

# Chapter 11 Campaign to Demand Compensation for Internees

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## Synopsis

When the first campaign related to Japanese internees in Siberia was initially launched, its main objective was to repatriate all Japanese people who had been illegally abducted and interned in the USSR. This campaign almost achieved its objective when the last repatriation ship (*Koan-Maru*) arrived in Maizuru Port from its 11<sup>th</sup> repatriation voyage on December 26, 1956.

In 1974, the campaign to claim compensation for internees was launched. This was 29 years since the Second World War ended, and 18 years since the last repatriation ship arrived home. Until that time, there had been no campaign to claim compensation. Why? The reason seems to have been that the Japanese government had trusted other countries to do what was necessary, even without being requested.

From the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century through the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Japan spent much time in war. The law of jungle and racialism were dominant principles and numerous colonies spread over the world of those days. In such a situation, Japan had maintained its independence without being colonized. The Japanese had endeavored to accede to this great achievement of forerunners and enhance national prestige. The wars Japan had fought were always a life-and-death struggle. In addition, the Japanese fought the Second World War with the code of “fighting until all Japanese died in honorable defeat.” The Japanese had never experienced defeat until the Second World War, so they had no idea of what would happen once they were defeated.

Japan accepted the Potsdam Declaration and laid down its arms, but the people abducted and interned in Siberia did not understand why this happened and what could be done

against it. Japan had fought a long war against the Allied powers and then surrendered. MacArthur was supreme commander in chief of the Allied forces in the Pacific theater, and Japan had surrendered to the Soviet military in north Asia under the assumed command of MacArthur. Therefore, the treatment of enemy officers and soldiers who surrendered must theoretically be in accordance with orders of the commander in chief. Moreover, sending these prisoners of war to Siberia without the consent of the commander in chief would still lay the responsibility for such action on the commander in chief, and further, on all Allied forces in general.

Since Japan had never experienced defeat in war, it did not know how to respond to this action and consequently failed to raise objections against its outrageousness both at the time it happened and in subsequent years, although a campaign was launched to accelerate the repatriation of internees, and the world seemed indifferent to the matter. Although this was an inexplicable event, the internees gave no thought to claiming compensation for themselves, resulting in a long delay in launching a campaign to claim compensation.

Of course, claims for compensation should have been directed at the USSR, which had concluded *the Japanese-Soviet Neutrality Pact of 1941*. Despite the fact that Japan had inflicted no harm on it, the USSR unilaterally broke the pact, declared war, commenced hostilities against Japan, took a tremendous amount of war bounty after fighting for virtually one week, interned Japanese people and caused much damage to Japan. But in *the Japan-Soviet Joint Declaration of 1956*, Japan waived its right to claim compensation against the USSR. Therefore, the internees began claims for compensation directed at the Japanese government, which later stated that although the State's right to claim compensation was waived in the Japan-Soviet Joint Declaration, the right of individuals to claim compensation was not renounced. The internees believed that since the government had not renounced the right of individuals to claim compensation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan was naturally obligated to guarantee the rights of Japanese citizens, and therefore, should demand the USSR to compensate individual internees based on the right of individuals to claim compensation. It was what Ministry of

Foreign Affairs of Japan ought to do, they thought. When the former internees requested the Ministry to take action, however, it responded by stating that it was unable to do so because Japan had waived the diplomatic protection. By relying on such a cryptic description as the “diplomatic protection” that cannot be found even in the *Kojien* (Japanese dictionary), the Ministry attempted to avoid involvement in this issue.

With regard to the term *yokuryusha* (literally meaning “interning people”), anyone interned should be called *hi-yokuryusha* (literally meaning “internee”). However, *yokuryusha* is used in this history of internment without the prefix *hi-* since it has already become a common expression for *hi-yokuryusha*. Regardless, as seen in the above-mentioned facts, it has become unclear how and where the issue of compensation for internees could be resolved.

Some internees instituted proceedings against the government only to have their suits rejected by the Supreme Court, but there continues to be no end to cases of internees filing lawsuits. Even now, some lawsuits remain in litigation.

According to one interpretation, possible compensation depends on a person’s status at the time—a prisoner of war or an internee. There is reportedly a law in present-day Russia providing compensation for internees, but not for prisoners of war. Another interpretation is that prisoners of war are protected by international law but internees are not, because no provision exists in international law governing the status of internees. In any case, no internees have had the feeling that they have been protected or compensated until the present time.

Since abduction and internment were not matters expected to be dealt with in international law in those days, there were no written provisions in reference to these matters. When international humanitarian law was later established, both abduction and internment were cited in international law as incidental to humanitarian law. In handling humanitarian problems, the world is evolving to keep pace with progress of the times. That is to say, what was previously acceptable in the 19<sup>th</sup> century has become illicit in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Consequently, abducting and interning persons who are not prisoners of war is now a far more serious crime.

Concerning the issue of claiming compensation, Prime Minister Ichiro Hatoyama responded to a question at the Diet about considering the possibility of handling the issue under

domestic laws. This resulted in a bill being submitted to pay a special subsidy of 500,000 to 1,000,000 yen to each internee in an attempt to resolve the issue, but these plans conflicted with a report by the Round-Table Conference on Issues of Compensations for War etc., and it was consequently decided to provide bonus money and goods to internees in accordance with the report of the Round-Table Conference.

Many questions were raised, however, regarding the provision of the bonus money, such as the scope of recipients, whether it should include internees in the Kurile Islands, Sakhalin and the Northern Territories of Japan. Also, whether the internees who were repatriated from when the act is enforced should be deemed entitled to such payment or all repatriated internees should be covered was another question. In addition, various requests were made for granting the bonus of 100,000 yen to all internees, even those already receiving a retirement pension and those whose period of service was added for the mutual aid association's pension, and because it took so long to resolve and adjust such questions and requests, the actual granting of the bonus was delayed to one year later. Against such a background, it was the opinion of the government and ruling party that all measures for healing the wounds of war had been completed along with the actual payment of this bonus money and goods. However, as the amount of the bonus money is rather too small, and a bonus money and goods is bonus money and goods from first to last, and not a compensation. This is the reason why this issue has been not completely resolved until today.

When viewing the campaign to claim compensation in a broad sense, it may be perceived that the government, concerned over what responses it should make to requests for compensation regarding internment after such a long delay, decided to require, formally, the Round-Table Conference on Issues of Compensations for War to make judgment, and then to adopt its report. The transition of understanding between the government and ruling party made in the meantime apparently suggests ongoing discussions over a long period between the government and the All-Japan Association of Forced Internees, the Parliamentary League, and Diet members concerned, with an array of potential solutions in response to the requests from internees being raised and then rejected one after the other.

The following pages chronologically describe the progress of this issue.

## **Section 1: Beginning of the Campaign to Claim Compensation for Internees**

The first campaign to claim compensation for internees began when Akihiro Maeda and eleven other veterans living in Imari City, Saga Prefecture, presented a petition to Shigeru Hori, then Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The basis of their petition was a newspaper report on the government compensating the interned crewmembers of a fishing boat that was seized on a charge of violating territorial waters. They launched their campaign on the former Army Memorial Day—March 10—in 1974.

The purpose of the campaign is clearly described in the “Purport of the Council for Promotion of Claiming Compensation for Prisoners of War in Second World War” issued on December 1 as follows:

“The government promptly paid a special subsidy in February 1974 to fishing boat crewmembers who were interned by China on charge of violating the East China Line etc. as well as to the owner of the fishing boat. The amount of compensation was 2,700 yen per person per day of internment, plus 6,000,000 yen for the person who died. In addition, upon the conclusion of cease-fire agreements in the recent Vietnam War, wars in the Middle-East and elsewhere, prisoners of war have been promptly exchanged and repatriated. Thus, human life and human rights are always most respected. We fulfilled our national duty at the risk of our lives as ordered by His Majesty the Emperor, observed the end of war outside the mother country, and were forced into hard labor as internees directly afterward. In order to claim due compensation for wages regarding that labor etc., we are going to promote this campaign on a nationwide scale.”

The claim for compensation for internees should have been made in due course against the USSR, which illegally and unreasonably interned people, but the internees instead launched a campaign to direct claims against the government for taking its position as cited in Article 6 of the Japan-Soviet Joint Declaration that "...shall mutually waive all rights to claim ..... that arose resulting from the war which occurred from August 9, 1945." Therefore, the Japanese government (the State) is obligated to compensate the internees on behalf of the USSR.

As advocates, many names are listed including the mayors of Saga City, Karatsu City, Imari City, Yamaguchi (the former-mayor of Imari City), Shigeru Hori, Isei Ide (titles omitted), and others.

### **Effectuation of the All-Japan Council for Promotion of Claiming Compensation for Forced Internees**

In this way, the campaign was launched in Saga Prefecture and a conference of all-Japan representatives was held in Tokyo during November 1977. The 27 participants included the representatives of six prefectures in Kyushu (Saga, Nagasaki, Fukuoka, Miyazaki, Kagoshima, and Kumamoto), representatives of Tokyo metropolitan Joint Associations, and volunteers from Kanagawa, Chiba and other prefectures. On this occasion, it was decided to formally call the council the "All-Japan Council for Promotion of Claiming Compensation for Forced Internees After the War" (abbreviated as *Zen-yokukyo*), and they presented the first petition to the government. *Yomiuri Shimbun* reported this event and the campaign quickly spread nationwide like fire through a forest.

Beginning with the formation of joint associations in Kanagawa, Chiba, and Shimane Prefectures, other prefectural joint associations formed throughout Japan in Wakayama, Hiroshima, Kyoto, Okinawa, Hyogo, Tochigi, Hokkaido, Yamagata, Oita, Okayama, Kochi, Osaka, and Nara, and the campaign soon became a large nationwide one, culminating in a national organization being established in April 1978.

The specific items being claimed were: (1) compensation for forced labor of the internees in the USSR, (2) consolation payment for the mental suffering of internees and their bereaved families, (3) remedies for the aftereffects caused by internment, (4) change of the additions for internment in the Public Officials Pension Act from one year to three years, (5) allowing prompt visits to grave sites and the return of remains, and else.

This organization was formed with the objective of seeking compensation for internees, compensation for their bereaved families, the return of remains, visits to grave sites, and remedies for the aftereffects caused by internment. The organization known as “*Zaidanhojin Zenkoku Kyosei-Yokuryusha Kyokai* (the Japan Association of Forced Internees; JAFI)” described later is united with this organization and seeks to collect materials related to internment, provide consultation services, and hold memorial events for the dead. In March 1980, the latter became the only organization of its kind authorized as a juridical foundation.

Regarding the background behind the establishment and outline of activities of the Japan Association of Forced Internees information is given below mainly based on the “Progression of the campaign for compensation for illegal internment by the USSR” and “Status quo of the campaign for compensation for illegal internment by the USSR after the war” as cited in the “Transition of activities by internee organizations in fiscal 1991 – Report on the investigation of historical facts related to the internment in Siberia” edited by the JAFI.

There was a reasonable background behind the delay in launching the campaign to claim compensation for internees far behind that of the campaign for promoting repatriation.

In the first place, those initially interned in Siberia were made “prisoners of war” unaware of the announcement made by Imperial Headquarters that, “They shall not be recognized as prisoners of war,” and were unable to know the details of the Potsdam Declaration, even though they surrendered as ordered by His Majesty the Emperor. Therefore, they understood that being interned was as a dishonorable act, and so they did not disclose that they had been “internees.” Moreover, their status as former internees would have adversely affected their potential employment. Although such thinking was a result of brainwashing, there might have been something to reflect upon in the behavior of

repatriates. Thus, the issue of the internees was hidden behind the scenes.

In due course, however, the actual circumstances surrounding the end of the war became clarified, and the internees recognized that they had not in fact been “prisoners of war,” also knowing the manner of how US soldiers taken prisoner in the Korean War had been treated. Thus, they acknowledged there was no need to depreciate themselves. At such time, articles about national compensation for the fishing boat crewmembers who had been interned in a foreign country filled the pages of newspapers. Against such a background, the campaign to claim compensation was launched. Indeed, the campaign to claim compensation for internees was a movement that emerged after nearly 30 years had passed since the end of the war.

Akihiro Maeda writes about above problem in his book, *Ubawareta Seishun: Kyosei Horyo no Sakebi (The Lost Youth: Clamors of Forced Prisoners of War)*, Akamazeki Publishing, 1975, as follows:

In the spiritual climate of not only the war generation like ours, who were given militaristic education, but also among today’s general population, the term “prisoner of war” is synonymous with “shame.” During the war, merely having become a prisoner of war meant that one’s family could no longer show their faces in public and were forced to live the life of persons with a shady past.

With regard to the campaign that began in Saga Prefecture, Diet member Shigeru Hori and some others warned that a campaign involving only about 10 people would never bear fruit, and therefore recommended a campaign of claiming compensation on a nationwide scale. Thus, we decided to issue a manifesto to volunteers throughout the country. As a result, we managed to reach the step of being able to present a petition to the government under the name of “All-Japan Council for Promotion of Claiming Compensation for Forced Internees After the War” (abbreviated as *Zen-yokukyo*) in Tokyo during November 1977. With this incident having

been reported by the mass media, the campaign spread in a burst throughout the country. The following year, we presented petitions to both the House of Representatives and the House of Councilors, as well as to the Liberal Democratic Party, and also elected Michio Otsuka of Tokyo as director general of central headquarters at the Conference of Representatives held in September, and established our office at Nihombashi in Tokyo.

## **Outline of the Organization**

1. Name: Central Conference of the All-Japan Council for Promotion of Claiming Compensation for Forced Internees After the War (Abbreviated as the Central Conference of *Zen-yokukyo*)
2. Address: 4-12 Nihombashi Hon-cho, Chuo-ku, Tokyo
3. Representative Officer: Michio Otsuka, Director General
4. Date of establishment: April 1973
5. Objective: To request the government to equitably evaluate and properly compensate for the matters mentioned below that arose from forced internment in certain areas of the USSR on and after August 15, 1945, and to endeavor to have said compensation realized:
  - (1) Compensation for internment to bereaved families of those who died during internment in the USSR
  - (2) Compensation for internment to those interned in the USSR
  - (3) Remedies for aftereffects suffered by those interned in the USSR
  - (4) Institute a law, or revise active law(s) to cover the three matters above
  - (5) Allowing the return of remains of those who died during internment in the USSR and visit their gravesites
6. Number of members: 60,557 persons  
(For reference:)  
Number of members of separate organizations: about 60,000 persons  
Number of unorganized, potential participants: about 100,000 persons

7. Regional organizations: As regional organizations, joint associations shall be established in each prefecture and the Metropolis of Tokyo, and with a branch in each city, ward, town and village.

The numbers of members of these joint associations of prefectures and the Metropolis Tokyo are as follows:

Joint Associations	Number of members	Joint Associations	Number of members	Joint Associations	Number of members
Hokkaido	637	Yamanashi	13	Hiroshima	5,373
Fukushima	1,963	Mie	17	Kochi	1,804
Tokyo	730	Hyogo	2,041	Kumamoto	3,771
Fukui	712	Okayama	1,913	Okinawa	305
Shizuoka	1,480	Ehime	112	Akita	13
Osaka	1,319	Nagasaki	1,929	Chiba	2,540
Shimane	2,625	Kagoshima	1,663	Ishikawa	853
Tokushima	249	Iwate	4,692	Gifu	741
Saga	1,153	Tochigi	1,527	Kyoto	843
Miyazaki	1,585	Niigata	7,734	Tottori	1,544
Aomori	589	Nagano	332	Yamaguchi	2,905
Ibaraki	111	Shiga	688	Fukuoka	766
Kanagawa	417	Wakayama	1,637	Oita	1,235

(Note) Of the regional organizations in the 47 prefectures and metropolis, those of eight prefectures (Miyagi, Yamagata, Saitama, Gunma, Toyama, Aichi, Nara, and Kagawa) are not included among regional organizations that have actually begun activities.

## **Emergence of Rokuro Saito**

Although it is unknown when Rokuro Saito, who was not a member when the Central Conference was formed, first participated in the organization, he held a general conference at Mielparque-Tokyo on May 7, 1979. At this conference, he was elected director general, changed the name of the organization to the “All-Japan Council on Compensation for Internees” and then directed the course of the organization at his discretion. However, a former vice-director general who had cooperated with Saito blew the whistle about details of Saito’s behind-the-scenes involvement in making it an issue. The former vice-director general repeatedly approached Saito in vain in an attempt to normalize and prevent the breakup of the organization, and ultimately sent an open letter to Rokuro Saito. Saito responded by ignoring the letter even after the designated deadline and pushed forward his own agenda in an ill-fated attempt to become a candidate for the House of Councilors. As a result, the organization had to choose a way of challenging the government in court in accordance with Saito’s original views.

People on behalf of the Central Conference of the All-Japan Council for Promotion of Claiming Compensation for Forced Internees conversely tried to persuade Saito to promote the campaign through discussions with all those concerned and with the consensus of all so that the organization would not break up, but Saito obstinately stuck to his own position. Therefore, they had no choice but to separate from Saito’s side and again revert to the great spirit of the campaign at the time of its launching, that is, to promote it with the agreement of all members and reach a political settlement through petitions and solicitations. Thus, the two sides completely split up.

## **Reorganization of *Zen-yokukyo***

Then on November 24 of the same year, anti-Saito representatives from seven prefectures in Kyushu, four in Chugoku, four in Kinki, and four in Kanto (including Tokyo) got together to hold the All-Japan Council for Promotion of Claiming Compensation for Forced Internees After

the War – Conference of Presidents of All-Japan Prefectural Joint Associations.

At the conference they issued a *Zen-yokukyo* statement declaring:

“Since being launched, *Zen-yokukyo* has finally begun to take shape after establishing its headquarters in September 1978 and steadily evolving under the leadership of its first director general, Mr. Otsuka. It elected Mr. Rokuro Saito as the second director general in May 1979 and expected to further evolve toward a glorious future, but suspicions arose over the direction being taken by the new director general. Although we endeavored to clarify what he meant in many attempts, those suspicions deepened even more, and in addition, probably for the purpose of achieving his own ambition by using this organization as a means of satisfying his own greed, he even went so far as to engage in self-righteous behavior under the name of the All-Japan Council on Compensation for Internees in stark contrast to the philosophy of this organization’s campaign, which is totally pure and innocent. At this point, we gritted our teeth to.....”, and tried to reform the organization and established a provisional bylaw in order to promote a campaign by returning to the original form of the All-Japan Council for Promotion of Claiming Compensation for Forced Internees at the time of its launching.”

### **Campaign to Restore *Zen-yokukyo***

After this, there was a movement to unify both sides under the belief of “*Zen-yokukyo* should be one unified body; breakup will produce no benefit,” but failed to achieve its goal until Rokuro Saito died.

With regard to the issue of internment, *Zen-yokukyo* always relied on the method of respectfully involving the government, which is, encouraging and urging the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to conduct negotiations with the USSR in due course. In contrast, Rokuro Saito was rumored to have been among those internees forced to undergo brainwashing in political classes while being interned in Siberia, pledged his loyalty to the USSR before his repatriation as mentioned by Kovalenko (Коваленко), therefore Saito took quite a different approach. Upon looking back on his actions in retrospect, Saito apparently believed that Ministry of Foreign

Affairs of Japan was unreliable and consequently took many actions that “benefited the enemy” by trampling down on the face of our state, such as conducting “official negotiations” on an individual basis, which naturally should have been done by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one example of which was betraying the “Kwantung Army’s policy of abandoning civilians.” As Saito adhered strictly to his attitude, the two sides of the organization went their own ways without unification until the end.

## **Representative Hideyuki Aizawa becomes Director General**

The faction in power of Zen-yokuryu had unofficially obtained Representative Hideyuki Aizawa, who had experienced internment, in November 1979 and elected him as its Director General on January 8, 1980. They held an ad hoc general meeting of the Central Conference to introduce Aizawa’s inauguration. This general meeting proved successful with 200 representatives of the prefectural joint associations in attendance, in addition to Director General Hideyuki Aizawa and many guests, including Vice-Chief Cabinet Secretary Koichiro Aino of the Prime Minister’s Office and members of both Houses. Many congratulatory messages were also sent from Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira, Zenko Suzuki, chairman of the General Council, former Secretary-General Kunikichi Saito, and others. Also on this occasion, it was decided to adopt the group counseling-type operation for the Central Conference, with officers Ueda and Tadashi Nishimura serving as the main coordinators.

With regard to activities carried out thereafter, *Yokuryusha Dantai no Katsudo no Hensen (Transition of activities by internee organizations)* describes roughly as follows:

This campaign became a full-scale one after Director General Hideyuki Aizawa took office in January 1980. In February of the same year, the Parliamentary League for Improving Treatment of Forced Internees after the War was formed within the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), a petition was granted at the Diet and committed to the Social Affairs and Labor Committee, and then transferred to the Cabinet Committee. Within the LDP, the Cabinet Subcommittee then handled the matter, and in the same year, a project team was formed under

the presidency of General Council Chairman Aino and made substantial progress. However, the government still rejected the claims for compensation using as a shield the 1977 memorandum of understanding between the LDP and the government that stated that the War Compensation had been completed. During the budget preparation period at the end of 1981, and in response to the strong approach made from the Parliamentary League for Improving Treatment, an understanding on reviewing the War Compensation was reached between the party and the government, and consequently a private advisory body (called the “Round-Table Conference on Issues of Post-War Compensation”) under the Director-General of Prime Minister’s Office was established, with a budget of five-million yen being allocated.

During July 1982, the assembly (which later became an advisory body of the Chief Cabinet Secretary) launched with seven committee members under the chair of Tatsuzo Mizukami. In December 1984, they submitted a report of as a conclusion of discussing over a span of two years and six months. The report fairly appreciated and sympathized with *Zen-yokukyo*, but ultimately regard the three organizations related to the Post-War Compensation as one organization, and deemed the matter one of various forms of Post-War Compensation. As a result, the conclusion of the report was favorable to the government, because the report refused compensation to individual war victims and instead suggested to establish newly public foundation.

The Parliamentary League for Improving Treatment strongly objected to this report and urged the government to change the policy, the government however, never appeased the Parliamentary League and decided to establish a new public foundation, with research expenses being budgeted and research conducted on the actual situations.

Separately from the activities of the Research Office for Newly Establishing Public Foundation, the Parliamentary League built up a strong structure to realize compensation for individuals even through legislation by members, worked out a member bill, and had it deliberated by the Legislative Bureau, House of Representatives for being submitted to the Diet. On December 11, a general meeting held at LDP headquarters adopted a resolution effecting a political settlement at the lawmaking body as the governing party under Parliamentary League

Chairman Saito. It was recognized that a strong structure had been built up, the Cabinet Division of the LDP approved the bill in April 1986, and details of the bill were decided by the Policy Affairs Research Council in May and agreed to by the General Council on the following day. Thus, it was agreed upon that the bill should expect approval at the next session of the Diet as specified in the memorandum by the top three executives of the LDP and two Ministers, the Minister of Finance and Director general of Management and Coordination Agency (Chief Cabinet Secretary). Indeed, they thought that their dream was finally coming true. However, the agreement reached between the government and the LDP regarding the issue of healing the post-war compensation announced at the end of 1986 crushed their expectations and came as a great shock to them. In response, their new struggle began in early January 1987 by keeping in close contact with members of the Parliamentary League.

On December 24, the presidents and directors of the prefectural joint associations held a joint meeting and adopted a resolution stating that, if bonus payment was not made to all internees, they would even refuse to receive the payment at all, and submitted the resolution to the Parliamentary League. In response to this, the Parliamentary League decided on the next day to negotiate with the government, deeming *Zenyokukyo's* resolution to be Parliamentary Leagues's own.

*Zenyokukyo* and Japanese government reached new agreement that any person who landed at Maizuru Port shall be regarded "survivor," by the petition to the top three executives of the LDP and bitter clash between LDP and government from December 27 to the dawn of December. They, however, postponed a conclusion of the issue on pensioner until the budget compilation period for 1989.

The Law on the Public Foundation for Peace and Consolation was finally enacted on May 18, 1988, and they started receiving applications for the bonus money and goods in August. In other side, on January 23, 1989, *Zenyokukyo* and Japanese government completely agreed on concerning those who died in the field, which is the one problem of the two pending matters. The other pending matters, the issue of pensioner encountered a thick wall and confronted a crisis of breakdown of negotiations. Then, the executives of the Parliamentary League and

representatives of the organization discussed and reluctantly compromised on it. Although it was quite unacceptable to discriminate against recipients of a retirement pension given the nature of the matter, it was an unavoidable action in view of various factors.

The background behind this matter will be concretely described below.

Forming of the “Parliamentary League for Improving Treatment of Forced Internees after the War”

On February 25, 1980, a ceremony commemorating the forming of the “Parliamentary League for Improving Treatment of Forced Internees After the War” was held at the grand hall of LDP headquarters, with 156 LDP members of the House of Representatives and the House of Councilors attended, as well as more than 500 organization members from all over the country. The conference elected Kunikichi Saito as director general and Yoshiyuki Toya as secretary general, and the number of Parliamentary League members increased to 214 finally.

## **Section 2: Movement in the Diet**

Thus, the issue of internment in Siberia became discussed actively at the Diet. It was before the campaign to demand compensation for internee start that government paid the second bonus to the repatriations and reached agreement with LDP stating, “all of the compensation of war had finished by this second bonus” at 1967. Government rigidly applied this agreement with LDP to reject the claims for compensation. However, with the support of the Parliamentary League, the petitions and solicitations took effect. As result, the “Petition for budgeting expenses for research on the actual situations concerning the claim for compensation for forced internees after the Second World War” being deliberated in both houses of the Diet and finally adopted by unanimous vote at the House of Councilors plenary session on May 10. Unfortunately, as the House of Representatives was dissolved on May 19, the petition was not put on the table in

Hose of Representatives. Nevertheless, the campaign was gradually working.

On May 19, 1981, a regular general meeting of *Zen-yokukyo* was held at the grand hall of *Kudan Kaikan*. In addition, on June 4, a general meeting of the Parliamentary League was held at LDP headquarters, and a resolution of the general meeting aiming at effectuation of the “allocating the budget for investigation into the actual conditions” in fiscal 1992 was adopted by unanimous vote.

In the meantime, the “Subcommittee Concerning Issues on Cabinet etc.” was established in the Policy Research Council, Cabinet Division of the LDP on February 4, and the Socialist Party, Democratic Socialist Party, Komeito, and Social Democratic Federation each formed a “special committee on the issue of internees,” followed by vigorous deliberations. As a result, on June 6, the “Petition for budgeting expenses for research on the actual situations concerning the claim for compensation for forced internees after the war” as adopted by both houses of the Diet at its 94<sup>th</sup> session was sent from each house to the Cabinet.

Thus, the government and ruling party, which had continuously rejected their claim, finally conceded to the wishes of internees and included in its general rules with regard to budgeting for fiscal 1982 a clause stating, “Considerations shall be given to the issue of Post-War Compensation,” prepared the “Agreement between the government and LDP with regard to the issue of Post-War Compensation,” decided to “establish an official forum for equitable considerations by intellectuals in the private sector” with regard to this issue, allocated an amount of one-million yen in the fiscal 1982 budget under the control of the Prime Minister’s Office, and thereby established the “Round-Table Conference on Issues of Post-War Compensation” in 1982.

(For reference:)

*Agreement between the Government and LDP with regard to the issue the Post-War Compensation*

1. With regard to the issue of Post-War Compensation, taking the necessary measures in the budget for fiscal 1982 became an opinion strongly asserted by the LDP.

The government considers that it has taken a series of measures including the support and other assistance for bereaved families of the deaths in the war, those wounded, or otherwise suffering from the war, and that since all measures for post-war compensation had been completed, based on an understanding between the government and the ruling party reached in 1967, it is not appropriate to take any other special measures such as paying a new subsidy or other forms of assistance. However, with regard to the above-mentioned issue, for which there are still certain strong requests among the nation even after 36 years since the war, the government must determine whether it is necessary to establish a forum for equitable consideration of this issue by intellectuals in the private sector, and deliberate how this issue should be handled.

2. To that effect, a necessary amount shall be allocated as expenses required for consideration in the budget of the Prime Minister's Office for fiscal 1982.
3. The result of the above-mentioned consideration shall be respected.

December 27, 1981

Noboru Takeshita, Vice-Chief Secretary, LDP

Tatsuo Tanaka, Chairman, General Council, LDP

Rokusuke Tanaka, Chairman, Policy Research Council, LDP

Kiichi Miyazawa, Chief Cabinet Secretary

Kunio Tanabe, Director-General, Prime Minister's Office

Michio Watanabe, Minister of Finance

## **Investigation into the Actual Circumstances**

In parallel with these movements, the Central Conference of *Zen-yokukyo* prepared for investigate on the actual individual situations, and on September 25, 1981, the Central Conference of Executive Directors officially decided to conduct the research. After having been

approved at the 1982 Conference of Presidents of All-Japan Prefectural Joint Associations, the research was launched on March 1.

As this investigation was for collecting data on the recipient of compensation, there are some opinions that insist the government should carry out the investigation. However, we need to begin the investigation swiftly, because the internees were aging. Therefore, *Zen-yokukyo* decided to start the investigation instead of government.

According to a report on the results of research on actual situations, 60,557 persons in 39 prefectures (including the Metropolis of Tokyo) were researched. In indicating what was researched, the report included statistics on the number of persons researched per prefectural joint association, number of internees per age, number of internees per occupation at the time of entering the USSR, number of internees per division of labor engaged in during internment, number of repatriates per year, situations regarding the receiving of retirement pensions or similar support, a table of research results per prefecture, a table of sampling/aggregation results, and the health conditions of internees.

Looking at the table listing the numbers of internees per division of labor engaged in during internment, you can see a general outline of the internment. This table carries a footnote describing that each internee generally engaged in several kinds of labor, though only one major kind of labor per internee was counted for this table, and from the total number of persons researched (60,557) and the percentage of divisions of labor engaged in, an overall situation can be known as follows: coal mining accounts for 15%, railways 12%, deforestation 33%, road work 7%, construction 13%, machinery 4%, agriculture 4%, medical services 1%, and others 11%.

In addition to such a campaign, different activities were carried out, including the forming of a political federation, holding political seminars, forming a supporting women's organization, and publishing stories about internment experiences.

## **August 9 as *Eikon-no-hi* (“Day of Eternal Regret”)**

At the All-Japan Directors’ Conference held on August 20, 1981, opinions were sought about what to call August 9 in order to eternally remember it as the day on which the Soviet Union abruptly invaded Manchukuo, leading to their forced internment in Siberia, and it was decided to call it *Eikon-no-hi* (“Day of Eternal Regret”). This appellation is used in the subtitle of stories about postwar experiences published at a later date as *Eikon-no Tsumeato* (“Claw Mark of Eternal Regret”).

## **Political Seminars**

On October 7 and 8, 1982, *Zen-yokukyo* held its first political seminar in the meeting room of *Kudan Kaikan*’s old wing, inviting Professor Yasuo Wakatsuki of Tamagawa University as guest speaker, along with Organization Committee Chairman Mutsuki Kato, former Cabinet Committee Chairman Takami Etou, Cabinet Division Chairman Koichiro Aino, and Parliamentary League Secretary-General Yoshiyuki Toya, all from the LDP.

Professor Wakatsuki commented on the controversy over school textbooks as follows:

“Needless to say, we must admit that Japan invaded foreign countries and committed wrongful acts without concealing the fact, making it food for thought for our future generations. But at the same time, it must be true that writing about the illegal, outrageous things that foreign countries committed on the Japanese people should not be restricted.

I have examined high-school textbooks regarding the internment in Siberia, but have found no book even mentioning it at all.

Not only school textbooks, I also examined various dictionaries of contemporary history, but was unable to find any heading of “Siberia internment,” even though there was one volume with the heading of “Dispatching troops to Siberia.”

Even the *Dictionary of Diplomatic History* edited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was no exception.

The number of people who died in Siberia rivals that of people killed by the atomic bomb in Nagasaki. When adding the number of dead in Manchuria, the number totals 300,000, which well exceeds the total number of atomic-bombing victims and survivors in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Moreover, the incidents in Siberia and Manchuria occurred after Japan surrendered, or after the so-called peace had been restored, and therefore can be considered more miserable and unjust than disasters during war when killing is justified.

Nevertheless, I wonder why Japan's mass media, which play up so loudly about the atomic bombings every year, would fail to cover the fact of Siberia internment at all, even in one line."

## **Federation of Internees in Siberia**

Also at this seminar, the significance of forming a political federation and need for activities by such an organization were discussed, and consequently the method of electing executives and operating such a political federation were deliberated by the secretariat of the Central Conference. On the next day, a meeting of specialized division chairmen was held and the closing of accounts, promoting membership in the political federation, participating in the women's division, and applying early for purchases of the book of postwar experiences were discussed.

Discussions about a political federation known as "Federation of Internees in Siberia" began in 1982, and the group was officially formed in 1983.

A decision on solicitations by *Zen-yokukyo* encountered a wall of being kept waiting two years for deliberations by the "Round-Table Conference on Compensations for War." If they were unable to wait for such a long time, how could they break through that wall? They reached the conclusion that there was no other choice than to politically pressure the government and the ruling party, and they required the participation of one member per 50 members of *Zen-yokukyo* and obtained 151 participants as of the end of October, elected Shohei Kubo of the Okayama Prefectural Joint Associations, and launched activities. Beginning with a petition to Director of

the Cabinet Division, the LDP, Yukihiro Ikeda on February 8, 1984, and the new organization presented a petition to the Secretary-General of the Prime Minister's Office on February 15 and to the Vice-Secretary-General of the same on February 17.

## **Establishment of the Women's Division**

The Women's Division reached a total of 172,043 members as of October 1982, and on December 14 of the same year, a conference of All-Japan Women's Division Chairwomen was held at the Second House of the Representatives Building, where it was decided to further expand and strengthen the organization with a goal of forming a million-member Women's Division. It was also decided to keep a list of division members at each prefectural joint association in considering the prevention of abuse.

## **Campaign to Establish an Aggregate Corporation**

In the organization's bulletin issued on January 10, 1983, full-time Vice-Chairman Shirota stated, "With regard to the issue of making our organization an aggregate corporation as proposed at the Conference of Prefectural Joint Association Presidents held on December 13 last year, which had also been approved at the General Conference the year before last, it is meant that the preparations should be made to make the present *Zen-yokukyo* a legal entity in the future. It is not meant to apply for institutionalization immediately." However, this plan has not materialized.

## **Plenary Session**

On May 13, 1982, the fixed General Meeting of the Central Conference of All-Japan Council for Promotion of Claiming Compensation for Forced Internees After the War and the Indignation Meeting were held at *Kudan Kaikan* with 1,258 members who gathered from prefectural joint

associations all over Japan, plus 72 representatives of the Women's Division organized to support internees in Siberia, many guests, and people from NHK and many other mass media.

## **Round-Table Conference on Issues of Post-War Compensation**

The first meeting of the Round-Table Conference on Issues of Post-War Compensation inaugurated as a private advisory body of the Secretary-General of the Prime Minister's Office to deliberate the issues of compensations for the war for internees, repatriates, and "persons disqualified for retirement pension" was held on June 30, 1982 in the meeting room of the Prime Minister's Office where Tatsuzo Mizukami was nominated to be chairman.

[Status of convening the Round-Table Conference on Issues of Compensations for the War]

- 1<sup>st</sup> Conference: June 30, 1982 – Free discussions about the theme and operation of the conference, such as how to proceed for the time being and the period of deliberations
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference: September 13 – Ministry of Health and Welfare (Transition of relief administration etc.; explanations and hearings)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference: October 18 – Ministry of Finance and Prime Minister's Office (Issue of overseas properties; explanations and hearings)
- 4<sup>th</sup> Conference: November 15 – Prime Minister's Office (Retirement pension system etc.; explanations and hearings)
- 5<sup>th</sup> Conference: January 20, 1983 – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cabinet Secretariat (Issue of internees in Siberia etc.; explanations and hearings)
- 6<sup>th</sup> Conference: March 8 – Ministry of Justice (Lawsuit-related matters; explanations and hearings)
- 7<sup>th</sup> Conference: April 25 – Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Health and Welfare

(Retirement Pension Law- and Relief Law-related matters; explanations and hearings)

8<sup>th</sup> Conference: May 23 – Prime Minister’s Office, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Health and Welfare (Memorial service for the war dead, support for atomic-bomb survivors; explanations and hearings)

9<sup>th</sup> Conference: July 1 – Prime Minister’s Office (Wrapping up matters explained by each ministry and related hearings)

10<sup>th</sup> Conference: September 28: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Outline of Post-War Compensation in foreign countries; explanations and hearings), Free discussions (how to proceed in the meantime)

It is planned that beginning with the next conference, hearings are to be made from the three organizations.

On December 21, 1984, a report was submitted from the Round-Table Conference whose governing authority changed from the Secretary-General of the Prime Minister’s Office to the Chief Cabinet Secretary. The contents of the report related to internees are as follows:

“The suffering of those interned in Siberia despite the fact that the war had ended must be far beyond our imagination. Also, it can be naturally understood from the sentiments of those concerned to require compensation from the government since almost no consideration has been given to those forcibly interned and forced into harsh labor in violation of the *Potsdam Declaration* and contrary to international practices regarding the humanitarian treatment of prisoners of war, and also since certain cases of compensation were made in West Germany although the situation was different from ours.

On the other hand, the government has taken the measures of establishing an addition for the interned period in the Public Pension Law and paying the families of non-repatriated persons an allowance in accordance with the Law for Aid to Families and Others Related to Non-repatriated Persons, and also granted a retirement pension, annual pension, and medical

benefits to their bereaved families and sick persons in conformity with the Public Pension Law, Law for Relief of War Victims and Survivors, and Law for Special Aid to the Wounded and Sick Retired Soldiers. Although they are truly pitiable for having been forced into harsh internment, we cannot help but say that it is also part of the war disaster which each citizen must treat in his or her own capacity, and with regard to whether any special political measures should be taken or not, it will still remain a problem in terms of its balance with those measures the government has taken thus far as mentioned above and with the other war victims.”

### **Convention to Appeal for Petitions for Requiring Compensation**

On July 22, 1983, a gathering of petitioners was held at the grand hall on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor of LDP headquarters.

Vice-Director General Shirota apologized to those who gathered from all over Japan that no VIP who could answer their questions had attended, since there was a plenary session of the House of Representatives on that day; nevertheless, the number of participants reached 665, consisting of 228 LDP members of the Diet, 289 male representatives of the organization, and 148 representatives of the Women’s Division.

### **Promotion of Legislation by House Members**

Our solicitation claiming compensation as addressed to the Speaker of the House of Representatives was accepted in 1980 and the movement to claim compensation became noticed among the people concerned, and despite the agreement made in 1967 between the government and the ruling party on completing the post-war compensation, it was admitted that reconsideration was necessary after 36 years had already passed, and in 1982, the round-table conference on issues of compensations for the war was established. In parallel with this progress, *Zen-yokukyo* launched a separate movement from the standpoint of being unable to wait for

deliberations by the Round-Table Conference given the limited time. This movement was the campaign to promote legislation by the members.

As early as in 1983, preparations began for making a draft of the member bill and in February its key passages were completed. Thereafter, over 100 petitions, solicitations, and resolutions were presented and submitted until 1986.

In 1984, a report was submitted by the Round-Table Conference on Issues of Post-War Compensation. However, because it included no measure to be taken for the compensation of individuals, they continuously attempted to accomplish legislation by the members. Based on the “Bill concerning the special remedy involved in the improvement of treatment of forced internees after the war” we had been preparing to draft since 1983, they worked out the “Bill concerning the payment of special benefit to internees etc.” and in May 1986 managed to obtain understanding by the LDP’s top three executives regarding handling of the bill so that it would pass as a member bill proposed by the chief member of the relevant committee with approval of all parties including the Communist Party shortly before the end of the Diet session. However, on the day before the date of the committee meeting, a strong objection was raised from Chief Cabinet Secretary Masaharu Gotoda, and the bill was not passed.

(For reference:)

*Outline of the “Bill on Providing Special Benefit to Internees etc.”*

1. A special benefit shall be granted to military and civilian personnel who were forcibly interned within the USSR on and after August 15, 1945, and to their bereaved families.
2. The amount of the special benefit shall be divided into four periods depending on the time of the internee’s repatriation:

(1) Between Aug. 15, 1945 and Dec. 31, 1946:	500,000 yen
(2) During 1947:	650,000 yen
(3) During 1948:	800,000 yen
(4) During and after 1949:	1,000,000 yen

- The amount of the special benefit to bereaved families shall be 70% of that of the special benefit for each internee.
3. The scope of bereaved families shall include the spouse, children, and parents of the internee at the time of the internee's death, and eligible bereaved family members shall be decided in this order.
  4. The special benefit shall be granted in inscribed government bonds to be redeemed within ten years, and said government bonds shall not bear any interest. The special benefit shall be levied exempt from income tax.
  5. The right to receive the special benefit shall be determined by the Prime Minister based on the applications. The Minister of Posts and Telecommunications (Post offices) shall handle the clerical work of paying the redemption money.
  6. This law shall be scheduled to be enforced on June 1, 1986.

*“Memorandum of Understanding by the Top Three Executives of the LDP about the Bill on Providing Special Benefit to Internees etc”*

*Memorandum of Understanding of the “Bill on Special Benefit to Internees etc”*

The above-mentioned bill (as attached) shall be presented at the next session of the Diet and is expected to be enacted.

May 15, 1986

Masaharu Gotoda, Chief Cabinet Secretary

Noboru Takeshita, Minister of Finance

Shin Kanemaru, Secretary-General, LDP *(signed)*

Kiichi Miyazawa, Chairman, General Council, LDP *(signed)*

Masayuki Fujio, Chairman, Policy Research Council, LDP *(signed)*

Since this understanding of May 15, 1986 encountered the strong objection of Chief Secretary Gotoda, the bill was not passed, and instead it was decided to grant bonus money and

goods in accordance with the report of the Round-Table Conference on Issues of Post-War Compensation, which led to the agreement on December 29, 1986 by the government and the ruling party on the issue of Post-War Compensation. Immediately prior to this agreement and in response to the purport of the report of the Round-Table Conference on Issues of Post-War Compensation, a written agreement titled “Regarding the issue of the forced internees in the USSR” dated December 20, 1986 had been made between the government and the ruling party. Since these developments reveal a transition in the manner of responding to the issue of the internment, these documents are submitted follows:

(For reference:)

*On the Issue of Forced Internees in the USSR*

With regard to the forced internees in the USSR after the war, in order to recognize their great deal of toil and suffering due to the forced labor in a land of severe cold and at the same time to invoke eternal peace, the following measures shall be taken:

1. For the internees in the USSR, memorial services, the construction of memorial halls, and other memorial events shall be implemented (at a total cost of 30 billion yen), and at the same time, bonus payment shall be made (averaging 40,000 yen per person granted for ten years, with 70% of said amount being granted to the bereaving family of the dead).
2. To implement the above, a public foundation for peace and consolation (or memorial foundation for internees in the USSR) shall be established and necessary legislation instituted at this ordinary session of the Diet.
3. Regarding the “expenses for preparing events to recognize the service of internees in the USSR” (office expenses), 200,000,000 yen shall be allocated in the fiscal 1987 budget (under the control of the Prime Minister’s Office).

December 20, 1986

Masaharu Gotoda, Chief Cabinet Secretary

Kiichi Miyazawa, Minister of Finance

Noboru Takeshita, Minister of Secretary-General, LDP

Shintaro Abe, Chairman, General Council, LDP

Masayoshi Ito, Chairman, Policy Research Council, LDP

*Agreement between the Government and the Ruling Party on the Issue of Post-War Compensation*

*On the Issue of Post-War Compensation*

1. Regarding the so-called issue of Post-War Compensation, all measures shall be made completed by newly establishing a public foundation and implementing activities to console the suffering of the people concerned in accordance with the recently issued report of the Round-Table Conference on Issues of Post-War Compensation.
2. (1) Regarding the issue of forced internees after the war among the matters of Post-War Compensation, in view of the background formed thus far and in order to express the deep recognition of their service separately to each survivor, a letter, an article of recognition, and bonus money shall be granted to each survivor as a special activity of the public foundation.  
(2) The bonus payment shall be limited to survivors other than those receiving a retirement pension, and the amount to be paid shall be 100,000 yen per person. The payment shall begin in fiscal 1988, and the method of payment shall be separately decided upon considering the financial situation.  
(3) In order to proceed with the above-mentioned activities from fiscal 1988, necessary research expenses shall be allocated in the fiscal 1987 budget.
3. The public foundation shall be established in fiscal 1988, and research and deliberations of concrete contents of the public foundation's activities shall be made during fiscal 1987.

December 29, 1986

Noboru Takeshita, Secretary-General, LDP  
Shintaro Abe, Chairman of the General Council, LDP  
Masayoshi Ito, Chairman of the Policy Affairs Research Council, LDP  
Yoshihiko Tsuchiya, Chairman, Assembly of Party Members of the House of Councilors, LDP  
Sosuke Uno, Vice-Chief Secretary, LDP  
Yoshiro Mori, Vice-Chairman of the General Council, LDP  
Koichi Kato, Vice-Chairman of the Policy Affairs Research Council, LDP  
Matazo Kajiki, Secretary-General for the LDP in the House of Councilors  
Masaharu Gotoda, Chief Cabinet Secretary  
Kiichi Miyazawa, Minister of Finance  
Riichiro Chikaoka, Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Management and Coordination Agency

Incidentally, on this occasion, it should be mentioned here that a bill quite similar to the above-mentioned "Bill concerning the payment of special benefit to internees etc." was proposed by an opposition party at a later date, but scrapped due to incomplete deliberations.

## **Resolution by the Parliamentary League**

As previously mentioned, in view of the setback from the start where the agreement and understanding regarding the report of the Round-Table Conference on Issues of Post-War Compensation, and the request of *Zen-yokukyo* and the Parliamentary League had been changed, a resolution was adopted on May 28, 1987 with a request to be made thereafter added as follows:

### *Resolution*

Parliamentary League for Improving Treatment of Forced Internees After the War  
Of the contents of the “Agreement between the government and the ruling party regarding the issue of Post-War Compensation” of December 29, 1986 (Attachment 1), the contents of the decision on the issue of forced internees after the war runs counter to the understanding by the LDP’s Top three executives regarding the “Bill concerning the payment of special benefit to internees etc.” (Attachment 2) and virtually causes the significance of the party’s decision to be lost. Since it was unable to respond to our long-lasting requirement, the decision is quite unsatisfactory to us.

However, in view of various factors including the present severe financial situation and also considering that the payment of bonus money was admitted with regard to the issue of internees in the USSR only among the contents of the issue of Post-War Compensation, this Parliamentary League shall aim to realize the following matters with its concentrated efforts hereafter:

#### 1. Regarding the Special Activities of the Public Foundation

(1) The letter, the bonus goods (silver cups), and bonus money (100,000 per person) shall be granted to all repatriated internees in the USSR (including those receiving a retirement pension)

(2) The letter shall be in the name of the Prime Minister.

#### 2. Regarding the activities of the public foundation

The public foundation shall be in the total amount necessary to conduct such activities as building monuments in memory of those who died during the internment, collecting remains, visiting gravesites, building and managing memorial halls, and collecting and publishing materials related to the internment, in addition to the above-mentioned special activities (Attachment 3).

#### Attachment 1:

*An Agreement between the Government and the LDP on the Issue of Post-War*

*Compensation*

Attachment 2:

*Memorandum of Understanding of the Bill on Providing Special Benefit for the Internees etc*

Attachment 3:

*Services of the Public Foundation:*

- (1) Matters related to building monuments in memory of those who died during the internment, collecting remains, and visiting gravesites
- (2) Investigation of and consultation for the bereaved families of those who died during the internment or after repatriation
- (3) Investigation of and remedy for those who have suffered aftereffects caused by injury or disease during the internment
- (4) Building and managing memorial halls and conducting memorial activities related to the internment
- (5) Collecting, storing, and exhibiting materials related to the internment, and editing and issuing publications thereof
- (6) Activities necessary to achieve other purposes

## **Regulation in Compassionate Allowance**

Discussions were made regarding the matter that, even though the government decided to exclude those receiving a retirement pension and those whose internment period was added to that for the mutual aid pension from the recipients of bonus money, all internees shall be covered as recipients of bonus money and goods, and the matter shall be deliberated by the government during a period of one year. As a result, the following was decided as mutual understanding:

*Memorandum of Understanding at December 27, 1987*

With regard to activities concerning the forced internees after the war, measures shall be taken separately as special activities by the public foundation in accordance with the agreement of December 27 of last year, and the scope of “survivors” in Item 2-(1) of said agreement shall be those who were repatriated, and scope of “survivors other than those receiving a retirement pension” in Item 2-(2) shall be those who were repatriated other than those receiving a retirement pension.

December 27, 1987

Shintaro Abe, Secretary-General, LDP

Masayoshi Ito, Chairman of the General Council, LDP

Michio Watanabe, Chairman of the Policy Affairs Research Council, LDP

Yoshihiko Tsuchiya, Chairman, Assembly of Party Members of the House of  
Councilors, LDP

Ryutaro Hashimoto, Vice-Chief Secretary, LDP

Keizo Obuchi, Chief Cabinet Secretary

Kiichi Miyazawa, Minister of Finance

Osamu Takashima, Director-General, Management and Coordination Agency

*Memorandum of Understanding*

1. A public foundation in the form of an authorized corporation shall be established during fiscal 1988. The amount of the fund shall be 20 billion yen, and the period shall be targeted at five years, with one-billion yen for the first fiscal year.
2. The objective of the public fund shall be to carry out activities to console the suffering of the people concerned in accordance with the purport of the report of the Round-Table Conference on Issues of Post-War Compensation.
3. The operation of activities to be carried out by the public foundation shall be done with the fruit of the foundation.

4. The government may subsidize in case of necessity.
5. The public foundation shall establish an operational committee that includes person(s) recommended from among those concerned to discuss what special activities should be undertaken, including those for consolation, and make proposals to the government.
6. In fiscal 1988, an amount of 500,000,000 yen shall be budgeted for the operation and research activities of the public foundation.

December 27, 1987

Shintaro Abe, Secretary-General, LDP

Masayoshi Ito, Chairman, General Council, LDP

Michio Watanabe, Chairman, Policy Research Council, LDP

Yoshihiko Tsuchiya, Chairman, Assembly of Party Members of the House of Councilors, LDP

Ryutaro Hashimoto, Vice-Chief Secretary, LDP

Keizo Obuchi, Chief Cabinet Secretary

Kiichi Miyazawa, Minister of Finance

Osamu Takashima, Director-General, Management and Coordination Agency

*Memorandum of Understanding on Providing Compassionate Allowance etc to  
Internees in the USSR*

With regard to the payment of bonus money etc. to internees in the USSR who are receiving a retirement pension and granting a letter and bonus goods to those who died during internment in the USSR, a conclusion shall be reached upon preparing the budget for fiscal 1989.

December 28, 1987

Shintaro Abe, Secretary-General, LDP

Masayoshi Ito, Chairman, the General Council, LDP

Michio Watanabe, Chairman, the Policy Affairs Research Council, LDP

Yoshihiko Tsuchiya, Chairman, Assembly of Party Members of the House of Councilors, LDP

## **Enactment of the Law on the Public Foundation for Peace and Consolation**

The government enacted this law based on the report of the Round-Table Conference on Issues of Post-War Compensation. By virtue of this law, the granting of the bonus money and goods to internees has begun. While applications for the bonus are to be received only for five years, given the law's limited period of validity and since said bonus shall only be granted with an application, about 300,000 internees filed applications. They comprised about 180,000 persons to receive the bonus payment and 120,000 persons to receive the bonus goods and letter only.

### *Memorandum of Understanding*

1. With regard to the activities for forced internees after the war based on the agreements dated December 29, 1981 and December 27, 1982
  - (1) The letter and bonus goods shall be granted to those who died during the internment;
  - (2) Considering that the bonus money is not to be paid to repatriated internees who are receiving a retirement pension, the bonus goods for those persons shall be a special set of silver cups (“mitsugasane” [piled three] cups); and
  - (3) Limited to fiscal 1989, a subsidy of 500,000,000 yen shall be separately allotted to the public foundation for the purpose of activities to console the forced internees. The contents of said consolation activities shall be deliberated by the public foundation,

- while respecting the opinions of the people concerned.
2. With the foregoing, all measures to be taken for the forced internees after the war shall have become definite and completed.

January 23, 1989

Shintaro Abe, Secretary-General, LDP  
Masayoshi Ito, Chairman, the General Council, LDP  
Michio Watanabe, Chairman, the Policy Research Council, LDP  
Ichiro Yamanouchi, Chairman, Assembly of Party Members of the House of Councilors, LDP  
Keizo Obuchi, Chief Cabinet Secretary  
Tatsuo Murayama, Minister of Finance

Item 2 of this Memorandum of Understanding mentioned above was specified without having been discussed at the time of consultation with *Zen-yokukyo*.

We would also like to mention the other means *Zen-Yokuryu* considered but did not carry out during the course of conducting this campaign.

Fearing that both Japan and the rest of the world might ignore us, *Zen-Yokukyo* thought they should raise the matter before the United Nations, and in fact, the secretariat prepared a draft of a bill. In replying to their enquiry, however, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that they could not do so because the government's position was that the matter had been internationally concluded by virtue of the *Japan-Soviet Joint Declaration*. Although the plan did not see light, and since *Zen-yokukyo* strongly feels that the internment issue and the territorial issue pose questions that would inevitably arise in concluding a peace treaty, We would like to quote the draft of the bill on this occasion:

*(Petition to the United Nations [draft])*

*Appealing to the United Nations*

Hideyuki Aizawa, President, Japan Association of Forced Internees  
Yasuzo Aoki, Director General, Japan Association of Forced Internees

The Japan Association of Forced Internees is the only juridical foundation representing the internees as established under authorization by the Prime Minister of Japan in 1989, in response to requests made by the internees up until then.

We were interned in Siberia after the Second World War and forced into hard labor for a long period living in a harsh environment. As a result, many human lives were lost or damaged. We feel that we were treated unjustly. Therefore, we are appealing our sentiments to the United Nations, the most authoritative organization in the world, in asking for its support and guidance on how we could convey our sentiments to the people of the world, and how to meet our need for redress.

We became subject to the former USSR's rule on or after August 15, 1945, that is, after Japan accepted the *Potsdam Declaration*.

Item (9) of the *Potsdam Declaration* states, "The Japanese military forces, after being completely disarmed, shall be permitted to return home with the opportunity to lead peaceful and productive lives." We do not interpret Item (9) as permitting any victorious nation to detain any persons and force them into hard labor for the benefit of that country, though they might be temporarily placed under restraint. We therefore believe that the internment and hard labor we experienced after the war was unjust.

It is said that when the war ended, the USSR issued an order "not to transfer Japanese military officers and soldiers to Soviet territory." This is presumed to have followed the *Potsdam Declaration*, but a few days later, the Soviets moved us to an area of the USSR under the so-called *Stalin Directive No. 9898* that ordered the internment of some 500,000 Japanese military personnel for forced labor.

Information about this incident was reportedly communicated to the Allied forces occupying Japan, but they kept silent at this Soviet breach of the *Potsdam Declaration*. We do not know the reason for their silence, but regret it very much that the tragedy we

encountered was ignored. Even at this stage, we still feel that the Allied forces should have made the USSR follow the *Potsdam Declaration*.

Be that as it may, first of all, we believe that our former status was as internees, and not as prisoners of war (POWs).

We understand that a soldier who surrenders before a war ends is considered a POW, but does that also apply to one who becomes subject to the former enemy's rule after the war ends?

In Japan, the now defunct Imperial Headquarters had issued a directive stating, "Those who come under the enemy's rule on and after August 15, 1945 shall not be recognized as POWs," from which it is apparent that we were not considered POWs. Given the intent of the *Potsdam Declaration*, we also believe we were not POWs. We wish to ask the United Nations to comment on whether our interpretation of the matter is internationally acceptable or not.

If one is internationally interpreted to be a POW, we would like to know how long after a war ends would one still be considered a POW, and how long would one be considered an internee? Please tell us the difference.

Does a victorious country also have the right to imprison a person as a POW and force that person into hard labor even after the war has ended? If the answer is yes, we do not consider it righteous for a country that signed the *Potsdam Declaration* to detain and force us into hard labor in complete disregard of the declaration, but that was what actually happened. How could such a situation be resolved?

With regard to compensation for this unjust action, we believe that the perpetrator country should compensate or console the injured parties, but this has not been done. We would therefore request that the country concerned take appropriate steps in the name of the United Nations.

In 1956, the *Japan-Soviet Joint Declaration* was signed and ratified by both countries. Article 6 of the declaration states as follows:

“The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall waive all rights to claim compensation against Japan. Japan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall mutually waive all rights of the respective states, their respective organizations and citizens in claiming compensation against the respective other state, its organizations and citizens that arose as a result of the war which started from August 9, 1945.”

Concerning its interpretation of Article 6, the Japanese government explained to us: “Even a state does not have the right to waive any right of individuals to claim compensation. You have the right to claim compensation. However, since the government has waived diplomatic protection, we as the government cannot assist you.”

We consider that the phrase in this Article, “... arose as a result of the war,” refers to damages caused directly by the war, and that the unjust internment, restraint and forced labor did not arise as a result of the war, but occurred after the war ended, and thus were actions in clear violation of the *Potsdam Declaration*; therefore, the long-term internment is not included as part of anything “which arose as a result of the war.” If the internment is not included as stated above, diplomatic protection can be exercised.

The Japanese government says that if the internment were held to be included as part of something “which arose as a result of the war,” individuals shall still have the right to claim compensation, but can the provision of Article 6 be interpreted that way? We would like to know the authoritative opinion of the United Nations concerning this position of the Japanese government.

Moreover, can any right to claim compensation be enforced without diplomatic protection? We would also like to know the authoritative opinion of the United Nations on this point.

Next is the problem of convictions rendered in court.

During the interment, some people were tried in Soviet courts and pronounced guilty under domestic laws of the USSR for matters that occurred before the end of the war. The

former USSR (today's Russia) admitted that such trials had been unjust and agreed to issue a document on rehabilitation in honor of those who were persecuted. However, this is a mere document. Some of those tried were also executed long ago.

Will a mere document mean anything to those people? Isn't it a matter of course to take proper measures for the relief of anyone who was mistakenly incriminated? We would also like to ask the United Nation to admonish the country concerned with regard to this matter.

The third problem concerns the possessions the internees left behind. We would again ask the United Nations to admonish the country concerned in an effort to promptly return those possessions.

In conclusion:

During an armed conflict, many things contrary to humanity are likely to occur, but the aforementioned problems all occurred after peace had been restored. All the more because that was the case, we believe the problems must be resolved as soon as possible and have decided to ask for the support of the authoritative United Nations. We eagerly request the United Nations to understand our concerns and take appropriate steps.