

Activities to protect human rights

JLAF aims at achieving equality between men and women

JLAF is aiming at achieving equality between men and women. JLAF had struggled hard and won many suits that claimed illegality of the pay gap and promotion discrimination between men and women.



JLAF defends the right of the working people



Scenery of Hibiya park where numerous lay-off workers gathered in New year of 2007

In Japan, the government backed up by the enterprise had built up working pattern that gives priority to the profit of the enterprise in the name of "Neo-liberalism".

Because of such working pattern, many workers are forced to work in unstable position on which they can be laid off or switch their condition from full-time to temporary workers any

time. Even those who have stable job are facing problems such as non-payment of overtime, physical and mental health hazard because of over-work and even death from overwork in extreme cases. In order to protect rights, life and dignity of workers, JLAF had always stood on the side of workers and engaged in labor trials. Moreover, JLAF in cooperation with NGO proceeded activities to relief workers such as providing legal consultation.

Activities to exchange ideas with people and lawyers in different countries

Member of JLAF, always standing for the standpoint of defending democracy and Peace Constitution, have consistently engaged in activities to defend people's right, life and dignity. It is a pleasure for JLAF members to communicate and exchange ideas with those who share the same ideas although the country they live are different. Up to now, members of JLAF have visited the United States, China, South Korea and other Asian nations and have been trying to make friendship with lawyer groups in those countries. We hope to spread the idea of Peace Constitution to the world and create the world without war in the future.



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JAPAN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION for FREEDOM

90 years history always working for human rights and democracy

The Japan Lawyers Association for Freedom (JLAF) was born out of the courageous struggle by the ship building workers in Kobe in 1921. Dozens of lawyers who helped the strikers who suffered from bloody attack by the imperial police founded the JLAF, in order to give legal aids to the people's movement. Since then the JLAF has been well known as the lawyer's organization that has been promoting the rights of the workers, farmers, small and medium sized business owners and those who are suppressed by the establishment. The JLAF has always been hand in hand with the various people's movement in Japan.



Hiroshi Kikuchi (President of the JLAF)

The Code of the JLAF says "We aim at protecting human rights, strengthening democracy and contributing to achieve peaceful and democratic Japan..... We oppose every attempt to enact bad laws. When people are infringing on their human rights, we always fight to protect the rights in solidarity with them regardless of their political thoughts and affiliations."

The JLAF was forced to suspend its activities due to the brutal suppression by the imperial government during the World War II. But it was promptly reconstructed right after the end of the War. Since then the JLAF has been engaged in the struggles to maintain peace Constitution known as "Article 9", to oppose every invasive war, to oppose adverse revision of the laws that guaranteed workers rights, to rescue the victims of various environmental pollutions and drug induced sufferings, to oppose the attempt to destroy the equal opportunity for the education, to help the indigent people for their rights to enjoy decent life. and so on.

The JLAF also has been active against every kind of frame up representing innocent people who were wrongly accused.

Many of these activities have been successful and hence the JLAF has obtained respects from those who are concerned with human rights, peace and democracy.

The JLAF has been actively interacting with the lawyers over seas including with American, European and Asian lawyers.

The JLAF currently consists of 1900 members, approximately 8 percent of all lawyers in Japan. It has 38 branches through out Japan.

We do hope to strengthen international solidarity with every people's lawyer in the world.



Demonstration to protect Peace Constitution

Activities to defend Peace Constitution

Members of JLAF are proud of Constitution of Japan which declares pacifism in Article 9, renounces war as a sovereign right of the nation, and abandons to maintain any war potential. Existence of Article 9 has been playing important roles to limit overseas deployment and the scope of its mission of the Self Defense Forces. However, the government wanted to lift the limit, and enacted the National Referendum Law in 2007, that gives way for modification of Article 9. JLAF in cooperation with the pacifist organizations and others participated in campaign against the establishment of the National Referendum Law

Unity among members is the power for JLAF

JLAF holds big gathering of members twice a year, in order to make decisions as an association, exchange opinions about political and social issues, and report each other on activities to protect human right. About 500 of JLAF lawyers and clerks who work with lawyers participate in those gatherings.



Scenery of conference of JLAF

“The Japan Lawyers Association for Freedom (JLAF) loves peace, and protests against war.”

JLAF strongly opposed to send the Self Defense Forces to Iraq. JLAF appealed to groups of pacifists, labor unions, and dozens of individuals to have a demonstration parade against dispatch of the Self Defense Forces to Iraq. On the night, February 5, 2004, about 10,000 people, holding candles in their hands, gathered to express opposition against Japan's participation to the war, and surrounded the Defense Agency.



Peace candle night



Yokota Air Force Base

There are many U.S. bases in Japan. U.S. bases cause the noise pollution to the resident in the surrounding, destroy natural environment, and give birth to big problems and danger such as aircraft crash accidents caused by military training. Members of JLAF have been engaged in lawsuits that claim compensation concerning the noise damages and other damages caused by U.S. bases, and participated in campaigns to remove or limit the expansion of the base.

JLAF fights against the human-right violation by those who have power



Toshikazu Sugaya, set to be cleared of murder, walks out of the court with a banner bearing the words “absolutely innocent”

It is significant human-right violation to restrain innocent for a long term due to the misjudgment by criminal court. Members of JLAF have been working to prevent misjudgment and achieved to start retrial by representing those who are innocent as defense counsels. Moreover, members of JLAF have been pursuing movement to point out problems of the investigative procedure that is the hotbed of the false charge.



A newspaper article on case in Katsushika in which a Buddhist monk was convicted for burglary because he had distributed political flyers to posts of apartment.

JLAF defends freedom of speech

There are many cases seen in Japan, in which people who distributed political flyer to posts of apartments are convicted for burglary or the violation of the Government Employees

Regulation Law that prohibits every government employee to participate in any political action.

Members of JLAF are working hard to protect people's freedom of speech by engaging in individual cases and also by attending activities to prevail importance of freedom of speech among citizen such as giving lecture, believing that it is a necessary and indispensable base of democracy to defend freedom of speech.