

Entering a New Era for the Advancement of Chiropractic in Japan.

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Professor Wardwell, a noted sociologist who is well known in chiropractic circles, writes in his recent book "We cannot escape history. We are creatures of it. We cannot understand where we are or where we are likely to go in the future unless we know where we have been."

I must agree with him. We tend to forget so many things, while we can learn so much from the past and put it into effect for our future.

Our chiropractic leaders have done well despite innumerable obstacles and, thanks to them, we are able to celebrate our centennial. This is truly a special occasion to think about our history and past achievements.

As we were looking through the records, we found a very precious photo in which the first Japanese chiropractor, Shigetaro Morikubo, was being adjusted by D.D. Palmer, the Founder. Morikubo graduated from Palmer School in 1906, just ten years after the birth of chiropractic. This should remind us that our people have had a close tie with chiropractic since its very inception. Furthermore, chiropractic was not just another imported therapy. With other determined chiropractic pioneers, our people had to fight against prejudice to obtain recognition.

The man who introduced chiropractic to Japan was Saburo Kawaguchi, who returned from America in 1916. Like Saburo there were more than a dozen who returned with D.C.'s in the 1920's. Unfortunately, later political turmoil and the war prevented others from studying overseas.

We had to wait almost a half century, until the 1970's and 80's, to receive a new influx of post-war graduates with D.C. degrees.

However, it is important to recognize the brilliant non-D.C.'s who carried the torch for chiropractic during this interval. Due to uncertainty and dissension in the profession, many did change to other Japanese forms of therapy. But a few could see that chiropractic's day was coming.

During the post-war period, training was by apprenticeship. There was very little academic study and skills were taught by observation and hands-on

practice. Nonetheless, these chiropractors understood the uniqueness of chiropractic and could see its future.

If we are realistic, we will realize that a thing will not flourish simply because it is good. Indeed, the political reality is that a thing may perish because it is too good for its adversaries. Hence, the need to establish a professional organization to protect and promote what we believe in. In 1961, the Japanese Chiropractic Association (JCA) was born as a coalition of many associations. In 1970, it was reorganized on the basis of individual memberships. Against many obstacles, the JCA worked towards three major goals. These were to promote public awareness of chiropractic, to promote chiropractic research and to become involved in the international chiropractic community. With a membership of only three to four hundred, any one of these goals would have been a great challenge. However, we chose to address all three, for they were all interrelated. We have certainly paid the price for our efforts, but are proud of the outcome as you will see in this journal.

There are a number of major issues still facing our Japanese profession, with education by far the greatest. Until now chiropractic education has been virtually nonexistent in Japan, except for those proprietary schools teaching technique courses.

It was obvious that Japan could not be an exception in the trend of international standards of chiropractic education. However, it was by no means easy to start a legitimate school without legal protection. On the other hand, proprietary schools have mushroomed in the past ten years and the image of chiropractic was in jeopardy. The JCA was therefore determined to establish a chiropractic college. Fund raising started and a search was carried out for a suitable location.

After examining many possibilities, we have finally established a relationship with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, and will collaboratively open the Chiropractic Unit-Japan in 1995. Like many of our overseas colleagues, we have come a long way, but are pleased to say that the effort was worthwhile. Chiropractic is in Japan to stay and will flourish.

History of Japanese Chiropractic

Struggle for Survival and Social Acceptance

The first person known to have introduced chiropractic to Japan was Saburo Kawaguchi D.C., in 1916. Prior to the war, there were more than a dozen Japanese who received formal chiropractic education in America and returned to Japan to practise. They all seem to have had successful practices, but only a few showed an interest in teaching in their homeland. Some of their students later became important professional leaders in the postwar period.

In those days no one knew about chiropractic, and those Japanese who had gone to America probably went there originally in pursuit of something else. What they had in common, however, was that they had all suffered some ailment and they were so dramatically helped by this new healing art called chiropractic that they decided to make it their career.

In those days, the returning Japanese D.C.'s had observed the legal battles going on for chiropractic in various parts of the United States, and it was only natural that they were very conscious of their legal status in their homeland.

Unlike today, the prewar Japanese health care system was under regional (prefectural) authority. Kawaguchi and many other D.C.'s worked to obtain their right to practise from Kanagawa prefecture, which granted the first approval in 1918. After the war and the occupation, the Japanese political system, including the health care system, changed completely. Under the occupation, only western medicine was allowed. Through political struggles, traditional healing arts such as massage therapists, acupuncturists and bone setters won their legal status. Later they went on to become the strongest opponents of chiropractic legislation.

In the postwar period, chiropractic had to start all over again. Yet, everything seemed to be against it. There were no new D.C.'s coming into the country and the prewar D.C.'s were becoming old and disappearing. Many practitioners adopted Japanese manipulative arts rather than be known publically as chiropractors. Worst of all, in 1947 chiropractic was legally banned.

To fight for a legal niche, those who practised manipulation and used associated modalities, including light, heat and electricity, got together and formed an organization, the Zenkoku Ryoujutsushi Kyokai (ZRK). The name literally means all Japan natural healing association.

Chiropractic was classified as one of the many Japanese forms of manipulation. In those days there were actually very few people who claimed to be

chiropractors and their activities were rather sporadic in the 1950's. The ZRK had determined leaders and several thousand members from the liberal prewar period. They conducted a vigorous political campaign for almost half a century and succeeded in making several legal advances to the effect that their right to practise was established. However, they never realized their goal of chiropractic legislation.

In 1960, the Japanese Supreme Court handed down a historic ruling in the case of an electrotherapist who had been accused of practising a therapy which had been banned under the 1947 legislation. The court accepted his argument that Japanese citizens had a constitutional right to pursue their profession provided that it did not threaten the welfare of the public. This meant that no one could arrest non-legislated practitioners unless they infringed on the scope of existing health care practitioners, or unless their therapy had been proven harmful.

In 1970, the Ministry of Health and Welfare officially stated that massage and pressure therapies did not include chiropractic. The organization of massage and acupuncture therapists had been pressuring the Ministry to stop chiropractic by maintaining that spinal manipulation was one form of their arts. It was obvious that their arguments were based on professional self-interest and perceived economic threats.

Medicine has a monopoly on health care in Japan, so that only medical doctors are allowed to diagnose or to use X-rays. Nonetheless, that the profession is very active and continues to grow is enough to make anyone jealous. In spite of the odds, chiropractic has gained popularity over the years. But this did not just happen. It was the result of well planned promotion of the profession.

In 1961, leaders of half a dozen chiropractic organizations got together to seek some way towards unity. A coalition of organizations was unanimously approved and the new body was called the Japanese Chiropractic Association (JCA). Since legislative efforts had been placed in the hands of the ZRK, the JCA served as a regular gathering of group leaders and later became a forum for monthly study seminars in the 1960's and 70's. In those days, information was rather limited and the activities served mainly to maintain the status quo.

It was in 1965, when Dr. Joseph Janse was invited for a seminar, that people began to feel the importance both of working together and of taking a modern approach to chiropractic. This was an epoch

