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SENDAGAYA 4-25-6, SHIBUYA-KU, TOKYO 151-0051, JAPAN
Telephone: +81-3-3423-2381, Fax: +81-3-3423-2383
E-mail: INFO@japan-press.co.jp
URL: <http://www.japan-press.co.jp>

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Speech on the 89th Anniversary of the Founding of the JCP

Looking forward to a new Japan beyond the crisis

Disaster, nuclear power plants, and Japan's future

Shii Kazuo
JCP Executive Committee Chair
August 1, 2011

Looking forward to a new Japan beyond the crisis ---Disaster, nuclear power plants, and Japan's future

Commemorative speech by Japanese Communist Party Chair Shii Kazuo
on the 89th anniversary of the founding of the JCP
August 1, 2011

Public coming closer to JCP position

To everyone in the hall and to everyone watching the live internet broadcast, I am Shii Kazuo, Japanese Communist Party Chair.

We mark the 89th anniversary of the founding of the JCP amid the worst postwar disaster with the nuclear power plant accident.

Nearly five months have passed since the triple disaster struck, and fresh moves toward reconstruction are seen in many places thanks to the tremendous efforts of people in the disaster-hit area. For example, fishing operations have resumed and fish markets have been reopened.

However, more than 90,000 people are still having to stay in temporary shelters, and are suffering from anxieties about their uncertain future. The dangers associated with the aftermath of the Fukushima nuclear accident are far from over. Rather, serious dangers are spreading nationwide.

I extend my deepest condolences to all the people who lost loved ones and express my sincere sympathies to the people continuing to suffer from the disaster.

The JCP is determined to do the utmost in supporting victims and promoting reconstruction, so that everyone in the affected areas can resume a safe and secure daily lives as soon as possible.

Disaster Brought Solidarity among People and Appreciation for JCP's Relief Efforts Based on its Founding Principle of Social Solidarity

People are seeking stronger social ties, breaking from individual "self-responsibility" argument

Today I want to talk about major changes which are taking place among the public at large, triggered by the March 11 disaster. The disaster has reshaped their views on politics and society, and the ways in which they lead their lives. The JCP is

responding to this worst postwar disaster in Japan guided by its founding principle that the party must dedicate itself to give relief and help provide security to the people. These efforts have aroused a sympathetic response from the general public and this has generated increased cooperation between the general public and the JCP.

In what way has this disaster changed people's political consciousness?

The NHK program "Asaichi (The first thing in the morning)" on May 30 featured the changes in women's ways of living after the disaster. The program reported that the Great East Japan Disaster caused a change in women's lifestyles and values not only among female victims in disaster-hit areas but also among women in the rest of Japan. These are some of the salient features of the changes brought about:

Views on marriage are changing. In Osaka, far removed from the disaster-hit area, people who signed up at marriage agencies to be married sharply increased. A woman in her thirties explained how her views on marriage changed. "Before the disaster, I was kind of seeking protection and comfort in marriage. But since I saw the people in the disaster area thinking of others first, I want to become someone who can protect others, not one who only waits to be protected."

There is more eagerness to help others. The program interviewed a woman who took part in volunteer activities for the first time in her life. Although she was a very reclusive person since early childhood, the images she saw of the disaster-hit area motivated her to take action. Together with her friends, she organized sending dry ice to the damaged area. She said, "Before, I was very passive and thought I couldn't make a difference, but now I believe it's important to take action."

There is more openness towards neighbors. A resident in Urayasu City in Chiba Prefecture told the reporter that for seven years since she moved there, she had not been very friendly with her neighbors. But the earthquake changed her greatly. On the day the earthquake struck, the elderly woman nextdoor helped her and her small child. Since that day, she came to think that mutual help among neighbors was essential to help assure the safety and well being of children. She began to take part in activities organized by the neighborhood association. Now, she is aware of the people who live near her. The earthquake changed her views about and relations with her neighbors.

A common thread that runs through these experiences is that we are finding the importance of establishing bonds with others. I am sure a similar change is seen where you live.

For a long time, people have been made to think that they are responsible for causing the social problems they are facing. This so-called “self-responsibility” argument has divided them into becoming isolated individuals. After they saw people in Tohoku lose their family members, houses, and communities because of the earthquake and tsunami, it dawned on them what a humane society should look like. Even though a person alone is powerless, we can get together to help each other. Many people donate money to fund-raising campaigns for relief and reconstruction or even go and work as volunteers in the disaster-hit areas. Isn't this an indication that the nation is overcoming the false perception that people are individually responsible for their circumstances, and that we are witnessing a great change in the ways in which people are now yearning for social ties of solidarity?

Where people suffer, JCP acts out of empathy

Among the people whose perception is rapidly changing, the Japanese Communist Party is receiving wider support for its activities helping the victims that are being conducted out of genuine concern to relieve their sufferings.

First, let me talk about the struggles of those JCP members who are themselves disaster victims. I have been to the disaster-hit areas several times. I was moved by many JCP members everywhere involved in rescue and reconstruction efforts in spite of the agonizing loss of their own family members, friends and homes.

In the disaster, we lost 49 members, and ten are still missing. Many JCP supporters and Akahata subscribers were also killed. Oikawa Ichiro, a JCP assembly member of Rikuzentakata City in Iwate Prefecture perished in the tsunami. JCP Iwate Prefectural Committee Chair Sugawara Norikatsu reported on Oikawa's final moments. I quote:

“On March 11, Mr. Oikawa was taking part in a rally and a demonstration opposing increased tax burden on the general public when the earthquake struck. After that, we lost contact with him. Later, we came to know about his final hours from an unexpected source. In Morioka City, the capital of Iwate Prefecture, when some JCP city assembly members and other activists were engaged in a fund raising campaign for disaster relief, a person from Rikuzentakata City said that Mr. Oikawa was heard repeatedly crying out ‘A tsunami is coming. Everyone run!’ He was helping people to evacuate till the last moment. To our great regret, his body was later discovered under the rubble of a shopping center. He, as the head of the JCP city assembly members group, provided great support to the progressive city administration of Mayor

Nakazato for 8 years, and played a major part in the election victory of Mayor Toba this past February. Local people fondly remember him, saying, 'He was always smiling, willing to listen to our problems, and kindly gave a helping hand to us whenever needed.' As a JCP member, he was undaunted by indifference or hostility, energetic, and always caring. He apparently acted in character during the last moments of his life."

Let us remember deep in our hearts Comrade Oikawa's last effort to help others.

JCP members in the disaster-hit areas are working hard at evacuation centers, temporary housing facilities, damaged fishing ports, or in local assemblies. They are spearheading many relief efforts, encouraging local administrations to respond to victims' keen demands, and winning peoples' trust and respect. This is but a manifestation of the JCP founding spirit that we should devote ourselves to relieving people's sufferings.

Members in branches and local organizations of the JCP have been engaging in fund raising campaigns and volunteer activities in the disaster areas, working together with many people with other organizations.

The amount of donations entrusted to the JCP for disaster relief has exceeded 880 million yen, an unprecedented amount, with an additional 220 million yen specifically donated to support and rebuild the JCP local organizations devastated by the disaster.

We have delivered this donation fund to the affected municipalities, agricultural and fishery cooperatives, chambers of commerce and industry, as well as commerce and industry associations. They appreciated it, but sometimes they were surprised. They told us that all they knew were political parties asking for money but for the first time they met with a party *bringing* them money.

Donations sent to the Central Committee's Relief Fund are often accompanied by heartfelt comments, telling us about their feelings for victims. One Akahata reader has sent us total sum of 41, 208 yen in small increments, such as 420 yen or 520 yen, 62 times. These donations were the remaining amount of his daily expenses, including food, for which he budgeted 1,000 yen. He said, "I made up my mind to donate whatever I can. The JCP I know will without fail see to it that the money will actually be used for relief." He still continues sending money to us.

A total of 11,000 volunteers from across the country responded to the JCP call to work for the relief of victims in collaboration with volunteers from various

democratic organizations.

Two young sisters living in Miyazaki Prefecture of southern Japan went all the way to Ishinomaki City in Miyagi Prefecture to help deliver relief supplies, serve at soup kitchens, and scoop mud out from tsunami-hit houses and fields. But they felt strongly that their support was still insufficient.

After going back home, they met with their hometown mayor to plead for immediate aid to the victims, telling him about their experiences as volunteers and the difficulties facing residents in the disaster-hit areas. He readily agreed because he remembered the town had received aid from all over Japan when the foot-and-mouth disease had broke out in the town.

The town administration listed the items that disaster affected residents needed most and that were in short supply based on information obtained from JCP district committees in the disaster-hit areas. They sent ten boxes of relief supplies. Isn't it delightful that the tie between JCP volunteers and people in a disaster-hit area grew into solidarity between two distant municipalities?

We are happy knowing that the JCP is given strength by its members always willing to help others in distress. While expressing my gratitude for your cooperation in the fund raising efforts and volunteer activities, I appeal to you to make further efforts in helping the people in the disaster-hit areas.

JCP defends people's lives from natural disasters – history of unrelenting struggle under duress

Great Kanto Earthquake – Kyosei's first chair risked his life to rescue victims

It has been 89 years since our party was founded. Throughout the years, JCP members have always devoted themselves to protect citizens' lives whenever they have encountered natural calamities. Today I would like to introduce our predecessors' activities even facing the fierce persecution during the prewar imperial system.

One year after the JCP was founded on July 15, 1922, the Great Kanto Earthquake hit Japan on September 1, 1923, with nearly 105,000 people killed or unaccounted for. Shortly before that, in the first major oppression against the JCP in June 1923, about 80 leaders and members of the party were arrested and put in prison. However, other JCP members and unionists who had escaped the oppression risked their lives to rescue quake victims. Among them was Kawai Yoshitora, the first chair of the Communist Youth League of Japan (now the Democratic Youth League of Japan), which was founded in April 1923 under JCP guidance.

Being involved in the “Nankatsu Labor Association” based in Tokyo’s Minamikatsushika district (ed. “Nankatsu”), Kawai was leading the militant labor movement there. Its militancy was proudly dubbed the “Nankatsu spirit,” a phrase which has been passed down to this day.

In the wake of the Great Kanto Earthquake, Kawai strived to save people’s lives. He rescued three infants from a furious fire. He bought powdered milk to feed a baby, gave biscuits to children, and then stayed one night in Ueno Park holding them under his arms inside his jacket before being able to take them to a safer place. Later, his worried mother was overjoyed to hear that he had been giving such tender care to orphans in such dangerous circumstances.

However, Kawai was arrested and beaten to death at the Kameido police station (Kameido Incident). He was only 21 years old. His mother went to the police station to protest against this brutality. She confronted the chief of the police station in a tearful rage, asking him, “For what crime was my son killed!?”

The fledgling party and youth league undauntedly carried out such activities to help others even when they were in danger of losing their lives.

The Kameido police station chief justified this lawless atrocity against Kawai as a “necessary action.” His remark was prompted by Shoriki Matsutaro, Chief Secretary of the Metropolitan Police Commissioner’s Office, who later became the owner of Yomiuri Shimbun. Please keep his name in mind as he was heavily involved in my later topic regarding nuclear energy issues.

1933 Showa Sanriku Tsunami – rescue operations amid fierce repression

Our predecessors also organized a relief operation when the catastrophic Showa Sanriku Tsunami hit Aomori, Iwate, and Miyagi Prefectures on March 3, 1933, with 3,064 people killed or left missing. The JCP was at that time under severe government repression. A revolutionary writer and a JCP member, Kobayashi Takiji had been killed by the Tokko, Special Political Police, on February 22, shortly before the tsunami hit. In spite of the government repression, the party called on readers to organize nation-wide relief efforts.

Here I have a copy of the Sekki (Red Flag), the then JCP organ paper, published on March 10, 1933. On the front page was a call to organize a labor-farmer funeral for Kobayashi. The second page carried an appeal with big headlines that read, “The massive tsunami, starvation, and a bad harvest hit the Sanriku coastal region in Tohoku. How can revolutionary workers help to assist and rescue disaster victims?” It explained how badly the area was damaged and listed the following demands:

1. Rice, clothes, fuel, and housing materials must be swiftly and directly given to the victims for free by the government and the capitalists/landlords!;
2. Forgive farm rent, taxes and debts owed by the afflicted peasants; and,
3. Government should freely provide victims with fishing gear, boats, farming gear, seeds, fertilizer and all the equipment necessary for their work;

Raising such demands, the article called on the readers, “Direct to the suffering brothers in Tohoku, send relief money and goods containing the genuine workers spirit!”

The JCP and the Workers and Farmers Relief Society made all-out relief efforts, including sending medical teams to the disaster-stricken area. However, the Imperial government carried out a major crackdown even on such relief efforts and arrested nearly 300 activists involved in the relief work.

One of them was Sunama Akiko, who was working as a nurse at Tokyo’s Osaki proletarian clinic, where the current Min-iren (Japan Federation of Democratic Medical Institutions) movement was born. Her husband Ichiro was in jail at that time, but he was elected as a JCP Diet member of the House of Representatives later after the war.

Akiko and her colleagues went to Taro Village (Iwate Pref.), the most devastated locality. To evade police surveillance, they walked 100 km from Morioka to Miyako in the snow. Then they took an hour-and-half boat ride to get to the village. They delivered relief money and medicines to the village office and immediately started treating patients. Long queues of people formed in front of them. However, hardly three hours passed before they were arrested by the Special Political Police. Based on the police announcement, the headlines of a local paper said alarmingly, “Red menace in disaster area/ Three arrested/ Organizing while giving medical care.” The Imperial government put saving its own skin above saving victims’ lives.

This spirit of our predecessors of saving peoples’ lives during times of natural disasters in spite of life-threatening repression has been passed down to our post-war relief efforts, such as after the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake.

Our present efforts in the disaster hit areas are a continuation of the JCP’s indomitable tradition of devoting itself to the service of people in need. I would like to stress this in connection with heartfelt respect for our forerunners.

‘Top-down reconstruction imposed by business circles’ or ‘reconstruction from below respecting local consensus’

Politics moved forward to solve ‘double loan’ problem

Reconstruction from the March 11 disaster is a long-term national project.

The JCP has stood firm in making joint efforts to address the urgent task of helping disaster victims by putting political difference aside. This JCP stance toward post-disaster reconstruction efforts is making possible positive changes in the political situation.

We can see this through the efforts made to solve the so-called “double loan” problem. The JCP in its second policy proposal regarding post-disaster recovery proposed that the government establish a body which would buy up debts from financial institutions in order to reduce the amount of debt owed by the disaster victims, who often must borrow money to restart their businesses or various livelihoods in addition to the debt incurred before the disaster. The JCP Dietmembers’ repeated questioning on this issue paved the way to cooperation among the opposition parties. As a result, a bill to solve the “double loan” problem was passed through the House of Councilors. The JCP will do its utmost to get this bill passed in the House of Representatives and help establish a system that provides support to all disaster-affected business owners.

Cowardly attempt to cut ties among fisherfolk – oppose plan to establish ‘special fishery restoration zone’

On the other hand, a fierce struggle is still going on between the opposing models of “top-down reconstruction imposed by business circles” and “reconstruction from below respecting local consensus.” Even though people began to have a stronger sense of solidarity since the disaster, putting more value on people-to-people ties, the government and big corporations are intent on trampling upon such people’s initiatives.

In line with a blueprint drawn up by a think tank affiliated with the Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren), the government and the Miyagi Prefecture government came up with the idea of establishing a “special fishery zone” where big companies would be allowed free entry into the coastal fishery industry (hitherto restricted to fishery cooperatives -ed.). At present, fisherfolk and people in the associated industries are struggling to rebuild their livelihoods after losing their boats, ports, food processing plants, and distribution facilities. However, what the administrations are doing is, in addition to neglecting reconstruction, driving fishermen into a corner, cutting ties among fishery people,

and above all else, giving large corporations a chance to make inroads to increase their profits. This is despicable and totally unacceptable!

Fisherfolk are putting up strong opposition. I took part in an emergency rally organized by the National Federation of Fisheries Cooperative Associations (JF, Zengyoren). They demanded to not have the present order established in the fishing industry destroyed by the incorporation of the proposed “special fishery zone.” Fisherfolk from all the corners of Japan gathered to express their deep anger.

Head of Miyagi Federation of Fisheries Cooperative Association Abe Rikitaro spoke at the rally: “Fisherfolk lost their homes, boats, and fishing equipment. But they are trying hard to bounce back even while they are living in temporary shelters. In these hard times, why on earth do they have to create special fishery zones that would give away traditional fishing grounds to corporations?”

Ooi Seji, chair of the Iwate Federation of Fisheries Cooperatives Association said: “We shed tears three times: we wept when we were devastated by the tsunami. We shed tears of joy when we received encouragement and support from many people. Now we have tears of anger in our eyes because the ‘special fishery zone’ scheme is causing anxiety and confusion.”

Later in the rally, political parties’ representatives made speeches. I said; “The JCP opposes the special fishery zone scheme. It will destroy the traditional bond among people in the local fishing industries. It will encourage big businesses to muscle in on coastal fishing.” The participants gave me a warm applause. It was the first time that a JCP leader made a speech at a fisherfolks’ national gathering. At the beginning, they looked uncertain. However, at the end, I felt a good rapport was established with them by what I had to say.

We will fight against this outrage in order to defend local fishery in Tohoku and throughout Japan by joining hands with fisherfolk and the Japanese people.

Sony’s lawless downsizing plan – big corporations must repay their obligation to society especially at a time of disaster

Another serious problem in the disaster-hit region is Sony’s job-cut plan at the Sendai Technology Center (Sendai Tech.) in Miyagi Prefecture.

Using the disaster as an excuse, Sony announced a plan to transfer 280 full-time workers at the plant to outside the prefecture and fire all 150 fixed-term contract workers at the end of their terms of contracts. Even more unconscionable, Sony’s Vice Chairman Chubachi Ryoji has joined the government’s Disaster Design Council as a representative of the business circles’ interests.

JCP member of the House of Councilors Yamashita Yoshiki recently questioned the Prime Minister in a House Budget Committee meeting, asking whether he would leave the situation as it is. The Prime Minister could only come up with an incoherent reply. Liberal Democratic Party lawmakers jeered the PM, saying, “It is the Disaster Design Council you should fire!” Yamashita’s question received a very favorable response from many people, especially in regard to the following two points.

One is that those young, fixed-term contract workers were among those who rushed to their factory to engage in repair work and shoveling out the tsunami mud even though they themselves were severely affected by the disaster. They are professional and dedicated workers, proud of working at Sony, no matter what their employment status may be. How dare you to talk about reconstruction if you make these young workers redundant amid the aftermath of the disaster?

Another point that struck a chord is the stark contrast between the local small businesses and Sony in terms of maintaining employment. In Miyagi’s Kesennuma City, there is a marine product processing company that has refused to fire any of its 800 employees even though eight out of its nine factories were completely destroyed by the tsunami. It is the employer’s belief that maintaining jobs is important in preserving the bond of solidarity in local communities. How dare the big corporation take to its heels when local small companies are struggling to avoid dismissing their workers?

We cannot forgive such large corporations’ atrocious and irresponsible behavior. It is on such an occasion as when a massive disaster occurs that major companies with their huge amounts of internal capital reserve should repay their obligation to society by maintaining the workforce.

Economic society governed by rules –call for a Japan in which people support each other based on need for social solidarity

The struggle over the course of post-disaster reconstruction is a part and parcel of our efforts towards creating an “economy governed by rules” as is envisioned in the JCP Program. Let us make rules and regulations by which the government is made responsible for rebuilding people’s lives and livelihoods destroyed by the disaster through making nation-wide efforts to overcome this crisis. Let us make strict rules requiring large corporations to fulfill their social responsibility to maintaining employment and the economic vitality of local communities through combating their actions based on greed.

We need to have a deep trust in the ability of the public to change their hearts and minds. They are now much more eager to cherish people-to-people ties after

having experienced the disaster. Let us build upon these forward-looking changes to create a new Japan where people support each other based on a strong belief in the need for social solidarity!

Nuclear crisis – collapse of ‘safety myth’ and renewed attention to JCP

People yearn for the truth amid exposure of ‘political lies’ regarding NPPs

Now I move on to the question of nuclear power plants and the JCP position.

It has been five months since the disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant operated by TEPCO. The situation continues to be critical.

First of all, the government should stop spreading false optimism by repeating its groundless claim that the path to containing the crisis is in sight. What I strongly demand is that the government should grasp the matter objectively and take every possible measure to contain the nuclear disaster by preparing for the worst case scenario.

I also demand that the government and TEPCO swiftly pay the victims compensation for all the costs incurred due to the nuclear plant accident in addition to doing the utmost to protect people’s health and lives from radioactive contamination.

Public opinion regarding nuclear power generation has dramatically changed. As the seriousness of the damage has become known, opinion polls show that 70-80% of respondents are in favor of the reduction or abolition of nuclear power plants. The nuclear “safety myth” has completely collapsed. The more the “political lies” regarding NPPs are exposed, the more eager people become to know the truth. This situation has led to renewed attention to the JCP position that has long been warning about the dangers associated with NPPs.

A recently published booklet titled “Think about Nuclear Power Plant Disaster through Scientific Eyes” written by JCP Social and Sciences Institute Director Fuwa Tetsuzo is getting good reception. It is based on his lecture on the topic that is a part of the ongoing lecture series on the JCP Program and scientific socialism organized by our Central Committee.

I brought along a copy of the journal of the Hyogo Medical Association. It reports on the board meeting held on June 1 which includes a statement by the Association President Dr. Kawashima Ryuichi. He began by saying, “Although I’m not a JCP member,” and talked at length about what he learned from the booklet by Fuwa Tetsuzo. His accurate and detailed introduction of the booklet

took up two thirds of his entire statement. He must have read it thoroughly. He concluded his remarks by saying, “Our association as a whole should fundamentally rethink the question of nuclear power generation.” Later at the general assembly of the lobby group of Hyogo doctors, Kawashima also said, “One opposition party has consistently been opposed to nuclear power generation. We did not listen to this party’s opinion at all because of our ideological differences. Reflecting on that, I’d now like to have a relationship with all the parties across the board and present them with our opinion on medical issues.”

They hardly had anything to do with the JCP before. But now that the nuclear “safety myth” has collapsed, they have found the JCP’s argument to be sound. This is another example of a convergence of views between various sectors of society and the JCP.

Public pressure begins moving politics – on the question of resumption of off-line reactors and manipulation of public opinions

Public pressure is now beginning to move politics in a new direction.

In May, Chubu Electric Power Company’s Hamaoka nuclear power plant suspended its operation. The plant is precariously located just above the assumed focal region of a major Tokai Earthquake. What brought it to a halt? It was not Prime Minister Kan’s decision. It was due to pressure from a local citizens’ movement consistently opposing the NPP since its construction plan was announced in 1967. This temporary suspension is a step forward to achieving total victory. We have to proceed to get this plant permanently shut down. I renewed this conviction when I attended a rally held in Shizuoka City the other day where 5,000 people were gathered demanding the decommissioning of the Hamaoka NPP.

If the Hamaoka NPP is extremely dangerous, how about other NPPs? There is a grave concern on whether or not to allow the resumption of nuclear reactors temporarily suspended due to regular inspections. The government hastily announced that it is safe to resume operation of those NPPs and requested power companies to resume operations of those reactors after taking makeshift “safety” measures. These so-called “safety” measures were simply absurd. I will give you one example. In order to prevent hydrogen explosions, they now prepare electric drills to make openings in the walls of reactor buildings. But who on earth could climb up and drill a hole in a reactor building which is about to blow up after a meltdown of its reactor core?

After their “safety declaration” was exposed to be useless, the government began talking about a “stress test” as an additional safety check. But who is conducting this test? None other than the power companies, the Nuclear and Industrial Safety

Agency (NISA), and the Nuclear Safety Commission. However, these three entities are already proven to be unqualified and indeed incompetent because it was they that caused the accident at Fukushima in the first place and it was they that are unable to stabilize the situation. They should rather be tested themselves than conducting the test, shouldn't they? We should not allow such an irresponsible rush to the resumption of the suspended NPPs.

Moreover, another scandal recently came to surface. Kyushu Electric Power Corporation (Kyuden) was caught using dirty tricks to prepare for a government TV program broadcast live regarding the on resumption of the Genkai NPP operated by Kyuden. Kyuden sent e-mails that asked its employees and others to send to the program via e-mail opinions in favor of the resumption of operations at the NPP. This instruction was even attached with a set of example comments like this: "If electricity is in short supply, I really fear having a 'heat stroke' in the summer. Victims are always children and elderly people..." It was hypocritical and contemptible for the power company to pretend to be on the side of the weak.

An employee of Kyuden's associated company was so indignant at this e-mail messaging scheme that he informed the JCP Fukuoka Prefectural Committee of the action. The Akahata newspaper then made an exclusive report on this after careful confirmation of the facts. Other media also received similar information, but they refrained from reporting it in the face of Kyuden's denial. Following the Akahata report, JCP Dietmember Kasai Akira took up the issue at a Diet session. Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry Kaieda Banri said to Kasai, "If true, it is not permissible." On that night, Kyuden held a press conference and admitted to having e-mails sent in order to manipulate public opinion. We were able block resumption of the Genkai NPP from the grassroots up all the way to sitting Diet members working in tandem, the JCP strength in moving politics in the interest of the people.

More instances of public opinion manipulation are now being disclosed. Next in line was the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency (NISA) that was caught. It had requested Chubu and Shikoku Electric Power Companies to organize people to express pro-NPP opinions at government symposiums. It is abhorrent for the NISA, supposedly an organization that regulates the nuclear energy administration, to have asked the nuclear power operators to become involved in manipulation of public opinion. The undeniably corrupt NISA should be abolished at once. An independent nuclear watchdog agency should be immediately set up outside of the nuclear power promoting Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI). This is an urgent need that must be met.

They are no longer able to convince local residents about the "safety" of NPPs, so they have to resort to underhanded manipulation. This itself is an testimony to how dangerous nuclear power plants really are.

We should be proud of the fact that public pressure and the JCP activities drove the government and power companies into a corner. Let us further strengthen our struggle.

What is the nature of NPPs' danger – Now is the Time for shutting down all the NPPs in Japan

“JCP Policy Proposal” shows way to immediately break with nuclear power

The Fukushima nuclear meltdown disaster posed an important question: Can we co-exist with the Nuclear Power Plants? To answer this question, the JCP published the “JCP Policy Proposal for an Immediate Break with Nuclear Power and Toward All-out Promotion of Renewable Energy - Need for national discussion to build consensus.” It reexamined the intrinsic nature of the danger of NPPs, clearly and concisely presenting reasons for getting rid of nuclear power plants.

First, nuclear power plant accidents pose hazards of an extraordinary nature not like other types of man-made disasters. Once a serious accident occurs at a nuclear power plant and radioactive material is released into the environment, there is no technological means to stop it from spreading.

The damage spreads geographically without limit. Radioactive contamination has resulted in serious contamination in many parts of Japan.

As for the duration of effects, radioactive contamination lasts for generations. Especially, the most serious concern is about the effect on children's health. We demand the government take every possible measure to protect the lives and health of younger generations.

As for social consequences, the nuclear accident has put local communities in peril. I visited three municipalities in Fukushima Prefecture after the accident – Kawamata Town, Iitate Village, and Minami-Soma City. With flowers blooming and hills covered with green, I found it to be an area of spectacular natural beauty. I can only imagine the sorrow and anger of the local people who were forced to evacuate the area because of radioactive clouds coming over the horizon.

There are no other accidents as dangerous as ones at nuclear plants. After the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Plant was destroyed, former Premier Nakasone Yasuhiro said “Even an airplane sometimes crashes.” Of course, plane crashes should never happen. But nobody asks for eliminating airplanes only because they might crash. NPPs accidents are totally different from car accidents or plane crashes. They are hazardous in such an extraordinary and incomparable

way that the total shutdown of all NPPs is the only way to avoid such possibilities.

Second, what is the root cause of this extraordinary danger? It is because the present state of nuclear power generation is based on intrinsically flawed and hazardous technology.

NPPs, whether existing or under development, are dangerous because they produce massive amount of radioactive “wastes” in the process of extracting nuclear energy. We, human beings, do not have any means available to contain these deadly wastes nor to render them harmless. We have tried to keep them isolated. But we have failed in such attempts, as demonstrated in the Three Mile Island, the Chernobyl, and the Fukushima accidents.

For the deadly wastes to become non-toxic, we have to wait as long as one million years! One million years before us, even *Homo erectus pekinensis* had not appeared on the earth. It is ludicrous to think that we can store those nuclear wastes safely for a million years to come. It is reported that an international nuclear waste dump is planned in Mongolia by Japan and the United States. This project is unconscionable. I want to emphasize that developed countries should never force the dangers of their nuclear wastes onto the shoulders of the future generations in developing countries.

These are the root dangers associated with NPPs. There is no such thing as a *safe* NPP. There’s only one way to make NPPs safe: abolish them.

Third, based on these observations, the JCP proposal calls for the immediate shutdown of all the NPPs and a full scale introduction of renewable energy at the same time. Renewable energy generation in Japan has great potential. The Ministry of Environment estimates the amount of renewable energy which we can utilize on a practical basis is 40 times more than the presently installed capacity of all the NPPs in Japan.

The other day, I had a chance to speak at the foreign correspondents’ club on this subject. During the question and answer session, some reporters told me that they agreed with our proposal.

Concluding the press conference, the moderator made this remark: “Thank you for elaborating the JCP’s policy. He told us that the renewable energy potential was 40 times larger than the capacity of the NPPs. This fact sticks in the mind. Please come again after you successfully shut down all the NPPs. We, the members of the club, are eager to hear from you about how you accomplished this task.”

I am really looking forward to talking about that achievement as soon as possible.

Let us unite in our efforts to create a NPP-free Japan through national discussions and consensus-building.

Government hid from public a terrifying damage estimate

Then, does the government have prior knowledge about the “extraordinary hazard” of a NPP accident?

The answer is “yes.” In 1960, the government conducted a damage estimate for a simulated severe accident at a nuclear reactor at Tokai Village in Ibaraki Prefecture with a 500,000 kilowatts of core thermal power (one third of which is electrical output). I brought it with me today. It is a thick, 244-page report entitled “The theoretical possibility and the public damage estimate of a large-scale reactor accident” (written by the Atomic Industrial Forum at the request of the Science and Technology Agency). The conclusion was dreadful.

At the end of the report was attached a table of the possible human carnage. Hundreds of deaths, thousands of injuries and 4 million people who would need medical follow-ups! The cost assessment of the damage was estimated to be twice the national budget at that time, running up to 3 trillion 730 billion yen. This is the only damage estimate ever conducted by the government concerning a serious nuclear reactor accident.

The government was so frightened by this devastatingly incriminating study that they swept it under the carpet. Only a portion of it was reported to the Diet and the general public was not informed of the damage estimate itself. Nineteen years later, the report was unearthed by the JCP. On April 9, 1979, AKAHATA ran a scoop on the report, but the government continued to deny that there had ever been any damage estimates conducted. In 1999, 20 year later, the government finally admitted that the report actually existed.

If the government had disclosed the study honestly in 1960, the number of nuclear reactors built could not have increased to 54. The successive governments were guilty on many counts. They concealed the frightening damage estimate from the public. They continued to spew out the nuclear “safety myth” to lull the public into accepting the NPPs. We have to eliminate the NPPs that have been built with the use of cover-ups, lies and false assumptions.

JCP’s 50 year struggle against hazardous NPPs

From earliest stage, JCP warns of NPPs’ danger and fights together with opponents

Let me touch on the 50 year struggle of the Japanese Communist Party against the

NPPs' inherent danger.

In December, 1953, U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower made an "Atoms for Peace" speech in the United Nations, calling for peaceful uses of atomic energy. His grand strategy was that by supplying enriched uranium worldwide to selected nations, the U.S. would be able to control the global nuclear industry. Japan was one of the targets of this strategy.

In 1955, Japan and the U.S. concluded the first agreement on nuclear cooperation. After the Atomic Energy Basic Act was enacted, Mr. Shoriki Matsutaro was appointed as the first chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. He was the person who had cracked down on relief activities in the aftermath of the Great Kanto Earthquake. In the Diet, only the JCP, which at that time formed a parliamentary group with the Labor and Peasant Party opposed the act, while the LDP and the Socialist Party supported it.

In the 1950s, immediately after the Basic Act came into force, projects were started to build a research reactor in the Kansai area and a commercial reactor in Tokai Village in Ibaraki Prefecture. In both projects, residents stood up in opposition. The JCP was at the forefront of these protests, located in the eastern and the western parts of Japan.

Taking these experiences into account, the Party adopted a Resolution on the Atomic Energy Question at the Central Committee Plenum in July 1961, which was held shortly before the Party program was adopted. It clearly stated as follows: "Given the present phase of development in technology and energy generation potential, there is no need to build high risk nuclear power plants in Japan. We demand that the construction of the Tokai Nuclear Power Plant be stopped."

The JCP warned about NPPs' danger from the very beginning of their introduction to Japan, waging joint struggles with residents to nearby plants.

Plan to build total 100 million kW NPPs halved due to public opposition

Since the 1960s, power companies disclosed their plans to build NPPs one after another. The Party opposed every proposed NPP project, helping to organize movements with local people. In Diet debates, we exposed the false myth regarding the safety of NPPs, pointing out their danger and accusing the government of inadequate regulation and lax supervision.

It was the grass-root struggles and the Diet deliberations that prevented the government and the power companies from building the number of nuclear power plants originally planned.

To the present, 54 reactors at 17 NPPs have been built with a total generating capacity of 48 million kilowatts, which accounts for one quarter of all the electrical power generation in Japan. All 17 NPPs, however, were either planned by power corporations or invited by local governments before the 1960s or during the 1960s. Ever since 1970, no planned NPPs have been able to commence operations.

Looking back at the history of struggles jointly fought by local residents and the JCP, there were numerous cases in which we foiled the NPP construction plans. Now, I will read out the names of those 25 localities where planned construction was halted. Some of the names of the localities may have disappeared because of mergers and annexations of municipalities:

Maki Town in Niigata Prefecture; Suzu City in Ishikawa Prefecture; Obama City and Sanrihama beach of Kawanishi Town, both in Fukui Prefecture; Kumihama Town, Maizuru City, and Miyazu City, in Kyoto Prefecture; Mitsu Town and Kasumi Town in Hyogo Prefecture; Ashihama beach cutting across Kisei and Nanto Towns in Mie Prefecture, Jonohama beach of Kiinagashima Town, Ojirohama beach of Miyama Town, Ichiura bay of Kumano City, also in Mie Prefecture; three towns of Hikigawa, Hidaka, and Koza in Wakayama Prefecture; Kakui Island of Hinase Town in Okayama Prefecture; Hohoku Town and Hagi City in Yamaguchi Prefecture; Kainan Town and Anan City in Tokushima Prefecture; Tsushima Town in Ehime Prefecture; the towns of Kubokawa and Saga in Kochi Prefecture; and Kushima City in Miyazaki Prefecture.

In all these municipalities, we helped quash attempts to construct NPPs with the power of citizens united that were expressed in referendums or mayoral elections.

The government and power corporations had planned to build scores of NPPs. In 1972, the government drew up a long term plan to increase output of nuclear power generation to “100 million kilowatts” from 1.82 million kilowatts being produced at that time. If this appalling ambition had materialized, one half of Japan’s electricity generation would have been supplied by nuclear power plants. Such a serious addiction to nuclear power generation would have caused irreparable damage to Japan’s healthy and safe development.

Peoples’ movements along with the JCP’s struggles, however, cut back on the planned aggressive build-up of NPPs to about 48 million kilowatts, less than half of the level they originally planned to reach. We feel proud of this achievement of our grass-root struggles.

People continued to oppose NPPs even after their installation

Even in the areas where the NPPs were forcibly installed, people living there

continued to engage in spirited opposition to their hazardous existence.

In regard to the Fukushima NPPs, there has been a protracted struggle opposing them by local residents and the JCP.

The other day, Mr. Sato Noriyasu, chairman of the Fukushima Prefectural Assembly, came to the JCP offices during his lobbying activities while in Tokyo. He said to me:

“I still remember what Ms. Miyakawa Emiko (JCP member of the prefectural assembly) said at the consultative meeting of the prefectural assembly members on energy policy. She said, ‘The Fukushima NPPs have taken no preventive measures against possible earthquakes or tsunami. What might occur if they cause NPP accidents?’ If we had taken her remark seriously last year, the ongoing crisis could possibly have been averted. I regret our refusal to heed her warning. The Fukushima Prefectural Assembly has now agreed to move toward the shutdown of all the NPPs. We have been responsible for cooperating with the NPPs in the past, so we felt morally obliged to take actions to rectify our past misjudgments.”

I told him that I was really impressed by his attitude of remorse and moral indignation.

It was of course unfortunate that such a serious accident occurred at the Fukushima Dai-ichi NPP. However, our activities that constantly warned of the NPPs’ dangers were not in vain. Rather, they are playing a part in helping to induce much needed changes.

The JCP is the only party that has been consistently opposed to the dangerous NPPs, working with local residents for more than half a century. Our policy proposal on total withdrawal from nuclear power generation is based on these struggles. On this occasion, I salute all those who have waged grass-root struggles to protect people’s lives and health against the continued presence of NPPs.

Struggle to rectify political distortion and change our society

‘NPP community of interest’ — ‘Pentagon in Nuclear Village’

Why does Japan, one of the world’s most earthquake- and tsunami-prone countries, have so many NPPs across the nation? This is because of two aberrations that distort the very structure of Japanese politics.

First, nuclear power generation has been promoted by a group unified by greed, the so-called “NPP community of interest,” in which Nippon Keidanren is deeply immersed.

The very construction of a nuclear plant is a huge project, which costs as much as 500 billion yen per reactor. Among those who benefit from this are large corporations consisting of financial institutions, electric power corporations, nuclear reactor manufacturers, major construction firms, steel and cement manufacturers, and big banks. These corporations and financial circles make donations to political parties and politicians, turning them into proponents of nuclear power generation. This group has a cozy relationship with privileged top government bureaucrats. Those monied interests put bureaucrats under their thumb, and those bureaucrats are rehired by the electricity generating companies after retirement, receiving a tremendous amount in remuneration. The large corporations have also made substantial donations to research programs in some of the most prestigious universities to create opportunistic scholars who will support these corporations whatever they do. Even after the Fukushima nuclear accident occurred, these scholars appeared on TV repeatedly making irresponsible comments such as “We believe that there will be no immediate health risk,” and “We consider that the soundness of the reactor containment vessels is maintained.” And these electric companies got the mainstream media to support their views with large amounts paid for advertisements, winning them over to the corrupt and immoral “community of interest.”

The “NPP community of interest” created a tight-knit society called the “nuclear village” which excludes any dissenting voices. It has profited greatly from the promotion of nuclear power plants, while manufacturing the nuclear “safety myth” to deceive the general public. When I talked at the Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Japan, I referred to it as the “Pentagon of the nuclear village.” A pentagon has five angles. This translates into a group of five, consisting of the financial circle, politicians, bureaucrats, opportunist scholars, and the major media. This is why a pentagon-shaped design is used on the cover of our booklet titled, “Japan without NPPs.”

I strongly demand that the members of the “community,” who have deceived the general public and made a vast amount of profits deeply reflect on their past wrongdoings. They must then take joint responsibility for the nuclear disaster, and fulfill their collective obligation to pay for damages and provide full compensation to those individuals and localities that have been adversely affected by the nuclear disaster.

Serious reflection is called for by all the major newspapers bought out with ‘NPP money’

What I think we must consider is the fact that the major media corporations are an integral part of this interest group.

Here is a copy of a memoir written by Suzuki Tatsuru, former publicity department director at the Federation of Electric Power Companies of Japan (FEPC), consisting of 10 electric companies. Its title is “New challenge for power industry—beyond a turbulent decade” (Nihon Kogyo Shinbunsha, 1983). Based on his own experience, Suzuki is forthright about how, in the 1970s, the electric power industry bought out major newspapers one after another through providing huge amount for advertising fees to promote nuclear power.

This started with the Asahi Shimbun. From August 1974, the electric power industry started running a monthly ten-column (2/3 page) advertisement in the Asahi newspaper to promote nuclear power generation.

“Soon after, the Yomiuri Shimbun came rushing over to me,” writes Suzuki. According to him, the public relation officer of the Yomiuri Shimbun insisted, “Nuclear power generation was introduced by our late President, Shoriki Matsutaro. With our rival Asahi exclusively carrying the ads, we are losing face.” Then, the FEPC started to place its ads in the Yomiuri Shimbun as well.

Following the lead of the two major papers, “The Mainichi Shimbun also hastened to join in,” says Suzuki. At that time, the Mainichi, the third largest circulation newspaper in Japan, was running a series of articles opposing NPPs. So Suzuki made a cutting retort to a representative from the Mainichi: “Your company is campaigning against nuclear power generation. You are free to do that. If you think you are opposing (nuclear energy) for the benefit of society, go ahead and stick to your position. You shouldn’t care about a petty thing like revenues from advertisements.” After Mainichi agreed to “report cautiously” on nuclear power plants issues, the FEPC began to place its ads in it as well.

Thus, “NPP money” was used to corrupt all the major newspapers.

When I spoke about this at the Foreign Correspondents’ Club, foreign journalists were very interested in this historical overview. The first question to me was, “Why did the electric power industry first target to the Asahi Shimbun to be an ally? We thought it was considered a liberal newspaper.” I responded by saying that I believe their large advertisements were first placed in the Asahi precisely because it was widely regarded as liberal.

Today I brought copies of some advertisements for NPPs carried by the major newspapers at the time. This ad appeared in the Asahi Shimbun on August 27, 1975. As you can see, it's a big 10-column ad. Its headline reads, "Why don't nuclear reactors explode?" The text reads like this: "A nuclear reactor is fundamentally different from an atomic bomb. A nuclear reactor is so securely designed that its safety measures are even said to be excessive. Even if the entire reactor control system stopped working, a serious accident could never happen."

After carrying such ads, the Asahi started its own campaign to promote nuclear power generation. The paper ran a pro-nuclear power serial in 48 installments entitled, "Nuclear fuel—from exploration to waste disposal," and the serial was later compiled into a book with the same title (by Okuma Yukiko and the Science Department of the Asahi Simbun, 1977). The book repeats the nuclear "safety myth" ad nauseam, which I found sickening to read.

Since the Fukushima accident, some of the major newspapers began to report on the dangers of nuclear power plant to some extent. There is nothing bad about that in itself. However, they also need to seriously reflect on their past deeds of complicity. These papers should stop ignoring rallies against NPPs such as one that was attended by 20,000 people in Tokyo and another with 5,000 participants in Shizuoka. If media expect to gain the public trust, they must report facts fairly and accurately.

End Japan's subservience to the U.S. - Enriched uranium and reactors from U.S. are basis of Japan's dependence on nuclear power generation

The second aberration of the structure of Japanese politics related to NPPs is that Japan's nuclear energy policy has been subservient to that of the U.S. It is not the Japanese people that have determined the policy. The U.S. used the carrot of enriched uranium, the fuel essential to power a nuclear reactor, as a tool of influence.

The governments of Japan and the United States concluded the first agreement on civil nuclear research in 1955. Under the agreement, the U.S. first gave Japan six kilograms of enriched uranium. And then in order to burn the fuel, Japan imported a research reactor made in U.S.A. Japan's initiation into the realm of nuclear research was in effect putting the cart before the horse, unlike other countries that entered this realm.

The next agreement on civil nuclear cooperation between Japan and the U.S. was signed in 1958 and Japan received 2.7 tons of enriched uranium. Coupled with this, Japan imported an experimental reactor from the U.S.

Then in 1968, the Japan-U.S. Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement was revised. Under the new agreement, the U.S. provided Japan with a massive 154 tons of enriched uranium. This was followed by the fierce competition over contracts for nuclear reactor procurement by Japan between the two major U.S. nuclear reactor manufacturers, General Electric (GE) and Westinghouse Electric (WH). To the present day, the agreement has been revised several times and at present 73 % of the enriched uranium used in Japan's NPPs comes from the U.S.

Nuclear reactors in Japan are just carbon copies of those in the U.S., and are not reactors developed by ourselves. For example, reactor 1 at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant was built exactly as GE had originally designed. And this brought about farcical but serious consequences. Reactor 1 had its backup power generator built underground as it would be in the U.S., the place most vulnerable to tsunami. How could this kind of stupidity be allowed? In the U.S., the greatest natural threats are posed by hurricanes and tornados, therefore underground is the safest place to build emergency power sources. Reproducing the U.S. designed nuclear reactor lead to this terrible disaster we are now experiencing.

Nuclear reactors build later were also based on U.S. technology. Therefore, Japanese nuclear operators cannot manage serious accidents on their own. They need U.S. technical support. Among the countries with major nuclear power generation, Japan is the only country depending on reactors copied from another country without having developed its own.

Japan relies on the United States for enriched uranium as well as nuclear reactors, with no technical expertise to deal with accidents. We must get rid of such dependence on U.S. energy policy and make full use of domestically produced natural energy.

With a vision for a society where people can live a decent life

The effort to totally break with nuclear power is also a struggle to demolish the "NPP community of interest" and to establish an "economy with rules" which protects the lives and livelihoods of the general public. It is also part of a struggle to shed Japan's dependence on U.S. energy policy. In fact, this is a struggle to change the shape of Japanese society and overcome the "two political aberrations" by which Japan always acts at the U.S. beck and call and in the interests of large corporations.

We envisage that through the full-scale introduction of natural and renewable energy sources and the shift to a low-energy consumption society, we can establish a society where everybody can live a safe and humane life and every worker is guaranteed decent working conditions.

Friends, with this long-term vision, let us forge a national consensus on the single goal of totally breaking away from nuclear power generation.

Eve of historic changes in politics: Join us in the JCP

The move toward a two-party system falters and t public perceptions are changing

I have talked at length about the “changes in values and social assumptions among the people and the JCP.” Lastly, I would like to examine these changes in a larger political context.

The large scale attempts to create a “two-party political system” started in 2003 and was led by the business circles. It has been the most powerful anti-communist campaign to limit the public choice to either the LDP or the DPJ with the intent to exclude the JCP as an option. This created adverse conditions for the JCP, including difficulties in winning in various elections.

When was the peak of this campaign? It was at the time when the much awaited change of government took place in the general election held in August 2009. However, as soon as the tail wind for this campaign reached its maximum velocity, the move towards establishing a robust two-party system came to a serious deadlock.

The public had placed hopes on the new government to change away from the old style of LDP politics. But the reality was different than expected. The DPJ government steadily went back to the same old LDP politics - from relocating the Futenma Air Station in Okinawa and imposing a consumption tax increase to participation in the TPP negotiations. Look at what is happening in the Diet sessions. The people are completely turned off by the partisan squabbles between the DPJ and the LDP. They are increasingly filled with despair and anger.

This backhanded anti-JCP campaign revealed its true characters within two years, much faster than the ruling circles had anticipated. The general public is searching for a new and different direction in politics and is beginning to rediscover the relevance of the JCP in various fields in spite of the ruling circles' efforts to remove the JCP from people's options.

The great earthquake and tsunami on March 11 and the nuclear disaster following that are still causing untold suffering to many people. At the same time, this crisis has also marked a major turning point in accelerating the emerging changes in public perception. We see far-reaching changes going on in people's views on politics and society and in their values. There is more common ground between public perception and the JCP's and greater cooperation in various fields.

Why doesn't the world of Japan's politics change even if there is a change of government? It is because there are two aberrations in the world of Japanese politics, subservience to both the United States and to Japan's business circles. If the public can understand this, and see prospects for breaking the present gridlock, Japan's politics will experience a sea change. We are on the eve of witnessing historic changes. With this perspective in mind, let us make every effort to bring forth a transformation at the structural level.

Profound changes among workers in the big private companies

In addition, among workers in the big private corporations, profound changes are also taking place. Let me relate two recent episodes that illustrate this.

A JCP member who had persevered in the face of anti-communist discrimination at a big company for a long time was approaching his retirement age. One day, his boss asked him to make a farewell speech if he liked. He then spoke boldly about his political beliefs and the way he had lived:

“In the face of tough discrimination under the anti-communist labor management here, I have never compromised my political conviction during the last 41 years. I have never received due promotions or substantial pay raises, but I have lived with a clear conscience. I have lived up to my ideals. As a parent, I am a happy man because I have had nothing to be ashamed of before my children throughout my life.” From the next day, more people at the workplace greeted him. Then, his boss requested him to stay on at his job. He explained the reason, saying, “There's no end to people who suffer mental illnesses. I want you to look around and talk to those who look like they may be experiencing emotional turmoil. Take care of them so that they won't have to suffer from mental illnesses.” Even his boss had rediscovered the value of the JCP member with strong principles.

Another episode is about an annual event to award the “employee of the year” honors held at another private company. This year, the management conducted an internal vote to choose an employee who was thought to be the best while doing a thankless task. Believe it or not, a JCP member who had waged uncompromising struggles as a member of the militant first union came in as the unrivalled first. The management gave him a gift of money. He said, “I have been discriminated against and excluded on a number of occasions, but I have always tried my best to get my job done efficiently and flawlessly. I did not hesitate to talk with workers from a pro-management second union when they came to me for advice.”

Friends, the JCP member in the big private corporations have been working under adverse conditions of discrimination and exclusion. But their co-workers have come to respect them for their sincere attitudes toward work assignments and for

their ways of living up to their ideals. Even the management counts on them for their compassion for co-workers and their recognized capacity to save colleagues from mental turmoil. We can see marked changes taking place even deep inside of large corporations.

For a new Japan beyond the crisis—Let us work together to meet this challenge

This is my last appeal to you.

We are witnessing deep-rooted changes appearing among wide sections of society. These are positive changes in the right direction, but won't automatically lead to a progressive transformation of Japanese society. Only with the JCP getting bigger and stronger will such a transformation at the structural level come to fruition. I just talked about being at the "eve of historic transformation." Morning dawns even if you are sleeping, but a new society does not dawn unless we work together.

Please join us in the JCP struggles, if you feel that what I had to say today was reasonable.

And please subscribe to the Akahata newspaper, the newspaper famous for its series of scoops based on true investigative reporting. A foreign reporter asked me at the Foreign Correspondents' Club what was the secret behind the Akahata scoops. My answer was that the Akahata could obtain hidden information because it had the trust of the people at the grass roots level.

Friends, JCP members' lives are not judged by worldly promotions and successes. Being a member has nothing to do with moneymaking. On the contrary, we have to ask you to pay fees according to your capacity. But if you stand firm on your political belief and conscience without yielding to unjust oppression, you would be living a life worthy of humanity experiencing the true happiness of life. I give you my word on that.

Japan is experiencing a critical situation following the earthquake and the nuclear power plant disaster. But if we join hands in overcoming the crisis, we can certainly arrive at a new Japan. In concluding my speech, I would like to call on all of you to work together as members of the JCP to rise to this challenge.

Viva, the 89th anniversary of the founding of the JCP!

Akahata, August 3, 2011