

TPP and Children “TPP Deprives Children of Their Safety and Security”

Children will be threatened by joining the Trans-Pacific Partnership free-trade agreement (TPP). First, Japanese food safety standards will ease, and children's health will be endangered obviously. Japanese school lunch programs are based on “local production and consumption” to let children know regional food products and works in the community. It also guarantees children's

development for humanity. However, there are possibilities that foreign companies may enter lawsuits against the national or local government by Investor-State Dispute Settlement. The TPP may destroy such an opportunity for children. Secondly, youth employment will be damaged because the TPP affects regional agricultural and fishery industries. With competition in em-

ployment intensified, conditions of temporary work will be deteriorated, and people will tend to work longer to earn money. It can therefore be said that family livelihoods will be facing further difficulties.

ZENKYO is resolutely opposing joining the TPP that not only affects children's lives or health, but also destroys enrichment of livelihoods.

International Activities

NIKKOKYO President Attends SNES-FUS National Congress

The Syndicat national des enseignants de second degré (SNES-FSU) held its National Congress in Reims, France from April 1 to 8, 2012. President Kamon (Japan Senior High School Teachers and Staff Union) was invited to attend the Congress as guest. Nakamura, Director of the International Bureau, and Shiratori, Secretary of the International Bureau also attended the Congress and had

exchanges with union members of various countries.

2012 World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs

2012 World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs was held in Hiroshima City from August 4 to 6, 2012. In all, there were 7,200 participants including delegates from the United Nations, representatives of foreign governments, the mayor of Hiroshima, the head of local governments and Zenkyo's members.

Zenkyo held its “Educational Forum for Peace by Teachers and Staff” on August 5, the second day of the Conference. There are 99 participants from all parts of the country. They shared their own activities with other participants.

Young Teachers' and Staff's Tour for Peace 2012 to Visit the Philippines

Zenkyo's Youth Committee organized a peace tour from December 26 to 30 to the Republic of the Philippines on the theme, “Let's learn lessons from the Philippine's experiences that stopped Nuclear Power Station with people's power, and got rid of the US Bases.” The tour made up young teachers and school employees visited the site after the US Bases left. They communicated with regional union members, and met Corazon Valdez Fabros (NFPC), a lawyer of Philippine, famous in activity for deterioration of Nuclear Power Station. Participants learned lessons from their struggle there, and got cheered up by that.



Exchange of opinions with Mr. Corazon Valdez Fabros (NFPC)

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Two Years after the Great East Japan Earthquake

Two and a half years have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake and the accident of Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Plants occurred in March 2011. Teachers and staff have been continuing efforts in the affected areas that haven't even proceeded restoration and recovery works.

Immediately after the earthquake, Zenkyo set up “Headquarters for The Great East Japan Earthquake” and had organized fund-raising for victims from teachers and staff around Japan. The contribution amounts 66 million yen, which were sent to the disaster-stricken area. Zenkyo also organized 2,000 volunteers to help the sufferers in Ishinomaki City, Miyagi prefecture. Zenkyo has demanded swift restoration and recovery works of schools in the affected areas against the government and Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

However, most children still study at temporary prefabricated school buildings instead of the schools washed away by tsunami. The temporary school buildings aren't installed enough equipment for lectures, and their conversation could be clearly heard in the next classroom. Unfortunately, children are forced to be patient at the temporary schools until new schools will be built after few years.

On the other hand, Children who lost their houses commute to school from temporary housing which has only small two rooms. It is immediate task to recover situation of housing and employment to claim peaceful days for children because they are worried about parents' arguments regarding housing problems and decent employment of their parents.

Especially in Fukushima prefecture, children are in serious situations. They are distressed by invisible enemy, radiation, caused by the nuclear accident in Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Plants. Schools located in evacuation zone

have rented spaces of another schools or universities far from Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Plants. A lot of children can't expect when they will return to their hometowns. Most of them live apart from their families, and study at temporary schools without enough rest rooms and gyms. Nuclear Power Plants deprive children of their important childhoods.

Zenkyo has proceeded with the project of “Fukushima no Kodomo ni Nobinobi Time wo (Let's give relaxing times to children in Fukushima)” It is aimed at relaxing children in Fukushima by playing outside. Around 4 days in summer break, Zenkyo invites children to rural districts remote in Fukushima, and let them to take deep breaths outside, run around and play to the best of their ability without considering radioactive contamination. The project is appreciated by children in Fukushima.

Nevertheless, the most important issue is to change Japan “Country with Non-nuclear Power.” Zenkyo concentrates its energies on the campaign with citizens under a slogan of “No Necessity Nuclear Power Plants in Children's Future.”



Nobiru Elementary School, Higashi Matsushima
2 and a half years have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake. Most children still study at temporary prefabricated school buildings.

Abe's Cabinet and its Dangerous Nature

The Liberal Democratic Party of Japan (LDP) took over the power from the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) at the general election held in December 2012. With the election result, the second Shinzo Abe's cabinet has started, and six months have passed already. He actually changed not only the Fundamental Law of Education for the worth but also fostered an undesirable amendment to the Constitution of Japan at his first Cabinet around 2006. He also introduced the "periodic renewal of teacher licenses." As a result, management control over teachers and staff was severely strengthened.

Many Japanese citizens, including teachers and staff, opposed the adverse amendment to the Fundamental Law of Education, and mounted a "historical campaign" against the amendment because the Fundamental Law of Education is integrated with the Constitution of Japan. Actually, it has been the one of the important issues for union activities to effort against the adverse amendment under the slogan of "Never approve implementation of the amendment" since the law was changed for the worth.

In his second term, the "Education Rebuilding Implementation Council" was established to put the

worsened Fundamental Law of Education into concrete shape. At the Council, "reforms of the board of education system" and "reforms of university education" are proposed, subsequently to proposal about "bullying problems at schools."

In addition, it is a salient feature that parliamentary activity became rapidly in recent days. A bill of "propelling measures for prevention of bullying" was enacted at the previous session of the Diet. The Abe administration intensifies its attack on pacifist constitution.

ZENKYO is resolved to keep the constitution of Japan, and make the most of it in schools and education.

State of Wages for Local Government Employees According to the Latest OECD Report

According to the latest Education at a Glance (EaG) by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Japanese teachers' wage rate fell by 9% from 2000 to 2010. The report finds that countries their wage rates fell are only Japan and France.

In spite of the situation, Japanese government requested local mu-

nicipalities 7.8% wage cuts for their employees including teachers this February. The cut rate is equivalent to that of the national public servant.

The government reimburses one third of teachers' wages and it tried to reduce subsidies for local municipalities. The local municipalities therefore are pressed to put into

action of wage cuts for local public servants.

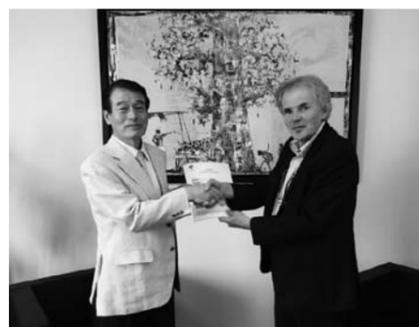
Zenkyo's affiliates struggled against the wage cut with demanding economic recoveries in local communities by a rise in wages. As a result, Zenkyo achieved its purpose as the amounts of wage cuts were decreased in many local municipalities despite government required.

ZENKYO Submit the Application for Membership to the Education International on May 29th, 2012.

EI Committee of Experts Concludes "ZENKYO does meet the requirements for admission to Education International"

On May 29th, 2012, President Yoshihisa Kitamura visited the head office of the Education International, in Brussels, Belgium, and submitted the application for membership to the Education International according to the resolution of Zenkyo 29th Congress. The application was formally received on May 31st, 2012. Regarding the application, Education International's Committee of Experts visited the head office of ZENKYO, Tokyo,

for investigation of requirements for admission to Education International in January 2013. Following the mission, Zenkyo received a report of EI Committee of Experts, "Report concerning the Application for Membership of EI from ZENKYO/Japan." The report concludes, "ZENKYO does meet the requirements for admission to Education International." Zenkyo has been waited for a conclusion of the EI Executive Board.



On May 29, 2012, President Yoshihisa Kitamura submitted the application for membership of EI to Mr. Fred K. A. van Leeuwen, General Secretary, at the head office of EI.

Together with Parents and Local Residents, Zenkyo Campaigns for Small-size Classes with 30 Children

The current standard class-size is 35 children under the second grade of primary schools, and 40 children from second grade of primary schools to high schools in Japan. According to the latest Education at a Glance (EaG) by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Japanese average class-size in primary schools is 28 children (OECD average is 21.6) and 32.9 children in junior high schools (OECD average is 23.4) It can be said that in Japanese average class-size is much larger than OECD average.

Hand in hand with parents and local residents all over Japan, Zenkyo has been campaigning against the state and municipalities for a quality education every year since 1989. This campaign has been developed around a petition campaign named "Nationwide Signature Campaign for Education". The campaign has demanded the state and municipalities to realize class-size with 30 children, increase number of

teachers and a subsidy for private schools, and to alleviate parents' burden by education free-of-charge. The petition campaign succeeded in gathering in 420 million signatures in 24 years. It has submitted to both the Diet and Local Assemblies.

As a result of such campaign, the state modified standard class-size to 35 children in the first grade of pri-

mary schools in April 2011, however, the improvement of class-size condition has stopped since then. Zenkyo has been strongly requested to the state to increase education budget, while Japanese education budget is the lowest level in the world, to at least on the same level of OECD, and to continue improvement of educational conditions.



Zenkyo campaigns the "Nationwide Signature Campaign for Education" in Nagano prefecture.

Demands Free Education Based on the International Covenants on Human Rights

Japanese Government had reserved article 13-2 (b)(c), part 3 of The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) until September 2012 despite the government ratified International Covenants on Human Rights in 1979. For that reason, the government explained, "Due to the need for the costs of upper secondary education and higher education to be borne fairly, students are currently required to pay a reasonable share from the point of view of the equitable payment burden and difficulty in securing sufficient funds

in case such education is provided free-of-charge." (369, Introduction of free upper secondary education and higher education, Third periodic reports submitted by States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant)

Zenkyo has demanded to withdraw the reservation and provide free education against the government together with parents and citizens for many years. As a result, the government finally withdrew the reservation in September 2012.

However, the current government shows a negative attitude toward

the realization of establishment "benefit type scholarship system", and considers a limitation on "free upper secondary education and higher education" based of income. Even though the government withdrew the reservation of ICESCR, all our efforts will have come to naught under such circumstances.

Zenkyo has continued campaign to expand "benefit type scholarship system" and "free upper secondary education and higher education", which can also be said as taking shapes of the government withdrawing the reservation, for guarantee of equal educational opportunities, and reducing parents' burdens of tuitions.