

Fusae Ichikawa

Fusae Ichikawa (1893-1981) dedicated her whole life to women's involvement in politics. In 1890, Japanese women were legally prohibited from engaging in political activities. Although in 1922 they were allowed to participate in political gatherings to some extent, women were still barred from a great deal of political involvement up until the end of the World War II. Under these circumstances, Ichikawa emerged as a leader of the Women's Suffrage League, and played a pivotal role in obtaining women's suffrage. After the war, when women's suffrage was realized, she organized movements for a peaceful and democratic society through women's votes with the slogan "Women's Suffrage is the Key", with the reflection that Japanese women could not prevent the miserable war only because they were not entitled to vote.

Ichikawa had been a Dietwoman in the House of Councillors (non-partisan) for 25 years, from 1953 through 1981, advocating improvements of women's status, as well as purification of politics in and outside the Diet. Parallel with worldwide women's movements since 1975, International Women's Year, the International Women's Year Liaison Group, a Japanese women's NGO connecting 49 women's organizations, has been and continues to be very active. It was Fusae Ichikawa who laid the foundation of this solidarity.

Biographical Sketch of Fusae Ichikawa

1893 Born in Aichi Prefecture

1913 Graduated from teacher's normal school for women, to be an instructor in a primary school

- 1917** Became a reporter at Nagoya Newspaper
- 1919** Established the New Women's Association with Raicho Hiratsuka, a pioneer in the women's movement
- 1921** Left for U.S.,to get acquainted with Alice Paul,leader of the women's suffrage movement in U.S.A.
- 1924** Back to Japan, to work at the ILO Tokyo Branch Office. Established the Women's Suffrage League of Japan (Dissolved in 1949)
- 1930** Held First National Meeting of Women's Suffrage
- 1940** Became Director General of Women's Study Group on Current Affairs
- 1945** Established the Women's League for New Japan (now called the League of Women Voters of Japan)
- 1946** Construction of Women's Suffrage Center completed
- 1953** Elected to the House of Councillors from the Tokyo district, (Re-elected in 1959,1965 and failed in 1971)
- 1957** Organized National Women's Committee of the United Nations NGO
- 1959** Inspected the election campaign in U.K.,surveying prostitution issues in France, Italy,W.Germany and India
- 1960** Surveys started for election expenditures by candidates &

political parties and political contribution to them

1974 Elected to the House of Councillors from the national constituency

1975 Held Japan International Women's Year Conference

1979 Organized the Stop-the-Corrupt-Candidates Campaign

1980 Requested the Japanese government to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Won the election to the House of Councillors with the highest number of votes from the national constituency

1981 Died at the age of 87

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