

Association for the Promotion of True Families event in Chiyoda, Tokyo, Japan

Eiji Tokuno
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National Rally for Promoting the True Families and Citizens: Movement 8679

On November 8, the Association for the Promotion of True Families' executive committee held an event in Chiyoda, Tokyo. This attracted about nine hundred well-informed people from political, academic, religious and educational fields. In April 2014, we had inaugurated the association in hopes of protecting the value of marriage and families in Japan. To provide momentum for this idea, beginning with the conference held in Fukui, from June 2014 to October 2015, we held conferences in all of Japan's forty-seven prefectures. In a national conference this year, we put into practice nationwide the "We Will Stand! Family Project 2015," along with the Family First Campaign, under the theme Strengthen Family Bonds, Spread Family Power.

On the day of the national conference, we met executives from the prefectural assembly and had the opportunity to share our results and discuss how to develop the movement.



Eiji Tokuno

The introductory greeting was delivered by the executive committee chairman, Mr. Hiroo Suzuki, a professor emeritus at the University of Tsukuba. He said, "Historically, Japan has faced many crises but we were able to overcome them by relying on our family traditions. However, recently, individualism has spread, and as families are weakening, various problems have been occurring. Now is the time for people who hold the same ambitions to come together and work to promote this national movement. Let's unite to reconstruct the traditional ways of a family and make effort toward regenerating our nation."

The vice-executive chairman who is also the national conference chairman, Eiji Tokuno, then took the podium to state the significance of the evolution of this meeting and reported on the progress made thus far. Rev. Tokuno expressed his determination saying, "I would like to strongly promote this movement as a campaign for national salvation." Subsequently, the chairman of the board of directors gave a commemorative

address.

The lecturer that day was a specialist with fifty years of experience in family education care. He manages an after-school academy providing supplementary education. He began with the issue of the drastic decrease in the national birthrate coinciding with a national increase in murders perpetrated by juveniles. Data indicates that the number of annual suicides by people under the age of nineteen increased to 547 (source: 2013: Suicidal Circumstances, police investigation).

This demonstrates the seriousness of the situation juveniles are facing. Certain characteristics that problem-causing children have in common include the following: They do not have a place for their heart to feel at ease. They lack self-respect. They do not have a goal or purpose in life, and they feel as though others do not need them.

Struggling with these four deficiencies could lead a young child to commit crimes or commit suicide. Based on these observations, these family-centric educational points may prevent such tragedies from happening: Give sufficient motherly love so there is a place for a child's heart to feel at ease. Nurture

confidence in children. Encourage them to find a purpose and to set goals, and stimulate self-reflection in children.

Let's make effort toward national renewal through protecting marriage and family values! The lecturer asked the nine hundred participants at the meeting of the Association for the Promotion of True Families 2015 to become active members of the association.



Hiroo Suzuki

Strong marriage, strong family

In order to achieve ideal families, the lecturer emphasized the importance of the marital relationship. Women must stand in the center of child rearing.

To the women of marriageable age, he advised, "Of course support from men is much needed but women should not think of parenting as a burden; instead, think of it as a privilege and strive to nurture children with an eager heart. Doing that will allow a mother to grow and mature as a parent." In conclusion, he reminded the audience that we can strengthen the family bond and raise children healthily through continual family education.

Following the speech, as part of the Family First Campaign, the executive committee presented the "Bling! Family Award." The award-winning three groups in the Family Episode section and the Family Volunteer section each received commemorative plaques and prize money. Then, to solidify the audience members' determination to spread the idea of holy values in marriage and achieving peaceful, harmonious true families, a representative read aloud the Tokyo Declaration. Finally, the executive committee members signed the panels of the declarative statement and the event ended.



Nine hundred people at the event held in the Japanese Diet, National Parliament Building

Comments and Opinions

A retired university professor: We hear much news and see many articles in newspaper reporting unbelievably horrific incidents, but I think that the root of the problem is disruptions in the family. I believe that your holding this promotion of the true family movement today was timely. It gives me hope for Japan's future. In order to tackle this major subject, "family reconstruction," I feel keenly that involving a great many people on a national level is necessary.

A former school principal: The event was profound with a warm atmosphere. Something said in the

commemorative address, that Japanese parents have a tendency to point out a child's shortcomings first, causing the child to lose confidence, I agree with. Raising children by indicating their strengths rather than their weaknesses is important. I believe that a warm household begins by praising our children. I would like to keep promoting this movement.



A performance at the event

A ward assembly member: The number of young people who have no desire to marry has been increasing. According to a certain poll taken among young adults, the most common reason that they do not want to marry is that they do not want to feel restricted and wish to continue living freely. When restated, this means they see marriage as a restraint and neither society nor parents have been able to convey the happiness and the fulfillment of hopes and dreams that is possible in a growing family. Through this movement, I feel that it is important to adjust family values and arouse public opinion.