

Summary of Press Conference of Incoming President, Terunobu Maeda, December 10th

I was selected yesterday by the Board of Governors to be the next president, a position of great responsibility. To be the person chosen, I was most surprised of all, but I plan to familiarize myself with the operations of NHK as quickly as possible and carry out my duties in a manner appropriate for a public broadcaster.

Q&A Session

Q: What were the major reasons you were chosen for the position?

A: Yesterday, Board of Governors Chair Susumu Ishihara told me that they definitely wanted me to accept the post, and so that is how it came to be. As I'm going to take on the job, I'll aim to do my best. That is all there is to it.

Q: What part of your work has left the biggest impressions on you and do you think you will be able to utilize your experiences from your time in the banking sector?

A: Although it is already more than 10 years since I left the banking industry, during the period of the merger of banks, the trouble caused by problems in the systems left the biggest impression on me. It took time to turn three banks into one; through the integration of operations, including the effort to improve efficiency of the organization, I learned it is important to take prompt action and that nothing could be achieved just by thinking about it. Whether this can be useful at NHK, I will find out in due course.

Q: What NHK programs do you particularly like?

A: I think the science programs are really excellent, including those related to space, those programs on which a great deal of time is spent on production are very impressive.

Q: It is said that people are continuing to move away from television towards the internet, what is your take on that?

A: The times are changing, so to some extent I think that is inevitable. However, I don't believe that television will disappear, as a medium I think that television still has value. Naturally, this depends on providing high-quality content, which we will have to keep on doing. The digital age is one in which information is delivered much faster than in the past and there will be developments that we are unable to foresee; we must take this into account as we face the challenges ahead.

Q: How will you deal with the issue of keeping a distance from the government?

A: I think the important things are fairness and impartiality. I have absolutely no close connection with any political administration. I have no interest in having one. I believe that it is a matter of course for political authorities in power to be scrutinized by the media. I think a proper distance should be maintained.

Q: What is your favorite saying?

A: Fukuzawa Yukichi's 'Independence and Self-Respect'. In that time of the Meiji era, the independence of Japan was an important matter. I am from Nakatsu City, Oita Prefecture, where there is a stone monument with those words inscribed on it. I played there all the time when I was an elementary school student, so those words are etched in my brain.

Q: What are your ambitions as the head of a public broadcaster?

A: Naturally, as a public broadcaster, to continue to make programs which are seen as trustworthy by all citizens. I think that will be the overarching focus. I don't think being overly concerned with viewing figures is the correct approach, but to continue to deliver high-quality programming.



Q: What are the most important elements in management philosophy and being a leader?

A: I have only worked in financial institutions, but in a nutshell, I believe it is delivering results. Organizations always have a tendency to become obsolete and bloated, so that must be looked out for. All organizations suffer from becoming stuck in their ways, so if a careful eye is not kept on such problems, they will become incapable of moving with the times and staying relevant.

Q: How do you view the receiving fee system?

A: Because NHK is basically run on the finances generated by the receiving fees, it should not be swayed by special interest groups or specific viewers, it must not waiver from delivering programs which contain accurate information and nurture culture as important elements of society. In that sense, the burden of the receiving fees should naturally be shared equally across all viewers, which I think is the essence of the law relating to it.

Q: As the organization is supported by the special system of the receiving fees, do you feel it is a completely different position from being the president of a listed company?

A: This will be a new experience for me. In a listed company, the major issues include how much to pay out in dividends and how to raise the stock price; as a public broadcaster, I think the situation is completely different. There is much I would like to learn, and I think there is great importance in being a public broadcaster, so I plan to work in a manner that comprehensively fulfils that mission.