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Speeches Marking the 83rd anniversary of the Japanese Communist Party

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Japanese Communist Party in the 60th Year Since the End of World War II

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Japanese Communist Party in the 60th Year Since the End of World War II

SHII Kazuo

Good evening to everyone in this hall and all those viewing this meeting via communication satellite broadcast. I want to thank you for attending this assembly. I am Shii Kazuo of the Japanese Communist Party.

Tokyo Assembly election and the weight of JCP existence

Recently, an election of the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly took place. First, I want to thank those in Tokyo and elsewhere for their support and help in campaigning for the JCP.

As you have heard, the election has given us clues, though at an initial stage of evaluation, to our advance against the moves toward the "two-party" system.

During the campaign, I fully realized that no elections have ever been fought with the Tokyo citizens' living conditions more damaged and with their anger more apparent than now when national as well as metropolitan policies create difficulties for ordinary people. Wherever I visited in Tokyo, I was impressed by widespread and lively movements at the grassroots level in defense of people's livelihoods from these policies. The JCP was playing an indispensable role in these movements.

The policies that the JCP put up for this election are not mere desk plans. They are based on Tokyo citizens' keen demands and movements for reinstatement of curtailed social services, support for education, childbearing, and for small- and medium-sized enterprises, and against the planned closure of metropolitan hospitals for children.

It is 83 years since the JCP was founded. Its founding principle and its reason for existence is that it makes efforts all the time, together with the people, to alleviate suffering. I feel that no other time than now has the JCP been more needed. With this firmly in mind, we will work to achieve the

public promises, and learn from the election campaign so that we will not fail to advance in the next national election.

Whether Japan learns from its war of aggression or justifies and eulogizes it?

The JCP founding anniversary this year falls on the commemorative 60th anniversary of the end of WWII. So I want to talk about the focus of Japan's postwar politics, the role the JCP played, and the goals and perspectives the JCP maintains. I want to discuss this from three angles.

First, how should Japan view its war of aggression in the past?

The war caused the loss of over 3.1 million lives among Japanese and over 20 million lives among other Asians. The war has left deep scars. Japan's postwar period has been a struggle between two views: One is to squarely face the fact of the war of aggression and to draw lessons and reflections on it; the other is to justify it and gloss over it.

Why is the JCP asking the question?

Which to choose between the two views has become a hot issue of national politics as well as a serious international question whether Japan can sustain itself in Asia and the rest of the world.

Forces that falsify historical facts and argue that Japan's past war was justifiable have gathered strength. Against this background, two adverse currents came into being. Prime Minister Koizumi visited Yasukuni Shrine for four straight years, and a controversial history textbook was published to indoctrinate children to praise wars. The international community has severely questioned the views and attitudes of the Japanese government toward history.

On May 12, JCP Central Committee Chair Fuwa Tetsuzo delivered a speech entitled "Breaking Japan's diplomatic stalemate." With this as the start, the JCP tried to unravel the core of the question through a series of articles carried by Akahata and through parliamentary debates.

I want to stress the following three points that the JCP challenge has meant.

First, the diplomatic stalemate which today's Japan finds itself in has

fundamentally derived from the attitudes of the Japanese government toward the past war and colonization of other countries; and that breaking up this stalemate won't be possible without a drastic review of these attitudes and a complete change from them.

Secondly, the core of the question is whether or not to condone Yasukuni Shrine's historical outlook and view of war, what the JCP calls Yasukuni's view of history. Yasukuni Shrine tries to justify Japan's war of aggression in the past as a war for survival and self-defense as well as a war for liberating Asia.

Thirdly, reflection on the war of aggression is the basis of the postwar international order stipulated in the United Nations Charter; and that Yasukuni's view of history will isolate Japan not only from other Asian countries but from the international community as a whole, including the United States and Europe.

Changes inside and outside of Japan in two months show strength of truth and reason

The development during the last two months are proof that the JCP raising this subject has touched the core of the question in breaking up the stalemate with perspectives.

The media has come to question Yasukuni's view on the past war

A change has taken place in the media reports in Japan. In the last two months, major commercial newspapers one after another carried editorials calling a halt to the prime minister's visits to Yasukuni Shrine. It gave a shock that not only *Asahi*, *Mainichi*, *Nikkei*, and *Tokyo*, but also *Yomiuri* in its editorial called for a halt to the prime minister's visits to Yasukuni Shrine, saying that he should not visit the shrine where class-A war criminals are enshrined, if he indeed recognizes them as war criminals.

Media awareness of the heart of the problem of Yasukuni Shrine's view of history has rapidly increased. In a feature article entitled "Let's think over the Yasukuni question," the Kyodo News reported on the shrine and its war museum "Yushukan" within the precinct. The report said: On exhibit are notes of dead soldiers and weapons. Inside the museum, the words used, exhibits on display, and the atmosphere give visitors the feeling that it is in a different dimension from the one we are in every day. It is not just a place to worship the war dead. It has a clear mission to send out a message that

Japan is not to blame.

The report went on to say that references to war victims in other Asian countries and explanations about the responsibility for leading Japan to war are lacking. The report ends with the following sentence: "The shrine, in a word, is a place where there are no dividing lines between the postwar, wartime, and prewar periods." Thus, the criticism is clearly directed at Yasukuni Shrine's outlook on war.

Even conservative politicians begin to talk sense

The mood in the political world has also begun to change. Some conservative senior politicians have begun to call for a "cautious response" from the prime minister. Former Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro, whose visits to Yasukuni Shrine also generated criticism from other Asian countries, said that it needs courage to discontinue anything. It should be noted that some influential Liberal Democratic Party politicians have begun to talk sense in that the prime minister's visit to Yasukuni Shrine negates the starting point of postwar Japan.

Now I want to tell you about an impressive change in the political atmosphere that I personally felt. It was in the House of Representatives Budget Committee meeting on June 2 when I was questioning the prime minister's opinion of his shrine visits. The prime minister answered that the government position is different from that of Yasukuni Shrine, and that he has no intention to justify the war. Though he apologetically said that he does not want this point to be misunderstood, he showed no change from his insistence on visiting the shrine. However, a change in the atmosphere was conspicuous in the Lower House First Committee room. The room used to be filled with heckling whenever the JCP is questioning. On that day, however, neither heckling nor whispering were heard. In these special moments for the JCP in parliament, I spoke in complete silence. The silence seemed to be a reflection of the other parties' thinking that they cannot but listen to the JCP argument on this question.

Criticism spreading in U.S., Britain, and France

Criticisms are also spreading abroad, making an issue of Yasukuni Shrine's view of war. The *New York Times* in its feature article said: "Yasukuni's view of history is one that few Asians or Americans would accept." The *USA Today* also carried a feature article which criticized Yasukuni Shrine for justifying the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and the invasions of China and Southeast Asia by saying: "To maintain the independence and peace of

the nation and for the prosperity of all Asia, Japan was forced into conflict." The French newspaper *Le Monde* also carried a feature article saying Yasukuni Shrine's view of war "is unacceptable to all of Asian and western historians" (translated from French). A British paper *Financial Times* of July 19 carried a sharp criticism, saying, "The Yasukuni museum next to the shrine shamelessly glorifies Japan's war record and glosses over such 'incidents' as the Nanjing massacre."

These developments, taking place at home and abroad in only two months, are a clear indication of how strong truth and reason are, aren't they?

I am proud that behind the crucial role the JCP has played in this struggle lies its 83-year history of upholding opposition to war and struggles for peace even with the sacrifice of its members' lives.

Insistence on Yasukuni visit will cause irredeemable consequences

Prime Minister Koizumi's insistence on the wrong choice of making further visits to Yasukuni Shrine is cornering Japan's foreign policy into a deadlock.

'Japan has few friends around her'

One aspect is that Japan's isolation from other Asian countries has become deeper than ever before. Its alienated position is obvious in the list of United Nations members that jointly submitted to the U.N. General Assembly on July 6 the G-4 resolution by which Japan, Germany, Brazil, and India called on the U.N. Security Council permanent members to be increased. Of the 25 co-sponsors, only three countries are from Asia and the Pacific region -- Afghanistan, Bhutan, and Maldives. Despite desperate moves of the Japanese government to win over supporters, not a single neighbor of Japan is on that list. Twelve European countries are on the list, including countries that are adjacent to Germany and fell victim to the Nazi Germany's aggression, such as Belgium, Czech, Denmark, France and Poland. In this respect, Japan makes a sharp contrast to Germany.

The German newspaper *Frankfurter Rundschau* in its editorial pointed out that Japan has few friends in its neighborhood. It also says that the Japanese moves are detrimental to Germany seeking a UNSC permanent seat. The diplomatic stalemate has become serious to reach such an extent as this.

U.S. House of Representatives 'reaffirms' Japan as war criminal

The other aspect that I want to introduce to you is a resolution that the United States House of Representatives adopted on July 14 commemorating the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. The resolution characterized the war as "rescu[ing] the world from the scourge of fascist militarism." It also referred to all war victims including Okinawa, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki.

The resolution includes a separate heading concerning Japan's war crimes, which states as follows: "(The Congress) reaffirms the judgment in Tokyo rendered by the International Military Tribunal for the Far East of 1946-1948 and the conviction of certain individuals as war criminals for their crimes against humanity."

It is the first time that the U.S. Congress adopted a resolution commemorating the end of a war. It bears weight that the U.S. Congress adopted the resolution commemorating the 60th anniversary of the conclusion of the Second World War, reaffirming Japan's war criminality. It should be noted that the resolution refers to Japan among the Axis, with no mention of Germany. It is easily surmised that this could be an expression of particular U.S. concern about Yasukuni Shrine's interpretation of history now being advanced in Japan, saying that Japan fought a just war and that there were no such things as war crimes.

The situation has worsened to this degree. We can not afford to leave the situation as it is. I want to warn Prime Minister Koizumi that if he insists on visiting the shrine, Japan will be alienated not only from Asia but from the whole world in an irredeemable consequence. It is never too late to decide to cancel further visits.

German example gives hope to Japan

Struggles against the adverse currents trying to justify the war of aggression must go on. I want to stress that only after Japan accomplishes this task will new prospects be opened up. This is clear from what Germany has experienced. What German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder in Berlin said in April at a joint news conference with South Korean President Roh Moo Hyun was very impressive. Asked by an Asian reporter to comment on the issue between Japan and China and South Korea over the distortion of history, German Chancellor Schroeder said: Every country has its own approach to face the bright as well as the dark sides of its history. All I can

do is to speak of the German experience. If a country sensitively and self-critically faces its own history, it won't lose friends but will win them instead. This is what we have experienced. This is an experience that anyone can share, if they have the will.

I am convinced that after this task is accomplished, a bright future will open before Japan and its people by winning true friends in Asia. With this perspective in mind, let us proceed with this task to an extent that adverse moves praising wars will be uprooted.

Which road to choose: subordination to the U.S. or independent and peaceful Japan

The second point of postwar political confrontation is about the choice for Japan: to continue its subordination to the U.S. or to achieve true independence and peace.

No one thought Japan-U.S. security setup would last so many decades

Japan-U.S. Security Treaty – framework of Japan's subordination to U.S.

Japan's downgrading subordination to the U.S. is the biggest problem in postwar politics. What was the major change in the world after the war? It is that the colonial system disappeared almost completely, with the movement for national independence in Asia, Africa and Latin America spreading. When unprecedented global changes were proceeding, Japan was degraded to a dependent country. This was an extraordinarily retrogressive move.

Underlying this is the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. Under the security treaty signed in 1951, maintaining of the U.S. military base system set up under the U.S. occupation was imposed on Japan. The treaty was revised in 1960, including provisions for Japan-U.S. joint military operations between the U.S. forces and Japanese Self-Defense Forces.

At that time, however, nobody in Japan's political circles anticipated that this system would last so long.

It was the forerunners of the present Liberal Democratic Party, the Liberal Party and Democratic Party that imposed the security treaty on the people. In 1955, they merged to form the LDP and adopted a platform stipulating

"preparation for withdrawal of the U.S. forces stationed in Japan." They were talking about the possible withdrawal of U.S. forces as a matter of course.

What was the opposition response to this issue? All the then opposition parties opposed the revised Japan-U.S. Security Treaty in the 1960 Diet. Not only the Communist and Socialist parties, but the just born anti-communist Democratic Socialist Party, a splitter from the Socialist Party, opposed ratification of the treaty. The Komei Party, which was founded in 1964, called for "step-by-step" dissolution of the military treaty. Facing its serious setback in the 1972 general election, the Komei Party temporarily called for the immediate abrogation of the treaty.

This was the situation in Japan at that time.

JCP's vital role of calling for the abrogation of the Security Treaty

But now, asked about the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, all parties, except for the JCP, express as a conditioned reflex absolute support. Prime Minister Koizumi in his initial talks with President Bush said, "I am a born Americanist. Some say Japan should be more independent, but it is completely unpractical." When Okada Katsuya became the President of the Democratic Party of Japan, he lost no time in visiting the U.S. to argue that it is essential for Japan to maintain and further develop the alliance.

The LDP, DPJ, and Komei Party now do not doubt that the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty will remain unchanged forever, just like a law of nature. It's pitiable that they have forgotten their respective wishes for independence.

Among political parties in Japan today, only one party continues to demand the abrogation of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty in order to create a Japan of independence and neutrality. I want to point out that our role is indispensable for the interest of the Japanese people.

Japan-U.S. alliance ignoring U.N. Charter and overriding the framework of the treaty itself

I've talked about changes in political circles' attitudes toward the security treaty. Well, what is the actual situation of the security treaty during the past half century? Has it been changed for the better for the Japanese people? Absolutely not.

U.S. military bases shows depth of Japan's dependency

Recently, I visited Okinawa and realized the widespread anger at the continued presence of U.S. military bases and the heavy burdens they have caused since the end of World War II. Even after the crash of a helicopter in August 2004 which shook the local people, the U.S. forces have had their own way.

They began live-shooting drills at a combat training range. It is just 300 meters away from residential areas that the shooting drills to kill Iraqis are conducted. Anger at the shooting drills is increasing among the people.

A U.S. serviceman committed an act of molestation of an elementary school girl. That this happened on Sunday morning when many citizens were on the streets added fuel to local people's anger.

Sixty years have passed since the U.S. military bases were established in Okinawa and other parts of Japan. The base functions have been strengthened, which causes increasing damages and pains. How can Japan in such an extraordinary situation be called an independent nation?

Three laws to send SDF abroad

In addition to the problem of U.S. military bases, two serious matters took place.

One is the extensive change of the Japan-U.S. military alliance into a global-level alliance beyond the framework of the security treaty.

Under the security treaty, two cases are assumed as conditions for Japan-U.S. joint military operations. One is an "emergency in Japan" – when Japan is attacked. The other is an "emergency in the Far East" – when the U.S. forces in the Far East enters into a state of war and the war extends to Japan. In both cases, the "joint operations," in principle, is for the "defense of Japan." However, remember the laws that were enacted to send the SDF abroad.

First, the 1999 "Law for Measures to Deal with Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan" which we opposed as the "war law." With this law, Japan-U.S. military cooperation is applied to "areas surrounding Japan," an ambiguous concept. When we questioned the government about the "areas surrounding Japan," the government answered that it is not a geographical

concept. The "area" can stretch ultimately to somewhere on "the other side of the globe." This is the only "area" that the government cited as being outside the "areas surrounding Japan."

Beyond the security treaty's geographical limitation of being within the Far East, the "war law" is aimed to allow military cooperation with the U.S. anywhere on earth.

Next is the "Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law" enacted in 2001. The United States launched the retaliatory war on Afghanistan. The Defense Agency reportedly discussed sending the SDF under the "Law for Measures to Deal with Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan." But under no circumstances can Afghanistan be designated as an "area surrounding Japan." Therefore, a special law was enacted to send the Aegis ship to the Indian Ocean. This was the initial overseas dispatch of the SDF with the aim to support the U.S. war in Afghanistan.

Third, the "Law Concerning the Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq" was enacted in 2003. The U.S. invasion of Iraq raised the subject of sending Japanese ground forces. The government sent the SDF to Iraq by introducing the idea that the activity of the SDF must be allowed only within a "non-combatant zone." But the SDF convoy was shot at and their camp site was fired upon. This shows that the Japanese government argument is untenable.

What common point do these three laws to send the SDF abroad have? It is that no article of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty provides the ground for these laws. They do not show any signs of the given aim of the security treaty – the "defense of Japan."

SDF may join U.S. war anywhere on the pretext of 'Japan-U.S. alliance requirement'

Asked by the JCP in the Diet on what basis the government can dispatch the SDF abroad, the government answered that it is "to meet the requirements of the Japan-U.S. alliance." However, any military alliance consists of written rights and obligations. Free of this, the Japanese government unconditionally cooperates with the U.S. in wars anywhere on the pretext of "Japan-U.S. alliance requirements." This demonstrates that the government's subordination to the U.S. knows no limits.

As shown in the aggression against Iraq, the war by the U.S. is an unlawful

war, the embodiment of the "preemptive strike" strategy in violation of the U.N. Charter. Notwithstanding this, the Japanese government has neither the willingness nor the capability to think whether a war waged by the U.S. is in accord with international law. To justify his support of the war on Iraq, Prime Minister Koizumi spoke of "Iraq's weapons of mass destruction." But no WMDs were found. Then he began to say, "Even Saddam Hussein has not been found." In this way Koizumi unconditionally swallows and parrots whatever the U.S. claims.

What is at question today is if Japan should be bound to the "Japan-U.S. Alliance" in the 21st Century. It is unlawful in a double sense: it is an alliance that ignores the framework of the U.N. Charter and goes far beyond even the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. Isn't it high time for Japan to renounce such abnormal relations?

Subordination to the U.S. has little constitutionality

The second major point is that the government policy of sticking to the "Japan-U.S. alliance" is incompatible with the Constitution.

I have mentioned some cases of sending the SDF abroad. But no matter what law is enacted, there is a limit that cannot be overstepped under the present Constitution of Japan. It is the prohibition of using force abroad.

Contradiction of tricky interpretation of Constitution

After the end of World War II, the LDP-government established the Self-Defense Forces by violating the Constitution. Originally, the existence of the SDF contradicts the second paragraph of Article 9 of the Constitution which bans war potential. Therefore, the government uses tricky 'interpretations', saying that the "SDF is not the war potential that the Constitution bans." What are they, then? The answer is that the SDF is a "force that is the minimum necessary for self-defense." Can you understand this logic? Although it is nonsense, they continue to use such an absurd argument.

This argument logically leads the government to fall into the following trap set by itself: so long as the SDF is not war potential, it is not allowed to use force abroad. To overcome this barrier, there is no alternative but to rewrite Article 9 of the Constitution and to upgrade the SDF to real "war potential."

Develop efforts to oppose adverse revision of the Constitution

The Liberal Democratic Party, Democratic Party of Japan and Komei Party are engaged in a constitutional revision race. They are calling for establishing the "self-defense armed forces" by amending the second paragraph of Article 9. This means nothing but making Japan a "country fighting wars abroad," or negating the renunciation of war.

Those aiming at constitutional revision are murmuring: "It is just adding a few words, 'self-defense armed forces.' As the SDF already exists, it is only needed to write this actuality into law. There is no meaning beyond it." But what they have in mind is how to make the SDF a war-capable force able to cooperate fully with the U.S. preemptive attack strategy. They view the Constitution of Japan only from the U.S. position and intend to sell it to the U.S. This is the real story.

The key to victory over their scheme is for all the people to realize their true intentions. The people's movement united in opposing any mal-revision of the Constitution is extending nationwide. On this occasion to commemorate the founding of the JCP, let's determine to develop this movement further.

A peaceful and independent Japan accords with mainstream of 21st century

Let us turn our eyes to the world situation. In a rather long period after the end of World War II, two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union had ruled the world, confronting each other. The major tool for this was world-wide networks of military alliances. But with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Soviet-led alliances were also dissolved. Most of the U.S.-led alliances were also dissolved or weakened. The military alliance system is a relic from the last century.

Today's major current of the world is non-alignment and neutrality centering on Asian, Latin American and African countries that achieved independence after the Second World War. Unprecedented waves of movements are surging for an international order of peace based on the U.N. Charter.

It is surely in line with the major current of the world for Japan to abrogate the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty to pave the way toward independence and peace, as the JCP has long been calling for. Deeply convinced of this, let us make a major advance to create a bright future!

Choose between politics supporting arrogance of business circles/big corporations and one prioritizing people's livelihood

The third focal point of postwar politics is the confrontation between politics supporting the arrogance of business circles and large corporations, and one prioritizing people's livelihoods.

"Capitalism without rules" -- arrogant business circles and their supportive politics

Japan is often said to be a country of "capitalism without rules." In many fields closely connected with people's livelihoods and rights such as employment, small-and medium size businesses, agriculture, environment, and social security services, rules which are already commonplace in Europe have not yet been established in Japan.

This aberration derives from two factors: the outrageously arrogant nature of business circles and large corporations and LDP politics supporting them without constraints.

Recently, I read an interesting *Akahata* serial article titled "Labor situations in EU." The first two installment were on Toyota in France: "35 work hours per week even of Toyota," and "Workers oppose import of *karoshi* (death due to overwork)."

First, let me introduce the latter installment. In a France-Toyota plant, the management imposed on workers time-controlled and intensive work as is practiced in Japan. As you know, it is often said that "at Toyota plants they work on the run." This way of intensive work was imposed in France. Consequently, a *karoshi* occurred in France. French workers launched a struggle demanding "Turn some of the large profits to maintaining our health." Toyota has thus even exported *karoshi* abroad. I feel enraged at such inhuman tactics nature of big business, a shameful behavior in the world.

But at the same time, the first installment of the report says, "Even Toyota observes 35 working hours a week." Toyota must obey the labor standards in France. The reporter writes:

I said, "Toyota workers in Japan work an average of 1,963 hours a year. In addition, over 10,000 workers work more than 360 hours overtime a year." A representative of a French workers' union CGT at Toyota then

asked me in surprise, "When on earth do they sleep?" He went on to say, "In France we work on a 35-hour-a-week basis, and no more than 1,600 hours a year. No work on Saturday and Sunday, of course. Those days are time of rest for my family and myself." The phrase "Time for my family and myself" really sounds good, doesn't it?

In Europe, thanks to workers long-standing struggles, there are labor rules that even Toyota must observe.

As regards our struggle in Japan, I'd like to stress the importance of both struggles to overcome inhuman practices by large corporations and to change the political system that favors corporations over people.

Two historic results of getting rules established to defend people's livelihoods

Looking back on postwar history, Japan, a country of "capitalism without rules," also has some rules to defend people's livelihoods. We have the historic experience of people's struggles realizing regulations to protect workers from inhuman practices by large corporations. In these struggles, the JCP played an active role, joining hands with workers. I'd like to draw attention to the importance of struggle.

Rule to stop arbitrary firing of workers

One example is restrictions against arbitrary dismissals. In the major recession of the 1970s swept a storm of personnel cuts by big businesses. Workers rose up and struggled to counter corporate restructuring throughout the nation. They filed lawsuits with district courts, and consequently gained a judgment at the Supreme Court that dismissals can not be arbitrarily made. This is called the precedent of "four requirements for dismissal for the purpose of corporate restructuring," including proving the necessity of dismissals. Lack of any of the requirements makes a dismissal invalid. This precedent has proven to be a strong weapon for workers facing corporate restructuring.

In opposition to this, the government and business circles tried to recoup their losses. The government proposed an adverse revision of the Labor Standards Law in 2003. The original bill included the phrase "employers can dismiss employees," as well as measures to increase the number of contingent workers. It was intended to offset the gains that workers had won.

Workers made a counteroffensive against the government proposal. The JCP also argued bitterly in Diet deliberations, and drove the government into a corner. As a result, the "provision of arbitrary dismissal" was deleted, and instead, in Article 18 of the Labor Standards Law was specified a new provision stating that the use of "dismissal when lacking objective and logical reason and deemed unjustifiable based upon social convention, will be invalidated for abuse of the right of dismissal." Thus, the spirit of the "four requirements of restructuring dismissal" was embodied in the Labor Standards Law, and the addition of the new provision turned out to be a great victory on the part of workers, making a landmark in workers' struggles.

End unpaid overtime work -- another struggle

Another struggle is for eliminating overtime work without pay. For 29 years since 1976, the JCP, in cooperation with workers, grilled the government on the issue as many as 240 times in the Diet. Our struggle bore fruit in 2001. At last, the Health, Welfare and Labor Ministry issued a directive to end the illegal practice. Since 2001 until today, a rough estimate of 60.5 billion yen has been paid to workers for unpaid overtime work. This was another accomplishment of workers' struggles.

However, the government and the business circles launched a counterblow to legalize 'unpaid overtime work.' The Japan Business Federation (Keidanren) in June 2005 made a "proposal concerning white collar-workers exemption." 'Exemption', an unpopular word, means "official permission not to pay something that you would normally have to pay." The proposal says that, for instance, salaried workers with an annual income of more than four million yen be exempted from the rule restricting work hours. To put it simply, "if a worker's annual income exceeds four million yen, he or she can be forced to work overtime without any pay." If a worker's superior defines him or her as 'exempted,' he or she must work until midnight without compensation. We must not condone such an unlawful measure.

Fierce struggles continue. Not retreating, let us push forward with our struggle to eliminate unlawful unpaid overtime work!

There is still a lack of adequate rules to defend workers' rights. "Rules of equitable treatment" and regulations of overtime work that exist in Europe haven't been established in Japan. But the postwar history tells us that only our struggles will open up a path toward a victory, doesn't it? Bearing this

conviction in mind, let us fight to establish rules defending our livelihoods!

Social security cutbacks and major tax increase schemes by greedy business circles

In addition, I'd like to refer to two major moves that will ruin people's livelihoods. A struggle to defend people's living standards from them has become an urgent task.

Social security cutback intended to ease burdens of corporations

First, a series of cuts in social security services have been imposed. In the wake of an adverse revision of national pension systems, a revised nursing care insurance law was railroaded through this current Diet session by the majority of the ruling Liberal Democratic and Komei parties and the opposition Democratic Party. The revision is designed to have elderly people in care facilities shoulder the full cost for meals and rooms as "hotel-like costs." It sounds like "if they are unable to pay, they will have to leave."

In addition, a bill to "support the independence of the disabled" is the point at issue. This is a major adverse revision of the social welfare system for the disabled people – the more serious the disability, the heavier the cost to bear. Further, the government plans to adversely change medical service systems next year.

What is a point in common in these inhuman laws? It is that "those unable to pay the necessary costs are excluded from social services." It is really a cold-blooded policy. The need now is for us to counter the government attack which will deprive people of the right to live guaranteed by the Constitution.

I want you to look at the following point: These moves are underlined by a vision of business circles trying to reduce corporate cost-sharing as much as possible. The 'Okuda Vision,' a policy proposal by Nippon Keidanren in 2003 says that under the diversified employment situation, corporate employees should pay full insurance premiums by themselves. This is an announcement that corporations will no longer make contributions to social insurance programs.

Nippon Keidanren chairman Okuda Hiroshi even insists last February that social security benefits "be held under economic growth rates." His idea

was included in the government '2005 basic policy for economic and fiscal management and structural reform' targeting medical services. This is outrageous. If the nation's economy grows by 1 percent a year, the total medical costs should be held down to a 1 percent increase. In case the economy registers minus growth, medical expenses should be minus. Stop joking! Does he mean to say that diseases decrease in times of economic depression? I denounce the business circles that call for such a cold-blooded policy in order to cut back their burdens.

Large tax increases for the people -- business circles exempted

The second move is the imposition of large tax increases. As I have mentioned, Keidanren made a policy proposal on June 21 of no payment for workers' overtime work. On the same day, the government Tax Commission made public a plan to increase the income tax rate of salaried workers. The plan has now become a national issue. What if the plan of abolishing or decreasing a series of deductions of income tax should be implemented together with a consumption tax rate increase? As specified before, a family of four with a household head whose annual income is about 5 million yen will be forced to pay 550,000 yen more in tax, equivalent to two-months' take-home pay.

Please remember that underlying this is business circles' goal of achieving a decrease in corporate burdens. Tax reforms manifested in the 'Okuda Vision' are as follows:

- 1) Increase consumption tax rate gradually to 16 percent;
- 2) Decrease and abolish a series of deductions in income tax, and ease the progressive tax rates;
- 3) Reduce actual rates in corporate tax.

The corporate tax revenues have been halved to 10 trillion yen from 20 trillion yen after several corporate tax breaks. The 'Okuda Vision' demands further cutbacks. In order to make up the deficit caused from the reduction in corporate tax, the business circles insist on increasing the regressive consumption tax and abolishing income tax deductions. The Tax Commission Chair Ishi Hiromitsu says, "We all shoulder these burdens." When I heard his statement, I thought, "How dare he say such a thing?" The 'all' excludes business circles, doesn't it?

LDP and DPJ competing of allegiance of business circles

I'd like to point out that the LDP and the DPJ are taking the same stance regarding cutbacks in social security services and large tax increases for

ordinary people. In July, the DPJ announced a "plan to reconstruct the national finance" compiled for the next general election. This plan includes all demands that business circles make. It specifies that the rate to increase the budget for social security be controlled under the growth rate of the Gross National Product. It also refers to a consumption tax increase. It allows an income tax increase by abolishing deductions for dependents and spouse, and special deductions for dependents. This clearly indicates that the DPJ is competing with the LDP for the allegiance of business circles.

Let's advance JCP with slogan for appropriate burden on business circles and big enterprises

Friends, business circles are trying to impose a larger burden upon ordinary people on the pretense of Japan's being an aging society and breaking through the nation's financial crisis, saying, "There is no choice but to do so." But this is wrong. The essence of their policy is to reduce large corporations' burdens, and instead, to impose the costs on people.

Today, large corporations are said to have gained unprecedented, the biggest ever profits. Their surplus funds at hand have increased by 16 trillion yen a year up to 82 trillion yen. Large companies should shoulder an appropriate burden commensurate with their profits.

I'd like to appeal to all of you. If we try to defend our livelihood, we need the influence of the JCP that faces up to the arrogant attitudes of large companies in the fields of employment, social security, and tax reforms, and force them to carry out their social responsibility. The LDP and the DPJ, graded by Keidanren on what they can do for big business and accepting political donations from corporations, cannot defend people's interests. In order to improve people's living conditions, the surest way is to advance the JCP, which has accepted not one donation from business circles in the 83 years since it was founded.

In conclusion -- JCP basic stance in the face of tense political situation

Today I have mentioned, from three angles, the focal points of the political confrontations during the postwar era. I'm convinced that the JCP's stance serves people's interests, and stands in the mainstream of history. The forces of the two-party system can offer no positive solution to any problems facing the people. The political situation is now tense, being threatened with

dissolution of the House of Representatives. Why did the postal service privatization bill pass the Lower House only by the slight majority of five votes? I think this passage reflects public criticism of and anger at the bill. Their criticism and anger are not restricted to the bill's anti-public interest nature that would disregard public services and let 340 trillion yen worth of postal savings and postal life insurance be preyed upon by major banks. Now Japanese politics at home and abroad are at an impasse, causing more hardships on ordinary people. The Koizumi government has become more self-absorbed, pushing for postal privatization and disregarding the public interest. The prime minister should notice that the people are turning their attention to the nature of politics under the Koizumi Cabinet.

Prime Minister Koizumi's threats to "dissolve the Lower House if the Upper House denies the postal bill" is the epitome of arrogance. But in case the Lower House is dissolved for a general election, we will get ready for the election, and fight in high spirits to seek judgment on Koizumi politics, and call for a drastic change from LDP politics. Whether the LDP or the DPJ takes power, Japanese politics won't change. Only a JCP advance will help Japan pave the way toward better politics. We are determined to convey this to the public to gain further support for the JCP.

We are determined to quicken our own activities for the coming election with prospective candidates in the lead, and promote a "great drive to increase party strength," thus creating an upsurge for strengthening ties between the JCP and the general public.

Finally, in order to achieve a great advance in the election, and to build a stronger party, we heartily wish for your support and cooperation.

Thank you for your attention.

For a Stronger and Bigger JCP To Usher in a New Era

ICHIDA Tadayoshi

Good evening, everyone. My greeting also goes to all those watching the live satellite broadcast throughout the nation. Thank you all for attending this assembly to mark the 83rd anniversary of the founding of the Japanese Communist Party.

First of all I would like to express my thanks to those who voted for the JCP in the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election as well as to the JCP supporters' association members, JCP supporters, party members, JCP candidates and their families who braved the hot weather. On behalf of the Central Committee, I express my heartfelt gratitude for the material and moral support from all over the country. Thank you very much.

How should we understand the result of the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election?

Let me first mention our understanding of the results of the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election. The important thing to consider is the conditions under which the election was held.

In the past four years we have had two national elections – the general election in 2003 and the House of Councilors election in 2004. These two national elections were held under the large-scale propaganda campaign, with full support from the media, for a "two-major-party system."

In the previous Metropolitan Assembly election in 2001, the JCP received 15.6 percent of the total votes. But both in the 2003 general election and in the 2004 House of Councilors election, the vote cast for the JCP decreased to 9 percent in Tokyo. The number of votes cast for the JCP in the 2004 House of Councilors election was about 520 thousand, while the Democratic Party of Japan got four times more votes than the JCP. The Metropolitan Assembly election this time was fought under those big changes of the power relations between parties.

Although we could not maintain the 15 seats we previously held, we won 13

seats including seats in the two-seat constituencies of Bunkyo Ward and Hino City. We recovered the percentage of our votes to 15.6 percent. I am convinced that it is an important result that we recovered our position in the fierce campaign in which every party exerted all energies just like in a national election and the full-fledged campaign for "two-major-party system" was launched.

This result was based on our policy debate in the interest of the people. We fought the election by making clear, from the beginning, the structure of the "all-are-ruling-parties" versus the JCP both at the metropolitan and national levels. Developing this argument, we created a favorable climate. Many votes for the JCP from nonpartisans resulted from our fighting spirit and energy.

At the same time it was of great regret that we lost 6 incumbent seats because of the unsuccessful change of candidates and other reasons, although we got new seats in 4 constituencies. We are now analyzing thoroughly what contributed to the failure and how to overcome it in each constituency, learning lessons from the experiences of the victory under difficult conditions.

In spite of your great efforts day and night, the JCP did not necessarily utilize all of our strength. In this regard, I am painfully aware of the weakness of fully utilizing the party's full strength. For our future advance, we will draw lessons from both the good and the bad results.

The percentage of votes in the Metropolitan Assembly election – 15.6 percent is equivalent to 2.65 seats in the Tokyo bloc of proportional representation of the House of Representatives, where we have now one seat – means that if we can increase the percentage 2 points, we can get 3 seats.

I think that this is a foothold, though it is only a beginning, for us to squarely confront the moves toward the "two-major-party system" and to advance in the next national election.

Dear friends, deeply convinced with this point, let's overcome our weaknesses and vigorously develop our activities for a new advance.

What is the campaign advocating a "two- major-party system"?

A product of the crisis of the LDP politics

By the way, what is the campaign for the "two-major-party system"?

In the 2nd Central Committee Plenum held in August of 2004 after the House of Councilors election, we made it clear that the campaign was essentially a product of the crisis of the LDP with the aim of keeping it in existence. Without changing the old framework of giving precedence to large corporations and subordination to the U.S., the "two-major-party system" is a scheme to prepare a political group to replace the LDP government and to prevent anti-LDP votes from going to the JCP. That is the device introduced to prolong the present ruling system.

Its first manifestation is the "non-LDP" government formed by Prime Minister Hosokawa Morihiro followed by Prime Minister Hata Tsutomu from 1993 to 1994. That government collapsed in a year.

The second one is the "Koizumi's government" that appeared with the call for "destroying the LDP." This is pushing through the very same LDP politics in the crudest way and further deepening the contradictions between the government and the public.

The third one is the ongoing campaign for the "two-major-party system" led by business circles on a large scale, which was started around the time of 2003 general election.

The true aim of "two-major-party system" is revealing itself to the public

The day after the FY2005 national budget was approved, newspapers ran editorials stating that the Diet's debates were sluggish.

One newspaper wrote that "the discussion in the Diet session was so sluggish that it drew sighs of disappointment."

Why? In the press conference on February 22, the leader of the DPJ which had been supposed to be a major opposition party declared that "we do not want to be called an opposition party. Please call us a party preparing to become a governing party."

In short, the role of the DPJ is not to struggle as an opposition party to defend the interests of the people from LDP politics. But it is to compete for

power within the framework of LDP politics, saying: "We are not anti-LDP. Please feel secure in supporting the DPJ as our policy is not so different from LDP." This confession by the party concerning the nature and purpose of the "two-major-party system" reflects the development of the situation in recent days.

DPJ president Okada once said that the difference between the LDP and the DPJ is just like the difference between "Nihonbashi-Mitsukoshi" and "Takashimaya" (two major department stores in Tokyo). If so, is it necessary to change government? It is no wonder that the discussion in the Diet is sluggish.

The DPJ sometimes takes a different attitude from the LDP on specific issues. But regarding the key issues of national political issues, the DPJ stands on the same ground as the LDP. There is no difference between them on the matters of adversely revising the Constitution or large increases in taxation on the people.

As the DPJ does not have the backbone to counter the LDP politics, it tried to make "politics and money" a major issue at the beginning of the ordinary Diet session of this year to attack the LDP, but the DPJ got counterpunched. The LDP and the DPJ denounced each other for being involved in scandals. Through these events, what has been made clear to the public was that both the LDP and the DPJ have the very same roots of receiving donations from business corporations and other organizations, which underlie the ground of political corruption.

They do not only compete for bad politics, but in some cases, they confer and agree with each other about bad politics.

For example, what do they say about revising the Constitution? The Tokyo Shimbun on June 22, 2005 carried "round-table talks by LDP, Komei and DJP key men." In the talks, DPJ Edano Yukio said: under the requirement of a two-third majority vote for initiating a process of revising the Constitution, it is not easy to push ahead with a plan for constitutional revision alone. If a draft is not prepared jointly according to an agreement between the parties, it is impossible to revise the Constitution.

In response to this, Yosano Kaoru, the LDP Policy Council chair said that in the stage of jointly preparing a draft, the LDP's plan will be used for reference.

Such is the case not only concerning constitutional revision. A newspaper said in an editorial that "if the government and opposition parties reached an agreement even on a consumption tax rate increase, what will they make a point at issue in a future election? Isn't it the same as the prewar Imperial Rule Assistance Association?" This will inevitably increase contradictions between them and the people.

The advance of the JCP can change politics

In contrast with the attitude of the "two major parties", the JCP Diet members' group, in close unity with popular movements, has openly developed counter proposals on all issues based on the position of the majority of the public.

For example, the JCP's argument to prevent a major tax increase and an additional increase of burden on the people threw in relief the worth of the JCP. By clarifying the fact that the approximately 7 trillion yen additional burden increase plan envisaged by the Koizumi cabinet is about to be forcibly carried out in spite of the ever-decreasing household revenues, the JCP exposed it as a potentially destructive blow to the people's living as well as to the Japanese economy and finance, just as we had seen at the time of the Hashimoto cabinet. The mass media also wrote that "it will be another example of the Hashimoto cabinet." This became the prevailing public opinion.

Through the polemic, we revealed the structure of a series of endless snowballing burden increases: abolition of local income tax-free measures for the elderly, an increase of the National Health Insurance tax and the public nursing-care insurance tax for the elderly, as well as the huge increase from 1,000 to 20,510 yen for a silver pass (for the elderly to use metropolitan transport services).

The Japanese Communist Party plays a pioneering role regarding the problems of recognition of Japan's history and the place of Yasukuni Shrine. It is supported by our own history of resistance. On May 12, Central Committee Chair Fuwa Tetsuzo made a report on the current situation, "How to break Japan's diplomatic stalemate." After this, Executive Committee Chair Shii Kazuo questioned Prime Minister Koizumi in the Diet. The prime minister had to answer: "My idea is different from what the Yasukuni Shrine represents." Why does he visit the shrine, then? He has lost the justification for his visits.

In addition, our newspaper *Akahata* published day-to-day campaign reports. Both at home and abroad, the Yasukuni's view of war and Japan's history of war are increasingly brought into question. Such a change has taken place. Isn't this an example of how the invaluable worth of the JCP is being fully displayed?

Currently, the situation over the adverse revision of the Japanese Constitution is very tense. What is common among all those who want to revise the basic law is the aim to change paragraph 2 of Article 9 of the Constitution in order to make it possible for Japan to legally have the self-defense armed forces. It is to make it possible for Japan to openly engage in wars overseas, namely, to make it possible for the Self-Defense Forces to cooperate in any U.S. war of aggression and to use force abroad. By revealing this intent, the JCP has continued to fight in and outside of the Diet.

What is the source of this role of opposition of the Japanese Communist Party? It is the past history of the JCP and the line of the Party Program.

Namely, it is the 83-year history against war and for peace in prewar and postwar days, and the line of the Party Program, which makes clear the root causes of threats to peace and people's sufferings – politics serving big business and subordinating Japan's public interest to the United States, and shows how to find a way out.

Based on this history and the line of the Party Program, and united with the people at the grass-roots level, there are 400,000 party members working hard day and night. At the same time, we have newspaper *Akahata* which conveys the reality of Japan and the world to the public, every day and every moment, and spreads the public quest for social justice in Japanese society.

A political party that has yielded to donations from business circles and big business and maintains the "U.S.-Japan alliance" can never become a force to change the conservative LDP politics. An advance of the Japanese Communist Party can change the substance of politics.

The Diet is now in great turmoil over the postal service privatization bill, with the possibility of the dissolution of the House of Representatives. We can never tolerate any attempt to force out the opposition and threaten to dissolve the house in order to forcibly enact the bill. But if the Diet were to be dissolved, we would squarely accept the challenge. It's a matter of

course. Whatever may happen to the future of the "two-major party" system, no change can happen to politics at the root. What is most important today and what is essential to defending the livings of the people and opening up the future for a peaceful Japan is the advance of the Japanese Communist Party, a genuine opposition party that represents the voices of the people. In order to defend our livelihoods, our Constitution, and peace, let's make our party stronger and bigger.

For a stronger and greater party that can defeat the "two-major party" system

What we really felt again in the Metropolitan Assembly election: "the real ability of the party is not yet sufficient."

In summing up last year's Upper House election, the second Central Committee Plenum clarified that the real ability of our party is not sufficient for defeating the move for establishing the "two-major party system" and winning the advance of our party in a national election. This is the greatest lesson to learn from the result of the Upper House election.

In the Metropolitan Assembly election, we achieved the results mentioned above, but at the same time, the weakness of our party buildup became evident. "Unless we further increase our efforts, we cannot make an advance" – that's what each of us really felt, to be honest.

Today's rally is to commemorate the anniversary of the founding of the party. We can say that the 83-year history of our party is the history of establishing and developing a correct line and policy and having overcome a variety of difficulties one by one, by displaying an invincibility that never yields to any attack, through our persistent effort to make our party stronger and bigger.

In order to win the advance of the JCP by facing up to the move for "establishing a two-party system," now is the time for us to display this tradition. This is my renewed determination.

The Japanese Communist Party is now engaged in a "great campaign for expanding the party buildup." This is in preparation for the Diet dissolution and a general election.

For the success of this campaign I have made a tour throughout the country. What I really felt then is this: this campaign is not only important for the

advance of the Japanese Communist Party, but it also has great significance involving the future course of Japan and the interests of the Japanese people.

Both in cities and in villages, there were many people desiring social progress in defense of basic human rights and peace, willing to work hard in hand with the Japanese Communist Party. The outpouring of such sentiments moved me every day.

The JCP exists where the people's sufferings exist

The people's living standards and welfare are being destroyed under Koizumi politics, and the suffering has now reached the limits of their patience.

There is a JCP branch which holds regular livelihood consultations in cooperation with the members of democratic bodies. Once a month, they deliver hand-outs to their communities. "Feel free to call us whenever you are in trouble or if you have anything you want to talk over with us", states the hand-out.

One day, a phone call came from a young man who read the hand-out. "Dad is going to commit suicide. Please help us!" He sounded desperate. In response, a party member rushed to the spot and found that his father "had lost his job three months before and ever since had taken regular meals." "You have suffered so much", he encouraged the starving patient. Then, with the help of the local Society for Safeguarding Living and Health and the All Japan Federation of Democratic Medical Organizations (Min'iren), he arranged for him to receive welfare benefits and be hospitalized.

When people struggling to survive are at a total loss, Communist Party members are there to encourage and help them by saying, "I know you've suffered great hardships." This is our pride of accomplishment. "When you are at a loss, why not go to the JCP for help?" This is phrase I have heard everywhere.

Literally, "the JCP exists where the people suffer."

The second characteristic is an awareness that the Constitution is in peril. Our earnest desire and sense of mission is to never allow Japan to go to another war. What gave rise to a big controversy in the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly election was Tokyo governor Ishihara Shintaro's statement that

he would risk his life to violate the Japanese Constitution.

Many of those who have gone through the last war feel the opposite. They firmly decided to risk their lives to defend the Constitution and peace and to never allow such a war to be repeated, and they enter the JCP one after another.

A young lady who joined the JCP on her birthday had been in the United States to study in high school there. Though moved by the free atmosphere of her American school, she began to feel awkward about her fellow students' views of war.

There were American TVs running commercials calling on viewers to join the army. Her friends said, "you can get good pay in the army."

"Would you join the army and kill if you got better paid?" she asked.
"Sure!" answered her American friends.

She thought, "It's terrible if Japan becomes like the U.S. But actually Japan is now following the U.S. and becoming a country ready to wage war. What will become of Japan and rest of the world?"

Feeling uneasy, she began to gather a lot of information on the Internet, and she came across the homepage of the JCP. Reading the online *Akahata* became her routine task. She read the Party Program three times.

"The pursuit of human rights within the framework of capitalism....the Japanese Communist Party has such a program. That's why this party can show the way to achieve democracy in today's society...."

Thus sympathizing with the JCP Program, she entered the JCP after returning to Japan. "The war of aggression in Iraq is wrong. Nuclear weapons should be abolished," she states with enthusiasm.

Toward a party that can win in a national election

The third characteristic is that the aspiration to make a stronger party to achieve a victory in a next national election is now increasingly developing all over the country. The other day I attended a local rally, "Let's Talk with Secretariat Head Ichida on the present situation" sponsored by the JCP Nakayo district committee in areas centering on Matsuyama City in Ehime Prefecture. In the past year, this district committee saw 17 persons newly

joining our party. But in the course of preparing the rally, the same district committee saw, to my surprise, 67 persons join as new members.

What was the motivation? The higher the percentage is of party members in the overall population, and the higher the percentage of the Akahata readership in the electorate, the higher will be the percentage of votes against the total votes cast in a proportional representation constituency of the House of Representatives. The largest population center in Shikoku is in Ehime Prefecture. But this prefecture ranks lowest in the percentage of party members in the overall population. It ranks 41st among the 47 prefectures of Japan. In order to achieve the victory of Haruna Naoaki, former member of the House of Representatives, in the Shikoku bloc with six seats allotted, Ehime must make an tremendous effort.

"We ventured a step forward to make approaches to the people and found no barrier between our party and the people. We realized that there was a barrier just within us," said local members. This conviction has spread to other prefectures of Shikoku – Kagawa, Tokushima and Kochi, and the movement is now extending throughout Shikoku.

Fukui is the prefecture where the number of party members is the fewest in the country. "In order for Kijima Hideo, former member of the House of Representatives, to win in the next election, we in Fukui must do the utmost for a stronger and bigger party." This triggered a surge in the movement for recruiting new party members.

Many comrades were at first reluctant to take action, saying, "It is said that the situation is promising, but that's a story of another prefecture." "The wind will stop at the prefectural border," said someone at an activity-exchange meeting I attended.

I stressed that "the 'wind' is nothing to seek. It's something to create through our own efforts, isn't it? The fact that your party organization is small means that you have so many people who have not yet read *Akahata*. It means that you have a lot more potential party members than other prefectures. Looking at the other side of the coin, your prefecture is teeming with conditions for a stronger party buildup. Let's overcome the 'barrier within' and do our utmost."

In Fukui Prefecture, just around the time of this meeting, we increased party members by 42. In Fukui today, they now say, "The wind is also blowing in our town."

What a difference! The other day I heard the following story spreading there: "There are growing expectations among the people toward the Japanese Communist Party with regard to protecting livelihoods and peace."

Tonight I happened to introduce the examples of Ehime and Fukui Prefectures. But such growth is taking place everywhere. On the 21st of this month I go to Akita. Akita Prefecture has already received one hundred new party members this month.

While expressing my respect for the fighting party branches and party members, I'd like to extend my hearty greetings of welcome to our many friends across the country who have newly entered our party.

I talked about what I really felt through this nation-wide campaign. The struggle for a stronger and larger party is filled with untold human dramas. It made me recognize anew the role and the significance of the existence of the Japanese Communist Party.

At no time is our effort so worthwhile as at present.

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party today can say nothing about their hopes or future vision of Japan. At least, the LDP of the past talked about their own perspective or vision like the "Income Doubling Plan," "Japan Archipelago Remodeling Plan," or "The First Year of Social Security," although, as a matter of fact, all of them proved deceptive and double-edged.

But all that today's LDP can say is "Crush the LDP!" or "Endure pains forever." All they can say is "No reform, no economic growth" and "From the public sector to the private one." At a time like this, the JCP is the only party that stands for politics of hope. Now is the time when our efforts are most worthwhile.

Lastly, I'd like to appeal especially to young friends. Historically, those who took the lead in struggles to break out of stifling atmospheres were always young people. Many of those who first founded the Japanese Communist Party eighty-three years ago were in their twenties or thirties. The history of the JCP has always developed with the younger generation of the times.

"Establishing a two-major party system" is the only imaginable and

ultimate plan of survival for forces that can no longer maintain their big business-oriented politics subservient to the U.S., except by forcing evil politics on the people. And yet, with the spread of struggle by a wide range of people coupled with efforts made by the JCP, this plan is shaken.

I'd like many young people to join our party, and work and advance together with our party. I want to take this opportunity to make my earnest appeal.

The rainy season has ended in Tokyo, but the end of the rainy season in politics must be won by individual efforts. A fierce tug-of-war is now taking place between two forces: forces for the adverse revision of the Constitution and a tax increase, namely, forces for creating the law of the jungle, and forces aiming at politics in which the people are the key players.

In order to achieve a society of solidarity, namely, politics in which the people are key players, please make efforts to make the JCP stronger. I do want you to increase readers of *Akahata*.

You only live once. To advance further, even a step or two, the wheel of history, do your utmost to achieve this. This makes your life most meaningful. I do want you to join our party. Let's work together, so that this 21st century may become the one in which peace and democracy blossom and everybody can live without fear. With this final appeal, let me finish my address. Thank you.