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JAPANESE COMMUNIST PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE 6TH PLENUM

MAY 24-25, 2003

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On 6th Plenum of the JCP Central Committee

May 25, 2003

Japanese Communist Party Central Committee Secretariat

The Japanese Communist Party Central Committee held its 6th Plenum on May 24 and 25 at the JCP head office.

JCP Chair SHII Kazuo gave the report on behalf of the Executive Committee. The report consisted of three main subjects: points at issue in the present international and domestic situations and the JCP's view of them; the lessons of the simultaneous local elections; and tasks for election struggles and party building efforts.

Questions of the international and domestic situations included the Iraq war and the prospects for world peace; the North Korea question and the JCP's position on it; and the two years of the Koizumi Cabinet and the immediate political issues. Emphasizing that the historical significance of international power in achieving peace was clear from the Iraq war, the report put forward diplomacy options that would induce North Korea to "become a member of the international community through settling its international lawless activities". It also called for greater efforts to scrap the contingency bills or to prevent the contingency laws from being invoked or given shape, and to develop the struggle on "Two Major Issues": common action and campaigns to achieve the "Four Urgent Demands" that include discontinuing forcing people to pay more for social services, and the struggle to stop corporate restructuring and seek corporations to assume social responsibility.

The report made clear that the review of the simultaneous local elections will be made from the basic position the Central Committee set forth at its 5th Plenum: Regain the ground lost and change the balance of power to our advantage. It stated that the JCP should be convinced of four points concerning the election results: the basic stance the JCP maintained in its policy debates; the number of votes cast for the JCP; the struggle to defeat anti-communist propaganda; and progress in cooperation with politically unaffiliated people. The report stated that the JCP needs to draw lessons on two important issues: preparedness to wage successful election campaigns and the JCP's basic strength. It also referred to several lessons with regard to guidance and activities in election campaigns.

Concerning the tasks for future elections and party building, the Executive Committee report proposed the following plans with a view to convening the JCP 23rd Congress in November 2003: The 7th CC Plenum will be held to approve the draft revised JCP Program to be discussed in the next JCP Congress; the 8th CC Plenum in September will approve the draft JCP 23rd Congress Resolution; and these two draft documents will be put to an all-party discussion. Bearing this plan in mind, the Executive Committee report expounded the "new characteristics of the present political situation", and emphasized that the JCP must hold fast to the basics: Regain the ground lost, change the balance of power to our advantage, and achieve further JCP advances. The report set forth the basic goals and strategy in preparation for the next House of Representatives general election and the House of Councilors election and proposed tackling "United Efforts to Increase Membership

and Akahata Readership" until the JCP 23rd Congress. Specifically, it put emphasis on the need to set activist political targets to further strengthen the JCP's political position by scientific approaches.

At the beginning of the afternoon session of the first day of the CC Plenum, Secretariat Head ICHIDA Tadayoshi announced eight JCP candidates and their regions in the House of Councilors proportional representation election.

During the discussion on the first day, Central Committee Chair FUWA Tetsuzo spoke on the two international questions put forward by the Executive Committee report: the Iraq war and the world situation, and diplomatic approaches to the issue of North Korea. He analyzed the significance of these issues in historical context.

In the two-day discussion of the Executive Committee report, 49 CC members spoke.

Chair Shii on behalf of the Executive Committee gave the remarks concluding the discussion. He said that what speakers said meshed with what the Executive Committee report proposed and the discussion was very successful and expounded on several issues.

Concerning the international and domestic situation, Chair Shii emphasized the importance of maintaining a scientific view on the state of affairs not as isolated phenomena but in the context of the main historical current. Regarding the review and lessons of the simultaneous local elections, he stressed that it is important for those in the party's leading bodies to try to be convinced of any positive aspect extracted from setbacks and maintain the self-analytical attitude of pursuing scientific approaches. He also pointed out the importance of recognizing points at issue concerning preparedness and party building falling behind. Referring to future JCP struggles, he called for the party to take a hard look at the reality of the situation in which we are making a new beginning and to be ambitious in election campaigns and in party building activities. In this regard he stressed the importance of using every existing potential while making efforts to mobilize young people around the JCP.

The 6th CC Plenum unanimously approved the Executive Committee report and the concluding remarks.

Executive Committee Report

**by SHII Kazuo
Chair, JCP Executive Committee**

May 24, 2003

Good morning everyone. I want to offer my warm greetings to all JCP members who are watching this Central Committee Plenum via the communication satellite broadcast.

I will make the report on behalf of the Executive Committee to the JCP Central Committee 6th Plenum.

I. ISSUES AND JCP'S POSITION

Let me first report from several angles on focal issues in the present situation and the position of the Japanese Communist Party concerning these issues.

Iraq war and outlook for world peace

(1) The first full-scale application of the Bush strategy – key questions facing the international community.

Let me begin with the issue of the Iraq war and the outlook for world peace.

The recent Iraq war was the first full-scale application of the new and dangerous global strategy of the U.S. Bush administration.

Distinctive features of the global strategy the Bush administration has made public in a series of official documents since last year can be summarized as follows:

- i) It has adopted a preemptive attack policy as a basic military strategy under the pretext of the need to counter terrorists and weapons of mass destruction;
- ii) It has overtly called for the overthrow of governments which are hostile to the United States and to occupy their territory;
- iii) It has declared use of unilateral military action on its own authority and ruled out the roles of the United Nations.

The Bush strategy committed to overthrowing governments by means of a preemptive attack without regard for the United Nations was carried out in the Iraq war. Indisputably, it was an act that defied and even destroyed the rules established by the United Nations Charter for the cause of peace.

The international community must bear in mind the following points in dealing

with the question of Iraq.

First, the international community must not accept this lawless war of aggression as an accomplished fact; it should rigorously establish the fact that the lawless war brought about inhumane consequences. The main reason the United States gave for the war was Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction, but such weapons have still not been discovered. The task now is for U.N. weapons inspectors to return to Iraq as quickly as possible to establish the facts.

Second, the international community must not allow the United States to invoke the preemptive attack strategy beyond Iraq. Iraq is not the only target of the U.S. preemptive attack strategy. U.S. leaders have threatened Syria, Libya, Iran, and North Korea by name, saying that these countries must "learn lessons from Iraq". Naturally, this move came under severe criticism from the international community. Such lawless military intimidation and escalation of war must be prevented from prevailing.

Third, the international community must not condone a rise of a new form of colonialism. Using the military occupation as leverage, the United States is now seeking free exploitation of oil and other resources through establishing puppet governments. They also proclaim a strategy to remake Islamic Arab countries by adopting a political system submissive to the United States in the name of "democratizing the Middle East". Resurgence of barbarism and tyranny that flagrantly violates the right of nations to self-determination must be thwarted.

Even if the United States and Britain succeeded in putting Iraq under their control and in imposing by force a regime to contain the immediate contradictions, they will not be able to keep doing so without facing increasing contradictions with the Iraqi people and the rest of the Middle East.

The JCP emphasizes that reconstruction of Iraq must be in conformity with the wishes of the Iraqi people and that the United Nations must assume the central role by forcing the U.S.-British forces out as soon as possible.

(2) Can we restore the world to rules for peace?

Can we envisage a world in which rules for peace are established? This is a major question that has a bearing on our general understanding of the 21st century world.

It's clear that we need to face up to the fact that U.S. hegemony is now a major source of threats and adversity in international politics. But I want to emphasize that the 21st century world is not so powerless as to succumb to this hegemony.

In the sequence of events that led to the Iraq war, specifically between September 2002 and March 2003, the U.N. Security Council was a diplomatic arena of fiery debate preventing the superpower from launching a war for six months. This is an event that has historic significance. In this diplomatic battle, the United States brought pressure to bear on other U.N. members in order to get the United Nations to adopt a resolution in favor of war. But the international community did not succumb to the pressure to the very end. So the United States started the war after it suffered a serious diplomatic defeat. Never in the past has the United Nations exerted its inherent role and power so effectively as this.

This was made possible by three trends converging and supporting each other to form a force for defending the U.N. Charter.

First, the non-aligned movement, which had been consistent in opposing lawless wars, played a significant role as an independent force influencing international politics. Since last October, the U.N. Security Council held four open discussions which included non-Security Council member nations. Each open discussion made it clear to everyone that the majority of countries were opposed to war. These open discussions were held at the call of the non-aligned countries. It was also important that Arab countries and Islamic countries expressed their position in favor of peace and reason in spite of the delicate relations they have with the United States.

Second, a trend was formed within the Group of Eight major countries in opposition to U.S. unilateralism and hegemony and in favor of a peaceful world order based on the U.N. Charter. France, Germany, and Canada, which are bound by the military alliance led by the United States, made a firm stand against war. Russia also took part in the anti-war coalition. It was the first time that the united western allies were divided, giving way to the formation of a position of opposition.

Third, China maintained a constructive position, as expressed by Jiang Zemin (Communist Party of China general secretary at the time) in talks with JCP Chair FUWA Tetsuzo in August 2002, stating that China was opposed to attacking Iraq and by its participation last November in the joint communiqué with France and Russia calling for a peaceful settlement. China attaches importance to peaceful international relations as essential for the country's economic development. Although it seeks to maintain stable relations with the United States, it held fast to the principled position in defense of the U.N. Charter and opposition to the hegemonic arrogance of the United States.

Fourth, these governmental trends of peace were supported and advanced by a tidal surge of a global anti-war movement. The recent massive actions calling for peace based on the U.N. Charter, including the February 15 demonstrations attended by a total of 10 million people in more than 600 cities throughout the world were unparalleled in modern times. Never before have diplomatic battles at the United Nations and popular movements around the world developed through supporting and encouraging each other.

This strength of peace that inspired the international community is historic when it is compared to the movements against the U.S. aggression in Vietnam in the 1960s and the 1970s. The U.S. invasion of Vietnam was defeated by the Vietnamese people's heroic struggle supported by the anti-war movements that spread throughout the world as the war got bogged down in a quagmire. The United Nations was powerless in the face of the cruel war that lasted more than 10 years. Neither the U.N. Security Council nor the U.N. General Assembly could take effective measures to end the U.S. aggression. The non-aligned movement was in its early stages and unable to stand firm against the war of aggression or play a pioneering role like in the recent case.

All this demonstrates a steady progress of history from the 20th century to the

21st century. Let us proceed with this conviction.

(3) Peace activities with the JCP taking a lead will leave great value in the future

The JCP in connection with the Iraq question has put considerable energy to opposition party diplomacy to help build a peaceful world order based on the U.N. Charter. We sent a delegation to China in August, to the Middle East in October, and to South Asian countries in December, after the 5th CC Plenum. In February, a JCP representative attended the Non-Aligned Summit as a guest. These were occasions for the JCP to actively discuss with foreign government officials to help achieve peaceful solutions to international disputes. We have also informed foreign embassies in Tokyo of the JCP views on important questions and deepened discussions with them.

The JCP has joined with popular movements in anti-war rallies and organized several nationwide protests and assemblies on its own in the effort to thwart the war and later to stop the war.

The National Peace Assembly of High School Students and young people forming lines on the playground reading "*senso akan*" ("No war" in Japanese) show that young people are trying seriously to think about the issue of war and peace as an issue that has an important bearing on their own lives, showing youthful rationality and sensitivity. This offers hope for the future.

In the cataclysm the world is experiencing today, the issue of war or peace is a major issue of the 21st century. In this context, I assure you that the JCP's peace actions will without doubt be a significant asset for the future.

On North Korea Question

(1) North Korea must give up its nuclear weapons development programs and the international community should seek a peaceful solution of the dispute by diplomatic means

I now report on the JCP position on the North Korea question.

North Korea's nuclear weapons development program is now a major focus of international attention. We do not have information showing the present stage of North Korea's nuclear development, but, judging from a recent series of actions by North Korea, notably its declaration in January of a withdrawal from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT), there is no doubt that North Korea is committed to the development of nuclear weapons.

The JCP has pointed out that North Korea's nuclear weapons development constitutes a flagrant breach of a series of international arrangements concerning such weapons and strongly demanded that North Korea abandon its nuclear weapons programs. The JCP has been critical of the NPT regime; it does so as a

party standing for the global abolition of nuclear weapons but by no means tolerates the emergence of new nuclear weapons states. It is important to state that nuclear war must be prevented from occurring. It is unacceptable for a country to seek to acquire nuclear weapons by reneging on its own promise not to do so as a party to the NPT.

It must also be emphasized that the use of military means must be ruled out as means to solve this problem. The issue of North Korea's nuclear weapons should be and can be solved by peaceful means through diplomacy. We repeat our call on the international community to firmly adhere to this position in trying to find a solution to this problem.

(2) North Korea must give up its nuclear weapon programs along with the concept of 'physical deterrence' and become a full member of the international community by ending lawlessness

In urging North Korea to abandon its nuclear programs, it is important to direct international criticism not only at its violation of international agreements but at what it presents as the "rationale" behind its nuclear weapons development.

The North Korean government has stated that "only a physical deterrence force, a tremendous military force powerful enough to decisively beat back an attack supported by ultra-modern weapons, can avert a war and protect the security of the country and the nation." This "logic" that regards "physical deterrence" as almighty is based on a "military-first ideology" that gives priority to the strengthening of military force before anything else.

However, the biggest problem for the security of North Korea is not the lack of "physical deterrence" but its isolation from the international community because of the absence of any normal diplomatic relations with neighboring countries. We must point out that the major cause of North Korea's isolation is in North Korea itself.

In particular, North Korea's failure to settle the numerous illegal acts it has committed so far is the major stumbling block to building full-fledged relations with the international community.

Illegal acts by North Korea are all grave crimes: the 1983 terrorist bomb explosion in Rangoon, the capital city of Burma (present Myanmar); the shooting incident involving a Japanese fishing boat in the Sea of Japan; the 1987 bomb explosion of a Korean Air Lines plane; international drug trafficking that has been denounced since the 1970s; and the abduction of Japanese nationals since the 1970s.

North Korea in late 1967 began to exhibit abnormal behavior in international relations when it was seemingly preparing to invade the South. In 1968, North Korea ordered "armed guerrillas" to attack the South Korean president's official residence. At the time when the first dangerous signs appeared, the JCP sent a delegation to North Korea to call attention to the danger associated with an invasion of the South. Kim Il Sung, the North Korean leader at the time, assured the JCP delegation that his country had no intention of initiating a war and the North's activities of the "armed guerrilla commando" strategy was brought to a gradual halt.

Later, in 1972, Kim Il Sung admitted that the attack on the South Korean president's official residence was carried out by its special forces and offered an apology to South Korea.

However, North Korea's lawless activities did not end there. During the 1980s, North Korea engineered one grave international incident after another. The JCP maintained unbending criticism of these acts. But North Korea wrongly accused the JCP for criticizing those incidents. They said that the JCP was "standing by the enemy". Since then, relations between the JCP and the Workers' Party of Korea have remained severed for 20 years.

In September 2002, in an important move towards settling its outrageous acts, North Korea claimed responsibility for the abductions of Japanese nationals and apologized to Japan for it. Regrettably, however, there has been no further progress since.

These lawless international acts cannot be condoned whatever their causes or circumstances may be. North Korea can become part of the international community only when it seriously commits itself to the settlement of these acts. It will not only contribute to making Asia's peace and stability definite, but will be in the interests of North Korea and enhance its security.

If North Korea fails to make such efforts and embarks on a path to develop nuclear weapons based on the concept of "physical deterrence" and the military-first ideology, it will be harmful and dangerous to both peace in Asia and the security of North Korea.

The international community needs to make diplomatic efforts based on reason, try to persuade North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons programs together with its logic of "physical deterrence", and solve problems related to its past wrongdoings so that North Korea will be accepted as a member of the international community. This is the position on which the JCP commits itself to doing everything it can to help this to happen.

Although the Japanese government issued the joint "Japan-DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) Pyongyang Declaration" last September laying a reasonable groundwork for negotiations with North Korea, it has been unable to play the role it should to solve the problem of North Korea. On the contrary, it has stirred up the "North Korean threats" to get the war-contingency legislation enacted, thus creating a vicious circle of military tension. The JCP demands that the Japanese government hold diplomatic talks based on reason after reviewing its diplomacy with North Korea since September 2002 .

(3) Nuclear brinkmanship card will give the U.S. the pretext to resort to a preemptive attack

North Korea's security of course has to do with threats from the U.S. Bush administration's preemptive attack strategy.

President Bush has named North Korea, along with Iraq and Iran, as part of an "axis of evil". The task now is for the international community to stop any further application of this outrageous threat whatever the targeted country is and for

whatever reason.

We are saying that North Korea's "physical deterrence" concept and nuclear weapons development will never help fundamentally solve the present problem.

Such a way will rather give the U.S. the pretext for the further strengthening of its military response capabilities and use of military strikes. It is a kind of dangerous nuclear brinkmanship. I want to stress that North Korea can only secure its peace and security when it renounces that dangerous policy and engages in a diplomatic path to join the international community.

Two Years' of Koizumi Cabinet and Present Political Issues

Next, regarding the two years of the Koizumi Cabinet and the present main political issues.

More than two years have passed since the Koizumi Cabinet was inaugurated. In foreign and security affairs as well as economic affairs and in dealing with people's livelihoods, the Koizumi Cabinet has done nothing to "reform the LDP"; it instead carried out the worst of all past LDP cabinets' undemocratic policies. This has only sharpened contradictions between the government and the public in every area. The present political situation is so fluid that it could trigger political cataclysm.

(1) Foreign policy and security issues call for a struggle to prevent Japan from becoming a state that sends the Self-Defense Forces abroad in violation of the Constitution.

In the field of foreign policy and national security, no Japanese cabinet in the past has been as outspoken as the Koizumi Cabinet in terms of an extraordinary submission to the United States and zeal for getting the Constitution revised. During the past two years, it has given the Bush administration support for the retaliatory war against Afghanistan and the invasion of Iraq, and railroaded through two pieces of legislation. One is the Anti-terrorism Special Measures Law. Also, a set of three war-contingency-related bills are about to be enacted.

Prime Minister Koizumi, who does not respect the Constitution, has gone so far as to state in parliament that the "Self-Defense Forces are de facto armed forces." This shows that the struggle for the defense and full implementation of the constitutional provisions for peace and democracy is more important than ever before.

The three contingency-related bills, which are now in the House of Councilors, would mark a new stage in the government plan to make Japan a state that sends troops abroad on U.S. demand. Throughout the parliamentary discussions, we have revealed that the contingency legislation is intended to prepare for joining with the U.S. forces to attack, instead of for defending Japan. The crux of the matter is that this legislation is designed to allow the SDF to participate in wars the United States starts outside of Japan with preemptive attacks, and to mobilize the Japanese people for such wars by imposing penalties on those who refuse to comply with government orders. I want to take this occasion to express our determination to make every effort to cooperate with a wide-range people to block the worst-ever

unconstitutional bills.

Even if these wartime bills are railroaded through, our struggle will continue. It is important to develop a struggle to prevent the contingency laws, along with the law on measures to deal with situations in areas surrounding Japan from being invoked. The movement to prevent concrete measures from being established as part of the contingency laws is also important.

The bill to respond to armed attacks provides that more laws on concrete measures will be established based on this law in order to make Japan a state that sends its military abroad. Included is a "law to assist U.S. forces", which defines how the SDF will assist U.S. military actions in the event of armed attacks. But the government has declined to give details. During the parliamentary discussion, we asked the government to state specific provisions to be included in the law. The government's reply was always, "Details will be considered later."

We know for sure that the "law for assisting U.S. forces" will contain provisions that allow Self-Defense Force units to enter "combat zones." This means that the SDF's activities will involve the use of arms, which is technically prohibited under the law on measures to deal with situations in areas surrounding Japan. It will contradict the government's constitutional interpretation that Japan cannot exercise the right of collective self-defense. The legislation to assist U.S. forces is the core of the contingency legislation. The struggle to block this legislation is very important

The contingency laws and other measures to create a state that sends its military overseas is deepening contradictions both in Japan and internationally. Local governments, which will be subject to national mobilization under the wartime laws, are very apprehensive and critical of the war-contingency setup. To date, 638 local assemblies, about 20 percent of all local assemblies, have adopted resolutions expressing opposition to or calling for careful deliberations on the contingency legislation. This is more than double the number of local assemblies (279) that expressed opposition or reservation to the law on measures to deal with situations in areas surrounding Japan.

Criticism of and concerns about the contingency legislation are increasing in other Asian countries. Following passage of the contingency bills through the House of Representatives, 30 South Korean National Assembly members sent a letter to all Japanese Lower House members, urging them to oppose the contingency bills. They stated: "We, National Assembly members, and the people of the Republic of Korea have grave concerns that the contingency legislation will reproduce the history of the last war which inflicted untold pains upon Asian states and peoples. We consider that the bills run counter to the constitutional spirit of peace. The road Japan should take as an accepted leader in the international community is one of building a state with high-level morals instead of seeking military superiority. Asian people of good will are wishing that Japan will try to earn trust not because of its military power but because of its morals."

The Koizumi Cabinet's pursuit of a state that dispatches troops abroad in subordination to the United States goes against the world currents toward peace. This will isolate Japan from the international community. The JCP rejects such a policy and will do its utmost to build a Japan that contributes to peace in Asia and

throughout the world through diplomacy based on reason guided by the Constitution.

(2) Economy and people's living conditions -- Four urgent demands and opposition to corporate restructuring

The two years of the Koizumi Cabinet reveals how disastrous its "structural reform" policy is for the economy and people's living conditions.

First, despite the deepening economic recession, it has forced the people to pay an extra four trillion yen by increasing medical costs and taxes on the pretext of the need to deal with "fiscal failure". This policy not only undermines the people's living standards and health but accelerates shortage of demand in the Japanese economy, causing a vicious circle of the exacerbation of the economy and fiscal conditions.

Second, the government urges banks to write off their bad loans as quickly as possible. This policy prompts banks to forcibly collect debts and raise lending rates, increasing bankruptcies and unemployment. It puts not only small- and medium-sized banks but also major banks in crisis, leading to use tax money to save them. In fact, it is damaging the banks' role as financial mediators, and contracting and even paralyzing finances. This in turn is further slowing down the real economy and accelerating the financial crisis. The JCP demands that the "Takenaka Program" of accelerating the disposal of bad loans be revoked immediately.

Thirdly, the government policy of encouraging corporations to increase restructuring has increased uncertainties about jobs and lowered personal earnings to the worst level since the end of World War II. The most recent data show that the unemployment rate in March was 5.4 percent with 3,840,000 people out of jobs, the worst in post-war Japan. Working household earnings fell 7.5 percent in the same month from the year before, the steepest ever. In terms of annual income, this means a loss of 460,000 yen (about 3,000 dollars) on average, which is one month's salary. In addition, government statistics show that one in five Japanese workers is forced to work 60 hours a week, or more than 3,000 hours a year. The adverse revision of the labor laws which is now being considered in parliament would sharpen these contradictions. We must prevent the enactment of these bills. Reckless corporate restructuring will only place obstacles in the way to the future sound development of Japan's industries and companies.

I have so far discussed from three angles the government's fallacious economic measures which backfire and exacerbate the economic crisis resulting in a vicious circle in every field.

The Koizumi Cabinet says it will not ease the on-going reforms regardless of the worsening economic situation, thus persisting in carrying out the "backfiring" measures. What it calls as measures that take into account the economic slowdown are mainly directed to manipulation of the stock market and setting up more large scale public works projects. These are all shaky measures that have been proven to be useless.

This is what the Koizumi Cabinet's economic policy is all about. It has no

choice. It is obvious that this cabinet is not qualified to manage the nation's economy.

The JCP in this situation will continue to make efforts to solve the problem and play the activist role in organizing the struggle for rehabilitating people's living conditions and the economy.

The JCP will work to build broader cooperation in the effort to increase the movement to achieve the "Four Urgent Demands" we published in September last year: stop shifting a heavier burden onto the people for social services; oppose regressive tax increases that hurt the working people more; end the policy that drives small- and medium-sized companies to go bust; and strengthen efforts to secure jobs and help the unemployed. These are all pressing demands and are warranted by the increasing cooperation on this issue between the JCP and broader sections of the people, including medical associations and small- and medium-sized entrepreneurs. The struggle for these demands is significant not only for the defense of people's living standards; it is a movement in opposition to the claim that the Koizumi Cabinet's "structural reform" policy is leading to the rehabilitation of the Japanese economy.

We also demand that corporations stop their irresponsible restructuring and fulfill their social responsibilities. In September 2001, the JCP Central Committee issued an appeal for a national struggle against massive corporate restructuring and in defense of jobs. This was followed by mass actions producing significant results in many parts of the country. In particular, this struggle forced the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry to issue a circular advising local labor bureaus to work to eliminate unpaid overtime work. In the next 18 months, 613 companies throughout the country stopped forcing workers to work overtime without pay and paid 8,100,000,000 yen in back pay for overtime work. This is part of the struggle with a view to achieving an economy governed by rules that make corporations fulfill their responsibilities appropriate to their strength. This struggle is of national significance because it seeks not only to defend the livelihoods and rights of the working people but to build a healthy economy and decent society in Japan. Let us take the lead in the effort to develop the struggle in the workplace and in communities.

(3) Political party realignment may dramatically change

I now speak about the state of political parties and the role of the Japanese Communist Party.

The Central Committee 5th Plenum pointed out that the political situation showed a new development. It stated: "At a time when many political parties now have no specific strategy to attract the public or reliable organizations for party activities, the JCP stands out as the only political party that is reliable. This is significant in that this is what the new political situation is about." This analysis has been corroborated by subsequent developments.

Look at the governing parties. The Liberal Democratic Party is in a critical situation because of its political failure and the crumbling of its supporter base. The Komei Party and its parent religious organization Soka Gakkai are not only extending organizational support to the LDP but calling for the implementation of

the undemocratic LDP policies, as clearly shown by its support for the Iraq war and its campaign in support of shifting heavier burdens on the people for medical treatment. All this has added contradictions in the Komei Party vis-à-vis the public. If the LDP continues to increase its dependence on the Komei Party and Soka Gakkai both politically and organizationally, in the long run it will not be able to avoid a decisive decline in support.

What about the opposition parties? The 5th CC Plenum decision stated, "It is also a fact that many opposition parties are without a banner or strategy showing a way to end LDP government." This weakness was revealed in a dramatic way when the Democratic Party and the Liberal Party voted in favor of the three bills for the contingency legislation in the House of Representatives. This represents a major collaboration being set up between some opposition parties and the ruling parties to promote the LDP-led government's security and foreign policies. Such a collaboration in key national issues calls these opposition parties' *raison d'être* into question.

The Democratic Party has touted its vote in favor of the three contingency bills as a "demonstration of its capacity to govern." It's illusory of them to believe so. The miserable failure of the non-LDP government that advocated the continuity of the LDP government is proof of it. The task now is for opposition parties to change away from basic LDP policies instead of following them.

The JCP will maintain its policy of joining with other opposition parties in parliament in struggles for agreed demands on behalf of the people. We will of course severely criticize other parties for problematic attitudes and activities.

In these political circumstances, power balance between political parties will not remain fixed. Its framework will not remain fixed either. The present political situation should be seen in relation to possible dramatic changes in power relations between political parties.

The JCP has a reliable political line and strategy to transform the present socio-political system from one of forcing Japan into submission to the United States and serving the interests of large corporations above everything else. The JCP is the only party that offers political alternative to LDP government in both foreign and domestic policies. The task now is for us to have the JCP's value recognized by as many people as possible. Aware of the increasing significance of such effort in light of the present state of Japanese society, let us do our best.

II. RESULTS AND LESSONS OF SIMULTANEOUS LOCAL ELECTIONS

(Gist)

Did We Succeed in Regaining Lost Ground?

(1) Results

Unable to defend the seats it had maintained, the JCP suffered a setback from the position it gained in 1999.

The numbers of seats the JCP obtained are as follows: 110 in prefectural assemblies, down from 152; 104 in major cities, down from 120; 141 in Tokyo's ward assemblies, down from 158; 940 in other city assemblies, down from 1,027; and 943 in town and village assemblies, down from 949.

The JCP succeeded in winning seats in Ishikawa, Shimane, and Kumamoto, where there had been no JCP seats but lost its seats in Tochigi, Aichi, Mie, Tottori, Saga, and Miyazaki.

The JCP share in town and village assemblies was 5.37 percent, up 0.16 points from the previous election four years ago. This is an important gain.

The total number of JCP seats in local assemblies after the simultaneous local elections is 4,208, the largest of all political parties.

(2) What did we regain?

We need to review and draw lessons from the latest elections in line with the decision of the 5th CC Plenum, and make clear if we can change the balance of forces in our favor by making up for the losses we incurred in the last House of Councilors election by reducing the vote getting strength to 4,330,000 votes.

Some Convincing Facts We can Learn from the Election

(1) Basics for political debates: JCP's appeal reflected its real value as a party worthy of the name

Our campaign in the first half of the simultaneous local elections took place in the midst of the Iraq war.

The JCP put up the demands of residents for betterment of living standards, welfare services, and education, particularly focusing on the need to end the "upside-down" local politics of all parties except the JCP. It also called for opposition to the Iraq war and defense of the U.N. rules for peace. These JCP activities were important as a demonstration of the *raison d'être* of the JCP which has been consistent in calling for national sovereignty and world peace. In many parts of the country, the JCP took active part in anti-war activities while conducting the election campaign, and some reports indicated that this serious and rational approach was a reason for increasing support for and trust in the JCP.

In the second half of the local elections, the JCP's campaign turned to focus more on issues that have direct bearings on municipalities, including health insurance, nursing care, child care, and environmental protection. It condemned the Liberal Democratic and Komei parties for their neglect of the role of local governments while making the value of the JCP assembly members who are working hard for the keen demands of residents visible.

(2) The vote we received can be a springboard for turning to an offensive

Secondly, the number of votes the JCP received fell short of the number it obtained four years ago. But we did find a springboard for an offensive in the next elections.

(3) We plucked up courage to confront anti-JCP attacks

Thirdly, the Komei Party and its parent religious organization Soka Gakkai used cowardly means to carry out anti-JCP attacks on a larger scale than ever before.

They not only carried out political propaganda to denigrate the JCP but even engineered a shift in Komei supporters' votes to secure the election of LDP or Democratic Party candidates and the defeat of JCP candidates.

The JCP on the whole acted aggressively to defeat their attacks both in political debates and in organizational battles. The JCP has made important progress in firmly setting itself against anti-communist attacks. In Tokyo's Sumida Ward, Soka Gakkai members disrupted JCP activities in the street and had police arrest a JCP member. The JCP and its supporters' association rose in protest against the frame-up and won the election of all JCP candidates.

In their anti-JCP campaign, the Komei Party and Soka Gakkai everywhere distorted facts using such lies as, "The JCP opposes everything and lacks achievements." The JCP has been prompt in responding to these attacks.

Of course, we must continue to struggle to eliminate the negative effects of anti-JCP attacks and isolate the anti-communist forces throughout the country; we have begun a new offensive to hold back anti-JCP attacks.

(4) We think and act together with politically unaffiliated people

Fourth, it is important to note that the JCP made advances where it joined with politically unaffiliated people.

This was the case in the Tokushima and Nagano prefectural assembly elections in which the JCP increased its seats. In the municipalities led by JCP mayors -- Komae City in Tokyo; Rikuzen-takata City in Iwate; Yuzawa City in Akita; and Sakahoku Village in Nagano -- all JCP candidates in the assembly elections were elected.

A JCP candidate was elected in the mayoral election in Konko Town in Okayama. He is the 11th JCP member to head a municipality. In Okinawa's Ginowan City, in which the U.S. Marine Corps Futenma Air Station is located, a

progressive candidate who called for the U.S. base to be relocated to outside of the country was elected as mayor.

A variety of popular movements are developing throughout the country today. It is important for the JCP to "think and act together" with those movements and build heart-to-heart cooperation with them in various fields towards changing politics.

III. ELECTIONS AND PARTY BUILDING (Gist)

JCP 23rd Congress

Under the JCP Constitution, which provides that the JCP Congress is held every two or three years, we must convene the JCP 23rd Congress by November. At the same time, we should have in mind the possible dissolution of the House of Representatives for a general election. Although uncertainty persists, we propose the holding of the next congress and its preparations as follows:

The 23rd Congress will be held in November 2003. It will be called by the next Central Committee Plenum.

The draft of a revised Program of the Japanese Communist Party will be approved by the Central Committee at its 7th Plenum in June.

The Central Committee will approve the draft Resolution of the 23rd Congress at its 8th Plenum in September and put it to a general discussion by all party members.

In case the House of Representatives is dissolved and a general election called, the Central Committee will take necessary steps to delay the 23rd Congress in accordance with the JCP Constitution until some time after the election.

Efforts to regain lost ground and achieve further advances

(1) Grasp the characteristics of the political situation from all angles so as to achieve a solution in a forward looking manner

In June, the present House of Representatives will have one year to go until its term expires. The House of Representatives can be dissolved anytime for a general election. The House of Councilors election will be held in July next year. We will concentrate our efforts on activities to increase JCP membership and Akahata readership in preparation for a JCP victory in the Lower House general election as well as the Upper House election.

(2) We can develop a new phase toward a JCP advance by frustrating the desperate attempt of the forces of reaction to stop their declines

In the late 1970s, the JCP had to deal with the second post-war wave of a reactionary offensive. In the present political situation, like in the 1970s, the forces of reaction began anti-communist attacks out of fear of possible JCP advances.

But there is a new phenomenon, too.

The main force that carries out such attacks is made up of the Komei Party and Soka Gakkai. These organizations are mobilized fully in a massive propaganda campaign to disseminate anti-communist lies. They even reach out to individual voters and employ every possible means.

Goals set for the Lower House General Election and the Upper House Election, and Our Basic Strategy

(1) Where to start?

In setting out to wage campaigns for the next elections, we must be aware of the present JCP strength (in relation to other parties). In the 2001 House of Councilors proportional representation election, the JCP received 4,330,000 votes. This is the number that represents our strength, and we must start from there.

(2) House of Representatives election: We must win the re-election of incumbent JCP seats and seek a further advance in every proportional representation constituency

Proportional representation constituencies are the main arena of our campaign to defend our seats and achieve a further JCP advance in each constituency.

The single-seat constituencies are important units in which the JCP presents voters with its policies and also constitute basic units for campaigns for the proportional representation election. The main task is for the JCP to increase its voter strength in single-seat constituencies so as to concentrate our energy on achieving a JCP advance in the proportional representation elections.

(3) House of Councilors election

In the House of Councilors election of July 2004, members who were elected in July 1998 will come up for reelection. In the 1999 election, the JCP received 8,200,000 votes and won 15 seats, the largest number ever achieved by the JCP. The JCP will seek to at least defend its eight seats in the proportional representation constituency, in which voters will choose a candidate from party lists, and seven seats in single-member constituencies.

In the next election, we will divide the country into campaign districts along the lines of the Lower House proportional representation constituencies and ask voters to write an individual candidate's name on the ballot.

Proposal for a 'United Effort to Increase Membership and Akahata Readership'

(1) We will set targets to be achieved by the JCP 23rd Congress.

In the membership drive, we keep in mind that we are at the halfway stage to 2005, the deadline we set in the 22nd Congress for achieving a 500,000-strong JCP membership. In the coming drive we will particularly focus on attracting young people.

In the Akahata readership drive, all JCP bodies - prefectural committees, district committees, and branches - will set goals that would bring the total number of subscribers to more than the number the JCP had at the time of its 22nd Congress.

(2) This drive is a real first step in our long-term efforts as well as in preparation for the coming parliamentary elections

After experiencing regrettable setbacks in the last three nationwide elections, we have learned how important it is for us to build a JCP through strengthening strong ties with the people at the grassroots level as the way to solve problems in our initiatives.

The United Effort will not only aim at paving the way for a victory in the next parliamentary elections, but at laying the groundwork for the party to carry out the struggle in the 21st century.

(3) Membership drive - Ensuring succession to younger people

The United Effort sets the membership drive as the pillar of party building activities. The task now is for us to recruit more young people as our successors everywhere, in communities, workplaces, and JCP bodies. This is the way we can ensure that the JCP will continue to grow into the future.

(4) Akahata readership drive - to influence public opinion

In the present-day situation, the JCP can become stronger and larger only when we establish "JCP activity with Akahata at its center."

It is necessary to reaffirm the JCP 22nd Congress decision concerning JCP activities with Akahata at its center. It said: "Our organ paper activity should not be reduced to just one of the many tasks for party building. The organ paper is the link between the JCP Central Committee and 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."

The crisis of LDP politics is very deep, but the commercial media tend to cover up or distort the crisis. So Akahata has a pivotal role to play in helping JCP members take part in party activities with confidence, in strengthening heart-to-heart ties between the JCP and the public, and in organizing the people's struggles as well as parliamentary struggles and election campaigns.

The JCP is a party with a scientific outlook of the world and a scientific political line. We must also be scientific in understanding the present conditions of party activities relating to JCP organizations and efforts to strengthen their positions.

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