform" policy as a pretext for forcing the people to pay more and encouraged corporations to do more to restructure themselves. During this period, many small- and medium-sized companies have been forced to go bust, and the living conditions of all walks of life have been further devastated. A Cabinet Office survey on people's lives shows that an all time high of 67 percent of the respondents said they are distressed or anxious about their daily lives.

The question now is how the JCP should act to put an end to these problems. The 3rd Plenum of the JCP Central Committee (22nd Congress) in October 2001 stressed the importance of the JCP's activist role in organizing struggles as well as the need to propose policies in the arena of national politics. The plenum decision stated: "The government and large corporations are not hesitant in carrying out anything without regard for the costs the people may have to pay. This is exactly what we must do away with for the sake of future Japanese society; it is also one of the major issues facing our society in the 21st century." With this, the 3rd CC Plenum called for a major struggle to effect a fundamental change in Japanese society incorporating a long perspective.

Following this decision, the JCP began to increase its efforts to strengthen its cooperation with popular movements in various fields.

- Opposition to lawless corporate restructuring has developed in many places of work throughout the country. Under the slogan, "Rules for the workplace", the struggle is increasing against unjust dismissals and transfers to subsidiary companies. The struggle to eliminate forced overtime work has been successful in forcing the government to take concrete actions against such labor practices. As a result, more than 25 billion yen has been reimbursed during the last two and half years in back pay for unpaid overtime work, marking a significant step forward. A struggle has also developed among young people, who recently started a signature campaign called "jobs for the youth".

- Arbitrary plant closings by large corporations and the busting up of credit unions and credit associations have been resisted by the JCP, trade unions, democratic organizations, and local governments in a joint struggle for the defense of regional economies and finances. These struggles have forced some companies to withdraw their plant closing plans and promise job security.

- On the issue of social services, the Medical Association, the Dental Association, the Pharmacists Association, and the Nurses Association took part in the broadest ever national movement against the outrageous government move to increase insured patients' share of medical costs to 30 percent from the 20 percent. The joint campaign has collected more than 30 million signatures and is continuing to call for patients' share of burden to be

reduced.

This is only a small first step. At the same time, however, it indicates that the Japanese people have accumulated enormous energy to rise in a broad-based struggle. It also shows that if we use this energy to develop the struggle, we will be able to produce results that will help defend living conditions against the government's policies of destroying people's livelihoods.

(16) Increasingly varied demands are being expressed for riding out the crisis of life by workers, working citizens, farmers, fishers, small- and medium-sized business operators, intellectuals, cultural professionals, women, youth, students, and elderly people. Demands related to livelihood have features common to all regions, urban or rural. It is necessary to develop a great struggle in many ways.

To help develop the immediate struggle against LDP government policies which destroy people's living conditions, the JCP calls for national efforts on the following three points:

Struggle to stop lawless corporate restructuring to win the creation of stable jobs – The employment situation is more critical than ever due to large corporations vying for cost-cutting restructuring encouraged by the government. In addition to the rise in the unemployment rate to a postwar high, personal income is falling. Large corporations are competing with each other for replacing full-time jobs with unstable contingent jobs, including part-time, temporary, and contract jobs. Workers are forced to work extraordinarily long hours, and this is a cause of *karoshi* (death from overwork), and the illegal practice of forcing workers to work overtime without pay is prevalent. Young people's difficulties in finding jobs is a particularly serious social problem. It calls for a struggle to be developed to oppose lawless corporate restructuring, eliminate forced overtime work without pay, put an end to long work hours, and enable workers to use their paid holidays fully, increase stable jobs, and establish just rules for employment and labor practices. We demand that the government increase financial assistance to small- and medium-sized businesses which employ 70 percent of the nation's wage workers.

Struggle to stop adverse revisions of social services and establish a true social security system – The budget cuts which have been carried out almost every year for social services attack the people in the form of increases in burdens and decrease in benefits. The social security system is intended to secure people's livelihoods, but it is now a major source of uncertainty that people have about their present and future situation. We will fight to block the major adverse revision of the pension system planned for the next fiscal year (starting April 1st 2004), stop the endless increase in medical costs, and demand that people's burdens be reduced and that problems of the nursing care insurance system be solved. The JCP will concentrate on efforts to develop the struggle by setting out a policy that will secure stable resources for social services through changing the way tax money is used as an immediate task and reforming ways and means based on economic democracy that will have large corporations and the wealthy shoulder appropriate burdens.

National struggle to block a major consumption tax rate increase plan – The government is acting in unison with business circles in beginning

to call for the regressive consumption tax rate to be increased to more than 10 percent. The Japan Business Federation proposes increasing it to 16 percent IN FY 2014 and the Japanese Association of Corporate Executives says the rate should be 19 percent by FY 2020. The government Tax Commission in its mid-term report advised the consumption tax rate to be increased to more than 10 percent from the present five percent. In the 2003 House of Representatives general election, the LDP and the DPJ publicized their calls for an increase in the consumption tax rate in their platform. Late in 2003, the LDP and Komei agreed on a far-reaching tax reform by 2007, including an increase in the consumption tax rate. This is how reckless moves are beginning toward a major increase in the consumption tax rate. A 10-percent consumption tax rate will mean taking an additional 25-trillion yen from the public. If the rate is 16 percent, an additional 40 trillion yen will be taken away. The danger is that if the people don't voice their objection, the tax rate increase will be accepted as a fait accompli.

The consumption tax is the worst form of taxation with its regressive character burdening low-income people most. A further tax rate increase will increase the regressive character and further widen the gap between rich and poor. It will also ruin working people's lives and Japanese society alike.

The consumption tax has a particularly destructive effect on small- and medium-sized businesses who are obliged to pay the tax on their own because it is difficult for them to include the consumption tax in sales prices. Its increase will force traders, who are already hit hard by the prolonged economic recession, to go bust or face more hardships.

Another point to make is that the consumption tax is an obstacle to economic recovery. This is evident in what happened following the additional 9 trillion yen burden imposed on the people in 1997, which included a consumption tax increase. At the time, the Japanese economy, which had just begun to return to a recovery track, though feebly, again touched bottom. How absurd it is to propose a tax increase plan at a time when the people and the economy are worn down by the prolonged economic recession.

The advocates of the consumption tax increase say the measure is necessary to "secure funds for social services." This is an untenable argument. Tax revenue since the consumption tax was introduced has reached 136 trillion yen. During the same period, revenue from three corporate taxes fell by 131 trillion yen. This shows the consequence of repeated corporate tax cuts in tandem with the introduction of the consumption tax and other tax increases. This means that the consumption tax has been swallowed by funds for corporate tax cuts for large corporations. In fact, the business circles are calling for a big increase in the consumption tax rate in combination with further corporate tax cuts as well as cuts in the corporate share of burden for social insurance premiums. Clearly, the consumption tax rate increase is not aimed at securing funds for social services; it is intended to further reduce large corporations' tax and social insurance burdens.

The JCP has been demanding that the notorious consumption tax be abolished. At a time when the substantial increase in the consumption tax rate, which will destroy people's living conditions and the nation's economy,

is about to be railroaded through, our immediate task is increase common actions by a wide-range of people on the single issue agreed upon: opposition to a consumption tax rate increase. The JCP calls on all people to participate in this movement.

(17) Japan's food and agriculture are in a state of crisis with the food self-sufficiency rate continuing to decline. Many family farmers are facing the danger of having to abandon farming. Destruction of the nation's agriculture is threatening the integrity of the nation's land and endangering the environment and local economies. More and more people are concerned about food safety being threatened by residual pesticides contained in imported products and the outbreaks of BSE. The urgent task is for the government to place importance on agriculture as the nation's key industry, reconstruct it, and raise self-sufficiency in food according to concrete plans.

In Japan, only 27 percent of the expenditure for agriculture is allotted to supporting producer prices and incomes, which is very inadequate when compared with European countries in which the percentage ranges from 50 percent to 70 percent. This is based on a business circles' strategy that would lead to the destruction of Japan's agriculture. They have repeatedly called for price support for agricultural products to be abolished and continued to put pressure on family farmers to surrender their farmland to large corporate agribusinesses. Abandoning its responsibility for maintaining stable prices and a demand-supply balance on the premise that Japan will depend totally on imported food and farm products, the Koizumi government has drawn up a plan for rice policy reform that will recognize large-scale farmers (with more than four hectares of land in 46 prefectures and more than 10 hectares of land in Hokkaido). The government is trying to impose this already failed policy in order to eliminate small-scale family farmers that account for an overwhelming majority of farm producers. This is a policy that will only accelerate the collapse of Japanese agriculture. We will firmly oppose the government and the business sector's policy of destroying Japanese agriculture and fight for drastic improvement of the government's price and income support policy that will sustain family farmers.

At the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference held in Cancun, Mexico, in September 2003, NGOs and many developing countries expressed opposition to the call of large exporters, including the United States, for further expansion of agricultural trade that benefits multinational companies most. This is how contradictions are sharpening on this issue. At a time when a world food shortage is a matter of deep concern, one important task of international solidarity is to work to review the across-the-board trade liberalization that targets all agricultural products, exclude the staples in maintaining self-sufficiency in food like rice in Japan from trade liberalization, and establish the principle of "food sovereignty" for every country. Taking total dependence on foreign farm products for granted, the Koizumi Cabinet has disclaimed state responsibilities for maintaining stable food prices and supply-demand relations. In the "Outline of Reform of Rice Policy," it imposes the already failed policy of only regarding large-scale farmers (more than ten hectares in Hokkaido and more than four in the rest of Japan) and corporate businesses as farmers, forcing an overwhelming majority of family farmers to give up farming. If nothing is done to check this, Japan's agriculture will collapse.

Now is the time to fundamentally change the present food, agriculture, forestry, and fishery policy to one of curbing expansion of food imports. It is also necessary to further develop the struggle to establish an agricultural policy that will fundamentally secure agricultural prices and farmers' incomes, support family farmers, and protect food safety. We will do our best to develop it as a national movement for the survival of all Japanese people whether they live in rural areas or in cities.

(18) Japan is referred to as a country under "capitalism without rules". This state of affairs is a product of LDP politics and Japanese monopoly capitalism's reactionary domination. At the same time, we need to recognize that it is connected with the fact that social struggles are often too weak to repel unjust attacks on workers and the people in general.

In western European countries, conservative governments over the 1980s and the 1990s preached propaganda about deregulation being a panacea in order to destroy the work rules established thanks to workers' struggles. This adverse current was opposed by workers waging powerful struggles in France, Germany, and Britain, including general strikes by several million workers. This struggle not only achieved wage increases and improvements in working conditions in individual companies but protected and even improved work rules, including regulation of dismissals. The EU has established the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR). Laws have been enacted to require firms to fulfill their responsibilities in many areas, including employment and the environment. Measures have been taken to encourage companies to voluntarily abide by the rules through disclosure of information. Thus, in Europe, the rules for defending people's lives and work conditions have been established through struggles to socially repel lawless attacks. It should be noted that these rules to some degree serve to stabilize and strengthen European economies.

The Japanese people have similar experiences in achieving historic rules to defend their living conditions. In the 1960s and 1970s, the people's struggle led to the establishment of important rules that are effective today. In the 1970s, massive arbitrary worker dismissals taking advantage of the oil crisis were strongly opposed by workers throughout Japan. In the late 1970s, judicial precedents called the "Four Requirements for Dismissals for Downsizing" were established as basic rights of workers based on court rulings. The citizens anti-pollution movement, which had been developing since the late 1960s, made significant progress through four major pollution lawsuits, resulting in the convening of a special Diet session in 1970 devoted to the issue of pollution. As a result, the Environmental Pollution Control Basic Law, which had failed to bind corporations, was revised. This marked an important step in strengthening rules for environmental protection. Workers also carried out a long struggle against workplace discrimination against workers based on ideology, and all the lawsuits filed against such discrimination involving Tokyo Electric Power Co., Chubu Electric Power Co., and Kansai Electric Power Co. were victorious for workers, contributing to the establishment of rules to prohibit such discrimination. The struggle against wage discrimination against women also made important progress.

However, following the 1980 "Socialist Party-Komei Party Agreement" and in the midst of the second major reactionary offensive since the end of World War II,

the Japanese labor movement conspicuously began to take a rightward course. Labor-capital collaborationism prevailed to suppress workers' demands and rights. We need to look at the hard fact that the power of labor to develop social struggles to defend the lives and rights of working people has since been weakened dramatically.

We are striving to realize the immediate keen demands of the people and achieve a united front for establishing a democratic coalition government. This requires us to increase efforts to overcome this weakness and establish a society capable of striking back at lawless attacks. We must develop a huge struggle to "establish rules in defense of living conditions".

(19) In this effort, it is very important for the JCP to play the pioneering role in organizing the struggle. The major task is for the JCP to make the cause of the struggle known to the public, achieve gains however small, make efforts to strengthen the mass movements and their organizations, and build cooperation among people of a broad political spectrum. JCP branches at places of work, communities, and schools as well as among the youth, and JCP groups need to play their roles as reliable partners in the people's struggle.

Particularly, the JCP has an important duty to help make clear the great cause of the struggle and exert its energies to the development of JCP policies and theories. For example, the struggle against lawless corporate restructuring is not only important for the defense of workers' lives and rights. The corporate competition for larger profits through restructuring is holding down personal incomes, causing a contraction of the economy independent of individual companies' intention. This is a cause of the prolonged economic slowdown in Japan. Corporations are trying to cut costs by offering more unstable jobs, but ironically, this strategy is contributing to a fall in corporate productivity. The ongoing destruction of the employment system is weakening the very foundation of the social security system and gutting medical services and the pension system. Under these circumstances, the struggle in opposition to lawless corporate restructuring is an important national task that accords with the great cause of achieving a sustainable economic and social development in Japan.

At a time when people are increasingly threatened and the attacks are directed at depriving the public of the energy to fight back, the JCP has an important role to play in explaining the national significance of each struggle to the public. In fulfilling this task, the newspaper Akahata's existence and role is very important in relation to the present state of Japanese mass media.

(20) The JCP will make every effort to develop a democratic people's movement aiming for forming a majority in every sector. Above all, the trade union movement is called upon to overcome labor-capital collaboration.

With large corporations aggressively seeking both "corporate restructuring and wage cuts", the so-called theory of the pie, the traditional theory of postwar labor-capital collaborationism, has failed. The theory was that workers' better livelihoods depend on their cooperation in the effort to enhance corporate productivity. The emerging situation calls for the trade union movement to reexamine itself in the light of its original cause. Under this strategy, large corporations are trying to force the unions to abandon their fundamental task to "defend livelihoods and rights, and

improve working conditions." They also plan to transform the unions into organizations that would merely help corporations gain larger profits and increase productivity. This scheme, tantamount to driving unions into committing suicide, is intensifying contradictions with a large number of workers. Against these trends, efforts are beginning to be made to restore the trade union movement's essential role. Objective conditions exist for restoring a strong union movement.

Under these circumstances, the National Confederation of Trade Unions (Zenroren), as the national center representing the working-class interests, is expected to play an active role in achieving people's as well as workers' demands. It is very important, through union struggles, to expand labor unions among unorganized workers and workers with unstable jobs and to seek cooperation in struggles based on agreements beyond differences of national affiliation.

JCP branches in the workplace have a role to play as strongholds of the struggle to defend workers' benefits and organize struggles, irrespective of unions' stances in corporations and unions' establishment, organized or unorganized. Their positions, which have resisted corporate offensives for more than 20 years, are great treasures. The JCP will use all its energy through its activities to maintain firm ties with workers, strengthen their positions, and implement a systematic handing over of progressive movements to future generations.

The JCP will try to make progress in the united front movement by linking it to people's struggles in every sector. The united front movement is basically aimed at expanding cooperation with a wide range of non-party people. The JCP will do its utmost to develop the National Forum for Unity for Peace and Progressive Change from local communities and places of work.

Part Six: For Broader National Common Action against Adverse Revision of the Constitution

(21) The attempt to adversely revise the Constitution, focusing on Article 9, is entering a critical stage. Now that the traditional government interpretational amendment of the Constitution is no longer tenable, the real danger is a textual revision to the Constitution. We must raise an alarm against the following dangerous moves.

- A set of laws has been railroaded through to send the Self-Defense Forces abroad. The overseas dispatch of the SDF has thus been expanded. The government has so far explained the SDF's activities abroad by sophistry, saying, "Support activities that don't involve the use of arms are permissible." Such sophistry is increasingly incompatible with the plan to send SDF units to Iraq, a country in a state of war.

- Under the Koizumi Cabinet, adverse revision of the Constitution has become the order of the day. The prime minister has instructed the LDP to draft its plan for a "revised" Constitution by November 2005, the 50th founding anniversary of the LDP, and openly stressed the need to enact a bill to hold a national referendum on constitutional "revision" before November 2005. In no time in the past since WWII has a prime minister instructed to draft a revised Constitution within a set time frame.

- In the Diet, the Research Commission on the Constitution was established in each house in January 2000, giving an impetus to the moves toward submitting their final reports within the next year. More than 300 Dietmembers of both Houses from the LDP, DPJ, LP, Komei, and the Reform Club participate in the Parliamentarian League Promoting Research of the Constitution, drafting bills to "revise" the Diet Law and establish a national referendum law as a step to proposing a constitutional revision. In addition to the Liberal Democratic and Komei parties, the Democratic Party shortly before the House of Representatives general election announced its call for a new constitution to be drafted. All major parties, except the JCP and the SDP, have made it clear that they are in favor of constitutional revision. Thus, a major trend is being formed by opposition as well as ruling parties in the direction of revising the Constitution.

(22) The call for constitutional revision by no means represents the demands of the people. In October 2000, a report on Japan was made mainly by Richard Armitage, the present U.S. deputy secretary of state. Pointing out that "Japan's prohibition against collective self-defense is a constraint on alliance cooperation," the report called on Japan to exercise the right of collective self-defense. The report, along with the LDP and business circles seeking a revival of militarism, has served as a driving force for the enactment of bills to send the SDF abroad and further encouraged calls for constitutional revision.

Article 9 of the Constitution is the biggest obstacle to Japan's global participation in lawless U.S. wars for hegemony. The main objective of those who are promoting the constitutional change is to remove Article 9 in order to pave the way for SDF dispatch without restrictions. This move goes against the international call for a peaceful world order based on the U.N. Charter.

The defense of Article 9 is important not only for securing lasting peace for Japan. It is a struggle that has great international significance because it is inseparably connected with the effort to build a world that opposes U.S. hegemony. In the opposition party diplomacy the JCP has carried out, we have felt that the peoples in the Middle East and Asia want to see Japan as the "country with Article 9" fulfill its pioneering role in defending world peace.

The JCP calls for a great common struggle to be waged by broader sections of people in opposition to the adverse revision of the Constitution and any attempts that conflict with the constitutional principle of peace. In this struggle, the JCP will prove its real worth as a party that has been consistent in defending the Constitution.

Part Seven: For National Discussion and Movement Aimed at Overcoming the Crisis of Social Morals

(23) The crisis facing Japanese society is not limited to politics and economics. Moral crisis is also a serious problem, affecting children. Many people feel anxious and distressed about shocking juvenile crimes frequently taking place as well as bullying, child abuse, and teenage prostitution.

The JCP has repeatedly called for a wider discussion and movement to help fight against the public tendency of looking down upon others, and to establish civic morals. "To respect civic morals and social ethics, and discharge their responsibilities toward society" has been recognized as the most important duty of JCP members since the JCP Constitution was revised at the JCP 22nd Congress.

The JCP renews its call for efforts to find a way out of the present difficulty, placing the task of overcoming the crisis of social morals, in particular securing children's healthy growth, as one of the most important efforts to help to build a democratic Japanese society in the 21st century. Specifically, the JCP calls for exploring solutions through nationwide discussions and struggles.

(24) What underlies the present-day moral crisis is a pile of distortions, contradictions, and difficulties the LDP government has caused to people's living conditions, work, and education. The task now is to do everything possible to solve these problems through democratic approaches.

For example, large corporations are in a fierce competition for larger profits through restructuring schemes. This has destroyed job security and forced workers into excessively long work hours with excessive workloads, which in turn has destroyed happy family life and even family communications. Extreme emphasis on the virtue of competition is forcing workers to obey the law of the jungle, placing workers as either winners or losers. This tendency has made people forget about caring for others and created a savage atmosphere affecting people's spiritual well being. The deep job crisis among young people deprives them of the right to participate in society and shatters their hopes for their future work, marriage, and child rearing prospects.

In its comments to the Japanese government in June 1998, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child stated that in Japan "children are exposed to developmental disorder due to the stress of a highly competitive educational system." Extraordinarily competitive education bound by control-oriented schools, which have been imposed for many years by the LDP government, are seriously damaging the minds and growth of children. The government and the LDP are wrongly insisting that the Fundamental Law of Education is to blame for the present educational contradictions and difficulties, and that this law should be revised; this is a groundless allegation. The fact of the matter is that the government and the LDP have for many years trampled down the basic ideas and principles of democratic education established in the Fundamental Law of Education, which cites building character as the fundamental objective of education and precludes state power's "unjust control". This is precisely the source of the present-day contradictions and difficulties facing education.

A string of political and economic corruption and scandals have immeasurably harmful effects on children. The elimination of moral corruption is essential for establishing sound civic morals.

A politician's recent remarks in favor of aggression against other countries and terrorist attacks were scandalous. This warns of the danger of a chauvinistic trend emerging in contempt of other nations in Asia.

The task now is to struggle to end various distortions and contradictions under

LDP politics that have harmful effects on civic morals. The JCP will fight to make Japanese society a democratic society with rules together with the effort to restore sound morals to Japanese society, starting at the top.

(25) The JCP believes that these efforts must be coupled with tasks to be carried out by society as its own tasks and proposes the following four initiatives:

- Establish standards of civic morals appropriate to a democratic society -- It is particularly important today to establish, through popular discussion and consensus, the standards of civic morals for the builders of a democratic society.

In prewar Japan, state power used morality, in particular the "Imperial Rescript of Education", as standards forcing the people to show their allegiance to the despotism of the emperor. These forced moral standards had nothing in common with civic morals in the true sense of the words. Using these "moral" codes, the brutal war of aggression was carried out against other nations in violation of humanity.

The Japanese Constitution and the Fundamental Law of Education were established based on remorse for the historical mistake of war. They were to provide a foundation on which postwar democratic civic morals would be formed. Their foundation is made up of universal values based on social progress, including the principle of people's sovereignty; respect for human rights and personality; rearing people as builders of a peaceful state and society; the quest for truth and justice; respect for labor and responsibility; and equality and equal rights between men and women. On these bases, various voluntary efforts have been made to establish the standards of civic morals worthy of a democratic society.

In the 1970s and the 1980s, the JCP called for children to be taught with civic morals in addition to academic, physical, and emotional education. In the JCP 21st Congress in 1997, the JCP proposed 10 points to be included in civic morals.

Public consensus is yet to be formed over standards to be established for civic morals. Any such standards should neither be imposed on people by government orders nor established based on a decision of a single political party. The JCP believes that the need now is for the public to form a consensus through discussion of standards for socially-recognized civic morals.

- Establish social self-discipline to protect children -- The U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child provides that "the children should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance." It is serious in the light of international practices that Japan has this kind of weaknesses concerning self-discipline that all societies should have.

Child prostitution and other types of buying and selling of sex are undermining children's rights. The Japanese government, by the standards set in the U.N. Committee on the Rights of the Child, has an internationally ignominious status in this respect. The concluding observations on Japan of

the Committee on the Rights of the Child stated that it is "concerned at the lack of a comprehensive plan of action to prevent and combat child prostitution, child pornography and trafficking of children."

Many people are concerned about children being exposed to violence scenes and explicit expressions of sex through mass media and video games. Social self-discipline in this field is lagging behind internationally. In an international perspective, Japanese society is aberrant in that the child is a big market for corporations to make profits by stimulating children to buy as many goods as possible.

Children are technically barred from the soccer lottery, but the fact is that they are involved in gambling over soccer game results. It is impermissible that the government and the Education, Science and Technology Ministry are indirectly taking bets from children.

Despite an increase in child abuse cases, improvement of administrative bodies specializing in this problem is behind the needs.

The urgent task is for Japanese society to make up for its backwardness in this regard and to establish social self-discipline to guarantee the sound development of children.

- Respect children's opinions and guarantee their right to participate in society -- In order to build a hopeful and positive world for children, it is necessary to guarantee children the right to express their opinions and participate in society in schools, local communities, and in various fields of society.

Juvenile crimes and other problems have various causes. However, many experts and people concerned point out that an underlying cause of these problems is that children's self-affirmative feelings and self-esteem are deeply hindered. If children lack self-esteem, the logical consequence is that they also lack in the feelings of respecting others as fellow humans. It is deplorable that Japan ranks very low in an international comparison in terms of percentage of children who regard themselves as worthy and who feel self-contentment in their own identity.

The task now is to create the climate at home, in local communities, and at schools in which children will receive the solid sense that they are held in esteem for their human values and feel assured that their existence is affirmatively accepted.

To that end, it is very important to establish in all sections of society human relations that seriously listen to children, respect what they might think or say. Efforts will be needed to set up a system that guarantees children the right to freely express their opinions, receive respect for their opinions, and allows them to participate in society. Only when children can see themselves as indispensable members of society can they grow into an adult who holds himself or herself and others in esteem and abides by socially just norms.

The U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulates as follows: "States

Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child." A major international movement concerning children is one of ensuring their social participation, such as allowing them to take some part in school administration. In Japan, a new movement has arisen to call for schools, local communities, and other forums to allow children to express their opinions and participate. It is essential to support this positive force.

- Grassroots efforts to help children's sound development -- The JCP will promote and support grassroots movements through joint efforts by parents, local communities, and schools to help children's growth, listen to their concerns, and give them support. Children will acquire civic morals through actual human and social relations instead of just empty words.

A variety of efforts to develop rich human relations among children are under way in many parts of Japan. These attempts include the book club movement, circles for theater-and-movie goers, sports and rhythmic calisthenics, tours in nature and society, and the setting up of independent children's organizations. Many self-support organizations of parents suffering from problems over child-rearing, such as bullying, delinquency, school non-attendance, and social withdrawal, have come into being. It is essential for the JCP to support these grassroots movements and to seek ways to solve the problems together.

Civic morals are not something that can prevail by strengthened government control, regulation and orders from above. Far from solving the issues, such government control will only exert harmful effects. A cabinet minister's remark that the parents of a criminal boy deserves punishment and retaliation is a recent example of government irresponsibility.

Ways to solve this issue will develop by supporting citizens' voluntary efforts. The JCP calls for a national discussion and movement to overcome the crisis in social morals in order to create a society that guarantees children a future to realize sound personal development.

Part Eight: Policy for JCP Campaigning in the Coming House of Councilors Election and for Preparations

(26) The 2004 House of Councilors election will be a political battle that is decisive for Japan's course in the 21st century concerning issues of peace, including the dispatch of troops to Iraq and the Constitution as well as issues of the people's living conditions. The JCP will wage its first election campaign since the adoption of the new JCP Program as the first major opportunity for the JCP to explain the JCP Program to the nation.

The basic points of our review and lessons of the 2003 House of Representatives election were made clear in the JCP Central Committee 10th Plenum (22nd Congress). Taking these points into consideration, the JCP will do everything possible to secure five JCP House of Councilors seats in the proportional representation constituency races. The JCP will also run its candidates in all

prefectural constituencies in order to retain the present seven JCP seats.

(27) The JCP will hold fast to the following political direction in this election campaign:

First, calling for an end to Liberal Democratic Party Politics, we will publicly discuss the JCP proposal for remaking Japan.

The political situation in the wake of the House of Representatives general election is characterized by a series of serious undemocratic policies being put forth by the Koizumi Cabinet, including the dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces, the promotion of the adverse revision of the Constitution, an adverse pension system reform, and an increase in the consumption tax rate. All this is making the contradictions between the Koizumi Cabinet and the public sharper than ever.

All these undemocratic policies pursued by the Koizumi Cabinet are connected with the old framework of LDP politics on all issues: submission to the United States and promoting the interests of business circles. The dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces to Iraq and the attempt to adversely revise the Constitution, which are the fundamental cause of the crisis of peace, are connected with the extraordinary framework that regards the Japan-U.S. security setup as absolute. The government has proposed an adverse pension reform and is planning to propose a massive consumption tax rate increase. At the root of these attacks on the people is the outrageous and arbitrary strategy of large corporations and business leaders and their manipulation of politics.

It is particularly serious that the Komei Party assists the LDP in carrying out these undemocratic policies and is exerting an enormous political and organizational influence on them. The Komei Party and its parent organization Soka Gakkai have deep-seated undemocratic character regarding all of their critics as Buddha's enemy that must be eliminated. Asserting unity of politics and religion, the Komei Party and Soka Gakkai are trying hard to infiltrate into the heart of state power. We will fight their moves that are very dangerous for the future of Japanese democracy.

In the coming House of Councilors election, the number one item on our political agenda is to publicly explain the JCP proposal for remaking Japan by placing the utmost importance on the need to break down the framework of LDP politics conforming to U.S. policies and accepting the nation's business leaders as the key players. We will carry out this task in conjunction with the effort to expose every undemocratic policy of destroying peace and livelihoods, promoted by the LDP-Komei government led by Prime Minister Koizumi.

Secondly, we need to explain based on fact that politics cannot be changed through a change of government within the framework of LDP politics or by the establishment of a two-party system.

The 2003 House of Representatives general election brought about a major change in the alignment of Japanese political parties. On the important issues that have an important bearing on the future course of Japan, including the plan to increase the consumption tax rate, the adverse revision of the Constitution, and the adverse revision of the election law, the Democratic Party of Japan, which has merged with the Liberal Party, is moving fast toward merging with the LDP current

and becoming another conservative party that can earn trust from both business leaders and the United States.

This move was developed on the initiative of business leaders, but a deeper look at the post-general election situation shows that the DPJ has become more favorable toward the demands of business circles. In fact, the DPJ makes it clear that its strategy in preparation for the House of Councilors election is to lay the groundwork for a government change and to make the current toward establishing a two-party system solid. However, they are calling for a "change of government" or a "two-party system" to be realized within the same framework as that of LDP politics. This cannot serve to meet the needs of the people for a "political change".

However, the DPJ's policies and position have not become identical to those of the LDP. Opposition to the SDF dispatch under the Special Measures Law on Iraq and to undemocratic LDP policies can emerge as a point of agreement in parliamentary joint struggle.

But we must keep in mind that a major change has taken place in the DPJ's position on issues that essentially affect national politics and we must carry out our struggle placing importance on the effort to expose policies and practices that are contrary to the interests of the people.

In debating with other political parties, it is important to have an accurate understanding, and keep it in mind, that the relationship between government and the business sector fundamentally changed over the last couple of years: Business circles in the past had the ruling party (or parties) assume political responsibilities and assisted them; they are now directly intervening in political affairs with the aim of realigning political parties and placing them under their control. Their strategy is one of comprehensive and direct intervention and control characterized by the following points:

- Publication of policy goals to be achieved. Business circles use them as norms for rating party policies and use corporate donations as bait for political parties to work to realize their policy goals;
- Creation of a "two party system" that is faithful to the wishes of business circles. The aim is not only to ensure that a conservative party in a crisis can be replaced by the other conservative party without causing business leaders concern, but also to have two conservative parties compete with each other for allegiance to business circles and work hard to meet the needs of the business sector;
- Exclusion of the JCP and any other parties that hinder the realization of business circles' aspirations. An instrument to achieve it is their call on voters to "choose a political party capable of assuming political power" or to "choose a party based on a realistic manifest". More importantly, they are planning to change the election system to one of electing all Diet members from single-seat constituencies.

These moves of the business sector was motivated by the sense of crisis that the LDP alone may not be sufficient to maintain the rule of business circles because of the declining LDP vote base. In short, it represents the crisis of the regime. There

are sharpening contradictions between these moves and the people's interests. The attempts to increase the consumption tax rate and adversely revise the Constitution are major issues that we can use to cause a political cataclysm that shakes the ruling system from its foundations if the JCP responds by organizing a major struggle together with the people. The establishment of a conservative bipartisanship will exclude not only minority opinion but the wishes of the majority of the people. The JCP firmly stands for the needs of the majority of the people, exposes and thwarts business circles' plans to establish direct control over Japanese politics and political parties' support for it.

Third, in our campaign, we will put emphasis on making the JCP policies known to the public, including its political line, history and achievements.

Along with policy debates, we need to make full use of the new JCP Program to let the public know the stand of the JCP: its characteristics, goals, history, activities, and achievements. This is essential in our publicity and public discussions aimed at winning trust from a wide-range of voters. We regard this as an important pillar of our political strategy in the election campaign.

Defeating anti-communist campaigns is also essential for our electoral victory. In this effort, it is very important to do more than just refute slanders. Through refuting anti-communist attacks, we will try to reveal the JCP's position and value as well as the aim and role of the attackers. Present anti-communist attacks are being carried out by the forces of reaction with anti-communism as an integral part of their strategy. Although their main aim is to prolong the LDP's dominion, they also make it their strategy to suppress the JCP so that they can ride over the tough times by playing a farce like the one they showed in the past in the name of "political realignment" as a means of maintaining the present power structure even if the LDP is forced out of power temporarily. This being a strategic attack, the JCP needs to seriously tackle this task of fighting back and overcome such anti-communist attacks.

The revised JCP Program will help build a theoretical basis for making widely known to the public the JCP concept of a future society, a socialist/communist society, which the Party is aiming for. As regards how to carry out publicity on the future society, which is our goal, the task is for us to make new exploration and efforts.

The question of North Korea is an issue of strong interest among the Japanese people. It is necessary to explicate extensively how the JCP has struggled for sovereign independence as well as what proposals it has made for diplomacy to achieve a peaceful resolution of international disputes.

The JCP has joined up with various popular struggles and achieved a number of results that influenced actual politics on such issues as unpaid overtime work and the nursing-care insurance system. In making appeals to the public, it is important to emphasize that we can truly defend living standards and peace through strengthening the party that stands for a fundamental change in LDP politics.

In waging the election campaign, the JCP must keep these policies in mind and make known to the public that the real task in the coming House of Councilors election is to achieve a JCP advance paving the way for defeating LDP politics

instead of "choosing between the Liberal Democratic Party or the Democratic Party."

(28) In carrying out activities for a JCP advance in the coming House of Councilors election, we must pay attention to the following points:

First, we locate the proportional representation part of the House of Councilors election as the pivot of all party activities to be developed. This means that our election campaigning must be directed to contributing to achieving a JCP advance in the proportional representation election and that our mass activities to realize various demands and our effort to increase JCP membership and Akahata readership must take into account the need to achieve a JCP advance in the proportional representation election. We should be aware of this point in setting goals and planning activities.

Second, we will make all JCP members and organizations understand the great significance of securing without fail five JCP seats in the proportional representation election and achieve this by the party's united force.

We have set this target number for the proportional representation election taking into account what we achieved in the last House of Representatives general election. We believe the goal realistic and fully realizable if we do our utmost. We can achieve it if we do much better than in the general election. We need to exert a major effort to increase the number of votes for the JCP to about 6.1 million from 4.58 million in the general election (or to more than 10 percent of the vote from the previous 7.8 percent). If we achieve this goal of increasing our vote getting strength by 33 percent, we will be able to lay the groundwork for recovering our last losses in the next House of Representatives general election.

In the House of Councilors proportional representation election, all of the JCP prefectural committees, district committees, and branches must be fully responsible for achieving the above stated goal by ensuring that the number of votes for the JCP will increase by 33 percent from the last general election. The point is that every party organization must achieve the goal they set for themselves to ensure a 33 percent increase in the number of votes for the JCP from the last general election.

In order for the JCP to be victorious in the coming House of Councilors election, which will be fiercely contested, we must tackle the important task of making all party members recognize the significance of the new campaign policy. The new policy corresponds to the new condition set by the adversely revised election law that allows voters to write either a party name or an individual candidate name in the proportional representation list. Under the new policy, we will ask voters to write on the ballot either the party name (JCP) or an individual candidate name in the JCP proportional representation list. We have decided on this policy by taking into account the last general election in which voters showed an increase in the tendency to choose a political party. The new policy will make it easier to ask voters for support. It also secures the election of at least five candidates in the proportional representation. JCP members and JCP supporters' association members will grasp the new policy is significant under the new voting method.

In carrying out this policy, we need to have all party members understand that

this goal of achieving at least five seats can only be achieved by the strength of party unity. Local party organizations are not only responsible for the election in their own constituencies. The proportional representation election is fiercely contested by parties in all regions and districts. It is important to work hard to increase the number of votes for the JCP by asking voters to write either the JCP name or a candidate's name and secure the election of at least five candidates. All party organizations must hold fast to the position of fulfilling this common responsibility while striving for the election of their candidates in the prefectural constituencies. We will stick with the concept that we are all fighting in Japan in the same national constituency.

Third, in campaigning for JCP candidates in the prefectural constituencies, we will not lose sight of the proportional representation election in which voters will basically choose a political party, although we must do everything possible to secure the seven incumbent House of Councilors seats.

We will run JCP candidates in all of the 47 prefectural constituencies. It is important that each candidate strengthens his/her ties with the electorate in their constituencies and increase voters' confidence in and support for the JCP. In prefectural constituencies, too, our activities must be directed to contributing to securing at least five JCP seats in the proportional representation election. In debating about policies, we need to put all political parties in perspective instead of targeting only parties that run candidates in the prefectural constituency.

In the seven prefectural constituencies in which the JCP has seats at present, we will have the dual task of defending the seven seats as well as securing five seats in the proportional representation election. We will use all resources available in order to achieve the set goal. In this effort, the iron rule is that we work for a JCP victory in prefectural constituencies in conjunction with the effort to contribute to a major JCP advance in the proportional representation election.

In the seven prefectural constituencies in which the JCP has seats at present, we need to set higher goals for votes than are necessary for contributing to securing five seats in the proportional representation election. The JCP in each constituency has already decided on their target numbers. In order to achieve their goals, we need to pluck up our spirit to overwhelm the other parties in all categories of activity and in all regions by organizing mass activities on a larger scale than ever to realize demands, publicity campaigns, and efforts to strengthen the party.

We can make the best use of the more favorable conditions we now have than six years ago because JCP members of the House of Councilors have played a valuable role in making their constituency's wishes heard in parliament and having achieved many tangible results. In constituencies in which the JCP runs a new candidate, we should try to build on what the JCP's achievements and roles have been.

Fourth, we will promote publicity and organization activities at the grassroots level with the JCP branches playing the key role.

Our electoral work is based on the Four Essential Points. In all areas of work, we need to organize activities that help achieve the target number of votes we set in each constituency.

The first point is that the JCP works "based on the people's keen demands and together with the people in order to defend their interests and increase JCP influence among the people". This activity serves as the basis for our effort to gain the support of as many people as possible. We will organize struggles to realize the various demands of the people, ranging from those related to national politics, including the issues of peace and living conditions, to those arising in day-to-day lives in the workplace, communities, and on campuses. It is important to increase JCP ties with residents using the demands as leverage and make use of those ties in activities for JCP victory in the election.

In achieving the party's electoral goals, it is essential for us to carry out publicity and organizing on a larger scale and at a faster pace than ever at the grassroots level. As part of this, we will canvass for votes, put up posters, distribute flyers, carry out publicity using bullhorns, work with JCP supporters' associations, and increase the JCP membership and Akahata readership. All JCP prefectural committees, district committees, and branches will set to work to achieve their goals in a set time-frame to exceed the highest achievement they have ever made in the number of people who they had dialogue with and who promised to vote for the JCP. In this area of activity, we will update voters' rosters and area maps, and make use of them to reach out to the people and engage in dialogue with them. Thus, we will utilize every possible means, including telephone communications, to reach out to all voters and establish relations with them.

In making advances in the early stages of expanding dialogue and support for the JCP, bulletins published by the JCP supporters' associations can help create dialogue with voters. In the last simultaneous local elections as well as in the House of Representatives general election, those party organizations that carried out these activities exerted a significant influence in making a major change in party activity. We will discuss with the JCP supporters' association ways to develop activities to systematically reach out to the 2,700,000 JCP supporters' association members with the view of further increasing the membership of the supporters' associations.

Along with large speech assemblies, shopping district speech meetings and assemblies are being planned by JCP branches in many prefectures. These are important initiatives. In preparation for the House of Councilors election we will encourage all party branches to hold speech assemblies or small public meetings in communities, workplaces, and on campuses. This could be the springboard for a leap in the election campaign in which the JCP branches are the main players.

Fifth, our awareness of the need to regain the ground we lost in the House of Representatives election should give us the power to successfully wage the coming House of Councilors election campaign.

As for the next House of Representatives general election, we will draw up specific plans in line with the proposals made by the 10th Plenum of the JCP Central Committee (22nd Congress).

In the coming House of Councilors election, the candidates in the JCP proportional representation list corresponds to the proportional representation area for the House of Representatives election. We will seek to obtain more votes for

the JCP through deliberately pursuing the task of regaining the losses we suffered in the last general election as well as the goal of securing at least five seats in the proportional representation constituency and seven in prefectural constituencies in which we now have seats. It is also important that JCP candidates for the House of Representatives, the House of Councilors candidates together take the lead in both the proportional representation constituency and for prefectural constituencies.

Part Nine: Present State of Local Politics and Way to Strengthen Our Work

(29) The new JCP Program states, "Establishing progressive and democratic self-governments throughout the country will provide the main vehicle that carries the demands of residents of regions and districts as well as provide important power propelling the democratic and progressive currents ." This makes clear how important it is for the JCP to increase its influence on local politics and work to achieve a democratic change.

In local politics, the predominant tendency is that all political parties except for the JCP are ruling parties, and that many local governments neglect their most essential task, that of securing residents' living conditions and well-being. This situation, in which local governments are no longer local governments, is increasingly serious.

The government is trying to further promote this failed policy under the decentralization slogan, "From the state to local governments". In the name of "self-help", the government is planning to abandon its responsibilities through a major cut in the funding to help local governments maintain the minimum standards of social services and education. The government is also strengthening control over local governments by forcing small municipalities to merge under the pretext that a certain size is required for a municipality to conform to the structural reform program. Far from promoting "decentralization", it is nothing less than the destruction of local self-government.

The aim of the "Trinity reform", which the government is promoting, is a practical application of the policy of slashing state funding for local governments, mainly concerning welfare- and education-related services. In rural areas, this goes along with forced municipality mergers, putting rural municipalities in danger of being abandoned. The central government tends to use more resources for urban development for wasteful mega-development projects in the name of urban re-development instead of residents' well-being. In rural and urban areas, contradictions are sharper than ever between the interests of residents and local politics promoted by all parties except the JCP.

Municipality mergers, which are being forcibly promoted, will hamper independent regional development and improvement of living conditions, and trample upon the constitutional principle of local government. This is why opposition to mergers is increasing in many regions, which can be taken as signs of new changes and residents' activities. We will achieve further advances in the struggle against the imposition of municipality mergers.

Firmly opposed to this adverse current that leads local governments into degeneration, the JCP will continue to be in the forefront of the struggle to restore

local governments to carry out their primary duty to meet the needs of residents. There are about 100 local governments with the JCP as a governing party, including those led by Communist mayors. In many parts of the country, politically non-affiliated people, including those who have supported conservative parties, have realized that cooperation with the JCP is the only way to secure the future of their regions and local governments, thus forming a promising current for the future. The task is for the JCP to help increase this current in local politics in defense of local governments from outrageous attacks.

(30) As contradictions deepen concerning local governments, cracks are spreading in the existing domination by all parties except for the JCP, and its political framework is beginning to crumble. In many elections throughout the country, incumbents or their 'successors' backed by all parties led by the LDP and the Komei Party, except the JCP, were defeated.

However, such changes in local government are varying. In some cases, voters wanted a local government with the 'residents-first' principle instead of the present upside-down politics. There are also movements trying under the guise of a "non-partisan" principle to impose a reactionary agenda on local governments to force the residents to pay more. There are also cases in which these two aspects are mixed and their future needs to be scrutinized. Careful analysis and appropriate responses are necessary for each municipality.

The point is that the JCP in all circumstances must always stand for the needs of the residents and show its banner of change in local politics. It is essential to increase the number and quality of JCP members of local assemblies. Experience shows that even when positive changes take place in local governments, real progressive change in local governments can proceed only when they are strongly backed by the JCP.

(31) The more than 4,000 JCP members in the nation's local assemblies constitute an important asset of the JCP and are playing an irreplaceable role at the grassroots level in defending people's living conditions.

For a democratic change in national and local politics, it is very important for JCP local assembly members to work hard to defend residents' interests, heighten their political expectations, and maintain and advance their positions.

The JCP attaches special importance to the effort to secure JCP victories in every off-year local election, including the 2004 Okinawa Prefectural Assembly election and the 2005 Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election. In Japan, there are 960 local assemblies, one third of all local assemblies, where there are no JCP seats. This weakness must be overcome through activities that are well-planned and methodical.

Part Ten: How to Put Party Building Efforts on a Stable Path toward Progress

(32) All JCP members want to build a strong and large party capable of making advances in elections in spite of any turmoil. This is exactly what we have acutely felt since the 22nd Congress, in the last three major elections: the House of

Councilors election, the simultaneous local elections, and the House of Representatives general election.

Taking bitter experience as lessons from these elections, the party will concentrate all our energy on the effort to build a JCP which is strong in numbers and in quality as a prerequisite for achieving the targets we set for the House of Councilors election, the biggest immediate political battle.

Since the JCP 22nd Congress, we have made strenuous efforts to build a stronger JCP by twice carrying out a "United Efforts to Increase JCP Membership and Akahata Readership" drive. Party building requires us to make more persevering and purposeful efforts than in any other area of party activities. We commend all party members for the enthusiasm and energy devoted to day-to-day activities to make progress in the drive.

More than 40,000 people have joined the JCP since the JCP 22nd Congress. However, the scale and speed of the membership drive is not sufficient in the light of our "five-year plan for the JCP membership drive". Although some JCP branches and bodies are beginning to produce results in the Akahata readership drive, the effort on the whole is yet to make stable progress despite many members' steady efforts. On the issue of organizing young people, we are beginning to seize new opportunities, including peace actions and the jobs-for-the-youth campaign, but the success in these efforts in the area of party building hinges on the future development of our activities in this area.

The JCP 22nd Congress decision and the later Central Committee Plenum decisions have presented the details of the basic strategy for advancing our party activities. Their main points are as follows:

- Concerning "why should we work on party building now?", (i) it is important to build a party strong enough in order to succeed through political battles no matter how fierce the political situation is, (ii) it is the time in our history to boldly lay stress on party building for a party strong enough to struggle and succeed in the 21st century.
- Regarding the question "Why party building now?", we need to be aware that it is important to build a party strong enough to be victorious in any elections under any political circumstances and that we are in an important phase of JCP history in terms of party building because we are trying to build a party that can lead the struggle in the 21st century.
- Defining the membership drive as "the pillar of party building" efforts, we plan to achieve the goal of a record 500,000-strong party by 2005. We will work to realize this goal through methodical activities according to five-year plans. The task now is for the JCP to use all its power to reduce the backlog in the membership drive.
- "Party activities centered on Akahata" is our principle. This means that the organ paper is "the link between the JCP Central Committee and the rest of the party, and the best medium that expands the ties between the JCP and the people. It is the central activity that promotes, unites, and develops diverse party activities, including the movement based on people's demands, the

struggle in the Diet and local assemblies, election campaigns, party building, and financial activities. We must reaffirm this principle and make efforts for our activities in this area to be constantly developed in a stable manner.

- On qualitative improvement of JCP activities, (i) we place emphasis on political activities and grassroots activities representing the JCP in every region and locality; (ii) we adhere to the principle of "party branches as the key players"; (iii) we will develop election campaign skills; (iv) the party financially supports party activities according to plans; (v) we will tackle the question of systematically developing party leaders and activists; and (vi) we will improve our political and theoretical level. We focus on these six directions.

- We must strengthen our activities to meet young people's diverse demands and boldly call on them to join the JCP, regarding such an effort as a matter of the JCP's survival in the future in our pursuit of democratic reform in Japan. We devote all JCP power to the effort to make progress on this task.

(33) Based on the above stated basic strategy, we will maintain the following point in carrying out activities to build a JCP that is strong both qualitatively and quantitatively in preparation for the House of Councilors election.

- **Target numbers:** We will put all our energy to the effort to achieve the following target numbers of our effort to increase the JCP membership and Akahata readership.

In the drive to increase the Akahata readership, all party bodies, prefectural committees, district committees, and branches will strive to build a position for the House of Councilors election campaign through achieving a 30 percent increase in Akahata readership over the time of the 2003 House of Representatives general election. This is an indispensable target if we are to achieve in the coming House of Councilors election a 33 percent increase in the number of votes the JCP received in the 2003 general election because the Akahata readership is the essential index showing the extent of the party's ties with the public.

We consider the membership drive as the "main part of the party building efforts", and hold fast to the goal of building a "500,000-strong JCP by 2005". Each party body will make clear their goals to be attained before the House of Councilors election. We will thus strive to make real progress.

- **A drive to increase the Akahata readership by 30 percent:** The effort to increase the Akahata readership by 30 percent over what we had at the time of the 2003 House of Representatives general election is an enterprise that requires every one of us to have unwavering resolve and readiness. It is an indispensable task we need to fulfill if we are to achieve the goals we set for the coming House of Councilors election.

The decline in the JCP's strength, which we are experiencing today, is the most serious problem we find in connection with the lessons we drew from the three recent elections. The Akahata readership was decreasing when we campaigned for the 2000 House of Representatives general election, the 2001

House of Councilors election, and the 2003 House of Representatives election. In these three parliamentary elections, the JCP had to face objectively complex and difficult conditions that would thwart the JCP's electoral advances, including the underhand anti-communist attacks, the quick rise in the rating of Prime Minister Koizumi dubbed as the "Koizumi Whirlwind", and the call for an election to choose a political power. These are the circumstances in which the JCP's real basic capabilities were tested. In examining the cause of our setback and drawing the necessary lessons, it is certainly important for us to review how we fought in each constituency, but more importantly, we need to remember that the biggest problem common to all these three elections was that we waged the election campaign without halting the decline in the Akahata readership.

Akahata is our essential means of informing the public and gives rise to public opinion regarding issues of justice. If the Akahata readership keeps declining as we wage the election campaign, we will not be able to accomplish the goals. In order to secure five JCP seats in the proportional representation without fail and seven incumbent JCP seats in prefectural constituencies, we must hold fast to the above stated political strategy and plan of action and do everything possible to fulfill the tasks we set out for the election, while giving rise to a major movement in the effort to expand the JCP membership and Akahata readership.

To maintain an Akahata readership which is more than 130 percent of the readership we had at the time of the previous election is an iron rule which the JCP used to try to observe in the period since the second half of the 1970s and the 1980s.

This policy has been established based on our experience and the lessons we drew from past elections, including the 1969 and 1972 House of Representatives general elections in which we followed the 130-percent rule nationally in increasing the Akahata readership to 130 percent of what the party had at the time of the previous election. This policy was very effective in defending the JCP position in the face of the second post-war political reaction attacking the JCP.

However, in the past decade, a major change was made in the election system for the House of Representatives; its members are elected both from single-seat constituencies and regional proportional representation blocs. This has made the parliamentary elections appear eclipsed, and party has become less enthusiastic about building a stronger and larger party to put up a good fight in the elections. In the second half of the 1990s, although the JCP achieved a series of advances in the elections, it was unable on the whole to halt the tendency of declines and setbacks in party strength during that period, and we were short of the organizational power to meet the increase in the JCP's political influence. The setbacks the JCP suffered in the three recent elections were a manifestation of this weakness that we have been unable to overcome.

The need now is to change this state of affairs. As a first step, we are strongly called upon to work, in preparation for the coming House of Councilors election, to have an Akahata readership which is 130 percent of what we had at the time of the 2003 House of Representatives general

election.

It is necessary to put into practice the policy of placing the organ paper in the center of activities in preparation for the coming House of Councilors election. We will wage an election campaign through reading Akahata, increasing its readership, and carrying out activities in cooperation with Akahata readers. We will also put all our energy into the effort to achieve the 130 percent goal to ensure that the JCP will attain the numbers of votes and seats targeted.

- ***The role of Akahata is irreplaceable:*** The Akahata newspaper is, above all else, marked by its mission to report critical perspectives and arouse public interest in social justice issues. While most of the mass media have major weaknesses such as lacking principled ideals to uphold, and bowing to power and distorting facts, Akahata is the newspaper that the people need in order to understand the major current in Japan and the world, get to the truth underlying that current, and increase public awareness of socially relevant issues in Japanese society.

Akahata is the banner of "warm and humane solidarity". At a time when the law of the jungle in a super competitive society is prevalent under Liberal Democratic Party politics, there is an increasing tendency to despise others and a deepening crisis of social morals, and Akahata is playing the role as a network for social solidarity.

Akahata is a banner for struggles for social justice. In developing popular struggles for a world order of peace, in establishing rules to safeguard the people's living standards, and also in defending democracy and human rights, Akahata is a reliable partner.

Akahata supports all day-to-day JCP activities in the Diet and local assemblies, election campaigns, and financial activities. The JCP is the only party that refuses to accept any donations from corporations and organizations as well as government subsidies to political parties. Its independent financial basis is supported by contributions by individual persons. This enables the JCP to work for the people without anything to fear as taboo. Increasing the Akahata readership is at a juncture in terms of its role in supporting the party's financial basis.

Let's work together to achieve the further development of Akahata which is irreplaceable for the people as well as the JCP.

- ***Membership drive to build a 500,000-strong JCP and efforts to organize young people:*** Along with the effort to increase Akahata readership, we will put fresh energy in a membership drive aimed at building a 500,000-strong JCP. At the JCP 22nd Congress, we decided to build a 500,000-strong JCP by 2005. In order to accomplish this goal, we need to recruit 100,000 new members in the next two years. Keeping this in mind, we must set target numbers to be attained by the time of the House of Councilors election. The task now is to accomplish this so that we can wage this historic election campaign together with new JCP members.

Putting great emphasis on the expansion of Akahata readership does not mean that we can put the task of recruitment on the back burner. The effort to increase the Akahata readership is an integral part of activities to strengthen our ties with the public. Recruitment is an activity essential for making the JCP bigger. We need to define these two aspects and to promote them simultaneously. The Akahata readership drive and the JCP membership drive can produce synergistic effect if we tackle them simultaneously.

The 22nd Congress decided that the real basis for party building is membership. We keep this concept in mind as we carry out party building efforts. In order to constantly recruit party members, it is essential for the JCP to help new members study and take part in day-to-day activities. In other words, we receive new members, and help them study and participate in branch activities. We confirm this concept as an essential part of our party building efforts,

In this whole effort, we will place greater importance on the membership drive among young people so we can add fresh vitality to the party in waging an election campaign. At the same time, we must make efforts to steadily hand down work to the rising generations utilizing a medium and long-term perspective.

Young people's movements are showing a diverse and well-informed understanding of the issues regarding peace and jobs. This gives us great hope for the future. How we can take advantage of this trend is key to successful party building. There are JCP bodies that are successful in their efforts to increase party membership among young people. One important lesson we can draw from their experiences is that they impose this task on themselves as a vital one that has a bearing on the future of the JCP and its effort to remake Japan, and that they translate the call for "all-out efforts" to be made by the party into practice.

Let us put all our energy to increase party activities among the young people, and wage the House of Councilors election campaign together with new JCP members in order to ensure that our great cause will be taken over and developed by the younger generations.

(34) If we are to achieve the goals set for the House of Councilors election, we need to promote two activities at the same time: the numerical and qualitative growth of the party and participation by all party members with full vitality.

In the House of Representatives general election, many party members displayed a militancy and firmly confronted the business sector's political strategy to contribute in many ways to a JCP victory. However, it is also a fact that many party members were left without taking part in party activities. The question now is how to get out of this situation and pave the way for every JCP member to use their abilities to participate in energetic party activity. To this end, the JCP 23rd Congress specifically calls for the following points to be carried out:

- *The JCP must devote itself to realizing people's demands:* The JCP's most important raison d'être is its devotion to the interests and safety of the people. JCP organizations and branches should daily take up the

pressing demands of the people and struggle to solve their problems. This must always be remembered as the JCP's founding spirit and the basis of JCP activity.

An important point to make is that we should take up diverse grassroots demands as well as national issues. Only by making steady day-to-day efforts to realize people's down-to-earth demands surfacing in homes as well as in labor councils, can the JCP give a full play to its strength in a struggle on a larger scale. It is necessary for the JCP to shed light on any struggle to achieve whatever demands of citizens, and encourage and give assistance for the struggle to move forward.

People will find the JCP trustworthy and feel sympathetic toward it not only by reading or listening to JCP arguments but also by witnessing JCP day-to-day activities and through their personal encounters with the JCP. In return, JCP members will regain their strength and will be reassured of the reason for their existence whenever they actually find out that the people look to the JCP as a party that cannot be destroyed. Devotion to the struggle to achieve people's needs is the source of political energy for the JCP.

- *The theoretical and political confidence in ideals must be shared by all in the JCP:* It is necessary for the JCP 23rd Congress to take up the task of fully and deeply understanding the revised JCP Program as a major undertaking related to this congress.

The JCP has achieved a major advance by experiences many ups and downs since it adopted the JCP Program 43 years ago. This is possible because the policy line of the JCP Program has helped the party to unite to carry out the tasks directed by the Program.

The 21st century will be a turbulent one. Japan under LDP politics will face deeper political, economic, social, and other crises, and will come to a historical turning point which may involve turbulence. Internationally, strong calls for the establishment of an international order of peace have taken shape in many forms out of the lawless wars waged by one country seeking complete hegemony. The crisis facing the world shows that the conditions are ripe for human society to go beyond capitalism into a future society in the 21st century in many parts of the world.

Theoretical and political confidence in the ideals each one holds becomes more important than ever in this century of turbulence. Only by gaining insight into the directions in which Japan and the rest of the world will lawfully develop can we acquire deep and unwavering confidence in dealing with all problems, turbulence and crises that may arise in the 21st century, by exerting energy stemming from this confidence.

Using this Congress, which has adopted a new JCP Program, as a springboard, we will make efforts to drastically change away from the present state of the party in which only 30 percent to 40 percent of party members have finished reading the JCP Congress decision. We will set to work for building the theoretical and political foundations for the JCP in preparation for not only the struggle in the coming House of Councilors

election but the struggle in the 21st century through getting all party members to master the new JCP Program and the Resolution of the JCP 23rd Congress.

- *We will work to build a JCP in which its branches are the key players and take active part in the election campaign:* Based on a review of the experiences made by advanced branches, we have formulated the tasks of the JCP branch in six items in Article 40 of the JCP Constitution. The most important part of the duties of the JCP branch is to "develop activities by establishing policies in response to public demands, with targets and a plan for expanding party strength based on the long-term task of getting support from the majority of the people in the workplace, locality, or campus."

As we prepared for the coming House of Councilors election, the JCP branch in workplaces, communities, and campuses will firmly stand for this position and decide on the number of votes it is going to receive in that election as well as the number of voters who have promised to vote for the JCP. These numbers must be more than 133 percent of those attained in the recent House of Representatives general election. The JCP branch will also draw up their "policy and work plans" for its election campaign, for activities to realize public demands, and for carrying out party building. Through implementing these plans with all party members participating, we will make a party full of vitality.

In this effort, it is important to put a lot of effort into the establishment of the branch practice of holding its meeting every week. We need in this respect to establish the branch meeting as the place where party members will use their individual strong points to join forces to resolve difficulties and grow together. The point is that every JCP branch should improve their weekly meeting so that everyone participating in the branch meeting will feel animated. JCP members can exert power to strive to overcome various difficulties if they have political and theoretical convictions and an environment of humane solidarity. The branch meeting should be the key in that effort.

In order to establish the weekly branch meeting and promote party activities in which the branches are the key players, the party bodies will understand the difficulty the branches have and help them solve problems. It will be necessary to help branches have a leadership composed of the branch head and some other members.

- *Improve and develop party body activities:* Despite organizational and financial difficulties, JCP prefectural and district committees are making strenuous day-to-day efforts, playing an indispensable role in building and supporting the party.

We should improve activities at local JCP bodies in a way that would encourage party members to voluntarily take part in work there as full-time activists knowing that full-time JCP activists are working under difficult conditions.

Under the JCP Constitution revised at the 22nd Congress, we will make further efforts to develop our activities in intermediate bodies to meet the new relationship the JCP has with society. The JCP Constitution allows district committees to autonomously handle local matters to meet actual local needs. It is important for local JCP bodies to carry out activities, including those related to local government affairs, on behalf of the Japanese Communist Party in their regions and districts. Local JCP bodies must give their guidance to branches in interactive and circular ways, listening to branch members; it must try to draw branch members' willingness to contribute to JCP advances. The task of local JCP bodies is to help branches and learn from their experiences.

It is also important to nurture an environment that encourages the whole JCP to support local bodies in terms of manpower, finances, and spirit. In particular, the party must concentrate its efforts to strengthen local bodies through staffing able committee members. We should do everything possible to bring up young promising successors while relying on experienced members who are pensioners as full-time or part-time leadership members.

In carrying out the electoral struggle, in fulfilling its role as the organizer of struggles, and in building the party, party bodies should always try to reach out to the public and deepen ties with the public at the grassroots level. Party bodies are called upon to develop activities that reflect people's needs, sentiments, interest, and struggles. This will enable party bodies to give heart-to-heart guidance and assistance to the branches and pave the way for a JCP advance.

Without building a large and strong party, we will not be able to achieve the target we set for the House of Councilors elections. This is a major enterprise that calls for great efforts and exploration by all party members and organizations. Let us set to work to build a JCP which is strong and large enough to wage victorious elections under any tumultuous political situation.

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