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SEND AGAYA 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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Resolution of the Japanese Communist Party 24th Congress

Adopted on January 14, 2006

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Resolution of the Japanese Communist Party 24th Congress

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I. Aberrant LDP Government Policies vs. Policies for Remaking Japan

(1) For achieving a change in aberrant policies without parallel in the world

The crisis facing LDP policies is more serious than ever, in both foreign and domestic policies. Many Japanese are unable to have confidence in their present and future living conditions, and this gives them anxiety and stress. With Japan's relations with its Asian neighbors deteriorating, Japanese diplomacy is now experiencing the most serious stalemate since the end of World War II. Underlying all this are three aberrations in LDP government policies that are rare in other capitalist countries:

- Justifying the past war of aggression
- Always acting at the U.S. beck and call
- Always acting in the interests of large corporations

Although these anomalies have persisted in the postwar LDP policies, the Koizumi Cabinet in the last four years and nine months has carried them to the extreme, putting the future of our country in the 21st century in peril.

In the recent general election, the LDP led by Koizumi focused its campaign on the issue of postal reform, diverting attention away from its own failure and misgovernment, a tactic to deceive the public in order to salvage itself from the crisis. With the all-out backing of the business and financial circles as well as the media, this tactic helped boost popular support for the LDP, which gave the LDP and Komei Party coalition a majority of seats in the House of Representatives.

This may give the LDP a respite from its present difficulty, but it will not help solve contradictions between aberrant LDP politics and the public interest or between the LDP government policies and the world trend toward peace. If their lies and tricks are exposed, a major political cataclysm will inevitably follow.

In order to break the impasse which Japanese politics is experiencing today, a radical surgery to remove the three anomalies needs to be carried out. The situation in Japan today is passing a historic period that acutely calls for a new politics replacing the outdated political framework. The new JCP Party Program and the policies for remaking Japan adopted at the JCP 23rd Congress shows the way to achieve this.

(2) Urgent need to break away from the aberrant view justifying the past war of aggression

First, a major step is needed to break away from the present position that justifies the past war of aggression.

(i) The past several years have witnessed a rise of forces trying to falsify history by arguing that "Japan's past war was a just war." These circumstances gave rise to two serious adverse currents: Prime Minister Koizumi's visit to Yasukuni Shrine and the approval of a history textbook designed to indoctrinate children with the idea of glorification of the Japanese war of aggression.

Throughout the postwar period, the LDP has never shown atonement for Japan's past war of aggression. It is particularly serious that 60 years after WWII, moves publicly seeking to "rehabilitate" the Japanese war of aggression are emerging.

In this situation, JCP Central Committee Chair Fuwa Tetsuzo on May 12, 2005 gave a speech entitled "Breaking Japan's Diplomatic Stalemate." The JCP put up a campaign to get to the bottom of the issue by running a series of articles in Akahata and raising the issue in parliamentary questionings.

Taking issue with Yasukuni Shrine's view on history and war, in particular its view of justifying the past Japanese war as a war that was necessary for Japan's "survival and self-defense" and for the "liberation of Asia," the JCP has made clear the main issue: how in the present-day world can the Japanese government be permitted to endorse such a distorted view of history?

This argument by the JCP drew favorable responses from within and outside of the country. One journalist said that the JCP's view "has brought Yasukuni's view of history to the dock." Many people came to realize what this question is all about, and criticism arose internationally as well. Criticisms were directed at Yasukuni Shrine's view of history. The Yushukan museum on the compounds of the shrine, which exhibits various items for the purpose of praising the war of aggression, has come to be well-known throughout the world.

(ii) Despite growing criticism at home and internationally, Prime Minister Koizumi has visited Yasukuni Shrine for five years in a row. In answer to a question by a JCP representative in the Diet, he stated, "The government has different views from Yasukuni Shrine's." In light of his statement, his continuous Yasukuni visits are inexplicable and irrational.

The present danger is that the Prime Minister's visits to Yasukuni Shrine will be established as Japan's national policy. If this happens, it will cause immeasurable damage to Japan's national interests.

The question affects not only Japan's relations with China, South Korea, and other Asian countries but Japan's relations with the world. The present international order was established after WWII and stands on the common understanding that the war waged by Japan, Germany, and Italy was a criminal war of aggression. It was built based on the world's resolve that no such war must be allowed to be repeated. To deny this recognition means a rejection of the existing world order.

In fact, the prime minister's Yasukuni Shrine visits have faced severe criticism not only from governments and media of China, South Korea, and other Asian countries, but from media in Europe and the U.S.

U.S. President Bush, in his speech marking the 60th anniversary of the victory over

Japan, severely criticized the argument that justifies the war of aggression as a "war for liberating Asia." The U.S. House of Representatives resolution on the 60th anniversary of the end of WWII reconfirmed that the past Japanese war was a crime. The chairperson of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on International Relations sent a letter to the Japanese ambassador to the United States expressing "regrets" about the Japanese prime minister's Yasukuni visits. Thus, the U.S. government and Congress gave attention to Yasukuni's view of history existing in Japan today and expressed their deep concerns about it.

A series of important international conferences were held between November and December 2005: the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) plus three (ASEAN+Japan, China, and South Korea) summit, and the East Asian summit took place, and Japan's isolation further deepened.

We strongly warn that if the Japanese government continues to take actions to give their endorsement to the "Yasukuni vision of history," Japan's diplomatic stalemate and isolation will become even more serious.

(iii) In the new JCP Program adopted at the JCP 23rd Congress, "Part One" on "Prewar Japanese Society and the JCP" is given to a concise description of the Japanese war of aggression, including its character, origins and escalation, and Japan's defeat, as well as calamities caused during the war. The JCP Program begins with a review of the issues of the prewar days, which we deem essential for understanding the present situation and the party's role. The recent developments of the situation keenly show how important this definition is.

At the beginning of the section outlining the policy for a "new Japanese peace diplomacy" in "Part Four: 'Democratic Revolution and Democratic Coalition Government'," the new JCP Program states the party will "attach importance to promoting friendship and exchanges with Asian countries on the premise that Japan expresses remorse for its war of aggression and colonization in the past."

The task now is to break with the aberrant politics that justifies the past war of aggression and achieve a drastic policy change without waiting for the establishment of a democratic government.

History cannot be made over or repainted. It is, however, possible to stand up to historical facts. If Japan is to be trusted by the people of Asia and the rest of the world, it must squarely stand up to the country's past errors and express remorse for its wartime past, not only by words but by deed. In order for the Japanese government to change its policy, each Japanese citizen should address this question seriously so that there will be a national consensus to reject arguments glorifying war in disregard of historical facts.

As a political party that has firmly stood for pacifism since its founding in the prewar days, the JCP will do its utmost to eliminate the root cause of the adverse current that distorts history.

(3) Remaking of Japan to correct the aberrant politics subservient to the U.S. and build an independent and peaceful nation

Second, the task of remaking Japan based on independence and pacifism by ending its extraordinary subservience to the United States is important.

The new JCP Program defines the present state of Japan as a nation being in an

extremely abnormal state of subordination to the U.S., and proposes putting an end to this state of affairs as the most important task for changing the present political system. Under the Koizumi government, this anomaly has been further exacerbated.

(i) The Japan-U.S. military alliance setup is transforming itself into a global alliance for aggression, going beyond the framework of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.

This is confirmed by three pieces of legislation enacted during the last several years for the purpose of dispatching Japanese Self-Defense Force units abroad. They are the 1999 "Law for Measures to Deal with Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan" (the law to implement the "Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation"), the 2001 "Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law," and the 2003 "Law Concerning Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq." Under these laws, Self-Defense Force units have been deployed in the Indian Ocean and Iraq in defiance of strong public opposition. The common thread that runs through these three laws is the establishment of a path leading to a globalized Japan-U.S. military cooperation that goes beyond the framework of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, the framework that provides that Japan and the United States will carry out joint actions in the event of emergencies in Japan and in the event of emergencies in the Far East affecting Japan.

The government explains that such military cooperation with the United States is for the sake of the "Japan-U.S. alliance." But any military alliance is structured on treaty arrangements regarding rights and obligations. If Japan unconditionally cooperates with U.S. wars for the sake of the bilateral alliance, Japan cannot be regarded as a sovereign nation because of its extraordinary subservience to a foreign power.

The U.S. military transformation and realignment, which the U.S. Bush administration is now promoting on a global scale, is aimed at i) transforming U.S. forces into forces with greater mobility that can be rapidly deployed anywhere in the world to wage preemptive wars, and ii) developing a full-fledged military cooperation system with its allies in order to engage in preemptive wars.

The strengthening of the "Japan-U.S. military alliance" is of the center of the U.S. military global realignment scheme, and Japan takes an abnormally obedient attitude toward the United States.

The joint statements issued in February and October 2005 by the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (Two plus Two) set out a major policy of expanding the Japan-U.S. alliance into a global one in the name of a "transformation and realignment" of the bilateral alliance.

— The documents set forth the "common strategic objective in the world" that includes countering international terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. This means that Japan will cooperate militarily with the United States in the "common strategic objective" in the event of a preemptive war anywhere in the world, as it has done in Afghanistan and in Iraq. As their common strategic objective in the region, the two countries announced that they will jointly deal militarily with "unpredictability and uncertainty" in the Asia-Pacific region.

— The statements set forth a posture that enables the SDF to take part in joint operations abroad with U.S. forces. They confirmed that their military forces will further step up their integration by consolidating their command functions, the co-use of military bases, expansion of joint exercises, and integration of their intelligence and communication networks as well as their strategy and operations, in order to ensure that they can intervene together in conflicts around the world. Placing the SDF under U.S. command as its supplementary forces to make Japan

more subservient to the United States is the hallmark of the Japan-U.S. military integration. Along with these plans, preparations are underway for establishing a permanent law to dispatch the SDF and a new law to protect state secrets.

— The statements put forward plans to arbitrarily strengthen the functions of U.S. bases in Japan with a view to maintaining them indefinitely. The plans include the construction of a new U.S. Marine Corps base in Okinawa, the relocation of a new U.S. army command to U.S. Camp Zama in Kanagawa Prefecture, the deployment of a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to Yokosuka Base, and the relocation of a carrier-borne air wing to the U.S. Marine Corps Iwakuni Air Station in Yamaguchi Prefecture. The common aim of these plans is to dramatically enhance the strike capabilities of the U.S. armed forces in Japan (Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps) in interventionist wars. What's more, outrageous plans are being made to force the Japanese public to pay additional costs for the realignment of U.S. military bases in Japan.

They are also planning to establish a new combat command of the Ground SDF at U.S. Camp Zama in conjunction with the relocation of the new U.S. Army headquarters, and relocate the Air SDF Air Defense Command that controls all ASDF combat units to the U.S. Yokota Air Base in Tokyo which commands the U.S. Air Force in Japan, thus integrating the command functions of the U.S. Armed Forces in Japan and the Japanese Self-Defense Forces.

The moves to deploy Japanese troops anywhere in the world are accelerating, and the plan to strengthen and perpetuate the U.S. bases in Japan has been developed in the name of "transformation and realignment for the future." The pressing task now is for us to put up an undaunted struggle to stop these plans.

(ii) The strengthening of the Japan-U.S. military alliance tailored to the policy of aggression is totally incompatible with the Japanese Constitution, in particular its Article 9.

The LDP government has imposed various laws to dispatch SDF troops abroad, but the use of force abroad has been banned, a restriction that none of them could override. As a matter of fact, the previous laws for sending the SDF abroad such as the law on situations in areas surrounding Japan, the law on anti-terrorism special measures, and the law on special measures for Iraq prohibit "the use or the threat of use of force."

Article 9 of the Constitution, in particular its second paragraph providing that "war potential will never be maintained" and that "the right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized," has acted as a brake on Japan's use of force abroad. After WWII, the LDP government established the Self-Defense Forces and then reinforced them in violation of the Constitution. The government has stated that the SDF is an organization with the minimum force needed for Japan to defend itself and that it is not a military force, which the Constitution prohibits. As the natural conclusion drawn from this official view, the government has been obliged to state that it is unconstitutional for Japan to "dispatch the SDF abroad for military operations," to "exercise the right of collective self-defense," or to "participate in a United Nations force that carries out activities involving military operations."

Replacing the second paragraph of Article 9 with a provision declaring that "Japan will possess a self-defense military" will mean removing the constitutional brake, thus paving the way for Japan's participation in military operations by dispatching troops abroad to exercise the right of collective self-defense or to participate in U.N. forces.

The real aim of the call for the revision of Article 9 is to transform the Self-Defense

Forces into a "full-fledged military" and to turn Japan into a "war-fighting country" that takes part in U.S. preemptive wars. The key to rallying a majority of the Japanese people to oppose the revision of the Constitution is to let the public know of this ulterior motive.

(iii) We can clearly see how aberrant it is for Japan to embark on a path of transforming the "Japan-U.S. alliance" into a more aggressive alliance and revising the Constitution. Throughout the world today, Article 9 is seen by many as a guide to establishing an international order of peace, in particular an order of peace and stability in East Asia.

— In July 2005, the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) conference, which was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York with NGOs from 118 countries participating, adopted the "World Action Declaration" that highly values Article 9: "In some regions of the world, normative-legal commitments play an important role in promoting regional stability and increasing confidence. For example, Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution ... has been a foundation for collective security throughout the Asia Pacific region." The GPPAC Northeast Asia Regional Action Agenda adopted in February 2005 states that "the principles of Article 9 should be recognized as having universal value and be therefore utilized as a foundation for peace in Northeast Asia."

— The International Association of Democratic Lawyers 16th Congress held in Paris in June 2005 adopted the "Resolution on Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan" stating that "humanity aspires to realize a 21st century without war" and "our aspiration may rest on a legal principle embodied in Article 9." It points out that "the very article is a gift given to humanity" and that "no wise men or women would cast their own treasure into the depth of calamity."

— In July 2004, the U.S. "Veterans for Peace" adopted a resolution entitled "Support for Endangered Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution." It states: "We share with you, dear Japanese friends, your vision that Article 9 is Earth's living model for 'rules-of-law' to replace 'rules-of-war'."

All these documents not only acknowledge that Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution is important for a peaceful Japan, they point out that it has a universal value as the "foundation," "basis," "norm," or "legal principle" of establishing a regional and world order of peace.

These moves are taking place against a backdrop of the global groundswell in the call for an international order of peace to be based on the United Nations Charter. They also reflect a major change taking place in the world to the effect that many of the U.S.-led military alliances have been dissolved or have become either dysfunctional or weakened in Asia and the rest of the world, and that they are being replaced by peaceful regional groups of countries that have no stated enemies.

By establishing the war-renouncing Article 9 of the Constitution after WWII, the Japanese people not only pledged that Japan will not go to war again but expressed the determination to herald a world without war by embarking on the path of pacifism that renounces war and prohibits Japan from possessing war potential.

(iv) The new JCP Program opens its section on democratic change in Japan by stating: "The Japan-U.S. Security Treaty will be abrogated in accordance with Article 10 that provides that Japan can notify the U.S. government of its intention to terminate the treaty, and the U.S. forces and military bases will be withdrawn from Japan. Japan will conclude a friendship treaty with the United States on an equal footing."

It sets out that the JCP will "defend all the provisions of the Constitution, including the preamble, and in particular strive to have provisions of peace and democracy fully implemented."

This programmatic direction provides a promising direction of action that accords with the world current in the 21st century. The JCP will strive to develop cooperation throughout society by setting aside political differences to achieve common demands in the effort to rally a majority of the people in the movement against the revision of the Constitution and in the struggle to forestall the strengthening of the functions of U.S. military bases in Japan. The JCP also strives to increase public support for the abrogation of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty.

(4) Carry out reform for economic democracy by ending the extraordinary policy of putting the interests of big business above everything else

Third, a reform for economic democracy will put an end to the state of "capitalism without rules," the cause of the arrogant behavior of large corporations.

(i) The neoliberal economic model that the Koizumi Cabinet has been applying to its "structural reform" policy gives priority to enabling large corporations to maximize profits, regarding deregulation and market forces as panacea and relying on the law of the jungle. This is how the Koizumi Cabinet's policy is sharpening contradictions in all areas of the Japanese economy and people's living conditions.

a) Increasing poverty and social disparity under "capitalism without rules":

Destruction of jobs and income, bankruptcies, and financial difficulties imposed on small- and medium-sized businesses have contributed to growing poverty and social disparity since the end of the 1990s, and this is now a serious social problem.

The low-income proportion of the population is growing rapidly. The number of households that need public assistance has reached one million. The percentage of children receiving educational benefits or assistance (for school lunch programs, school excursions, and supplies) doubled to reach 12.8 percent in the last ten years. The percentage of households with no savings has risen to 23.8 percent. The number of elderly people who live on pension benefits of under 100,000 yen a month and who have no savings, is also on the increase.

Japan's increasing poverty and the widening gap between the rich and the poor stand out in the world. An Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) survey shows that the poverty rate in Japan — the ratio of population of households with less than half of the median disposable income — is 15.3 percent. Japan's poverty rate is the fifth highest among the 25 countries surveyed. The average for the OECD countries is 10.2 percent.

What underlies this situation is the destruction of jobs with dignity. Large corporations and business circles are pushing ahead with cost-cutting "restructuring" strategies targeting the middle aged and the elderly, and restraining new hiring in order to cut full-time jobs and hire more temporary employees, part-timers, subcontract workers, and other contingent workers. As a result, one in every three workers and half of young people are in non-regular employment. These workers are extremely low paid without basic workers' rights. The government has fully supported the business circles' tyrannical and arbitrary methods in the name of "deregulation of labor laws." The series of adverse revisions of taxation and social welfare systems are further exacerbating poverty and widening social gaps.

b) Major tax increases on working people and successive cutbacks in social services:

The government and the ruling parties are competing with the opposition Democratic Party to impose a major tax increase. The size of the planned tax increase now on the table is the largest ever, forcing working people to pay an extra 24 trillion yen by raising the consumption tax and income tax rates. It is a savage attack on low-income people and the socially weak, and undermines the democratic principle of paying taxes according to one's ability, exempting cost of living from taxation, and redistributing income.

Social services have already undergone adverse revision including the national health insurance system, the pension system, the nursing-care insurance system, and assistance to the disabled. The government is planning another major adverse revision of the health insurance system in 2006. The aim of social services should be to help people make a decent living. But in reality they are being reduced to something that tramples on human dignity. The government and business circles have proposed a policy of restraining the rate of increase in social welfare benefits below that of economic growth rates. This will mean forcing people to pay more than they can afford to while decreasing benefits. Given the fact that social welfare benefits in Japan remain lower than those in European countries in terms of their ratio to the GDP, how unreasonable it is to force the public to accept restraints to supposedly benefit the economy.

Underlying the planned large-scale tax increase on the working classes and the series of adverse revisions of social services is the tyrannical behavior of large corporations and business circles. In fact, corporate taxes have been repeatedly decreased in response to business circles' demands. Despite the fact that large corporations are making larger profits than they did during the bubble economy, corporate tax revenue has dropped to half. What's more, the Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren) is demanding more corporate tax cuts while calling for consumption and income tax increases and even the elimination of the employers' share in the payment of social insurance premiums. Thus, reducing the corporate share of burdens and shifting them onto the working people is what's actually happening today in Japan.

c) U.S. interference in Japanese economy: Since 1994, the U.S. government has presented the annual "Regulatory Reform Recommendations" to Japan with the aim of urging Japan to ease regulations and open markets. Their reports boast of the results they obtained in Japan.

Under an extraordinary system of interference in the Japanese economy, a series of legislative measures have been taken after the United States demanded them, including the liberalization of the use of temporary workers (proposed in 1996), the abolition of the Large-Scale Retail Stores Law (1997), and the privatization of postal services (1999). The United States promoted these changes in close cooperation with Japanese business circles.

The U.S. government, in collaboration with the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and the World Bank, has forced many regions of the world to carry out "structural adjustment" programs based on "neoliberal" policy in the name of economic "globalization." This high-handedness has been severely criticized by the world community as the imposition of the "Washington consensus." U.S. interference with the Japanese economy using the annual "Regulatory Reform Recommendations" is the worst example of this U.S. policy of structural adjustment.

The attempt to transform Japan using a U.S. mold is further deepening the crisis of the public well-being and the Japanese economy, and is sharpening the contradictions.

d) Exacerbating distortions of society and the falling birth rate: The government "structural reform" policy that puts the profits of big business before everything else has made the public increasingly desperate about the country's present and future. It has exacerbated distortions that exist in Japanese society and generated devastation and decline.

Increasing suicide rates due to economic difficulties is a serious social problem. There is a growing tendency to regard it as natural for a society to be divided into the "winners' group" and the "losers' group," and to be insensitive to the ongoing attacks on the socially disadvantaged. The abuse of the elderly and minors, collapse of family bonds, and increasing crimes and other social diseases are more serious than ever. At the same time, there's a growing tendency to praise investors making easy money.

The falling birth rate is a serious problem that imperils the very foundation of Japanese society. The long-standing problem of the falling birth rate is attributed to social distortions created by pro-big business government policies that include increasing unstable employment, excessively long hours of work, wage restraint, increasing burdens of taxation and other costs for childbearing, childrearing, and education, and the deteriorating social environment for raising children.

In Europe, some countries have succeeded in raising the birth rate by adopting a comprehensive approach to deal with the issue. They have developed policies for changing the way society functions, including employment policies, policies of reducing the economic burdens on families, and policies for equality between men and women.

In Japan, for more than 10 years the government has been saying that it is necessary to take "measures to stop the birth rate from further declining," but all that it has done is set forth policies that create more obstacles in the ability to raise children. It in fact has undermined the rules of work through "deregulation of labor laws," increased taxes and costs to be borne by families with children, imposed higher user fees for childcare centers, and cutbacks in childcare services. The government shows enthusiasm for using the falling birth rate as a pretext for threatening to increase taxes and cut back on social services, but it has never been serious about taking steps to address this problem. Here too, LDP government policies disclaim all responsibilities for the future of Japanese society.

The task now is for us to expose how the "structural reform" policies have disrupted Japanese society. The policies have denied the emergence of a society in which people support each other and are instead creating a society governed by the law of the jungle, making us feel cold and isolated. Contradictions have accumulated to the point where sustainable social and economic development in the future is no longer possible.

(ii) The Japanese Communist Party will take a lead in the struggle to socially repel attacks that destroy the foundations of humane living standards. It in particular focuses on the struggle against a massive tax increase, while opposing cutbacks in social services and demanding jobs with dignity.

The JCP Program sets forth six changes that we should seek in order to establish economy democracy: establish an "economy governed by rules"; enforce a democratic regulation of large corporations in order to control their excesses; change the present tax system that gives large corporations and the wealthy preferential treatment and establish a progressive tax system and social services based on the principle of tax rates based on the ability to pay. These policies show a comprehensive way to end the present crisis of the Japanese economy as well as of

people's deteriorating living conditions. The JCP Program also makes clear that Japanese society should make efforts to reverse the falling birth rate as one of the most urgent tasks of Japanese society.

The JCP will continue to strive to safeguard living standards and work for the sound development of the Japanese economy, in line with democratic changes set out in the JCP Program.

(iii) In order for JCP policy for economic democracy to be supported by a broad range of people, we need to keep in mind the following points:

a) Using the force of facts, expose the distorted rule of large corporations and business circles: In the first half of the 1970s, many people were aware of the distorted rule of large corporations because of problems such as pollution and soaring prices that drew criticism from around the country. Later, throughout the 1980s and the 1990s, distortions caused by the rule of large corporations were hidden through the use of a massive campaign praising the role of the "private sector." It is important, therefore, to take into account the public misconception of the present situation and help expose what large corporations are actually getting away with.

One important aspect that we should expose is the fact that the "structural reform" policy is being promoted mainly by the business circles. We need to inform the public of the fact that business leaders have established a system of rating political party policies and performances using political donations as bait, that they are directly taking the lead in decision-making on policies in the government Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy, and that they are flagrantly intervening in election campaigns as in the recent House of Representatives general election. In short, what we must make the public aware of is the fact that LDP government policies are manipulated by business leaders.

Although we expose the authoritarian rule of large corporations and business circles, we also make it clear that the JCP does not take on large corporations as the enemy per se but that we are opposing large corporations' authoritarian and selfish practices and demanding that they fulfill their social responsibility and accept burdens commensurate with their economic strength. It is also important for us to make clear the JCP's programmatic position calling for "coexistence with large corporations under democratic rules."

b) Overcome fallacies used to force the public to endure hardships: In order to force the public to accept the "structural reform" policy, various fallacies are promoted with such slogans as "From the public sector to the private sector," "small government is best," and "removal of special privileges given to public servants."

The common thread that runs through the "structural reform" program is the strategy to deliberately cause divisions among people. They drive a wedge between government workers and private sector workers, between active workers and the elderly, between employees and the self-employed and between working women and housewives. This strategy includes attacking the movement of forces opposing policies that destroy people's living conditions as self-centered action trying only to defend their vested interests. This divide and rule strategy is their stock in trade.

It is important to put an emphasis on the solidarity that exists among the various social forces in countering these attacks and putting up an offensive against this divide-and-rule attack. The "small government" advocates' ongoing attack on government employees is aimed not only at reducing local services but at instigating a race for lower wages between the public sector and the private sector and at paving the way for a large-scale tax increase. Public employees are strongly called upon to

expose the true aim of the attack on them and thwart it by standing firmly for the position in favor of "solidarity with the public" as well as "solidarity with private sector workers."

c) Push for proactive debate to expose the cause of unprecedented financial failure, responsibility for it, and its remedy: The debts of the national and local governments accounted for 59 percent of the GDP in FY 1990. It rose to 126 percent in FY2000 and reached 150 percent in FY 2005. The government and the business circles take advantage of this bankruptcy as a means of threatening the public with the aim of imposing a set of policies that will force people to endure more suffering despite the fact that the crisis is actually the result of the scandalous failure of their politics.

It is important to show the way to solve the crisis by making clear who are responsible for these huge debts and deficit-ridden finances. The cause of the crisis lies in the extremely wasteful public investments and the huge military expenditure since the 1990s as well as the decrease in tax revenues caused by the excessively generous tax breaks on large corporations and the wealthy. Without a drastic change to make steep cuts in the "vested interests" accorded to big businesses, there will be no solution to the crisis and no funding for social services. Efforts should be made to increase this understanding among the general public by strongly emphasizing it as an important part of the policy line for remaking Japan.

(iv) Lack of reflection on historical errors, subservience to the U.S., and corporate rule — these are the elements of the aberrant LDP politics that have no parallel in the world. Its contradictions with the Japanese people and with the world current for peace are sharper than ever. It is failing in every area. Japan now stands at a historical turning point that embraces conditions for building a new Japan that puts the people first.

Let us do our utmost to bring about a democratic and progressive breakthrough to reach out to all the Japanese people to inform them of the new JCP Program which provides a compass that points toward a democratic direction for Japan to advance and achieve our goal of establishing a Democratic Coalition Government in the early part of the 21st century.

II. Structural Changes in the 21st Century World and the JCP Position

(5) Struggle to build a world order of peace

The new JCP Program states: "The major question today is that the world must choose between two international orders: one of peace based on the U.N. Charter and the other plagued with intervention, aggression, war, and oppression giving the United States freedom to be tyrannical." Choosing between these two international orders is now the major issue for world peace.

(i) U.S. President George W. Bush began his second term in January 2005. Since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the Bush administration has been very aggressive in promoting a diplomatic and military strategy that includes the preemptive attack strategy and unilateralism that disregards the United Nations. In its second term, the Bush administration's basic strategy remains unchanged.

Arguing that the need now is to counter "new threats" such as "global terrorism" and

"weapons of mass destruction," the Bush administration is pushing ahead with the preemptive attack strategy and is realigning the U.S. military on a global scale in a bid to use its military power most efficiently.

The Bush administration's nuclear weapons policy raises particularly deep and urgent concerns. The Bush administration is reviewing the "Doctrine for Joint Nuclear Operations" for the first time in ten years, with the dangerous aim of broadening the scope of permissibility of unilaterally using nuclear weapons against countries that do not have nuclear weapons. This doctrine is being put into practice in a variety of ways: the development of small and supposedly more usable nuclear weapons, the promotion of a "missile defense program" for preemptive nuclear attack, and the militarization of space. The U.S. preemptive nuclear attack strategy is thus entering an extremely dangerous new stage.

At the same time, however, U.S. unilateralism for global hegemony is failing and facing increasing isolation in the world. The military occupation that followed the invasion of Iraq and the operation to defeat resistance forces created a cycle of violence and terrorism. Thus, the Iraqi situation became a military quagmire. The "Coalition of the Willing" is about to collapse because many members that sent troops to Iraq have decided to bring them home or reduce their presence. In the United States, with more and more soldiers dying in combat and with the cost of the war rising, the public demand for the United States to change its Iraq policy and withdraw its troops from Iraq is increasing.

As the United States is faced with situations that cannot be dealt with by military means alone, the U.S. administration is beginning to seek diplomatic solutions to international questions. In the Six-Party Talks by South Korea, North Korea, Japan, China, Russia, and the United States aimed at resolving the question of North Korea's nuclear program, the United States apparently is trying to deal with the question through diplomatic means because it had no other choice but accept the positive developments in Asia. Within the U.S. administration, there has been a move exploring a diplomatic strategy for peaceful coexistence with China incorporating a long-term perspective. In the U.S.-China summit talks in November 2005, both governments agreed to fully promote a "constructive and cooperative relationship." Concerning relations with the ASEAN countries, the United States signed the "Joint Vision Statement on the ASEAN-US Enhanced Partnership" in which it acknowledges that it will "respect the spirit and principles of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC)."

(ii) The previous JCP Congress resolution pointed out, "The struggle against the Iraq War confirmed that the possibility is increasing globally that a large international movement can be built for cooperation by the world's popular struggles and a majority of the world's governments in the common cause of establishing a U.N. Charter-based international order of peace." The huge increase of social movements favoring peace before and after the Iraq War are making advances using a large variety of activities.

— *U.S. preemptive attack strategy denounced by the U.N. General Assembly:* The above stated currents for peace have had a positive impact on the United Nations. This was demonstrated in diplomatic battles over the "World Summit Outcome" adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in September 2005 at the 60th session of the U.N. General Assembly. The United States sought to use the phrase "anticipatory self-defense against imminent threat" in the preparatory document for the "World Summit Outcome" to justify its own preemptive attack strategy. But as a result of the U.N.G.A. discussion, the U.S. attempt was foiled, and the phrase "anticipatory self-defense" was deleted. The "Outcome" document confirmed the importance of the principles enshrined in the U.N. Charter as the fundamental

principle governing international relations in the present-day world, namely the peaceful settlement of conflicts and multilateralism with the United Nations at the center.

— ***Developing regional communities of nations for peace:*** Independent regional communities of nations for peace are developing in many parts of the world as regional standard-bearers in support of the international peace, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the South American Community of Nations (CSN), and the African Union (AU). These regional groups are calling for an international order of peace to be based on the U.N. Charter, peaceful solution to conflicts, respect for the economic sovereignty of every nation, and a democratic international economic order. Notably, regional communities of nations are beginning to cooperate with each other in the quest of networking themselves to defend the international peace. The Summit of South American-Arab Countries is one such example.

— ***International efforts underway in Asia for peace:*** In Asia, significant progress has been made in the efforts to build regional communities of nations for peace.

The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) was concluded in 1976 calling for peaceful settlement of conflicts and the prohibition of the use of force, and has been joined by China, South Korea, Japan, Mongolia, Russia, India, Pakistan, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and Australia as well as the ten ASEAN nations. This means that the TAC that embraces 53 percent of the world's population is evolving into a community representing all East and Southeast Asian nations calling for peace.

Moves toward reconciliation and friendship are underway in relations between China and India as well as between India and Pakistan. In April 2005, China and India took a major step toward settling their long-standing border dispute by establishing the "India-China strategic and cooperative partnership for peace and prosperity." India and Pakistan, despite the fact that their historical issue over territorial rights over Kashmir remains unresolved, took a big step recently toward normalizing bilateral relations. This has had a favorable effect on peaceful cooperation in the region.

A sign of similar improvement in relations is present in Northeast Asia. The Six-Party Talks began with the aim of resolving the issue of North Korea's nuclear problem. It is important that the "joint statement" issued on September 19, 2005 made it clear that the countries participating in the Six-Party Talks are committed to develop the negotiations and "join efforts for lasting peace and stability in Northeast Asia."

How encouraging it is to see changes in the situation in Asia, a region that has been plagued for many years with conflicts. The currents for an international order of peace based on the U.N. Charter are developing throughout the world, including the movements toward forming a regional community of nations for peace.

(iii) The new JCP Program formulates the party's international tasks as follows: "The JCP will do all it can to help build up international solidarity to help stop U.S. hegemonism from dominating the world, establish an international order of peace, and achieve a world without nuclear weapons or military alliances." The main trend in the world at the beginning of the 21st century confirms that the JCP Program confirms the possibilities of a peaceful future.

The JCP has carried out activities at the grassroots level throughout the country as

well as in the international arena to achieve a peaceful world, including the struggle against the Iraq War and for the abolition of nuclear weapons. It is very significant that international cooperation for peace is developing between governments, organizations and individuals as shown by the achievements of the World Conference against Atomic & Hydrogen Bombs.

The JCP will continue to make every effort in Japan and internationally to establish an international order of peace based on the U.N. Charter and get nuclear weapons eliminated without delay.

(6) JCP's opposition party diplomacy

(i) The JCP has continued to make progress in its opposition party diplomacy since its 23rd Congress.

In 2004, the 3rd International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) in Beijing, China, attended by 83 political parties from 35 Asian countries, governing and opposition alike, was a huge success. Taking part in the discussions and exchanging views with other participants on world peace, the JCP made many new friends. The "Beijing Declaration" adopted unanimously by the ICAPP set forth important tasks of international activities to "seek an international order of peace, refuse wars, aggression and hegemony, oppose all forms of terrorism, and promote international cooperation to alleviate poverty." Another important feature of the Declaration was the confirmation of the principle not to make ideological differences a barrier to exchanges and cooperation as well as the principle of non-interference in each other's internal affairs. The fact that a conference of this kind took place in Asia and adopted the "Beijing Declaration" is significant in that it represents a major trend of social progress developing in this part of the world.

Our understanding of the huge movement for social progress in Latin America has been a significant event during this period. JCP representatives participated in the 4th Summit on Social Debt of Latin American countries held in Venezuela in February 2005, and had a firsthand encounter with the vigor of the movement for change taking place in the region. A new movement for political change is spreading throughout Latin America. Political change in each country is making progress through winning in elections. The movement's objective is to achieve economic democracy in each country and to become self-reliant by rejecting the forces of U.S. domination. These developments in Latin America have tremendous world significance.

(ii) The JCP's opposition party diplomacy evolves because the direction set out by the JCP Program accords with the major changes taking place in the present-day world.

The JCP's opposition party diplomacy is guided by the 8-point policy set forth in the new JCP Program for a new peace diplomacy, including tasks of championing the international order of peace as defined by the U.N. Charter, establishing a democratic international economic order, and establishing dialogue as well as coexistence among various civilizations with different values. These policies that are based on universal principles can be accepted in every corner of the world.

The JCP's position of sovereign independence and its history of consistent pacifism are reasons given for the trust and support shown to the JCP's opposition party diplomacy throughout the world. The history of the JCP adhering to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of others and its respect for other countries' cultures, and their way of organizing their societies, has great significance for truly developing friendship and cross-cultural understanding with various nations.

(iii) In view of future developments, it is very important to do out utmost to achieve peace and stability in East Asia, and the task is for Japan as an Asian country in the 21st century to respect the political and economic sovereignty of every nation and contribute to developing a self-reliant regional community.

In doing this, Japan is called upon to shift its diplomacy to one of opening its heart to other Asian peoples and (i) overcome the adverse current justifying the past Japanese war of aggression and colonial rule; (ii) end its exclusive support for U.S. policy and develop a comprehensive strategy for exploring peaceful relations with other Asian countries; (iii) stop placing emphasis on military approaches and stand firm for peaceful settlements of international disputes through diplomacy; and (iv) deny any country the right to assert hegemony and call for defending the peace in compliance with the U.N. Charter.

The JCP has so far made many efforts to help achieve peace and stability in East Asia by making proposals for breaking Japan's diplomatic stalemate caused by the government's distortion of history and calling for a reasoned resolution of the North Korea issue. We will continue to make every effort to strengthen the movement for a regional system of peace from Southeast Asia to Northeast Asia with the aim of turning the whole of East Asia into a region without fear of wars or conflicts.

(iv) In talks in December 2005, the JCP and the Communist Party of China (CPC) held a very significant theoretical discussion. It was a theoretical exchange between a party that is developing in a developed capitalist country a theoretical exploration of a future society with the view of advancing toward socialism and communism and a party exploring theories for practices on its path to socialism.

With its capability to respond to all questions raised by the CPC, the new JCP Program was taken by the CPC delegation as a document that offers a perspective that warrants careful study. This shows the relevance that the JCP Program has in the present day world.

Recognizing international theoretical exchanges as an important aspect of its opposition party diplomacy, the JCP will make efforts to further develop such activities.

(7) A vision of a new society overcoming capitalism

(i) The new JCP Program envisages a great future by stating that the JCP " will make every effort to make the 21st century a century in which humanity records a historic advance toward constructing an association free of exploitation or oppression."

The rationale behind this view is "capitalism's contradiction arising from its inability to control the enormously developed productive power."

A U.N. agency report states that the widening gap between the rich and the poor as well as the North-South problem will be left unresolved as long as the present socio-economic system remains. The U.N. Development Programme (UNDP) publishes its annual Human Development Report. The term "human development" is used to mean eradication of poverty. Its latest edition states: "In 2003, 18 countries with a combined population of 460 million people registered lower scores on the human development index (HDI) than in 1990 — an unprecedented reversal," and concludes that "to put it bluntly, the world is heading for a human development disaster." In other words, extreme poverty and growing inequalities cannot be eliminated under the present world system.

Profit-driven capitalism is creating new contradictions threatening the very survival of

the human species. These include global warming, the possible depletion of oil and other fossil energy resources, the massive dumping of wastes, and other environmental issues. The basic requirements to ensure the survival of human beings, including a livable environment and access to energy, are being destroyed. If we are to protect ourselves from environmental collapse, we must question whether we can do so under the present profit-first system.

In the realities and contradictions of world capitalism, there exist conditions for making progress toward a future society that the JCP envisages — socialism/communism.

(ii) The new JCP Program states, "The 21st century world will be an era characterized by an increase in currents toward overcoming capitalism and advancing to a new society." This arises from "sharpening economic and political contradictions and from popular movements in the developed capitalist countries; efforts to explore their peculiar ways to socialism in countries that broke away from capitalism; and the popular movements in many countries in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America that are unable to find their way for future economic development within the framework of capitalism, even after achieving political independence."

Looking at the critical state of capitalism, major mass media in the United States, France, and Germany have published featured stories about Karl Marx. One tendency spreading in the developed capitalist countries is a call for the need to take another look at Marx.

Countries that are exploring their respective ways to socialism already occupy important positions in world politics and the world economy. Governments of the major capitalist countries are working out a diplomatic strategy defining their political and economic relations with China.

As some Latin American countries tackle democratic reform of society, one question has been raised regarding the future of these reform efforts. Serious discussions are beginning regarding a quest for a form of socialism peculiar to each country. They argue that the path of capitalism has no future and that the Soviet Union that failed was far from being a socialist society.

In this era of upheaval, it is very significant that the JCP has adopted its new Program that puts "socialization of the means of production" in the center of the future society it envisages, a society aimed at the total development of human beings. Standing firm for the name of the Japanese Communist Party which is closely associated with the future society it envisages, we will make strides toward the future with a comprehensive vision and undaunted ambition.

III. Respond to Demands of the People, Talk about the JCP, and Achieve a Real JCP Advance in National and Local Elections

(8) Achieve JCP advances by learning lessons from the three recent national elections

The three parliamentary elections in the past three years forced the JCP to wage a fierce battle in the face of the adversity created by the moves to institutionalize a two-

party system pushed by business circles. Drawing lessons from each of the struggles waged under evolving political situations and utilizing the wisdom and power of the JCP Central Committee and local bodies, the JCP has explored and developed an effective stance and a range of activities in parliamentary elections.

The 2003 House of Representatives election was the first full-scale struggle against the "building of a two-party system" promoted mainly by the business circles. Analyzing the shift that was taking place in the state of political parties and discovering that business circles' strategy was behind it, the JCP stood up against it. But the JCP could not gain the public attention needed to oppose this shift and lost a number of the seats it previously held. The JCP Central Committee 10th Plenum that reviewed the election campaign made clear that there was a delay in the Central Committee's efforts to establish its campaign posture and in analyzing business circles' interference in politics as well as in launching a counter offensive.

The 2004 House of Councilors election was the second parliamentary election in which we faced the offensive aimed at establishing a "two-party system." The policies the JCP put forward in the election campaign matched the political situation and the interests of the public, and gained a wide audience. Nonetheless, favorable public reactions did not help increase the number of votes cast for the JCP because many voters came under strong pressure to choose "either the LDP or the DPJ" and this had much influence over their voting behavior. Analyzing our frustrating setback in the election, we drew a lesson as to how we should emphasize the importance of JCP Diet seats in the emerging situation in which people are forced to "choose between two major parties." The quest bore fruit in the resolution of the JCP Central Committee 2nd Plenum.

In the 2005 House of Representatives general election, we made full use of the lessons learned from the previous two elections. In the face of the snap dissolution of the House of Representatives and the general election, the party center and party organizations joined together throughout the country and promptly decided to go on the offensive. Based on the decision of the JCP Central Committee 2nd Plenum, the JCP produced its "election promise as an opposition party," and fought using the catch-phrase "the reliable opposition party." Although it was vexing that the JCP could not achieve the political goal it set, we put up a good fight. Despite the difficult conditions, we managed to maintain the seats the JCP previously held. This was made possible by the whole party making efforts and learning lessons from the two previous national elections regarding its posture and policy debates.

The biggest lesson we learned from these three national elections is that the JCP is short of the strength, qualitative and quantitative, necessary to ensure a JCP advance under any political circumstances, and that the task now is for the JCP to become strong enough to be able to prevail in national elections.

Throughout these national elections, the JCP was learning to respond to political shifts. We learned many lessons and achieved some important results. By keeping them in mind, we will make every effort to achieve a real JCP advance in the simultaneous local elections and the House of Councilors election in 2007, and in the next House of Representatives general election.

(9) JCP takes the high-road as a political party in the present-day political situation

Look at the state of political parties in the wake of the House of Representatives general election. While the LDP-Komei coalition government led by Prime Minister Koizumi, after winning a majority in the Diet, began rushing to implement

reactionary changes that will destroy the livelihoods of the people, the DPJ, which lost many seats in the House of Representative election, is now competing with the ruling parties for a faster rate of adverse reform. It is now more and more clear that the ongoing moves toward creating a "two-party system" is nothing but the emergence of a system in which all parties share the same policy on the major national issues of calling for the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty to be firmly maintained, for the Constitution's Article 9 to be amended, for massive tax increase to be imposed on the people, and for social services to be cut back. Although a "great coalition" between the LDP and the DPJ is being discussed constantly, in actual politics, the two parties are in a state of coalition. These moves of the LDP and the DPJ will inevitably be in conflict with public interests.

The Komei Party supports the Koizumi government as its ruling partner. In return for measures to improve the child-support allowance program, the party accepted upgrading the Defense Agency to a "ministry" and adversely revising the Fundamental Law of Education on request of the LDP. The self-serving characteristic of the Komei Party stands out more than ever.

This situation brings into relief the true value of the JCP. Let's consider the features of the JCP. In view of the current situation of the major parties, it is important to make the following points known widely:

a) The JCP makes much of its Program as the guideline for party activities: The new JCP Program envisages a way to change the outdated framework of the LDP politics characterized by its extraordinarily deep subservience to the U.S. and defense of the interests of large corporations. The JCP is the only Japanese political party to have a program devoted to radical change.

No party, other than the JCP, strictly adheres to its party program, attaches importance to it as providing guidelines for its day-to-day activities, and makes efforts to enrich its policy. In the recent general election, the JCP presented the public with its "election promises as an opposition party." These promises are all based on the JCP Program and were produced as a practical application of the Program in the course of heated political debates with other parties.

Although the LDP has its "program" and the DPJ has a document entitled "Our Basic Philosophy," they only set forth abstract slogans instead of presenting a concrete vision for the future of Japan. They do not use these basic documents as guidelines for their daily activities. The political platform that the LDP adopted at the time of its founding in 1955 had a vision calling for the "completion of Japan's sovereign independence," the "completion of a welfare state," and "preparation for the withdrawal of foreign forces stationed in Japan." However, the present LDP Program (adopted in 1995 and expected to be amended in 2005) states nothing about the type of society they aim for. The DPJ's "Our Basic Philosophy" was adopted in 1998 before its merger with the Liberal Party and remains unchanged. It is not even in use.

The fact that the LDP and the DPJ can function without a program indicates that they are content with the outdated framework of policies that are subservient to the United States and large corporations.

b) JCP is a party that has its own organizational structure based on its nationwide branches with close ties to the public: As of the end of December 2005, the JCP has 3,550 local assembly members. This represents the largest number of representation of all Japanese political parties. The JCP also leads in the number of women local assembly members. Thus, the JCP's role is indispensable in defending the interests of residents at the grassroots level. The JCP has put up good fights in local assembly elections following municipality mergers that caused sizable seat cuts. It is important

that the percentage of JCP members in local assemblies has risen to 7.29 percent from the 7.11 percent in 2000, the year when the number of JCP assembly members peaked at 4,456, thus further increasing its weight.

These results were underpinned by the JCP structure at the grassroots level throughout the country. The JCP has a membership of more than 400,000 in 24,000 branches in workplaces, local communities, and on campuses. It also has an Akahata readership of about 1,640,000.

In 2,027 of Japan's 2,056 cities, wards, towns and villages (98.6 percent), JCP branches and members are participating in activities to protect residents' interests. The Japanese archipelago has recently been hit by a series of natural disasters, including the major earthquakes in the Chuetsu region (central Niigata Prefecture) and in western Fukuoka Prefecture as well as by heavy rains in various parts of the country. In every disaster area, JCP branches and members have devoted themselves to activities to assist and support the local residents even though they were also disaster victims. The JCP takes pride in maintaining its own organizational structures among residents at the grassroots level nationwide to safeguard their interests.

No other Japanese political party has such organizational structures at the grassroots level. The LDP depends on business organizations and corporations, the DPJ counts on trade unions, and the Komei Party on a religious organization as substitutes for party organizations. This not only deviates from what a political party should be, but is tantamount to destroying democracy from the grassroots level by forcing the organizations that are supposedly established free of party affiliation to support a particular party.

In its "structural reform" drive, the LDP is destroying its relations with business organizations that have long been its constituencies. At the same time, the LDP is strengthening its cozy relationship with and dependence on business circles and waging large-scale election campaigns entirely paid for by big business.

c) The JCP is a party financially relying on the public: Donations from corporations and other organizations as well as the government subsidies to political parties violate the principles of popular sovereignty, parliamentary democracy, and fundamental human rights. In addition, they constitute two major sources of political corruption.

The negative effects of these financial practices have become more extensive than ever during the last several years. The Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren) publishes a list of its "policy priorities." Using this list, it evaluates the LDP and the DPJ and arranges corporate donations to them in accordance with their ratings, leading to a sharp increase in the amount of money donated to them by Nippon Keidanren board member corporations. This represents the worst form of buying political parties and their policies.

All political parties other than the JCP now depend heavily on government subsidies. The LDP depends on the government subsidy for 59 percent of its annual income and the DPJ 84 percent. Contrary to their slogan "from the public to the private sector," these parties have degraded themselves by becoming "state-financed parties" with a heavy dependence on tax money. How can they explain this contradiction?

Heavy dependence on donations from corporations and other organizations as well as governmental subsidies is also illustrated by the very small amounts of money from individual donations. Look at the amounts of individual contributions each party headquarters collected in 2004. While the JCP collected 1,122,100,000 yen, the LDP received 329,000,000 yen (which accounts for 1.25 percent of its total income) and the DPJ no more than 368,000 yen (0.0026 percent). Donations from corporations

and other organizations as well as government subsidies only help these parties further debase themselves without establishing their financial basis in the people.

In contrast, the JCP, which refuses to accept corporate donations or government subsidies, keeps itself clean by relying on obtaining its funds from the general public. The construction of the new JCP head office building was also made possible by donations from many JCP members and supporters. Financial activities relying on the people entail hard work and many difficulties, but they generate the party's energy to fight against the high-handedness of business circles. Our activities in this field produce the vitality needed to develop the JCP because they strengthen connections between the JCP and the public.

d) The JCP is a party that has maintained a consistent policy throughout its history, prewar and postwar: The JCP's 83-year history from the prewar to the postwar period shows consistent policies in defense of public interests as well as in defense of peace and democracy. In the "Eighty Years of the Japanese Communist Party," the JCP presents readers with its pioneering and indomitable history in a consistent manner, demonstrating its ability to analyze its errors and limitations.

In both the LDP and the DPJ there still is a group of politicians who openly advocate the "Yasukuni view of history." What underlies this problem is the continuity of the policy that promoted the war of aggression as clear from the fact that political parties, including the Constitutional Party of Political Friends (Seiyukai), the Democratic Party (Minseitō), and the Social Masses Party (Shakai Taishūtō), have continued to occupy the center of Japanese politics since the end of World War II and have only changed their names. Only the JCP can be proud of consistently opposing the war of aggression and colonial rule, before and during the war, even at the cost of JCP members' lives.

It is also only the JCP that has unfailingly confronted LDP politics. The series of political party breakups and mergers since 1993 show that all political forces except the JCP have been responsible in assisting the LDP either at present or in the past. The JCP put up the slogan, "We are a reliable opposition party" in the general election, which is confirmed by the JCP's history, prewar and postwar.

e) The JCP is a party promoting international solidarity and exchanges standing firm on the principle of sovereign independence: After resolving the "1950 Question" and establishing the position of sovereign independence at its 7th Congress in 1958, the JCP has been consistent in defending Japan's sovereignty and self-reliance. It was from this position that the JCP opposed foreign interference and high-handedness by any country or group, including the United States, the Soviet Union, the Mao Zedong group of China, and North Korea.

The position of sovereign independence is the reliable foundation for the JCP's effort to develop international solidarity and exchanges for peace and social progress. It also provides an important foothold for the JCP to analyze the world situation, develop policies on international issues, and update theories of scientific socialism.

All the other major Japanese parties in their diplomacy have the inclination to accommodate themselves to great powers that underline their weakness regarding the defense of sovereign independence. The lack of sovereign independence on the part of the LDP, the DPJ, and the Komei Party is made manifest in their inability to recognize the abnormal nature of the present state of Japanese subservience to the United States.

The JCP is a party that proudly takes a principled stance. It stands out among Japanese political parties in terms of value to the citizenry. Let us reach out to as

many people as possible and let our stance be known to them with conviction and pride.

(10) Fulfill the responsibilities of the JCP as a "reliable opposition party," foil adverse constitutional revision, and talk energetically about the JCP's program for remaking Japan

In view of the simultaneous local elections and the House of Councilors election upcoming in 2007 as well as the next general election, the JCP will increase its activities to fulfill its responsibilities as a "reliable opposition party" and talk extensively to the people about the policy for remaking Japan.

(i) The JCP will fulfill its responsibilities as a "reliable opposition party." Specifically, the JCP will carry out the three tasks it promised during the general election: (1) oppose adverse government policies, (2) make efforts to realize the demands of the people, and (3) further develop its opposition party diplomacy on the world scene.

In this context, the pressing task is for the JCP as a "reliable opposition party" to strengthen nationwide popular movements in combination with parliamentary efforts to oppose a major tax increase on working people, foil the adverse revision of the Constitution, and stop the strengthening of the functions of U.S. bases in Japan and eventually remove them.

a) Struggle against major tax increases on the people: This will certainly become a major national issue in the years to come. The government and the ruling parties have already decided to abolish the fixed-rate income tax deductions and have made public their plan to have a consumption tax rate increase enacted in fiscal 2007. They are also planning to review taxable income deductions which means another major tax increase. The DPJ also calls for the consumption tax rate to be increased and for a tax increase through reviewing taxable income deductions ostensibly to support pension funds.

It is an urgent task to develop a major national movement against these attacks. All JCP branches are called upon to extensively build up grassroots movements to prevent tax increases by organizing discussions and study meetings in their respective localities, places of work, and on campuses, in cooperation with residents' associations, storekeepers' associations, trade unions, and organizations of small- and medium-sized companies. We will attach importance to enhancing the Liaison Council of Various Circles to End the Consumption Tax and the Association to End the Consumption Tax at the national and local levels by further developing cooperation with these organizations in advancing the campaign.

We are making efforts to stop the government plan to adversely revise the medical insurance system and implement cutbacks in welfare benefits and assistance to students with economic difficulties in paying school expenses. We will also work to further develop the struggle against adverse revisions of social services in cooperation with various organizations.

b) Struggle to block adverse revision of the Constitution: A grave situation has arisen in which the political forces for adverse constitutional revision are actually competing with each other to draft a new constitution.

The LDP "draft of a new Constitution" adopted by the November 2005 LDP Convention marking the party's 50th founding anniversary removed the phrases that express remorse for the war of aggression from the preamble to the Constitution. It also deleted the second paragraph of Article 9 of the Constitution and added a

provision allowing Japan to "maintain a self-defense military" tasked to perform "internationally coordinated activities to secure the peace and security of the international community," thus paving the way to allow Japan to use force abroad. It also contains a clause to restrict fundamental human rights in the name of "public interests and public order" which amounts to denying constitutionalism. In addition, it is also serious that the LDP draft of a Constitution makes it easier to make further adverse amendments to the Constitution by easing the requirement for the initiation of amendments by the Diet from the present two-thirds majority to just a majority of all members of each House.

The DPJ's "Proposal on the Constitution" also argues that it is necessary to "define the concept of 'limited right to self-defense' provided by the U.N. Charter" and to "give clear status to U.N. security activities," thus expressing the intention to pave the way for enabling Japan to use force abroad as an exercise of the right of collective self-defense or by participating in U.N.-led multinational missions.

At the same time that U.S. pressure for Japan's constitutional revision is becoming stronger, the Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren) is openly advocating a constitutional revision by publishing its proposal for constitutional revisions.

We must advance the movement to block the adverse revision of the Constitution and rally the majority of the people to take action.

The "Article 9 Association," a movement initiated by public figures who represent the conscience of Japan has made significant progress during the one and half years since its founding. More than 3,000 grassroots "Article 9 associations" have been established in localities, places of work, on campuses and in various areas throughout the country. The JCP will play an active part in advancing this movement by setting aside political differences.

At the same time, the JCP will spare no effort to increase cooperation with the national and local "joint action centers" set up to help develop opposition to the adverse revision of the Constitution with various democratic organizations. The JCP also will make efforts to play a unique and positive role in order to defeat the arguments of advocates of constitutional revision and explain the cause and perspective of the struggle to defend the Constitution. We must not to allow disruptive activities by groups praising international terrorism to intrude on the movement to defend the Constitution. This is important to further advancing our national and international cause. The effort to increase the struggle to thwart a national referendum bill, which is aimed at paving the way for constitutional revision, is also an immediate and important task.

The struggle concerning the Constitution is a historic struggle that will not only decide Japan's course in the 21st century but will have important bearings on the peace of Asia and the rest of the world. As a political party with a consistent history in the cause of pacifism, the JCP will exert every effort to assemble an unswerving majority of the Japanese people to oppose an adverse revision of the Constitution as the party's life or death struggle.

c) Struggles against the consolidation of military bases and for the removal of them:

The struggle against the strengthening of U.S. bases in Japan has entered a critical phase as the "Japan-U.S. alliance" takes on a more aggressive nature. The government and ruling parties are trying to impose the plan agreed upon at the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee meeting, but opposition is developing throughout the country with prefectural governors and mayors of cities and towns concerned taking a lead.

In Okinawa, the government plan to construct an on-sea new base off the Henoko

district of Nago City as the substitute for the U.S. Marine Corps Futenma Air Station was thwarted by the residents' long and tenacious opposition. After this, the Japanese and U.S. governments agreed to construct a base on the shoreline of U.S. Marine Corps Camp Schwab. This plan, however, is sharpening the contradictions with local residents, and the struggle to block the plan is spreading throughout Okinawa. Today, it is clear that the military base issue in Okinawa cannot be resolved by relocating bases within the prefecture and that the bilateral agreement of the 1996 Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) has completely failed.

The present moves toward strengthening the functions of U.S. bases affect not only those prefectures in which U.S. bases are concentrated, such as Okinawa and Kanagawa, but all of Japan including Aomori, Tokyo, Yamaguchi, Hokkaido, Ibaraki, Aichi, Ishikawa, Fukuoka, Nagasaki, Miyazaki and Kagoshima. The urgent task now is to develop the struggle involving residents and local governments into a national movement.

(ii) We will talk about the new JCP Program and JCP policies for remaking Japan. An important lesson we learned from the recent general election campaign is that we must increase the effort to win favorable public responses to and support for the new JCP Program and our policies for remaking Japan.

Only by disseminating widely the policy line set out in the JCP Program and our policies for remaking Japan as a way of ending LDP government policies can our call for supporting the "reliable opposition party" become more convincing to the public. The party must tackle this task in its day-to-day activities, without confining it only to the election period.

We launched a campaign to talk with the public about "What changes are needed for Japan?", "What kind of Japan is the JCP aiming for?", and "What kind of party is the JCP?" based on the new Party Program and the 24th Congress resolution (draft) as guides in fresh talks that meet the evolving situation and the interest shared by the public. JCP branches as well as the district and prefectural committees will hold speech assemblies or meetings to explain the JCP to the public.

While effectively utilizing the mass media when possible, we place importance on making efforts to make the JCP's reform agenda and its activity known to a broad range of people. Increasing the networks of Akahata subscribers throughout the country should be the basic task in doing this. We will use every possible means, including the establishment all over the country of networks of Akahata subscribers. We will also improve and increase JCP activities to make the JCP known to all eligible voters, including the use of the grassroots publicity using the door-to-door delivery of JCP handbills, workplace and local community newspapers, the Internet, newspaper ads, and commercial messages on television.

(11) On the policy for two nationwide elections in 2007

The simultaneous local elections and the House of Councilors election will be held in 2007. A common foundation to achieve a real JCP advance in these elections is to give top priority to activities to win support for the JCP by trying to attract public attention to the value of the JCP and its seats not only in the House of Councilors election but in local elections.

(i) On the current situation of local politics and the simultaneous local elections

Local politics is an area of sharpening contradictions between the "structural reform" policies pushed by the government and business circles and the livelihood concerns

of the people.

— Attacks on local finances are increasing under the cover of a "three-throwed reform." In return for transferring the right to collect some taxes to local governments, the national government is planning to disclaim its responsibility for the funding of public services by cutting or abolishing subsidies for welfare programs and education as well as by cutting the amounts of tax money allocated to local governments.

— The government has forcefully promoted the mergers of municipalities. As a result, the number of municipalities in Japan is going to decrease by about 40 percent, from 3,232 in March 1999 to 1,821 in March 2006. Yet, the government is continuing to push ahead with more mergers while considering replacing the present administrative units with larger ones.

— The government and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications in March 2005 published the "Guidelines for Promotion of Local Administrative Reform," requiring all municipalities to come up with their own "intensive reform plan" for five years from 2005. This is nothing but a blanket cutback in the programs supporting welfare and living conditions by means of reducing the number of public service employees, consigning some operations to the private sector, and totally privatizing others.

Since these attacks on local governments amount to undermining the very *raison d'être* of local governments as organs responsible for the well-being of residents, they deepen contradictions with residents, thus bringing about notable adverse changes in municipalities. Although the government has forced many local governments into municipal mergers, the government has achieved far less than the goal of merging into "1,000 municipalities." Even in municipalities that chose to merge, residents' awareness and interest have increased regarding town planning. As expectations are rising for the JCP, which works earnestly to ease people's anxieties and meet their demands, our cooperation is increasing with people across the political spectrum, including with conservatives.

In urban areas, all political parties except the JCP are pushing ahead with undemocratic administrations that destroy local autonomy by cutting welfare, livelihood support services, and promoting large public works projects in the name of "urban redevelopment." As the harmful effects of undemocratic administrations are being brought into relief, expectations for the JCP are increasing.

Under such circumstances, to defend the public interests and establish local politics in which people are the key players, the role JCP members of local assemblies or JCP assembly members' groups have to play becomes more important than ever. Local party bodies that represent the JCP in each municipality should develop activities to meet the needs regarding the new situations surrounding local politics.

In the municipalities that have come into being through mergers, JCP members of local assemblies are called upon to work in broader circles with varied tasks. Party organs should actively guide and support local JCP members of local assemblies and party branches for the purpose of enhancing coordination of efforts to defend the interests of the people and build a stronger JCP. They can also count on help from former JCP local assembly members.

Making use of the favorable conditions we have for a new JCP advance, we will achieve steady victories in the coming midterm local elections. In the 2007 simultaneous local elections, we without fail will make headway toward achieving three goals: (1) increase the percentage of JCP seats in local assemblies, (2) obtain

"the right to propose bills," and (3) eliminate "local assemblies where currently there is no JCP seat."

In view of the fact that the JCP ranks as fourth largest in the number of seats in assemblies of prefectures and major cities, it is of special importance in the elections of these assemblies to maintain the present JCP seats at any cost, make further advances, and obtain seats in each of the six prefectural assemblies where the party has no seat. To this end, it is necessary to increase the effort to address issues facing the prefecture on a day-to-day basis. In order to achieve this, the JCP will set numerical targets together with political targets in the House of Councilors election to be held in succession, and will make every effort to this end.

Aiming to achieve advances and victories in the simultaneous local elections, the party will immediately set political goals and name candidates. It will also establish without delay district campaign offices and campaign offices for individual candidates, and strengthen systematic activities based on the "four basics."

All party branches will have its JCP supporters' association and increase their membership. They will make efforts to establish closer relations with supporters on a day-to-day basis by delivering newsletters and having discussions with them. All party branches should also maintain and make use of various lists and maps, and routinely and systematically increase support for the JCP and its candidates.

The JCP will have closer cooperation with people, including conservatives, who presently do not support a particular party and work hard to develop progressive and democratic municipalities in which the JCP is a ruling party.

(ii) Target numbers and campaign policy for House of Councilors election

Defining the 2007 House of Councilors election as an election to turn into a real JCP advance, the JCP will do everything possible to achieve a major victory.

In the proportional representation part of the 2007 House of Councilors election, the JCP must unite in the effort to achieve its goal of securing at least five seats and win extra seats with more than 6.5 million votes or 10 percent of the vote, which is a more than 30 percent increase from the votes obtained in the proportional representation elections of the last House of Representatives election. The JCP has learned lessons from our tenacious commitments to increasing votes for the JCP in the proportional representation part of the last House of Representatives election, assuming that we wage the campaign in a "single national constituency." The party should fully take advantage of this lesson in the 2007 House of Councilors election and improve our campaign by giving priority to the proportional representation portion of the election.

Drawing lessons from the last two elections in which voters could write either the name of a candidate or a party name, the JCP will call on voters to write "JCP" on the ballot in the proportional representation part of the next House of Councilors election. The five candidates in the proportional representation election, whose seats the party must win at any cost, should engage in their activities as candidates in each zone of responsibility. Party organs in charge of those allocated zones must fulfill their responsibility for returning respective candidates as well as gaining the victory of all five candidates.

As regards prefectural constituencies in the House of Councilors election, the JCP will put up candidates in all constituencies, aiming to defend its seat in Tokyo at any cost, and at recovering its seats in Kanagawa, Saitama, Aichi, Kyoto, Osaka, and Hyogo where the JCP lost seats in the 2004 election. In these districts, the party will exert

itself in two tasks: to drastically increase the number of votes to win seats in the district constituencies, and to secure the five seats in the proportional representation elections.

(12) On activities to make real JCP advances in the next House of Representatives election

The experience of the recent election reminds us of the importance of vigilance and readiness for the party to be able to wage an election campaign whenever the Diet is dissolved for a general election. In the next House of Representatives general election, we will seek to win or increase the number of JCP seats in all eleven proportional representation blocs.

JCP members of the House of Representatives elected in the proportional representation blocs have responsibilities to their constituencies. They also have responsibility associated with the fact that their Diet seats were won by JCP supporters and Supporter Association members as well as JCP members in their respective blocs. They must be aware of their responsibilities to strengthen activities to realize the demands of residents, join forces with prospective JCP candidates and increase ties between the JCP and voters.

We recognize the importance of challenging the single-seat constituencies and make clear the prospects from the following three angles so as to systematically increase our activities.

— A single-seat constituency is the basic unit of the entire election campaign. It is also a basic unit connecting the JCP with the voters on a day-to-day basis in dealing with questions of national politics. The effort to increase our activities to establish broader ties with and support from voters is very important for achieving a JCP advance in a proportional representation election.

— A single-seat constituency is an important stage where JCP organizations and politicians are tested in a severe battle between parties. It is important to note that members of party committees who ran in the recent general election reported that they saw prospects for and confidence in developing the activities of JCP committees at all levels.

— The JCP has set the goal of establishing a Democratic Coalition Government in the early part of the 21st century. It is indispensable for the party to build a stronger party capable of winning in single-seat constituencies while concentrating efforts to increase the numbers of votes and seats in proportional representation constituencies.

These being our prospects, in the next House of Representatives election we will maintain the policy of fielding a candidate in every single-seat constituency. However, this does not uniformly apply to all constituencies. We will leave the decision to prefectural committees. In constituencies where conditions have matured, local party committees will select their candidates as soon as possible, systematically and aggressively carry out day-to-day activities to strengthen ties with the voters to meet their demands, and win broader support for the JCP.

In activities in preparation for the next House of Representatives general election, we will strive to reveal how harmful the present undemocratic electoral and political systems are, including the single-seat constituency system, government subsidies to political parties, and the high cost of candidacy deposits. We also firmly oppose adverse revision of the election system, including a proposed cut in the number of

proportional representation seats, and call for the election system to be fair and democratic.

IV. Efforts to Develop Nationwide Movement to Rally a Majority of the People

(13) Achieve progress in the trade union movement by playing their primary role

(i) Under the circumstances in which both the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and the opposition Democratic Party of Japan are competing with each other for a revision of the Constitution and for a major tax increase on the people as well as for policies that attack the livelihoods and rights of the workers, the Japanese trade union movement is experiencing a new historic turning point.

As clear from the slogan "abolish the vested rights of trade unions," the "structural reform" policy is attacking even the coopted trade union movement that allows for labor-capital collaboration. This is sharpening the contradictions between the demands of the Japanese Trade Union Confederation (Rengo) unions on which support for the DPJ is imposed, and the stance of the DPJ. The contradictions are associated with the issues of the Constitution and the Fundamental Law of Education, tax increases on working people, and attacks on government employees. With the DPJ declaring that it will stop counting on trade unions, the policy of union support for a particular political party has been thrown into serious contradiction.

These intensifying contradictions are laying the groundwork for trade unions to achieve an advance by playing their real role, which is to work to realize workers' demands. It is necessary to create a major current standing for the view that the trade union movement can grow when it affirms the basic democratic principles of unity based on demands, independence from capital, and independence from political parties.

Under these circumstances, the National Confederation of Trade Unions (Zenroren) is being called upon to play a greater role in advancing the trade union movement by strengthening the effort to defend the interests of workers and the public interest in general as well as the movement to defend peace and democracy.

(ii) In order to boost the union movement by making the most of the emerging conditions, we must keep in mind the following points:

a) *Joint action based on workers' demands:* Trade unions' joint actions based on demands regardless of their national affiliation should be drastically strengthened. At the prefectural level, various joint actions of trade unions are already underway concerning the tasks of opposing the adverse revision of the Constitution and the Fundamental Law of Education. These prefectural moves should expand in many ways and gather momentum towards joint action at the national level. In this work, we will make efforts to get the trade union movement to make progress towards an "independence from political parties."

b) *Organizing the unorganized:* With more and more regular jobs being replaced with non-regular ones, the percentage of organized workers has fallen to 19.2 percent. Zenroren is making efforts to organize workers who are forced to work under illegal working conditions without basic workers rights. It is important to use every resource

available to develop these efforts fully.

It is noteworthy in this connection that the unions that admit participation of individual workers are playing a vigorous role in improving working conditions of non-regular workers. The Tokyo Metropolitan Area Youth Union with a membership of 200 mostly part-time workers, won a lawsuit against a Japanese subsidiary of a U.S. corporation over the use of illegal staffing services and unpaid overtime work. Their victory made headlines in a business journal reporting that "a part-timers' union with only 200 members forced a global firm to give in." This kind of struggle needs to be encouraged and further developed.

c) Repelling attacks on government employees: The LDP and the DPJ are competing with each other for a plan to reduce the number of government employees and lower their salaries. This is a serious attack not only on workers and unions but on the entire trade union movement in Japan.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the JCP made public its view on the role of local government employees and on democratic public service employees. It called for public service employees and local government employees to fulfill their duties as "servants of the whole community" and supported their struggle to protect their livelihoods and rights while calling for reforming the government administrative structure into a more effective one that serves the interest of local residents.

The need now is to reaffirm this position and take the offensive in solidarity with local residents. Some public service employees' unions have made progress in the effort to repel attacks on them by developing a joint movement with the people to realize the keen demands of residents, including improvement of childcare services and school lunch programs. These experiences provide us with important lessons.

(14) Kakushinkon movement and struggles in various strata and fields of society

(i) The National Association for a Peaceful, Democratic and Progressive Japan (Kakushinkon), formed at the call of the JCP in 1980, has increased cooperation between nonpartisan people and the JCP, and is developing as a movement for building a progressive majority that supports democratic change in politics. The number of grassroots Kakushinkon organizations has doubled in the last ten years. Kakushinkon has been established in 596 local communities and in 159 places of work along with three youth Kakushinkon organizations, bringing the total number to 758 groups and 4.5 million members.

One striking feature is that a wide-range of intellectuals and public figures collaborate with Kakushinkon and are contributing to heightening public awareness and developing national movement opposing the adverse revision of the Constitution, the strengthening the functions of U.S. bases, tax increase plans, and increasing demands to defend democracy. Kakushinkon's call for "national cooperation on a single issue — opposition to adverse constitutional revision — " serves as an important driving force for developing the popular movement in defense of the Constitution.

The Kakushinkon movement is aimed at promoting solidarity with broad sections of the people regardless of political or ideological differences in order to achieve the common objectives of peace, democracy, and better living standards. It will further develop by rallying the huge popular demand calling for a "change in politics."

The new JCP Program sets forward the task of establishing a Democratic Coalition Government on the basis of a united front. Building a network of Kakushinkon in

many local communities and places of work, and developing them further in quality and in quantity, is essential for building a new, promising Japan. This is a major programmatic task of the JCP.

(ii) In building a popular majority in support of democratic change, we need to further support the popular movements not only to make progress in a massive counter offensive on such burning national issues as the Constitution, tax increases, social security, employment, and U.S. military bases, but also to help them develop in many ways based on the urgent demands of the people in every sector of society.

a) *Children and education:* Serious problems are arising that in many ways that adversely inhibit children's minds and their healthy growth, including falling academic standards and the loss of morals. One of the causes of these problems is the LDP government education policy that has left educational conditions poor and inadequate while producing competition-driven education and a control-oriented administration in violation of the democratic principles established in the Constitution and the Fundamental Law of Education, a policy that has been criticized by the United Nations.

The LDP government has imposed top-down "educational reforms" on the pretext that the need is to "solve the problem of the collapse of the education system." The present policy incites competition among schools in the name of "freedom of choice," "breaking down of equality," or "diversification," and imposes educational "reforms" based on "neo-liberalism" which extremely intensify the competition, thus bringing in wider gaps between children in education. It also deprives teachers, children, and schools of autonomy, brings in state-control by imposing on education political demands by means of the requirement to hoist the "Hinomaru" flag and sing "Kimigayo" at school ceremonies, making the teachers and staff meetings a mere facade, and imposes stronger administrative control over teachers using the "teacher evaluation" scheme. This policy will increase serious contradictions in schools. The government is also planning to abolish national funding for the compulsory education system, which is tantamount to destroying the nation's educational foundation.

The LDP government has imposed a policy of "flexible and liberal education" in a top-down and uniform manner instead of putting an end to excessive competition and control. After its failure became evident, it turned to putting emphasis on academic standards. The LDP government educational policy is a disastrous failure that has ravaged schools.

The aim of the proposed revision of the Fundamental Law of Education is to deny the right of the people to educate based on people's sovereign rights and to give the state a "right to educate." It will change the purpose of education from one of achieving "perfection of the human character of each child" into one of educating children to become citizens who can serve a "nation that fights wars abroad," which is the object of the adverse revision of the Constitution.

Today, the movement calling for sound growth and development of children is spreading throughout the country in many ways. This includes opposition to the adverse revision of the Fundamental Law of Education, activities demanding a smaller class size and an increase in the subsidy for private schools, various efforts made at schools and in local communities to help children get basic academic standards, grassroots activities to help children overcome problems of delinquency or absenteeism, and the campaign to prevent the adoption of the war-praising history textbook. In the situation that the top-down "educational reform" has proven to be untenable, cooperation is increasing among teachers, children, parents, and local residents in efforts to make schools focus on the growth and development of every

child. An increasing number of municipalities are seeking to provide education centered on the local residents.

The JCP will do its utmost to further develop the movement to overcome the crisis of education in the hope that every child will achieve sound development. The JCP promotes educational reform to establish a competition- and control-free education ensuring the basic academic standards that every child can acquire, including physical strength, humane sentiments, and civic morals required as a citizen, and to build the necessary educational infrastructure commensurate with these objectives. It will also do all it can to block an adverse revision of the Fundamental Law of Education as well as to get the Convention of the Rights of the Child implemented fully in Japan.

The resolution of the JCP 23rd Congress pointed out that the crisis of morals persists in Japanese society and that it is seriously affecting children, and called for a national discussion and movement to overcome the problem. This is an important policy indicating the direction for overcoming the detrimental social environment surrounding children by using the strength of the entire society of Japan. The JCP will work to develop efforts in concrete ways, including a movement to build local communities that can insure children's safety against crimes.

b) Food self-sufficiency and rebuilding agriculture, forestry, and fishery: With agriculture and farming villages declining or collapsing, the country's food self-sufficiency rate has been falling, and local economies, land, and the environment have been disrupted, thus jeopardizing the conditions for Japanese people's survival. The government and business circles are pushing ahead with a policy of destroying family farming by abolishing the price-support system and by excluding small-scale farmers from being the government-designated operators of agriculture. We cannot leave the future of Japanese agriculture to such irresponsible government policies.

A majority of the public wants to consume safe domestic produce, and to see farming, forestries and fishing areas reinvigorated. The movement is developing in various ways to protect food safety, including the question of BSE. Interchanges between agricultural producers and urban consumers through direct marketing, campaigns to promote local production for local consumption, and efforts to preserve forests and greenery are increasing.

It is of national significance to define agriculture as a key production industry, reconstruct it, and raise the country's food self-sufficiency rate according to a national plan. The JCP will make strenuous efforts to advance the struggle to defend and develop agriculture and food by: (1) demanding that the government support farming by maintaining the price-support system for produce and by making the price and income support policy the main focus of the agricultural budget; (2) calling for the WTO agricultural agreements to be reviewed and for food sovereignty to be restored in order to stop the unrestricted increase of imports and to seek coexistence and collaboration with a variety of agriculture systems of other Asian countries; (3) striving to strengthen the measures to protect food safety, including the maintenance of the system of BSE testing of all cattle.

The JCP will urge the government to preserve and control fishery resources on its own in order to promote the fisheries industry and improve the self-sufficiency ratio for the nation's marine products.

c) Small- and medium-sized enterprises and local economies: Small- and medium-sized businesses and local economies have been hard hit by the "structural reform" policy. Under the policy of writing off bad loans, major banks are reluctant to lend money to smaller companies and are carrying out forcible collections of debts. Large-scale retail stores are opening new outlets without restrictions thanks to

"deregulation." Large corporations are abandoning more subcontractors. Falling personal consumption is making doing business more and more difficult. It is deplorable that due to these difficulties, more than 4,000 owners of small- and medium-sized firms have committed suicide in recent years.

In these circumstances, it is important to note that joint struggles are developing in many parts of the country to defend smaller businesses and local economies. Local governments, residents, and public research organizations are cooperating in the effort to prop up smaller businesses in such areas as finance, technology, product development, expansion of markets, and business counseling. An increasing number of local governments have enacted "town development ordinances" to regulate openings of new outlets of large retail stores in hopes of restoring prosperity to their shopping districts.

The JCP in the national political arena will strive to increase government expenditures for small- and medium-sized businesses, introduce a policy to establish a financial administration responsible for funding small- and medium-sized businesses, and establish regulations to restrict the harassment of subcontractors and the arrogance of large retailers. The JCP will also put a lot of effort to promote joint struggles to support and develop small businesses in local areas. It is urgent to oppose the move to scale down or abolish public financing organizations for smaller enterprises and demand that their services be improved and expanded.

d) *Improvement of environment for childcare:* The demands for better childcare is increasing among the 27 million people in their 20s and 30s. The problem is that the childcare environment in Japan is further deteriorating in spite of the fact that there are growing concerns about the declining birth rate.

According to the report on "international comparison of social environments concerning declining birth-rates and gender-equality" compiled in September 2005 by a panel of experts set up by the government Council for Gender Equality, Japan ranked as the most backward among the OECD countries in indices of childcare environments, including working hours of parents, the extent to which equality has matured in terms of employment opportunities, child-rearing costs, and the opportunities for youth to become self-reliant.

Since the 1970s, other major countries have improved their social environments to enable people to raise children and work at the same time, contributing to increasing women's labor participation rate. In contrast, in Japan, where the rate has increased only a little since the 1970s, women's labor participation rate is the lowest among the 24 OECD countries. This shows how inadequate the childcare environment is in Japan. This in fact is a major cause of the free-fall in the birth rate.

Creating a society that makes child bearing and child rearing free of anxieties has an important bearing on the future of the Japanese people. The JCP will make every effort to develop the movement for a dramatic improvement in the child-rearing environment. Objectives of this movement are to enable people to work in a humane environment while maintaining a healthy family life by ending long hours of work, build a society in which women can continue to work by eliminating discrimination against them, improve the social environments for childcare such as at childcare centers and after-school care facilities, improve the program to provide free medical care services for children, and to ensure stable jobs for young people.

e) *Environmental protection movement:* The health hazards posed by asbestos, air pollution, and the illegal dumping of industrial waste as well as environmental destruction caused by wasteful public works projects such as the reclamation of Isahaya Bay and the construction of the Kawabe River Dam and Yanba Dam are

major problems. With the United States withdrawing from the Kyoto Protocol, worldwide environmental destruction, including global warming, has further worsened, making it urgent to do something.

Under these circumstances, citizens' movements and NGO/NPO campaigns for environmental protection have grown rapidly. The JCP, in cooperation with these movements, will make strenuous efforts to support the environmental movement locally as well as globally.

f) Promotion of gender equality: International organizations have repeatedly criticized the low social status of Japanese women and Japan's gender equality falling behind the time as a fundamental issue facing Japanese society, and recommended that this must be improved. Women workers account for about 40 percent of employed workers in Japan, but 51.7 percent of them are non-regular workers. About 70 percent of part-time workers are women. From 80 to 90 percent of temporary workers are young women. Even as regular workers, women's wages are 68 percent of men's on average. Women with managerial positions account for only 10.1 percent. The Civil Law does not allow married couples to have different surnames. The prevalence of commercialization of sex is trampling on women's sexuality and dignity. Thus, Japanese women are surrounded by situations that are more abnormal than any other developed capitalist countries.

The movement demanding that the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (ICERD) be fully implemented is making new progress in solidarity with international activities. Activities in defense of women's rights have been developed, including victories in court struggles calling for an end to discrimination against women in promotion and wages, organizing of part-time women workers, prohibition of domestic violence, and prevention of sexual harassment.

The JCP has the largest number of women members in local assemblies and the Diet combined. The JCP will use this power to further strengthen joint struggles with various women's organizations and movements in order to attain gender equality by winning the ratification and implementation of international treaties as well as the establishment of effective rules.

(iii) To build a Japanese society capable of fighting back against unjust attacks from the government and business circles is a very important task in view of creating Japan's democratic future in the 21st century.

Let us strive to build a labor movement that involves a majority of the working class which accounts for 70 percent of the Japanese population, and develop the popular movement in various strata and fields, and increase cooperation with various citizens' and residents' movements so that it can contribute to create a surge of a great people's movement.

V. Put Party Building Efforts on a Regular Track

(15) Three viewpoints on the significance of tackling party building now

(i) Since its last Congress, the JCP has made great efforts to build a party that is large in numbers and with the quality to be able to take the lead in overcoming any

turbulent situation.

The JCP 23rd Congress called for a major effort to achieve a 30 percent increase in the Akahata readership from what we had at the time of the 2003 House of Representatives general election in order to achieve the goals set for the 2004 House of Councilors election. The whole party responded to this call with various new and creative efforts, resulting in an increase of Akahata readers by about 80,000 between the 23rd Congress and the 2004 House of Councilors election. This was a very important achievement.

The Central Committee 3rd Plenum in April 2005 proposed a "United Efforts to Increase JCP Membership and Akahata Readership" with an eye to the JCP 24th Congress scheduled for January 2006. It called on the whole party to achieve more than 50 percent of the set goals by the time of the 24th Congress so that the JCP can fight a series of national elections to be held in 2007 with a membership of 500,000 and an Akahata (daily and Sunday edition) readership that is 30 percent more than what we had at the time of the 2003 House of Representatives general election. Although the United Efforts drive was discontinued temporarily due to the snap House of Representatives general election, the whole party is now striving to reach the goal of the United Efforts before the 24th Congress.

In the "United Efforts" to increase JCP membership, the JCP Ichinomiya-Bihoku District Committee in Aichi Prefecture achieved its goal to contribute to building a "500,000-strong party." The JCP Tokushima Prefectural Committee and five district committees also accomplished their goals of the "United Efforts." The JCP now has a membership of more than 404,000 members, exceeding the number it had at the time of the 23rd Congress. Concerning Akahata readership, JCP Kagawa and Nara prefectural committees and 52 district committees have more Akahata subscribers than they had in the previous Congress, but nationally, the party fell short of achieving an increase from the time of the start of the "United Effort."

Since the JCP 23rd Congress, many useful experiences have been reported in the nationwide party building drive, which are full of lessons for us. However, such progress is still partial. We have not succeeded in putting it on a steady and regular track.

The 24th Congress proposes to make efforts to accomplish the party's initial target to build a "500,000-strong party" with a 30 percent increase of Akahata readership from the time of the 2003 House of Representatives general election by the April 2007 nationwide local elections.

With no national election expected, 2006 will be a year when the whole party can be fully geared to and concentrated on building a stronger party. The JCP Central Committee and other party bodies at all levels are called upon to use their united wisdom and power to make 2006 an historic year to create a major advance in party building efforts.

(ii) On the significance of party building, the new JCP Program states as follows: "The JCP's growth, backed by high-level political and theoretical capabilities as well as great organizational strength with close ties with workers and other strata of the people, is indispensable for the development of the united front."

The need now is for the whole party to take this proposal seriously and understand the need to build a stronger party now from the following three angles:

First, building a stronger party now not only is essential for the JCP's future but also has an important bearing on Japan's future course and the people's interests.

In the next few years, the issue of constitutional revision will be the major issue of national political significance and will give rise to the biggest struggle since the end of WWII, a struggle that will have a major bearing on the making of the nation and on the situation in Asia and the world. The unprecedented scale and substance of the planned major tax increase on the general public will destroy the structure of the postwar taxation system. This attempt should also be countered by national campaigns across the Japanese archipelago.

Building a stronger JCP now is a task needed to establish a steady basis for a national struggle to reject the reactionary runaway politics that disrupts peace and livelihoods.

Secondly, successfully increasing JCP membership and Akahata readership is the biggest guarantee for a JCP advance in the two nationwide elections in 2007.

However accurate the JCP political debate may be, it alone cannot bring victory to the JCP in elections. The actual circumstances around election campaigns will not be determined by wishful thinking. In order to achieve a JCP advance under any conditions, it is necessary for the JCP to rely on its own strength, and the JCP at present falls short of that ability. No full-scale advance in elections will be possible for the JCP unless the party persistently tackles the task of making itself stronger. This is the biggest lesson that the JCP has learned from the several national elections in the recent past.

Bearing this lesson in mind, we will achieve the two goals, achieving a 500,000 JCP membership and a 30 percent increase in the Akahata readership so that the JCP will be able to win on its own under any circumstances.

Thirdly, historically, there have been periods in which party building was of decisive importance in the JCP's struggle, and today the party enters one such period.

Looking back on the postwar history of the JCP, the party achieved a historically significant advance in party building after establishing the JCP Program at its 8th Congress in 1961 that followed the resolution of the "1950 Question" at its 7th Congress in 1958. In the 12 years up to 1970, the JCP rapidly increased its membership from 36,000 to 300,000 and Akahata readers from 47,000 to 1.8 million. This advance became a driving force that brought about the political advance of the JCP in the 1970s.

In the new situation we face in the early 21st century, we now have the new JCP Program. If all JCP members study it and talk about it with the general public everywhere throughout the country, we can have great prospects for mobilizing a majority of the Japanese people in a united front for the promotion of Japan's democratic change. Let us not only strengthen the existing party branches and organizations, but also establish branches in localities, workplaces, and on campuses where there are no JCP branches at present, with the spirit of pioneers.

(16) How to put party building on a stable path

(i) The basic policy of party building has been set out in the decisions of the JCP 22nd and 23rd Congresses. The main points emphasized in these decisions are as follows:

— ***Increase of JCP membership as the pillar of party building:*** The effort to increase the membership is the main pillar of party building, including activities to expand the JCP's organizational strength. We regard it as the "main pillar" because all party activities, ranging from work to meet the needs of residents to publicity

about JCP policies, election campaigns, work in parliament, and the organ paper activity, depend on JCP members who have voluntarily joined the JCP ranks. Increasing party membership, educating new members and encouraging them to take active part in day-to-day branch activities are important elements of the membership drive as the main pillar of party building.

The effort to recruit new members weakened for about ten years since the mid-1980s. It remains the weakest part of our party building activity. The urgent task now is for the JCP to overcome this weakness by using the force of party unity.

— ***JCP activity centered on Akahata:*** Work on the party organ paper is not just one of the aspects of party building but it should be put into practice in the following ways: 1) Ensure that JCP members read Akahata carefully and participate in discussions at branches and party bodies as part of their activities; 2) Constantly increase the Akahata readership and strengthen the network for delivery and collection of subscriptions so that ties between the JCP and the public can be developed with Akahata at its center; 3) Enhance cooperation with readers to develop party activities; and 4) Attach importance to Akahata-related activities to support sound party finances. Our activities with the organ paper should be geared to promote all aspects of party work in firm unity.

— ***Develop party building with the 'branches as the key players' and party education activities:*** We will improve the quality as well as the quantity of party activity with the branches as the "key players" equipped with policies and plans by reinforcing educational activities in order to heighten theoretical and political standards.

JCP members' study will focus on the following three fields: 1) the policy line and history of the JCP that includes the study of the new JCP Program; 2) the theory of scientific socialism; and 3) immediate JCP policies and strategies.

Since the last JCP Congress, the movement to study the new JCP Program has spread throughout the JCP, but only 34.2 percent of members have read it. This represents the JCP's serious weakness. We must live up to our plan to make further progress in this study drive as the JCP's main task at present. Studying the new JCP Program will provide the very basis for our daily activities displaying the party's indomitable and pioneering role.

To study scientific socialism's view of the world and history is an important way to better understand the new JCP Program as well as to fundamentally grasp the law of social development. Although politics can experience twists and turns, if we have confidence in the JCP Program and its view of history, we can look to the future and confidently carry out party activities no matter how complicated or difficult the situation may be. In the area of party building, the primary task is for JCP members and branches as well as bodies at all levels to improve the theoretical and political capabilities to be able to continue the primary task of party building.

(ii) These are the basic principles that show the direction of party building. The question is how we can put party building on a stable path in line with this basic policy. This is a task to be explored through concrete activities. In view of the present state of party activities, including its weaknesses, the Congress proposes the following five tasks as essential for drastically increasing party activities.

a) Party building with the "branches as the key players" equipped with "policies and plans": The JCP 20th Congress in 1994 called on all JCP branches to set realistic political goals to change the areas of their responsibilities, including the places of work, local communities, and campuses by mapping out their "policies and plans" and by actively carrying out activities realizing the demands of the residents as well as

building the party organization. This activity spread to the whole party, and the JCP 21st Congress Resolution (1997) stated that "party activity in which 'party branches are the key players' is fairly on track, with 89.4 percent of all branches working according to their own 'policy and plan.'" It also stated, "This is the most important result we have achieved in party building during this period, and it opens up a new phase in the history of party building."

The JCP 22nd Congress in 2000 revised the JCP Constitution, and Article 40 of the JCP Constitution on the duty of branches is clearly laid down as follows: "Develop activities by establishing policies in response to public demands, with targets and a plan for expanding party strength based on the long-term task of getting support from the majority of the people in the respective workplace, locality, or campus."

A review of actual party activities in the last several years, however, shows that this activity is weakening or being interrupted. At present, the number of party branches with prepared "policies and plan" has declined to 52 percent from the peak of 90 percent.

This reflects the weakness of the party center in its daily guidance and assistance. The party center's guidance and assistance have been inadequate in making efforts to get most party branches to carry out the "two basic activities" to realize the needs of residents and increase party ranks according to their own "policies and plans."

The JCP will not become stronger unless we devote energies specifically to party building efforts. At the same time, we must emphasize that a pursuit of expanding the party ranks will be fruitful and will make it possible to constantly increase the party strength only when we base ourselves on the activity to steadily increase the number of branches that voluntarily work with their own "policies and plans."

Taking this as an important lesson, the JCP regards it as essential to get all its branches to voluntarily pursue party building on their own as the "key players" armed with locally specific "policies and plans." All the district committees and the prefectural committees as well as the Central Committee will consistently make efforts to make sure that this way of party building will be established throughout the JCP.

In improving "policy and plans," it is important to pay attention to the following points:

- All branch members should have a discussion for setting their political goals concerning ways to modify their areas of responsibility: workplaces, local communities, and campuses. It is important to set a target number of votes the JCP should obtain in the next national election.
- To have a "policy" is for JCP branches in areas of their responsibility - workplaces, local communities, and campuses- to be aware of the needs of the local public, to make clear what action they will carry out in order to realize them, and to actually act to this end.
- To have "plans" means making efforts to increase the JCP membership and Akahata readership while strengthening the JCP qualitatively by making clear what kind of strength of the party we need in the movement to realize the needs of the public. Every JCP branch will establish its JCP Supporters' Association, produce and deliver the association's newsletter, hold day-to-day discussions with supporters, and develop the association's activities in cooperation with supporters.
- To maintain deeper and wider ties on a day-to-day basis with people around the JCP branch is a source of the party's vitality, not a mere instrument for activities on

one thing or another. Special attention must be paid to these ties as the JCP's basic style.

In making this effort to build a party in which the "branches are the key players," it is important that the branch leadership consists of several members and that the three principles of branch activity are implemented: read daily Akahata, attend branch meetings, and pay party dues.

The number of branches that hold their meetings once a week increased to 25 percent during the period between the 22nd Congress and the 23rd Congress, but declined to 19 percent during the period between the 23rd Congress and the 24th Congress. Holding branch meetings every week is the key element for all party branches to become collectives in which all party members acquire theoretical and political confidence and establish heart-to-heart solidarity. The party will make efforts to establish party activities with the regular branch meeting at the center in a way that encourages party members to become willing to attend and gain energy from them.

b) Put membership/readership drive on a stable path and make progress: The effort to put party activity with the branches as the main players needs to be combined with a specific effort to put the expansion of the membership/readership drive on a priority path to make further progress.

Those prefectures and district committees that have continuously made progress in their membership/readership drives in the last two years since the 23rd Congress provide the whole party with the following lessons from their experiences.

- 1) They consider providing political and theoretical guidance to encourage party branches and members to be their main duty. They try to have all branch members study the new JCP Program, Central Committee decisions, and Akahata articles in order to have all party members understand the most recent political developments and the role played by the JCP.
- 2) They have a clear understanding that the political goals of each party body and the membership/readership drive are interrelated. In other words, party branches and party bodies are well aware that the goal set for electoral victory is interrelated with the membership/readership goals, and that the effort to achieve demands is interrelated with the expansion of membership and Akahata readership.
- 3) They attach importance to activities to make the JCP's activities known to voters through daily publicity and participation in the national movement on the issues of the Constitution and tax increases as well as in the local movements to realize local demands, connecting them with the goals of the party membership/Akahata readership drive.
- 4) They are always trying to increase the number of branches that voluntarily work with "policies and plans." They visit each of the branches experiencing difficulties and listen to them and give them the necessary assistance.
- 5) They pay attention to the feedback effects of recruiting members and increasing the Akahata readership. By receiving new members, the party can gain vitality and make the "pillar" of party building bigger and stronger, which in turn will further advance the organ paper activity.

It is important to increase public awareness of how important the role of Akahata is in view of the present state of Japanese mass media. Most of the media today has given up their two primary tasks of journalism: reporting facts and monitoring political power. They reported little about the movement opposing the Iraq War or about the

Article 9 Association movement initiated by public figures who represent Japan's moral and ethical conscience. This failure means a neglect on the mass media's part of fulfilling its primary mission of reporting facts in response to the citizens' right to know. Far from watching power, all national newspapers are assisting the campaign to maintain the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, revise the Constitution, promote the "structural reform" policy, and force the public to pay more in taxes, raising grave concerns about the similarity to the situation under the Imperial Rule Assistance Association in prewar Japan.

Under such circumstances, the role of Akahata, which is true to journalism's mission of reporting truth and watching political power, is like a torch in the darkness, a ray of reason and conscience. At the same time to make efforts to improve Akahata, to extend the network of Akahata subscribers throughout the Japanese archipelago is very important not only for the immediate struggle to defend peace and livelihoods but also for forming a national majority supporting true democratic change in Japan.

In order to raise the level of the JCP's theoretical and political level and develop relations with the public in many ways, the role of the magazines and books published by the JCP is also important. The JCP will work hard to promote these publications.

c) Dramatically strengthen the setup and activity of prefectural and district committees:

The main duties of JCP prefectural and district bodies are to fulfill their responsibility for local politics on behalf of the JCP in their respective areas, and increase people's movements, and strengthen the activities within the party to get more branches to become the key players. To strengthen the organizational structure of JCP bodies, to improve the quality of their guidance, and to maintain leaders for them is an important link that can promote party activities, including the effort to build a stronger party.

However, the reality is that the number of full-time standing committee members, the leading core of JCP bodies, continues to decrease due to the weakening fiscal basis of the party and delays in the effort to train successors. Though the tireless efforts and dedication of full-time committee members are supporting the activities of the organizations, the party must face up to its serious inability to extend necessary assistance to branches.

In order to resolve this particular problem, party bodies should seize the new conditions arising from the maturing of the party. By assembling experienced JCP members who are retirees, the party should make efforts to establish a leadership collective. If these experienced members, who are tested both in party activities and life experiences, assume the position of leading party bodies within their capacity, it will be very helpful to greatly advance the activities of party bodies. Experiences in many places nationwide have already shown this.

In strengthening the setup of JCP district bodies, it is important to make good use of auxiliary bodies for guidance. This is required particularly in relation to local municipalities whose coverage has been enlarged due to mergers of municipalities. The past structure of a single JCP branch in a town changes into one in which several branches exist in an enlarged municipality while the number of local assembly members have been reduced. In order to meet changing local municipality needs and to advance party activities and party building, the party will explore ways to strengthen the district bodies by establishing auxiliary bodies.

Party finance is a key issue both at the party center and at intermediate bodies. It is necessary to recognize the need to strengthen the party in view of the importance of consolidating the JCP's financial position. At the same time, the party spares no effort

in having all JCP members pay party dues, which is the pillar of party finance, and in resolving problems of collection of Akahata subscription fees. Experiences of district committees that have overcome various difficulties and resolved the problems of failure of collection or delayed payments, show that the effort to establish a system of delivery of Akahata and collection of subscription fees by invoking the principle that the "branches as the key players" holds the key to resolving this problem.

The party center and the prefectural bodies should make extra efforts to encourage young members of the leading party bodies who are to assume the future leadership roles in the JCP. The party center will organize a "Special Party School." The special "Party School" for young activists of central, prefectural or district bodies will not end in one session like the ordinary "party school." It will be held in several sessions at different times to help them develop the comprehensive capabilities required to become party leaders trained in theory, practice, and partisanship.

d) Activities of branches at places of work need to be drastically enhanced: JCP branches at places of work have a very important role to play in advancing the trade union movement in Japan which is at a new turning point. JCP branches at places of work have struggled hard against various attacks and have maintained and developed their party organizations. However, with the so-called baby boom generation retiring soon, it is urgent for the party to take measures to boldly strengthen JCP branch activities in workplaces so that the invaluable foothold in workplaces can be passed on to the next generation.

Workplace branches are asked to play an active role in advancing the trade union movement and organize struggles on their own to achieve the demands of all workers. To carry out common action for common demands, to organize the unorganized, and to repel attacks on government employees are some of the important tasks of the struggle to be addressed by JCP branches in places of work. The JCP branches should draw up policies for their respective workplaces in response to the demands of the workers there and should strive to achieve them. It is necessary to increase educational activities so that they can fight against the ideology that has been imposed on workers in the name of "structural reform" and "corporate restructuring."

Bringing up successors who will take over the foothold of the movement that has been built over many years, linked with the above-stated struggles, is an important task. It constitutes a serious task of the class struggle. Nationally, there are examples in which party members talk to younger colleagues about workers' pride and having motivation about their jobs as well as the meaning of life as JCP members and building up ties of human trust, that have resulted in gaining new party members. This kind of activity should be carried out more extensively.

To give close assistance to JCP branches in the places of work, the JCP Saitama Prefectural Committee has established units at prefectural and district levels in support of JCP workplace branches by assembling veterans of workplace branches or the labor movement who are helping advance party activities. The assistance unit members visit various JCP workplace branches, listen to them regarding their present conditions, problems, and requests, and think and act together with the branch members so that mutual trust can be formed between the party bodies and workplace branches. Learning from this experience, every prefectural committee as well as district committees, wherever possible, should establish a program to assist workplace branches at every prefectural committee and at district committees wherever possible.

In promoting this activity, the Central Committee will systematically organize seminars to study and exchange experiences on workplace issues so that activists capable of guiding workplace branches will be adequately trained.

e) On strengthening activities among young people: With young people facing extraordinary adversities arising from unstable employment, difficulty in finding jobs, and high tuition fees, solving these problems has an important bearing on the future of Japanese society.

The employment situation facing young people is particularly serious as the unemployment rate among young people is twice as high as the average of all generations and one in every two young workers is a non-regular employee. Young workers are threatened by the danger of *karoshi* (death from overwork) caused by excessively long hours of work. In addition to this, young workers are the targets of such illegal treatment as unilateral dismissals or arbitrary discontinuation of employment contracts on short notice, unpaid wages or employers' failure to provide severance pay, denial of social insurance coverage, and violence in the guise of punishment. Thus, contradictions of government policies giving excessive favor to large corporations are most conspicuous among young workers.

It is a great step forward that young people are developing the movement to change these circumstances by themselves. The phenomenon is spreading throughout Japan in which unorganized workers organize themselves in unions to resist companies' unlawful actions. The National Youth Rally in Tokyo and the rally at Maruyama Park in Kyoto which launched the "Call for a Youth Insurgency" called for worker solidarity. It is also good that by joining these movements, young people are learning the importance of struggling for human rights and developing a sense of solidarity with others. The JCP earnestly applauds their movement and will continue to work in solidarity with them.

In the last six years since a call was made for establishing JCP young member's branches, over 400 such branches have come into being throughout the country. They are putting up the demands of young people such as the defense of peace and the Constitution, jobs with dignity and decent working conditions, and voting rights starting at age 18, and are making efforts to get new young members to together achieve these demands. On the other hand, many young party members are having difficulties in finding a life worth living due to harsh working conditions and excessive competition in places of work or on campuses. It is necessary for young JCP members to solve their hardships one by one and give full play to their energy and strength. To achieve this, the party should drastically increase assistance to JCP young members' branches in their study efforts. At the same time, it is important to promote exchange and cooperation within the party between the young and older generations. Specifically, youth party branches and DYLIJ branches along with party bodies and veteran party members need to understand each other's positions through exchange meetings in order to join together in their common struggle to reach out to more young people.

The JCP must increase activities among students and JCP student branches. On the occasions of lecture meetings the JCP or the DYLIJ held at universities, a lot of students have expressed for the first time their agreement with the new JCP Program envisaging the future of Japan and the world as well as the view for a future society. JCP policies are able to respond straightforwardly to students' intellectual and theoretical interests and their quest for a life worth living. The party will organize various lectures, large and small, to talk about the JCP and scientific socialism at college campuses in close collaboration with sympathetic faculty members.

The Democratic Youth League of Japan (DYLIJ) is now making efforts to reconstruct its district committees, and this effort has been successful in 28 districts in 9 prefectures. In these districts, the DYLIJ has been developing their activities in response to the demands and interests of a broad range of young people in their

respective areas, as well as improving their ties with corresponding JCP district committees, thus showing new progress. The DYLI is tackling the task to establish regional consultative bodies in every prefecture with the aim to reconstruct district committees. It is necessary for the JCP to accurately grasp their progress and give close assistance centered on study efforts.

The future belongs to young people. The JCP is a party oriented toward the future, with the program that can open a bright future of Japan. We call on the whole party to do its utmost to dramatically strengthen its activities among the younger generations in order to secure the successors to the undertaking of achieving Japan's social progress.

(Akahata, January 15, 2006)