St Antony's College

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NEW PARTY SUCCESS AND FAILURE IN JAPAN:

The Experiences of the Liberal Party, 1998-2003

Inge Engel Christensen

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of D.Phil., Faculty of Politics and International Relations

Trinity Term, 2005 [ie 2006] (LTS 30.i.06)



”If you do not change direction, you may end up where you are heading”

Lao Tzu, 600 B.C.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the Liberal Party, a new party founded in 1998 in Japan, where numerous new parties have emerged in the 1990s following the disintegration of the existing political order. New parties have played important roles in the ongoing process of political change, but have failed to challenge the dominant Liberal Democratic Party, and most have faced difficulties in consolidating their positions within the emerging party system. The Liberal Party also failed to become a permanent player, but nevertheless played an important role, serving as a catalyst for change. The thesis examines its experiences to better understand its development, role, and character.

The thesis first discusses recent political developments in Japan, including an analysis of new party emergence and trends within the political realignment process. The case study of the Liberal Party discusses developments from 1998 until 2003, when the party was dissolved, and also examines three dimensions of party activity, covering 'policy', 'organization, leadership, and resources', and 'relations with the electorate'.

The thesis draws on existing scholarly literature, but also employs data from party publications, interviews, observations, newspaper reports, and political finance reports.

The analysis shows that the Liberal Party's attempts to influence the political structure and process were often frustrated. Although the presence of a strong leader positively impacted on the party's sustenance, it proved difficult to expand the organization and to secure sufficient resources. The Liberal Party's emphasis on policy set it apart from its contemporaries, and it succeeded in functioning as a dynamo of new ideas. It failed, however, to expand its electoral base significantly, which limited its options.

The thesis also finds that although the process of realignment has pushed Japan further towards a two-party set-up, developments at the elite level have failed to generate a corresponding realignment of the highly alienated and disinterested Japanese electorate.

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NOTE ON CONVENTIONS

Japanese names are given in the traditional Japanese style with last name first. Long vowels in Japanese words are indicated by macrons, e.g., ō, ū and ā, but are not used in place names commonly used in the English language, for example Tokyo and Osaka. Names of Japanese newspapers and institutions are written in *italics* when used in the text. Political parties are referred to by their English names or translations of the Japanese names (when no official English name was designated by the party) and are followed by their Japanese characters and abbreviations the first time they appear in the main text, e.g., 'Japan New Party [日本新党] (JNP)'. Japanese characters for party names do not follow references to parties in the footnotes, but a comprehensive list of party names, their abbreviations and Japanese characters is found below. The Japan Socialist Party (JSP) changed its official English name to the Social Democratic Party in 1991. The Japanese name was changed in 1996 and now corresponds with the English name, but to avoid confusion, I use 'Japan Socialist Party' or 'JSP' throughout.

Other Japanese expressions have been translated into English followed by Japanese characters in square brackets. This option has been chosen, since neither Japanese characters nor Romanized expressions make much sense to non-Japanese speakers. For a Japanese speaker, however, the presence of characters can be quite helpful in determining the exact meaning of a given phrase.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1. General

HC	House of Councillors
HR	House of Representatives
PR	Proportional representation
LD	Local districts (House of Councillors)
MIAC	Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications
MMD	Multimember districts (House of Representatives; until 1994)
SMD	Single-member districts (House of Representatives)
PARC	Policy Affairs Research Council (of the LDP)
PEC	Prefectural Electoral Commission
PFCL	Political Fund Control Law
POEL	Public Office Election Law
UN PKO	United Nations Peace Keeping Operations

2. Names of political parties (used in tables and text)

CG	Clean Government [公明]
CGP	Clean Government Party [公明党]
CL	Citizens' League [市民リーグ]
GGP	Good Governance Party [民政党]
CP	Conservative Party [保守党]
DC	Dawn Club [黎明クラブ]
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan [民主党]
DRL	Democratic Reform League [民主改革連合]
DSP	Democratic Socialist Party [民主社会党]
FF	From Five [フロム・ファイブ]
HCC	House of Councillors Club [参議院クラブ]
IG	Independents' Group [無所属の会]
JCP	Japan Communist Party [日本共産党]
JNP	Japan New Party [日本新党]
JSP	Japan Socialist Party [社会党] * see Note on conventions above
JTUC	Japanese Trade Union Confederation group in the House of Councillors [連合参議院]
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party [自由民主党]
LG	Liberal Group [自由の会]
LL	Liberal League [自由連合]
LP^{94}	Liberal Party (est. in 1994) [自由党]
LP	Liberal Party (est. in 1998) [自由党]
LPC	New Party of Liberals for Preservation of the Constitution [新党護憲リベラル]
NLC	New Liberal Club [新自由クラブ]
NCP	New Conservative Party [保守新党]
NFP	New Frontier Party [新進党]
NFR	New Party Fraternity [新党友愛]
NPF	New Party Future [新党みらい]

NPH	New Party Harbinger [新党さきがけ]
NPCG	New Party Clean Government [公明新党]
NPP	New Party Peace [新党平和]
NSP	New Socialist Party [新社会党]
PCP	Peace and Citizens' Party [平和・市民党]
RC	Reform Club [改革クラブ]
RP	Renewal Party [新生党]
SCC	Second Chamber Club [二院クラブ]
SDL	Socialist Democratic League [社会民主連合]
SDP	Social Democratic Party [社会民主党] * see Note on conventions above
SPP	Sports and Peace Party [スポーツ・平和党]
SP	Sun Party [太陽党]
VP	Voice of the People [国民の声]

3. Place names (used in tables and figures)

AI	Aichi	MZ	Miyazaki
AK	Akita	NI	Niigata
AO	Aomori	NK	Nagasaki
CH	Chiba	NN	Nagano
EH	Ehime	NR	Nara
FI	Fukui	OK	Okayama
FK	Fukuoka	ON	Okinawa
FS	Fukushima	OS	Osaka
GI	Gifu	OT	Oita
GM	Gumma	SA	Saga
HG	Hyōgo	SG	Shiga
HS	Hiroshima	SH	Shimane
HK	Hokkaidō	ST	Saitama
IB	Ibaraki	SZ	Shizuoka
IS	Ishikawa	TC	Tochigi
IW	Iwate	TO	Tokyo
KC	Kōchi	TS	Tokushima
KM	Kumamoto	TT	Tottori
KN	Kanagawa	TY	Toyama
KS	Kagoshima	WK	Wakayama
KW	Kagawa	YG	Yamaguchi
KY	Kyoto	YN	Yamanashi
MG	Miyagi	YT	Yamagata
MI	Mie		

CHAPTER 1

CHANGING JAPANESE PARTY POLITICS

1.1 Introduction: Political Change and the Liberal Party

Japanese domestic politics took a new turn in 1993, when long-term stability and one-party dominance gave way to dramatic changes in the party system. When the ruling Liberal Democratic Party [自由民主党] (LDP) failed to secure a majority in the 1993 election due to defections, an alliance of new and established opposition parties was forged, which sensationally resulted in the creation of the first non-LDP government in 38 years.

The LDP split in June 1993 marked the beginning of what was to become a prolonged process of political realignment. This process has reconfigured Japan's political landscape as established parties have disappeared and numerous new parties emerged. No less than 29 new parties have been represented in parliament between 1993 and 2003, and although many of these disappeared as quickly as they had been formed, some have played important, if different, roles within the process of political change currently underway in Japan.

One highly significant new party was the Liberal Party [自由党] (LP), founded in 1998 by Ozawa Ichirō and his supporters, and although it was eventually dissolved in 2003, it served as an important catalyst of change. Ozawa, a protagonist in the political reform process, initially belonged to the LDP, where he had risen within the party hierarchy and been able to wield significant influence. Nevertheless, he became

an ardent proponent of political reform in order to realize his visions for a "normal Japan" and to create vibrant politics (Curtis, 1999, p. 89). Key to his ideas was the establishment of a party system where voters could choose between two major parties offering clear policy alternatives. In his bestselling book from 1993, which was subsequently translated into English as the "Blueprint for a New Japan", Ozawa clearly stated his aims:

> "The question is not whether, but how we should demolish the old order and achieve a transformation of postwar politics....The aim of reform is the revitalization of politics".
> (Ozawa, 1994, p. 63)

Ozawa was pivotal in bringing down the LDP government and in bringing about the creation of a multiparty coalition dedicated to wholesale reform of the system of governance (Stockwin, 2003, p. 199). With other LDP defectors Ozawa established the Renewal Party [新生党] (RP), which occupied a central position in the two non-LDP governments in 1993 and 1994. Ozawa and his Renewal Party were also instrumental in the passage in 1994 of a political reform package, which included reform of the electoral system. In July 1994, however, the LDP succeeded in orchestrating its return to power through an alliance with its former archenemy, the Japan Socialist Party [日本社会党] (JSP) and a smaller party established by LDP defectors in 1993. In response, Ozawa and his colleagues from the non-LDP camp established the New Frontier Party [新進党] (NFP) as an attempt to build a party that might realistically challenge the LDP under the new electoral setup. This attempt to move towards a two-party contest, however, capsized when the NFP disintegrated in late 1997 due to personality clashes and organizational incompatibilities (Stockwin, 2003, p. 199)

From the ashes of the NFP split emerged a range of splinter parties, most of which were shortly afterwards merged with the Democratic Party [民主党] (DPJ).

The Liberal Party, another NFP splinter party, however, was set on a different course, and in spite of initial scepticism developed into a durable entity, and came to play a significant role in subsequent political developments. In many ways it seemed different from other new parties of the period, and indeed also different from other established parties in Japan. The major difference was its characteristic emphasis on bringing its policy vision to the fore. Quite simply, its raison d'être was to work for the realization of its policy ideas. From the outset the logic of exclusion was prioritized over the logic of numbers, which had been characteristic for its predecessor, the NFP. Indeed, only legislators who could be counted on to rally behind Ozawa and his ideas were invited to join the party, and it presented itself to the world as a 'fighting policy group', grounded in a shared policy vision. While this policy vision was largely identical to the ideas previously promoted by Ozawa, party representatives went to great lengths in order to emphasize the party's quality as a 'team of policy experts', and its detailed political programme was consistently developed over the years.

The LP attempted to influence the political structure and process constructively in various ways, and in 1999 it joined the LDP in a coalition. This coalition was later extended also to include the Clean Government Party [公明党] (CGP), which pushed the LP into a supernumerary role. Its hopes of influencing the coalition's agenda were soon disappointed, which led to the decision in 2000 to withdraw from the ruling camp. Although party unity had been remarkable so far, this decision resulted in a major rift within the party, causing it to split in half. Liberal defectors established the Conservative Party [保守党] (CP), which remained in the coalition, and for the LP the split was fateful in that it greatly altered the character of the party

and imposed limitations on its options. Although the LP also sought to exert influence within the opposition following its departure from the ruling coalition, its marginal position caused it to be overshadowed by the DPJ.

In spite of its strength within the policy dimension, consolidation and preservation of the party represented an uphill struggle. The central organization revolved around Ozawa, who exerted strong influence over party affairs, and appeared solid and unified barring the crucial split in 2000. At the same time, however, building and consolidating the organization at the local level proved exceedingly difficult. Indeed, Liberal efforts to expand the organization yielded almost no results. Expanding its electoral appeal also proved difficult, and although the party did succeed in appealing more strongly to certain socioeconomic groups over the years, election results never significantly enabled it to improve on its minor position within the party system. The LP never faced the threat of complete extinction given the safety net of Ozawa's personal popularity, which guaranteed the election of a number of MPs through proportional representation. It nevertheless appeared increasingly unlikely that the party would be able to enlarge its representation in parliament and local assemblies in any significant manner.

Realizing the need for united opposition efforts, but also perhaps partly based on its less than encouraging future prospects if it were to remain on its own, the Liberal Party decided to dissolve and was merged with the DPJ in September 2003. Power did not change hands in the 2003 election, which followed shortly after the merger, but the merger certainly succeeded in making the election into a de facto two-party contest. This in turn represented a significant step towards the realization of Ozawa's ambitions for the reform of Japanese politics.

1.2 The Aim and Focus of This Thesis

It was not just in Japan that one-party-dominant regimes experienced setbacks in the 1990s, but elsewhere new parties have had more success in ousting old ruling parties.[1] The LDP's return to government in 1994 was no return to the *status quo ante*, but in Japan new parties have so far been unable to seriously challenge the dominant LDP. The prolonged dominance of the LDP during the postwar period no doubt affected the way Japanese voters perceived their national politics, and according to one observer, rule by the LDP had almost come to symbolize "the natural expression of Japanese political culture" (Tani, 1998, p. 97). Nevertheless, considering the amount of energy poured into forging a reconfiguration of the political setup in Japan, the continued rule of the LDP certainly represents an intriguing puzzle.

Many of Japan's new parties in effect amounted to little more than transitional vehicles for MPs in the process of political realignment. Some, however, have clearly been more significant and ambitious, and have played important roles in the various phases of the ongoing process of political systemic change, contributing towards the slow but gradual emergence of a new political order. Common to all new parties have been difficulties in expanding and consolidating their position within this emerging party system. As it soon became apparent, establishing a new party was not difficult, but managing it successfully in parliament and steering it successfully through elections was a very different matter.

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[1] Ware (1995) gives a more detailed discussion of cases, where established regimes have suffered setbacks in the 1990s. The case most often cited in comparison with Japan is that of Italy, where the collapse of the Christian Democrats and the Socialists prompted a major upheaval in the party system in 1994. A significant difference between developments in Japan and Italy, however, is that while the Italian Christian Democrats collapsed completely, the Japanese LDP suffered what was indeed a serious setback, but nonetheless remained the largest party in parliament.

The aim of this thesis is to provide a comprehensive account and discussion of the Liberal Party's experiences in order to identify areas of party successes and disappointments. Through the study of the LP's trajectory, the thesis demonstrates how it was not only a response to the ongoing process of change within the party system, but also how it served as an important catalyst for change within this process, even if it failed to manifest itself as a permanent player within the party system.

In spite of the LP's heavy emphasis on policy and ideas in its appeal, party strategists also clearly perceived the need to build the organization and expand the party's electoral support basis. This study, however, clearly shows that its efforts in this regard were largely unsuccessful, and the thesis demonstrates how organizational weaknesses impacted on the party's ability to consolidate. It also demonstrates how these weaknesses tied in with the LP's performance in the electoral arena.

The story of the Liberal Party is that of a party, which ambitiously worked to promote and realize its political ideas, and one which clearly set itself apart from its contemporaries within the policy dimension. It put initial scepticism that it would soon disappear to shame, and attempted to use its strongest cards, i.e., a strong and charismatic leader and a clear policy agenda, to appeal to the electorate and as a compass in its parliamentary activities. It wholeheartedly sought to propel forward its ambitious policy agenda, and also worked to influence its surroundings constructively. But the trajectory of the LP is also the story of a party, which had to look political realities in the eye and deal with the constraints and limitations placed upon it by its structural context. As such its experiences appear to be representative for most new parties that have emerged in recent years in Japan.

A secondary aim of the thesis is to provide a detailed discussion of Japan's changing party politics, to gauge the extent to which the aims of political reform, particularly the aim to bring about a two-party system, have actually been achieved, and to establish a basic understanding of the new players, which have emerged within the party system. While this part of the thesis forms the backdrop for the discussion of the Liberal Party, it serves to cut through the confusion that has surrounded the process of political realignment and seeks to establish more precisely what actually happened at elite and electorate levels between 1993 and 2003.

New parties in Japan had to deal with the overwhelming presence of the LDP, but also faced the challenge of developing and consolidating in a new and uncertain context created by various institutional changes. Their development was further complicated by weak organizational bases and difficulties in tapping into sufficient resources. New parties have largely been unsuccessful in their attempts to consolidate and challenge the LDP, but several, and perhaps in particular the LP, have been important contributors to the process of political change, which in spite of various setbacks seems to be on an irreversible course.

Political transitions are full of unpredictable, albeit short-term, tendencies, and leaders have to cope with a large degree of uncertainty. As Wightman asserts, "the initial phase of a regime shift is a formative period in which wise or foolish choices are made" (1995, p. 4). Thus, the experiences of new parties provide valuable learning lessons for their successors, and for this reason alone warrant closer scrutiny.

1.3 Existing Literature and This Study's Contribution

Political parties have occupied a central position within political science from its

early beginnings, although scholarly emphases have changed over time. Research at the systemic level ranges from studies of the development and consolidation of party systems (e.g., Dahl, 1966; LaPalombara and Weiner, 1966) to studies focusing on the identification and classification of different types of party system (e.g., Sartori, 1976). Parties themselves have been studied from the perspective of electoral support through analyses of the origin and transformation of this support (e.g., Bartolini and Mair, 1990; Lipset and Rokkan, 1967), their organization (Duverger, 1954; Kirchheimer, 1966; Michels, 1959; Ostrogorski, 1964), their ideological character (Budge, Hearl and Robertson, 1987), or their governing role and policy performance (Budge and Keman, 1990; Castles and Wildenmann, 1986; Katz, 1987).

The majority of studies focus on established parties, but new parties have also attracted attention in the scholarly literature. At a more general level, scholars have recently sought to explain the formation of new parties, their electoral success (or variation in success), or to determine how institutional arrangements impact on new party success (e.g., Hug 2000, 2001; Lucardie 2000; Willey 1998). The most common approach to the study of new parties, however, is the case study of individual new parties or types of new parties within a given polity, and as Hug (2001, p. 70) notes, the literature is replete with monographs and journal articles dealing with individual new parties (e.g., Betz, 1994; Ignazi, 1994; Kitschelt 1988, 1995; Müller-Rommel, 1993, 1998; Poguntke, 1993).[2]

In contrast to the diverse corpus of literature on political parties in Western democracies, the study of political parties has generally played only a limited role in

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[2] New parties have likewise been the focus of studies of the processes of post-Communist change in East-Central Europe (e.g., Kitschelt, 1992; Kopecký, 1995; Lewis, 1993, 1996; Olson, 1998; Roskin, 1993; Wightman, 1995).

the subfield of Japanese politics.[3] Nevertheless, the development of the old party system and the political parties within have been well documented (see for example, Curtis, 1988; Fukui, 1970; Hrebenar, 1986, 1992, 2000; Scalapino and Masumi, 1962; Stockwin, 1968, 1999; Thayer, 1969; or Tominomori, 1977).

Recent developments in Japan, however, have mainly been examined in terms of changes in voting behaviour (e.g., Miyake, 1994, 1995; Reed, 1999, 2003; Reed and Yokoyama, 1997; Tanaka and Nishizawa, 2000), change (or non-change) in election campaigning and election strategies (e.g., Christensen, 1998; Ōtake, 1997, 1998b; Reed, 1995), coalition formation and the policy process under these coalitions (e.g., Nonaka, 1998; Ōtake, 2000c), or other changes at the systemic level. Individual new parties have rarely been scrutinized in detail. The main work on the new parties remains the three-volume collection of materials compiled by the Kabashima Ikuo Zemi (1998a, 1998b, 1998c), which, however, has the compilation of data as its primary aim. In English, *Japan's New Party System* states as its purpose to present material on the structure of the various parties within the new party system (Hrebenar, 2000, p. xi), but the chapter dedicated to new parties presents little significant information on any of these. For example, the Liberal Party, which is the focus of this thesis, is taken care of by a single paragraph. Indeed, while the more established parties from the 'old party system' are allocated 40-50 pages each, Hrebenar constricts his analysis of what he deems to be the six most important new parties to the limited space of 17 pages. Numerous factual mistakes and misunderstandings

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[3] For decades the study of Japanese politics was dominated by the 'dominant-bureaucracy' view, most notably advocated by Chalmers Johnson (1982). Political parties were generally seen as insignificant actors and given little attention. A new trend became apparent in the 1980s, as scholars began to emphasize the pluralistic aspects of Japanese politics and policy making processes, and focus shifted to the relationship between the LDP and interest groups and bureaucrats, as well as to the ability of the LDP to counter bureaucratic dominance (e.g., Allinson and Sone, 1993; Inoguchi and Iwai, 1987; Muramatsu, Itō, and Tsujinaka, 1992; Sone and Kanazashi, 1989).

aside, Hrebenar's account does little to enhance our understanding of the new players in the Japanese party system.

Within the general literature on political parties, their importance has been reasserted on several occasions, often in the wake of suggestions that parties were in crisis or had failed. The role of parties has obviously changed over time and new actors have entered the political arena, but parties nonetheless continue to function as the legitimizing link between citizens and the state. They provide the principal means through which the people can hold their governors accountable for policy and performance in office, and remain the key actors in the formation and maintenance of governments (Katz and Mair, 1992, p. 1). Understanding new parties is no less important. Some new parties, even if starting small, are here to replace established parties, and even if new parties do not succeed in becoming central actors, their sheer presence impacts on the electoral competition. Finally, new parties may force existing parties to address issues, which have been neglected so far (Hug, 2001, p. 1).

Recent developments in Japan adhere to this general pattern. As discussed in the following chapters, some new parties have usurped the position of existing ones, and the emergence of new parties certainly have changed the nature of Japanese party politics and Japanese elections in a positive direction by injecting more competition into the electoral equation. Most new parties did not form around policy issues and therefore had little impact on the policy of other parties, but some, most prominently the Liberal Party, clearly served as battering rams for new ideas, thus forcing other parties to react to its proposals (see also Feldman, 2003). Furthermore, although the pace has been slow, recent measures of administrative reform have aimed at reducing the role of bureaucrats in the legislature, and parties seem to be

increasingly moving towards the centre stage of Japanese political life. Finally, the sheer number of new parties that have emerged in Japan in recent years is a reason in itself to seek a better understanding of their character and role (see also Hug, 2001, p. 1). Thus, if we aim to enhance our understanding of current Japanese politics, there are good reasons to go below the system level and conduct detailed analysis of individual new political parties.

The nature of this thesis is shaped by the desire to explore this *terra incognita*, and it hopes to build on the gaps that currently exist in our knowledge of new parties in Japan, thereby paving the way for a less arbitrary way of dealing with the new party phenomenon in the literature. Apart from the need to understand how and why party politics in Japan is changing, an in-depth analysis of the Japanese case will also enrich the general, western-centred, approach, which has dominated the literature on political parties.[4]

The research design of this thesis is a single case study of the Liberal Party, and the focus on a single case obviously limits the possibilities for broader generalizations. Even within the Japanese context it could be argued that the LP was somewhat of an anomaly. At the same time, however, it is clear that it shared at least some characteristics with other new parties, e.g., in the area of organization and electoral performance, which will allow for at least some generalization from the

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[4] The Japanese case has often been seen as *sui generis*, and much time and energy has been spent debating whether any aspects of Japan should, and indeed can, be interpreted through employment of analytical frameworks based on categories developed in a non-Japanese context. Hardliners are found on either side of the fence, with one extreme arguing that Japan and everything Japanese is unique and that it cannot possibly be understood by application of Western categories. The other extreme holds that no elements of cultural differences should enter the discussion of Japanese politics (for a discussion of these issues, see Stockwin, 1999, p. 2). This study takes the position that Japan's political parties act in ways largely similar to their Western counterparts, but also acknowledges the need to take specific contextual factors into account when dealing with Japanese political parties. The need for awareness of contextual factors is, however, not unique to the study of Japan, but applies to all countries.

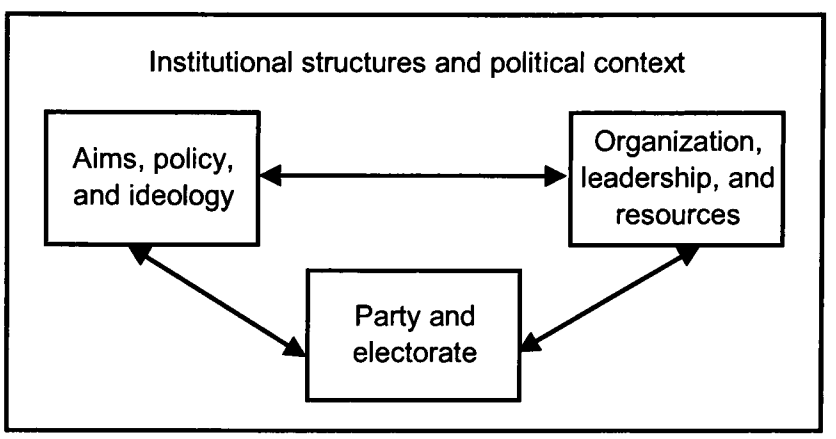
findings in this study. The case study approach, however, also has the clear advantage that it allows for 'intensive research' (Eckstein, 1975, p. 81). And given the absence of a similar study on which to build, a proper understanding of the case needs to be achieved in order to create the basis for future research on the LP and other new parties. As previously noted, the emergence of new parties in other countries have already attracted considerable scholarly attention, while the literature on Japan's new parties remain limited. In order to reach an understanding of these new actors, it is to a large extent necessary to aggregate data from scratch on a range of aspects pertaining to their existence and activities, and an underlying aim of this thesis is therefore also to generate data, which might form the basis of subsequent research that will enhance our understanding of new party emergence more generally.

1.4 A Model for the Study of New Parties

This study seeks to identify areas of Liberal Party success and disappointment, and through the analysis to pinpoint the underlying reasons for these successes and failures. It examines the LP's formation, the move from opposition to government, the return to opposition and the party split, which resulted from this move, as well as the eventual decision to dissolve the party and merge with the DPJ. The remainder of the analysis is structured according to the tripartite model suggested by the Kabashima Ikuo Zemi (1998a) as an effective method for studying new parties (see Figure 1.1). Thus, the remaining three chapters of the case study are structured along the lines of (1) policy, (2) organization, leadership, and resources, and (3) relations

with the electorate. These dimensions are discussed in more detail below.

Figure 1.1
Studying New Parties: A Model



Note. Adapted from Kabashima Ikuo Zemi, 1998a, p. 20.

Party organization has remained central to the study of political parties throughout, and as noted by Alan Ware, any party "requires an organization to utilize [its] resources in an effective way" (1996, p. 93). Panebianco (1988) takes the emphasis on organization one step further, arguing that "whatever else parties are and to whatever other solicitations they respond, they are above all organizations" (pp. xi-xii). Although recent studies of party organization have tended to emphasize formal structures, the examination here also aims to include informal aspects of organization.[5] Access to resources is vital for building an organization, and the chapter dealing with party organization therefore also discusses this aspect.

While establishment and maintenance of the party organization is a crucial challenge for new parties, it is also a feature that remains somewhat isolated from the party's public face, which for parties operating within a competitive electoral system plays an equally important role in appeals to the electorate. The public face of a

[5] The former relate to the structure of the party as stated in its rules and statutes, the regulations on internal decision making procedures, as well as the physical units of the party (e.g., local party organizations), whereas the latter may be best understood as the 'internal dynamics' of the party, e.g., the existence of informal sub-units (factions) within the party, the relationship between these units, sense of solidarity within the party, level of cohesion, etc. How to strike an appropriate balance between formal and informal aspects of organization remains a bone of contention in the literature. While Katz and Mair (1992, p. 6) argue that formal frameworks are "important in their own right", Panebianco (1988, p. 35) see these as nothing more than a point of departure for organizational analysis and instead stresses the importance of including informal structures in the analytical framework. The need for inclusion of informal structures is echoed by Kabashima (2000, p. 39), who emphasizes that a party must maintain solidarity within the organization, if it is to compete seriously for power, or if it wants to maximize its clout in negotiations for becoming a coalition partner.

political party to a large extent consists of its policies and official ideology, and the embracing of ideology by parties may indeed be seen as a response to the demands imposed by the competition for the votes of a mass electorate (Ware, 1996, p. 17). Our second dimension therefore pertains to party aims, policy, and ideology.

The final dimension concerns the relationship between party and electorate. To state the obvious, any party operating within a democratic system will need to be able to win seats in elections. In order to do so, it needs the support of groups within the electorate, and must devise its electoral strategies in order to secure and maintain this support. Along this dimension we examine the extent to which the Liberal Party was able to appeal to voters, and we also attempt to establish a typology of this support. The study of these dimensions provides a multifaceted picture of the Liberal Party's experiences, and the study specifically seeks answers to the following questions:

(1) What were the Liberal Party's origins?

(2) How did the LP seek influence within the political system? And to what extent was it successful in this regard?

(3) How did the LP seek to influence its structural surroundings?

(4) What was the LP's policy orientation, and how was policy formulation and presentation performed?

(5) What were the LP's organizational characteristics?

(6) How was the party organization developed, and what difficulties were experienced by the LP in this arena?

(7) How did resource availability influence organizational development?

(8) How did the LP fare with the electorate, and which modes of appeal were employed in the attempt to build the party's electoral base?

1.5 Outline of Thesis

This section provides a brief outline of the thesis. Chapter 2 presents an overview of recent developments in Japanese politics, and provides the contextual background for the analysis in subsequent chapters. It first discusses the so-called 1955 system, its disintegration, and the reasons behind the LDP split in 1993, which became the impetus for political realignment. It then examines the two non-LDP coalitions in 1993 and 1994, the passage of political reform in 1994, as well as the attempts to construct a system based on two-party competition between first the LDP and the NFP (1994-1997) and then between the LDP and the DPJ (1998-2003).

Chapter 3 focuses on the process of political realignment, and first examines the emergence of new parties in the 1990s and their characteristics. It then ponders realignment at the elite level and examines various trends in this process as well as the incentives and motivations for participation in realignment. The chapter finally discusses political realignment from the perspective of the electorate, which provides an important clue to understanding the political climate within which new parties were struggling to consolidate.

Chapters 4-7 present the case study of the Liberal Party. Chapter 4 focuses on party activities from its formation in 1998 until its dissolution in 2003, and examines various important turning points in the party's existence, notably the decision to join the LDP in coalition, the disintegration of coalition unity following inclusion of the CGP, the decision to leave the coalition, and the ensuing split of the party in 2000. The chapter finally examines the LP's activities as an opposition party (2000-2003) and the decision to merge with the DPJ in September 2003.

The LP's raison d'être was grounded in its policy vision, and policy remained a

focal point for party activities throughout. Chapter 5 focuses on the Liberals' policy making framework, their basic principles, as well as the party's major policy documents and statements. It identifies LP policy preferences using content analysis, and these preferences are placed in a comparative context to examine the party's position vis-à-vis other parties. It also contrasts party preferences with the preferences expressed by the electorate in opinion polls from the period.

Chapter 6 examines the party's organization, style and role of leadership, as well as its access to resources. The analysis examines central and local levels of organization, and also ponders the formal and informal mechanisms of the organizational structures, which shaped the organization in important ways. At the local level the examination covers the development of formal units of organization over time, as well as the LP's membership base and grassroots foundations. The chapter then presents a detailed examination of political financing in Japan and discusses the LP's difficulties in securing access to financial resources. This discussion compares the LP's situation with those of other parties, and also includes a case study of the funding situation for individual legislators.

Chapter 7 examines electoral activities of the LP, and discusses its performance in national and local elections. Its electoral survival surprised many commentators, but it clearly faced difficulties in the electoral arena, and the chapter discusses some of the underlying reasons. A major challenge obviously related to building support within the electorate, and we therefore discuss the socioeconomic characteristics of LP support over the years and also compare this with support for other parties. Finally, the chapter discusses the modes of appeal used by the party to extend its support base through political activities and electoral campaigning, and also the

electorate's response to some of these appeals.

1.6 Methods and Data

King, Keohane, and Verba (1994, pp. 5-6) assert that "neither quantitative nor qualitative research is superior to the other", and this thesis utilizes a 'mixed-method' approach that combines both types of research. It engages with a range of party dimensions, and consequently also employs a range of different data types, which are outlined in more detail in the following.

A database containing data on the electoral and biographical background as well as realignment activities of parliamentary members in Japan was compiled in the course of the empirical research for this thesis. It contains information on all members of the Japanese Parliament in the period from August 1992 to November 2003, the date which forms the end point of this research project (n=1465). Entries include gender, age, birthplace, educational background, career background, number of terms in parliament, party affiliations, electoral results, and some additional notes. The main sources for the database include various editions of two well-known parliamentary handbooks, i.e., *Seiji Handobukku* and *Kokkai Binran*, while additional sources include *Shitte okitai kokkai giin no ugoki* (Kokusei Jōhō Sentā, 1998), *Asahi Kīwādo* (various years), the websites of various political parties and individual legislators, newspaper articles and other media coverage from the period.[6] This dataset is used in chapters dealing with the contextual background for the case

[6] The House of Councillors' website, the House of Representatives' website, and the Powershift website, which contains data on affiliation changes as well as background data on individual legislators, have also been useful in the aggregation of data. Although the formal limit of the dataset is the 2003 election, the dataset also includes information on postelection affiliation changes that occurred on the day following the election, when the few remaining members of the New Conservative Party entered the LDP.

study (Chapters 2-3) as well as in the case study itself (Chapters 4-7), and is referred to in the text as 'Database, 2004'.

In addition to data from the Database, the background chapters mainly draw on previous scholarly work, i.e., research monographs and journal articles, media coverage from the period and various electoral data (e.g., Seiji Handobukku; Kokkai Binran; newspaper reports; reports from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications [MIAC]).[7]

In addition to the above sources, the case study also draws on various party publications, internal party documents, political finance reports, observations, and elite interviews. In terms of the dimensions relating to policy and organization, data were primarily assembled from Liberal Party publications, e.g., the reports on party activities published in connection with the annual Party Conventions. Data on political finance in Japan has been collected from the website of the MIAC, which oversees the collection of financial disclosure reports from central party organizations and some individual legislators, but also from the websites of various Prefectural Electoral Commissions (PEC), which are tasked with gathering the remaining disclosure reports of legislators, party branches, and other political groups. Obtaining complete and reliable data on political finance remains virtually impossible, which results partly from the unsystematic way this data is collected and publicized. But doubts about the reliability of party reports also continue, and while things may have improved somewhat in recent years due to political finance reform,

[7] When attempting to establish the background of events and when trying to comprehend motivations of various actors, I have also benefited from reading non-scholarly works by Ōshita Eiji, a novelist who has published a great number of novels dealing with current political developments. His novels generally build on interviews with legislators and other centrally placed figures and offer interesting insights into their 'view of the world', although some of his conclusions are slightly biased and bear witness to the fact that interpretations of a given situation are intrinsically linked to the 'eye of the beholder'. Two books (Ōshita, 2003, 2005) deal specifically with Ozawa and the Liberal Party, and have been particularly useful in this research.

many still suspect that there is considerable underreporting on the amounts collected and spent. These and related problems associated with data on political finance are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

The quantitative data used in the empirical research are generally analysed using relatively simple statistical analytical methods, such as frequency distribution and cross-tabulation. Parts of the analysis of LP policies (Chapter 5) employ the content analysis method on one of the party's major policy documents, and utilize the analytical framework set forward in *Mapping Policy Preferences* (Budge, Klingemann, Volkens, Bara, and Tanenbaum, 2001). This framework is outlined and also discussed in more detail in the actual chapter.

Most of the primary sources were gathered during fieldwork in Tokyo from May 2002 to July 2003. During this period I was affiliated as an intern with the office of a Liberal legislator in the House of Representatives, Mr. Azuma Shōzō, and from the vantage point of his office I was able to see the internal workings of the party firsthand and participate in and observe a range of party activities, e.g., Party Conventions (2002, 2003), the annual Study Meeting in Hakone (2002), and various policy study group sessions in parliament. The daily contact provided valuable insights and opportunities for informal discussions with office staff, legislators, and staff from party headquarters, and the empirical analysis draws on several observations from this fieldwork.

To gather additional information I conducted a series of interviews with Liberal Party legislators as well as their secretaries and staff members from party headquarters (a list of interviewees is included in the bibliography section). The technique employed in interviews involved open-ended questions based on an

interview guide dealing with topics such as policy, elections, campaigning and political activities, organization, the LDP-LP and LDP-LP-CGP coalitions, the party split, merger plans, and future prospects of the party. Partly due to time constrictions, interviews focused on different aspects in line with the interviewees' particular area of expertise and knowledge, but generally several opinions were solicited on each topic. Additional information was obtained by subsequent e-mail correspondence with some interviewees.

CHAPTER 2

THE POLITICAL CONTEXT, 1988-2003

The 1990s will be remembered in Japan as a decade of economic woe and political turmoil. The economy remained mired in troubles throughout the decade following the collapse of the 'bubble economy' in the early 1990s, and since then Japan has suffered two outright recessions, and recovery has been weak. In its efforts to pull the economy out of the slump, the government nationalized and recapitalized banks, used government guarantees to keep credit flowing to small businesses, and piled one fiscal stimulus package on top of another. By 2001 these measures had pushed the Japanese state's debt to 130 percent of GDP (Schoppa, 2001, pp. 78-79), and Japan ended the decade with the slowest growth of the G7 countries (Sato, 2002, p. 216).

The political establishment also went through drastic changes. Realignment of political forces changed the layout of the political map, and the breakdown of LDP dominance led to the emergence of one coalition government after another. In the wake of 38 years of relative stability under one-party rule this was certainly a novel situation.

It was widely anticipated that the introduction of a new electoral system in 1994 would eventually lead to the emergence of a two-party system, and the New Frontier Party was the first attempt to create a party, which might realistically compete with the LDP in such a two-party contest. Despite initial success, however, this attempt ended in a resounding failure. In 1998, various splinter groups and

opposition parties were merged with the Democratic Party, in effect making it the leader of the opposition. The DPJ's position was strengthened further through its merger with the Liberal Party in September 2003, and the 2003 election for the House of Representatives in effect presented voters with the choice between two major parties.

This chapter presents an overview of the political context within which the political parties have been operating and thus provides the contextual framework for the case study.[8] It first discusses the political setup in place prior to 1993, the developments that led to the breakdown of this system, as well as some of the possible explanations for its breakdown. Following a brief discussion of the 1994 electoral reforms and their impact on political actors, the chapter finally discusses events from 1994 until 2003 with particular emphasis on the emerging two-party system.

THE 1955 SYSTEM AND ITS COLLAPSE

2.1 Characteristics of the 1955 System

The political system in place before 1993 was commonly referred to as the '1955 system' because 1955 was the year when the two major parties of the postwar period, the LDP and the JSP, were established. From the outset the two parties entered into an intense ideological rivalry, the widespread assumption being that a two-party system would eventually develop, but with the emergence of new parties in the 1960s and 1970s the system transformed into a multiparty-system.[9] The dominance

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[8] Appendixes A and B present a chronology of main events (1989-2003) and an overview of popular support for the various cabinets between 1992 and 2003.

[9] In 1960, defectors from the JSP established the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), and in 1964 the Clean Government Party was established as the political arm of *Sōka Gakkai*, a branch of the Buddhist

of the LDP, which controlled all governments from 1955 to 1993, however, remained the most salient characteristic, and although opposition parties reached a level of support almost equivalent to that of the LDP during the 1970s, they nonetheless failed seriously to challenge the latter's grip on power.[10]

Another dominant feature of postwar politics was the salience of factions [派閥] within political parties. This was particularly evident in the LDP, where factions bargained over distribution of posts within the cabinet, party and party committees, and also channelled funds to faction members to finance their electoral and political activities.[11] Factions initially competed vigorously among themselves, thus in a sense compensating for the lack of competition at the party system level, but from the late 1970s the faction led by Tanaka Kakuei came to dominate the LDP and consequently Japanese politics.[12] Tanaka's strategy was based on the formula that 'politics is power, power is numbers', and he rapidly expanded membership of his faction, enabling it to establish itself as the mainstream faction and allowing its leaders to exercise considerable control over party affairs (Asahi Kīwādō, 1997, pp. 62-63; see also Babb, 2000). The strategy of increasing power by increasing numbers, however, also created the need for large sums of money in order to sustain the power base, and as a result corruption scandals surfaced on a regular basis.[13] The link between

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Nichiren Shōshū sect. In 1976, a small group split from the LDP and established the New Liberal Club (NLC), which returned to the LDP fold in 1986. In 1977, defectors from the JSP established the Socialist Democratic League (SDL), and in 1989 the so-called Japan Trade Union Confederation group in the House of Councillors was established, which was the last new major grouping to appear under the 1955 system.

[10] There was a significant difference in the strength of the LDP and the JSP from the outset and at no time did the JSP poll more than one third of the votes. As the opposition grew in size, it also became increasingly fragmented, and the inability of the opposition to cooperate and join forces was a major reason for the continued dominance of the LDP (Johnson, 2000).

[11] Stockwin (1989) presents a more thorough discussion of the role of factions in Japanese politics.

[12] In 1987, the Tanaka faction became the Takeshita faction, led by Takeshita Noboru.

[13] The reasons for this were legal as well as structural. Legal because the laws on corruption were full of loopholes, and structural because a far greater income than provided by the state was essential in

politicians and electors rested heavily on a rural-based, personality-appeal style of electioneering, and elections tended to emphasize the ability to deliver pork to constituents rather than national policy issues. This tendency was reinforced by the electoral system for the House of Representatives, which forced parties to run multiple candidates in most districts in order to secure a majority. Candidates therefore increasingly relied on their factions and their individual support groups [後援会], which were localized and personalized by nature (see also Abe, Shindō, and Kawato, 1994; Krauss, 1989; Stockwin, 1999).

Throughout the postwar period public dissatisfaction with government and political institutions remained persistently high, and while the economy was still booming, Japanese people would often refer to their own country as having a 'first-rate economy, but third-rate politics'. Dissatisfaction with politics was mirrored in the rate of support for political parties, and from the late 1960s onwards an increasing number of people did not support any of the established parties.[14] Voting turnout, nevertheless, remained relatively high in the 1970s and 1980s.[15]

2.2 The End of LDP Dominance, 1988-1993

By the late 1980s fatigue in the system based on LDP dominance was evident, and public dissatisfaction continued to grow. When the Recruit scandal broke in 1988, public anger prompted Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru to launch a policy of

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order to be elected and survive financially as a politician (Stockwin, 1997, p. 81). Schlesinger (1997) provides some fascinating examples of MP activities involving vast sums of money.

[14] Surveys have shown a continuous increase in the number of unaffiliated voters, up from 21 percent in 1968 to 41 percent in 1993 (for more details on party support see also Miyake, 1985; Tōkei Sūri Kenkyūjo, 1994; for more details on the 1955 system, see for example Abe et al., 1994; Curtis, 1988, 1999; Masumi, 1995; Stockwin, 1999; or Stockwin, Rix, George, Horne, and Itō, 1988).

[15] See Appendixes C, D, E, and F for additional data on dissatisfaction, party support, and voting turnout.

political reform in a bid to restore confidence. By April 1989, however, the cabinet support rate had plunged to single digits, and Takeshita was forced to resign (Narita, 1999, p. 11).[16] His successor, Uno Sōsuke, barely had time to settle into the Prime Minister's seat before becoming engulfed in a sex scandal, and with this backdrop it is perhaps not surprising that the July election for the House of Councillors brought disastrous results to the LDP, which for the first time lost its majority in the House of Councillors. The JSP, on the other hand, triumphed under its new leader, Doi Takako, and in an attempt to improve the LDP's tarnished image, Uno was replaced with Kaifu Toshiki, one of the few senior LDP politicians not implicated in the Recruit scandal (Foreign Press Center Japan, 1990, p. 60). The appointment of Kaifu initially seemed to do the trick, and the LDP secured a stable majority in the 1990 General Election.[17] Electoral victory allowed Kaifu to stay on as Prime Minister in spite of his weak position within the party, but he was forced to resign in November 1991, when he failed to secure passage of a political reform package (Stockwin, 1999, p. 78). He was succeeded by Miyazawa Kiichi, and in the 1992 House of Councillors election the LDP improved on its dismal showing in 1989, although it remained short of a majority in the House. The JSP, on the other hand, was unable to keep up steam, winning only 22 seats.[18] This election also saw the appearance of the Japan New Party [日本新党] (JNP), which mainly attracted voters disillusioned with the status quo of party politics.

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[16] On top of the continued unravelling of the Recruit scandal, other factors causing increased dissatisfaction in 1989 included the decision to liberalize beef and citrus fruit imports, and the introduction of a three percent consumption tax (for further details on the Recruit scandal see also Ishikawa, 1989a).

[17] For details on the 1989 election see for example Ishikawa (1989b), Kobayashi (1991), Lesbirel (1990), and Shinohara (1989). On the 1990 election see Donnelly (1990) or Reed (1991).

[18] The JSP's electoral failure in 1992 can probably also be attributed to its confrontational stance in the PKO law debate, where it refused to compromise, which made it look irresponsible in the eyes of the voters (for further details on the 1992 election see also Jain, 1993a).

In the fall of 1992, the so-called Sagawa Kyūbin scandal emerged, dealing a serious blow to the balance of power in the dominant Takeshita faction.[19] Outbursts of public anger over the scandal forced the faction's chairman, Kanemaru Shin, to resign as LDP vice-president and later to give up his seat in the House of Representatives. This sparked an acrimonious struggle for power within the faction, which had until then been jointly headed by Takeshita, Kanemaru, and the younger Ozawa Ichirō. The faction in effect split into a pro- and anti-Ozawa group[20], and the pro-Ozawa group put forward the reformist Hata Tsutomu as their candidate for a new faction chairman, while their opponents supported Obuchi Keizō. When the latter prevailed, the Ozawa/Hata group responded by setting up the Reform Forum 21 [改革フォラム21] as a study group within the faction, which had by then become known as the Obuchi faction. In theory its purpose was to study political reform, in practice it was a faction within a faction, and three weeks later the split was formalized when Reform Forum 21 became an independent faction (often referred to as the 'Hata faction').

The Sagawa Kyūbin and other scandals continued to rock the boat in early 1993 (Pempel, 1998, p. 140).[21] To calm public anger, Prime Minister Miyazawa was forced to initiate another round of reform debate and in May pledged to accomplish electoral reform within the ongoing parliamentary session. The LDP leadership, however, continued to refuse making any concessions regarding the shape of a new

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[19] For details on the Sagawa Kyūbin scandal see for example Curtis (1999, chap. 2), Noble (1993, pp. 2-4), Schlesinger (1997), or Stockwin (1999, chap. 6).

[20] Ozawa had risen rapidly within the party hierarchy under the wings of Tanaka and Kanemaru, but his 'direct style' of politics had on several occasions caused discord among other senior faction members (for more details on the split of the Takeshita faction see also Ōshita, 1993, pp. 409-436).

[21] On March 6, 1993, Kanemaru was arrested on suspicion of evading taxes worth almost two billion yen, an astronomical amount even by the standards of Japanese politics. It made particularly good television when public prosecutors dragged anonymous bond certificates worth some three billion yen, tens of millions of yen in banknotes, and some 100 kilograms of gold bullion from his various offices, town houses, and suites.

electoral system, and to voice their protest, opposition parties submitted a motion of no confidence in the cabinet (Tahara, 2000, pp. 21-22). This was generally considered a matter of routine, and under normal circumstances the LDP, relying on its majority in the House of Representatives, would have been able to squelch any such motion. But the vote on June 18 was no routine matter, and for once, television broadcasts of parliamentary proceedings turned into regular drama, when members of the LDP joined forces with the opposition parties. Fifteen LDP members were absent from the vote, while the Hata faction moved on to cast the decisive votes in favour of the motion, which carried by 255 to 220 votes. Consequently, the House of Representatives was dissolved, and a general election called to be held on July 18. Three days later a small group of LDP members led by Takemura Masayoshi established the New Party Harbinger [新党さきがけ] (NPH), and on June 23 the Ozawa/Hata group also left the LDP to establish the Renewal Party. The LDP had split, and this split became the starting point for an extensive process of political realignment, which was to send repercussions through the entire political system. As we shall see later, the election resulted in the removal of the LDP from government, but we will now first briefly consider some of the possible explanations for the breakup of the LDP.

2.3 Explaining the Demise of the 1955 System

While the sudden upheaval of the political system in 1993 caught many by surprise, it had essentially been in the making for quite some time. Pervasive political distrust was evident in the early 1990s, and according to some scholars this not only caused the overall decline of old establishment parties, but also provided an incentive for the

conservative camp to realign (Ishikawa, 1993). Nevertheless, it is important to note that voters did not single-handedly bring about the LDP's fall. Indeed, the 1993 election set new heights in the rate of voter abstentions, and it soon became clear that the growing sense of alienation was prompting voters not only to abandon the old parties but also to quickly reject the new (Ishikawa, 1997, p. 31; see also Ōtake, 2000a). The electorate, however, initially embraced the new parties with enthusiasm, and several scholars emphasize the significance of the emergence of new conservative alternatives in bringing about the LDP's fall from power (e.g., Kabashima, 1993, 1994; Takabatake, 1993). Reed (1997a, pp. 120-121) argues that the effect of the 'new party boom' in 1993 had "more to do with the choices offered to voters than the voters' mood".[22] It is important, however, to keep in mind that voters did not all of a sudden turn against the LDP, which in the election actually added one seat to its preelection strength. But the LDP proved incapable of recovering the ground lost through defections before the election, and in this way the party split emerges as the single most important factor in explaining the LDP's fall from power. This, however, begs the questions of what caused the split, and what factors made it possible. On the surface, the LDP's failure to carry out electoral reform became the straw that broke its back, and the actual passage of the motion of no confidence perhaps is symbolic of the frustration felt by many, even within the LDP's own ranks. But frustration alone clearly cannot explain the events that followed, and it is more likely that structural, or macrolevel, factors coalesced to produce a context conducive to a split, which was in turn helped on its way by a

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[22] Reed (1997a) identifies three so-called 'boom elections', where interaction between electorate and elite produced change (in 1976 with the NLC, in 1989 with the JSP victory, and in 1993 with the new party boom). He suggests that voters may have been ready for a change as early as 1976 and again in 1989, but that there was no appropriate receptacle for voter frustration. Such a receptacle appeared with the new parties in 1993, making it possible to register a meaningful protest against the LDP.

mixture of microlevel factors, e.g., self-interest, loyalty, but also a portion of idealism (see also section 3.10 in Chapter 3).

At a structural level, scholars cite the impact of the end of the Cold War on domestic Japanese politics as a reason for the collapse of LDP dominance (Inoguchi, 1993; Takabatake, 1992), and according to Stockwin (1999, p. 80) one should not ignore the significance of the removal of the Soviet threat, which led to the blurring of the sharpest divide in domestic politics (see also Jain, 1997, p. 21). Over the years policy differences between the LDP and opposition parties had become a matter of degree, and as the Socialists abandoned some of their most radical ideological tenets, the domestic situation became conducive to party realignment across the government-opposition divide (Hiwatari, 1998, p. 307).[23] The ideological cleavage of the 1955 system had weakened considerably by 1993, and it was no longer impossible to imagine coalitional arrangements including opposition parties.[24] This no doubt made it easier for ambitious LDP groups to contemplate defection.

In contrast, some scholars emphasize microlevel factors in their analyses, focusing on politicians' motivations and incentives to defect. The 1992 split of the Takeshita faction is generally seen as a harbinger of the party split that occurred six months later, but opinions differ over its reasons. Most see the faction split as the direct outcome of a struggle for power following Kanemaru's resignation (Curtis, 1999, p. 91; Ōtake, 1996, p. 287), and Anderson (1994, p. 3) in particular emphasizes Ozawa's personal ambitions as a cause for the split. In contrast, Ozawa and his

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[23] This divide was narrowed further following the LDP's loss of majority in the House of Councillors in 1989, when it was forced to solicit cooperation from moderate opposition parties. As Stockwin (1999, p. 78) notes, Ozawa was able to sow the seeds of cross-party relations in his dealings with the CGP and the DSP during the early 1990s, during his tenure as LDP secretary-general.

[24] Ōtake Hideo (1998a, 1999, 2000b) discusses the breakdown of the domestic axis of confrontation and the struggle to create a new, more meaningful axis in the 1990s.

supporters maintain that the controversy revolved more around policy differences between 'reform-minded' and 'reactionary' members of the faction, than around issues of succession (Ozawa, 1993a, p. 8).[25] Subsequent events have indeed shown that Ozawa is ready to stand up for his ideas and policy visions, but with regard to the 1992 split, the truth is probably that the two elements of discontent became interlinked.

While it is one thing to set up a new faction within an existing party, the stakes are raised considerably when leaving the old party to establish a new one. It has been suggested that the LDP's split should be seen in the context of its declining electoral fortunes, and according to Pempel (1997, p. 357), in 1993 "it became clear to individual LDP politicians that loyalty to the party no longer provided a vehicle guaranteed to enhance one's personal career". He adds that, in light of the continuing scandals and increasing public anger, "leaving the party suddenly offered the possibility for politicians to present themselves as more attractive, principled and electable alternatives". Similarly, Cox and Rosenbluth (1995, p. 359) suggest that the ability of the LDP again to secure a majority of seats was perceived as slipping, thus raising the probability of a split substantially. They suggest that members who had closer links to the opposition (cf. Stockwin, 1999, p. 78), who had less seniority and therefore lesser shares in the spoils of office, and who were electorally more marginal tended to defect more frequently than their colleagues with opposite characteristics (Cox and Rosenbluth, 1995, p. 369). Similarly, Kohno (1997, p. 145) argues that the breakup of the Takeshita faction was the direct product of a sense of

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[25] According to this notion, Ozawa saw his political fortunes rise by breaking with the faction on the issue of reform after Kanemaru's fall (Anderson, 1994, p. 3). Ozawa's 'reformist' sentiment is emphasized by Etō (1993, p. 18), who proclaims him to be an "unusual politician who places primary importance on policy implementation...and who is not concerned about becoming Prime Minister".

electoral vulnerability. According to this view, mounting distrust did not affect LDP politicians evenly, and members of the Takeshita faction are seen as having been particularly sensitive to the public demand for reform. The breakup of the faction should therefore be seen as a product of the perceived electoral vulnerability of some politicians, who consequently needed to show their commitment to reform.[26] Ōtake (1997, p. 23) also points to the fact that a great number of defectors were junior members, who were more sensitive to scandal, although he also suggests that many may have acted out of a sense of obligation to Ozawa because they had received assistance from him in the past.[27]

While it is tempting simply to ascribe defections to the self-interest of individual politicians, the explanatory power of such interpretations is limited, and they certainly cannot explain the behaviour of all defectors. Table 2.1 shows the distribution of MPs in the Takeshita faction according to the number of terms served, and, as can be seen, a great number of so-called junior members (first or second term members) in the Takeshita faction did in fact side with Ozawa and Hata. Only 19 of the 36 politicians who joined the Renewal Party, however, were junior members. The remaining 17 MPs had been elected in or before 1983, and the group included some quite senior

Table 2.1

The 1992 Split of the Takeshita Faction: Seniority of MPs

Terms served	Hata faction	Obuchi faction
1 term	7	2
2 terms	12	3
3 terms	3	4
4 terms	0	3
5 terms	4	4
6 terms	1	4
7 terms	2	1
8 terms	6	1
9 terms	0	1
10+ terms	1	5
Total	36	28

Note. Figures indicate number of MPs. Based on data from Kokkai Binran, 1993.

[26] A similar argument suggests that junior members had little else than their party affiliation to attract votes. This made them vulnerable to swings in public opinion, and the possibility that the actions (or inaction) of party leaders could undermine their chances of winning reelection gave them cause to challenge the leadership rather than meekly toe the line (Wolfe, 1995, pp. 1060-62).

[27] Ōtake's 'obligation hypothesis' assumes that many junior members felt obligated to Ozawa because they had been elected for the first or second time in 1990, while Ozawa served as LDP secretary-general, and therefore had received assistance from Ozawa in their election activities (1997, p. 23).

members with 6 to 11 terms to their record. While some junior MPs may have been worried about a perceived imperfection of their electoral support bases, it is highly unlikely that senior members with long-standing and extensive networks to rely upon should have been seriously worried about their immediate reelection prospects.[28]

That a majority of junior MPs in the Takeshita faction sided with Ozawa may be taken to support Ōtake's idea that their actions were guided by a sense of obligation, but again this does not explain the action of senior members, most of whom had entered politics before or at the same time as Ozawa, or at least before he had attained sufficient clout within the party to wield much power. Thus, the idea that the actions of these defectors were guided by obligation seems rather impressionistic, although it is perhaps possible that at least some senior members from the same cohort as Ozawa and Hata (first elected in 1969) were acting based on a sense of loyalty.[29]

A final possibility that should be considered is that defectors may have been motivated by a genuine desire for reform and a genuine desire to change Japanese politics based on shared policy views. This is reflected in statements by various defectors (cf. Etō, 1993), and as Ōtake (1997, p. 23) also suggests, it is quite possible that similar career backgrounds or experiences may have led some people more

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[28] We might even question the notion of electoral vulnerability for some junior members, since seven of the Renewal Party's junior members had taken over the support network of a relative. Five other junior members had past careers in local politics, which meant that they already had at least some support in the district.

[29] In 1969, Tanaka supported many aspiring politicians, and those who entered parliament under his guidance grew into a close-knit fraternity that was given various nicknames such as 'Tanaka's Bodyguards', 'the seven magistrates', and the 'boys' detective unit' (Schlesinger, 1997, pp. 178-179). For example, Okuda Keiwa, Watanabe Kōzō, Satō Megumu, and Satō Moriyoshi who participated in the establishment of the Renewal Party had all been elected at the same time as Ozawa and Hata, and it seems reasonable to assume that a sense of fraternity might have played a role for their decision to follow Ozawa and Hata.

readily to sympathize with the policy ideas espoused by for example Ozawa.[30] Much of the reform debate was clearly rhetoric, but the desire for reform should not be ignored completely. In scholarly and media discourse there is, however, an inherent scepticism vis-à-vis the 'reform-mindedness' of many defectors, and this is not to say that all defectors were crusaders on a quest to revitalize Japanese politics. But including 'desire for reform' as a factor in the analysis of defection certainly helps close some of the gaps in alternative explanations.

No single explanatory framework can stand alone, and there is a clear need for a multifactor approach when seeking an understanding of defectors' motivations. We need therefore to caution against adopting too narrow an approach in dealing with a highly complex matter.[31] It seems most likely that a combination of 'structural factors' strengthened the possibility and feasibility of a split, and that individual circumstances (including electoral prospects, emotional ties, ambitions, and idealism), coalesced and together caused the LDP to split, resulting in the party's fall from power in 1993.

THE 1993 UPHEAVAL AND THE NON-LDP COALITIONS

2.4 The 1993 Election and the Hosokawa Administration

Election fever gripped Japan in June 1993, and the public mood was aroused. Dramatically, the *Asahi Shinbun* encouraged its readers to "use [their] vote to put an end to the one-party dominance of the LDP" (1993, June 16). Three new parties

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[30] For example, 44 percent of MPs in the Hata faction had worked in the national bureaucracy, while only 15 percent of the MPs in the Obuchi faction had this type of background (Kokkai Binran, 1993).

[31] While an explanation like that presented by Kohno (1997) holds a certain degree of attraction due to the parsimonious nature of its analytical framework, it is clearly too simplistic to adequately portray the complexities of reality. And certainly, more detailed data on the defectors' preferences and the circumstances guiding individual choice are needed before we can reach any conclusions on the breakup of the LDP and the motivations of defectors (see also Chapter 3, section 3.10).

campaigned alongside the established ones, all espousing ideas for political reform. There was, however, no unified vision of the direction of reforms, which, combined with the fact that two of the new parties had emerged from *within* the LDP, caused some confusion.[32]

Political reform became the defining issue of the election, and as Jain (1993b, p. 1079) notes, "during the two-week campaign period, almost all candidates sang the same political reform song – though none made it at all clear what that meant, or indeed how it was going to be achieved". Table 2.2 summarizes the content of party leader speeches on the first day of campaigning, and, as can be seen, almost all party leaders referred to the issue of political and electoral reform, and opposition leaders, in particular from the Clean Government Party and the Japan Communist Party [日本共産党] (JCP), spoke on measures to prevent corruption. Most parties also envisioned a restructuring of the political setup to bring about a coalition government.

Table 2.2
Content Analysis of Party Leader Speeches, 1993 Election Campaign

	Expressions used in speeches				
Party leader (party)	Political reform	Electoral reform	Corrup-tion	Realignment/ change of government	Other expressions
Miyazawa (LDP)	7	1	0	0	'change' (2), 'sorry' (2), 'a pity' (2)
Yamahana (JSP)	6	1	4	2	'new' (16), 'farewell LDP politics' 6)
Ishida (CGP)	13	1	9	3	'new' (17)
Hata (RP)	9	7	5	3	'party to take over/pivot of political forces' (7)
Fuwa (JCP)	14	0	22	0	
Ōuchi (DSP)	12	0	0	10	'change' (10), 'one-party rule' (6)
Takemura (NPH)	6	1	0	0	'new' (13), 'determination' (7)
Eda (SDL)	10	0	3	10	'take power' (2)
Hosokawa (JNP)	9	0	2	4	'flow of history' (6), 'historical necessity' (7)

Note. Numbers indicate the frequency of a given expression in party leaders' first campaign speech. Adapted from *Asahi Shinbun*, July 5, 1993.

[32] The Renewal Party in particular was greeted with considerable scepticism from its potential partners, and Hosokawa initially rejected the idea of joining forces with the group, referring to its members as 'dubious company' (*Asahi Shinbun*, 1993, June 26). To placate its critics the RP offered an "openhearted apology to the electorate for having occupied a central role in the LDP and thereby having lent a hand to one-party rule" (*Asahi Shinbun*, 1993, July 2).

Established opposition parties, especially the CGP and the JSP, seemed intent on distancing themselves from the 'establishment', and their speeches featured the word 'new' prominently. The RP in particular emphasized its qualities as a party, which could take over from the LDP, making it clear that it was aiming to take the lead in uniting the non-LDP forces.

Opposition parties had previously by and large relied on their own support networks, but in 1993 electoral cooperation between parties and support groups became increasingly pluralistic, as some labour unions that had traditionally supported only either the Socialists or the Democratic Socialist Party [民主社会党] (DSP) also extended their support to some of the new parties.[33] The greatest blow to the LDP came when the Japan Federation of Economic Organizations [経団連] (JFEO) announced that it would revise its policy on political donations and also support new conservative parties (*Asahi Shinbun*, 1993, July 2).[34]

In the election the LDP lost its majority in the House of Representatives, but nonetheless remained the largest party with 223 seats, picking up one more seat than it had commanded following the defections in June. The JSP, on the other hand, suffered a stinging defeat and saw its number of seats reduced from 134 to 70. The new parties did well, with the Japan New Party going from zero to 35 seats, and the Renewal Party from 36 to 55 seats. The New Party Harbinger did less well, but

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[33] The CGP had traditionally relied on support from the *Sōka Gakkai*, the JSP on support from the labour union federation *Sōhyō*, and the DSP on support from *Dōmei*, a different federation of unions. In 1993, the pattern of union support shifted slightly, and in some cases unions withdrew support from JSP candidates. In Hyogo 2, *Tekkō Rōren* for example withdrew support from Doi Takako (JSP) and instead endorsed Koike Yuriko (JNP), and some unions refrained from endorsing candidates from the left wing of the JSP on grounds of 'incompatible political attitudes' (*Asahi Shinbun*, 1993, July 3). In most cases, however, unions opted for supporting established as well as new players.

[34] The LDP had been the only recipient of support from these powerful economic organizations until 1993, but shortly before actual campaigning began the JFEO in a statement welcomed "the possibility of disengaging the business world from the LDP", and expressed "great expectations for the new parties to become an impetus for political realignment" (*Asahi Shinbun*, 1993, July 2).

managed to increase its preelection strength by 3 seats. Unsurprisingly – in an election dominated by a strong anti-establishment mood – the number of independents doubled from 15 to 30 (see also Appendix G for details on the results of this and subsequent elections).

In spite of the electoral result, the mood within the LDP was initially far from pessimistic, and party leaders seemed to think that a majority could be restored by patching together a coalition. Determined to exclude the Renewal Party from government, and acting on the implicit assumption that it would be able to 'buy' the support of one or more small parties with a few key cabinet positions, the LDP set about figuring out how much they would have to horse trade with Hosokawa and Takemura in order to get them to join a coalition. But the leaders of these smaller conservative parties were playing for higher stakes than this. They were looking for a way to restructure the party system and to secure important posts for themselves and their parties within this new system (Curtis, 1999, pp. 110-113). The LDP leadership was slow to understand the dynamics of the situation, while Ozawa seemed quickly to have grasped what was at stake. Forced to counter the LDP's manoeuvres to isolate the Renewal Party, he responded not only by embracing the reform proposals of the JNP and the NPH, but also by unceremoniously dropping Hata as candidate for the post of Prime Minister. Instead he threw his party's support behind Hosokawa, and on July 29, eight parties announced their intention of forming a coalition government.[35] This was in itself a novelty after decades of one-party rule, but the greatest surprise was perhaps that this strategic power play resulted in making a first-

[35] The Hosokawa coalition included the RP, the JSP, the CGP, the DSP, the SDL, the JNP, the NPH, the newly formed Democratic Reform League (DRL), as well as a few independents.

term member of a one-year-old party the Prime Minister of Japan.[36]

Initial support rates for the Hosokawa cabinet were remarkably high, and Hosokawa himself recorded an unprecedented 71 percent of support in early opinion polls. Managing the coalition, however, proved to be an uphill struggle. A reform programme was announced at an early stage[37], but from the outset coalition partners differed over the preferred direction of reforms. In a sombre evaluation of the Hosokawa cabinet's achievements, Curtis (1999, p. 134) states that "to say that its policy accomplishments were modest would be to give it excessive praise". In particular, he points to the failure in carrying out meaningful political reform, and although Hosokawa succeeded in moving towards liberalization of the rice market, there was virtually no progress made in the areas of deregulation and administrative reform. In spite of these shortcomings, the Hosokawa administration, however, played an important role in bringing about change in Japanese politics, and succeeded in setting an agenda of reform, which could not easily be ignored by subsequent governments. Most importantly, it succeeded in rewriting the electoral law, in effect shaking up long-standing forms of political activity and organization (Stockwin, 1999, p. 84).[38]

2.5 Electoral Reform in 1994

From 1947 through to 1993, Japan had used a single, nontransferable vote in

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[36] Hosokawa was not a complete newcomer to national politics, however, and had formerly been a member of the LDP, serving as a member of the House of Councillors for two terms from 1971 to 1983. In 1983, he became governor of Kumamoto (reelected 1987), but resigned in 1991 to prepare his reentry into national level politics.

[37] The programme included reform of the House of Representatives electoral system, legislation to counter corruption, proposals for deregulation in various fields, and decentralization of government functions.

[38] Hosokawa himself incidentally regards liberalization of the rice market as the greatest achievement of his administration (Stockwin, 2003, p. 111)

multimember districts.[39] Although all districts elected more than one candidate, each voter was provided with only one ballot, and there was no formula for transferring votes cast for one candidate to another (Curtis, 1999, p. 140). Over the years the system attracted much attention and blame for its alleged impact on party and candidate strategies, including electoral campaigns based on personal traits of candidates rather than policy issues, expensive campaigns leading to frequent cases of corruption, politicians' incentives to deliver pork rather than public goods to constituents, and last but not least the perpetuation of one-party dominance (McKean and Scheiner, 2000, p. 449).

It is far from certain that the electoral system was in fact the only cause of Japan's political problems.[40] By 1993, however, the electoral system had come to be seen as the root of all evils in Japanese politics, and popular discontent was so strong that electoral reform became unavoidable. Political reform in effect became synonymous with electoral reform (Curtis, 1999, pp. 144-145), and as Reed (2003c, p. 26) points out, two facts made some type of reform virtually inevitable. First, too many parliamentarians, including many within the LDP, were committed to reform and willing to break with party discipline, if necessary, in order to achieve it. In other words, if an acceptable political reform bill came to a vote, it would most likely pass irrespective of party leaders' positions. Secondly, no party wanted to enter the next election as the party that had killed reform (see also Iwai, 1999, p. 195).

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[39] The total number of seats to be contested in each election changed over time, but in the last election held under the old system (1993), 511 candidates were elected in 129 constituencies. Each constituency generally elected between three and five members to the House of Representatives, although two constituencies elected six members, and eight constituencies elected only two (Stockwin, 1999, p. 122; for more details on the old electoral system see also Reed, 2003, pp. 16-23).

[40] As Curtis points out, Italy has experienced factionalism similar to that in Japanese parties, the United States has costly campaigns, and both Sweden and India have experienced long periods of one-party dominance. None of these countries, however, has used electoral systems even remotely similar to the one used in Japan (Curtis, 1999, p. 142). A more detailed discussion of these aspects can be found in Curtis (1999, chap. 4) and Stockwin (1999, chap. 8).

There was, however, little agreement on what type of system should replace the existing one. Debates on electoral system change had been underway for many years, with large parties generally favouring single-member districts (SMD) and smaller parties favouring proportional representation (PR). The LDP had advocated introduction of a simple 'first past the post' system, anticipating that such a system would drive minor parties out of existence, while the Socialists argued in favour of a PR system or no change at all (Curtis, 1999, p. 145; Reed, 2003b, p. 22). A proposal for introduction of a mixed system of 250 SMD seats and 250 seats in a nationwide PR district was part of the Hosokawa coalition's policy framework, but although all coalition parties had agreed to work towards the establishment of such a system, considerable disagreement remained. Ozawa and his colleagues in the RP, for example, strongly advocated a simple SMD system, while the Socialists continued to favour a pure PR system. Apparently even Hosokawa was not enthusiastic about the mixed system, but instead preferred retaining the old multimember districts with some modifications (Curtis, 1999, p. 155).

A compromise was reached after extensive negotiations, and it was agreed to introduce a system combining two parallel tiers [並立制], consisting of 300 SMD seats and 200 seats divided between 11 regional PR districts.[41] Under the new system voters would receive two ballots, one for each type of district, and the new electoral law included a provision allowing for 'dual candidacies', which in effect allowed candidates to run simultaneously in both district types, and to take a PR seat even if defeated in the SMD competition (Reed, 1995, p. 1075; Stockwin, 1999, p. 122).

It was a widespread idea that a SMD system would cause elections to become

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[41] Sakamoto (1999, pp. 429-433) presents a more detailed discussion of the passage of electoral reform in 1994.

policy-oriented, party-controlled, and inexpensive, and transform the party system into a two-party format.[42] The inclusion of the PR segment placated minor parties, which would face severe difficulties in the SMD, and provided an opportunity for their electoral survival. As Curtis (1999, p. 156) notes, "no party made a strategic decision that its interests would be served best by replacing the multimember district system with a mixed system", but the mixed-system proposal emerged because it was the only one that could get the support of all parties.

2.6 The Hata Administration, April-June 1994

The passage of the political reform package in January 1994 became the last significant undertaking of the Hosokawa coalition. Hosokawa had gradually moved closer to Ozawa, and an antagonistic relationship developed between Takemura on the one hand and Hosokawa and Ozawa on the other (Stockwin, 1999, p. 84).[43] This antagonism was laid bare in the 'consumption tax conundrum' in February 1994, when Hosokawa suddenly announced that the three percent consumption tax would be changed into a new seven percent 'national welfare tax' [国民福祉税]. This announcement resulted in an uproar within the coalition.[44] Hosokawa's sudden resignation in April 1994 caught most people by surprise, and as the coalition

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[42] According to Curtis, the prevalence of this idea defies not only empirical evidence but also elementary logic. As he notes, generally "the smaller the district, the greater the tendency for candidates and voters to be concerned with local issues" (1999, p. 163) It should, however, also be noted that the intraparty competition between candidates, particularly from the LDP, in the old district type *had* tended to lead to localistic pork barrel appeals.

[43] Ozawa's aim was reforms that would lead to a policy change with the objective to make Japan into what he called a 'normal country'. For Takemura, however, Ozawa represented precisely the old style of top-down factional politics that he and the NPH wanted to eliminate. He preferred to see Japan as a 'small and sparkling' country, concerned about improving the environment and the welfare of its citizens (Curtis, 1999, pp. 114-115; see also Ozawa, 1993b; and Takemura, 1994).

[44] The JSP threatened to defect from the coalition unless the policy was reversed, and Takemura also severely criticized the proposal. Hosokawa was forced to retreat, and the event proved a serious setback for all involved. Hosokawa was made to look foolish, the JSP irresponsible, Takemura disloyal, and criticism rained down on Ozawa for having led the drive towards establishment of the tax in the first place (Curtis, 1999, p. 129).

partners struggled with the problem of deciding on his successor, relations between different groupings reached the breaking point (Curtis, 1999, p. 179).[45] Ozawa now made a bold gamble. He not only sought to orchestrate another split in the LDP but also at the same time to divide the JSP in order to set the stage for the formation of a party that would replace the LDP as the largest and most powerful party. His endeavours were directed at bringing most members of the coalition into a unified group, which might form the nucleus of a new major party.

To bring about an LDP split, Ozawa offered the post of Prime Minister to Watanabe Michio on condition that he would leave the LDP with his supporters. Watanabe signalled his readiness to defect from the LDP and join hands with all or portions of the coalition, if a "comfortable number" of LDP members would leave the party with him (Japan Economic Newswire, 1994, April 10), but on April 15 he had to make a hasty retreat, when it became apparent that he could only persuade a handful of LDP members to join him (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 1994, April 16). The failure of this scheme eventually put the post of Prime Minister in the hands of Hata Tsutomu, whose election was secured by the votes of all coalition parties.

Assuming that the JSP would stay in the coalition no matter what, Ozawa continued to pressure the party on matters relating to deregulation, Japanese participation in UN PKO, and a hike in the consumption tax. In late April, he all but dared the JSP to quit the coalition and form one with the LDP (Curtis, 1999, p. 181). Having just supported Hata's election, the JSP was shocked to hear about the

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[45] It remains unclear what precipitated Hosokawa's resignation, but most observers refer to his alleged involvement in a corruption scandal. Anxiety about the impact of a scandal on the passage of the 1994 budget, frustration with the antagonistic relationship between Ozawa and Takemura, and Hosokawa's conviction, following the welfare tax issue, that the JSP should be excluded from a future government may also have influenced the decision (Kusano, 1999, pp. 25-26; see also an interview with Hosokawa in Kabashima Ikuo Zemi, 1998b, p. 264).

formation of Renovation [改新], a new parliamentary grouping in the House of Representatives. [46] This move represented a serious blow to the JSP's position and caused it to withdraw from the coalition, leaving Hata in charge of a minority government without much room for manoeuvring.

The establishment of Renovation clearly made strategic sense at the time, but in hindsight this move, which alienated the JSP and consequently brought down the Hata government, seems highly irrational.[47] The Hata coalition was permitted to exist by the JSP and the NPH, which had also withdrawn from the coalition, essentially for the purpose of passing the budget, which had been stalled during the last weeks of the Hosokawa administration (Stockwin, 1999, p. 85). Faced with a motion of no confidence, the Hata cabinet resigned on 25 June, after only 58 days in office.[48]

The debacle surrounding the formation of Renovation had infuriated the JSP, and in many ways facilitated the alliance between the NPH, the JSP, and the LDP,

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[46] Within parliament, MPs organize themselves not in 'parties' but in so-called 'parliamentary groupings' [院内会派]. When a number of small parties exist within parliament, such groupings take on a significant meaning as politicians group together to grasp power. The new group formed in April 1994 comprised the RP, the JNP, the DSP, and two newly formed minor parties, the New Party Future and the Liberal Party. The CGP had also indicated that it would eventually join the group (for a more detailed discussion see also Curtis, 1999, pp. 171-79).

[47] Three major concerns seem to have motivated the move. Decision making in the Hosokawa cabinet had been complicated by the need for extensive consultation with all coalition partners, and the formation of Renovation was partly motivated by the desire of the non-Socialist coalition leadership to enable the Hata government to implement more streamlined and effective decision making. But Renovation was also a strategic move to influence the distribution of cabinet posts. As the largest party in the Hosokawa coalition, the JSP had received six cabinet posts, but vis-à-vis the 134 member strong Renovation it would not be able to bargain for as many post nor be as well-represented on parliament committees as before (Curtis, 1999, pp. 183-185). Finally, Renovation was widely seen as the first step towards forming a new party, which could compete with the LDP in the new single-member districts. Ozawa initially dismissed the Renovation incident as being of little importance (Curtis, 1999, p. 186), but has later admitted that alienation of the JSP constituted a failure (informal discussion with Ozawa Ichirō, Nissan Institute, University of Oxford, November 2, 2000).

[48] The Hata cabinet resigned before the vote on the motion of no confidence was taken, and Hata chose not to dissolve the House of Representatives, even though this might have been advantageous considering the cabinet's relatively high support rate. Hata has cited opposition from the coalition partners as one reason for this choice. Members of the JNP, who had been elected on the reform wave, in particular opposed dissolution of parliament, but even established parties were unwilling to fight an election after such a short period. Hata also seemed to believe that an election would distort the course of political reform (Kabashima Ikuo Zemi, 1998b, p. 280).

which was forged in June 1994. Armed with considerable leverage, the JSP now allowed themselves to be courted by both the ruling coalition and the LDP. Ozawa and Ichikawa Yūichi, Chairman of the CGP, however, seemed convinced that a coalition between the LDP and the JSP would prove so disastrous that it would lead to the defeat of both parties in the next election, and they made it clear that they would rather go into opposition than compromise with the JSP (*Asahi Shinbun*, 1994, June 28). As Curtis (1999, p. 190) points out, this turned out to be a monumental miscalculation. The LDP did what they had to do in order to secure unity among the Socialists, announcing that it would support JSP leader Murayama Tomiichi for Prime Minister. With this prospect, support among JSP members for rejoining the Hata coalition all but disappeared, an on June 29, Japan finally had its first Socialist Prime Minister in 47 years.[49]

TOWARDS A TWO-PARTY SYSTEM?

2.7 The NFP vs. the LDP, 1994-1997

Electoral reform had created a need for organizational consolidation, and moves towards establishing a new major opposition party proceeded rapidly following the inauguration of the Murayama administration. In December 1994, all non-Communist opposition parties agreed to join forces, and the New Frontier Party was launched with much fanfare, comprising more than 200 parliament members (Kabashima Ikuo Zemi, 1998a, pp. 229-232). It was widely expected that its formation would in effect bring about a de facto two-party system, where the LDP

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[49] The JSP-LDP coalition was epoch-making and came to shape subsequent events, not so much for its achievements, but rather because it offered the LDP the opportunity to return to government. Had the Hata coalition been able to hold on to political power for a longer period, the LDP would probably have experienced further defections since party unity had been shaken during its time in opposition.

and the NFP would compete and eventually take turns in office, and initially this indeed appeared to be in the making.

Ruling as well as opposition parties declared the 1995 elections for the House of Councillors to be a referendum on the performance of the Murayama coalition. Many voters were, to say the least, unhappy with the performance of Murayama and his administration, which was widely seen as having dealt ineffectively with domestic and international issues.[50] Furthermore, the JSP had been forced to renounce almost its entire traditional platform during its time in coalition with the LDP. This apparent 'sellout' had alienated even some of its staunchest supporters, and it came as no surprise that the JSP suffered its worst showing ever, retaining only 16 of the 41 seats it was risking in the election. The LDP also did worse than expected, although it remained the largest party and improved considerably over its disastrous performance in 1989.[51] The NFP, on the other hand, outperformed all expectations, and in the election returned 40 candidates, several of whom beat projected LDP winners in tough district battles. The majority of NFP wins, however, came at the expense of JSP incumbents, thus cementing its usurpation of the JSP's former status as the second largest party. The most talked about outcome of the election, however, was the record-low voter turnout. For the first time in a national

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[50] Many people blamed the Murayama administration for its slow response to the Kobe earthquake in January 1995. The economy was in a slump, the yen was soaring, and at the same time concerns over security issues were heightened by the *Aum Shinrikyō* sarin gas attacks on the Tokyo subway. Murayama's debut on the international scene also gave off an unfavourable impression, when he missed most of a G7 meeting, having collapsed from jet lag. The unworkability of the coalition became apparent shortly before the election as a great deal of time and effort was spent on hammering out what turned out to be a rather feeble apology for Japan's aggression against its neighbouring countries in World War II. But the Murayama administration also had some positive aspects, for example its attempt to deal constructively with the 'comfort women' [慰安婦] issue, and as noted by Neary (2002, p. 96), it was also under Murayama that a committee to report on human rights protection was established and a final solution found on the issue of compensation to victims of industrial pollution in Minamata, which had been on the table since the 1960s.

[51] Preelection forecasts had foreseen around 50 seats to the LDP, with party leaders admitting to dreams of a return to the 'good old days' of one-party majorities, but in the end the party won only 46 seats.

election less than half of eligible voters (44.5 percent) showed up, a clear indication of the electorate's increasing disillusionment with developments at the elite level (Ishikawa, 1997, p. 41; Thies, 1995, p. 467).

Murayama stayed on as Prime Minister in spite of the poor electoral showing, but all coalition parties suffered from internal divisions as responsibility for the electoral defeat was assessed. In September, LDP President Kōno Yōhei resigned and was succeeded by Hashimoto Ryūtarō from the Obuchi faction. When Murayama announced his decision to step down in early January 1996, Hashimoto took over as Prime Minister, and the LDP was 'back in business'. The Hashimoto cabinet, however, got off to a rough start, and the early months of 1996 saw the Parliament mired in confusion, largely due to the government's proposal to use taxpayer's money to bail out bankrupt loan companies.[52] The NFP voiced fierce protest and went as far as setting up a blockade of the Budget Committee Room in the House of Representatives, stalling deliberations for three weeks. In May, the budget was finally approved, nearly six weeks after the start of the fiscal year.

A projected split of the JSP had failed to materialize in January 1995 due to the devastating earthquake in Kobe (Stockwin, 2003, p. 256), and although discussions concerning the creation of a new party, which would unite the JSP and the NPH under one roof, were underway from mid-1995 nothing materialized until both parties split in September 1996 (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 1995, September 2).[53] On

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[52] For more details on the issues surrounding the so-called '*Jūsen* problem' [住専問題] see Fukui and Fukai (1997) or Inoguchi (1997).

[53] In April 1995, Murayama, in an apparent attempt to forestall a split of the JSP, confirmed that a new party comprising social democrats and liberals would be formed (Financial Times, 1995, April 26). Later on, in September, the JSP's Kubo Wataru and Murayama himself were allegedly working toward establishing a new liberal party under the provisional name of National Democratic Union [全国民主連合]. From the outset, however, there was disagreement with regard to the way an eventual merger of the two parties might take place (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 1995, September 2).

September 28, defectors from the two parties established the Democratic Party, aiming to become a so-called 'third pole' – in other words, a supplement to the LDP and the NFP. On the previous day Hashimoto had called an election for the House of Representatives, which raised several crucial questions. It was uncertain, for example, whether the formation of the DPJ would spur on another 'new party boom', and uncertain whether the NPH and the JSP would indeed survive electorally. Furthermore, the election pitted the LDP and the NFP against each other for the first time in the single-member districts introduced with the electoral reforms.

Voters were clearly confused about the new electoral setup and the parties running in the contest. Major opposition parties failed to project a clear image, and since most incumbent candidates had spent at least some time in government since the last election, only the JCP could claim to be a pure opposition party (Reed, 1997b, p. 124). This confusion was a major reason for the record-low turnout at 59.6 percent. While it had been hoped that the new electoral system would force candidates to place greater emphasis on policy issues, this did not come through in the campaign. Indeed, in the absence of well-defined and debatable issues, money and personal support networks continued to dominate campaigning in the SMD competition (Fukui and Fukai, 1997, p. 25).

The LDP gained 28 seats in the election, but with 239 seats remained short of an outright majority. The NFP, however, won only 156 seats, far off the goals set by the party's leadership. This was a poor performance in light of the party's electoral successes in 1995, and voters seem to have picked up on cracks in party unity (Jain and Todhunter, 1997, p. 229). The newly formed DPJ placed a distant third and barely managed to hold on to its preelection strength. Results were disastrous for the

LDP's two coalition partners, with the JSP winning only 15 seats and the NPH only 2. The only party to make considerable gains was the JCP, which increased its strength from 15 to 26 seats.[54]

Following the election Hashimoto reshuffled his cabinet, now an LDP minority government with outside cooperation from the JSP and the NPH, both of which had by now been reduced to marginal players. Hashimoto vowed to carry out reforms of administration, economic structure, financial system, social welfare, and fiscal affairs, but in the following years the economy continued to be troubled. The NFP increasingly struggled to preserve party unity, which became particularly evident as its numbers dwindled through individual defections in the months following the election. In December 1996, the first major defection occurred, when Hata and his supporters left the party to establish the Sun Party [太陽党] (SP). In July 1997, the NFP failed to win even a single seat in elections for the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly[55], and in the following months its parliamentary strength diminished even further. At the Party Convention in December, the NFP was finally dissolved, and what had seemed to be a two-party system in the making ended in a resounding failure.

2.8 The DPJ vs. the LDP, 1998-2003

Owing to the NFP split, 1998 began with a flurry of activity, and realignment activities picked up pace again with the emergence of no less than seven new parties in January. Most of these were relatively short-lived, and only the Liberal Party,

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[54] For more details on the 1996 election see for example Fukui and Fukai (1997), Jain and Todhunter (1997), Ōtake (1997), or Reed (1997b).

[55] Elections for the Tokyo Assembly are held every four years, and are watched closely because results often serve as indicators of nationwide sentiment (Japan Times, 2005, June 27).

formed by the NFP's Ozawa group, continued on to become a significant player. In April, the DPJ merged with three of these splinter parties, in effect making the DPJ the second-largest party (these developments are also discussed in more detail in Chapter 3). The economic situation continued to worsen, and unemployment rates reached a postwar high of 4.1 percent in early 1998. The JSP and the NPH formally broke ranks with the LDP in June[56], and public support for the Hashimoto cabinet dropped below 30 percent for the first time.

In spite of the bleak economic backdrop, most pundits expected a comfortable win for the LDP in elections for the House of Councillors held in July 1998. The party had, after all, triumphed in all recent by-elections to fill vacancies in the House of Representatives, and preelection polls gave no indications of the blow, which the LDP would eventually take (see for example Japan Economic Newswire, 1998, July 1 and July 8). Voters turned against the LDP in an apparent protest against the government's ineffective economic measures, and turnout rose to 58.8 percent, a significant increase over the dismal 44.5 percent in 1995. This increase appeared to be partly related to changes in the regulations concerning absentee voting and an extension of voting hours, but also partly to public anger following Hashimoto's indecision concerning a permanent tax cut during the last phase of the campaign period (Kabashima Ikuo, cited in Hisada, 1998). The LDP captured just 46 of the 126 contested seats, which left it far short of a majority, even when adding the 58 seats held over from the 1995 election. The reorganized DPJ captured 27 seats, the JCP secured 15, and a record-high number of independents were elected. Unaffiliated voters rallied behind the opposition parties, which prevented the LDP from capturing

[56] JSP leaders maintained that exit from the coalition was caused by the LDP's unwillingness to compromise on establishment of new guidelines for political ethics, but most commentators saw the move as part of the JSP's last-ditch survival tactics (e.g., Wanner, 1998a).

any seats in three major cities (Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya).[57]

Hashimoto immediately resigned to take responsibility for the defeat, and the election to pick a new LDP leader, and consequently the new Prime Minister, saw Obuchi Keizō pitted against Koizumi Junichirō and Kajiyama Seiroku. Obuchi won a landslide victory, but foreign media reports promptly likened him to "cold pizza", and the Japanese public seemed equally unenthusiastic. In an early opinion poll only 33 percent of respondents approved of the Obuchi administration, while 52 percent indicated disapproval. The same poll found 75 percent of respondents expressing anxiety about the future (Sasaki, 2000, p. 21). Obuchi's vows to prioritize economic recovery and to pull the country out of its long recession apparently did little to inspire the market with confidence, and share prices continued to drop along with the yen. In parliament the administration's weak position became apparent soon after, when Obuchi was forced to cave in to opposition demands on emergency financial legislation. Other events in the fall of 1998 brought home the constraints of a situation in which the LDP was obliged to form temporary alliances in order to govern (for more details see Sasaki, 2000).

Obuchi therefore turned his focus to finding a way of trading his administration's image of weakness for one of strength. This became the impetus for coalition negotiations between the LDP and the Liberal Party, and a coalition was officially launched in January 1999. Increasing cooperation from the reestablished

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[57] Party spokesmen claimed that the LDP had been "hit by an unimaginable wind", and election results clearly left the LDP in shock. But, as Kabashima (1998, p. 12) emphasizes, it is necessary to put the LDP defeat into perspective. Although it did not translate into additional seats, the LDP in fact increased its share of the votes in local districts compared to 1995. Its share of votes in the nationwide PR constituency dropped somewhat because quite a few voters split their vote between a LDP candidate locally and a party other than the LDP nationally. This reduced the number of winners on its PR list from 15 in 1995 to 14 in 1998. These numbers, however, do not illuminate the extent of the shock felt by the party, for it was not the 1995 results, but rather the good showing in 1992 that the party had set its sights on (for more details see Kabashima, 1998).

CGP helped to speed up parliamentary deliberations, and the cabinet's approval ratings gradually edged up as things were also beginning to look up on the economic front. By May 1999, supporters of the administration outnumbered its opponents for the first time.

A tripartite coalition, including the LDP, the LP, and the CGP, was launched after another cabinet reshuffle in October, and the government now commanded a stable majority in both houses of Parliament. The raison d'être of the extended coalition, however, was widely questioned, as the coalition platform was long on abstracts and short on substance, and because the alliance had a strong aura of being a tool for use in preparation for the next general election (Sasaki, 2000, p. 23). The administration, which had previously won acceptance by shouldering the burden of crisis management, abruptly shifted to a behavioural pattern of risk avoidance, and by March 2000 a mere 28 percent of respondents approved of the coalition (see also Chapter 4 for more details).

On April 1, 2000, Ozawa announced the withdrawal of the Liberal Party from the coalition, citing policy differences and frustration with the LDP's lack of will to deliver on its promises. This, however, caused the party to split in half, with those MPs who opposed the withdrawal establishing the Conservative Party, which remained within the ruling coalition. Chaos prevailed when Obuchi was hospitalized with a massive stroke on April 2, and on the following day his cabinet stepped down to open the way for selection of his successor. In a disputed selection process, Mori Yoshirō became LDP President and Prime Minister and was tasked with steering the LDP through elections for the House of Representatives, which would have to be held at the latest in October 2000. When Obuchi died in May after lingering in coma

for six weeks, it was therefore expected that Mori would call snap elections in hope of winning sympathy votes[58], but he eventually decided to postpone the election until after the June G8 summit in Okinawa, presumably to build up his otherwise unproven credentials as a statesman (Thies, 2002, p. 148).

Mori played a prominent role in the June election campaign due to his repeated gaffes[59], but the election resulted in no dramatic changes. The ruling coalition maintained its majority, winning 271 of the 480 seats, but this result nonetheless constituted a sharp decline from the 336 seats held prior to the election. The LDP lost 38 seats, while the CGP and the CP declined from 42 to 31 and 18 to 7 seats, respectively. Thus, the election could hardly be interpreted as an endorsement of the governing coalition. The DPJ emerged as the big winner, improving its position from 95 to 127 seats, while other opposition parties also realized modest gains. Turnout improved slightly, with 62.5 percent of voters turning up to vote. With a majority in the House of Representatives, Mori was reappointed despite his low support ratings. Following the election new gaffes and scandals caused the cabinet's support rates to plummet to a mere four percent, and essentially Mori remained in charge only because there was nobody else willing to take the job (Thies, 2002, p. 154). Mori fended off a no-confidence vote in late 2000, but it was clear that his days at the helm were numbered.

With an eye on the coming House of Councillors election, the LDP chose its

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[58] The LDP landslide victory in 1980, for example, had been closely linked with Prime Minister Ōhira's death during the election campaign (see also Stockwin, 1981).

[59] Not only was he (and in extension the LDP) severely criticized over the opaque nature of the selection process by which he had replaced Obuchi, but soon after taking office Mori entered dangerous waters by referring to Japan as a "divine nation, centring on the emperor" (*Asahi Shinbun*, 2000, May 16), dredging up bitter wartime memories at home and abroad. Mori caused another stir, when he used the war era term 'national polity' [国体] in condemnation of the JCP's opposition to the imperial system (*Mainichi Shinbun*, 2000, June 3), and again when he opined that "undecided voters should stay home and sleep" on polling day (*Mainichi Shinbun*, 2000, June 21).

new leader in April 2001, when Koizumi Junichirō surprised everyone by winning a landslide victory in party primaries. This time the vote was extended beyond parliamentarians to include also representatives of local chapters, and Koizumi performed remarkably well within this group, winning no less than 123 of the 141 votes allocated to local chapters (Aoki, 2001). His campaign pledges of vigorous reform to restore the economy to health were well received by party members, and even those who disagreed with these pledges apparently went on to vote for him on the grounds that he would be the person most likely to pull the LDP safely through the election (Lincoln, 2002, p. 68). Koizumi's reform rhetoric (though vague) combined with personal characteristics, which seemed to set him apart from the traditional grey and faceless LDP leaders, resounded surprisingly well with the public, who endorsed him and his administration enthusiastically.[60]

And it was to a large extent Koizumi's personal popularity that led to victory for the LDP in the July 2001 House of Councillors election, where the LDP added 3 seats to the 61 it had at stake in the election. Although the gains were relatively limited, it was nevertheless perceived to be a major victory for the LDP, which had earlier been expected to lose seats in the election. The LDP's two partners, however, did not fare well. The CGP barely managed to maintain its preelection strength, while the CP lost two of the three seats it was defending. Among the opposition parties only the DPJ and the LP registered gains, winning an extra four and three

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[60] The Koizumi administration's support rate was 86 percent in April and remained high throughout 2001. Japan was gripped by what seemed to be a 'Koizumi mania', with people lining up in front of the LDP headquarters to get his campaign posters and other Koizumi merchandise. Koizumi clearly differed from other prominent LDP politicians in that he was considered handsome, liked rock music and opera, and was a bachelor. At the same time, however, he was quite traditional. As Lincoln (2002, p. 69) points out, Koizumi was a third-generation politician, who had initially inherited his fathers support network. Upon entering parliament he had joined the Fukuda faction, where he remained a loyal member throughout. He had held two cabinet posts prior to becoming Prime Minister, but did little to gain media attention during either posting (Mainichi Daily News, 2001, April 24).

seats each. In contrast, the JCP lost three of the eight seats at stake, while the JSP saw its strength further reduced, losing four of the seven seats up for election. According to exit polls, the growing army of unaffiliated voters, largely concentrated in urban areas, this time tended to cast ballots for the LDP, while they in previous elections had sought haven in opposition parties (Japan Times, 2001, July 31). Voting turnout remained relatively low at 56.4 percent.

Despite Koizumi's pledges to restore economic health, Japan continued to grapple with many of the same problems it had faced over the past decade. Koizumi was able to remain in office, but almost all of his efforts to reform the moribund economic system were watered down by resistance from affected groups (Uriu, 2003, p. 78). His record-high approval ratings fell sharply following his decision in January 2002 to sack his Minister of Foreign Affairs, the popular Tanaka Makiko, and in June the disapproval rate surpassed that of approval for the first time (e.g., *Nikkei Shinbun*, 2002, July 4).[61] The economy had ended 2002 with positive growth, but this trend was reversed in early 2003. The monthly unemployment rate hit a new historic high of 5.5 percent in January, and economists feared that Japan was about to enter yet another period of recession (Uriu, 2004, p. 169). The opposition attacked Koizumi's lack of progress, painting the LDP as so beholden to special interests that it was incapable of real reform, and Koizumi was under constant attack from those within his own party, who wished him to backtrack on reform (Uriu, 2004, p. 171).[62] Nevertheless, he convincingly secured another term as LDP president in September

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[61] Support for the administration, however, went up in the following months, in particular after Koizumi's surprise visit to North Korea for summit talks with Kim Jong-il. The North Korea issue, however, was a two-edged sword and particularly the task of finding a solution to the issue of Japanese abductees living in North Korea haunted the Koizumi administration following the visit.

[62] These attacks were led by the so-called 'old guard' within the LDP, which includes MPs supported by constituent groups that would be decimated by reform (for more details see Uriu, 2004, p. 171).

2003, allowing him to focus on the coming election for the House of Representatives. At the same time, there were also stirrings in the opposition as it geared up to prepare for the election, and in late September, the Democratic and Liberal parties were merged, which served to close opposition ranks considerably (see also Chapter 4).

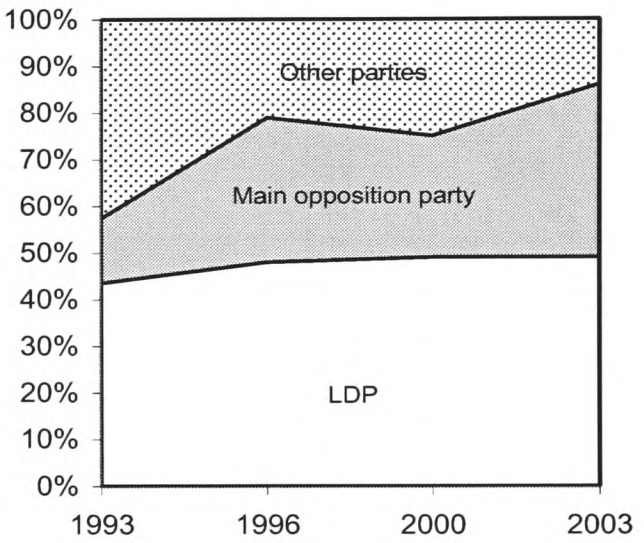
In spite of the emergence of a more cohesive opposition, nobody really expected the election to result in a change of government, since there was little chance that the DPJ would be able to overtake the LDP's lead in seats. And indeed, on the surface the election again produced little change. The LDP lost 10 seats compared to its preelection strength of 247, and actually dipped below the simple majority threshold. On the day after the election, however, the majority was restored when the four remaining MPs from the New Conservative Party [保守新党] (NCP), a successor party to the Conservative Party, and three independents were welcomed into the LDP. The DPJ, however, was the clear winner, and increased its representation from 137 to 177 seats. The party's strong showing can largely be attributed to the progress made in defining itself as a clear alternative to the LDP (Uriu, 2004, p. 173), but probably also to the fact that voters for the first time were presented with a genuine two-party contest. Smaller parties generally performed poorly in the election, and among these only the CGP made gains, adding three seats to its preelection strength. The LDP's other partner, the NCP, had lost 5 of 9 seats, and the JSP lost 12 seats, leaving it with only 6 MPs in the House of Representatives. The JCP lost 11 of its 20 seats, and party officials blamed the negative results on the media, which they claimed had focused exclusively on the LDP and the DPJ (Japan Times, 2003, November 10).

An interesting outcome of the election was the apparent emergence of a two-

party system, a development anticipated since the introduction of the new electoral system in 1994. As will be remembered, it was widely believed that the new system's emphasis on single-member districts, which favours larger parties, would lead to a two-party system format, but this had failed to materialize in elections in 1996 and 2000. Although the number of seats in PR districts had been reduced to 180 by 2000, this element continued to allow smaller parties at least some representation.

Figure 2.1

Seat Shares of the LDP and Its Major Challengers, House of Representatives Elections, 1993-2003



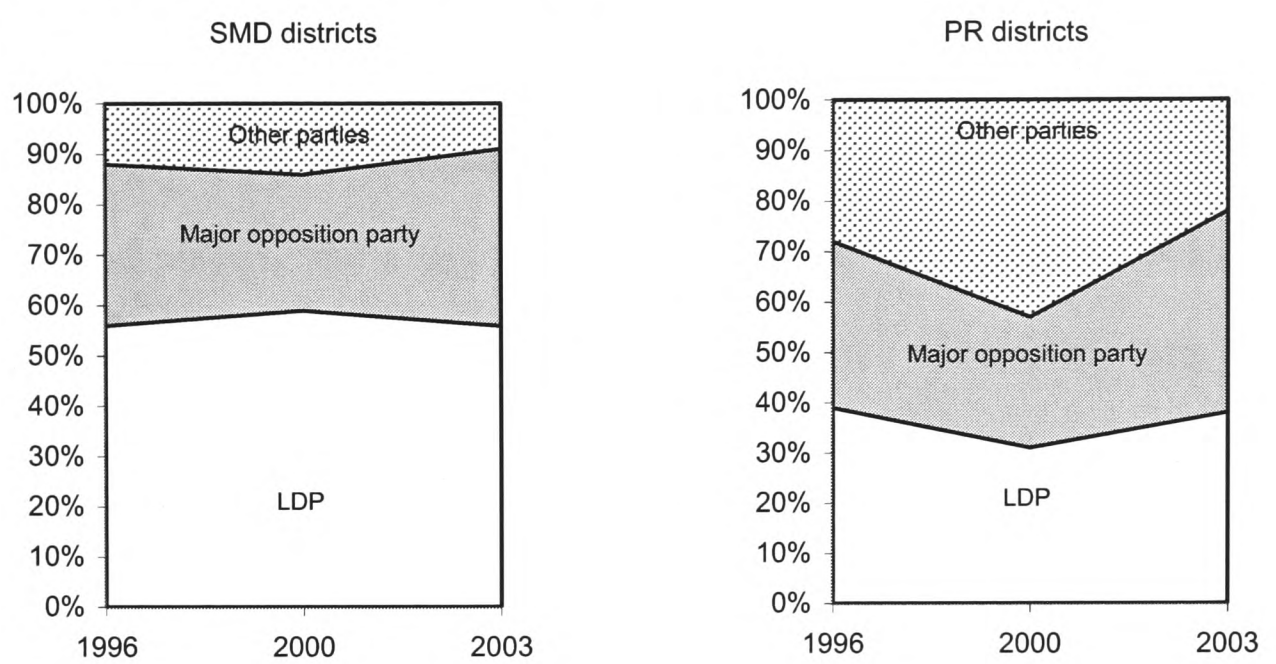
Note. 'Main opposition party' refers to the JSP (1993), the NFP (1996), and the DPJ (2000 and 2003). Based on data compiled from Kokkai Binran, 1993; *Asahi Shinbun*, October 21, 1996, June 26, 2000; *Yomiuri Shinbun*, November 11, 2003.

Figure 2.1 illustrates the changes in seat shares of the LDP and its main challengers in elections for the House of Representatives from 1993 to 2003. As can be seen, the LDP captured roughly below 50 percent of all seats in all elections, its worst performance being the 1993 election. The percentage of seats won by its main challenger and other parties, however, has shifted considerably between 1993 and 2003. In 1993, other parties than the two major ones accounted for no less than 43 percent of all seats, but in subsequent elections the share of seats won by the major opposition party at the time increased considerably. The role of other parties than the two major ones declined to just 21 percent in 1996, when the NFP secured 31 percent of the seats. In the 2000 election, the DPJ was the main challenger to the LDP, but other parties experienced a small upsurge, winning 25 percent of the seats, which was almost as many as the DPJ. By 2003, however, the picture had become much

clearer, and in this election parties other than the DPJ and the LDP won only 14 percent of all seats, and the DPJ increased its share to 37 percent.

Figure 2.2

Seat Shares of the LDP and Other Parties in Different District Types, House of Representatives Elections, 1996-2003



Note. 'Main opposition party' refers to the NFP (1996) and the DPJ (2000 and 2003). Based on data compiled from *Asahi Shinbun*, October 21, 1996, June 26, 2000; *Yomiuri Shinbun*, November 11, 2003.

Figure 2.2 illustrates changes in the pattern of competition in the different district types under the new electoral system (1996-2003), and here changes are also evident. As can be seen, the percentage of seats won by other parties than the LDP and the major opposition party in the SMD competition declined between 1996 and 2003. In 2003, the DPJ and the LDP clearly dominated the competition for the 300 SMD seats, of which they won no less than 273 (or 91 percent). The same trend is visible in the PR districts, albeit the dominance of the two major parties is less overwhelming. In 2003, parties other than the LDP and the DPJ won only 22 percent of the 180 PR seats, which was a dramatic decline from the 43 percent captured in 2000. The DPJ's emergence as a strong challenger to the LDP was further underlined by results in the PR districts in 2003, where it actually outperformed the LDP.

The period from the early 1990s until the present has been a tumultuous period in Japanese politics. Following years of stable one-party government, the Japanese public was faced with a range of coalition governments involving numerous parties, and the trend of government by coalition as well as changes in the electoral system forced politicians and parties to adjust to the new circumstances in order to maximize their leverage. The unravelling of the old order created a new and uncertain context for political players, and a new party system has only slowly begun taking shape. The following chapter examines the new players, which entered the scene following the collapse of the old order and contributed to the ongoing remodelling of the party system.

CHAPTER 3

NEW PARTY EMERGENCE, REALIGNMENT AND DEALIGNMENT, 1992-2003

The extensive process of realignment, which has been unfolding among Japan's political parties, involved old as well as new parties. Political parties regrouped, and some joined forces in the range of coalition governments that followed decades of one-party rule. Within the party system no less than 29 new parties have appeared, but by late 2003, only three of these new parties were still represented in parliament.

The high turnover among new parties made the realignment process seem quite chaotic. According to Hrebenar, "Diet members moved from one party to another and then back again...[and] handbooks on the two houses of the Diet [were] often out of date and inaccurate even before they [reached] the bookstore" (2000b, p. 3), and Pempel states that "after 25 years of exceptional electoral and party stability, parties split and recombined with the speed and unpredictability of amoebae, but totally without policy or socioeconomic logic" (1998, p. 1). In a more poetic vein, the *Asahi Shinbun* noted that "new political parties have sprung up like bamboo shoots after the rain" (1998, January 6). Confusion was clearly abundant.

Throughout the democratic world increasing numbers of citizens have in recent years been 'switching off' from the political establishment (Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000; Putnam and Pharr, 2000). Japan is no exception to this trend, and partisan loyalty in national elections has been declining gradually throughout the postwar

period. This decline became particularly rapid in the 1990s, and the group of so-called unaffiliated voters has comprised more than 50 percent of survey respondents throughout most of the past decade (see for example Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1992-2003). Significantly, voting turnout also declined dramatically in the 1990s, and the increasing alienation of voters has coincided with the extensive realignment of political parties at the national level. Although the electorate initially responded enthusiastically to the creation of new parties, the quick evaporation of enthusiasm clearly added to the difficulties faced by new parties in their attempts to consolidate and carve out a position for themselves.

This chapter falls into three parts, and first examines the emergence of new parties since 1992. Following a brief sketch of developments in the party arena, new parties are classified according to durability, electoral participation, relevance, and government participation. The second part of the chapter focuses on the extent of the realignment process as well as its main trends and discusses the motivations of the many politicians, who participated in realignment activities. The chapter finally examines the electorate's perspective on political developments by examining various opinion polls from the period.

In other words, the chapter aims to provide answers to the following questions: Which new parties have appeared and what were their characteristics? What has been the extent of the realignment process, and when did activity occur? What has been the direction of MPs' realignment activities? What, if any, are the trends with regard to MPs' movements, and, what do these trends tell us about specific party groupings? What motivated defectors? And finally, how did the average Japanese perceive changes at the elite level?

NEW PARTY EMERGENCE, 1992-2003

3.1 Defining 'New' and 'Party'

Before we can proceed to examine the type and number of new parties, we must first define what is meant here by 'new' and 'party'. According to Harmel (1985, pp. 405-406), new parties can be defined in a number of ways. One might, for example, consider 'new' only those parties that have been formed to do battle over what are perceived to be 'new issues'. Such parties are new because of what they do for and to their party systems. Alternatively, one might also consider as 'new' all parties formed after the occurrence of some particularly important historical event. Such parties are new not only because they were formed more recently, but also because they were formed in an environment changed from that of earlier party formation. The vast majority of new parties in Japan were not formed exclusively around new issues, although the first generation of new parties in the early days of realignment often focused heavily on the issue of political reform.[63] The split of the LDP in 1993, which led to its loss of power, however, presents us with a defining historical event. Not only was it the starting point for party realignment, but it also marked a considerable change in the political context. Prior to this, however, one significant new party, the JNP, had already emerged, and its success in the 1992 House of Councillors election became an inspirational factor for MPs contemplating defection. Considering the great symbolic significance of the JNP as well as its central role following the LDP split, it would be inappropriate to exclude it from this analysis. For the purpose of this examination we therefore consider as 'new' all parties, which

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[63] In 1993, new parties emerged immediately before the election and had little time to formulate policies in other areas, which perhaps made them focus even more on political reform. The issue of reform, however, was not exclusive to new parties, but was also taken up by old parties in appeals to the electorate.

emerged after the 1955 system had begun to show serious cracks in the surface in the early 1990s.[64]

While defining what constitutes a 'new' party is relatively easy, definitions of what constitutes a 'party' tend to elicit more controversy in the literature. Endless numbers of definitions have been put forward, ranging from "any organization which nominates candidates for election to a legislature" (Riggs, 1968, p. 51) to "all political organizations which regard themselves as parties and are generally so regarded" (Hodgkin, 1961, p. 16). And even if scholars may agree on a particular abstract conceptualization of party, opinions tend to differ with regard to when such organizations are big enough or organized enough or indeed important enough to be included in a sample for study (Harmel, 1985, p. 406). As we will see shortly, many of the new Japanese parties played only marginal roles within the legislature or existed for only brief periods, and if we were to apply conditions on our definitions with regard to so-called significance or size, many of the new parties would clearly fail to qualify for inclusion. The purpose here, however, is to reach an understanding of the realignment process as a whole, and in order to make the analysis as comprehensive as possible, we adopt a definition close to that used by Rochon (1985), which requires that a party have gained representation in the national legislature at least once in order to be included in the analysis. The high turnover among Japanese parties in the 1990s, however, meant that several of the new parties emerged *during* a parliamentary term and in some cases ceased to exist before an election was actually held. These new midterm parties also had a role to play, and rather than just parties, which gained representation through an election, the

[64] One might easily argue that the disintegration of the 1955 system had been underway for quite some time, but for practical purposes the analysis here defines as 'new' all parties, which have emerged since the formation of the Japan New Party in May 1992.

definition used here therefore includes all (new) parties, which were represented in parliament at any point of time between 1992 and 2003.

3.2 A Brief Sketch of New Party Emergence, 1992-2003

Before attempting to construct a classification scheme for the new parties, this section first briefly sketches developments in the party arena between 1992 and 2003.

The Japan New Party was established shortly before the 1992 House of Councillors election by Hosokawa Morihiro, and it managed to tap into the growing pool of voters fed up with the established parties. The JNP represented a fresh breeze in the political system, but the restructuring of the political party landscape, however, only began in earnest from around the time of the LDP split in June 1993, when defectors formed two new parties, the New Party Harbinger and the Renewal Party. The election, which followed shortly after, was dubbed 'the election to reorganize the political world' [政界再編選挙], and indeed, in many ways this was exactly what appeared to be happening. Japan experienced a regular 'new party boom', with the three new parties winning just about 20 percent of the seats in the House of Representatives.[65]

After the election, members of the Japanese Trade Union Confederation group in the House of Councillors [連合参議院] (JTUC) established the Democratic Reform League [民主改革連合] (DRL), and further defections from LDP ranks occurred in the wake of its fall from power. In April 1994, two small conservative parties, the Liberal Party [自由党] (LP^{94})[66] and the New Party Future [新党みらい] (NPF), were

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[65] Although new parties were not an unknown feature in Japanese politics, it was the first time that new parties made such substantial gains in their first election (see also Chapter 2).

[66] The Liberal Party formed in 1994 is henceforth referred to as 'Liberal Party^{94}' (LP^{94}) in order to avoid confusing it with the much larger Liberal Party (LP) formed in 1998.

formed, and both became part of the Hata coalition. In November, a new miniparty, the 'New Party of Liberals for Preservation of the Constitution' [新党護憲リベラル] (LPC), was established by former members of the JSP and the minor Social Democratic League [社会民主連合] (SDL) in the House of Councillors.[67] At the same time moves towards establishing a new major opposition party, which could effectively challenge the LDP, picked up pace. In December, two 'established' parties dissolved and joined forces with four new parties to establish this new 'super party', which was named the New Frontier Party.[68] A handful of people from the now defunct parties chose not to join the NFP, and instead established the Liberal League [自由連合] (LL), while others became independents.

1995 saw little activity in terms of realignment, and only two minor new parties appeared. The first of these was the Peace and Citizens' Party [平和・市民党] (PCP), in reality a one-man party formed by Den Hideo in the House of Councillors, which lasted only a couple of months. In January, a group centred on Yamahana Sadao, a senior member of the JSP, announced the creation of a new 'democratic' party (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 1995, January 1), but the announcement coincided with the devastating earthquake in Kobe, and the plans were temporarily shelved. Almost a year later, in December 1995, the plans were finally realized, but triggered only a minor split of the JSP. In the end only three members left the JSP to join forces with two independents (formerly affiliated with the JNP) in establishing the Citizens'

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[67] The SDL had been dissolved in May 1994.

[68] The CGP's merger into the NFP was done according to a rather complicated scheme. The party was formally dissolved in early December, and two parties, the New Party Clean Government (NPCG) and Clean Government (CG), were formed. All CGP members in the House of Representatives joined the NPCG, which subsequently joined the NFP. But only some of its members in the House of Councillors followed this course. MPs elected in 1989, whose seats were due to be contested in 1995, joined the NPCG/NFP, while those elected in 1992 continued as an independent grouping (the CG), which, however, cooperated closely with the NFP.

League [市民リーグ] (CL). A few days later, on January 1, 1996, another minor grouping left the JSP and established the New Socialist Party [新社会党] (NSP). The JSP's decline became particularly evident when the party split in September 1996, and dissident members joined ranks with defectors from the NPH to establish the Democratic Party as a so-called 'third pole' alternative to the LDP and the NFP. The DPJ was formed immediately before the House of Representatives election, but it failed to spur on a 'new party boom' similar to the one in 1993. The 1996 election, however, in particular dealt a severe blow to the New Frontier Party and put the party's internal inconsistencies on display. Unity in its ranks quickly dwindled, and the first major defection occurred in December 1996, when key member Hata Tsutomu and a small group of his followers established the Sun Party.[69] Throughout 1997 defections from the NFP continued, although no major new parties appeared. A small grouping of independents, mainly in the House of Councillors, established the Liberal Group [自由の会] (LG), which was, however, dissolved shortly afterwards. In December, another miniparty, From Five [フロム・ファイブ] (FF), was formed by independents and NFP defectors, centring on Hosokawa Morihiro.

At the New Frontier Party Convention in late December 1997, it was decided to dissolve the party, and January 1998 saw a flurry of activity as MPs regrouped. Six new parties were established in the first days of the year, largely mirroring the NFP's internal divisions. The Dawn Club [黎明クラブ] (DC) was established by NFP members in the House of Councillors, who had previously been affiliated with the CGP, but the new party was within a couple of weeks merged with Clean Government [公明] (CG), the remnant of the old CGP. Former CGP members in the

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[69] Most participants in the Sun Party had formerly belonged to the LDP and had participated in the establishment of the Renewal Party in 1993.

House of Representatives established the New Party Peace [新党平和] (NPP), while former Democratic Socialists established the New Party Fraternity [新党友愛] (NFR). The Voice of the People [国民の声] (VP) was formed by a mixed group centred upon Kano Michihiko, consisting of former LDP and JNP members as well as people elected in 1996 for the NFP. The Reform Club [改革クラブ] (RC) was established by a group of 12 MPs, who had gathered around Ozawa Tatsuo, a senior legislator who had left the LDP in 1993, and consisted mainly of people elected for the NFP in 1996 and former LDP members. The last new party to emerge from the ashes of the NFP was the Liberal Party, formed by the group that had emerged around NFP leader Ozawa Ichirō. Its ranks included a mix of people from the DSP, the CGP and the JNP, but predominantly former Liberal Democrats and people first elected for either the RP in 1993 or the NFP in 1996.

While internal divisions had seemed to be the cause of the NFP's disintegration, many of the splinter parties were quick to play down their differences and within a week most of them joined forces with the DPJ to form a new parliamentary grouping, the *Minyūren* [民主友愛太陽国民連合].[70] On January 23, the Sun Party, From Five and Voice of the People merged to form the 'Good Governance Party' [民政党] (GGP), but it was widely anticipated that this move was merely part of preparations for a much larger merger. This came about in April, when the parties within the Minyūren were merged with the Good Governance Party into one major party, the so-called 'new DPJ', which consequently became the largest opposition force. In November 1998, the Clean Government Party was reestablished via the merger of the

[70] The name of this parliamentary grouping does not easily translate into English as it was a contraction of the names of the participant parties. The *Minyūren* included six parties (the DPJ, the SP, the NFR, the VP, the FF, and the DRL).

CG and the NPP, and at the same time a minor grouping, the House of Councillors Club [参議院クラブ] (HCC), appeared on the stage.

Shortly afterwards, Liberal Party leader Ozawa and Prime Minister Obuchi reached agreement to establish a coalition government. Most people saw this as the first step towards a so-called 'conservative merger', which, however, failed to materialize. Throughout 1999 almost no realignment activities occurred, although a grouping of independents established the Independents' Group [無所属の会] (IG) in December. In April 2000, however, MPs moved again, this time occasioned by Ozawa's announcement that the Liberals would withdraw from the coalition. Despite the Liberal Party's cohesive character, this decision caused the party to split in half, as members in favour of maintaining the coalition with the LDP seceded to establish the Conservative Party. A couple of these later joined the LDP, and party ranks were considerably reduced in the House of Representatives election in 2000. In December 2002, the CP was dissolved and some of its members joined ranks with defectors from the DPJ to form the New Conservative Party, while others (re-)joined the LDP. The NCP was formally dissolved following the November 2003 election, and its remaining members absorbed into the LDP. Prior to the same election, the Liberal Party was merged with the DPJ in an attempt to close opposition ranks and present a united front vis-à-vis the LDP-led ruling coalition (see also Appendix H for a graphic overview of the changes in the party landscape between 1992 and 2003).

3.3 New Parties: Durability, Electoral Participation, Parliamentary Strength, and Cabinet Participation

All in all 29 new parties emerged between 1992 and 2003, but many seem to have been little more than transitional resting places for MPs en route to other parties.

Olson (1998, p. 434) discusses the flux in party formation in emerging party systems in East and Central Europe, and uses the term 'couch parties' to describe parties that are quickly formed among a few people, but which most often disappear equally quickly. Similarly, he uses the term 'party tourist' to refer to parliamentary deputies who have belonged to several different parties within a single term of office. The label 'couch party' indeed seems applicable to many of Japan's new parties, and Japanese legislators have certainly done their fair share of 'party tourism'.

Most of the new parties existed only for short intervals of time. Table 3.1 lists the new parties according to duration, and, as can be seen, many disappeared rather quickly, and some even dissolved within weeks or months of their emergence. Fifteen of the new parties were active for less than a year, while three parties existed for less than two years. Two parties existed between two and three years, while only nine parties remained in existence for more than three years.

Table 3.1

Durability of New Parties, 1992-2003

Less than 1 year (n=15)	1-2 years (n=3)	2-3 years (n=2)	3 or more years (n=9)
NPF (1994.4-12)	JNP (1992.5-1994.12)	RC (1998.1-2000.6)	NPH (1993.6-2002.1)
LP[94] (1994.4-12)	RP (1993.6-1994.12)	CP (2000.4-2002.12)	DRL (1993.8-1998.4)
LPC (1994.11-1995.6)	SP (1996.12-1998.1)		CG/CGP (1994.12-)
NPCG (1994.12)			NFP (1994.12-1997.12)
PCP (1995.6-9)			LL (1994.12-)
CL (1995.12-1996.9)			NSP (1996.1-)
LG (1997.1-8)			DPJ (1996.9-)
FF (1997.12-1998.1)			LP (1998.1-2003.9)
DC (1998.1)			IG (1999.12-)
NPP (1998.1-11)			
VP (1998.1)			
NFR (1998.1-4)			
GGP (1998.1-4)			
HCC (1998.12-1999.12)			
NCP (2002.12-2003.11)			

Note. Dates in brackets indicate time of party's formation and dissolution. Based on Database, 2004.

New parties are often judged on their ability to win seats in elections, but many of the new parties in Japan were formed during a parliamentary term, and several

parties existed too briefly to even have the opportunity to contest elections. Other cases bear witness to the fact that although it was relatively easy to create a party, it proved considerably more difficult to steer it successfully through an election.

Table 3.2

New Parties' Electoral Participation and Results, 1992-2003 (Number of Seats Won)

Party	Total	HC '92		HR '93	HC '95		HR '96		HC '98		HR '00		HC '01		HR '03	
	1992-2003	PR	LD	MMD	PR	LD	PR	SMD	PR	LD	PR	SMD	PR	LD	PR	SMD
JNP	39	4	0	35	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
NPH	18	-	-	13	2	1	0	2	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
RP	55	-	-	55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DRL	3	-	-	-	0	2	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NPF	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LP[94]	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LPC	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-
CG/CGP	87	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	2	24	7	8	5	25	9
NPCG	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NFP	196	-	-	-	18	22	60	96	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LL	2	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
PCP	1	-	-	-	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CL	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NSP	0	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
DPJ	409	-	-	-	-	-	35	17	12	15	47	80	8	18	72	105
SP	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LG	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FF	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DC	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NPP	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
VP	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NFR	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LP	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	1	18	4	4	2	-	-
RC	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	-	-	-	-
GGP	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
HCC	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IG	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	5	0	0	0	1
CP	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	7	1	0	-	-
NCP	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	4

Note. "×" indicate that party did not contest any elections. "-" indicate that party did not run candidates in election, had yet to be formed or had ceased to exist. Based on data from Kokkai Binran, 1992-2003.

Table 3.2 lists the electoral participation of new parties and shows that 14 of the new parties never even made it to the polls, and that only two of the parties, which existed for less than a year (the PCP and the NCP), contested elections.[71] Of

[71] As the PCP was literally a one-man party, it hardly seems appropriate to deduce anything from the fact that Den Hideo, a veteran in Japanese politics, was able to secure his seat under this label. Den actually won his seat in a prefectural district, where party labels matter only relatively little. The NCP

the three parties in existence for more than one but less than two years, only the JNP and the RP contested elections, and although this was done under the old electoral system, the nature of the 1993 election does imply that party label was of some significance. The three parties in existence for more than two but less than three years all contested elections, but only two have been successful in returning candidates and then only in single-member districts, where party label is not a crucial factor for success. All of the parties that existed for more than three years have contested elections, but only some have done so with success. The New Socialist Party, for example, has run candidates in all elections since its formation, but has failed to get any of these elected, and the Liberal League has likewise run a substantial number of candidates in all subsequent elections, but has so far only managed to return one candidate to parliament. The Clean Government group did not run candidates in the 1995 House of Councillors election[72], but did contest elections in 1998, returning candidates – albeit in small numbers – in prefectural as well as national districts. Following the group's reunion with other former CGP legislators in November 1998, which meant the formal resurrection of the CGP, it has participated in all elections and done so with relative success. The NPH likewise has contested elections, and has managed to return candidates in single-member districts for the House of Representatives and national and prefectural districts for the House of Councillors. Its parliamentary strength following defections in 1996, however, remained minuscule. The same holds true for the DRL, which managed to return candidates in prefectural and single-member districts for both houses of Parliament,

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contested the 2003 General Election, which, however, also spelled its doom. Its dismal performance in the election, where only 3 of its 10 incumbents were reelected, led to the decision to dissolve the party.

[72] Candidates that would have otherwise belonged to the CGP were running under the NFP label in the 1995 election.

but did so only in small numbers. The remaining three parties, the NFP, the DPJ and the LP, are the only new parties to have contested elections, returned candidates in all types of districts, and to have done so in significant numbers.

New parties also displayed considerable diversity in terms of parliamentary strength. The vast majority of parties included relatively few legislators, and 12 of the new parties had 10 or fewer members at their peak. Twenty-four of the parties had less than 50 members, and only two have had more than 100 members.

Defining what constitutes a 'relevant party' can be done in a number of ways, one of the simplest being that presented by Ware (1996, pp. 158-159) which counts as relevant only "those parties that obtained at least three percent of seats in the national legislature in a general election". This criterion has also been adopted in other recent studies (e.g., Siaroff, 2000), and although this may be a somewhat arbitrary measure, it does help us come to grips with the relative size and parliamentary strength of new parties. As noted earlier, almost all new parties emerged within a parliamentary term and therefore did not gain entry to the legislature through an election. To distinguish between 'relevant' and 'irrelevant' parties, we here apply a definition of 'relevance' as 'parties which at one time held more than three percent of the seats in parliament'. Table 3.3 presents data on the relative size of new parties, identifying those that qualify as 'relevant'. Twelve parties were large enough to be deemed relevant in the House of Representatives, 13 did not meet the criteria, and four never held any seats in this House. In the House of Councillors nine parties qualified as relevant, 17 did not, and three had no representation at any point of time. We also find that only six of the new parties held enough seats to qualify as relevant in both Houses.

Table 3.3

Relative Size of New parties and Their Relevance, 1992-2003

Party	Highest % of seats in HR	Lowest % of seats in HR	Highest % of seats in HC	Lowest % of seats in HC	'relevant party' in HR	'relevant party' in HC
JNP	7.2	6.5	1.6	1.6	●	×
NPH	4.3	0.2	1.6	0.4	●	×
RP	12.1	10.8	6.0	3.2	●	●
DRL	0.4	0.2	4.0	0.8	×	●
NPF	1.0	1.0	-	-	×	-
LP[94]	1.4	1.4	-	-	×	-
LPC	-	-	2.0	2.0	-	×
CG/CGP	8.4	6.5	9.7	4.4	●	●
NPCG	10.2	10.2	2.8	2.8	●	×
NFP	34.4	26.6	22.2	14.3	●	●
LL	1.4	0.2	1.2	0.4	×	×
PCP	-	-	0.4	0.4	-	×
CL	1.0	1.0	-	-	×	×
NSP	0.4	0.4	1.2	1.2	×	×
DPJ	36.9	10.4	26.3	3.6	●	●
SP	2.0	2.0	1.2	1.2	×	×
LG	0.2	0.2	1.6	1.6	×	×
FF	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	×	×
DC	-	-	5.6	5.6	-	●
NPP	7.6	7.4	-	-	●	-
VP	3.0	3.0	1.2	1.2	●	×
NFR	2.8	2.8	3.6	3.6	×	●
LP	8.2	4.6	4.8	2.0	●	●
RC	1.8	1.0	1.2	0.4	×	×
GGP	6.0	6.0	3.6	3.6	●	●
HCC	-	-	2.0	2.0	-	×
IG	1.9	0.2	2.4	1.6	×	×
CP	4.2	1.5	2.4	2.0	●	×
NCP	2.1	0.8	1.6	1.6	×	×
'Relevant' parties, n=					12	9
'Irrelevant' parties, n=					13	17
Parties not represented, n=					4	3

Note. "-" indicate that the party was not represented in this part of parliament. "●" indicate that party held more than three percent of seats in parliament, and "×" indicate that the party was represented, but failed to meet the criteria for 'relevance'. Seat percentages were calculated based on data from Kokkai Binran, 1992-2003.

Using only the three percent threshold as a measure of parliamentary strength, however, leaves no room for the possibility that a party, which may not meet the criterion for relevance, can still serve as a coalition partner and thus exert at least some degree of influence. The NCP, for example, was not large enough to be considered a relevant party, but nevertheless served in coalition with the LDP and the CGP. Its role within this coalition, however, remained marginal throughout.

Table 3.4
New Party Participation in Government, 1993-2003

	Cabinet [inauguration date]															
	Hoso-kawa	Hata	Murayama		Hashimoto			Obuchi			Mori			Koizumi		
			I	I[a]	I	II	II[a]	I	I[a]	I[a]	I	II	II[a]	I	I[a]	I[a]
Party	[93.8]	[94.4]	[96.6]	[95.8]	[96.1]	[96.11]	[97.9]	[98.7]	[99.1]	[99.10]	[00.4]	[00.7]	[00.12]	[01.4]	[02.9]	[03.9]
JNP	●	●	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NPH	●	×	●	●	●	●	●	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
RP	●	●	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DRL	●	●	×	×	×	×	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NPF	-	●	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LP[94]	-	●	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LPC	-	-	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CG/CGP	-	-	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
NPCG	-	-	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NFP	-	-	×	×	×	×	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LL	-	-	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
PCP	-	-	×	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CL	-	-	-	×	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NSP	-	-	-	-	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
DPJ	-	-	-	-	-	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
SP	-	-	-	-	-	×	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LG	-	-	-	-	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FF	-	-	-	-	-	-	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DC	-	-	-	-	-	-	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NPP	-	-	-	-	-	-	×	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
VP	-	-	-	-	-	-	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NFR	-	-	-	-	-	-	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LP	-	-	-	-	-	-	×	×	●	●	×	×	×	×	×	-
RC	-	-	-	-	-	-	×	×	×	×	×	-	-	-	-	-
GGP	-	-	-	-	-	-	×	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
HCC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	×	×	-	-	-	-	-	-
IG	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
CP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	●	●	●	●	●	-
NCP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	●	●

Note. [a] cabinet reshuffle. "●" indicate that party participated in cabinet, while "×" indicate that party did not participate in cabinet. "-" indicate that party had not yet been formed or had ceased to exist.

Table 3.4 identifies new party cabinet participation, and, as can be seen, only few of the new parties have actually participated in government. It is also evident that the majority of new party government participation took place under the two non-LDP coalitions in 1993 and 1994. Apart from the 1993/1994 parties, only the Clean Government Party, the Liberal Party, the Conservative Party, and the New Conservative Party have participated in government. And among these, only the CGP has been large enough truly to matter as a coalition partner, as its inclusion into the

ruling coalition in 1999 finally meant a restoration of a parliamentary majority in both houses for the LDP-led coalition.

3.4 Characteristics of New Parties in Japan (A Summary)

Table 3.5 summarizes the characteristics of new parties along the dimensions discussed until now, and briefly to sum up our findings, we have seen that two-thirds of the parties in our sample lasted for less than three years, while the remaining nine parties were relatively durable entities. Only three of the new parties, however, remained represented in parliament by late 2003, i.e., the DPJ, the LL, and the IG.

Table 3.5
Summary of New Party Characteristics

Party	Party duration >3 years	'Relevant' party in		Cabinet partici-pation	Number of times party participated in elections [election years]	Elections where party won 3 % or more of the contested seats	
		HR	HC			HR	HC
JNP		●		●	2 [1992/1993]	1993	1992
NPH	●	●		●	4 [1993/1995/1996/2000]		
RP		●	●	●	1 [1993]	1993	
DRL	●		●	●	2 [1995/1996]		
NPF				●			
LP[94]				●			
LPC							
CG/CGP	●	●	●	●	4 [1998/2000/2001/2003]	2000, 2003	1998, 2001
NPCG		●					
NFP	●	●	●		2 [1995/1996]	1996	1995
LL	●				5 [1996/1998/2000/2001/2003]		
PCP					1 [1995]		
CL							
NSP	●				5 [1996/1998/2000/2001/2003]		
DPJ	●	●	●		5 [1996/1998/2000/2001/2003]	1996, 2000, 2003	1998, 2001
SP							
LG							
FF							
DC			●				
NPP		●					
VP		●					
NFR			●				
LP	●	●	●	●	3 [1998/2000/2001]	2000	1998, 2001
RC					1 [2000]		
GGP		●	●				
HCC							
IG	●				3 [2000/2001/2003]		
CP		●		●	2 [2000/2001]		
NCP				●	1 [2003]		

Fourteen of the parties failed to meet our criterion for parliamentary relevance, and only 6 of the remaining 15 parties did so in both houses of Parliament. An additional six parties were large enough to be relevant in the House of Representatives, while three parties were relevant only in the House of Councillors. Ten new parties participated in one or more of the coalition governments, while 19 gained no experience in this regard. Most of the parties that participated in government did so in the early phase of the realignment process under the Hosokawa and Hata coalitions, and only five parties have participated in government following the LDP's return to power in 1994.

Fifteen new parties participated in one or more elections, but only seven won three percent or more of the seats in a given election. The remaining eight failed to win any seats or won only a limited number of seats, while 14 of the new parties ceased to exist before they could actually contest an election.

In short, very few parties have been significant in all dimensions of party activity. Only three, the NFP, the DPJ, and the LP, were durable new parties with relative strength in both houses of Parliament, and have been able to participate in elections and win significant proportions of the seats. Of these only the LP has been part of a ruling coalition.

REALIGNMENT AT THE ELITE LEVEL

3.5 Trends in the Realignment Process

Activity occurred throughout the period of realignment, and the level of activity was at times hectic. Confusion prevailed, and this section therefore takes a closer look at the extent and major trends of the realignment process.

Between August 1992 and November 2003, a total of 1465 people have been members of the Japanese parliament. Table 3.6 presents an overview of the sample's distribution according to MPs' initial affiliation, and, as can be seen, the largest group by far had originated in the LDP. No less than 43 percent of all MPs were affiliated with the LDP in 1992 or were elected under that label in subsequent elections. The second-largest group consists of people affiliated with the JSP or subsequently elected under that label (16 percent), while other significant groupings comprise MPs elected for other 'established' parties, i.e., the CGP (7 percent), the JCP (5 percent), and the DSP (2 percent). Other groups consist of MPs elected for new parties, e.g., the DPJ (10 percent), the NFP (5 percent), the JNP (3 percent), the RP (1 percent), or as independents (6 percent).

Table 3.6

Sample Distribution: MPs 1992-2003

First affiliation	Entire sample		No change of affiliation		Change of affiliation	
	No. of MPs	%	No. of MPs	%	No. of MPs	%
LDP	629	43	516	54	113	22
JSP	236	16	157	16	79	15
DPJ	147	10	142	15	5	1
CGP	103	7	37	4	66	13
NFP	68	5	0	0	68	14
JCP	68	5	68	7	0	0
JNP	41	3	0	0	41	8
DSP	27	2	3	0	24	5
RP	21	1	0	0	21	4
Other	43	3	7	1	36	7
Indp.	82	6	24	3	58	11
Total	1465	100	954	100	511	100

Note. Based on Database, 2004.

If we take a look at the group of MPs who switched their party affiliation one or more times between 1992 and 2003, again the largest group consists of MPs who had initially been affiliated with the LDP (22 percent). The second largest group again consists of MPs initially affiliated with the JSP (15 percent), followed by MPs from the NFP (14 percent), the CGP (13 percent), independents (11 percent), and the JNP (8 percent). Additional groups include MPs who had initially belonged to the DSP (5 percent), the RP (4 percent), or other minor groupings within the sample.

The realignment process has clearly been extensive and hectic, but it should also be noted that it was far from all MPs who participated. The 511 MPs who changed their affiliation in the period constitute 35 percent of the sample, while the remaining 65 percent maintained their initial affiliation throughout. In other words, a majority of MPs in fact chose *not* to change affiliation, or failed in getting reelected before they could do so.

Table 3.7 illustrates the extent of party-switching within individual groups, and we find that the JCP is the only group without a single change of affiliation. All other groups experienced at least some activity, and since several parties were dissolved during the 1990s, there are also some groups, where all MPs changed affiliation. The sheer number of party-switchers clearly demonstrates the intensity of the realignment process, but the numbers are at the same time merely an imperfect illustration of the potential extent of realignment as many latent party switchers failed to get reelected before they could change their affiliation.[73]

Table 3.7

Affiliation Change vs. No Change in Party Groupings

First affiliation	MPs who did not change affiliation		MPs who changed affiliation	
	No. of MPs	%	No. of MPs	%
LDP	516	82	113	18
JSP	157	67	79	33
DPJ	142	97	5	3
CGP	37	36	66	64
NFP	0	0	68	100
JCP	68	100	0	0
JNP	0	0	41	100
DSP	3	11	24	89
RP	0	0	21	100
Other	7	16	36	84
Indp.	24	29	29	71
Total	954	65	65	35

Note. Based on Database, 2004.

3.6 Frequency of Affiliation Change

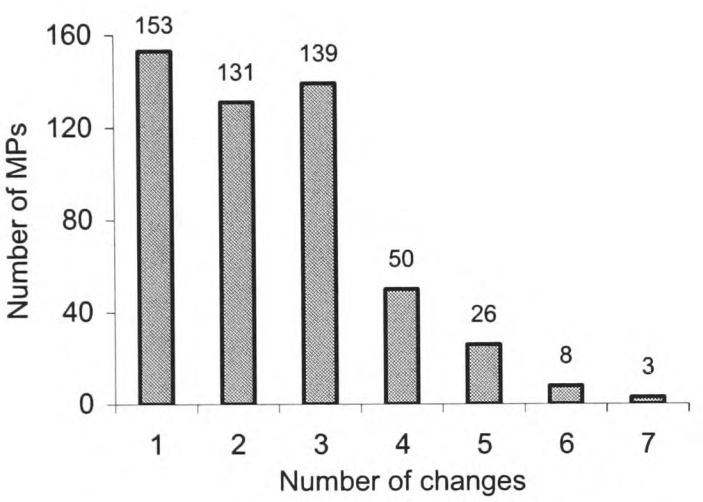
In the previous sections we found that many of the new parties could easily be

[73] For example, although 3 of 27 MPs from the DSP register no changes, this can be explained by the fact that they failed to be reelected in 1993, before realignment got under way. The same caveat could also be applied in the case of the JSP, which would most likely have registered a higher frequency of defection had it not been for the fact that the party suffered dismal showings in all elections since 1993. The JSP therefore lost considerable numbers of MPs in elections rather than through defections.

classified as 'couch parties', and the relatively short duration of many parties would also suggest that there must have been a considerable amount of 'party tourism' going on. Indeed, as Figure 3.1 illustrates, the majority of MPs who changed their affiliation, did so on more than one occasion. Of the 511 MPs who changed their affiliation between 1992 and 2003, 153 did so only once, whereas the majority changed two or three times (in total 270 MPs). Fifty MPs changed their affiliation four times in the period, and 26 MPs did so on five occasions. Some MPs even managed to change affiliation six and seven times, which must be considered a rather remarkable feat![74]

Figure 3.1

Frequency of MPs' Affiliation Change, 1992-2003



Note. Based on Database, 2004.

The vast majority of affiliation changes occurred among serving MPs, and exceptions to this typically involved former MPs, who had failed to be reelected in one election and were trying for a comeback in the subsequent election. A number of these 'returnees' were forced to change their affiliation, irrespective of their own desire, since their former party was no longer in existence at the time of their comeback attempt.

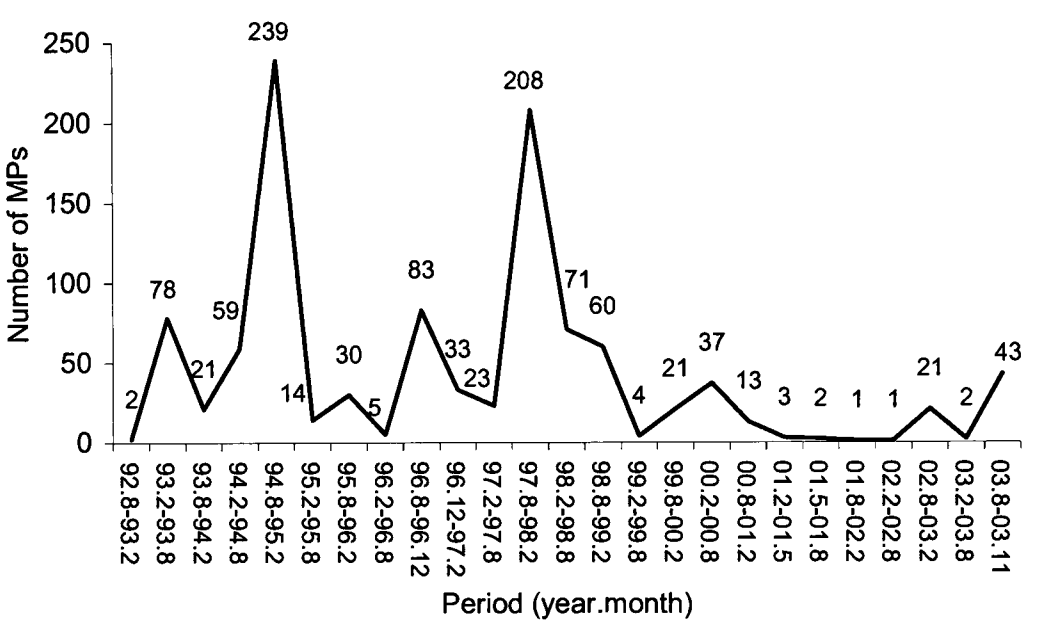
[74] For example, Ōgi Chikage left the LDP in 1993 and following a brief period as an independent joined the RP, from where she participated in first the NFP, then the LP, the CP, and the NCP, before finally returning to the LDP in 2003. Another MP, Emoto Takenori, who had been elected on the ticket of the SPP, later joined the LL and after a spell as an independent joined the LG. After another period as independent he participated in the FF and the GGP before finally settling down in the DPJ (Database, 2004).

3.7 Activity Levels in the Realignment Process Over Time

The level of activity was far from stable over time, and although affiliation-switching occurred throughout the period, activity increased spectacularly on several occasions. As Figure 3.2 shows, the first rise in the activity level is found in the summer of 1993, when the RP and NPH groups defected from the LDP. Although developments in this period were extremely significant in the sense that they triggered much of the subsequent realignment, it was, however, far from the most intense period.

Figure 3.2

Realignment Activity Level, 1992-2003



Note. Based on Database, 2004.

Activity continued in the following months, mainly with defections from the LDP, but also with independents joining various parties.[75] There was a slight increase between February and August of 1994, which involved defections from the LDP, independents switching to party affiliation, as well as defections from the JNP and the CGP. Most of these defections can be interpreted as reactions to the developments at the political stage. For example, several of the LDP defectors grouped together to establish two miniparties (the LP[94] and the NPF), which subsequently became part of the Hata coalition. The majority of independents

[75] Most of these movements seem to be a reflection of the pattern often seen in Japanese elections, where 'party candidates', who for one reason or another have not received the official party endorsement, run as independents and then join their party after the election.

switched to the Renewal Party, which had come to play an even more pivotal role following the launch of the Hata coalition[76], while the move away from the JNP can be explained by increasing internal differences over the party's direction.[77] Furthermore, some MPs also worried that the party's image had been badly damaged following media focus on Hosokawa's financial problems (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 1994, April 30). More surprising are perhaps the affiliation changes of CGP legislators during this period, as members of the CGP have tended to move in concert, and there is no immediate explanation for these movements.[78] Finally, there was a considerable increase in the independent camp in the latter part of the period. This primarily involved MPs from the LDP and the JSP – a movement which could very well be a reaction to the establishment of the Murayama coalition in July 1994, which was opposed vehemently by groups within both parties.

The highest level of activity throughout the period is found between August 1994 and February 1995, when no less than 239 MPs changed their affiliation. Activity here almost exclusively involves MPs joining the New Frontier Party in December 1994 (211 MPs), and people moving from now defunct parties to independent status (11 MPs) or to the smaller parties formed at around the same time as the NFP.

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[76] It seems reasonable to assume that the possibility of taking office held sway over some MPs' decisions, and it is quite likely that this was an incentive for MPs who joined the Renewal Party or entered into cooperation with the Hata coalition in April 1994.

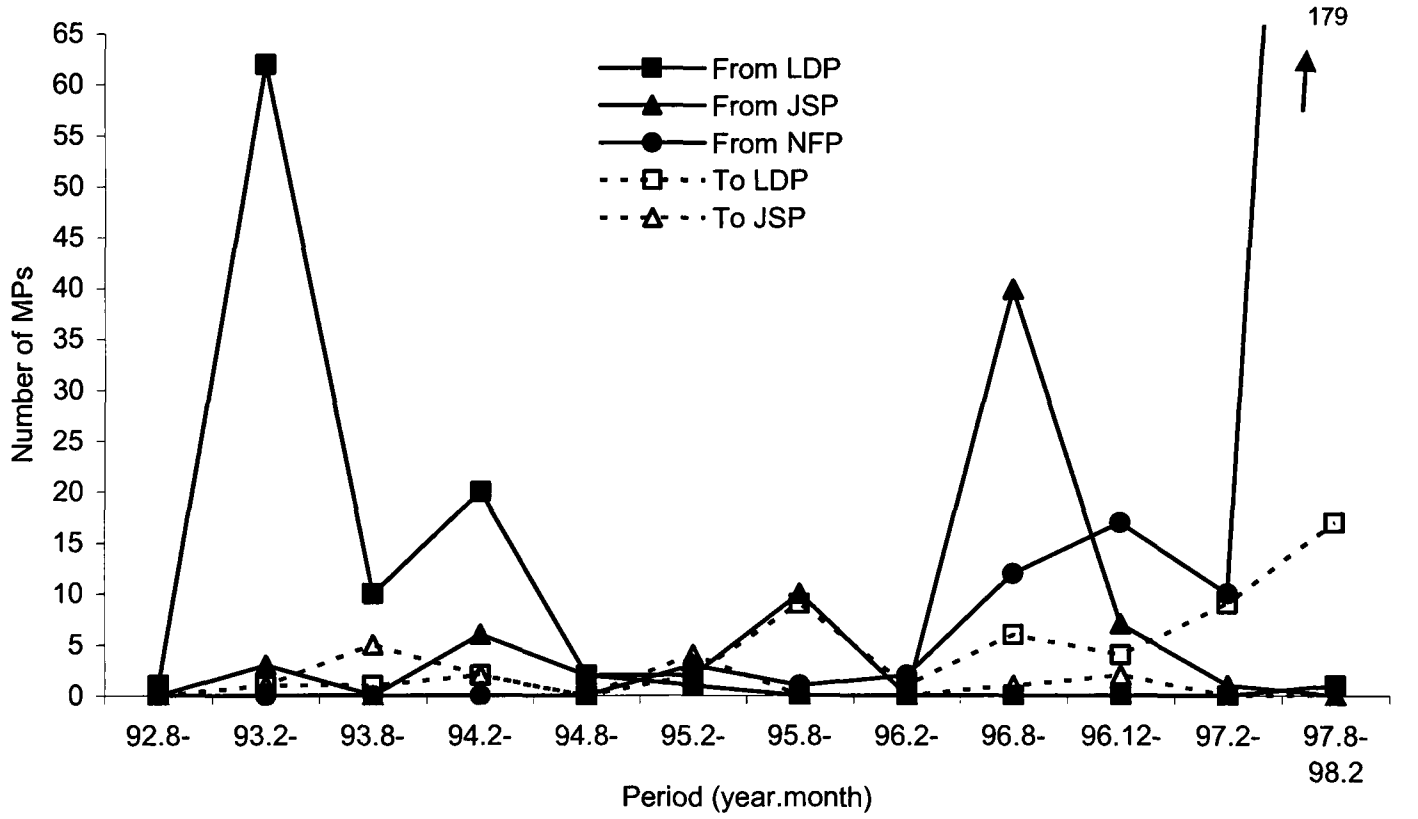
[77] In late April, for example, the *Yomiuri Shinbun* reported that the JNP was on the verge of breaking up, and that as many as 10 MPs were prepared to quit the party over its increasingly close ties with the RP and the CGP. The breakdown of the JNP-NPH alliance apparently also upset many members. Criticism of Hosokawa had begun to smoulder among some party members in February after he advocated formation of a supraparty alliance in order to move towards a system based on two major political parties, close to the thinking of Ozawa and Ichikawa (CGP). The move to form the new parliamentary grouping, Reform [改革], also caused a stir as some MPs claimed it to be a unilateral act by the party leadership. The subsequent formation of Renovation, they claimed, was decided without sufficient intraparty consultation (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 1994, April 30).

[78] All of these defectors have, however, rejoined the CGP at a later time.

The activity level dropped considerably in 1995, although 44 affiliation changes occurred between February 1995 and February 1996. Two significant trends in this period are movement *away* from the JSP and movement *towards* the LDP. The JSP had not fared particularly well in coalition with the LDP, and, as can be seen in Figure 3.3, the decline of the JSP was becoming increasingly evident by early 1996. On the other hand, the LDP by this time seemed to have been able to halt defection from its ranks, and it is hardly a coincidence that this happened at the same time as the LDP finally regained the Prime Minister post in January 1996.

Figure 3.3

Affiliation-Switching Involving the LDP, JSP and NFP, 1993-1997



Note. Based on Database, 2004.

Activity increased somewhat when the JSP and the NPH split and the DPJ was established (see also Figure 3.2), and movement in the latter part of 1996 unsurprisingly also includes several defections from the NFP, which was increasingly suffering from internal divisions. Indeed, between December 1996 and February 1997 most activity involved movement away from the NFP, or people

switching from independent status to party affiliation.

MPs continued to move away from the NFP throughout 1997, and many of these defectors later joined the LDP. Indeed, a substantial number of these MPs had now come full circle, having initially been affiliated with the LDP. The high peak in early 1998 hardly needs an explanation as the breakup of the NFP sent no less than 179 people shopping for a new affiliation. Most settled down temporarily in the splinter parties described earlier, and at the same time several independents entered the LDP or the Good Governance Party, which later joined the DPJ. The restructuring of the DPJ in April and the reestablishment of the CGP in November caused numbers to stay relatively high throughout 1998, but the level of activity lessened considerably after this time.

The Liberal Party split in April 2000 occasioned another bout of activity, when 27 people seceded to form the Conservative Party. Another increase in activity occurred when the Conservatives joined forces with defectors from the DPJ to form the New Conservative Party in December 2002. The final round of realignment took place between September and November 2003, and primarily involved moves in connection with the Liberal-Democratic merger and the dissolution of the NCP and entry of its remaining eight MPs into the LDP fold.

We have now examined the realignment process more generally by considering the starting points of party-switchers, the frequency of changes, and the level of activity. The following section presents data on the direction of MP movement.

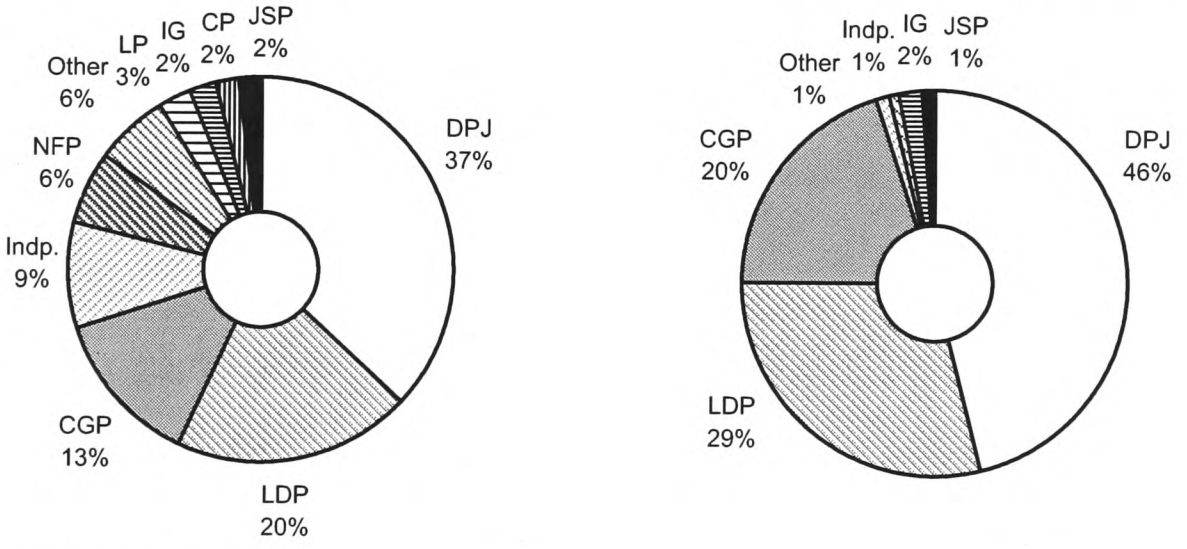
3.8 Direction of MP Movements in the Realignment Process

The final destinations of party-switchers include a range of parties, but there is an

obvious trend towards consolidation in the larger parties. As Figure 3.4 (a) illustrates, the largest group of MPs settled down in the DPJ (37 percent), followed by the LDP (20 percent). The remaining MPs primarily ended their realignment activities in the CGP (13 percent), as independents (9 percent), in the NFP (6 percent), or in the LP (3 percent). The IG, the CP, and the JSP each accounted for another 2 percent, while the remaining 6 percent ended in other smaller parties. The group of party-switchers, however, includes a significant number of people who retired or lost their seats in an election, and it is not unreasonable to expect that many of these MPs would eventually have ended up in one of the larger parties had they remained in parliament.

Figure 3.4

Final Destinations of MPs Who Changed Their Affiliations, 1992-2003



Note. Based on Database, 2004.

If, for example, we look only at the group of party-switchers who were members of parliament at the end of the period covered by the dataset (Figure 3.4b), the picture clears up almost completely. Ninety-five percent of legislators were now affiliated with one of three major parties, i.e., with the DPJ (46 percent), the LDP (29 percent), or the CGP (20 percent). Only five percent were found in other parties or were independents. In other words, despite the initial proliferation of small parties, there is

a very clear trend of consolidation in the bigger parties. It seems that MPs running as candidates for smaller parties have faced difficulties in securing reelection, and under these circumstances it has made sense for MPs to consolidate in the larger parties.

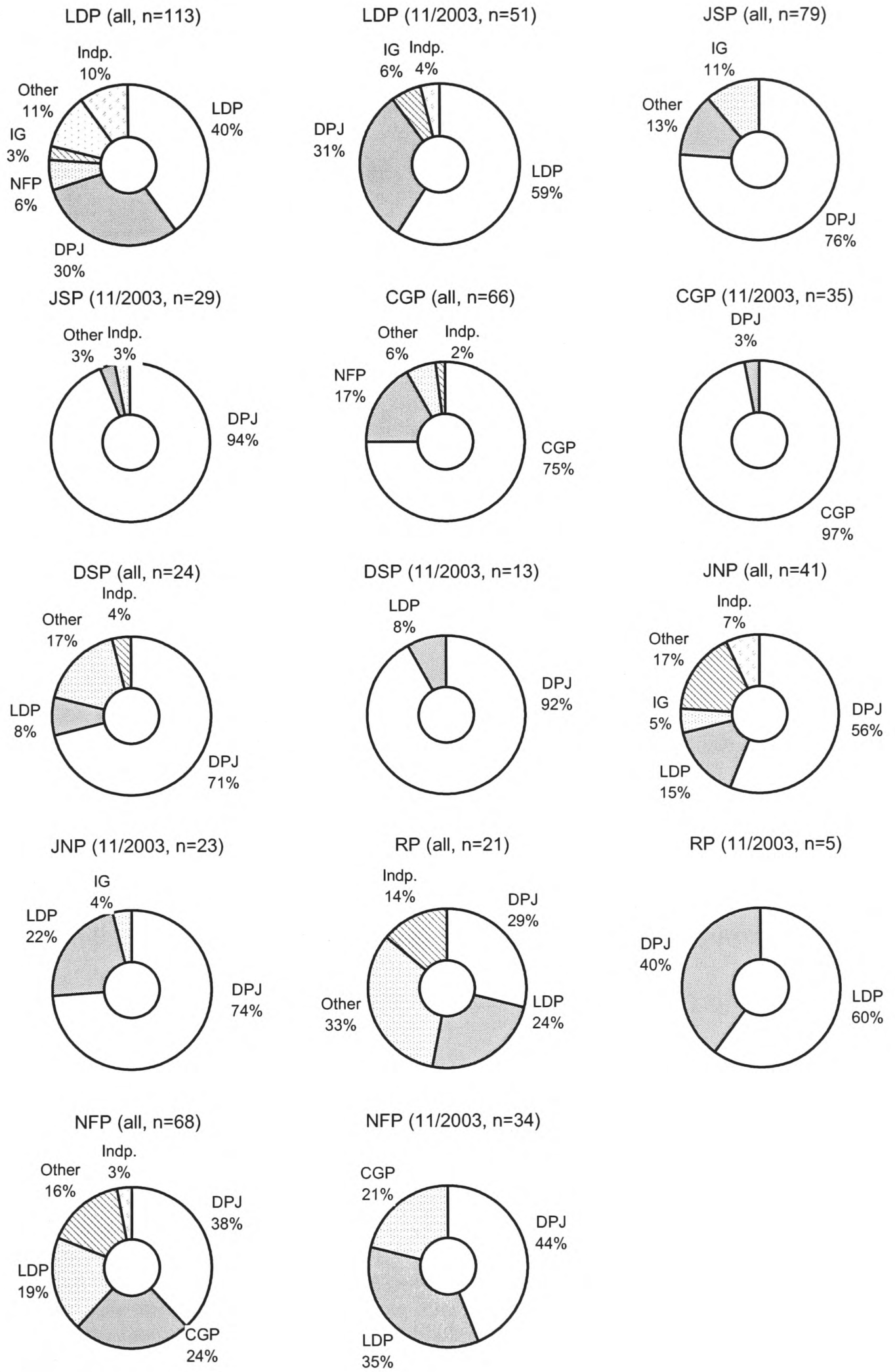
Figure 3.5 illustrates various MP groupings' distribution in terms of final destination, and we will now briefly consider each of these groups. A considerable number of former LDP legislators have returned to the LDP fold (40 percent), while the DPJ has also attracted a significant portion of these people (23 percent). Other final destinations of former LDP legislators include independent status, the NFP, the IG, and other minor parties. If we consider only members of parliament in November 2003, almost all MPs were either found in the LDP (59 percent) or in the DPJ (31 percent). The remaining 10 percent had either moved on to become independents or were members of the Independents' Group.

No less than 76 percent of all JSP defectors moved to the DPJ, while 11 percent became independents. The remainder ended up distributed almost evenly among the smaller JSP splinter parties. Many JSP legislators failed to secure reelection during the period, and those who remained members of parliament in November 2003 were almost exclusively found in the DPJ (94 percent). In contrast to the LDP group, former JSP members have clearly found little incentive to return to their roots.

Legislators from the CGP present a rather clear-cut picture, which is not surprising in light of its reputation as an extraordinarily cohesive party. Almost all former CGP members (75 percent) returned to the party when it was reestablished in 1998, although 17 percent of MPs had failed to be reelected during their affiliation with the NFP, and therefore register this as their final affiliation. Another handful of

Figure 3.5

Final Affiliation of MP Groups (According to Initial Affiliation)



Note. Based on Database, 2004

former CGP legislators opted not to rejoin the party in 1998 and instead moved first to the LP and subsequently to the DPJ. By November 2003, however, an overwhelming majority of former CGP members were now back in the CGP fold (97 percent), with just one other MP found in the DPJ.[79]

Democratic Socialists primarily ended up in the DPJ (75 percent), although some also became independents or went to the LDP or other parties. By November 2003, the vast majority of the group belonged to the DPJ (92 percent), and a smaller group to the LDP (8 percent).

Trends among legislators first elected for one of the major new parties of the period do not differ significantly from those among the 'established' parties. The JNP group presents a diverse picture overall, with roughly half of the group having the DPJ as their final destination and the remainder almost evenly distributed between the LDP, independents, the IG, and other parties. Those of the group's members, who remained in parliament by November 2003, were found overwhelmingly in the DPJ (74 percent) and the LDP (22 percent).

The Renewal Party group divided into four blocks, with roughly half of its MPs either having settled in the DPJ (29 percent) or in the LDP (24 percent). Another 14 percent ended up as independents and the remainder with other party affiliations. The

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[79] Former members of the CGP, who did not return to the party in 1998, have in many instances faced an uphill battle in subsequent elections. One example is Azuma Shōzō, who was elected for the first time in 1990 on the CGP ticket in what was then Tokyo's 6th district. He followed the 'usual' party track and was reelected in 1993. In 1994 he joined the NFP, where he gradually moved closer to Ozawa, with whom he stayed following the party's dissolution. Azuma's electoral district, however, was in Kōtō Ward, where there are several bastions of CGP support. As a member of the LP, Azuma often faced verbal assaults from CGP supporters, who considered him to be a traitor, and on several occasions there were movements intended to obstruct him (Azuma Shōzō [interview], July 9, 2003; Hosoda Isamu [interview], 2003, March 7). From having been elected without a single worry in 1990, the 2000 election turned into an uphill struggle, and having failed in what is now the Tokyo 15th district, Azuma only barely succeeded in getting elected on the LP's PR list (with the dubious record of being the candidate with the lowest number of votes to get elected through PR). In 2003 he joined the DPJ in connection with the Liberal-Democratic merger, but failed to get reelected.

group of MPs that succeeded in getting reelected and remained members of parliament by November 2003, however, is divided clearly into two blocks, with 60 percent in the DPJ and 40 percent in the LDP.

The final affiliations of MPs elected for the first time under the NFP label reflect the internal groupings of the party, and MPs were distributed between the DPJ (38 percent), the CGP (24 percent), the LDP (19 percent), other parties (16 percent), and independents (3 percent). Several NFP MPs failed to secure reelection in 2003, and of the former NFP legislators who were serving as members of parliament by November 2003, 44 percent had settled in the DPJ, 35 percent in the LDP, and the remaining 21 percent in the CGP.

The DPJ has so far been able to avoid significant defections. A total of 147 MPs have been elected for the first time on the DPJ ticket since its formation in 1996, and only five of these have changed their affiliation. Two of these joined the NCP in 2002, one became independent, while two MPs have joined the LDP. Among these defectors only the two people who have moved to the LDP were successful in their reelection bid in 2003.

In lieu of a brief summary, we can say that the trend of initial proliferation of new small parties has clearly been halted, and that the overall tendency in the movement of MPs has been towards consolidation in larger parties.

3.9 Routes Taken by MPs to Reach Their Final Destinations

If a general trend of the realignment process has been the move towards larger parties, this was, however, clearly the outcome of a profoundly complex process, which is examined in more detail in this section. The final destinations of the 511

MPs in our sample were reached via no less than 224 different routes during realignment, and only 8 of these routes were followed by 10 or more MPs. No pattern stands out clearly from the dataset, and it is exceedingly difficult to pinpoint any major trends in the routes taken by MPs before reaching their final destinations. MPs in most cases behaved in a highly individualistic manner, but an examination of the routes taken allows us to gauge the extent of diversity within different groups (for details on interim MP movement see also Appendixes I, J, K, and L).

Table 3.8 shows subsequent affiliations of MPs in the major party groupings, and while former LDP members overwhelmingly ended their realignment activities either back in the LDP or in the DPJ, their final destinations were reached via no less than 57 alternative 'routes', and overall the group's MPs registered 19 types of different affiliations. This suggests considerable diversity within the group, although there are some similarities with regard to the

Table 3.8

Subsequent Affiliations of MP Groupings (%)

Sub-sequent affiliation	Initial party affiliation						
	LDP (n=113)	JSP (n=79)	CGP (n=66)	DSP (n=24)	JNP (n=41)	RP (n=21)	NFP (n=68)
NPH	10	1	0	4	20	0	0
RP	49	1	0	0	0	0	0
DRL	0	4	0	4	0	0	0
NPF	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
LP[94]	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
LPC	0	5	0	0	0	0	0
CG	0	0	18	0	0	0	0
NPCG	0	0	79	0	0	0	0
NFP	65	5	97	92	63	95	0
LL	3	1	0	4	7	0	0
CL	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
NSP	0	6	0	0	0	0	0
DPJ	25	80	5	71	56	33	38
SP	8	1	0	0	0	5	3
LG	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
FF	0	0	0	0	2	5	0
DC	0	0	5	0	0	0	16
NPP	0	0	48	0	0	0	7
VP	6	0	2	0	22	5	9
NFR	0	0	0	46	0	0	15
LP	18	1	12	21	10	57	26
RC	3	0	0	0	0	0	13
GGP	14	1	2	0	22	14	12
HCC	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
IG	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
CP	9	1	0	8	2	19	9
NCP	6	0	0	0	0	10	3
Indp.	49	3	12	21	2	38	15
LDP	40	1	0	8	7	29	19
JSP	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
CGP ('98)	0	0	74	0	0	0	24

Note. Based on Database, 2004.

route taken in the initial phase of realignment. For example, 49 percent of the LDP group joined the RP in 1993, while the NPH attracted around 10 percent of the group's MPs. Another nine percent of the group left the LDP for one of the two small parties established in 1994 (LP^{94} and NPF), while most other MPs left the party to become first independents and then later joined one of the new parties. Almost two-thirds of the group were members of the NFP at some point, but from here on the picture grows increasingly blurred. Almost one-fifth of former LDP legislators joined the LP in 1998, and several of these later joined the CP and the NCP. Other significant groupings joined the DPJ after passing through one or more of the NFP splinter parties. The group of former LDP members registers a total of 371 affiliation changes, making the average number of changes for the group 3.3, substantially higher than the overall average of 2.4.

The 79 people who left the JSP during the course of realignment almost exclusively ended up in the DPJ, and the vast majority of people went directly from the JSP to the DPJ in 1996, while another small group reached that destination via smaller parties or independent status. Nonetheless, 22 routes can be identified among group members, but compared to the LDP group, former JSP members seem to have settled down fairly quickly in their final destinations, and the average number of changes for this group is a mere 1.5, the lowest average among all groups. A possible explanation for this is that most of the JSP legislators entered the realignment process at a rather late stage, as the majority of changes within this group occurred between mid-1995 and late 1996. Another reason for the low average may be that substantial numbers of former JSP legislators have disappeared from the political stage following electoral defeat, which may also have limited the number of changes.

The routes taken by former CGP members illustrate the tight-knit character of this party, although there have been some small variations. The group's MPs register 11 alternative affiliations, but have with few exceptions generally moved in concert. When the party was dissolved in 1994, it was split into the Clean Government group and the New Party Clean Government [公明新党] (NPCG), and from the latter MPs either joined the New Frontier Party directly (58 people) or via independent status (5 people). No less than 97 percent of the group participated in the NFP, and subsequently almost all MPs joined in the reestablishment of the CGP in 1998. Only a handful of MPs in the House of Representatives chose instead to join the LP[80], and a couple of House of Councillors members eventually joined the DPJ. Although the group tended to move in concert, 14 alternative routes can be identified, and the average number of affiliation changes for the group is 2.6, slightly higher than the overall average.

Former members of the DSP also form a relatively clear-cut picture. Almost all MPs joined the NFP directly following the dissolution of the DSP in 1994 (20 people), while another two MPs joined the NFP after brief spells as independents. From the NFP the group's members primarily went to either the New Party Fraternity or the Liberal Party. As we saw earlier, the bulk of MPs eventually settled in the DPJ, and former DSP legislators register a total of 10 different affiliations. Their final destinations were reached via 13 different routes, and the average number of changes for the group was 2.7, slightly higher than the overall average.

It is difficult to identify any clear trends in the routes taken by MPs from the JNP, which mirrors the varied composition of the group. Faced with the problem of

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[80] Four of the MPs who joined the LP eventually returned to the CGP.

not being able to muster enough candidates in the 1993 election, the party welcomed members from all walks of life (cf. Kabashima and Ishio, 1998; Ōtake, 1999), and although the majority of its members ended up in the DPJ, there is considerable variation even in terms of last affiliation among group members. MPs from the JNP moved along 24 different routes during the realignment process, and the only parties to attract a significant number of former JNP members are the NFP and the DPJ. Twenty-six MPs joined the NFP in 1994, while the remainder went to the LL, the NPH, or became independents. From the NFP, MPs went along a variety of routes before settling down in their last stations, but nevertheless the group's average number of affiliation changes is just 2.6, only slightly higher than the overall average.

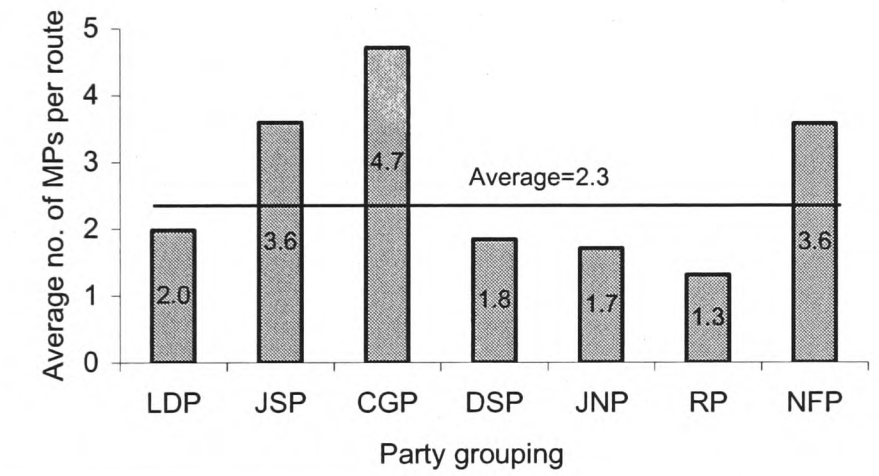
MPs elected for the first time for the Renewal Party mirror the tendencies in the group of LDP defectors, who founded the party. With one exception, all members participated in the NFP, after which the largest group joined the LP. Other group members joined the LDP or the DPJ directly or via one of the NFP successor parties. Members of the group followed 16 different routes before reaching their final destinations and have participated in a total of 12 different parties during the period. The group's average number of changes is 3.1, the second-highest in the sample and only slightly below that of the LDP.

Finally, the NFP group again mirrors the tendencies evidenced in the party groupings that constituted the party's foundations, and MPs from this group primarily ended in the CGP, the LDP, and the DPJ. Following the NFP split in early 1998, a large group of MPs went with Ozawa to the Liberal Party, and other slightly smaller groups joined in the formation of the Reform Club, Voice of the People, New Party Peace, or the Dawn Club. The patterns that emerge from the NFP group's

activities reflect its diverse character, and its MPs have participated in no less than 15 different parties. The average number of affiliation changes is 2.1, which is lower than the overall average, but rather high considering that the group did not take part in realignment activities in any major way until early 1998.

While none of the groupings have moved in complete concert throughout the realignment process, there are clear differences among groups in terms of diversity. As mentioned previously, party-switchers proceeded along 224 different routes, and as Figure 3.6 illustrates, the average number of MPs per route in the overall sample is 2.3. The CGP group lies well above this average with 4.7 MPs per route, and appears to be the most cohesive segment in the sample. What is perhaps more surprising is that the JSP comes second in terms of cohesion, alongside the NFP with 3.6 MPs per route taken. On the other end of the spectrum were the JNP and the RP with quite low averages of MPs per route, which perhaps illustrates again their patchwork character and the larger variation in their membership.

Figure 3.6
Diversity in Routes Taken by Major MP Groupings



Note. Based on Database, 2004.

3.10 Incentives and Motivations for Defection and Affiliation Change

As the previous section illustrated, legislators' activities and movements have been so diverse that it is really impossible to pinpoint any major trends with regard to the way individuals and groups of legislators have moved about within the party arena.

Although the final stations of party switchers were limited to a small range of parties, the in-between is filled with detour after detour. With the exception of the JSP and the CGP, all groups exhibit considerable variation, and even in the two first cases there is some variation between individual members. This extreme diversity most likely implies that legislators' actions have been guided by a variety of motives and incentives.

Defections from political parties are not uncommon, and the body of literature dealing with the topic is growing steadily (see for example, Aldrich and Bianco, 1992; Ames, 2002; Castle and Feet, 2000; Kreuzer and Pettai, 2003; Shabad and Slomczynski, 2004; Smith and Remington, 2001). In Brazil, where the frequency of defection among legislators is quite high, Desposato (in press) argues that legislators tend to defect to another party that maximizes their chances of reelection, enhances their access to pork, or presents a forum ideologically compatible with their own goals.[81]

Scholars on Japanese politics have also examined the determinants of party defection (e.g., Cox and Rosenbluth, 1995; Horiuchi and Tay, 2004; Kato, 1998; Reed and Scheiner, 2003; Tatebayashi, 2002), but so far most studies deal almost exclusively with the LDP split in 1993. Even with regard to this isolated case disagreement remains as to what constitutes the most important variable(s) for explaining MP behaviour. Some studies have emphasized the electoral incentive as a reason for defection[82], but Reed and Scheiner (2003, p. 488) argue that parsimonious

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[81] Mershon and Heller (2001) linked frequent party-switching in Italy to electoral rules, discipline, and party size, and Turan (1985) found party-switching in Turkey to vary with incumbency, district magnitude, and regional development.

[82] Cox and Rosenbluth (1995) emphasize the significance of the electoral incentive, arguing that junior MPs (defined by the number of terms served), former members of the Takeshita faction, those MPs who had fared poorly in the previous election, and candidates who had previously run without

models based on a single incentive, e.g., the reelection incentive, may be useful, but that they in most cases fail to reflect reality. Instead they suggest that a mix of electoral incentives and policy preferences played a role in determining whether a politician chose to defect or not in 1993, and they find, in contrast to previous studies, that policy preference is the single most consistent and powerful influence on MP behaviour. They also note that this policy preference appears to be independent of many politicians' electoral incentives (2003, p. 470), a view that certainly runs counter to those sceptics, who have written off reformers declarations as mere rhetoric (cf. Chapter 2). A recent study by Horiuchi and Tay (2004) is primarily concerned with the motivations guiding the defection of the Hata faction in 1993, and they argue that the group defected primarily because it had become marginalized in the intraparty arena and had little chance of being powerful within the LDP. In the interparty arena, on the other hand, the possible change in the electoral system and the success of the JNP in the 1992 election enhanced the group's expectations of gaining power within parliament following defection (p. 6). Horiuchi and Tay identify three types of party defections, all present in the 1993 split of the LDP. The first involves defection by a major faction within a party, and is characterized by having a potentially significant impact on interparty power balance, as was the case for example with the Hata faction's defection. The second type involves the defection of a small subfaction or cross-factional group, which does not significantly tilt interparty power balances, and this type applies for example to the group that left the LDP to form the NPH in 1993. Finally, a third type involves defections by

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the LDP nomination were more likely to defect than their colleagues with the opposite characteristics. Similarly, Kato (1998) examines defectors' electoral strength, but finds only weak evidence that electoral incentives guided MP's behaviour, which is perhaps surprising considering that electoral circumstances have long been seen to be keys to predicting the behaviour of legislators.

individual legislators, which generally do not cause significant change to the power balance in the party arena, and which often arise from what they term "random personal events" (pp. 4-5).[83]

Explaining defections is clearly a complex matter, and as Reed and Scheiner points out, "politicians, like the rest of us, live in a complex world of competing incentives" (2003, p. 488). They also note that incentives, e.g., electoral incentives, are not constant for politicians, but vary across space and time. As a consequence, within any given legislative body we must expect different members to respond to stimuli in different ways (pp. 470-471). Attempting to generalize more broadly over what factors made the MPs in our sample change their party affiliation in the period covered here represents an even more complex problem than the limited case of the 1993 split. If we accept that there were several different motives for leaving the LDP in 1993, we can also safely assume that this has been the case with regard to exit from other parties in subsequent years. And if the 1993 split involved different types of defections, this most likely would also have been the case with regard to other party splits and defections. Finally, if we assume that different persons responded to stimuli in different ways in 1993, we can also safely extend this assumption to cover the entire period.

We could here attempt to present an overview of the characteristics of party switchers and their counterparts, who did not change their affiliation, but such an overview would merely present an average over the entire sample of MPs, or what Miller and Shanks (1996) calls an 'apparent average effect'.[84] As Reed and Scheiner

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[83] A 'random personal event' may for example be a fight with party colleagues, an external shock to the environment, or individual personal development (Horiuchi and Tay, 2004, pp. 4-5).

[84] In their discussion of voting behaviour, Miller and Shanks note that "estimates of the 'apparent effect' for each individual variable in [the] model conceal significant variation among voters....The

(2003) point out, sometimes these apparent average effects conceal significant differences among cases, which would also be the case with legislators' responsiveness to the context they face. To accurately grasp the motives behind MP behaviour in our sample, dozens of case studies and new statistical analysis would be needed, and this is clearly beyond the scope of the present study and remains a topic for future research.

What we can note, based on the analysis presented here, is that in many cases new parties presented MPs with an opportunity for attaching a new and more delectable label to use in their appeals to the electorate. This was particularly true for parties such as the JNP, the RP, and the NPH, which rode on the anti-establishment wave in 1993. This does not, however, mean that these parties were only designed as a means to enhance electoral appeal. As Reed and Scheiner (2003) conclude, the issue of political reform was on the mind of many MPs who defected, and these MPs generally had a keen desire to transform Japanese politics.

Some attempts at party formation were clearly more serious than others. The NFP was an attempt to challenge the LDP, and although it ceased to exist after only three years, there is no indication that MPs initially considered it to be a transit party. Its demise seems to have been grounded in difficulties in maintaining party unity among the many subgroups within the party as well as some groups' dissatisfaction with the party leadership and the internal workings of the party (Stockwin, 2003, p. 199). Several of the splinter parties, which were established following the NFP split, however, have a very strong flavour of being exactly just transit parties for MPs on the way to another destination. They generally represented established subgroups

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true influence of a given attitude on the vote is almost certainly higher for some voters than for other, and thus all our estimates represent a kind of average over the entire sub-sample of voters" (1996, pp. 205-206).

within the NFP, and little effort was put into formulating coherent policy visions. Their merger with the DPJ only months after establishment strengthens this impression. As the case study of the Liberal Party in the following chapters will show, there were also attempts to create a new type of political force. And for the Liberals, the eventual merger with the Democrats does not initially seem to have been on the mind of party members. Rather it was a reaction to the political context and the realization that the party would probably not be able to achieve its aims on its own.

Some parties were formed through mergers of entire parties or large groupings from other parties. Others were formed by splinter groups or smaller groups of individual MPs from a range of different parties. Such splits and mergers may have been founded upon a desire to try something different, to pursue different avenues from the original party, to free oneself from the influence of elements within the original party, or perhaps, in some cases, a combination of all these factors. It is clear that the realignment process has seen a range of different types of parties, and consequently also a range of different types of party-switching. In short, different incentives seem to have been at play in motivating MPs to switch parties. In some cases the electoral incentive was particularly strong; in other cases policy preferences guided the choice. In yet other cases, personal sympathies and antipathies worked to facilitate realignment of the party landscape. To determine exactly what was behind the formation of individual parties, a range of case studies will be needed, and this area represents an interesting avenue for future research.

REALIGNMENT AND THE ELECTORATE

3.11 Realignment Seen from the Electorate's Perspective

While politicians' behaviour was no doubt often motivated by a keen desire to change the ways of Japanese politics, looking from the outside it was often difficult to discern any particular logic behind their movements. Or rather, the only apparent logic seemed to be that of securing, by all means, reelection. Many of the new parties existed too briefly to formulate clear policies that the electorate might use for evaluation, and from the vantage point of the electorate, fickleness and utilitarianism seemed to be the words best describing politicians as they shifted from party to party. The same philosophy seemed to be guiding politicians as they grouped together in a range of coalition governments, some of a rather perplexing character. Most significantly, the LDP-JSP-NPH coalition (launched in June 1994) included the two former archrivals of Japanese politics, and revealed that the imperatives of 'minimum distance of ideology' and 'minimum winning coalition' could be ignored for the purpose of forming a government (Sone 1996, p. 82). Indeed, during the lifespan of this coalition, the JSP was forced to compromise with long-standing party principles on many occasions, which served to alienate former supporters. The following section examines the response of the electorate to the changes at the elite level, as well as popular sentiment on issues such as the need for change, attitudes towards creation of new parties, expectancy of new party success, and evaluation of the behaviour of politicians and political parties.[85]

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[85] Surveys are from the *Asahi Shinbun*, the *Yomiuri Shinbun* and the NHK (various years), and as far as possible, surveys with similar question wording, sample size, and interview method have been used.

3.12 Popular Sentiment As Expressed in Opinion Polls in the 1990s

Sensing the fatigue of the old system, the Japanese public was clearly ready for change by the early 1990s. Prior to the emergence of the first new parties in 1992 and 1993, the media had increasingly reported on various plans concerning realignment of existing parties, and at first the electorate responded positively to the idea of changing the layout of the political landscape by creating new parties. Table 3.9 shows survey respondents' attitudes towards the reorganization of existing parties and establishment of new parties, and, as can be seen, the percentages of respondents favouring realignment rose steadily from 1990 to 1993. While a 1990 survey had found 40 percent of respondents agreeing to the proposition that political parties should be reorganized, a survey from early 1993 found no less than 72 percent of respondents considering reorganization of existing parties a necessity.

Table 3.9
Attitude Towards Creation of New Parties, 1990-1993 (%)

NHK[a]	1990	1993a	1993b	*Asahi Shinbun*[b]	1993
New parties should be created	40	57	66	Necessary to reorganize political parties	72
New parties should not be created	22	16	11	Unnecessary to reorganize political parties	17
Don't know/no answer	38	27	23	Other/no answer	11
Total	100	100	100	Total	100

Note. [a] "There is an opinion that current political party members should be reorganized and new political parties should be created. Do you agree or disagree with this opinion?" [b] "Considering the current political situation in Japan, do you think it is necessary or unnecessary for political party members to be reorganized to establish new parties and groups?" Data were compiled from NHK, March 1, 1993 (interview dates: March 24-25, 1990), May 1, 1993 (interview dates: March 6-7,1993), October 1, 1993 (interview dates: July 3-4, 1994); *Asahi Shinbun*, March 20, 1994 (interview date: February 1, 1993).

Survey results, however, also indicate that enthusiasm vis-à-vis new parties cooled down as the process of realignment unfolded at the elite level. Table 3.10 shows public attitudes towards new parties from 1992 to 1996. In 1992, a majority of respondents (56 percent) approved of creating new and more ideologically coherent parties, but by 1995 only 46 percent of respondents were convinced of the desirability of further reshuffling of political parties. Twenty-seven percent did not

desire additional reorganization, while 18 percent remained undecided. Fourteen new parties had been formed between April 1992 and July 1996, of which only 7 remained in existence, and three very different coalitions had held power since 1993. The public seemed to have tired of new parties, which was painstakingly clear in a 1996 survey, where a staggering 67 percent replied that they did not want any more new parties.

Table 3.10
Changes in Attitudes Towards Creation of New Parties, 1992-1996 (%)

Asahi Shinbun 1992[a]		NHK1995[b]		*Asahi Shinbun* 1996[c]	
Approve of creation of new parties	56	Want reorganization of political parties	46	Want new parties to be created	26
Disapprove of creation of new parties	34	Do not want reorganization of political parties	27	Do not want new parties to be created	67
Other/No answer	10	Difficult to say either	18	Other/No answer	7
Total	100	Don't know/No answer	9	Total	100
		Total	100		

Note. [a] "There is a plan to dissolve the current political parties and create new (more ideologically coherent) parties in the hopes that it will become easier to replace the party in power. Taking this into consideration, do you approve or disapprove of the idea of creating new parties?" [b] "Do you want political parties to be reorganized by reshuffling membership and new parties created?" [c] "Do you want new political parties to be formed or not?" Data were compiled from *Asahi Shinbun*, March 30, 1994 (interview date: April 1, 1992), July 10, 1996; NHK, November 1, 1995 (interview dates: September 1-3, 1995).

Elite level realignment clearly seems to have failed to spur on a corresponding alignment within the electorate. This notion is supported by various surveys measuring public interest in realignment manoeuvrings. For example, one survey from 1994 found 57 percent of respondents expressing interest in one or other of the listed plans to create new parties, while 40 percent expressed no interest whatsoever in any of the ongoing movements (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 1994, November 23). Interest in the manoeuvrings of political parties gradually declined, and in 1997 the number of respondents exhibiting no interest had reached 54 percent (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 1997, May 28).

As Table 3.11 illustrates, expectations for new party success declined simultaneously with enthusiasm for and interest in them. In 1994, immediately

before the establishment of the New Frontier Party, the number of respondents expecting it to be very or somewhat successful reached 38 percent, but they were outnumbered by the 45 percent who expected little or no success (NHK, 1994, December 1). The same trend was evident in several surveys from 1994 to 1996, where a majority of respondents had no expectations for new party success – another indication of the electorate's declining enthusiasm with regard to the new parties.

Table 3.11
Expectancy for Success of New Parties, 1994-1996 (%)

	Yomiuri Shinbun 1994[a]	NHK 1994[b]	NHK 1995[c]	*Yomiuri Shinbun* 1996[d]
Expect new parties to be successful	41	38	25	37
Do not expect new parties to be successful	55	56	58	55
Other/No answer	4	6	17	8
Total	100	100	100	100

Note. [a] "How much success do you expect from current political movements such as forming new political parties... very much, some, not very much, or none at all?" [b] "The political parties that formed the former coalition cabinet are planning to start a new party by the end of this year. How much success do you expect from this party?" [c] "The JSP and a few other parties are planning to split up and create a new political party. Do you expect this new party to be successful, or not?" [d] "In recent years, new political parties are being founded, including the DPJ led by Kan Naoto and Hatoyama Yukio. How successful do you expect the new political parties to be...very successful, somewhat successful, not very successful or not successful at all?" Data were compiled from *Yomiuri Shinbun*, November 23, 1994, October 3, 1996 (interview dates: September 28-29, 1996); NHK, December 1, 1994 (interview dates: September 24-25, 1994), November 1, 1995 (interview date: September 1, 1995).

In spite of lacking enthusiasm on the part of the electorate, realignment activities continued at the elite level. Voters were asked to pass judgement on their representatives in October 1996 and cautiously returned the LDP to power. The election, however, also witnessed the lowest turnout ever for a House of Representatives election, and interviews with eligible voters during the campaign period showed indecision, disinterest or disillusionment with the way politics was working. Most statements went along the lines of "it will not make any difference whatever party wins in the election", "all parties sound the same", and "[politicians] will say anything to get elected" (Japan Times, 1996, October 21).

In late 1996, former Liberal Democrats began trickling back into the LDP, the NFP was beginning to show severe cracks in the surface, and the JSP and the NPH

were in shambles following defections to the newly formed DPJ. The electorate appeared increasingly dissatisfied with developments at the national level, and when asked in 1997 whether they were satisfied with the current political situation, only 10 percent of respondents gave a positive response. Thirty-eight percent expressed dissatisfaction with the activities of parties, while 42 percent stated, with what might be interpreted as a shrug, that they "had expected nothing at all" to come out of the recent reorganization of political parties (NHK, 1997, December 1). Similar sentiments were echoed in January 1998 following the dissolution of the NFP, when 61 percent of respondents indicated that they expected nothing from this round of party realignment (NHK, 1998, April 1). Four months later, when the 'new DPJ' was launched, expectations remained low, with only 33 percent having some expectations, while 52 percent did not expect any significant outcome from the creation of this new party (*Asahi Shinbun*, 1998, April 27).

Asked why they did not expect new parties to be successful, respondents replied that "new parties do not have new political ideas" (31 percent), "politics will remain the same even if new political parties are formed" (61 percent), "forming a new party is just a fad" (30 percent), "new parties are formed simply because they want to have an advantage in elections" (25 percent), and "[new parties] may not last long" (29 percent) (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 1996, October 3). If we consider the electorate's sentiment vis-à-vis their elected representatives, a majority of voters were obviously not happy with the activities of most political parties, even prior to the onset of the realignment process. In 1992, for example, only four percent answered "very satisfied", while 26 percent were somewhat satisfied. However, 51 percent were "not very satisfied" and 13 percent "not satisfied at all" (*Yomiuri*

Shinbun, 1994, March 30, [interview date May 1, 1992]).

As Table 3.12 illustrates, subsequent realignment activities have done little to alleviate voters' dissatisfaction with political parties. Instead, developments in the 1990s helped strengthen the image of politicians as being little concerned with the interests of the public. Parties were seen to lack "political ideas", "integrity", "leadership", "eagerness to improve the current situation", and "consideration for the average citizen".

Table 3.12
Problems of Political Parties as Perceived by Survey Respondents, 1995-1998 (%)

Asahi Shinbun[a]	1995	1996	*Yomiuri Shinbun*[b]	1998
Lack political ideas	13	15	Lack political ideas and visions for the future	30
Don't keep official promises	9	12	Lack policy making ability/power to get things done	39
No expectations for success	21	21	Lack leadership/influence over government officials	31
Insufficient policy debate	8	9	Lack of quest for power/ability to maintain a cabinet	10
Submissive to bureaucrats	7	7	Don't put priority on national interest	14
Lack integrity	20	15	Lack consideration for average citizens	61
Are not free from corruption	9	11	Lack eagerness to improve the current situation	22
Don't have any problems	6	4	Don't release information on party administration	16
Other/don't know	7	6	Nothing in particular/no answer	7
Total	100	100	Adds to more than 100 due to multiple responses	

Note. [a] "What problems do you think political parties have?" [b] "Which of the following do you think political parties are lacking?" Data were compiled from *Asahi Shinbun*, June 28, 1995, July 10, 1996; *Yomiuri Shinbun*, April 19, 1998.

In 1997, no less than 87 percent of respondents agreed with the statement that "politicians are only concerned with their own interests and the interests of their political parties" (NHK, 1997, December 1). In the wake of the New Frontier Party's dissolution, almost half of respondents replied that Japanese politics were heading in a bad direction (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 1998, January 25), and when asked specifically for an opinion on the seemingly endless party-switching of legislators, only 20 percent of respondents saw no problem in politicians switching their party affiliation. Forty-eight percent replied that politicians should not change parties between elections, while an additional 22 percent stated that at least MPs elected on the PR party lists

should not change affiliation between elections (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 1997, September 28). Considering the actual behaviour of politicians at the time of this survey, there was clearly a considerable gap between what was actually going on and the general public opinion.

It is clear from this brief survey of electorate sentiment that initial enthusiasm for the new party project was quickly replaced by disillusionment and dissatisfaction. In the words of Putnam, Pharr, and Dalton (2000, p. 21), "the state of opinion and the political mood…[had become] not just grumpy, but much grumpier [than before].

CONCLUSIONS

To sum up the findings of this chapter, we have seen that a large number of new parties entered the political stage during the past decade. The vast majority of these existed for only a brief time and most had only limited parliamentary strength. They thus seem to fit Olson's characterization of 'couch parties'. Not all parties were 'relevant' in parliament, and of the more durable parties only a few were also large enough to exert influence in parliament. Many parties did not exist for long enough to contest elections, and only a few were able to return candidates in significant numbers. Most new parties remained outside the sphere of government, although some joined forces in the two non-LDP coalitions in 1993 and 1994. Following the LDP's return to power, however, only five new parties (NPH, LP, CGP, CP, and NCP) have been part of the ruling coalitions.

The examination of the realignment process found that activities did not involve all legislators. In fact, roughly two thirds of parliament members did not change affiliation at any time between 1992 and 2003. A substantial number of

legislators were, however, involved in realignment activities, and it is almost certain that this number would have been higher had it not been for electoral defeat of potential 'party switchers'.

The initial phase of realignment was characterized by moves away from the LDP, but this trend was almost completely halted by 1996, and a substantial number of defectors have subsequently returned to the LDP fold. The move away from the JSP, once the largest opposition party, began slightly later, but by mid-1996 the party's decline was painstakingly clear, and defections and electoral defeats have reduced party ranks significantly. In contrast to the LDP, there has been no reversal of the trend away from the JSP. The remaining part of the realignment process mainly involved MPs from established opposition parties, which became defunct during the 1990s, and MPs elected for the major new parties since 1993.

Although the realignment process was initially characterized by proliferation of smaller parties, the 'end result' (at least for the time being) has been consolidation in larger parties, and 95 percent of the MPs that changed affiliation and who remained members of parliament by 2003 were found in one of the three largest parties, the LDP, the DPJ, or the CGP.

While the overall trend has been towards consolidation, the interim period was characterized by diversity. Legislators on average changed affiliation 2.4 times, but substantial numbers of people changed affiliation on a more frequent basis, and 'party tourism' has clearly been a prominent feature of Japanese politics in recent years. We also examined diversity within individual groupings and found that the behaviour of MPs generally mirrors the character of the party with which they were initially affiliated.

We also briefly examined the factors guiding politicians' decision to switch their party affiliation, and although the available data are not sufficient to say anything conclusive, it does appear that mixed incentives were at play for legislators in deciding their future course. Some may have been motivated by the desire to secure reelection, and some were motivated by policy preferences. Others again were influenced by personal relationships. It is likely, however, that for most MPs the various incentives mixed together, and also likely that the importance of various incentives changed over time and space.

The party system remained in a state of flux throughout the 1990s, but the extensive realignment of political parties failed to generate a corresponding realignment within the electorate, and instead seems to have increased already high levels of dissatisfaction. The analysis of public sentiment vis-à-vis realignment activities and behaviour of politicians and parties showed that the electorate quickly tired of new parties, and public interest in new parties quickly faded, along with expectations for their success.

Parties were not highly thought of prior to the realignment process, and only a minority of survey respondents was satisfied with the activities of the political parties in 1992. The emergence of numerous new parties, however, has not served to alleviate this dissatisfaction, but perhaps rather worked to increase it. Parties continue to be seen as lacking in ideas, integrity, visions, and not least consideration for the average citizen. Excessive affiliation-switching and coalitions including 'odd bedfellows' combined with what was perceived as a general disregard of the electorate's sentiment have enhanced the already negative image of politicians and political parties in Japan.

The greatest challenge for old as well as new political parties in Japan is to restore faith in politics and political institutions of a highly cynical and disillusioned electorate. There is little doubt that new parties, which emerged within this climate of dissatisfaction and distrust, faced a formidable challenge in their efforts to consolidate and strengthen their appeal. We now examine the attempt of one new party, the Liberal Party, to do just that.

CHAPTER 4

THE LIBERAL PARTY:

FORMATION AND ACTIVITIES, 1998-2003

> "Political parties exist to put forward their policies and to seek the realization of those policies. That is what they are about....The preservation of a political party is not a purpose in itself".
>
> (Ozawa Ichirō, cited in Ozawa and Kan 2003, p. 132)

The Liberal Party appeared on the political stage in January 1998, following the implosion of the New Frontier Party in late 1997, and disappeared in 2003, when it was merged with the Democratic Party. In between, it had led a tumultuous existence – first in opposition, then as a ruling party and coalition partner of first the LDP and later the LDP and the CGP, and then back on the opposition benches. The decision to leave the coalition caused a serious rift within the party, which had until then been characterized by remarkable cohesion. It in effect split in half as MPs in favour of remaining within the coalition defected to form the Conservative Party. Following the split, the Liberal Party continued its activities as a member of the opposition, where it was, however, overshadowed by the much larger DPJ. The need to present a united front to the LDP-led coalition paved the way for a merger of the Liberal and Democratic parties, which was finally realized in September 2003 after prolonged negotiations.

This chapter presents a discussion of events surrounding the Liberal Party since its formation, with particular emphasis on its participation in the LDP-LP coalition

(1999) and the extended coalition with the LDP and the CGP (1999-2000). It presents an analysis of the breakdown of the latter coalition, and also examines the split of the LP, which coincided with the departure from the coalition alliance. The second part of the chapter examines the LP's activities in parliament between 2000 and 2003, as well as the developments surrounding its dissolution and merger with the DPJ in 2003.

PARTY FORMATION AND GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION, 1998-2000

4.1 Party Formation and Opposition to the LDP

As was also discussed in Chapter 3, the decision to dissolve the New Frontier Party initiated an intense round of realignment, which culminated in the formation of six new parties. These parties were formed around groups already existent within the NFP – many of which had roots that stretched back further than the NFP itself. The largest of these splinter groups was the so-called Ozawa Group, formed around NFP president Ozawa Ichirō. Its members established the Liberal Party, which proved to be the only durable party among the NFP splinter parties.

On December 28, 1997, the Ozawa group had created the 'Committee for Establishment of a New Party' [新党設立委員会], and immediately began deliberating the new party's basic policies and party platform. The Liberal Party was formally established on January 1, and the party's inaugural meeting was held on January 6, with 54 parliamentarians in attendance. Ozawa was promptly and unopposed elected as party president, and at the meeting MPs agreed on the 'Basic Principles of the Liberal Party' [自由党結党の基本理念], 'Emergency Policies for "Reform without taboo"' [「タブー無き改革」の緊急政策], as well as the

distribution of executive posts within the party organization. In effect the party carried over the policies of the 'Manifesto for National Renewal' [日本再構築宣言], formulated by the NFP in October 1997, and was clearly seen as the NFP's 'successor'.[86] In his first speech to the assembled MPs, Ozawa outlined the party's purpose in the following way:

> "We have created the Liberal Party in order to carry out the basic concepts of the Manifesto of National Renewal of the now disbanded New Frontier Party. The Liberal Party has been formed by fellow fighters who share the same concepts and the same policies, and who are resolved to go beyond the New Frontier Party in terms of resolute leadership and enhanced unity".
>
> (Liberty and Reform, February/March 1998)

The parliamentary session, which began two weeks later, was dominated by the worsening economic situation. Simultaneously, a series of scandals involving ministry officials rocked the foundation of the elite bureaucracy, and scandals involving lawmakers tasked parliamentarians with passing legislation to improve political ethics. The Liberal Party sought cooperation with other members of the opposition, and in mid-January the secretaries-general of the opposition parties met to discuss an 'action plan', agreeing to work closely with each other to oust the Hashimoto administration (Jiyūtō, 1998c, p. 11). The NFP split, however, had left the opposition fragmented, which significantly complicated attempts to forge a united front. The situation improved slightly when opposition groups were reorganized into the 'new DPJ' in April, but the DPJ nevertheless failed to serve as a strong unifying element within the opposition (Wanner, 1998b). Although the JSP and the NPH had formally broken ranks with the LDP, in effect ending the tripartite alliance after four years of coalition rule, they helped to kill a no-confidence motion

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[86] The policy visions of the LP are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

against the Hashimoto cabinet in June, which left little doubt about the opposition's lack of cohesion.[87]

The end of the parliamentary session coincided with the beginning of campaigning for the 1998 House of Councillors election, and for the Liberal Party this first election was clearly going to be a matter of do-or-die (see also Chapter 7). Prospects initially looked quite bleak for all opposition parties, but in spite of all expectations, the LDP suffered a surprising and stinging defeat, which consequently led to Hashimoto's resignation. He was replaced by Obuchi Keizō, who got a lukewarm reception from all sides (see also Chapter 2).

Without a majority in the House of Councillors, the LDP was left in a significantly weakened position, and in order to get legislation smoothly through parliament, the LDP needed to find a way to secure a workable majority. Putting together a coalition that would produce such a majority, however, proved difficult. The LDP initially focused its coalition endeavours on the CGP since its 22 seats in the House of Councillors would bring the LDP almost within reach of a majority, which might then conceivably be secured by enlisting LDP-leaning independents or a minor party. The CGP, however, initially showed little enthusiasm for a formal coalition.[88] Developments in the House of Councillors, however, quickly pinpointed the precarious position of the LDP, as Obuchi was forced to capitulate to opposition

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[87] As if to further deplete the opposition's hopes of toppling the LDP, the June 14 Kumamoto by-election for the seat left vacant by former Prime Minister Hosokawa saw the LDP candidate triumph over the DPJ candidate, who had been designated by Hosokawa as his official successor (for details see Wanner, 1998b).

[88] The CGP had only recently been reestablished following the breakup of the NFP, and apparently preferred to concentrate its efforts on consolidating its position. Also, rather than entering into a full-fledged cooperation with the LDP, it seemed to prefer to use its newfound leverage as a casting vote in the House of Councillors (Curtis, 1999, p. 216).

demands in connection with the passage of banking legislation.[89] The LDP made further overtures toward the CGP, and in November for example agreed to include the CGP-sponsored proposal for the so-called 'voucher plan' in a new stimulus package, but the CGP continued to refuse entering into a formal alliance.

4.2 The Obuchi-Ozawa Agreement and the LDP-LP Coalition

Faced with an ambivalent CGP and an increasingly bold DPJ, the LDP's Chief Cabinet Secretary, Nonaka Hiromu, apparently then changed his strategy from building a majority to splitting the opposition. Nonaka stunned observers and numerous LDP members alike by extending a coalition offer to the Liberal Party, and on November 19, Obuchi and Ozawa met and formally agreed to begin working towards a coalition between the two parties. The Liberal Party promised to cooperate with the LDP government in the coming months, especially in connection with the drawing up of the fiscal 1999 budget. Subsequently, a coalition government was to be formed before the beginning of the parliamentary session in mid-January 1999. Last but certainly not least, the party leaders agreed that a comprehensive system for cooperation in national and regional elections should be established (Jiyūtō, 1999, pp. 21-22).[90]

A list of basic policy agreements accompanied the Obuchi-Ozawa statement (see Table 4.1), but reaching interparty consensus on these policies required great efforts, and negotiations continued well into January. Friction between the two parties became apparent on several occasions, and Ozawa criticized the LDP for

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[89] Opposition demands involved a strengthening of the government's proposed legislation to deal with severely undercapitalized and insolvent banks, in effect forcing the nationalization of the Long Term Credit Bank (Curtis, 1999, p. 217).

[90] This primarily entailed interparty coordination of SMD candidates for the next general election based on the principle of 'incumbent precedence'.

Table 4.1

Outline of Obuchi-Ozawa Policy Agreements (November 19, 1999)

I. Political and Administrative Reforms

1. Abolition of the Government Committee Member System (preventing bureaucrats from answering questions on behalf of ministers) within next parliamentary session.
2. Establishment of parliamentary vice-minister and parliamentary aide system within the government structure.
3. Regrouping of government ministries to streamline administration.
4. Reduction in the number of national public servants by 25 percent over the next 10 years.
5. Revision of the Public Office Election Law during the next Ordinary Parliamentary Session (reducing the number of seats in both the House of Representatives and the House of Councillors by 50 each).

II. Security Policies

1. Establishment of a legal framework based on the following two principles:

(a) Japan will use force to check and counter an aggression only when Japan is subject to an imminent and illegitimate act of forceful aggression. Neither force nor the threat of force will be exercised in any other case.

(b) In the event there is a resolution on international peace activities in either the General Assembly or the Security Council of the United Nations, we will participate in those activities requested by the United Nations.

III. Tax Reform

1. Review of the consumption tax to restrict its rate, including limiting its use to welfare purposes.
2. Implementation of a tax cut of around 10 trillion yen worth of reductions in income, residence, and other taxes.

Note. Based on the LP document 'Policies to be implemented immediately' [いま直ちに実行する政策], reproduced in Jiyūtō, 1999, p. 23.

dragging its feet and not negotiating seriously.[91] A breakthrough, however, occurred a few days later, and the coalition was formally launched on January 14, 1999.[92] In accordance with the Obuchi-Ozawa agreement, the number of cabinet posts was reduced to 18, of which the Liberal Party took one.

4.3 Media and Public Response to the LDP-LP Coalition's Formation

Although the Japanese public gradually warmed to the idea of the two-party coalition, initial polls showed a distinct lack of enthusiasm for its formation. In December 1998, one poll found only 19 percent of respondents expressing approval of the coalition's

[91] On January 9, Ozawa criticized the LDP's apparent lack of sincerity, stating that "if policies on reforms are not implemented, there is no hope of forming a coalition". His comments earned a harsh rebuke from Nonaka, who suggested that "Mr. Ozawa may be a little too wrapped up in his policies" (Japan Times, 1999, January 11).

[92] Negotiations resulted in first the 'LDP-Liberal Party agreement on abolition of the government delegate system and introduction of parliamentary vice-ministers' (January 11), then 'Consultations on the reduction of parliament seats' (January 12) and finally the 'Basic outline of security issues' (January 13). Agreements included decisions to end the practice of bureaucrats standing in for ministers in parliament interpellations, the introduction of a vice-ministerial system to take effect in 2001, and a security policy agreement that would allow Japanese Self-Defense Forces to participate in UN PKO not involving the use of force (for further details see Jiyūtō, 1999, pp. 27-30).

formation, while 43 percent expressed disapproval (*Nikkei Shinbun*, 1998, December 16).[93] Other polls taken at the same time found similar scepticism and lack of enthusiasm, and the coalition was considered by many to be the result of political expediency.[94]

Media response to the formation of the coalition fell roughly along the lines of the traditional right-and-left-of-centre divide, with newspapers of a more conservative bent expressing support and expectations (e.g., the *Sankei*, *Nikkei*, and *Yomiuri*). These papers saw the coalition as a valuable step towards a more stable administration that might effectively deal with Japan's economic crisis.[95] The *Mainichi* and the *Asahi*, on the other hand, took a more critical view of the coalition, expressing considerable caution and concern over its democratic foundations. According to the *Mainichi*, the coalition was merely the outcome of the convergence of the aims of the Obuchi administration, which wanted to boost its parliamentary strength and consolidate its base, and the aims of the Liberal Party, which was fighting for its very survival (1998, January 15).[96]

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[93] When asked for the reasons for disapproval, respondents stated that "the LDP is just like it used to be" (52 percent), that "Ozawa can't be trusted" (48 percent), or that the "opinions and policies [of the two parties] contradict what they have claimed in the past" (49 percent). Respondents who expressed approval generally believed that the coalition would stabilize politics (48 percent), that innovative policies could be expected (38 percent), and that political reform would be promoted through the coalition's formation (34 percent) (*Nikkei Shinbun*, 1998, December 16).

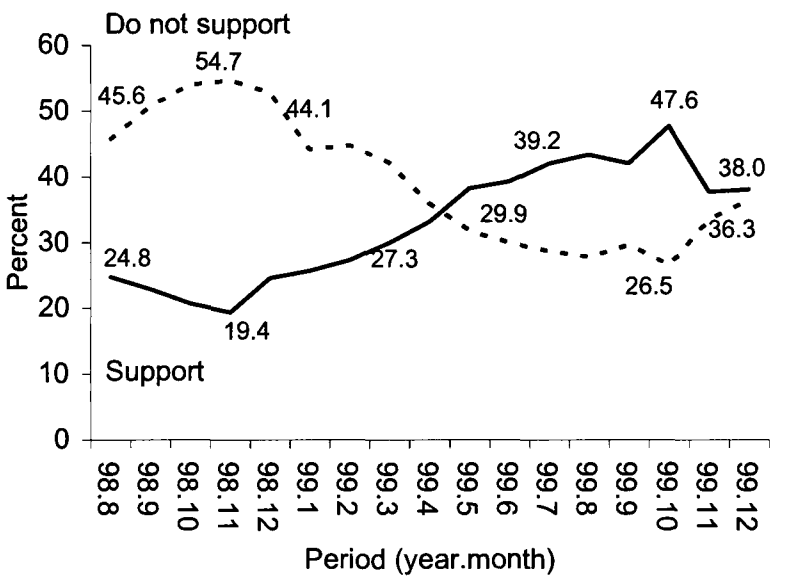
[94] One observer, Professor Kobayashi Yoshiaki, pointedly noted that voters, party supporters, and rank-and-file members were ignored in the process of establishing the coalition. He suggested that "people will have a hard time understanding why two parties that [have] criticized each other most severely will join hands to form a coalition" (cited in Japan Times, 1999, January 14).

[95] The *Sankei* hailed the formation of the coalition as a historical event that could lead to a clear structure of conservatives versus liberals, and the *Nikkei* saw the coalition as having "the possibility of opening up a new phase in conservative politics", expressing great expectations for the coalition's ability to overcome economic recession. The *Yomiuri* praised the coalition for bringing together parties that share the same doctrine and policies, and hoped that it would serve to revitalize the economy, strengthen national security, and carry out political and administrative reforms (Editorials, 1999, January 15). American market watchers also expressed their hopes for a larger role for the LP, which was seen as strong backer of economic reforms (Washington Post, 1999, January 13).

[96] The *Mainichi* and *Asahi* also criticized the decision to have Ozawa stay outside the cabinet. To counter this criticism, Obuchi explained that Ozawa had told him that "he wanted to concentrate on managing his party" (Japan Times, 1999, January 14; see also Daimon, 1999).

Some critics predicted that the coalition would be unable to govern smoothly, but it nevertheless seemed to be off to a flying start. In sharp contrast to the protracted nature of interparty deliberations on the banking bills in late 1998, the budget for fiscal 1999 cleared the House of Representatives three weeks into February – the fastest enactment in postwar history (Wanner, 1999a). Considering its previous record, this was a significant accomplishment for the Obuchi administration. Polls from late January 1999 showed a gradual increase in support for the coalition, a shift that was also mirrored in the cabinet's support rates. Figure 4.1 presents an overview of cabinet support rates in 1998 and 1999, and, as can be seen, non-support experienced a sharp downturn following the formation of the LDP-LP coalition, after rather dismal rates in the first months of Obuchi's administration. Support also gradually began to edge upwards, indicating the public's feeling that the administration had indeed been revitalized. In May 1999, cabinet support for the first time outnumbered non-support.

Figure 4.1
Support Rates of the Obuchi Cabinet, 1998-1999



Note. Based on data from Chūō Chōsasha, 2001.

4.4 From the LDP-LP Coalition to the LDP-LP-CGP Coalition

Although cooperation within the coalition proceeded smoothly on the surface, smaller fissures were beginning to develop beneath. The Liberal Party often found itself relegated to a supporting role, and off-the-record, members indicated

frustration with the LDP's insistence on wooing the CGP at the expense of pursuing the policy agenda of political and bureaucratic reforms.[97] Interparty discussions on most of the central pillars of the coalition agreement, e.g., the amendment of relevant laws to create vice-ministerial posts for politicians and the reduction of seats in the House of Representatives, as well as negotiations on electoral cooperation, proceeded at a snail's pace (Wanner, 1999a). The fact that cooperation from the Liberals did not provide the LDP with its coveted majority, however, made support from the CGP essential. And perhaps it was therefore inevitable that the Liberal Party's policy ambitions would have to suffer as a result. By early May, LDP officials were making public statements about their desire to formally bring the CGP into the coalition framework, and this time the CGP was warming to the idea of formally joining the coalition. There was, however, no doubt that the inclusion of the CGP would spell further trouble for the LP. Not only was it likely to become increasingly marginalized vis-à-vis the two larger parties, but in terms of policy the LP and the CGP disagreed in a considerable number of areas. Unsurprisingly, Ozawa voiced his frustration over not having been consulted over the plans (Japan Times, 1999, June 25), and although he later indicated that he did not oppose the inclusion of the CGP, he also pointedly reminded the LDP of the terms of the original coalition agreement (Nikkei Weekly, 1999, July 5).[98] Kanzaki Takenori, leader of the CGP, on the other hand noted that his party would not be bound by earlier policy agreements made by the LDP and its junior partner, and in this way the triangular relationship was stretched to its capacity even before the coalition was actually launched.

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[97] One Liberal MP vented his frustration, saying that "I cannot help but feel that we are less prominent...now than when we were standing firm against the LDP (Nikkei Weekly, 1999, February 22).

[98] Ozawa suggested that the CGP's acceptance of already existing policy agreements should form the basis for any serious negotiations (Japan Times, 1999, June 28).

Reaching agreement on basic policy matters proved difficult for the three parties. One highly contentious issue related to electoral reform, and the CGP at one point warned that any further discussion of the seat cut proposal would "negatively affect [its] decision to join the coalition". The Liberal Party, on the other hand, continued to argue that the LDP should honour its promises and follow through on its commitments.[99] A compromise was finally reached in August, when Ozawa and Obuchi agreed to postpone consideration of the seat reduction bill (Wanner, 1999d). This allowed the parties to focus on other policy areas, and the tripartite coalition was finally launched on October 5, 1999.

4.5 The LDP-LP-CGP Coalition and Its Breakdown

The creation of the tripartite coalition resulted in the alliance's complete control of parliamentary proceedings. With 357 of the 500 seats in the House of Representatives and 141 of the 252 seats in the House of Councillors, the coalition's strength was indisputable. Obuchi predicted that the administration's numerical strength would facilitate prompt legislative action on policies aimed at ensuring sustained economic recovery, but some observers were quick to point out that the political agreements and the policy differences underlying the union might soon make Obuchi so preoccupied with keeping peace in his 'new family' that he would be unable to lead the nation forward (Wanner, 1999e). And indeed, the following months seemed to prove these sceptics right.

The new coalition got off to an inauspicious beginning when the coalition-

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[99] Ozawa called for an evaluation of the implementation of the agreements already in place, and threatened to break away from the coalition if the LDP failed to implement them by the end of the current parliamentary session (Japan Times, July 26, 1999). Shortly afterwards, he pointedly noted that "[the Liberal Party] is not seeking any new requests, and promises made before launching the coalition government should be faithfully executed (Wanner, 1999c).

backed candidate suffered a much publicized defeat in the Nagano House of Councillors by-election held on October 17.[100] Three days later Obuchi was forced to fire his vice-minister for defence, Nishimura Shingo (LP), following Nishimura's remarks that Japan ought to have nuclear weapons as a force of deterrence.[101] An embarrassing flip-flop over the implementation of a 1995 law to ban corporate donations to individual politicians made the administration look exceedingly inconsistent and caused discord between the partners. Discord increased even further in early November following discussions about a much criticized funding scheme for a home health care insurance plan already set to take effect from April 2000. This plan pitted the LP against the CGP and the LDP, who had agreed to freeze the collection of premiums from people aged 65 and over for six months after the system was to take effect. This freeze was to be financed by issuing new government bonds in connection with a second supplementary budget, a proposal in stark contrast to the Liberal Party's idea for financing nursing care services through consumption tax revenues. Tension was further heightened by the fact that Obuchi announced the decision without securing the LP's backing, apparently convinced that the junior partner would not be prepared to leave the coalition over the issue. Although the two larger parties prevailed, the issue continued to mar coalition relations, and a few days later the inclusion of a 900 billion yen item to cover the postponement of premium collections in a government economic stimulus package resulted in Liberal protests,

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[100] Commentators were quick to link the election results to public disapproval of the new coalition, although the Nagano by-election could hardly be seen as a clear-cut message of antipathy. The contest pitted Hata Yūichirō, son of former Prime Minister Hata Tsutomu, against Fukusawa Kenichirō, supported by the LDP and the CGP, and Hata no doubt gained considerable support through his father's fame in the district – the eastern part of which is known as the 'Hata Kingdom' (for more details see Mainichi Daily News, 1999, October 19).

[101] Nishimura went on to compare the deterrent quality of nuclear weapons with that of punishment for rape, stating that "if there were no punishment for rape, we would all be rapists", a comment which did little to ingratiate him with feminist organizations (Japan Times, 1999, October 20; Mainichi Daily News, 1999, October 21).

although it eventually voted in favour of the stimulus package.

While unity in the coalition dwindled rapidly, so did the level of public support for the cabinet. In November, support rates took a sharp dip, accompanied by an increase in the group of non-supporters (see also Figure 4.1), and the raison d'être of the extended coalition was widely questioned (Sasaki, 2000, p. 23). The plummeting approval ratings were generally seen as an expression of dissatisfaction with Obuchi's lack of leadership, the absence of fresh policies, but also with the blatant demonstration of power by numbers (*Mainichi Shinbun*, 1999, November 10).[102] Several observers agreed that Obuchi's attempt to form a united political front to facilitate parliamentary action "had all but blown up in his face" (Wanner, 1999f).

Shortly after the 'nursing care scheme debacle' had been patched over, tension rose anew as rumours began circulating that the LP wanted to merge with the LDP. Suggesting that the two parties should consider merging, Ozawa reportedly also warned that his party might leave the coalition if merger talks were to collapse (*Mainichi Shinbun*, 1999, November 11). The merger proposal drew both praise and criticism from within the LDP, where proponents of a so-called conservative-conservative alliance [保保連合], most prominently Kamei Shizuka, expressed support for the idea. Other groups, however, expressed considerable opposition to the proposal, in particular the factions led by Katō Kōichi and Yamasaki Taku.[103] Observers generally viewed the attempt to forge a merger between the two parties as

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[102] The administration passed several pieces of contentious legislation, e.g., the so-called Wiretapping bill [盗聴法], the Residence Ledger to number all citizens [住民基本台帳法], and legislation on the national flag and anthem [国旗及び国歌に関する法]. Yamaguchi (1999, pp. 38-43) also presents a critical review of the policy making processes under the Obuchi coalition.

[103] Scepticism about a merger also stretched into LDP ranks at the local level, and a survey found 60 percent of prefectural chapters opposed to, or cautious about, the proposal. Most cited the lack of reasons for merging with the LP, antipathy toward Ozawa, and concern that a merger could adversely affect the LDP's chance of winning the next general election (*Mainichi Shinbun*, 1999, November 18).

a desperate act on the part of the Liberals aimed at securing electoral survival. Although the merger discussions remained underway at an unofficial level for weeks, they eventually reached a stalemate (Maeda and Yoshida, 1999). Two weeks later peace was restored to the coalition when Ozawa announced that the Liberals would after all support the supplementary budget, if Obuchi in return would implement the policy agreement made earlier by the ruling parties.[104] Although relations between the coalition partners were smoothed over, at least temporarily, these inconsistencies seemed to have caused Liberal MPs for the first time to openly express displeasure with the party leadership. For example, Transport Minister Nikai Toshihiro publicly expressed discontent with Ozawa for having taken the supplementary budget hostage (*Mainichi Shinbun*, 1999, November 26). In mid-December, the government's decision to abandon the seat reduction bill, a major item on the coalition policy agenda, left the Liberal Party divided over whether to stay or leave the coalition. When agreement to pass the seat reduction bill in the coming ordinary parliamentary session was reached, the LP, however, eventually opted to remain in the coalition.[105] From the outside, however, the coalition seemed increasingly fragile, and opinion polls bore witness to the public's critical view of the alliance. By March 2000, a mere 28 percent of respondents approved of the coalition, while 63 percent indicated some degree of disapproval (Sasaki, 2000).

Speculations about the timing of the next general election increased dramatically when the fiscal 2000 budget was passed in late February.

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[104] This included a reduction of seats in the House of Representatives' PR blocks, overhaul of the social security programmes, and extension of the right to vote in local elections to foreign residents living permanently in Japan.

[105] The seat reduction bill was in fact railroaded through a Special Committee of the House of Representatives on December 13, amid fierce protest from the opposition. The bill was passed, but the House of Representatives Steering Committee immediately decided to carry the bill over to the next parliamentary Session (see also Japan Times, 1999, December 15).

Unsurprisingly, this also sparked renewed interest in negotiations for electoral cooperation between the coalition partners. As mentioned previously, for the Liberal Party such cooperation primarily revolved around the agreement reached in November 1998, which stated that the LDP and the LP should seek coordination of SMD candidates in order to avoid interparty competition. Negotiations between the two parties, however, broke down on March 24, once again causing speculation that the LP would break away from the coalition (Japan Times, 2000, March 25). On March 29, Ozawa directly warned Liberal members that the "party is in a critical condition", but failed to form a consensus that the party should actually leave the coalition. He pointed to the lack of public support, that none of the Liberals' initial policy demands had been realized since inclusion of the CGP in October 1999, and finally expressed dissatisfaction with the LDP's lack of willingness to cooperate in coordination of SMD candidates. He went on to suggest that the party either merge with the LDP or leave the ruling camp. For once, however, the Liberals' trademark party unity was shaken, with some MPs fearing that the party could suffer big electoral losses if it campaigned as part of the ruling coalition. Others, including a number of quite senior members, however, were equally wary about the prospects of leaving the coalition and going into opposition (Japan Times, 2000, March 30).

On April 1, Ozawa met with Obuchi and Kanzaki, urging them to realize the policy agreements reached in October and demanding that they show when and how these policies would be implemented. Obuchi and Kanzaki, however, both maintained that it would be impossible to implement the agreements during the current parliamentary session, after which Ozawa reportedly expressed his regret and terminated the meeting (Japan Times, 2000, April 2). The Liberals' departure from

the coalition became mired in the confusion that arose when Obuchi suffered a stroke on April 1, and was overshadowed by his dramatic hospitalization and the subsequent resignation of his cabinet. On April 3, Liberal MPs in favour of remaining inside the coalition formally left the party and established the Conservative Party. The Liberal group in effect split in half, with 27 of its 50 MPs moving on to join the Conservatives.

4.6 Making and Breaking the Coalition

The split of the Liberal Party was intrinsically connected to the breakup of the coalition, and the following sections examine in more detail the causes of the coalition breakup, as well as the Liberal Party split itself. Before considering the various reasons for the coalition breakup, however, it is perhaps instructive first briefly to reconsider why the coalition was launched in the first place as well as the motivations of the involved actors.

The primary aim for the LDP in late 1998 had been to find a way to offset its weak position in the House of Councillors. Creating an alliance that would allow it to govern in a smooth manner quickly became part of the Obuchi cabinet's survival strategy. The LP could not provide the LDP with an outright majority and therefore was not its preferred choice, but the agreement reached between the two parties in November, nevertheless, effectively served to divide the opposition and provided the Obuchi administration with space for manoeuvring.

For the Liberal Party, on the other hand, there was a range of motivations to join forces with the LDP. For one thing, if the party could coordinate candidate lists for the coming general election with the LDP, prospects would certainly look

brighter for quite a few of its incumbents. The electoral incentive was often emphasized by analysts, many of whom wrote off the coalition as little more than a matter of convenience for both partners, and in particular as a survival strategy for the Liberal Party. Indeed, it is highly likely that electoral incentives played a significant role in determining the LP's decision to join hands with the LDP in 1998. Many of its junior members had yet to build up personal support networks, and stepping into the government limelight might very conceivably improve their reelection prospects. For almost all SMD incumbents a promise from the LDP not to run candidates in their districts would also be quite significant. It would, however, be unfair to view electoral considerations as the sole reason for the Liberals' decision to team up with the LDP. As is also discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, policy *was* a vital concern for the LP, and it harboured a clear ambition of finding a way to achieve pet policy changes. Indeed, from its formation the party consistently sought to portray itself as a policy-based party, and Oka Takashi, who has worked closely with Ozawa for many years, has pointed out that while the LDP exists to rule, the Liberal Party's raison d'être was much more grounded in the policy visions of its leader (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1999).[106] In other words, although Ozawa and his followers were ambitious, they were not motivated by the quest for power alone. For the Liberal Party, the alliance with the LDP provided a golden opportunity to promote some of its policies, which would have been impossible, had the party opted to stay within the opposition. These strongly held convictions also explain the numerous clashes between the coalition partners over policy. The LDP, however, soon showed a distinct lack of will to follow through on

[106] According to Oka, Ozawa has on several occasions reiterated his wish to 'make a difference' through the reform of politics, and he has strongly advocated a shift from personality to policy in political campaigns and activities (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1999).

its policy promises, and in hindsight it appears almost naïve of Ozawa and his Liberal colleagues to have believed that it would.[107] While the significance of policy cannot alone account for the LP's motivations to join hands with the LDP, it should be noted that it was differences over policy that formed the basis of most intracoalition discord, and as such it clearly played a role in shaping developments.[108]

Ideologically speaking the LDP-LP coalition brought together parties of similar political stripes and as such was a reasonable alliance, but structurally it was weak because it failed to secure a majority. In other words, it was a 'superfluous coalition' (Kabashima, 2000, p. 42), and it is highly possible that for the LDP this coalition was merely a step towards first splitting the opposition, then towards the creation of a greater alliance that could provide a majority, which was finally achieved with the CGP's inclusion into the coalition.

The CGP seems to have been attracted by the chance of getting access to government, especially considering the sorry state of the opposition due to the lack of clear leadership. Again, however, electoral considerations may have played a significant role for both the LDP and the CGP, and one reporter summed up the motivations of the two parties in the following way: "A clear aim [for both parties]

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[107] Ozawa himself has indicated as much, noting that the Liberals were fooled by the LDP. In 2002, he explained that "at the time when Obuchi was Prime Minister, [the LP] joined forces with the LDP after being told 'we will listen to you, so please help us', and was completely fooled" (Ozawa, 2002). Elsewhere Ozawa has stated that "[joining the coalition] was thoughtless. Following the LDP's defeat in the 1998 election, they came to talk. We teamed up with them because they said 'Put your thoughts on a piece of paper, then we will get the executive group together, give it the stamp of approval and act accordingly', but after a month and a half we understood that the LDP didn't have the will to deliver on their promises" (Kyōdō Tsūshinsha, 2002).

[108] In addition, some observers have speculated that Ozawa's decision to join forces with the LDP was part of a strategy aimed at instigating a split within the LDP to bring about yet another round of realignment. According to this view, an alignment of the LDP and the LP would strengthen the group within the LDP, which had pushed for a formal amalgamation of right-leaning politicians. Such an alliance would effectively force a break up the LDP, and some commentators claimed that the LDP-LP tie-up would make such a fissure all but inevitable, and that this was what Ozawa aimed for (for this type of argument see for example Shimizu, 1999; or Wanner, 1999a).

was to increase the chances of winning in the next House of Representatives election. Breaking new ground in terms of policy [was] a secondary goal" (Kajiki, 1999). The alliance with the CGP had the potential of providing *Sōka Gakkai* backing for some, if not all, LDP candidates, which would be of great significance in future elections. Considering its own organizational strength, electoral cooperation was perhaps less important for the CGP, but one distinct motivation for joining the coalition was the potential for keeping the LDP from fulfilling its promise to reduce the number of seats in the House of Representatives' PR districts, which would inevitably have a negative impact on the CGP's electoral fortunes.[109] For the Liberal Party there was little incentive to widen the coalition, since an extension would make it increasingly superfluous to the LDP, and as described earlier its response to the initial proposal was at its best lukewarm. On top of fears of further marginalization, the CGP's presence within the coalition might very well increase the likelihood of friction over a range of policy issues, as the LDP would now have to strike a balance in accommodating its two partners, located on either side of it (Kabashima, 2000), and also hamper the prospects for LDP-LP electoral cooperation[110]

In the end, the LDP overwhelmingly leaned towards the CGP, the more powerful of its two partners, which left the frustrated Liberals with little to show for themselves in terms of policy achievements. This frustration caused Ozawa repeatedly to threaten to leave the coalition unless particular LP proposals were taken

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[109] The proposed reduction of PR seats from 200 to 150 would cause severe devastation to the CGP, which elects most of its MPs in the PR districts. To counter the LP's proposal, the CGP therefore began advocating reversion to the old multiseat arrangement. Most likely it was perfectly aware that the multiseat system proposal was a nonstarter, but it nevertheless succeeded in using it as a bargaining chip to kill off the Liberal Party's proposal (Wanner, 1999b).

[110] One observer pointed out that it was always doubtful that the LDP would be prepared to sacrifice SMD candidates in order to keep the LP within the coalition, and suggested that for the LDP "a union with the CGP…require less 'major surgery'…than continuing its relationship with the LP" (Watanabe Tsuneo, cited in Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1999).

into consideration. Indeed, the LP's lack of bargaining leverage in the political processes within the coalition made it look rather desperate at times, perhaps also incidentally sowing the first seeds of dissent within the party.

4.7 Electoral Cooperation and Its Significance for the Coalition's Breakdown

The Liberal Party maintained that its withdrawal from the coalition was caused by intracoalition policy differences and the failure of the LDP and the CGP to deliver on their promises. Ozawa emphasized that significant progress had been made under the LDP-LP coalition, especially in terms of parliamentary reform, but that almost none of the important items of the tripartite policy agreements had been realized. He added that "[this] is making it increasingly difficult to refute accusations that the coalition is just a matter of rule by numbers" (Jiyūtō Press Briefing, April 1, 2000). Policy differences no doubt played a central role in the deterioration of intracoalition relations, and therefore also in the coalition's final breakup.

In reality, however, the straw that broke the camel's back seems to have been the outcome of LDP-LP negotiations regarding electoral cooperation in the coming general election. In 1998, Obuchi and Ozawa had agreed that the two parties should avoid running candidates in the same single-member districts, and that nominations should be coordinated based on the principle of incumbency precedence. Table 4.2 summarizes an internal party document, which reported the outcome of interparty negotiations, which had focused on the 26 districts where the LP had incumbents. The LDP's final offer certainly left much to be desired from the LP's vantage point, since the LDP offered cooperation in just five districts, while another five districts were left pending. In the remaining 16 districts Liberal incumbents would not only

Table 4.2

LDP Proposal on Electoral Cooperation for Liberal SMD Incumbents (Outline)

Offer of electoral co-operation	Electoral district	LP Candidate	LDP candidate	LDP candidate status	LDP 'margin of defeat'[a] (1996)
No	IW 1	Tasso	Tamazawa	Incumbent (PR)	73.67
No	CH 3	Okajima	Matsuno	New	86.34
No	TO 14	Nishikawa	Matsushima	New	96.04
No	AI 2	Aoki	Taniguchi	New	0.00
No	AI 3	Yoshida	Kataoka	Former	83.62
No	AI 4	Misawa	Miyasaki	New	0.00
No	AI 7	Aoyama	Suzuki J.	New	0.00
No	AI 10	Esaki	Suzuki M.	New	0.00
No	MI 1	Nakai	Kawasaki	Incumbent (PR)	99.51
No	OS 13	Nishino	Shiokawa	Former	91.71
No	OS 14	Nakamura	Tanibatake	Incumbent (PR)	93.31
No	OS 17	Nishimura	Okashita/Hiraita	New	0.00
No	HG 6	Koike	Sakagami	Incumbent (PR)	90.77
No	HG 10	Shiota	Tokai	Former	95.75
No	TS 3	Iwasa	Gotōda	New	0.00
Yes	IW 4	Ozawa	Igata	New	16.06
Yes	KN 14	Fujii	Nakamoto	New	63.33
Yes	AI 9	Kaifu	[none]	-	-
Yes	WK 1	Nakanishi	Tanimoto	New	0.00
Yes	WK 3	Nikai	Higashi	Former	0.00
Pending	IW 3	Sasaki	Shiga	Former	56.64
Pending	OS 9	Nishida	Harada	New	0.00
Pending	OS 19	Matsunami	[none]	-	-
Pending	HG 4	Inoue	Konishi	New	58.83
Pending	KM 2	Noda	Hayashida	Incumbent (PR)	0.00
No	TO 15	Azuma[b]	Kimura	Incumbent (by-election)	

Note. [a] 'Margin of defeat' is used as a percentage measurement of the 'size of the defeat' in SMD. Most parties use this measure as the basis to award some or all of the seats in the PR districts. It is calculated by taking the losing candidate's votes, dividing them with the winning candidate's votes, and then multiplying with 100 to get the percentage. [b] Azuma Shōzō was elected on the NFP's PR list in Tokyo in 1996, but had previously been elected from the multimember district corresponding with the new Tokyo 15 district in 1990 and 1993 (for the CGP). Adapted from the LP internal party document: 'Final reply from the LDP on the working-level consultations concerning LDP-LP electoral cooperation' [自自選挙協力に関する実務者協議における自民党の最終回答] (dated March 24, 2000).

have to fend off challengers from the opposition, but also from the LDP. Furthermore, electoral cooperation in the five districts included in the LDP's offer were of limited significance to the Liberals, as these were almost all districts with veteran LP legislators, where new contenders would stand little chance in any case. In one of the pending districts the LDP did not even have a candidate lined up, and would be giving up little if it eventually decided to cooperate. In the remaining districts, nine LDP candidates, all of whom had run but lost in the 1996 election, were lined up. Among these, four had been elected through PR following defeat in their district, but

were intent on again doing battle for the SMD seat, and dissuading these and other candidates, who had worked hard since 1996 to build up strength in their districts, from running would naturally be difficult for the LDP. It was therefore perhaps hardly surprising that the LDP would reject cooperation in these cases. In six other districts, however, the LDP insisted on running novice candidates against Liberal incumbents – a clear violation of the principle of incumbent precedence.

The LDP was clearly not prepared to go out of its way to accommodate the wishes of the LP, and the nearly complete lack of concessions in negotiations almost gives off the impression that the LDP intended to force the Liberals to react to its pressure and leave the coalition. One centrally placed LDP legislator expressed it quite simply, saying "we cannot fight the election without the CGP. That Obuchi cut off...Ozawa in the tripartite talks was exactly because he gave preference to relations with the CGP" (*Shūkan Shinchō*, 2000, p. 141). Owing to the fact that the breakup of the coalition and the subsequent party split coincided with the confusion surrounding Obuchi's collapse, it is exceedingly difficult to get a clear picture of what actually happened. Many observers indeed believe that the LDP *was* manoeuvring in order to corner Ozawa, cause a breakup of the Liberal Party, and then oust Ozawa and his followers from the coalition, and according to a Japan Times report, some LDP executives wanted to part with Ozawa in order to avoid protracted discord within the already shaky coalition (2000, April 5). According to another source, Ozawa voiced concern that the LDP was working to orchestrate a split of the Liberal Party (*Shūkan Posuto*, 2000)[111], and indeed it seems that from late March onwards talks had been under way between LDP representatives and some Liberal MPs on the possibility of

[111] It was also suggested that Nonaka Hiromu (LDP), who strongly disliked Ozawa, had been working actively to lure people away from his side (*Shūkan Posuto*, 2000).

establishing of a new party (excluding Ozawa) that could remain in coalition with the LDP (Japan Times, 2000, March 31).[112] This was also confirmed by Watanabe Hideo, a Liberal MP who had formerly been affiliated with the LDP, who was approached by LDP representatives in 2000 ([interview], 2003, July 16).

Some LDP members were now openly advocating the expulsion of the LP, and at least two possible scenarios were tabled during internal LDP talks, i.e., either that Noda Takeshi would form a new party that would join the coalition, or that those Liberals who were opposed to the idea of leaving the coalition should be allowed to enter (or in several cases re-enter) the LDP (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 2000, March 30). Furthermore, reports suggested that the LDP might be prepared to offer electoral cooperation to an eventual new party (*Asahi Shinbun*, 2000, March 30). The LDP's sudden inclination to engage in electoral cooperation with defectors does indeed appear somewhat curious, considering that the major obstacle in LP-LDP negotiations had been exactly the LDP's lack of will to cooperate. This strengthens the impression that the issue of electoral cooperation was skilfully used by the LDP, first as a lever to undermine the Liberal Party's position and then to cause a rift within. According to one report, some LDP executives were determined to force the LP out of the coalition, but had wanted it to look like an amicable divorce to minimize political fallout (*Nikkei Shinbun*, 2000, March 31).

4.8 The Split of the Liberal Party

The LP's decision to withdraw from the ruling coalition triggered the party's split, with defectors stating their intention to remain within the governing coalition in

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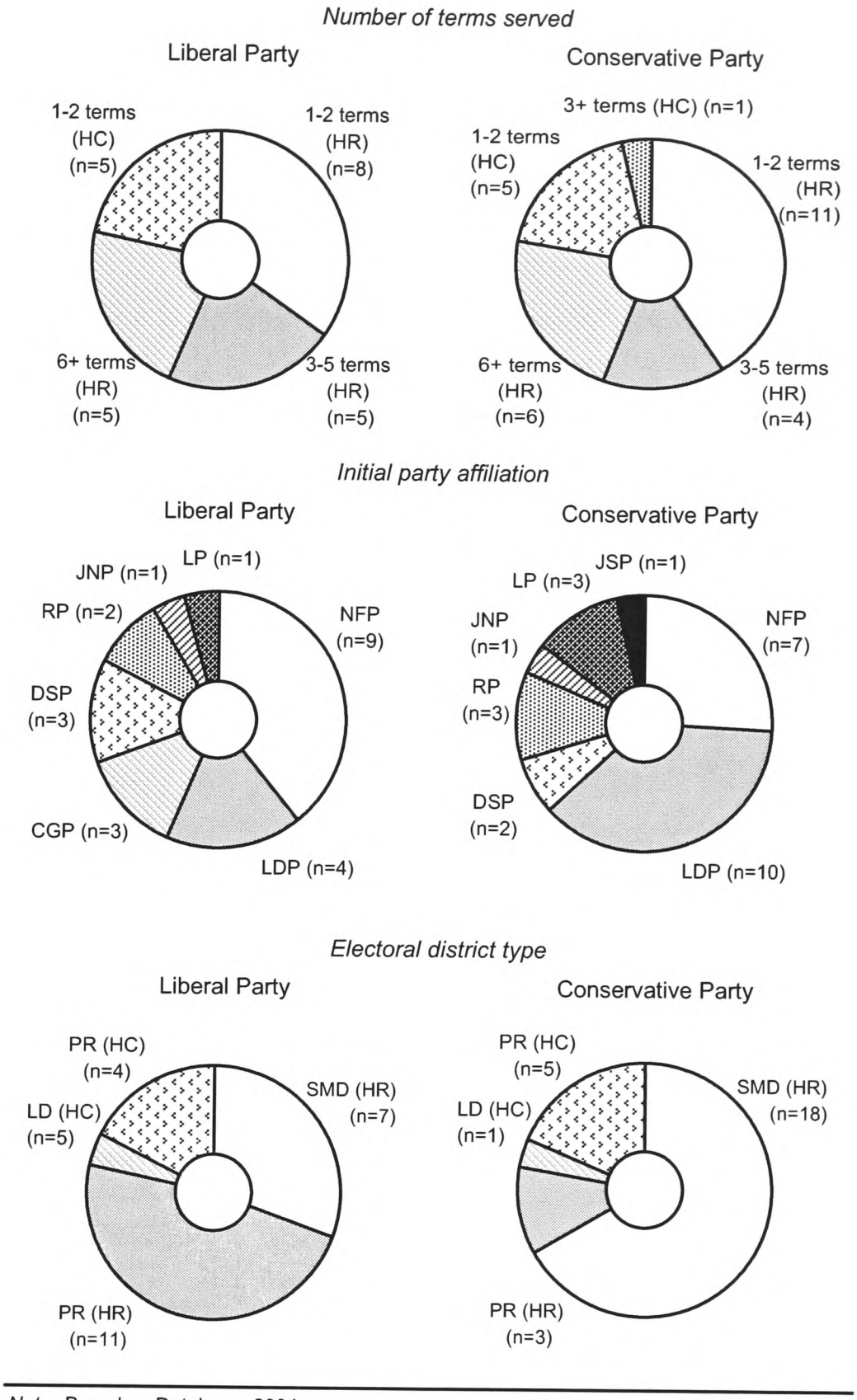
[112] On March 30, Noda Takeshi announced that he would seek to form a new party with 10 other MPs, if Ozawa decided to leave the coalition. At the same time Nishino Akira was negotiating with LDP representatives over possible electoral cooperation for LP defectors (Japan Times, 2000, March 31).

order to execute the policy agreement reached at the time of the coalition's launch. Considering that Obuchi and Kanzaki had just turned down Ozawa's request for a swift implementation of the very same policy agenda, stating this as a reason to stay behind does appear rather contradictory. Unsurprisingly, observers noted that concerns about the next general election had played an important role for defectors as well as for those who remained behind (*Mainichi Shinbun*, 2000, April 9). Initial reports on the party split also referred to alleged factional fighting in the LP (Japan Times, 2000, March 31), and one report suggested that an intraparty struggle for influence played a role in deepening the rift within the party. According to this view, a shift of power within the party executive group had left several of the more senior members without a formal position. One key defector, Noda Takeshi, for example, had initially served as the party's secretary-general as well as Minister of Home Affairs, but following a cabinet reshuffle was left without even an internal party post. Another senior member and former Prime Minister, Kaifu Toshiki, had all but disappeared from the centre stage (*Nikkei Shinbun*, 2000, March 31). Attributing the split merely to factional infighting, however, would be an exaggeration, and according to one observer, the existence of a minor sub-faction within the LP only occurred right around the time of the party split (Hosoda Isamu, personal communication, April 12, 2005). Suzuki Yoshio, a former Liberal MP, takes a stern view of the group, which formed around Noda Takeshi in March 2000, and in his view, the split came down to a matter of self-preservation for the defectors. The Noda group, he claims, consisted of two types of MPs. One group consisted of former LDP members and veteran MPs with a solid electoral support basis, who were not particularly interested in political reform and policy, and who eagerly

grasped the opportunity to return to the LDP (e.g., people like Kaifu, Nikai, and Nakanishi). The second group consisted of MPs who felt uncertain about their electoral prospects without the possibility of LDP/CGP electoral cooperation, e.g., people like Noda, Okajima, Nishino, Matsunami, and Misawa (Suzuki, 2000). As we have seen in other cases of party splits, multiple incentives are often at play for individual MPs. This was almost certainly also the case with the Liberal Party split. As can be seen in the following analysis, however, the issue of electoral cooperation did seem to play a highly significant role in the breakup of the party.

If we look at the lines along which the party divided, groups in both houses of Parliament were split almost evenly in half, with 23 MPs remaining in the LP and 27 MPs moving to the CP. In the House of Representatives, 18 MPs remained with Ozawa, while 21 joined the CP, and in the House of Councillors, 5 MPs remained in the LP, while 6 joined the CP. Figure 4.2 illustrates the way the Liberal Party split according to MP seniority, MP's initial party affiliation, and type of election district. Newspaper commentators suggested that it was the party's more senior legislators (as measured by the number of terms served), who opted to leave, but as Figure 4.2 shows, there seems in reality to have been little difference between the two groups in this regard. If we look only at senior legislators who had formerly been affiliated with the LDP, this proposition, however, holds true. With one exception (Ozawa himself) they all left for the CP, but this was actually the case for most former Liberal Democrats. As can also be seen in the figure, 10 of 14 former LDP members joined the CP, and many of the MPs who had followed Ozawa since their defection from the LDP in 1993, now left his side. In contrast, all former CGP members sided with Ozawa, while other groupings within the party divided almost evenly.

Figure 4.2
Anatomy of the Liberal Party Split (1)



Note. Based on Database, 2004.

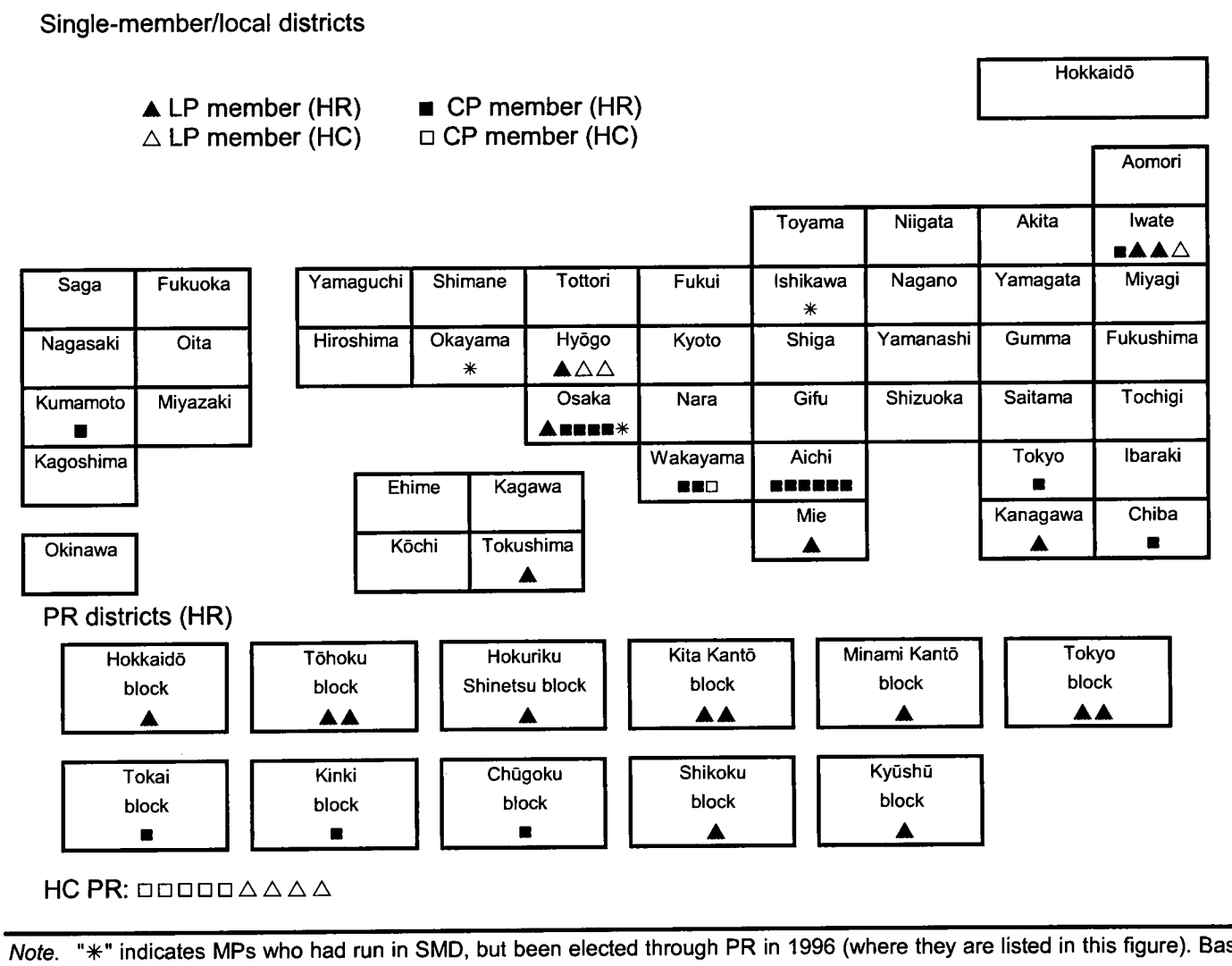
Some differences emerge, however, if we compare the electoral background of the two groups. The last dimension contrasted in Figure 4.2 illustrates the distribution of MPs according to type of election district, and we find that although members in the House of Representatives were split almost evenly between the LP and the CP, no less than 18 of the 25 SMD incumbents from 1996 opted to join the Conservatives. In contrast, only 3 of the 14 MPs elected through PR in 1996 followed this course. This indicates that SMD incumbents tended to put their faith in promises of electoral cooperation from the LDP, whereas PR incumbents seemed much less inclined to join the Conservative Party, and instead

put their faith in Ozawa's charisma to secure their reelection. For members of the House of Councillors there is no apparent difference concerning the electoral aspect. This is perhaps not so surprising, considering that the thorny issue of electoral cooperation pertained to the House of Representatives election.

In relation to the aspect of electoral cooperation it is also worth noting that the geographical location of MPs' districts seems to have impacted on their choice.

Figure 4.3

Anatomy of the Liberal Party Split (2): Geographical Distribution of MPs' Election Districts (n=50)



Note. "✳" indicates MPs who had run in SMD, but been elected through PR in 1996 (where they are listed in this figure). Based on Database, 2004.

Figure 4.3 illustrates the geographical distribution of party MPs, and, as can be seen, the districts of defectors were heavily concentrated in Aichi prefecture and the Kansai region (Osaka, Hyōgo and Wakayama), both known to be traditional strongholds of the *Sōka Gakkai* and therefore also of the CGP (*Nikkei Shinbun*, 2000,

March 31). It is not difficult to imagine that the possibility of teaming up with the LDP and the CGP, and thereby also of creating basis for support from the *Sōka Gakkai*, affected individual legislators' evaluation of their options. In a reverse line of reasoning, it is clear that if Liberal MPs were to confront the CGP in its strongholds, it would almost certainly have a negative impact on their reelection chances. A similar pattern is not apparent for the MPs that remained in the Liberal Party, who were spread more widely throughout the regions, although many of them were elected from districts in the northern and eastern parts of Japan, where Ozawa has played a prominent role for several decades.

The split left the Liberal Party substantially weakened, and the departure of a majority of its SMD incumbents turned it into something largely approaching a 'PR party'. As the election for the House of Representatives in June 2000 also showed, the party's primary source of strength was more than ever Ozawa's popularity and charisma, with 18 of the 22 successful Liberal candidates securing their seats in the PR districts.[113] Most incumbent candidates failed to secure a SMD seat, but seven were able to take up a PR seat in spite of defeat in the SMD. Eleven of the 15 Liberal incumbents gained reelection in 2000, giving the group a 'survival rate' of roughly 73 percent. On the other hand, defection appears not to have brought the anticipated salvation to many defectors. Indeed, before the CP had even materialized, there were speculations that the LDP might not be willing to provide electoral cooperation after all.[114] Table 4.3 presents an overview of the competition in districts, where Liberal and former Liberal incumbents were running. As is clear from the table, the LDP did make adjustments in a number of districts with defectors, and the CGP also lent

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[113] The significance of Ozawa for the party's electoral survival is also discussed in Chapters 7 and 8.
[114] One MP compared the CP to a "rescue boat that may save people unless filled beyond its capacity, so that everyone ends up drowning" (*Asahi Shinbun*, 2000, March 31).

Table 4.3

Liberal and Former Liberal MPs in the 2000 House of Representatives Election

Name	Initial district (1996 election)	2000 election				
		Affiliation/	District	LDP candidate	Seat won	Electoral cooperation and adjustments made in district
Liberal MPs						
Wanibuchi	Hokkaido	LP	HK 13	Kitamura		
Tasso	IW 1	LP	IW 1	Tamazawa	SMD	
Ozawa	IW 4	LP	IW 4	Igata	SMD	
Sasayama	Tōhoku	LP	AK 3	Muraoka		
Futami	IB 6	LP	IB 6	Niwa		
Takeyama	Kita Kantō	LP	ST 13		PR	
Suzuki	Tokyo	LP	TO 6	Ochi	PR	
Azuma	Tokyo	LP	TO 15	Kimura	PR	
Fujii	KN 14	LP	KN 14	Nakamoto	SMD	
Ichikawa	Hokurike (IS2)	LP	IS 2	Mori	PR	
Nakai	MI 1	LP	MI 1	Kawasaki	PR	
Nishimura	OS 17	LP	OS 17	Okashita	PR	
Shiota	HG 10	LP	HG 10	Tokai	PR	
Iwasa	TS 3	LP	TS 3	Gotōda		
Sugawara	Tōhoku	LP	Tōhoku		PR	
Former Liberal MPs						
Sasaki	IW 3	CP	IW 3	Shiga		None
Okajima	CH 3	CP	CH 3	Matsuno		CGP support, but LDP candidate ran
Nishikawa	TO 14	CP	TO 14		SMD	LDP/CGP support (LDP ➡ PR list # 1)
Aoki	AI 2	CP	AI 2	Taniguchi		CGP support, but LDP candidate ran
Misawa	AI 4	CP	AI 4			CGP support (LDP withdrawal)
Kaifu	AI 9	CP	AI 9		SMD	LDP/CGP support
Esaki	AI 10	CP	AI 10	Suzuki		CGP support, but LDP candidate ran
Inoue I.	Kinki (OS8)	CP	OS 7			LDP/CGP support
Nishida	OS 9	CP	OS 9			LDP/CGP support
Nakamura	OS 14	CP	Kinki	Tanibatake		Nakamura ➡ CP PR list
Matsunami	OS 19	CP	OS 19		SMD	LDP/CGP support (LDP withdrawal)
Inoue K.	HG 4	CP	HG 4		SMD	LDP/CGP support (LDP withdrawal)
Koike	HG 6	CP	HG 6		SMD	LDP/CGP support (LDP ➡ PR list # 3)
Nakanishi	WK 1	CP	WK 1			LDP support (LDP candidate ➡ Indp.)
Nikai	WK 3	CP	WK 3		SMD	LDP support (LDP candidate ➡ Indp.)
Noda	KM 2	CP	KM 2		SMD	LDP/CGP support (LDP ➡ PR list # 3)
Yoshida	AI 3	LDP	Tokai	Kataoka	PR	Yoshida ➡ LDP PR list # 3
Aoyama	AI 7	LDP	Tokai	Suzuki	PR	Aoyama ➡ LDP PR list # 4
Nishino	OS 13	LDP	Kinki	Shiokawa	PR	Nishino ➡ LDP PR list # 4

Note. Nishimura, Yonetsu and Gondō from the Liberal Party did not run in the election. Abe and Katō from the Conservative Party also did not run in the election. A key to the abbreviated district names can be found in the List of Abbreviations. Data were compiled from Seiji Handobukku, 2000; the Election.co.jp website; various newspapers.

support to some Conservative candidates. Three defectors moved almost immediately from the CP to the LDP, where they were placed on the PR lists through which they all secured a seat. Only seven of the CP's remaining incumbents, however, succeeded in being reelected, and several CP candidates had to face an

LDP challenger in the district. Thus, the gamble to secure electoral survival through defection and LDP cooperation failed to provide the desired results for most defectors.

IN OPPOSITION AND THE MERGER WITH THE DPJ, 2000-2003

4.9 The Liberal Party in Opposition

The spotlight largely moved away from the Liberal Party following its departure from the ruling coalition, and in its new role as opposition party it was often overshadowed by the DPJ, which due to its size was the natural focus of attention within the opposition. The Liberals strongly opposed the LDP-led Mori administration, severely criticizing Mori's elevation to Prime Minister in the wake of Obuchi's stroke. Following establishment of the Koizumi administration in April 2001, the Liberals continued their severe stance towards the government and continuously criticized Koizumi's reform pledges as 'mere words', 'illusionary', and 'fake', and Koizumi himself as 'irresponsible' and 'unprincipled' (Jiyūtō, 2001, p. 5, 2002a, pp. 4-5, 2003a, pp. 4-5).

The Liberals had been frustrated by difficulties in bringing their policies to the fore within the ruling coalition, but this unsurprisingly proved to be equally hard within the opposition. Liberal MPs generally had little opportunity to promote their views in Parliament, and in party leader debates, modelled on the British Parliament's 'Prime Minister's Question Time', the party was allocated only 4 of the total 40 minutes due to its limited size.[115] Within the constraints of this structural setting, the Liberals nevertheless attempted to place their marks on parliamentary

[115] On several occasions in 2002 and 2003 Ozawa voluntarily refrained from participating in debates, arguing that the allocated time was insufficient for meaningful debate.

affairs, and also adopted an active approach to the legislative processes. In the Japanese Parliament, opposition parties sponsor bills on a regular basis, although this activity remains a largely symbolic gesture in as much as they are almost never passed. It is, however, a way to demonstrate the party's abilities within the legislative processes, and the Liberal Party on several occasions submitted legislation for parliamentary deliberation. Table 4.4 presents data on opposition-sponsored bills submitted to the House of Representatives from July 2000 until October 2003, and, as can be seen, the DPJ submitted the highest number of bills, with a total of 110 during the period, followed by the LP, which submitted a total of 29 law proposals.

Table 4.4

Number of Party-Sponsored Bills in the House of Representatives, 2000-2003

Party	Parliamentary session								Total
	148	149	150	151	153	154	155	156	
DPJ	2	1	13	35	11	20	4	24	110
LP	0	0	0	3	6	8	0	12	29
CGP	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	4
CP	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
JSP	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

Note. The table does not include bills sponsored by the government, by the chairmen of the various committees, or by individual LDP legislators. Data were compiled from the 'House of Representatives Records' [議案一覧], retrieved from the House of Representatives website.

This was considerably more than the LDP's coalition partners, the CGP and the CP, and substantially more than other minor opposition parties. While submission of legislation may have been somewhat futile in terms of exerting influence on the legislative process, for the LP it served as a way to demonstrate its policy making abilities, and its final act in Parliament was the submission of a large policy package, the 'Japan Renewal: 11 Law Proposals' [日本一新 十一法案], which formed the core of the party's projected campaign material in 2003 (see also Chapter 5).

Despite the relatively weak position in parliament, the Liberals played their only strong electoral card, party leader Ozawa, skilfully and managed to expand representation marginally in elections in 2000 and 2001. But although Liberal MPs continued to proclaim that the party would one day take power, it was becoming

increasingly obvious that it would not be able to do so on its own or in its present form. Under the present conditions, the party could not realistically expect to expand much further electorally, and the implementation of Liberal policies seemed destined to remain an unattainable dream unless drastic changes were to occur. This led to the opening of discussions on a merger between the Liberal and Democratic parties.

4.10 Towards the Liberal-Democratic Merger

The LP had sought to work closely with other opposition parties in order to present a united front vis-à-vis the ruling coalition, but was increasingly frustrated with the DPJ's failure to exert firm leadership within the opposition. Although the DPJ had become the undisputed leader of the opposition in back April 1998, it failed to come out with a clear policy agenda that would convince the public that it could do a better job than the LDP. In 2002, in an apparent attempt to instigate a split of the LDP, DPJ President Hatoyama Yukio expressed his support for Koizumi's fight against the LDP's 'old guard', but the attempt backfired and made it increasingly difficult for the electorate to see why they should support the DPJ rather than Koizumi (*Asahi Shinbun*, 2002, December 26).[116] As long as the opposition remained divided, there seemed to be little chance of countering the ruling coalition in an effective manner, and it was this situation which provided the backdrop for a proposal to merge the LP with the DPJ in order to make opposition forces more cohesive. The merger of the two parties finally materialized in September 2003, and was the result of a prolonged process, which lasted almost a year. We now take a closer look at the developments,

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[116]Following his reelection as DPJ leader in September 2002, Hatoyama stumbled in his selection of party executives, putting internal divisions on display. This was followed by a resounding defeat in by-elections held in October, and the DPJ's already low support rates declined further as did the party's image as a credible governing alternative (*Asahi Shinbun*, 2002, December 2).

which preceded the merger.

The idea to merge the two parties was initially introduced in late November 2002. It is unclear whether the idea originated with Hatoyama or Ozawa, and although Hatoyama was generally credited with having taken the first step towards actual merger talks, some sources suggest that the scheme had in fact been hatched by Ozawa. Talks of a possible merger had been circulating behind the scenes following a meeting between Hatoyama and Ozawa held at Hatoyama's summer resort in Karuizawa in the summer of 2002. Within the DPJ, where leftist groups remained strong, there was, however, considerable opposition towards a merger, which would inevitably lead to a strengthening of the conservative currents within the party. Overcoming this intraparty opposition represented a serious hurdle for Hatoyama and would likely have made it difficult for him to approach anyone with a merger proposal. Based on Ozawa's behavioural pattern in other situations, Hosoda Isamu, who served as policy secretary to a Liberal MP at the time, suggests that the fact that Ozawa went all the way to Karuizawa to discuss the possibilities with Hatoyama indicates that he may have been the mastermind behind the proposal (personal communication, December 7, 2004). What remains certain is that it was Hatoyama who made the first official moves in November 2002.

On November 29, Ozawa and Hatoyama agreed to establish a unified parliamentary grouping, which should eventually lead to a party merger, but the proposal was lambasted by large groups of DPJ legislators, who criticized Hatoyama for not having consulted them before making the agreement with Ozawa. Within days Hatoyama was forced to retreat and resign as party president, leaving the opposition as divided as ever. New DPJ President Kan Naoto indicated his intention

to seek electoral cooperation with the Liberals, but refused to commit himself to any specific course with regard to an actual merger (Japan Times, 2003, January 10). Ozawa, on the other hand, continued to pressure the DPJ for a decision, making it clear that he was prepared to fight the next election without assistance, if the DPJ failed to agree on unified tactics (*Asahi Shinbun*, 2003, January 15). Proponents of the merger idea within the DPJ were also causing a stir, and in February 2003 Hatoyama launched a new faction, coming out strongly in favour of a merger. Amid worries that this new faction would defect, the two parties agreed to set up a panel to discuss the merger proposal again, and it was agreed to reach a conclusion after local elections were held in April 2003. Executive members of the DPJ had apparently envisioned a panel to discuss only electoral cooperation and basic policy coordination, but the merger panel was agreed upon due to strong demand from Ozawa as well as DPJ members pushing for further integration of the two parties. The DPJ's intent was expressed by Secretary-general Okada in the following manner: "There are conflicting views [within the DPJ regarding the merger], but there is no option for not cooperating" (Financial Times, 2003, March 3). Nevertheless, consensus within the DPJ was not forthcoming, and in May it was decided to put off the merger plan due to lingering conflict between proponents and opponents of the idea.[117] Okada then proposed that the two parties should establish a joint parliamentary grouping rather than merge directly, but this proposal was flatly rejected by Ozawa on the grounds that it set no deadline for the materialization of the alliance.[118] Merger talks were taken off the table, and both parties began preparing to

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[117] In May, Okada conducted a person-to-person survey of DPJ members, which found 40 percent in favour, 30 percent against, and 30 percent undecided (Japan Times, 2003, May 28).

[118] Ozawa seemed convinced that such a move would jeopardize Liberal legislators in an eventual election, as it would force the party to abandon its key policies while still having to campaign

fight the election on their own. At the Liberal Party Convention held in June 2003, Ozawa expressed his regret for the failure to achieve unity, and cautioned that the coming election was the last chance for the opposition parties to take political power. As he noted, "if we do not take power this time, the chance to do so for the time being will disappear" (Ozawa, 2003). At the Party Convention, names of candidates scheduled to run in the next general election were announced, and Liberal MPs generally seemed to believe that they would be fighting the election on their own, and that the merger was unlikely to materialize in the near future (Tasso Takuya; Fujii Hirohisa; Suzuki Yoshio; Azuma Shōzō [interviews], 2003, July 9-14). To the astonishment of most observers, the merger plan then suddenly resurfaced again in mid-July, when Kan and Ozawa, pending endorsement by their respective party organizations, agreed on a merger of the two parties. This time Ozawa made considerable concessions, which seemed to placate even the staunchest opponents within the DPJ (Japan Times, 2003, August 1). On the other hand, some observers expressed doubts that the proposal would go down well with all members of the Liberal Party, in particular because tough negotiations were expected with regard to the allocation of the official party nomination in a range of districts.

With most Liberal MPs elected in the PR districts following defeat in the SMD, they were likely to be at a disadvantage vis-à-vis their DPJ counterparts, but in a final display of the party's famous cohesion all MPs eventually endorsed Ozawa's proposal. There is no doubt, however, that quite a few Liberal legislators were wary about the move. It seems that many MPs were not aware of the negotiations, or at least aware that they were at such a concrete stage, and the sudden announcement of

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separately in the election. "This", he told reporters "would greatly undermine the Liberal Party's ability to sell [its] uniqueness to voters" (Japan Times, 2003, May 27).

the merger sent at least some MP's offices into frenzy as they weighed their options.[119] Ozawa afterwards explained that the overwhelming majority of party MPs were in fact initially against the idea due to concerns about their electoral future. As he pointed out, most of his colleagues had been elected in 2000 *because of* the Liberal Party label and Ozawa's personal popularity, and it was generally expected that the party would once again be able to secure around six million votes nationwide, which would be enough to bring about the election of between 30 and 40 MPs. According to Ozawa, Liberal MPs had a strong sense that their position would be secure if the election was to be fought under the Liberal label, but that anything could happen following a merger with the DPJ (Ozawa and Kan, 2003, p. 120). Reportedly, it was difficult to win over some Liberal sceptics, but as Ozawa recalled afterwards, MPs could not really counter his argument that "nothing could be more important than finding a way to implement the party's policies, working wholeheartedly for Japan and the Japanese people, and toppling the LDP", and in the face of this argument it was difficult for legislators to look only at their individual situation and immediate electoral prospects (cited in Ōshita, 2003, p. 11). Despite the noble intentions that Liberal legislators proclaimed to have in their endorsement of the merger plan, it clearly caused concern and some MPs expressed a caveat, saying that if negotiations on district adjustments with the DPJ did not go well, they would

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[119] For example, this was certainly the case for Azuma Shōzō (Tokyo 15), who had secured his seat via PR in 2000. His primary concern was that there would not be sufficient time to explain the merger decision to voters. He had until then been criticising the DPJ for not playing a sufficiently decisive role, and joining hands with the party could easily make him look inconsistent (Azuma Shōzō, personal communication, August 1, 2003). Azuma, who had initially belonged to the CGP but opted to stay with Ozawa in 1998, was also faced with the dilemma that some within his district considered him to be a 'traitor', and he feared that this impression might be strengthened if he switched party again. In the end, however, he opted to join the DPJ based on his close adherence to Ozawa's thinking and personal ties to Ozawa (Tokunaga Masahiro, personal communication, 2004, December 21).

refrain from joining the party and instead become independents (Ōshita, 2003, p. 11). The stage was clearly set for a tough round of negotiations.

4.11 Negotiating the Merger

The agreement reached by Kan and Ozawa in late July stipulated quite clearly that the DPJ would be the surviving party, and the LP disbanded. It also stipulated that Kan would continue as party president, and that the policies, party platform, and party rules of the new DPJ would be based on the current DPJ's. It was agreed that the two parties would immediately establish a Merger Preparation Committee [合併準備委員会] in order to proceed with preparations for the merger, and here discussions primarily concerned adjustment of candidate lists for the coming election. The merger agreement included the following stipulation:

> Priority shall in principle be given to those who were elected in single-seat constituencies in the previous election as well as those who filed dual candidacy in both single-seat and proportional representation districts and were elected with a greater proportion of votes of those garnered by the winning candidate in a given district.
>
> (Democratic Party News Topics, 2003, July 23)

And following the announcement of the merger agreement, Kan calmly stated that "who will be left behind is more or less automatic in around 70 percent of the districts". This framework for candidate adjustment, however, represented a severe hurdle for most Liberal MPs and candidates hoping to gain the DPJ nomination in their districts, and the mood in the Liberal Party therefore was far from calm and more resembled a "whirlpool of dissatisfaction" (*Asahi Shinbun*, 2005, July 25). Trying to smooth things over, Ozawa responded to Kan's statement, saying that "in principle this is the case, [but] we need to win the election. There is no way we'll go with a specific candidate purely based on principles, if the person is not likely to win

in the election" (Jiyūtō NewsFlash, 2003, July 24). He also emphasized that the actual adjustments and decisions on individual districts should be considered afterwards, showing himself prepared to put up a fight on behalf of his colleagues (*Asahi Shinbun*, 2003, July 25).[120]

Negotiations began on July 31 and continued until the very last minute before the ceremony, which marked the actual merger. At the first meeting party representatives agreed on a set of Basic Principles for Adjusting Party Candidates [次期衆議院総選挙における候補者調整及び擁立の基本的考え方について], which stated that SMD incumbents would be given priority, that PR incumbents elected following defeat in SMD would be prioritized according to the highest 'margin of defeat' [惜敗率] in the previous election, and that in cases where new candidates were set to clash, priority should be given to the person most likely to secure the seat (Democratic Party News Topics, 2003, July 31).

From the outset 59 Liberal candidates were slated to run, including all 22 incumbents, 4 former MPs, and 33 new candidates.[121] Twenty-two candidates (12 incumbents and 10 newcomers) were scheduled to run in SMD, where the DPJ had no candidate, which made negotiations superfluous. This left negotiators with 35 districts, where candidates were at loggerheads to obtain the DPJ nomination. As Table 4.5 shows there was a range of competition patterns between candidates from the two parties. The LP had four SMD incumbents, but three were elected in Iwate, where the DPJ did not plan to run any candidates, and the only candidate overlap

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[120] Apparently to leave options open, Ozawa said that "[district adjustments] are not something decided upon in the...agreement, but it is [mentioned] there...due to the internal circumstances of the DPJ. There are still unclear points in the content of the agreement" (*Asahi Shinbun*, July 25, 2003).

[121] A list of 53 scheduled candidates had been announced at the Liberal Party Convention in June 2003, and six additional candidates were later added to this list (Liberal Party website). Two candidates were scheduled to run only on the PR list in the Tōhoku Block.

Table 4.5

LP-DPJ Patterns of Competition (Scheduled Candidacies Prior to Merger Agreement, n=35)

LP candidate type	vs.	DPJ candidate type	Number of districts (district names)
SMD incumbent	vs.	New	1 (KN 14)
PR incumbent	vs.	SMD incumbent	2 (KN 6, TO 6)
PR incumbent	vs.	PR incumbent	1 (KN 7)
PR incumbent	vs.	New candidate	4 (AI 12, OS 17, HG 10, NK 3)
Former MP	vs.	SMD incumbent	2 (TO 19, NK 1)
Former MP	vs.	New candidate	2 (IB 6, KY 4)
New	vs.	SMD incumbent	8 (HK 6, ST 5, ST 6, CH 2, TO 5, TO 7, TO 9, TO 22)
New	vs.	PR incumbent	1 (HK 2)
New	vs.	Former MP	3 (CH 9, NI 4, OS 4)
New	vs.	New	11 (FS 1, FS 5, ST 7, ST 14, ST 15, CH 3, CH 13, TO 25, AI 9, AI 14, OS 1)

Note. A key to the abbreviated district names can be found in the List of Abbreviations. Data were compiled from Eda Satsuki's website, as well as from various media coverage from the period.

involving a Liberal SMD incumbent was in Kanagawa 14, where Fujii Hirohisa was scheduled to run against a novice DPJ candidate. Several Liberal PR incumbents who had been elected following SMD defeat were, however, scheduled to run in districts, where the DPJ had also planned to run candidates[122], and four Liberal candidates were former MPs, two of whom were scheduled to run against a district incumbent, while another two were running in districts where the DPJ had new candidates. Eight of the new Liberal candidates had been scheduled to run in districts with a SMD incumbent, one in a district with a PR incumbent, three in districts where the DPJ had former MPs running, and 11 were facing new candidates from the DPJ.

Liberal MPs and candidates appear to have been justified in worrying about their electoral prospects following a merger, and if we look at the overall distribution of party nominations, the DPJ clearly took the bulk. [123] Table 4.6 summarizes the outcome of adjustment negotiations, and, as can be seen, the problem of surplus

[122] Two of these PR incumbents were facing SMD incumbents, one was facing another PR incumbent and four were facing new candidates.

[123] In the end, the 57 districts where Liberal candidates had been scheduled to run were distributed almost evenly between the two parties, but the 29 districts allocated to Liberal candidates, however, included 22 districts where the DPJ did not have a candidate running in the first place.

Table 4.6

Outcome of Candidate Adjustment Negotiations for DPJ Nominations in SMD (n=36)

Received district nomination	District (competition pattern: LP vs. DPJ)	Adjustments made in district [a]	'margin of defeat': LP	'margin of defeat': DPJ	Candidate survey in district
DPJ	HK 2 (new x inc x new)	◈ LP➡HK 12 ⊙ DPJ new➡Indp.	25.9	83.9	yes
DPJ	HK 6 (new x inc)	⊙ LP➡Indp.	22.8		
LP	FS 1 (new x new)	❖ DPJ			yes
DPJ	FS 5 (new x new)	⊙ LP➡Indp.			yes
LP	IB 6 (for x new)	◈ DPJ➡IB 7	20.8	40.8	yes
DPJ	IB 7 (new x new)[1]	❖ LP			
DPJ	ST 5 (new x inc)	❖ LP			
DPJ	ST 6 (new x inc)	❖ LP			
LP	ST 7 (new x new)	◈ DPJ➡HC 2003 (by)			yes
DPJ	ST 14 (new x new)	❖ LP			
LP	ST 15 (new x new)	◈ DPJ➡ST 4			yes
DPJ	CH 2 (new x inc)	❖ LP			
LP	CH 3 (new x new)	❖ DPJ			
DPJ	CH 9 (new x for)	❖ LP	28.8	68.9	
DPJ	CH 13 (new x new)	❖ LP			
DPJ	KN 6 (inc x inc)	◈ LP➡KN 13	31.7		
DPJ	KN 7 (inc x inc)	◈ LP➡KN 18	44.3	94.0	
LP	KN 14 (inc x new)	◈ DPJ➡KN 10		81.4	
DPJ	TO 5 (new x inc)	⊙ LP➡Indp.	31.6		
DPJ	TO 6 (inc x inc)	◈ LP➡Tokyo PR #25	32.9		yes
DPJ	TO 7 (new x inc)	⊙ LP➡IG			
DPJ	TO 9 (new x inc)	◈ LP➡Tokyo PR #26	36.6		
DPJ	TO 19 (for x inc)	◈ LP➡TO 11	26.7		
DPJ	TO 22 (new x inc)	◈ LP➡TO 8	37.9		
DPJ	TO 25 (new x new)	❖ LP		70.8	yes
LP	NI 4 (new x for)	◈ DPJ➡NI 2	96.3	79.9	
DPJ	AI 9 (new x new)	⊙ LP➡Indp.			
DPJ	AI 12 (inc x new)	◈ LP➡AI 15 (+PR #1)	28.1	69.7	
DPJ	AI 14 (new x new)	❖ LP			
DPJ	KY 4 (for vs. new)	❖ LP		15.2	yes
DPJ	OS 1 (new x new)	❖ LP			yes
DPJ	OS 4 (new x for)	◈ LP➡OS 6	27.6	85.4	yes
LP	OS 17 (inc x new)	◈ DPJ➡HC 2004	67.8	79.9	yes
DPJ	HG 10 (inc x new)	❖ LP	29.6		
DPJ	NK 1 (for vs. inc)	❖ LP	82.3		
LP	NK 3 (inc vs. new)	◈ DPJ➡HC 2004	54.7	37.2	

Note. A key to the abbreviated district names can be found in the List of Abbreviations. [a] "❖"indicate that scheduled candidate was withdrawn. "◈" indicate that candidate was transferred to different district or election type. "⊙" indicate that a candidate, who was denied nomination, ran with different affiliation. [b] Initially the DPJ did not have a candidate scheduled to run in Ibaraki's 7th district, but negotiations resulted in the DPJ candidate in the 6th district being shifted to the 7th to make way for a LP candidate, who had formerly run in Ibaraki 6th district. Data were compiled from the Election.co.jp website; the Eda Satsuki website; various newspapers.

candidates was generally solved by either moving candidates to another district or election type, or alternatively by having candidates withdraw their candidacies. The DPJ took the majority of nominations in districts with two candidates, securing 26 of the 35 contended districts, and the LP obviously had to make the most concessions

and compromises. In 15 districts the problem was solved simply by having one candidate withdraw to make way for the other, but only in two instances was the DPJ candidate made to withdraw. In other 16 districts, one candidate was moved to a different district or was persuaded to run in a different type of election. Seven DPJ candidates were shifted in this way, three to the House of Councillors election and four to different districts, while nine LP candidates were shifted to different districts. In the remaining five districts, disappointed LP candidates, who had not received the DPJ nomination, ran anyway as independents or for the Independents' Group (these involved only so-called 'new' candidates).

All 13 SMD incumbents (1 Liberal and 12 Democrats) maintained their district nomination. Seven districts involved PR incumbents elected following SMD defeats, and it had been agreed that such candidates should be prioritized according to their 'margin of defeat' in the 2000 election. Two of the LP's PR incumbents were facing SMD incumbents from the DPJ, who prevailed based on the principle of district winner priority, and subsequently Tsuchida (Kanagawa 6) and Suzuki (Tokyo 6) were shifted to Kanagawa 13 and the Tokyo Block (pure PR, rank 25), respectively.[124] In most other cases the DPJ nomination went to the candidate in the district with the highest 'margin of defeat' from the 2000 election (Kanagawa 7, Aichi 12, and Nagasaki 3)[125], but in Osaka 17, where Nishimura (LP) was facing a

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[124] Suzuki's listing only on the Tokyo Block list was actually a bit of an anomaly, as the DPJ in principle did not allow pure PR candidacies. He was, however, placed so far down the list, that his inclusion seems an almost symbolic gesture. This was also the case for Kawashima, who had been scheduled to run in Tokyo's 9th district, but who was shifted to the Tokyo Block list (rank 26). With few exceptions, dual candidates on block lists were given the same ranking, although two Liberal incumbents received preferential treatment and were placed at the top of the block lists (Tsuzuki in the Tokai Block and Hidaka in the Minami Kantō Block). Overall only 10 candidates were allowed to run as pure PR candidates, but all were listed after the DPJ's dual candidates. These 'exceptions to the rule' seem to have been the result of intense horse trading at the negotiation tables.

[125] Two PR incumbents, Hidaka (LP) and Sudō (DPJ) were facing each other in Kanagawa 7, and based on his lower 'margin of defeat' Hidaka was shifted to Kanagawa 18. In Aichi 12, Tsuzuki (LP)

DPJ newcomer whose 'margin of defeat' was actually slightly higher, the nomination was given to Nishimura following a survey review of the district.[126]

While most cases involving incumbents were fairly straightforward, the remaining 18 districts involved clashes between either two new candidates or a former MP and a new candidate. The initial agreement in such cases was that the person most likely to secure the seat would be given the nomination, but finding a method for objectively assessing these cases posed a problem since most candidates had never run in the district before. It was therefore decided to conduct a district survey in 12 districts in order to obtain 'objective' data for the distribution of nominations. Two of these districts involved incumbents (Tokyo 6 and Osaka 17), while the remainder involved clashes between two new candidates or a former MP and a new candidate. There is no information available on the criteria for inclusion of districts in the survey, and no trends are apparent from the outcome of negotiations. In some instances surveys were conducted even if one of the candidates had a significantly higher 'margin of defeat', and in some districts where it might have seemed obvious to conduct a survey due to a close race between candidates, this option was not chosen. In general, it seems that a lot of horse trading took place at the negotiation tables, and individual candidates were probably in some cases used as bargaining chips to protect the position of other candidates. The LP, for example, withdrew candidates without a fight in three districts (Saitama 14, Chiba 13, and Aichi 14), and there is no obvious explanation for this, except perhaps that in all

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faced a newcomer, who had a higher 'margin of defeat', which led to Tsuzuki being shifted to Aichi 15. In Nagasaki 3, Yamada (LP) also faced a newcomer, but his 'margin of defeat' was highest, and his opponent was shifted to the House of Councillors election in 2004 (where he was elected).

[126] Odachi was shifted to the House of Councillors election in 2004, where he was elected. In Hyōgo 10, the last of the LP incumbents, Shiota, was scheduled to run along with Okada, a DPJ newcomer who had not previously run, but for unknown reasons Shiota eventually withdrew his candidacy.

three instances the LP candidate was in fact a secretary to an MP or an employee from party headquarters, who had until very recently served in that function. In other districts candidates yielded if the opponent had already established some degree of support network in connection with other electoral activities or through family ties (e.g., Chiba 3, Chiba 9, and Chiba 13), and in yet other districts a candidacy was withdrawn as part of a compromise reached elsewhere (e.g., Ibaraki 7).

The Liberal Party had to make considerable compromises and indeed some sacrifices, but negotiators managed to secure districts for the majority of scheduled candidates, and in November 2003, 37 of the initial LP candidates were running with the DPJ nomination. Twenty-four of these were successful in their bid to win a seat, and incidentally no less than 13 of them managed to secure a SMD seat, which was a much higher number than would have been possible if the Liberals had remained on their own.[127] Thus, although there had initially been some doubts among Liberal MPs regarding the advantages of a union with the DPJ, there seem to have been quite tangible electoral benefits for many MPs.

4.12 External Response to the Liberal-Democratic Merger

Considering the Liberals' strong emphasis on their policies throughout the party's existence, it does seem at bit fickle that they were prepared to more or less throw their policy programme away in order to achieve the merger, but according to Ozawa the decision was based on the realization that a change of government could only be achieved by uniting the opposition under Kan, and in this way take power from the LDP. This would then eventually provide an opportunity to realize the Liberal policy

[127] Eventually, eight of the 22 Liberal incumbents secured their seat in the SMD competition and seven were elected through PR following defeat in their SMD. Four incumbents failed to win a seat (one ran without the DPJ nomination), and the remaining three incumbents did not run in the election.

package (Ozawa and Kan, 2003, p. 122).

Initial response to the merger agreement was rather cool, and representatives from both the LDP and the CGP were dismissive of the merger, describing it as 'unprincipled' and 'illicit'.[128] Newspapers like the *Yomiuri* and the *Sankei* also criticized the merger as a plot to enhance the parties' electoral possibilities, finding it difficult to discern the principles of the parties in the merger decision. The *Asahi* cautioned about the danger of including so-called 'right-wingers' like Nishimura Shingo into the DPJ, and only the *Mainichi* adopted a positive stance towards the merger plans, applauding the possibilities for the emergence of a political party which might realistically present itself as a governing alternative (Editorials, 2003, July 23). Within a short period of time, however, initial scepticism seemed to disappear, and the Kan-Ozawa duo seemingly made a strong impression in joint appearances.[129] Opinion polls conducted shortly after the announcement of the merger had indicated that respondents held limited expectations for the merger, and a poll from late July for example found 51 percent expressing no expectations, which increased to 59 percent in another poll from August 2 (reported in TV Asahi, 2003, July 27 and August 3). This trend, however, was halted within a couple of weeks, and an *Asahi Shinbun* poll conducted on August 12 found the two major parties head to head, with 34 percent of respondents in favour of continued rule by the LDP, and an equally large percentage in favour of a change of government with the DPJ at the

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[128] LDP Secretary-general Yamasaki Taku dismissed the announcement, saying "It has nothing to do with the LDP. The DPJ will gain only a tiny number of people by joining hands with the LP", and CGP leader Kanzaki Takenori added that "they are obviously doing this for election purposes. Where are their principles and policies?" (*Mainichi Shinbun*, 2003, July 23*)* This is perhaps slightly ironic, since the very same argument was used by the opposition in criticism of the LDP-CGP coalition, which could be described as equally 'illicit'.

[129] As Ozawa himself noted, the main sticking point was initially a reaction to his person, but he played his cards openly and admitted that his goal was to wrest power from the LDP, and that he was prepared to do *anything* to accomplish it (Japan Times, 2003, August 3).

centre (reported in TV Asahi, 2003, August 17).

What seemed to be most significant in voters' evaluation of the new party was that the merger strengthened the impression that the DPJ would transform itself into a party capable of taking the reins of government. Despite difficulties in reconciling all policy positions of the DPJ and the LP, the merger meant that voters for the first time were presented with a clear choice: Koizumi's reforms or reforms led by Kan and Ozawa (Kitaoka, 2003). The Chairman of the Japan Trade Union Council, Sasamori Kiyoshi, applauded the merger, saying that "The DPJ has so far been considered somewhat unreliable, but with the inclusion of the Liberal Party, it has been reinvigorated and now presents the electorate with a real choice of governing party" (*Yomiuri Shinbun*, 2003, October 6).

Following the election, the *Asahi Shinbun* noted that the DPJ, through the merger with the Liberal Party, had been able to shed its image as a perennial opposition party and gain support among conservative voters, and that consolidation of opposition candidacies had largely prevented opposition votes from being diluted among a range of parties, a significant problem in previous elections (2003, November 11). Business circles also expressed expectations for improved policy debates in parliament following the DPJ's electoral progress and its transformation into a 'responsible political party' (Japan Business Federation, 2003, November 9 and 10). Most significantly, however, the merger became an important step towards the realization of a genuine two-party system, which had been coveted by many, and perhaps in particular by Ozawa, since the onset of realignment activities in 1993. As Professor Steven Reed noted, "aside from the random Communist running around, it's a two-party system now" (cited in Frederick, 2003, ¶ 2).

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has presented a discussion of the Liberal Party's experiences in and out of government from its formation in 1998 until its dissolution in 2003. The LP initially sought to work within the opposition to oust the Hashimoto cabinet, but later decided to join the LDP in a coalition, partly based on the desire to influence the policy agenda and partly to forge a framework of electoral cooperation. This coalition was greeted with some scepticism, but progressed relatively smoothly in the beginning. Its initial success was mirrored in the approval ratings of the Obuchi cabinet, which rose from dismal to quite respectable figures. The LDP, however, quickly lost the will to work with its smaller partner, and increasingly turned to the CGP, whose support it needed in the House of Councillors. When the coalition was extended to formally include also the CGP, the Liberal Party was frustrated by its relegation to an increasingly minor role. In addition, disagreement over policy issues caused discord between coalition partners, and Ozawa on several occasions threatened to leave the coalition unless at least some progress were made in implementing the initial policy agreements. Although these various crises were smoothed over at first, by spring 2000 some LDP members seemed convinced that the LP would have to go. When the LDP refused to cooperate with the LP in the coming elections for the House of Representatives, Ozawa again threatened to leave the coalition, and the decision finally to withdraw caused the party to split in half and led to the establishment of the Conservative Party. Officially the party split was caused by disagreement over whether to stay within the coalition alliance or not, but it seems that, at least to some extent, pressure was being exerted from the LDP beneath the surface in order to orchestrate a breakup of the LP and isolate Ozawa. If

the 2000 election can be seen as the people's verdict on these events, it seems that the group, which remained within the LP made the right choice. Although Conservative candidates received some support from the LDP and the CGP, the election took a heavy toll on its numbers, leaving it with only seven seats.

Within opposition the LP faced an uphill battle in carving out a position for itself, and although it took an active approach in parliamentary affairs, it was obvious to all that the party's grand designs would remain unrealized barring major changes. At the same time electoral considerations called for unity within the opposition to counter the LDP and the CGP, and in November 2002 talks about merging the LP and the DPJ surfaced for the first time. Due to strong resistance within the DPJ, the plan was not realized, and by early summer 2003, following several failed attempts, was widely considered to be off the table. In a surprise move, Ozawa and Kan, however, reached agreement to merge the two parties in preparations for the coming election, and this time Kan felt confident that resistance within the DPJ could be curbed. Although many Liberal legislators were wary of the move, they rallied behind Ozawa, endorsing his plan, and in late September 2003 the two parties were officially merged. Prior to the merger, however, tough negotiations took place between the two parties in order to coordinate candidates in a range of single-member districts, where both parties had scheduled candidates. The Liberals obviously entered the negotiations from a somewhat weaker position and were forced to compromise and indeed sacrifice a handful of their scheduled candidates, including one incumbent. But judging from the outcome of the election, the merger clearly seemed to benefit the candidates who had received the DPJ nomination. The number of wasted votes due to opposition fragmentation was also reduced

considerably, and many of the Liberal candidates, who had previously been forced to rely on PR results, this time succeeded in securing a seat in their SMD.

In the 2003 election voters seemed to appreciate increasing clarity in what was a de facto two-party contest, and although the DPJ failed to wrest power from the LDP, it emerged from the election reinvigorated and rekindled in its quest, and the emerging new party system seemed to be one step closer to becoming a genuine two-party system. Although it did perplex many to see the LP so readily give up its independence and seemingly also some of its key policies in the merger agreement, Ozawa nevertheless stated that he had absolutely no regrets about the party's dissolution (Ozawa and Kan, 2003, pp. 132-33). After five years and eight months the curtain fell on the Liberal Party, and its members embarked on a new leg of their journey towards power – this time within the DPJ.

CHAPTER 5

THE LIBERAL PARTY AND POLICY

> "What's important is ideas and policy. I do not intend to withdraw a logic argument in order to assemble numbers".
>
> Ozawa Ichirō (*Asahi Shinbun*, 1997, February 28)

One characteristic of the 1955 system was the lack of clear policy competition between the LDP and the opposition parties, as the latter changed between playing the role of 'boots-and-all' resisters of government and of 'clients' of a government acting as 'patron'. The leading opposition party, the JSP, failed to articulate policy on a range of important issues[130], and the tradition of opposition parties as proponents of an alternative set of policies, which might translate into government policies following electoral victory, was remarkably weak (Stockwin, 1997, p. 81). Furthermore, within the LDP efforts to aggregate clear policy positions were often frustrated due to its catchall character and the great pluralism within party ranks (Richardson, 1997, pp. 68-9). Under the old electoral system, however, this mattered little to individual legislators as campaigning tended to emphasize personality rather than party or policy (Stockwin, 1997, p. 80).

An underlying aim of political reform in the 1990s had been the creation of a truly competitive party system, where parties would take their policies to the electorate, which could then endorse or reject these. Simultaneously, reforms were

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[130] According to Jain (1997, p. 18), the JSP did not articulate policy on issues such as pollution, consumer prices, liberalization of the distribution system, and agriculture, and also did little to call for better social welfare programmes or defend the rights of minorities.

intended to reinvigorate parliamentary proceedings and return political parties to a central role within the national policy making process. As Ozawa put it:

> "[Parliament] is the Supreme organ of national authority. Statements made there thus have the greatest formal significance. It is the appropriate place for responsible politicians to make their intents known to the world, to inform the people of party positions on issues, and to raise public consciousness on issues....Parties will communicate their positions more clearly to the people, and the people will communicate theirs in elections".
>
> (Ozawa, 1994, p. 75)

Ozawa believed the creation of parties capable of formulating clear policies to be a crucial element in the reinvigoration of Japanese politics, and the formation of the Liberal Party was clearly grounded in this belief. It was widely seen as a party organized around a shared policy vision, an image its members also sought to emphasize, for example by referring to themselves as a 'fighting policy group' [闘う政策集団] (Nishida Takeshi cited in *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 1997, December 31; Ozawa Ichirō cited in *Nikkei Shinbun*, 1997, December 30). The party clearly saw its raison d'être in the advancement of its policy agenda, and instead of aiming to become a catchall party, the Liberals were quite exclusive in admitting members at the time of party formation. When selecting candidates for subsequent elections, the party actively solicited people with a background that might help solidify the party's policy unity, although in practice many candidates were found through traditional channels (see also Chapter 7).

As this chapter demonstrates, the party quickly developed an internal policy making framework. Although its structure largely resembled that of other parties, innovative approaches to policy making were also explored. In all elections the Liberals put forward election pledges, which may be likened to the so-called 'policy manifestos' that eventually became a dominant theme of the 2003 election, and here,

as well as in other more detailed policy proposals, the Liberals addressed what they believed to be the problems facing Japan. Liberal policies tended to resound well with policy experts, but the electorate as a whole did not respond equally enthusiastically. This obviously brought some frustration to the party, and as will be suggested in the analysis here, this frustration may have been caused by the Liberals' insistence on bringing to the fore issues of interest to themselves (and of course in their view, of interest to Japan), rather than the issues of immediate importance to the average voter.

A range of rather arbitrary labels were applied to the Liberal Party over the years, and sometimes it was referred to as 'conservative' or 'neoconservative' (e.g., Ozawa, 1999; Tahara, 1999), other times as 'hawkish' and 'right-wing' (Hatoyama, 1999; Kawachi, 1999). This chapter therefore aims to shed light on the actual policy positions of the LP. In other words, we seek here to discover what the Liberal Party was actually all about in terms of policy. The chapter also aims to determine the LP's position within the policy dimension relative to other parties and to determine how its policy preferences matched those of the electorate.

The chapter first examines the LP's policy making framework and discusses the various party organs that formed the basis for policy formulation. It then briefly discusses the Liberal Party platform and the party's major policy statements and documents, from the first 'Blueprint for the Renewal of Japan' until the party's final policy statement, the 'Renewal of Japan: 11 Fundamental Laws'. The second part of the chapter presents and discusses the results of content analysis conducted on the 'Blueprint for the Renewal of Japan' (1998), and these results are used to position the party on a Left-Right policy continuum and also to compare its position with that of

other parties. The chapter finally considers how the issues emphasized by the Liberals resounded – or perhaps failed to resound – with the electorate by comparing issue preferences of the party with those of the electorate.

POLICY MAKING, BASIC PRINCIPLES, AND POLICY POSITIONS

5.1 The Policy Making Process and Intraparty Policy Organs

The Liberal Party immediately set out to signal that it was seriously contending for political power, and to show that the party's MPs were prepared to take over government, the NFP practice of maintaining a shadow cabinet, or the so-called 'Cabinet of Tomorrow' [明日の内閣], was carried over to the LP. The first lineup included Ozawa in charge as shadow Prime Minister, and an additional 10 MPs in charge of one or more policy areas[131] (Jiyūtō, 1998c, p. 9). The divisions of policy areas in the Cabinet of Tomorrow were largely duplicated in the party's policy groups, which are discussed below.

The number of bills sponsored by parliamentarians has increased in recent years (Yamamoto, 2001, p. 76), and the Liberals were quite active in sponsoring legislation proposals, although this remained a rather symbolic gesture as none of the proposals were adopted (cf. Chapter 4). In addition to the various types of policy advice provided by Parliament[132], all major political parties uphold their own research departments or research councils, which function to determine party policy positions on issues raised in parliamentary sessions. Most well-known and most

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[131] These policy areas included 'General Adjustment', 'Administrative Reform', 'Education and Culture', 'Science', 'National Security', 'Transportation', 'Okinawa and Hokkaidō', 'Commerce', 'Labour', 'Justice', 'Local Autonomy', 'Posts and Telecommunications', 'Land and Construction', 'Economy and Finance', 'Foreign Relations', 'Environment', 'Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry', and 'Citizen Welfare and Social Security'.

[132] These include for example the Research and Legislative Reference Bureau of the National Diet Library and the Legislative Bureaus in Parliament (for more details see Yamamoto, 2001, pp. 76-7).

important is the LDP's Policy Affairs Research Council (PARC), which has played a critical role in Japan's policy making process over the years. Its members are LDP parliamentarians, and it consists of a range of divisions, policy research groups, and special committees.[133]

The LP's policy making framework was centred on the so-called 'Liberal Party Policy Research Council' [自由党政策調査会], which was tasked with study and discussion of policy issues, and with presenting party positions in various policy areas. The structure of the Policy Research Council was not particularly innovative, and resembled that of the LDP, albeit obviously on a much smaller scale. It consisted of various divisions [部会] and an additional number of Research Councils [調査会], Promotion Headquarters [推進本部], and Project Teams [プロジェクトチーム].

The number and types of policy divisions varied over time, but their focus generally complied with the jurisdiction areas of the various government ministries. As the number of MPs decreased following the party split, so did the number of policy divisions, indicating that the LP were forced to restructure in accordance with the human resources at hand. Between 1998 and 2000, the number of divisions decreased from 17 to 13, and while MPs had initially been assigned to individual study groups, from April 2000 onwards they in principle belonged to all divisions.

Table 5.1 outlines changes within the structure of the Liberals' Policy Research Council, and, as can be seen, a number of restructurings occurred over the years. In 2000, for example, the number of divisions decreased by four, three research groups

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[133] The PARC coordinates LDP policy positions and works closely with government bureaucrats and interest groups. As Yamamoto (2001, p. 78) points out, however, it is not a place where politicians go to seek alternative policy advice. Furthermore, PARC staff members are not necessarily policy experts, but party operatives whose job it is to organize the meetings held under its auspices (see also Curtis, 1999; Hrebenar and Nakamura, 2000, pp. 138-9). The PARC currently consists of 12 divisions [部会], 44 policy research groups [政策調査会], and 50 special committees [特別委員会] (LDP website, accessed on March 2, 2005).

Table 5.1

Composition of the 'Liberal Party Policy Research Council', 1998-2003

Name of research unit	December 1998	May 2000	January 2001	January 2002	October 2002
Research divisions					
Environment	●	●	●	●	●
Judicial Affairs	●	●	●	●	●
Economy and Finance	●	●	●	●	
Transportation	●	●	●	●	
Posts and Telecommunications	●	●	●	●	
National Defence	●	●			
Okinawa and Hokkaidō	●	●			
Social Security	●	●			
Foreign Affairs	●	●			●
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	●		●	●	●
Commerce and Industry	●		●	●	
Administrative Reform	●				
Education and Culture	●				
Science	●				
Labour	●				
Local Autonomy	●				
Land and Construction	●				
Education, Culture and Science		●	●	●	
Administrative Reform and Local Autonomy		●	●	●	
Land, Construction and Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries		●			
Commerce, Industry and Labour		●			
Foreign Affairs and national Defence			●	●	
Land and Construction and Okinawa and Hokkaido			●	●	
Social Security and Labour			●	●	
Cabinet					●
General Affairs					●
Financial Affairs					●
Education and Science					●
Health and Labour					●
Economy, Trade and Industry					●
Land and Transport					●
Security					●
Other units:					
Political Reform Promotion Headquarters	●	●	●	●	●
Tax Reform Headquarters	●				
Financial Affairs Research Council	●				
Pension Affairs Research Council	●				
Constitutional Research Council		●	●	●	●
Public Works Project Team			●	●	●
Japan Renewal Headquarters			●	●	●
BSE Countermeasures Project Team				●	

Note. Compiled from Jiyūtō, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002a, 2003a.

disappeared, while a new 'Constitutional Research Council' was created. The number of divisions had decreased further by January 2001, but at the same time two additional research groups, the 'Public Works Project Team' and the 'Japan Renewal

Headquarters', were created. The latter included nine sub-committees, and was established in order to realize the 2000 election programme, 'Japan Renewal' [日本一新].[134] The policy divisions remained the same until October 2002, although a 'BSE Countermeasures Project Team' had been added by January 2002. The final list of policy research groups from October 2002 brought a new restructuring, as nine divisions disappeared and eight new were created.

While the framework described above largely resembled that of other parties, Liberal policy making activities also explored more innovative avenues, for example, the creation in January 1999 of a party think tank, the so-called 'Liberal Party Policy Research Center' [自由党総合政策研究所]. While both the LDP and the DPJ have associated think tanks to draw upon for new policy ideas and initiatives[135], the Liberal Party's think tank was a novel experiment in that it did not have an office but operated mostly through the Internet. It was in essence a virtual think tank, and its 'staff' consisted of the party's incumbent members as well as people who had run or were scheduled to run for the party in elections. Initially these 'researchers' discussed various issues within eight policy areas via e-mail, fax, and post, but a regular meeting place on the Internet was established in May 1999 (Jiyūtō, 1999, p.

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[134] It consisted of the Committees for 'Development of Self-reliant Individuals' [家族、社会に根ざす自立した日本人のあり方委員会], 'Fiscal Reconstruction and Administrative Reform' [財政健全化・行政改革委員会], 'Simpler, Fairer, and Lower Taxes' [税制の簡素・公平・軽減委員会], 'Structural Reform of the Economy and Protection of the Environment' [経済構造改革・環境保全委員会], 'Promotion of the Independence of Local Government' [地方自治体の自立推進委員会], 'Creation of a Japanese Information Society' [日本型情報社会構築委員会], 'Fundamental National Issues' [国家の基本問題に関する委員会], 'Promotion of a Consumption Tax Based Social Security Framework' [社会保障の消費税方式推進委員会], and finally for 'Reconstruction of Agriculture and for the Protection of the Food Provision for the People' [国民の食料確保ための農業再構築委員会] (Jiyūtō, 2002a).

[135] The LDP's think tank, the 'Institute for Policy Research' [総合政策研究所], was established in 1982, but its main function was gradually reduced to staffing PARC, although it also occasionally work with outside experts to generate policy ideas. The DPJ has two closely related policy advisory organizations, the 'Citizens Policy Research Council' [市民がつくる政策調査会] (established in 1997) and the 'Think Net Center 21' [シンクネットセンター21] (established in January 2000). The former aims to initiate legislation reflecting citizens' interests, while the latter studies policy agendas and seeks to develop networks with other think tanks and specialists (Yamamoto, 2001, p. 79).

16). Proposals were submitted to the party's policy board for adoption as party policy, and the virtual think tank also functioned as a means to attract and train candidates for office (Yamamoto, 2001, p. 79). In reality, the think tank seems not to have been used to a great extent by incumbents, who had other ways of influencing the policy agenda, but for non-MPs it provided a good chance to learn about and influence party policy (Hosoda Isamu [interview], 2003, July 2).

5.2 Party Platform and Basic Principles of the Liberal Party

The Liberal Party platform was adopted at the inaugural meeting and its opening line stated the party's aim as being "to realize a society and nation founded on liberalism, where people can express their abilities and individuality while maintaining respect for one another". The party's brand of liberalism was described as "creative liberalism, where autonomous individuals can creatively and freely pursue their own way of life, based on diverse choices and a fair set of rules". Furthermore, the platform referred to the development of "structures necessary to maintain and develop the lives and lifestyles of the Japanese people", "efforts to protect the global environment", and "liberty and peace within the international community". The opening paragraph was followed by six sub-sections, stressing keywords such as self-reliance, self-restraint, family, love of one's country, decentralization, small government, freedom, fairness, transparency, equality of opportunity, crisis management, social security, environment, coexistence with the international community, and world peace and prosperity (Jiyūtō, 1998a; see Appendix M for the full text of the platform). At a glance it resembled the platforms of most other parties, which often include a whole range of lofty ideals. The Liberals, however, clearly

thought of themselves as a new conservative force, able to rebuild a Japan, which they saw as having 'lost direction' and as having fallen into 'a pit of confusion' (Liberal Party Website), and party documents almost always stressed the LDP's failure to present a new national goal to the Japanese people, and its continuing adherence to the old agenda of distributive politics.

5.3 Liberal Party Policy Documents: An Overview

The Liberal Party published a wide range of policy statements and policy proposals. Many came in the form of statements regarding current issues, responses to deliberations underway in parliament, or statements concerning developments on the national or international stage. Some were short opinions or party briefs on particular policy areas, while others were lengthy documents with specific proposals in a range of policy areas. Some were issued in connection with electoral campaigns, while others were put forward outside election periods, often publicized in connection with a Party Convention.

Table 5.2
The Liberal Party's Main Policy Documents, 1998-2003

Document title	No. of Jap. characters	Year
Blueprint for the Renewal of Japan［日本再興へのシナリオ］	35,000	1998
Election Pledges for the House of Councillors Election 1998［参議院選挙の公約］	3,100	1998
The Liberal Party: The Road from Here［これからの自由党］	2,400	1999
Renewal of Japan［日本一新］	13,000	2000
Main Election Pledges for the House of Councillors Election［参議院選挙重点公約］	3,500	2001
Renewal of Japan: 11 Law Proposals［日本一新11法案］	44,800	2003

Note. Except for the 'Renewal of Japan: 11 Law Proposals', English translations or digests of the documents in this list were prepared by the Liberal Party and made available on its website. Based on Jiyūtō, 1998d, 1999, and 2002a; Liberal Party, 1998; Liberal Party website (accessed 27 September 2003).

Table 5.2 presents an overview of major party documents issued between 1998 and 2003, and, as can be seen, the 'Blueprint for the Renewal of Japan' (henceforth 'Blueprint') from 1998, was not only the first but also one of the lengthiest of the

party's policy programmes, and formed the core of all subsequent documents.[136] A digest of the 'Blueprint' was used in the relatively short 'Election Pledges for the House of Councillors Election' (1998), which was followed by 'The Liberal Party: The Road from Here' in June 1999, following the party's shift from opposition to government. A lengthier document, 'The Renewal of Japan: Policies for the 2000 House of Representatives Election' was published in 2000 to outline the party's electoral pledges, and was followed in 2001 by the 'Main Election Pledges for the House of Councillors Election 2001', also a relatively lengthy document. The final major policy statement, the 'Renewal of Japan: 11 Law Proposals' was of a slightly different character and consisted of a set of concrete law proposals, which were submitted in parliament in May and June 2003. The initial plan was to use this set of law proposals as the basis for the 2003 electoral campaign, but it was, at least temporarily, shelved due to the merger of the LP and the DPJ.

If the 'Blueprint for the Renewal of Japan' served as the starting point of the Liberal Party's policy endeavours, then the submission of the 'Japan Renewal: 11 Law Proposals' in 2003 must be seen as the party's grand finale in terms of policy statements. As the title indicates, it consisted of 11 law proposals, and its core ideas closely resembled those presented in the 'Blueprint'. Ozawa described the package as a 'blueprint for a new nation' [新国家の設計図], and explained that the law proposals were aimed at establishing a "free, fair and open society" and "an independent Japan based on individuals" (Jiyūtō, 2003b).

The crafting and submission of genuine law proposals as a means of communicating policy positions to the electorate was a novelty, but this was exactly

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[136] The 'Blueprint for a Renewal of Japan' (1998) was closely linked to Ozawa's 'A Plan for the Remodelling of Japan' [日本改造計] (1993).

what the Liberals attempted to do. By submitting the policy package they aimed to send a strong signal that their party was able to provide an alternative to the ruling coalition. In the presentation of the policy package, it was also emphasized that although each law proposal might be seen as an independent element, together they formed a 'system of law' (Jiyūtō, 2003b).

The laws were intended to show the party's image of a new Japan and the purpose of its proposed reforms, and the Liberal Party promised to pass the bills into law within half a year if the party were to gain a parliamentary majority (Jiyūtō, 2003b). The first of the eleven laws, the 'Fundamental Law for Building People', was intended to replace the existing 'Basic Law on Education', and in his introductory remarks Ozawa emphasized its importance for creating so-called 'good Japanese' [よき日本人], who could contribute to the creation of the ideal – a 'free, fair and open' Japan. As can be seen in Table 5.3, other laws covered areas such as

Table 5.3
'Renewal of Japan: 11 Fundamental Laws' (Outline)

Title of law	Date
1. Fundamental Law for Building People [人づくり基本法案]	June 23
2. Fundamental Law on Establishment of Politics led by the People – Law for Abolition of the Cabinet Legislation Bureau [国民主導政治確立基本法案・関連・内閣法制局廃止法案]	May 30
3. Fundamental Law on Security [安全保障基本法案]	April 17
4. Fundamental Law on Emergency Countermeasures [非常事態対処基本法案]	April 17
5. Fundamental Law on Establishment of Local Autonomy [地方自治確立基本法案]	May 30
6. Fundamental Law on Tax Reform [税制改革基本法案]	June 14
7. Fundamental Law on Enriching the Daily Lives of People [国民生活充実基本法案]	June 23
8. Fundamental Law on Establishment of a Market Economy [市場経済確立基本法案]	May 28
9. Fundamental Law on Reorganization of Special Status Corporations [特殊法人等整理基本法案]	May 30
10. Fundamental Law on Securing Food Provisions and Production [食料生産確保基本法案]	June 23
11. Fundamental Law on Conservation of the Global Environment [地球環境保全基本法案]	June 23

Note. Based on Jiyūtō, 2003b.

political reform, security issues, emergencies, local autonomy, tax reform, enrichment of people's lives, market economy, special status corporations, food provisions, and conservation of the global environment. All of these issues had been

covered in the 'Blueprint', and in many ways the '11 Fundamental Laws' package presented the Liberal Party's original policy visions in a new and more concrete version.

Unfortunately for the Liberals, of course, they did not have a parliamentary majority, and the law proposals therefore unsurprisingly were not passed. Considering the party's parliamentary standing the submission of the full policy package may in a sense have been 'much ado about nothing', but on the other hand the submission did send an important message. It showed the party's ability to craft legislation, and also its ability to present a coherent set of policies. Certainly this was a statement which could not easily be ignored by the DPJ in the merger negotiations.[137] And even if the Liberals were not in a position to bring about their desired changes, this manifesto nevertheless gave some "key signposts for the legislative agenda", and presented "a challenge to Koizumi and his reformers" (Feldman, 2003). As Feldman also notes, the Liberals played the role as "a battering ram for new ideas", and the '11 Law Proposals' package certainly deserves attention as the party's 'final stand'.

Although the '11 Law Proposals' document was somewhat longer than the 'Blueprint', it rested heavily upon the ideas put forward in the 'Blueprint', and the pivotal role of this first document in the development of party policies makes it the obvious starting point for an inquiry into Liberal Party policy positions. For this reason it will be the subject of the content analysis in the following section. Before

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[137] Although the two parties' leaders had agreed that the policy platform following the merger would be that of the DPJ, they had also agreed that elements of the Liberal policy platform should be incorporated wherever possible. In late August, it was agreed to incorporate 3 of the 11 proposals into the DPJ's election manifesto, but negotiators failed to reach consensus on inclusion of the remaining 8 proposals. The items incorporated into the DPJ Manifesto were the 'Fundamental Law on Establishment of Local Autonomy', the 'Fundamental Law on Establishment of a Market Economy', and the 'Fundamental Law on Conservation of the Global Environment' (*Asahi Shinbun*, 2003, August 23).

embarking on the analysis, we will, however, briefly consider the analytical framework that guides this analysis.

LIBERAL PARTY POLICY PREFERENCES

5.4 Policy Preferences, the Content Analysis Method, and the Coding Scheme

A number of methods can be used to compare policy positions of individual parties, including the so-called 'expert judgements'.[138] Alternatively, one might instead distinguish between party positions at the level of specific issues and general political priorities across issues.[139] This is the approach employed by Budge et al. (2001), who utilize a cross-national dataset consisting of a comprehensive selection of party election manifestos coded according to a range of specific categories to identify the policy preferences of political parties. The study is grounded in the theory of *issue salience* rather than the idea of party confrontation at all levels, and essentially argues that parties compete in terms of *issue priorities* and avoid taking minority stands on specific issues. The key to understanding policy positions thus lies in unscrambling the puzzle of issue saliency and priorities for specific parties.

The content analysis method has been described as a "research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of

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[138] This method involves asking local experts to place parties on a given dimension, but as noted by Budge (2001, p. 75) such 'expert judgments' are fraught with problems if one does not also reflect on how these experts are going to judge party positions. And unless specific instructions are issued, one cannot be certain that experts will be using the same criteria, nor that the criteria used would be appropriate for the tasks for which the measure is to be used.

[139] As Budge (2001, p. 76) suggests, however, the complexities of party positions complicate this endeavour since parties do not always adopt what he terms 'yah-boo responses', nor do they often take completely alternative stands to their competitors. Indeed, parties may by and large endorse the same specific issue stands but still prioritize them differently. Budge also argues that this tactic fits general common sense impressions. For example, Left wing parties do not emphasize tax-cutting but stress the expansion of welfare, while Right wing parties do the opposite. Other oppositions such as those between a warlike and pacifist stance also occur. No party wishes to be accused of leaving the country weak and unprepared – but neither will it wish to be seen as opposing peace. One can, nevertheless, differentially emphasize threats to security compared to opportunities for negotiation, and such varying priorities do quite clearly differentiate *overall* party stands.

communication" (Berelson, 1971, p. 18), and the coding scheme developed by Budge et al. (2001) includes quantification (how many statements) as well as classification (what kind of statements) of election programmes. The method involves counting all sentences in a text, whether they seem to have a direct policy content or not (the 'count' for each category may include vague generalizations about a problem or simple references to its importance), and the justification for this approach is that party programmes are carefully considered documents, so that presumably no sentence appears in them without a purpose (Budge, 2001, p. 79; Budge et al., 1987; Budge et al., 2001, pp. 216-7).[140] Furthermore, they argue that parties tend to devote their energy to emphasizing the policy areas where they have a special interest or their credibility is strong enough to pick up votes, which leads to their theory of issue salience.

To facilitate cross-country comparisons, a classification scheme of invariant general categories is used to cover the document content. This scheme is outlined in Table 5.4, and contains 56 different categories grouped into seven major policy domains, i.e., 'External Relations', 'Freedom and Democracy', 'Political System', 'Economy', 'Welfare and Quality of Life', 'Fabric of Society', and 'Social Groups' (for a more detailed description of the coding categories see also Budge et al., 2001, pp. 222-8). The coding unit is the 'quasi-sentence', defined as an argument or the "verbal expression of one political idea or issue" (Budge et al., 2001, p. 217).[141]

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[140] The inclusion of all references to a given issue area, however, makes it difficult to tie down all sentences to either a specific pro- or con-position. Long digressions on the growth of unemployment are presumably saying it is a bad thing and that the party would do something to counter it. As Budge (2001, p. 79) notes, it is almost impossible to imagine that any party is going to say explicitly that it is *for* unemployment, but a party might, however, say very little about unemployment and instead devote a lot of attention to the evils of inflation, implying that all other considerations should be subordinated to fighting this problem.

[141] In most cases this consists of a 'regular' sentence, and punctuation has therefore been used as a guideline for identifying arguments, but in some cases one sentence combine two statements (e.g., 'we

Table 5.4

Overview of the 7 Policy Domains and 56 Categories Used in the Coding Procedure

1. EXTERNAL RELATIONS	4. ECONOMY	6. FABRIC OF SOCIETY
Foreign special relationships (+)	Free enterprise	National way of life (+)
Foreign special relationships (-)	Incentives	National way of life (-)
Anti-imperialism	Market regulations	Traditional morality (+)
Military (+)	Economic planning	Traditional morality (-)
Military (-)	Corporatism	Law and order
Peace	Protectionism (+)	Social harmony
Internationalism (+)	Protectionism (-)	Multiculturalism (+)
European Community (+)	Economic goals	Multiculturalism (-)
Internationalism (-)	Keynesian demand management	
European Community (-)	Productivity	7. SOCIAL GROUPS
	Technology and infrastructure	Labour groups (+)
2. FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY	Controlled economy	Labour groups (-)
Freedom and human rights	Nationalization	Agriculture and farmers
Democracy	Economic orthodoxy	Middle class and professional groups
Constitutionalism (+)	Marxist analysis	Underprivileged minority groups
Constitutionalism (-)	Anti-growth economy	Non-economic demographic groups
3. POLITICAL SYSTEM	5. WELFARE/QUALITY OF LIFE	
Decentralization	Environmental protection	
Centralization	Culture	
Governmental and administrative efficiency	Social justice	
	Welfare state (+)	
Political corruption	Welfare state (-)	
Political authority	Education (+)	
	Education (-)	

Note. From Budge et al., 2001, pp. 222-8.

The data on policy preferences can be put to use in a range of settings, and Budge and Klingemann (2001), for example, use the dataset to position political parties within a Left-Right dimension, while Hearl (2001) uses data to profile parties by creating so-called 'Top Ten Tables', which identifies the most emphasized categories for individual parties.

The aim of our investigation is to reach a better understanding of the Liberals' policy positions and issue priorities. The focus of the examination is the 'Blueprint for the Renewal of Japan', and in order to enhance the credibility and comparability of the analysis conducted here, it is carried out in adherence to the classification

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will cut taxes and reduce our military forces'), and to grasp all messages of the programme such sentences have been decomposed into 'quasi-sentences' (see Budge et al., 2001, pp. 217-8, or the accompanying data CD-ROM for more details on what constitutes a 'quasi-sentence').

scheme just outlined.[142] The aggregated data will then be used to position the Liberal Party on a Left-Right dimension (cf. Budge and Klingemann, 2001) as well as for profiling it in terms of policy emphasis (cf. Hearl, 2001). Before presenting the actual results of the content analysis, however, a brief outline of the document structure and content is given below.

5.5 Outline of the 'Blueprint for the Renewal of Japan'

The 'Blueprint' was published in both Japanese and English (Jiyūtō, 1998d; Liberal Party, 1998), and the booklet (79 pages in the Japanese version and 63 pages in the English version) presented a comprehensive account of the party's basic ideals, its basic policies, and its visions for a restructuring of Japan. The 'Blueprint' focused on the key items of the party platform and included abstract ideas as well as a range of concrete proposals for measures to be taken in the event that the party was to gain power.

The first chapter, Our Basic Ideals (pp. 1-10; Japanese print version), stressed the need for reform and outlined the principles of the Liberal Party's reform plan embodied in the buzzwords 'free', 'fair' and 'open'. Finally, it described the LP's ideal society, which involved the creation of a 'fair and just society', a move 'from reliance on the bureaucracy towards self-reliance', a shift of 'power from the centre

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[142] The original classification scheme allows coders to create sub-categories to capture particularities of national politics, provided that these sub-categories can be recombined into a general category. Such sub-categories have for example been used for Eastern European and South American countries to capture the specific policy problems of transitional democracies. For the present purpose, however, I have opted not to create any additional sub-categories for two reasons. Firstly, most of the quasi-sentences in the 'Blueprint for the Renewal of Japan' could be identified as belonging to one of the existing categories (uncoded sentences constitute only 1.3 percent of total). Secondly, the data aggregated for the 'Blueprint' will be used in comparison with data on other Japanese parties, which are included in the dataset created by Budge et al. (2001). Since no sub-categories were used in the coding for these parties, it seems most sensible to use the same approach for the Liberal Party document.

to the regions', and an end to the collusion between politicians, bureaucrats, and big business. The LP also envisioned a 'consumer-led society with a vigorous private sector', 'a society where the burden of overwork would be reduced', a 'normalized society', where every citizen could participate to his or her ability, a 'society in harmony with nature', and last but not least a country which could be 'relied upon by the international community' (see Appendix N for further details). After these more abstract thoughts, the second chapter (pp. 11-42) presented the LP's Basic Policies in two main areas titled 'On Japan and the Japanese' and 'Supporting the National Lifestyle and Economic Activity'[143], while the remaining three chapters consisted of policy visions for a restructuring of Japan under the headlines of 'Maintaining People's Living Spaces and the Environment' (pp. 43-56), 'Contributing to World Peace and Prosperity' (pp. 57-64), and 'Changing the Nation' (pp. 65-79). An overview of the content of the 'Blueprint' can be found in Appendix O.

5.6 Content Analysis: 'Blueprint for the Renewal of Japan'

The sheer length and scope of the 'Blueprint' call for some kind of quantification in order to allow us to understand and summarize the ideas, policies, issues, and concerns stressed by the Liberal Party in the document. Both the Japanese and the English version were accessible in hard copy as well as in an electronic format on the Liberal Party website. In terms of content there were no differences between the paper and electronic versions, and to ease the coding procedure, the version used for

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[143] The first section stressed the need for autonomy, both at individual and state level, and the importance of family ties, and included proposals for creating improved conditions for family life and care at the various generational levels, educational reform, and measures to improve moral and support culture. The second section dealt with the economic situation, and stressed among other things the need for structural reform of the economy, fiscal structural reform, reform of the taxation system, employment security, and reform of the social security system.

aggregation of data here is the English translation, which was downloaded from the website, and subsequently prepared for coding by decomposing it into quasi-sentences using a spreadsheet.[144]

In accordance with the coding instructions established by Budge et al. (2001), some types of content are not included in the analysis.[145] Due to the general character of the 'Blueprint's' first chapter, this has been excluded from the analysis, which therefore focuses only on chapters 2-5. The total number of analytical units equals the total number of identified quasi-sentences (Volkens, 2002, p. 8), and in the case of the 'Blueprint' the analysis covers a total of 821 quasi-sentences. Following identification of individual sentence units, each of these were then coded according to the 56 categories outlined previously in Table 5.4.

Table 5.5 shows the distribution of quasi-sentences over the various policy categories, and, as can be seen in the table, the 'Blueprint' touched upon issues in all policy domains. The 'Economy' was most salient with 28.6 percent of all sentences falling into this category, followed by the domains of 'Welfare and Quality of Life', 'Political System', 'External Relations', 'Social Groups', 'Fabric of Society', and finally 'Freedom and Democracy'. Within policy domains some categories were clearly more important than others, and no less than 21 categories were left empty. These included several categories, which hold little relevance in the Japanese case, e.g., 'multiculturalism' (+ and -) and 'European Community' (+ and -), or items not endorsed by the Liberal Party, e.g., 'centralization' and 'nationalization', but most

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[144] Before choosing the English version over the Japanese, crosschecks of random sections were made in order to secure that structure and content of the two versions were identical (no significant differences were identified). Furthermore, since the English version was an official translation provided by the LP, it is deemed here to constitute a reliable basis for analysis of party positions.

[145] This includes for example statistics, tables of content, and section headings. Introductory remarks by party leaders are also ignored, as the ideal type of a platform is defined as authoritative statements of a given party (Volkens, 2002, p. 8).

Table 5.5

Percentage Distribution of (Quasi-) Sentences Over 56 Policy Categories Plus Uncoded Sentences in 'Blueprint for the Renewal of Japan'

Domains and categories	sentences		Domains and categories	sentences	
	n=	%		n=	%
1. EXTERNAL RELATIONS	[94]	[11.5]	Technology and infrastructure	59	7.2
Foreign special relationship (+)	7	0.9	Controlled economy	0	0.0
Foreign special relationships (-)	0	0.0	Nationalization	0	0.0
Anti-imperialism	0	0.0	Economic orthodoxy	8	1.0
Military (+)	16	1.9	Marxist analysis	0	0.0
Military (-)	7	0.9	Anti-growth economy	0	0.0
Peace	7	0.9			
Internationalism (+)	57	6.9	5. WELFARE AND QUALITY OF LIFE	[156]	[19.0]
European Community (+)	0	0.0	Environmental protection	37	4.5
Internationalism (-)	0	0.0	Culture	21	2.6
European Community (-)	0	0.0	Social justice	18	2.2
			Welfare state (+)	42	5.1
2. FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY	[51]	[6.2]	Welfare state (-)	0	0.0
Freedom and human rights	5	0.6	Education (+)	38	4.6
Democracy	34	4.1	Education (-)	0	0.0
Constitutionalism (+)	5	0.6			
Constitutionalism (-)	7	0.9	6. FABRIC OF SOCIETY	[59]	[7.1]
			National way of life (+)	2	0.2
3. POLITICAL SYSTEM	[140]	[17.0]	National way of life (-)	0	0.0
Decentralization	34	4.1	Traditional morality (+)	19	2.3
Centralization	0	0.0	Traditional morality (-)	0	0.0
Governmental and adm. efficiency	90	11.0	Law and order	9	1.1
Political corruption	16	1.9	Social harmony	29	3.5
Political authority	0	0.0	Multiculturalism (+)	0	0.0
			Multiculturalism (-)	0	0.0
4. ECONOMY	[235]	[28.6]			
Free enterprise	30	3.7	7. SOCIAL GROUPS	[86]	[10.4]
Incentives	28	3.4	Labour groups (+)	14	1.7
Market regulations	54	6.6	Labour groups (-)	0	0.0
Economic planning	1	0.1	Agriculture and farmers	29	3.5
Corporatism	0	0.0	Middle class and prof. groups	0	0.0
Protectionism (+)	0	0.0	Underprivileged minority groups	12	1.5
Protectionism (-)	1	0.1	Non-economic demographic groups	20	2.4
Economic goals	48	5.8			
Keynesian demand management	2	0.2	Uncoded sentences	11	1.3
Productivity	4	0.5	Total	821	100.0

Note. Content analysis was conducted on sections 2-5 of 'Blueprint for the Renewal of Japan' (pages 9-63). A total of 1026 quasi-sentences were identified, hereof 205 headlines, which have been excluded from the analysis. Sentences which fell into none of the 56 categories are listed in the category 'uncoded sentences'.

belonged in the group of 'pro' or 'con' positions included in the coding scheme.[146] If we look at the 35 categories, which were referred to in the 'Blueprint', again we see that some issues were clearly more salient than others.

[146] Such bipolar contrasts include for example 'internationalism (+ and -)' and 'national way of life (+ and -)', and if we assume that parties tend to emphasize the issues, which they favour, and largely

Table 5.6 presents a 'Liberal Party top ten issue list' based on the results of the content analysis, and, as can be seen in the table, the highest ranking issues related to the domains of the 'Political System', 'External Relations', 'Economy', 'Welfare and Quality of Life', and 'Freedom and Democracy'. Most frequent were references to the need for governmental and administrative efficiency, for advancement and improvement of technology and infrastructure, for international cooperation and for Japan to take on a responsible role within the international community, as well as references to market regulations, which in almost all cases stated the need to abolish existing regulations, to establish fair and transparent market rules, to provide aid to small businesses, and to protect consumers. References to the economy in more general terms were also frequent, and often included statements about the need to restore fiscal and economic health, the need to create a solid economic basis to meet the demands of the rapidly aging society, and the need to put Japan back on a track of economic growth. Other salient issues included provision of social security in various areas, improvement of the educational system and the status of education, environmental protection, and a strengthening of democratic aspects within society and within the political system.

Table 5.6

Liberal Party 'Top Ten' Policy Issues

Rank and Category (Policy Domain)	%
1. Governmental and administrative efficiency (Political system)	11.0
2. Technology and infrastructure (Economy)	7.2
3. Internationalism + (External relations)	6.9
4. Market regulations (Economy)	6.6
5. Economic goals (Economy)	5.8
6. Welfare state + (Welfare/Quality of Life)	5.1
7. Education + (Welfare/Quality of Life)	4.6
8. Environmental protection (Welfare/ Quality of Life)	4.5
9. Democracy (Freedom and democracy)	4.1
10. Decentralization (Political system)	4.1

Note. Figures indicate the percentage of references to a given category in 'Blueprint for the Renewal of Japan', and are based on table 5.5.

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ignore those issues, which they do not endorse, it is not surprising that some of these categories are void. Indeed, Budge (2001, p. 83) found that in most cases the negative side of these bipolar contrasts received few endorsements from political parties (for a more detailed discussion on pro versus con positions in the coding scheme see Budge, 2001).

Finally, the issue of decentralization figured prominently on the Liberal agenda, and included a range of concrete proposals for delegating administrative tasks from the centre to the regions.

Further down the Liberal agenda, below the top ten issues, followed references to free and unhampered enterprise and the merits of a strong private sector (3.7 percent), social harmony, in particular appeals for national effort and public spiritedness (3.5 percent), support for agriculture and farmers (3.5 percent), incentives to encourage enterprise, including a comprehensive tax reform (3.4 percent), provision and support of cultural activities (2.6 percent), assistance to various demographic groups, in particular women and the elderly (2.4 percent), protection of traditional moral values, which in particular involved positive references to the importance of family ties and the role of the family within society (2.3 percent), and social justice and the need for fair treatment of all citizens (2.2 percent). The document also referred to the need for measures against political corruption (1.9 percent), for favourable treatment of labour groups, in particular with regard to employment security (1.7 percent), for creation of a barrier free society to allow full participation of handicapped in social and work life (1.5 percent), and for the maintenance of law and order (1.1 percent). Finally, there were sporadic references to categories such as 'economic orthodoxy', 'foreign special relationships', 'peace', 'constitutionalism' (both praise and criticism of the current constitution), and 'freedom and human rights'.

Considering that the Liberals were often described as 'hawkish' and 'rightist', it is interesting that references to military matters constitute a relatively insignificant part of the document. Only 23 (2.8 percent) of the 821 quasi-sentences referred to

military matters, and of these 7 either stated that Japan should not be allowed to embark on a new militaristic path, or referred to disarmament. Sixteen sentences were coded as positive towards military, but most dealt with the U.S.-Japan alliance, with ways to maintain and increase its credibility, the need to maintain defence capabilities, the need to clarify guidelines for the role of the Self-Defense Forces, and the state's responsibility for defending the property and lives of Japanese citizens. Thus, although a few Liberal legislators may in some instances have taken more aggressive stances on military issues, references in the party programme were in fact rather scarce.

To reiterate briefly our findings here, references to issues relating to the economy, welfare and quality of life, and the restructuring of the political system were prevalent, and these three domains in fact constituted almost two thirds of the whole document. All other domains were also given attention, but played a more limited role within the overall structure of the document. Specific issues within the policy domains were given special attention, as can be seen for example in the case of the 'internationalism (+)' category. Although the 'External Relations' domain constituted only 11.5 percent of the whole document, its subcategory 'internationalism (+)' scored no less than 6.9 percent, and ranked third on the party's top ten list of issues. Similarly, the sub-category of 'democracy' also ranked among the top ten issues, even though the 'Freedom and Democracy' domain constituted only 6.2 percent of the overall text.

5.7 Positioning the Liberal Party in a Left-Right Dimension

In this section we use the values derived from the content analysis are used to

position the Liberal Party on the Left-Right scale. Clearly, as most researchers agree, the actual policy space in a given political system consists of as many dimensions as there are political actors and public preferences held by them, and as Budge and Klingemann argue, any attempt to measure this space is bound to have built-in distortions, whether the representation is one-dimensional, two-dimensional, or has as many dimensions as we can handle (2001, p. 59). Nevertheless, Laver and Budge (1992) identified the Left-Right dimension as the dominant and most generalizable policy continuum across countries and over time since it produces a simplified space where policy closeness can be represented, and because it is an effective way of simplifying presentation.[147]

The purpose here is to reflect the Liberal Party's view of the world and its location within the political system. This is done by positioning it on a Left-Right scale, which has been made up by adding the percentages of references to the policy content categories grouped as Left and Right (see Table 5.7), and then subtracting the sum of Left percentages from the sum of Right percentages. In the resulting Left-Right score, negative values represent Left positions and positive values represent Right positions. As will be remembered, the coding scheme also included categories other

Table 5.7

Left-Right Grouping of Categories

Right emphases	Left emphases
Military (+)	Anti-imperialism
Freedom/human rights	Military (-)
Constitutionalism (+)	Peace
Political authority	Internationalism (+)
Free enterprise	Democracy
Incentives	Market regulations
Protectionism (-)	Economic planning
Economic orthodoxy	Protectionism (+)
Welfare state (-)	Controlled economy
National way of life (+)	Nationalization
Traditional morality (+)	Welfare state (+)
Law and order	Education (+)
Social harmony	Labour groups (+)

Note. From Budge and Klingemann, 2001, p. 22. Further details on the inclusion of individual categories in the Left or Right side of the spectrum can also be found here.

[147] According to Budge and Klingemann (2001, p. 61), complex issues can most easily be rendered intelligible for debate if positioned along a single dimension of differences. As they note, Left-Right ideology is already there to focus differences, and is widely used by the media, practically forcing it on electors and political parties alike.

than those represented in the Left-Right continuum, and each value therefore represent the proportionate value of a category within the *whole* document. In the calculation of the Left-Right position values are left as they are, based on the notion that a policy document is not made up of a series of discrete statements on different policy areas, but represent a carefully considered presentation of the party's policies. This approach allows us to summarize the tendencies of the whole document, and not just one bit of it (Budge and Klingemann, 2001, p. 23). This approach also entails – in concord with the issue saliency theory described previously – that parties may change their positions on the Left-Right dimension simply by saying more or less about different matters. Parties may continue to make assertions about Left-Right issues, but the overall balance and position on this dimension can be shifted simply if they add or subtract references to other policy areas. Indeed, as noted by Budge and Klingemann, "political rhetoric is a more subtle matter of nuances and relative emphases than is allowed for by analysts who feel that if parties do not make blunt assertions or counter-assertions they are not taking up a position at all" (p. 24).

Slightly less than half of the sentences in the 'Blueprint' referred to one of the 26 Left-Right categories, with 18.4 percent falling in Right categories, and 30.9 percent in the Left categories. If we subtract the sum of Left issues from those of the Right, we reach a Left-Right score of -12.5 for the Liberal Party, which places it slightly left of centre. Thus, although the party was often referred to as 'rightist', this proposition is not supported by the empirical analysis of the party programme conducted here. Many of the issues stressed by the Liberals, however, were definitely issues typically emphasized by parties on the Right, for example the advocacy of deregulation, market economy, and small government, but, as is also noted by

Stockwin (2003, p. 201), the reforms advocated by the LP were those of the moderate – not the extreme – Right. And if we look at the 'total policy package' and the LP's position on the Left-Right dimension, it actually falls slightly to the left of the middle – like most other major parties in Japan.

The dataset prepared by Budge et al. (2001) also includes data on Japanese parties, although the time span covered unfortunately runs only until 1996 – before the Liberal Party's formation. For the sake of comparison, however, we now take a brief look at the Left-Right values for parties, identified in their campaign material from elections in 1993 and 1996. These are listed in Table 5.8, and, as can be seen, in 1993 all parties were in fact positioned left of centre based on what they were saying in their election programmes. In 1996, only the NFP and, somewhat puzzling, the JCP placed right-of-centre based on their electoral statements. It does seem a bit bewildering that the JCP's score should have changed from -20.0 in 1993 to 12.8 in 1996, in effect placing it right-of-centre, but this may perhaps be the result of it having strongly emphasized issues outside the Left-Right dimension in 1996, since there is little doubt about the general leftist character of the JCP. In fact, this case presents us with an example of the weakness of this type of content analysis, and the case certainly calls for further investigation. As we are here primarily concerned with the position of the Liberal Party, this investigation, however, must be left for future research.

Table 5.8

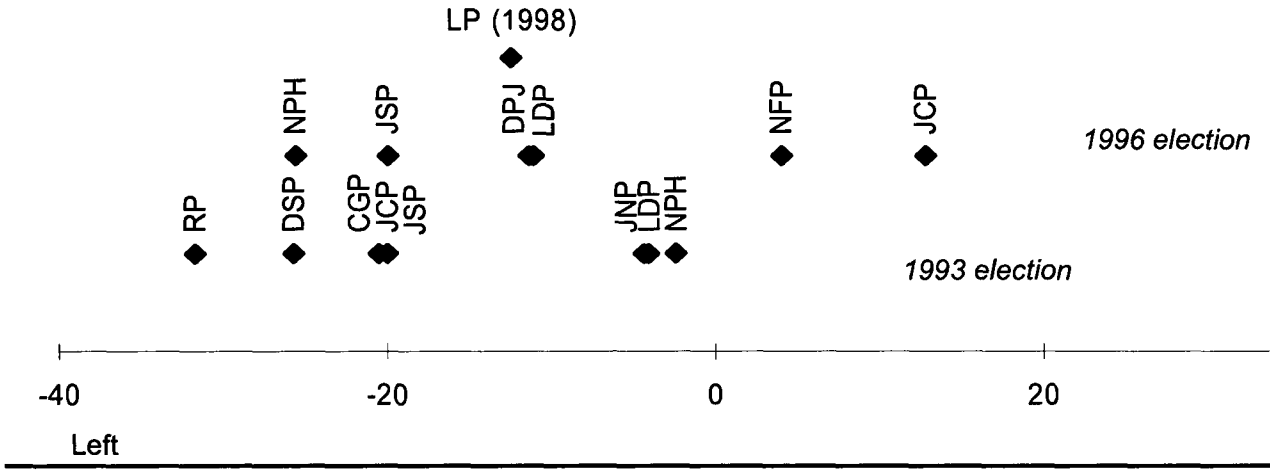
Left-Right Scores of Major Parties

Party	1993 election	1996 election
JCP	-20.0	+12.8
JSP	-20.0	-20.0
DSP	-25.7	
CGP	-20.5	
LDP	-4.0	-11.1
RP	-31.7	
NPH	-2.4	-25.6
JNP	-4.4	
NFP		+4.0
DPJ		-11.4

Note. The dataset for Japan covers election programmes of parties in elections for the House of Representatives (1960-1996), and in all cases the data source is the *Asahi Shinbun's* summary tables on parties' electoral pledges (normally published two weeks prior to the election). Data were compiled from Budge et al., 2001 (accompanying data CD-ROM).

But we can use the data as a guide to understand the LP's position within the policy spectrum relative to other parties, and Figure 5.1 juxtaposes the positions of the LP and other Japanese parties.[148] As is evident, the LP did not place in any extreme position within the Left-Right dimension and was positioned quite closely to the two major parties, the LDP and the DPJ. Furthermore, although it was considered to be the conservative core of the NFP, its overall emphasis seems actually to have shifted somewhat to the left of the NFP's position.

Figure 5.1
Japanese Parties' Positions on the Left-Right Scale



Note. The positions of parties other than the Liberal Party are based on the values listed in table 5.7 above.

As a caveat it should perhaps be noted again that the Left-Right positions of political parties presented here are representations of the *entire content* of their election or policy programmes, and that a party's position on the Left-Right dimension is influenced by the proportion of references to issues other than the traditional Left-Right issues. This may in some cases blur the picture, as a party could be stressing issues traditionally associated with the Right or Left in certain policy domains, but at the same time also stress non-Left-Right issues in other domains. Schoppa (2005), for example, argues that the DPJ has positioned itself to

[148] It should probably be noted that the party positions shown in the figure are based on different points in time, which may add some bias to the representation of positions.

the right of the LDP in terms of economic policy, and that it in this and other respects is much closer to being a neoliberal party than, as often believed, a social democratic party.

The principal aim of this exercise has been to clarify the position of the Liberal Party and in particular to demonstrate the need for moderation of some of the arbitrary labels sometimes attached to it. This empirical analysis shows the LP as a relatively moderate rather than extremist party, although the content analysis also showed that some issues were particularly salient to the party. Some of these issues were of a controversial character, e.g., the Liberals' strong emphasis on a 'normal' role for Japan internationally and constitutional revision, and for this reason perhaps came to define its image more markedly than other issues.

5.8 Issue Preferences: The Liberal Party and the Electorate

We previously identified the issues most salient to the Liberal Party, and in the following examine how its policy emphases matched the preferences of the electorate. Regular polls conducted by the *Nikkei Shinbun* have asked respondents to name the policy areas, which they most want the government to do something about. In 1998, when the LP was established and the 'Blueprint' was put forward, the economy remained mired in trouble, and polls unsurprisingly found respondents expressing strong concerns about this situation. Table 5.9 shows voters' issue preferences in 1998 polls, where respondents were primarily concerned with economic recovery, which was named by almost two-thirds of the respondents as an issue that the government should be dealing with. After this followed issues of immediate relevance to most survey respondents, e.g., issues relating to social security and taxes.

These were followed by administrative and political reform, and items like education and the environment, which were salient issues for roughly a quarter of respondents. Further down the list were issues relating to land and housing, deregulation, foreign relations, and decentralization, and at the bottom of the list items like defence, earthquake protection, and World War II issues, which held salience only for a small group of respondents.

Table 5.9

Voters' Issue Preferences, 1998 Surveys

1. Economic recovery [59.5]	9. Deregulation [18.8]
2. Pensions and welfare [48.8]	10. Foreign relations [18.6]
3. Tax reform [39.9]	11. Decentralization [16.3]
4. Administrative reform [36.8]	12. Defence [12.9]
5. Political reform [31.8]	13. Earthquake protection [12.4]
6. Education [26.5]	14. World War II issues [11.3]
7. Environment [26.0]	15. Can't say/don't know [5.4]
8. Land and housing [20.7]	16. Other [1.7]

Note. Survey respondents were asked "which policies do you want the cabinet to deal with?" and were then given 14 options and also the opportunity to name additional issues. Figures in brackets indicate the percentage of respondents who considered a given issue to be salient. Values represent the average results of surveys conducted from January to December 1998. Rankings were calculated based on data retrieved from the Nikkei Shinbun Website (http://www.nikkei-r.co.jp/nikkeipoll).

If we compare the voters' preferences with the Liberal Party's priority list (Table 5.6 above), we see that some items overlap and were attached similar levels of importance. Issues concerning education and environment, for example, placed more or less in similar positions in terms of salience for both the Liberal Party and survey respondents, but on other issues there were significant gaps in terms of salience. Survey respondents, for example, rated pensions and welfare almost at the top of the list, while this was placed well down the Liberal Party's list. On the other hand, some issues, which were particularly salient to the Liberals, seemed less important to survey respondents. Administrative reform, for example, was placed at the top of the Liberal agenda, but only about one-third of respondents thought this was an issue that needed to be dealt with immediately. The Liberals also accentuated issues relating to foreign relations, and became widely known for their calls for Japan to

find its own role within the international community. Indeed, as we have seen previously, their emphasis on this issue placed the 'internationalism' category third on the party's top ten issue list. Among survey respondents, however, issues relating to foreign relations placed a distant tenth, with only slightly less than one-fifth of respondents indicating the issue to be of salience.

As noted previously, the Liberals stubbornly stuck with their pet policies and principles, and the core ideas of their programme were duplicated in all policy proposals. But the fact that some of these key policies were not perceived by the electorate to be of a salient character may be part of the reason why the party faced difficulties in expanding their appeal to a wider electoral audience.

CONCLUSIONS

Our survey of the Liberal Party's policy activities showed that the party sought to emphasize its quality as a party capable of presenting a policy alternative to the electorate. In order to signal that it was serious in its quest for power, the LP immediately established a 'Cabinet of Tomorrow', and also actively sponsored various bills in parliament in a bid to strengthen its image as a policy-based party.

The LP's policy activities were centred on its Policy Research Council, which consisted of a range of policy divisions, research groups, bureaus, councils, and project teams. The policy framework was restructured on several occasions, and the party experimented with various combinations of policy areas. This experimentation was perhaps primarily grounded in a limitation of resources as numbers in parliament were cut back following the party split in 2000, and although MPs had initially been assigned to individual study groups, they eventually belonged to all groups. This part

of the policy making framework was not particularly innovative and largely resembled that of other parties, for example the LDP. One element of Liberal policy making, however, was quite innovative, i.e., the party's virtual think tank, which functioned as a 'meeting place' for MPs and candidates. MPs, who also had other means of influencing the policy line, seemed to use this avenue to a lesser extent, but for candidates outside the parliamentary circuit it provided an inroad into the party's policy making machinery and also increased the possibilities for influencing this.

The party platform stressed the aim of realizing a society and a nation founded on so-called 'creative liberalism'. The ideas expressed in the platform were further expanded upon in the party's first major policy document, the 'Blueprint for the Renewal of Japan'. The Liberals considered themselves to be a new conservative force, which could provide Japan with a new sense of direction, and repeatedly lambasted the LDP and other established parties for having failed to present a new national goal to the Japanese people. The LP's final policy stand came with the submission of the 'Renewal of Japan' law package in May and June 2003, which can be seen as the culmination of its policy making efforts. It set forward the principles of the party platform and previous policy documents in concrete legislation, which the Liberals pledged to implement if given the chance to take power. Obviously this endeavour was largely symbolic, but nevertheless served to create a foundation for policy negotiations with the DPJ in connection with the merger of the two parties, and also served to make the LP into a 'battering ram for new ideas'.

The results of the content analysis of the 'Blueprint' demonstrated that even though some Liberal MPs may sometimes have taken extreme positions on specific issues, the party as a whole did not take up an extremist position. On the Left-Right

dimension, the Liberals placed slightly to the left of the middle, in the vicinity of other conservative-centrist parties like the LDP and the DPJ. While many of the issues stressed by the Liberals were typical for parties of the Right, the reforms advocated were those of the moderate and not the extreme Right. And alongside with these issues the party also accentuated a range of issues from the Left side of the spectrum as well as issues outside the Left-Right continuum.

The only extreme aspect of its policy package was perhaps its insistence on bringing particular and sometimes controversial issues to the fore. All policy domains from the content analysis framework were represented in the 'Blueprint', but issues relating to the economy, welfare and quality of life, and political reform constituted almost two-thirds of the overall document. Within policy domains, however, specific issues were emphasized, and the Liberals for example came out strongly in favour of internationalism, which ranked third on its top ten issue list. Although much ink has been spent on depicting Ozawa and his Liberals as warmongers due to their insistence on having Japan become a 'normal nation', the policy documents contained remarkably few references to military issues, and several of the references explicitly stated that Japan should not embark on a new militaristic path.

The chapter also compared the Liberals' top ten issue list with the policy preferences of the electorate, and found that some policy items overlapped and were assigned similar levels of importance by party and voters alike. There were, however, also policy areas where a considerably gap between the Liberals' line of thinking and the voters' preferences was evident. For example, the intense advocacy of issues such as 'internationalism' seems not to have resounded with electors, who quite

clearly considered other issues to be of more pressing concern. While the Liberals stuck with their beliefs and stubbornly emphasized their pet policies, this gap between party position and voters' preferences may help explain the party's difficulty in appealing to a broader electoral audience.

Although Kabashima (2000; see also Chapter 6) found some variation in terms of ideological positions among individual Liberal legislators, there is a remarkable consistency in the policy declarations made by the party, and a clear thread runs through the various documents. If nothing else, this consistency certainly strengthens the party's image as having been a band united around a shared policy vision – largely grounded in the ideas and thinking of Ozawa Ichirō.

Policy was an important part of the Liberal Party's image, or its so-called 'public face'. But developing the party organization and finding ways to access resources for party activities were equally significant for the party's survival, and the following chapter examines these aspects in more detail.

CHAPTER 6

THE LIBERAL PARTY:

ORGANIZATION, LEADERSHIP AND RESOURCES

Political parties require an organization to utilize their resources in an effective way and to manage party activities in and out of parliament. The character of the organization is greatly influenced by the party's leadership, which plays a significant role in the shaping of the organization. Party organizations in Japan present a mixed picture, and Richardson (1997, p. 72) notes that Japanese parties, particularly the LDP, have produced an interesting mélange of both European-style party centralization and American-style party decentralization. Richardson also emphasizes the importance for Japanese parties of informal groups and relationships, most significantly the existence of intraparty factions, noting that generally large parties display a tendency to factional proliferation, while small parties appear to be less prone to factional divisions (p. 70).

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that access to resources is the most vital element for the survival of the party organization, not least within a system like the Japanese, where money continues to play an overwhelming role in political and electoral activities. Indeed, as Hrebenar notes, "[in Japan] money is still the crucial ingredient in political success" (2000c, p. 59).

This chapter examines the Liberal Party's organization, leadership, and access to resources. It first examines the party organization at central as well as local levels,

and also discusses the role of its leader, Ozawa Ichirō, within the party structure. While some recent studies of party organization have tended to emphasize formal structures (e.g., Katz and Mair, 1992; Bille, 1997), there is little doubt that informal aspects of organization also play a vital role in the workings of political parties. In the case of the Liberal Party we find that the presence of a strong leader figure, which was able to exert significant control over other elements of the central organizational structure, and the lack of factionalism had an important impact on the party's organizational character. The chapter then proceeds to examine the party organization at the local level, and traces its development over time. Although party executives quickly realized the need for expansion of the local organizational framework in order to broaden the party's electoral appeal and to spread its policy views, the LP clearly experienced serious frustrations in this arena, and its attempts to solidify and expand the local organization were largely unsuccessful.

The second part of the chapter examines the financial circumstances of the Liberal Party through analysis of a range of data on political financing at central and local levels. The analysis gives a clear indication of the party's difficulties in securing sufficient resources for party activities, and pinpoints its weak financial base relative to other major parties. This situation cannot but have added to the Liberals' distress and concerns over the long-term prospects of the party.

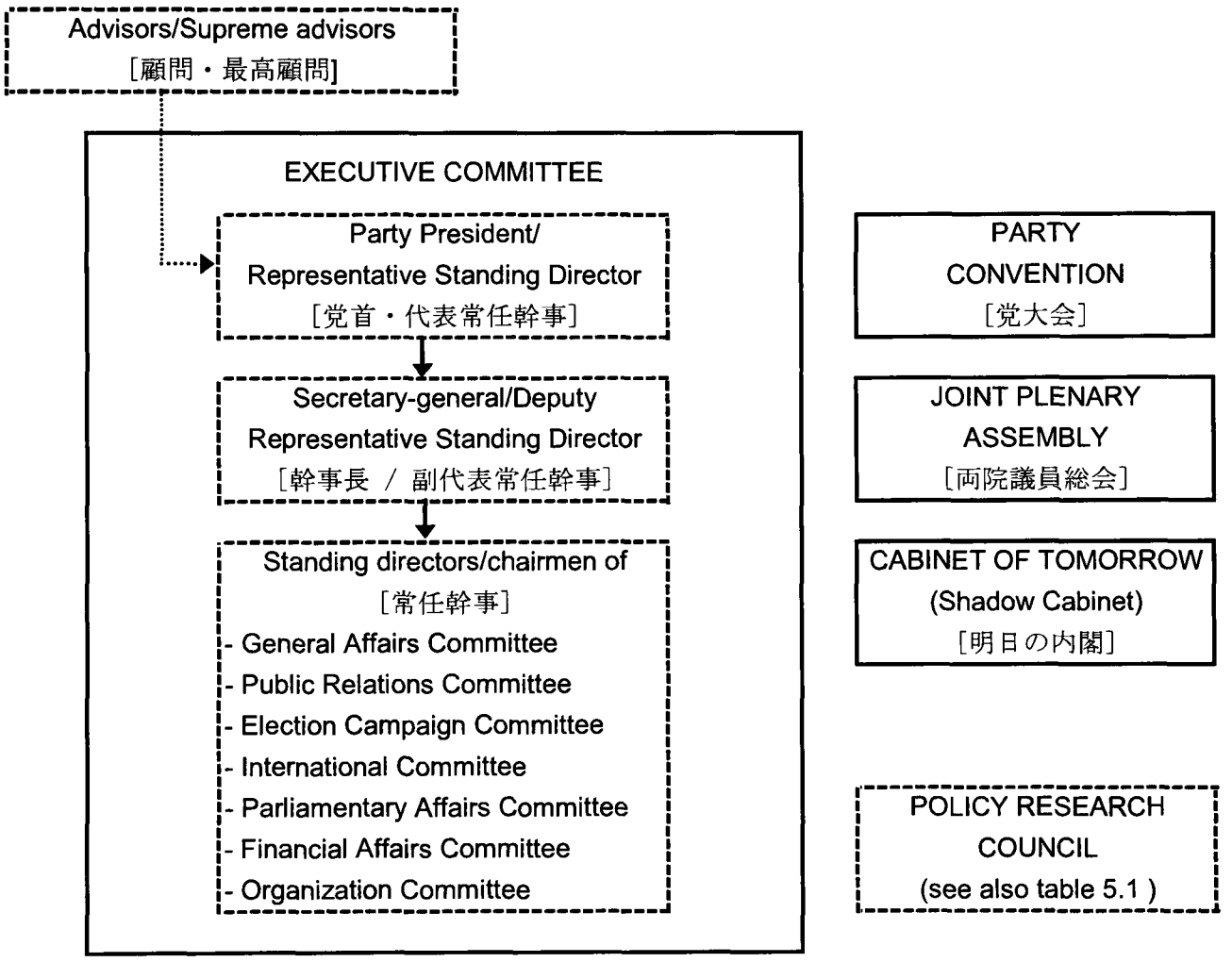
ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP

6.1 Party Organization at the Central Level

The formal organizational framework of the Liberal Party's central organization was set out in the party rules (Jiyūtō, 1998b). The party's leader was elected for a three-

year period by the Party Convention and was given charge of general party affairs and the selection of the members for the executive committee, which he also chaired as Representative Standing Director. The executive committee framework changed slightly over the years, but as illustrated in Figure 6.1, consisted of the president, a vice-president (most often referred to as the 'secretary-general'), as well as a range of Deputy Representative Standing Directors and Standing Directors.

Figure 6.1
Liberal Party Organization (Parliamentary Level)



Note. Based on Jiyūtō, 1998b.

The executive committee was in charge of overall decision making and execution of general policies, and also dealt with party management and discipline. The party leader also had the option of appointing so-called Advisors or Supreme Advisors from among senior members for counsel and consultation, but following the party split in 2000 the number of such senior figures decreased markedly and after some

time the Advisory Council disappeared from the organizational framework.[149]

The highest party organ was in principle the Party Convention, which consisted of parliamentarians as well as delegates from the various party branches. It was scheduled to take place once a year, but an extraordinary Convention could also be called if requested by the executive committee or more than half of the local branches. Decision making in the Party Convention required the attendance of more than half of the delegates, and decisions were made by a majority vote. As stated in the party rules, all members had to adhere to the rules and regulations adopted at the Party Convention (Jiyūtō, 1998b).

The agenda of the Party Convention, however, was decided by the executive committee, and the Party Convention therefore functioned largely as a body to accord recognition to more or less already fixed party positions and proposals determined by the executive committee. And while some discussion may have taken place under more informal sessions in connection with the Party Convention, formal proceedings left little room for serious discussion of any kind. Indeed, actual proceedings tended to last only for about an hour, and consisted of speeches by the party president and the secretary-general, who outlined new policies and reviewed the past year. This was generally followed by the adoption of a so-called 'conference declaration', which was prepared in advance, the introduction and formal recognition of candidates slated to run in coming elections, announcements regarding retirement of incumbents, or similar announcements. The formal proceedings were followed by

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[149] Eligible for the post as 'Advisor' were party members who had served more than 15 years in parliament, while members who had formerly served as Prime Minister or who had been the leader of another party could be designated as 'Supreme Advisors' (Jiyūtō, 1998b). In January 1999, for example, the advisory group consisted of Kaifu Toshiki, Katō Mutsuki, Gondō Tsuneo, and Nishimura Shōzō. In the restructuring following the party split, Watanabe Hideo was appointed as Advisor, but from 2002 he instead became Standing Director of the Election Campaign Committee.

a social gathering, which also included guests from the various branch offices and other organizations, and as such the defining characteristic of the Party Convention was largely that of a social event to prop up party spirit and nurture the local grassroots.

Within parliament the Joint Plenary Assembly served as a meeting forum for party MPs. The Assembly included all Liberal MPs and deliberated on decisions relating to matters such as party affairs, party policies, parliament management, and discipline. As stipulated in the party rules, an Assembly meeting could substitute for a Party Convention in matters requiring urgent action, which for example happened in September 2003, when the decision to dissolve and merge the party with the DPJ was taken. As was also the case with the executive committee, the party leader was dealt a rather strong hand in connection with the Joint Plenary Assembly, and he had the right to nominate its chairperson and vice-chairperson, who could then call Assembly meetings on request of the party leader or the executive committee (Jiyūtō, 1998b).[150] Other formal elements of the party organization included the Cabinet of Tomorrow and the Policy Research Council, which were also discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

6.2 Party Leadership and Party Cohesion

As the brief overview of formal institutions within the Liberal Party framework showed, the party leadership played a very central role within the organization, and there was little room for rank-and-file membership to influence, not to mention

[150] The decision making procedures of the Joint Plenary Assembly were similar to those of the Party Convention. A regular Assembly meeting required the presence of one-half or more of all party MPs, while an Assembly meeting substituting for a Party Convention required the attendance of two-thirds or more of the party's MPs.

countering, the official line presented by the party executive. We therefore now turn to examine the party leader's role and position within the party in more detail.

Elections for the party presidency were held in 1998 and again in 2001, and Ozawa, who ran unopposed on both occasions, remained the undisputed leader of the party throughout. The party's founding members exclusively consisted of people from the New Frontier Party's so-called Ozawa Group, which had become a central faction within the NFP, particularly during Ozawa's tenure as NFP president. Even before the formal founding of the Liberal Party, Ozawa's central role in the new party project was evidenced by referrals to the party simply as the 'Ozawa New Party' [小沢新党] (*Nikkei Shinbun*, 1997, December 27).

The shape of the new party had been discussed at a meeting of Ozawa supporters on December 27, 1997, where two lines of thinking were discussed. One group suggested inclusion only of those MPs who would promise to unite under Ozawa's leadership, while another group argued that the new party should aim for the highest possible number of participants. In the end proponents of the former approach prevailed, and documents concerning entry into the new party was delivered by hand only to MPs, who had been handpicked by the core group. Thus, in its attempt to create a cohesive force centred on Ozawa, the group clearly prioritized the logic of exclusion over the logic of numbers (*Asahi Shinbun*, 1997, December 28).[151]

The party's image was from the beginning intrinsically linked to Ozawa's person and remained so throughout. Indeed it is almost impossible to imagine the Liberal Party with any other person at the helm. As we also saw in Chapter 5, the

[151] Ozawa expressed his approval for the creation of a united group, but at the same time pragmatically noted that "there is no need to limit numbers beyond reason" (*Asahi Shinbun*, 1997, December 28).

policy line of the party was heavily based on the ideas outlined by Ozawa in his book, 'A Plan for the Remodelling of Japan' (1993b), and his abilities as a strategic mastermind within parliament and in elections were unrivalled even by other senior members of the party. As Chapter 7 will also demonstrate, the party's electoral survival became linked to Ozawa's person, as it was largely due to his personal popularity that the LP was able to pick up significant numbers of votes in the PR blocks, which secured election of most party MPs.

Although party founders had hoped to assemble around 100 MPs, the party eventually came to include only 54 MPs. Party members had initially been affiliated with a range of parties, and in terms of initial affiliation, its membership was by far the most diverse among the six splinter parties that emerged from the NFP split (see Table 6.1). It is perhaps therefore not surprising that Kabashima (2000) found the level of ideological cohesion to be relatively low among Liberal legislators, although this obviously is somewhat at odds with the party's insistence that it was a coherent 'fighting policy group'. In spite of different ideological convictions among individual legislators, the official party line nevertheless remained consistent throughout (cf. Chapter 5).

Table 6.1

The New Frontier Party Split (1): Distribution of MPs in Splinter Parties According to Initial Affiliations

Initial affiliation	Splinter parties, January 1998					
	LP	NPP	DC	RC	VP	NFR
NFP	18	5	11	9	6	10
LDP	16	0	0	2	7	0
CGP	7	32	3	0	1	0
DSP	5	0	0	0	0	12
JNP	3	0	0	0	3	0
RP	3	0	0	0	1	0
NPH	0	0	0	1	0	0
Indp.	2	0	0	0	0	1
Total	54	37	14	12	18	23

Note. Based on Database, 2004.

Table 6.2 outlines the distribution of NFP legislators in the 1998 splinter parties according to the number of terms served, and, as can be seen, the LP's

founding members included a high number of junior legislators, many of whom were referred to by the media as 'Ozawa's children' [小沢チルドレン] (e.g., *Sankei Shinbun*, 2000, May 8). These primarily included MPs, who had received strong support from Ozawa in their first election(s), and they naturally gravitated towards his person. The party also included several senior legislators, many of whom had followed Ozawa closely from the beginning of the realignment process. With this in mind, it is perhaps not surprising that Kabashima's survey of cohesion in party organizations found the Liberal Party to be among the most cohesive, particularly in terms of affection towards the leadership (Kabashima, 2000). Figure 6.2 compares levels of cohesion in party organizations, and shows that the Liberals ranked high in terms of 'feelings of goodwill' towards their party and in terms of 'identification with own party'. Indeed, only

Table 6.2

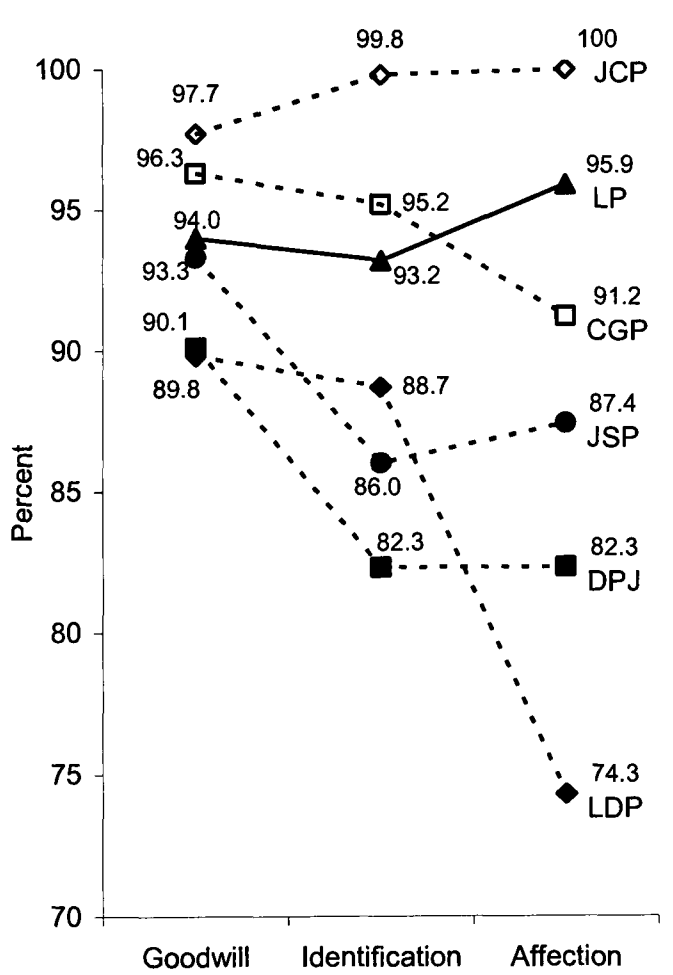
The New Frontier Party Split (2): Distribution of MPs in Splinter Parties According to Seniority

Number of terms	Splinter parties, January 1998					
	LP	NPP	DC	RC	VP	NFR
1 term	19 [6]	5	12 [12]	9 [3]	6 [2]	11 [5]
2 terms	15 [4]	16	2 [2]	1	5 [1]	5 [4]
3 terms	3	6	0	0	2	2
4 terms	5 [1]	2	0	1	1	1
5 terms	2 [1]	2	0	0	0	1
6 terms	1	0	0	0	0	1
7 terms	4	2	0	0	0	0
8+ terms	5	4	0	1	4	2
Total	54 [12]	37 [0]	14 [14]	12 [3]	18 [3]	23 [9]

Note. Figures indicate total membership numbers, and figures in brackets indicate the number of MPs in the House of Councillors. Based on Database, 2004.

Figure 6.2

Cohesion in Party Organizations,1998



Note. 'Goodwill' signifies sense of goodwill towards own party. 'Identification' signifies sense of identification with own party. 'Affection' signifies sense of affection for party leader. Reading the graph as a measurement of organizational cohesion, low figures indicate a relatively low level of cohesion. Conversely high figures indicate a relatively high level of cohesion. Adapted from Kabashima 2000, p. 40.

legislators from the CGP and the JCP placed higher along these dimensions. Finally, the Liberals ranked second when it came to 'affection for the party leader', trailing only the JCP. Since Kabashima's survey predates the LP split in 2000, it is reasonable to assume that cohesion within the organization might even have increased in the last years of the party's existence, as the group pulled even tighter together around Ozawa's person.

The lack of other major personalities caused the group to become a close-knit unit, and Ozawa's significance for party survival resulted in the LP being seen very much as a one-man party. Other party members generally displayed an overwhelming reverence for Ozawa, whose leadership came under attack on only one occasion, namely at the time of the party's withdrawal from the LDP-LP-CGP coalition, which resulted in the party split in April 2000 (see also Chapter 4). Although the split represented a major setback for the Liberals, those who remained behind seem to have rallied even more enthusiastically around their leader, and the reverent attitude towards Ozawa was visible at all party events, where his arrival was often greeted with standing ovations and jubilant cheers. Although individual MPs may at times have been dismayed with certain developments, this resulted only in 'silent complaints', which were never aired in the open. Indeed, MPs and other people within the party machinery largely considered Ozawa to be somewhat of a 'father figure', and his charisma subdued any eventual opposition to his leadership style (Hosoda Isamu, personal communication, 2005, April 12).

In this way, the Liberal Party seemed to embody the so-called 'leader-follower relationship', which has been described as the essential building block of political organization in Japan (Stockwin, 1987, p. 97). This 'leader-follower' relationship

rests on personal linkages based on mutual obligation, and leads to the fostering of close and intense group loyalties. As Stockwin notes, this is most often found in groups that are small enough to facilitate personal interaction between a leader and his personal followers, and has been most prevalent in the intraparty factions of larger parties. The organization of smaller parties, however, resembles that of factions within larger parties, except for the absence of an overarching party organization encapsulating them (Stockwin, 1987, p. 97)

Ozawa has been a key player in the realignment process since 1993, and has been at the helm of first the Renewal Party, then the New Frontier Party, and finally the Liberal Party. While many MPs joined the RP based on a sense of affection or obligation to Ozawa, its membership also included people with a range of alternative convictions and loyalties, which can be seen in the dispersion of its members in various successor parties following its dissolution in 1994 (see also Chapter 3). While the RP had been created by a LDP splinter group, the NFP was the result of a merger of several parties and brought together people of diverse stripes. Although Ozawa played a pivotal role in party affairs, the NFP was clearly not centred on his person, and indeed many of the party's internal problems seemed to stem from conflicts between the pro- and anti-Ozawa camps within party ranks. In contrast, the LP was the result of a 'purifying process' and was based exclusively on Ozawa's personal supporters. There were no apparent factions, except for the small group that emerged at the time of the party split (see Chapter 4), and with the LP Ozawa finally found a cohesive vehicle for promoting his political project. A final display of party unity and cohesion was seen around the time of the LP-DPJ merger, when the group moved en masse to the DPJ in spite of some scepticism among individual legislators.

6.3 Party Organization at the Local Level: Formal Elements

Building the organization solely on Ozawa's charisma clearly was not a viable strategy if the party were to develop into a durable political force, and strengthening the local organization therefore was a vital concern for party strategists.

Figure 6.3
Outline of the Liberal Party Organization

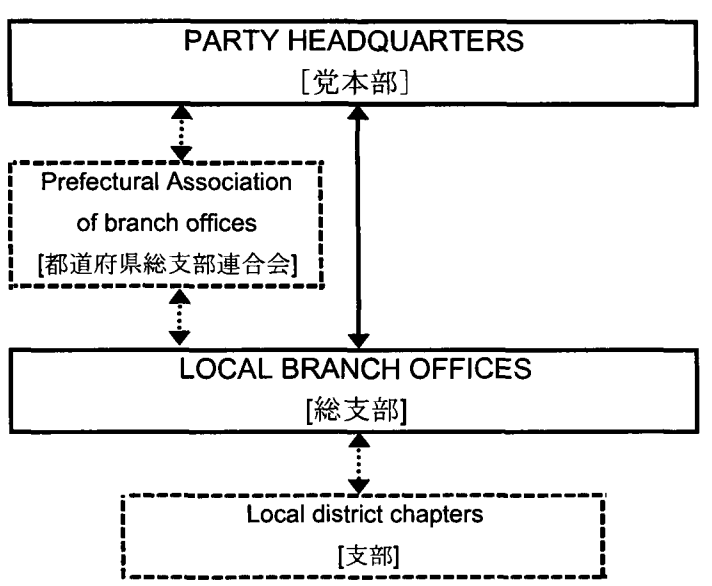


Figure 6.3 outlines the framework of the Liberal Party organization, which consisted of the party headquarters in Tokyo, Prefectural Associations of Branch Offices, and Local Branch Offices. Party branches came in four main types corresponding to the various types of election districts for national level elections, and were formed either by parliamentarians or candidates running in a given district type. The formal role of party branches within the organization was "to work for the successful election of candidates nominated or endorsed by the party and to work in order to spread the ideas and policies of the party", and each local branch was responsible for the nomination and endorsement of candidates in all types of elections involving the district. Branches were allowed to establish sub-branches, or chapters, within the local district, and in such cases the branch office served as the coordinating unit for these smaller chapters. Above the Local Branch Offices were in some cases a Prefectural Association of Branch Offices, which was tasked with facilitating communication and cooperation between the various local branches within the prefecture and with spreading the basic ideas and policies of the party (Jiyūtō,

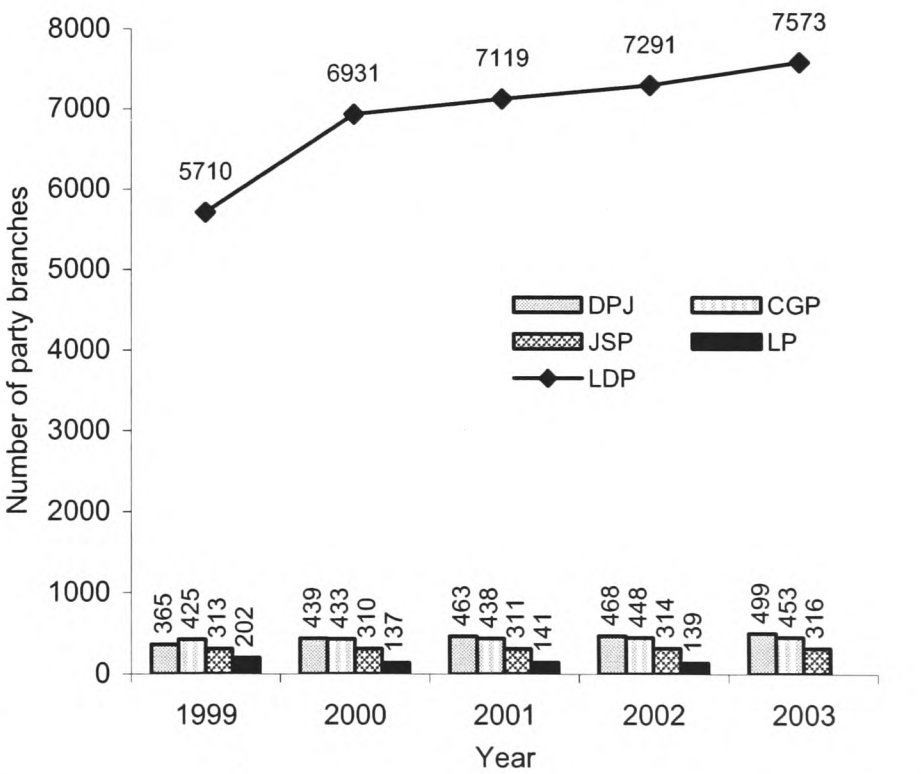
1998b). At the heart of the party organization was the Party Headquarters, located in Tokyo's Akasaka district, incidentally in the very same building that had housed the NFP's central offices.

6.4 Party Organization at the Local Level: Party Branches

The local units of the party organization obviously served an important role as the focal point for local activities. But they also played an equally important role by allowing individual politicians access to parts of the public subsidies received by the central party organization. Their legal status equalled that of political parties, and branches were therefore also allowed to receive donations from companies and organizations, which were banned from donating directly to individual legislators. The second part of the chapter considers this aspect in more detail, but we will now first examine the development of the party organization's scope and reach over the term of the party's existence.

Figure 6.4 shows the number of party branches of major parties between 1999 and 2003, and, as can be seen, the LDP had by far the most expansive network of local branches. The number of LDP branches increased steadily

Figure 6.4
Party Branches of Major Parties, 1999-2003

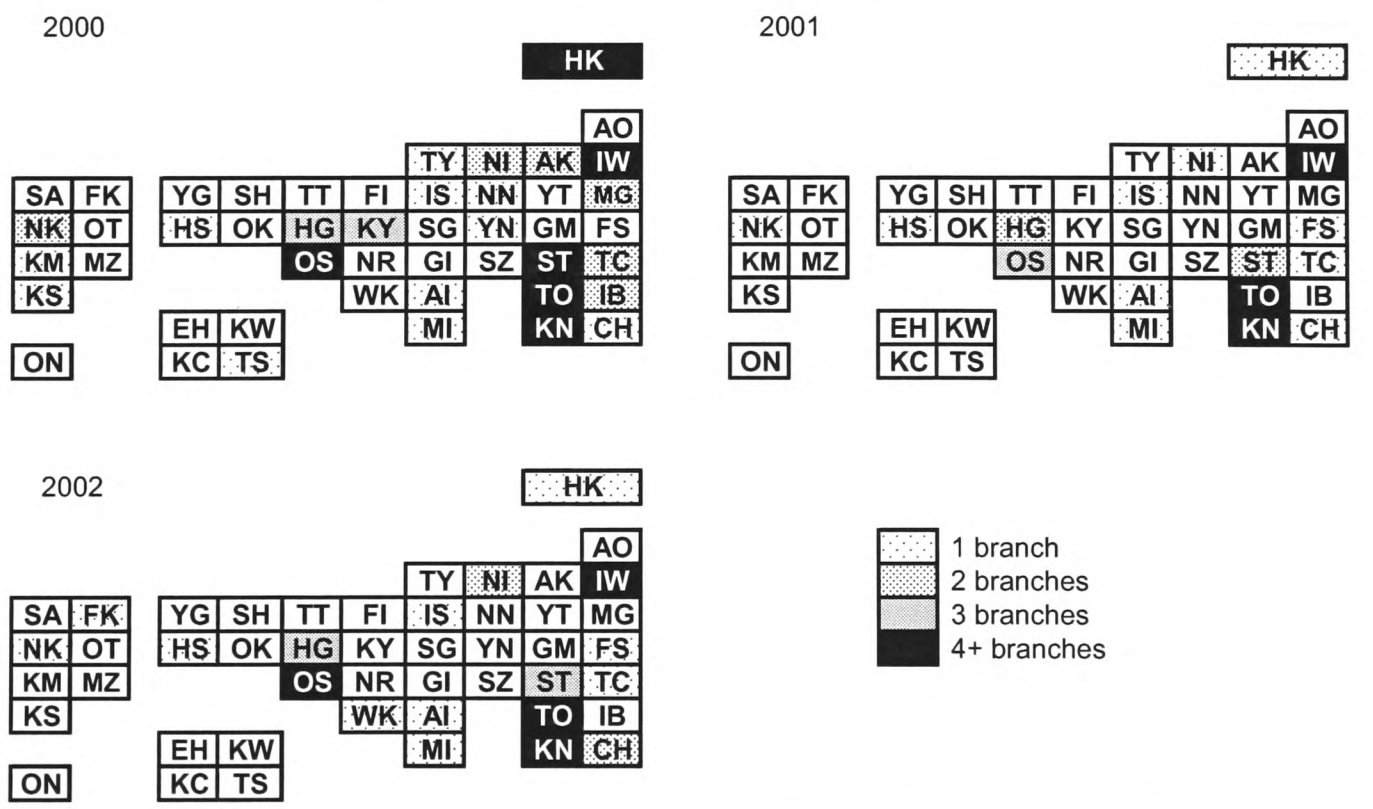


Note. Data were compiled from MIAC, 2000c, 2001b, 2002e, 2003d, 2004b.

over the years, reaching no less than 7573 in 2003. The number of DPJ branches also increased gradually over the years, reaching 499 in 2003 after the merger with the LP. Among the major parties, the LP throughout had the lowest number of party branches, and following a decline from 202 in 1999 to 137 in 2000 after the party split, the number remained almost static in the remaining years of the party's existence. While the establishment and maintenance of party branches is obviously not the only indicator of local party activity, it seems that in spite of the party's efforts in terms of organization building, the outcome was not an expansion, but rather a small contraction of the organization at the local level. Some local branches seem to have had almost no active role within the party organization, and if we look at the geographical spread of active party branches, which were listed in the party's public subsidy expenditure reports as recipients of part of the subsidy amount, a small contraction at the local level is also evident (Figure 6.5). For example, reports

Figure 6.5

Changes in the Geographical Spread of Liberal Party Branches, 2000-2002



Note. A key to the abbreviated prefecture names can be found in the List of Abbreviations. Based on data compiled from MIAC, 2001c, 2002d, 2003h.

from 2000 listed local branch offices in 24 prefectures, but the number of prefectures with party branches had declined to 17 and 18 in 2001 and 2002, respectively. Five prefectures had four or more branches in 2000, but in 2001 the number had fallen to three. The number of prefectures with three branches fell from three in 2000 to just one in 2001, and while the party had two branches in six prefectures in 2000, this number had decreased to just two in 2001. In short, the Liberals seemed to have little success in their attempt to expand the organization at the local level.

6.5 Party Organization: Membership and Grassroots

If we look at the grassroots level, the LP's membership base was extremely limited compared to other major parties. Unfortunately no data are available for 1998 and 1999, but in 2000 the number of members reported by the central party organization was only 811. This figure increased slightly in 2001, reaching 1003 people, but fell again in 2002 to 853 people (MIAC, 2001c, 2002d, 2003h). Actual numbers were probably slightly higher as members could sign up either with the central party office or with local party branches, but certainly numbers remained negligible compared to other parties. [152]

While the membership base did not expand, groups at the grassroots level played an important role in campaign activities, and the party therefore actively sought to nurture and strengthen local group ties, which was done through various social events. One such event was the annual National Study Meeting [自由党全国研修会], where Liberal MPs and delegates from the various local branches gathered for

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[152] In comparison, the membership figures of other parties in 2002 were as follows: LDP: 1,169,951, DPJ: 314,012, CGP: 367,937, JSP: 30,659, and JCP: 3,311,569 (MIAC, 2003h). The figures given here are those reported by the political parties themselves. It is, however, likely that these figures may be somewhat inflated, and for example the LDP membership lists are said to include many whose relationship with the party is rather peripheral (Hrebenar and Nakamura, 2000, p. 120).

three days in order to learn more about the positions of the party, to discuss policies, and to reinforce the grassroots level of the organization through social activities.[153]

Table 6.3
Participants in the 2002 Study Meeting

Occupational background	Number of people
Company employee	134
Company CEO/company director	82
Student (undergraduate and graduate)	64
MP or candidate secretary	56
Self-employed	40
Housewife	28
Local politician	15
Agriculture	11
MP or candidate office staff	11
Organization employee	8
Other occupations	32
Total	481

Note. Data were compiled from Jiyūtō, 2002b.

Table 6.3 presents information on the background of the 481 people who participated in the 2002 Study Meeting as 'delegates' from offices of the various MPs and candidates, the party's Student Club, the Ozawa Ichirō Politics School, and Prefectural Association offices. Participants included a mix of people, but most numerous were company employees, company CEOs, students, secretaries, self-employed, and housewives. The Study Meeting presented participants with a thorough introduction to party positions on current issues and the state of Japanese politics as seen with Liberal eyes, as well as discussions of specific policy areas. Naturally, however, the development of social relations between MPs and their support groups was equally important as mirrored in the number of formal and informal social gatherings included in the schedule (Jiyūtō, 2002b).[154] While the selection of delegates may have been a bit arbitrary in many cases, the event nevertheless provided a means for building new social relations, or developing existing ones, and thereby also for

[153] Incidentally, similar meetings hosted by the LDP's Takeshita faction and later the Renewal Party had taken place at the same venue in Hakone, and in this way the roots of the study meeting extended further back in time than those of the LP itself. The Annual Study Meeting actually seems to have survived even the LP, and in September 2004, the DPJ's 'Renewal Group' [一新会], a group formed around Ozawa, also held a study meeting in the exact same location.

[154] In 2002, this for example involved a 'making new friends' session, regional block meetings of MPs and delegates, morning gymnastics, sports contests, receptions, dinners, and various drinking sessions (Jiyūtō, 2002b).

strengthening the party organization in the local districts. In 2002, delegates from the Tokyo 15th district branch (the office of Azuma Shōzō), for example, included two secretaries, two other employees of the office, as well as one student, three company CEOs, and a representative from a local business organization. All of these people continued their affiliation with the office after the Study Meeting and actively participated in campaign activities for the 2003 local elections. In this way the Study Meeting provided the organization with a way for recruiting activists at the grassroots level. Like other political parties, the LP also established and nurtured a so-called Student Club [学生部], which served as another source for recruitment of party activists and staff.

POLITICAL FINANCING AND RESOURCES

6.6 Political Financing in Japan

Almost all studies of Japanese politics note the overwhelming significance of money, but the literature dealing specifically with political financing in Japan nevertheless remains limited.[155] Scholars are now slowly beginning to explore the complexities of political financing in a more systematic manner, and Sasaki, Yoshida, Taniguchi, and Yamamoto (1999), for example, presents a comprehensive picture of campaign finance in the 1996 election, although their focus on a single election unfortunately makes it difficult with any certainty to identify more enduring new trends in political financing.[156]

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[155] As noted by Kohno (2001), one reason for this may be that the problem of money and politics was for a long period regarded as a topic outside mainstream political science analyses in Japan. This was primarily due to the difficulties related to obtaining realistic data on revenues and expenditures, and information gathering on political finance was therefore largely left to journalists (e.g., Hirose, 1989).

[156] As also noted by Thies (2001, p. 127), the results presented in Sasaki et al. (1999) hardly represent a new 'equilibrium' for campaign finance in Japan, but merely a description of the first stage of a

Before proceeding with the analysis of party finance, it is important to first consider some of the problems associated with reliable analysis of political financing in Japan. The 1994 political reform package aimed at bringing about more transparency in political finance and included a new set of disclosure requirements for political parties and organizations. But although reforms have increased transparency in some areas, it remains exceedingly difficult to grasp the full realities of political funding in Japan. The amounts transferred from the government to political parties as public subsidies are reasonably easy to trace, as parties are required to submit detailed reports. This is also the case for local party branches, which may receive parts of the subsidy from party headquarters in support of local activities. But since individual politicians are not required to disclose their income and expenditure, the only way to identify the flow of money into – or through – the accounts of individual politicians is to piece together the information disclosed for organizations surrounding individual politicians (Kohno, 2001, p. 13).[157] Even with this approach, gathering complete information remains virtually impossible. A major complication lies in the way financial disclosure reports are collected and published in Japan. Reports tend to be collected in a rather unsystematic and inconsistent way, which greatly complicates public access.[158] Furthermore, politicians are allowed to

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transition. Another major shortcoming of the study is the omission of data on losing candidates, which leaves out significant parts of the full picture.

[157] The Public Office Election Law does, however, stipulate a set of disclosure rules for candidates during campaign periods.

[158] Political groups may file their reports either with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (formerly the Ministry of Home Affairs and also briefly known as the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Post and Telecommunications), or with one of the 47 Prefectural Electoral Commissions. Where reports are submitted depends on the geographical scope of activities, and Carlson (2003, pp. 24-5) found that members of the House of Representatives submitted roughly half of their reports to Prefectural Electoral Commissions. Previously scholars had to travel to each Electoral Commission office in order to gain access to the reports and summaries, and were not even allowed to copy the statements until the enactment of the Information Disclosure Act in 2001. With the advent of the Internet Age, data are now slowly also becoming accessible through this medium,

establish an unlimited number of so-called political groups [政治団体], and determining the relationship between a specific politician and the many hundreds (sometimes thousands) of political support groups in a given prefecture remains a virtually impossible task, since the politician in question does not even have to be listed anywhere in the financial disclosure report of the group (see also Carlson, 2003, pp. 24-26). Although this problem may be solved by in-depth case studies in individual prefectures, this is clearly beyond the scope of this thesis.

In the following analysis I primarily rely on the reports published annually by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and in some cases on reports published by Prefectural Electoral Commissions. Scholars are generally sceptical about the reliability of figures in these official reports on political finance, the assumption being that many parties (grossly) underreport their income.[159] In spite of the uncertainty associated with the reliability of figures, these reports can, however, as also noted by Hrebenar (2000c, p. 61), be useful in discerning general trends in party income and expenditure. Before examining the actual data on political finance for the major parties, we will, however, first briefly consider the regulations that constitute the formal framework of political funding in Japan.

6.7 Political Reform and Political Finance

Political finance in Japan is regulated by the Political Fund Control Law (PFCL), the first of which was enacted in 1948. Its emphasis, however, was more on disclosure than on regulation, and a number of loopholes were left open (Taniguchi, 2002, p.

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but while all Prefectural Electoral Commissions now have independent websites, far from all list financial disclosure data (or even summaries) on the website.

[159] In the case of the LDP, for example, observers believe that the real income in some years could have been as great as 500 percent more than reported (Hrebenar, 2000a, p. 61).

73). Amendments to the PFCL were discussed on several occasions, but nothing concrete happened until public fury erupted over the Lockheed scandal in the mid-1970s. The PFCL still contained glaring defects after this amendment, and the Recruit scandal in the late 1980s led to strengthened calls for further reforms. This forced the LDP government to reopen discussions on political reform, but the government's failure to deliver any concrete results eventually became the straw that broke the LDP's back, leading to its fall from power in 1993 (cf. Chapter 2). Political reform quickly became the sole unifying element for Hosokawa's multiparty coalition (1993-94), and the enactment of the political reform package in 1994 became its most significant contribution.[160]

The political reform package from 1994 aimed to put a break on the excessive spending by individual politicians and to create the basis for more party-centred political activity. But even if the tightened rules closed some loopholes, others were left and new ones opened. The revised PFCL limited contributions from companies and organizations to political parties, 'Political Funding Groups' [政治資金団体], and Fund-Raising Groups [資金管理団体]. Furthermore, each legislator or candidate was allowed only one 'Fund-Raising Group', although no limitations were imposed on the number of so-called 'Political Groups'.[161] New regulations on fund-raising events and a lowering of the disclosure limit for donations from one million to 50,000 yen

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[160] Kohno (2001) and Taniguchi (2002) offer a more detailed discussion of the various amendments of the PFCL during the postwar period.

[161] Companies and organizations were initially able to make donations to all types of groups, but were from 2000 barred from making donations to individual politicians and political groups. 'Political Funding Groups' are designated by individual parties and function as the extended fund-raising arm of the party organization. 'Fund-Raising Groups', on the other hand, are designated by individual politicians and function as his or her official fund-raising organ. In many cases, the local party branch doubles as the official 'Fund-Raising Group', but in some cases (particularly for LDP members) the party branch functions side by side with the 'Fund-Raising Group' and the politicians' other support groups. The category of 'Political Groups' covers a range of organizations, including the personal support groups of politicians.

Table 6.4

Regulations on Donations to Political Parties and Politicians (Annual Amount/ Million Yen)

Recipient	Donations from	
	Individuals	Companies/ organizations
Political parties[a]	20	7.5 - 1000[b]
Political groups/politicians	10	3.5 - 50[b]
- per political group	1.5	×
- per Fund Raising Group	1.5	0.5
- per politician	1.5	×

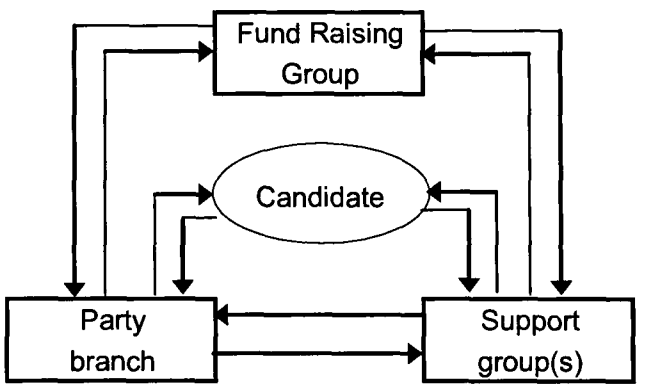
Note. [a] This also includes Political Fund Groups and local party branches. [b] Permitted amounts differ according to the size and income of the company or organization. Adapted from Okada, 2002, pp. 158-70.

have nevertheless increased the degree of transparency within the system (Taniguchi, 2002, p. 76; see Table 6.4 for a brief summary of the limits imposed on donations by the 1994 amendment of the PFCL).

To increase transparency, the PFCL had sought to limit each candidate to a single fund-raising organ (the 'Fund-Raising Group'), but Yoshida and Yamamoto (1999) discovered that in reality most candidates now control no less than three so-called 'wallets': The 'Fund-Raising Group', the party branch, and the personal support group(s) (see Figure 6.6). This pattern was seen most clearly among LDP members, or former members of that party, who have the most extensive network of personal support groups.[162] And with the possibility of letting funds flow freely between the three groups a new loophole was in reality opened, where an old one had been closed.

Figure 6.6

The Three 'Wallets' of Candidates



Note. Adapted from Yoshida and Yamamoto, 1999, p. 17.

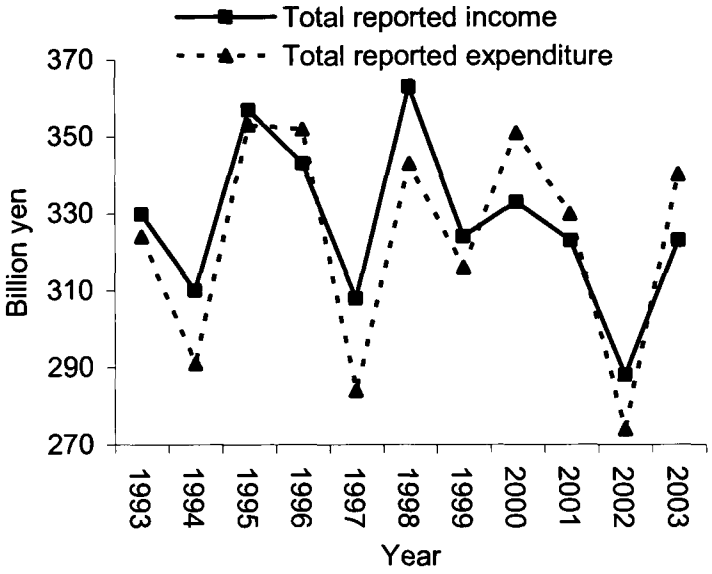
[162] Kamo, Kashihara, and Okada (1999) surveyed campaign funding in 1996, and found clear differences in fund-raising patterns of NFP members according to the candidate's former affiliate background. Former members of the JNP or the CGP relied primarily on the 'Fund-Raising Groups', while former members of the DSP used party branches more vigorously. Former LDP members, who had more developed personal support networks, depended most heavily on 'Fund- Raising Groups' and personal support groups for their fund-raising activities, and displayed a behavioural pattern similar to those who had remained in the LDP (pp. 132-5).

6.8 Recent Trends in Political Finance in Japan

The need to bankroll expensive electoral campaigns continues to force political parties and individual candidates to solicit large amounts of financial support from a range of sources. Electoral reform has rearranged the institutional framework for the political activities of parties and candidates, but so far there is little indication that the new electoral system has worked to cut down the costs associated with the electoral process. Even in years without an election parties and candidates tend to spend astronomical amounts on their political activities in preparation for coming elections.

Figure 6.7 shows the trends in reported income and expenditure for political parties and political groups (central and local level combined) between 1993 and 2003. The combined income average for the period was 327 billion yen, while expenditure was slightly less at 323 billion yen on average. As the figure shows, income and expenditure varied depending on whether the year was an election year, but from 1998 there was a gradual but steady decline in the amounts collected and spent. This trend was only reversed at the time of the last general election in 2003, where income and expenditure rose to 323 and 340 billion yen, respectively. The decline in income and expenditure in the latter part of the period gives an indication

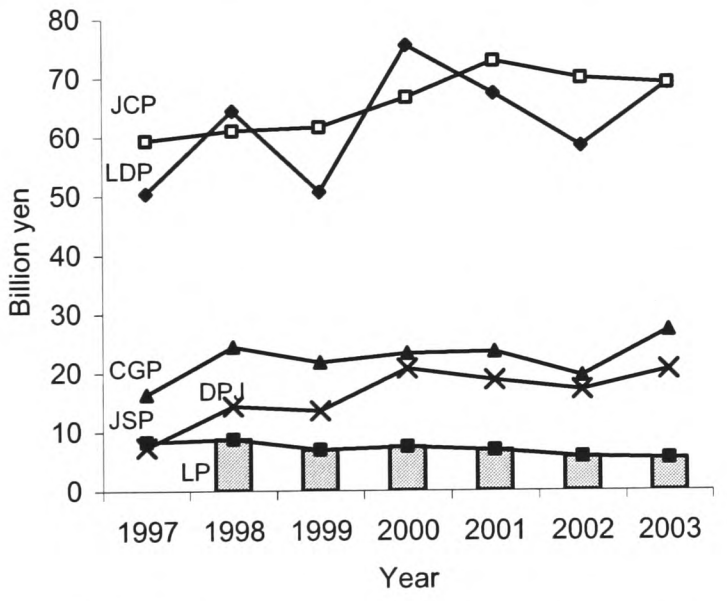
Figure 6.7
Income and Expenditure of Political Parties and Groups, 1993-2003



Note. Data were compiled from MIAC, 1999, 2000b, 2001d, 2002b, 2003c, 2004c.

of the increased difficulties for political actors in attracting financial support, which is largely related to the general decline of the Japanese economy, especially at the corporate level. Until 1993, the Japan Federation of Economic Organizations had each year amassed funds from its constituent associations to be used for contributions to political parties, but the decision in 1993 to terminate these political funding activities forced politicians to increasingly seek financing from individual companies, most often located in their own electoral districts (Blechinger, 2000; Curtis, 1999, p. 52).[163] Simultaneously, however, the task of soliciting contributions from individuals and companies has grown increasingly difficult in the midst of a prolonged economic slump, and individual candidates face considerable difficulties in securing sufficient funds (Japan Times, 2004, April 27).

Figure 6.8
Income Trends for Major Parties, 1997-2003



Note. Data were compiled from MIAC, 1999, 2000b, 2001d, 2002b, 2003c, 2004c.

The ability of parties and candidates to amass funds varied considerably. Figure 6.8 illustrates shifts in the level of reported income for major parties in recent years, and shows differences in the amount of financial resources available. The LDP and the JCP clearly surpassed other parties in terms of fund-raising ability, and between 1997 and 2003 amassed an average income of 65.8 and 62.2 billion yen, respectively. The CGP followed substantially below with 22.2 billion, and the DPJ with 16 billion yen, while the JSP and the LP

[163] Although a return to pre-1993 levels seems unlikely, the Japan Business Federation [日本経済団体連合会] (the successor to the JFEO) from 2003 resumed its role as mediator of political donations in a bid to increase its political clout.

on average did not even collect half of this amount (7 and 6.8 billion, respectively). The level of income of the JCP and the CGP remained almost stable throughout the period, while the income of the LDP and the DPJ fluctuated significantly, generally increasing in election years. It is worth noting that the income of the Liberal Party gradually declined over the last part of the period, which cannot but have contributed to the party's continued difficulties in expanding its organizational and electoral reach. It is also highly likely that this situation intensified concerns about its future.

6.9 Political Financing of Major Parties at the Central Level

Income sources of political parties and candidates generally include several elements, e.g., public subsidies, membership fees, donations from individuals, companies, and organizations, or revenues from party business (publications, party events, fund-raising parties, etc.). As we shall see in the following, the dependence on different types of income sources differed considerably according to party.

Public subsidies to political parties were introduced in 1994 in order to compensate for the diminished income from other sources and to promote party-centred political activities.[164] Subsidies are granted specifically to political parties and are managed by the party headquarters, but parts of the subsidy amounts can be distributed among individual legislators if they establish a local party branch. Parties are required to disclose the usage of the subsidy amount in detail, including the

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[164] Subsidies are stipulated in the so-called Political Party Subsidy Law [政党助成法] under which the government grants subsidies to political parties with a minimum of five members in parliament or parties that have obtained over two percent of the vote in the most recent election for either of the two houses of Parliament. Half of the total subsidy amount is divided among political parties according to each party's number of parliamentary members, while the remaining half is distributed according to the percentage of votes obtained in the two most recent elections for the two houses of Parliament (Okada, 1999, p. 135). The amount available for subsidies is calculated each year by allocating 250 yen per elector according to the most recent census (for further details see also the MIAC website).

amounts passed on to local branches (for more details see also Okada, 1999, p. 135).

As Table 6.5 shows, the amounts of subsidies distributed to political parties between 1998 and 2002 amounted to approximately 31 billion yen annually. The LDP received almost half of this amount, and the second-largest party, the DPJ, received roughly half the amount of the LDP, while other parties received significantly smaller portions. In 1998, the Liberal Party received 2.9 billion yen (or 9.2 percent of the total amount), but this amount had diminished somewhat by 2002, when the party received slightly less than 2 billion yen (or 6.2 percent of the total amount). The decreased amount obviously mirrors the decrease of the party's parliamentary representation following the split in 2000.

Table 6.5

Public Subsidies to Political Parties, 1998-2003

Party	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
LDP	15.2	14.9	14.5	14.5	15.2
DPJ	6.4	6.9	7.7	8.4	8.7
CGP	3.2	3.3	3.1	2.9	2.9
LP	2.9	2.8	2.5	2.0	2.0
JSP	2.5	2.1	2.3	2.2	1.8
Other parties	1.1	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.2
Total	31.2	31.4	31.4	31.4	31.7

Note. Unit=billion yen. Data was compiled from MIAC, 2000c, 2001b, 2002e, 2003d.

Public subsidies played an important role in the income structure of all eligible parties except the JCP, which has refrained from applying for subsidies to signal its opposition to the subsidy system. But dependence on public subsidies, however, differed considerably depending on parties' ability to raise funds through other channels. Table 6.6 shows the proportionate role of public subsidies in expenditure figures reported by various parties (central level), and the table reveals considerable differences in terms of dependence on subsidies. In

Table 6.6

Public Subsidy Dependence Ratio of Major Parties, 2001-2002 (%)

Party	2001	2002
LDP	63	54
DPJ	81	90
CGP	26	12
LP	75	98
JSP	55	55
Average	54	48

Note. Figures relate to central party expenditures only. Data were compiled from MIAC, 2002f, 2003f.

2001, 54 percent of the total expenditures reported by all parties combined were covered by public subsidies, and although this figure decreased to 48 percent in the following year, the trend was the reverse for several parties. For example, the DPJ had depended on public subsidies to cover 81 percent of expenses in 2001, but in 2002 this figure rose to 90 percent. The LP's ratio of dependence rose from 75 percent in 2001 to no less than 98 percent in 2002, the highest among all major parties. On the other hand, the JSP continued to depend on subsidies to cover slightly more than half of its expenses. The LDP also depended on subsidies for roughly half of expenses, but had managed to reduce dependence between 2001 and 2002. The CGP in particular was able to access significant amounts of resources elsewhere, and like the LDP also reduced its dependence on public subsidies between 2001 and 2002. For most parties, however, public subsidies constituted only part of the total income, and in the following we examine alternative sources of income for political parties in more detail.

Table 6.7 lists the reported income of the central offices of the six major parties in 2002. The total income of the combined parties amounted to 91.9 billion yen, but public subsidies constituted only 33 percent of this amount. Political parties clearly continued to amass massive amounts from a range of other sources. For the parties seen as a whole, the most significant source of income came from party publications and party events, which constituted 43 percent of the overall income. Donations played a lesser role, while income from party membership played almost no role.[165]

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[165] For political groups, which are not eligible for public subsidies, the significance of membership fees was significantly higher (23 percent), although this item was surpassed by direct donations (35 percent). Most significantly, income generated at group events amounted to 38 percent of the reported income for political groups (MIAC, 2003c).

Table 6.7

Summary of Income Sources Reported By Major Parties (Central Organization), 2002

Income summary	All parties combined	LDP[a]	DPJ[b]	LP[c]	JSP	CGP	JCP
Income total (billion yen)	91.9	26.8	10.7	2.2	3.3	15.4	33.4
Income sources (%):							
Membership fees	4.5	4.2	2.9	0.2	9.1	7.2	3.8
Individuals	1.9	2.1	0.0	0.2	0.8	0.1	3.4
Company/organization	2.9	9.5	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.0
Political groups	5.1	16.3	0.1	0.3	0.0	2.0	0.0
Party publications and events	43.1	2.1	2.4	0.2	21.3	61.9	85.3
Local branch	2.8	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.5	6.9	4.5
Public subsidies	33.3	56.6	81.3	89.5	54.4	18.9	0.0
Other sources	5.4	9.1	12.8	9.3	1.2	3.1	1.1
Bank loans	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.1	0.0	1.8

Note. [a] Includes income reported by the LDP's Political Funding Group, 'The People's Political Council' [国民政治協議会]. [b] Includes income reported by the DPJ's Political Funding Group, 'The People's Council' [国民会議協議会]. [c] Includes income reported by the LP's Political Funding Group, 'The People's Reform Council' [改革国民会議]. Data were compiled from MIAC, 2003g.

If, however, we look at individual parties, there are significant differences in terms of income sources. While membership fees played a relatively significant role for the JSP and the CGP, it was less significant for other parties. As already seen, the LP had the lowest number of registered members among all the parties, and this item constituted a negligible 0.2 percent of its total income. The importance of donations from individuals, companies, organizations, and political groups also differed considerably depending on the party. The JCP and the LDP had the highest percentage of individual donations, while the amounts collected by other parties from individuals constituted insignificant parts of income. Only the LDP was able to attract significant donations from companies and organizations, which was also true with regard to donations from political groups.[166] Income generated from party publications and party events played an insignificant role for the Liberal Party, and also constituted relatively small proportions of the incomes of the LDP and the DPJ.

[166] All donations from companies or organizations to the LDP were channelled through its Political Funding Group, the 'People's Political Council' [国民政治協議会].

For the JSP, the CGP, and the JCP, this item, however, constituted very significant parts of total income, and indeed the JCP amassed no less than 85.3 percent of its income from this source. All central party organizations received contributions from local branches, but in most cases the amounts constituted only a very insignificant proportion of the total income. On the other hand, public subsidies played a significant role for the LP (89.5 percent), the DPJ (81.3 percent), the LDP (56.6 percent) and the JSP (54.4 percent). Subsidies amounted to only 18.9 percent for the CGP, while, as noted previously, the JCP refrained from applying for the subsidy.

Differences in terms of party income were, unsurprisingly, largely mirrored in the level of expenditures for individual parties and also in their spending patterns. In 2002, the combined expenditures reported by all parties amounted to roughly 21.4 billion yen, and rose to 39.1 billion yen in 2003 due to the election for the House of Representatives (MIAC, 2004b). If we look specifically at the reported expenditures of central party offices (Table 6.8), unsurprisingly, the LDP outspent all other parties with a total of 5.3 billion yen. Other parties spent significantly less than the LDP, but it is worth noting that the LP came second in terms of spending with a total of almost two billion yen. This sum almost equalled the party's total income in 2002, while other parties spent proportionately less of their income (cf. Table 6.7 above). The

Table 6.8

Summary of Expenditures Reported By Major Parties (Central Organization), 2002

Expenditures	LDP	DPJ	CGP	JSP	LP
Running costs	3510	962	976	798	264
Organizational activities	473	350	19	0	1543
Electoral activities	165	13	0	280	11
Publishing/advertising activities	1038	254	30	89	16
Survey/ research activities	130	171	0	0	49
Other expenses	0	0	0	0	84
Total expenses	5316	1750	1025	1167	1967

Note. Unit=million yen. Data were compiled from MIAC, 2003e.

Liberals spent the most on organizational activities (1.5 billion yen), which can be seen as an indication of their intensive efforts in the process of building the organization. More established parties spent much less in this category, and seemed to focus their activities more on publishing and advertising. Other parties also spent considerable amounts on running costs, while this constituted a relatively small proportion of the Liberals' expenditures.

6.10 Political Financing at the Local Level: Party Branches

So far we have only examined financing at the level of the central party organizations, but this obviously represents only part of the picture, and this section therefore briefly considers political financing at the local level. Coming to grips with trends at the local level, however, is complicated by the lack of comprehensive and readily comparable data. As noted previously, local party branches and other political groups submit their financial disclosure reports to the individual Prefectural Electoral Commissions, and the format and content of the reports published by the Commissions differ greatly. Furthermore, barring a visit to every single Electoral Commission office throughout Japan, it is impossible to assemble a complete dataset. Consequently, a comprehensive analysis of local level funding is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, to reach an understanding of the Liberal Party's funding circumstances, we need to give some attention to the local level. The brief survey of local level funding presented below allows us at least to gain an understanding of the party's difficulties in terms of securing funding, which also mirrors its difficulties in establishing a local basis for party activities. We will examine data from prefectures where the Liberal Party had incumbents, as well as data from prefectures where the

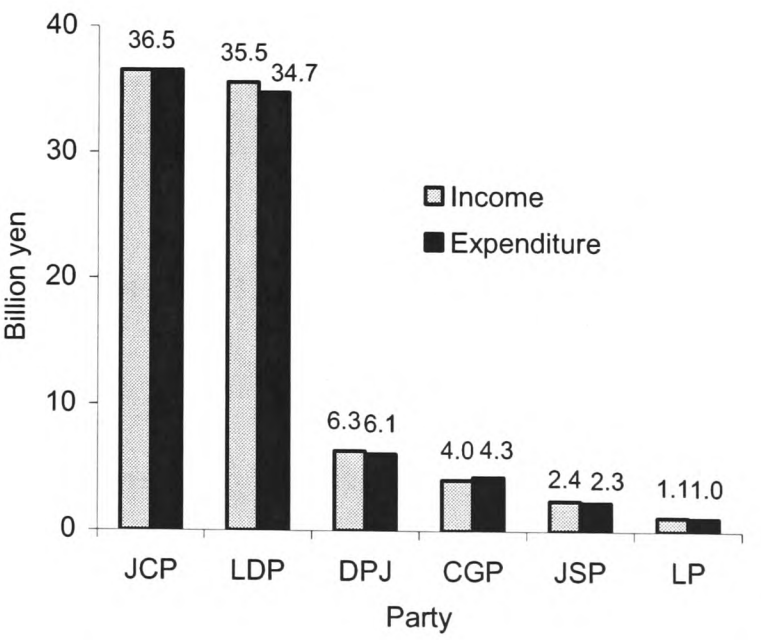
party organization was only in its beginning phase. Finally, the analysis presents a case study of the Nagasaki 3rd District, comparing the funding patterns of the Liberal candidate and his main competitor from the LDP.

Most individual candidates function as the nominal head of the local party branch, which is allowed to receive donations from companies and organizations. Branches are also entitled to receive part of the public subsidy, which is channelled through central party headquarters. For this reason, many candidates opt to use the party branch as their main fund-raising organ, although, as seen previously, some candidates, particularly from the LDP, have designated Fund-Raising Groups operating side by side with the party branch. Looking only at party branches, therefore, we will not be able to get a complete overview of local financing. But with this caveat in mind, reports from branches clearly represent the most reliable source of information on funding at the local level.

Figure 6.9 shows the total income reported by major parties' local branches in 2002 to the various Prefectural Electoral Commissions, and, as is obvious from the figure, there are marked differences in the income of parties at the local level. As was also the case for central party organizations, the LDP and the JCP surpassed all other parties, which were able to earn and spend much less at the

Figure 6.9

Income and Expenditure Reported by Branches of Major Parties, 2002



Note. Reports submitted by local branches to central authorities are not included in these figures. Based on data from MIAC, 2004a.

local level. Local branches of the DPJ earned almost six times less (6.3 billion yen) than those of the JCP and the LDP, while the CGP was somewhat below this at 4 billion yen. The income of local JSP branches was only half of this amount (2.4 billion yen), while local LP branches garnered the least with a total of only 1.1 billion yen. Almost one-fifth of this amount (208 million yen) was reported by the local branches in Iwate, the absolute party stronghold, which gives an indication of the relative weakness of the fund-raising ability of LP branches in other areas.

Table 6.9
Income of Party Branches (Reported Locally), 2002

Prefecture	Income reported by party branches (unit=million yen)						Number of LP incumbents (n=16)
	LP	JCP	LDP	DPJ	CGP	JSP	
Iwate[a]	442	407	351	10	31	67	HR:4, HC:1
Ibaraki	5	428	771	126	58	23	HR:1
Tochigi	70	223	779	94	31	11	
Tokyo	159	5416	1967	531	727	139	HR:2, HC:1
Niigata	39	695	1013	96	28	85	HC:2
Toyama	13	130	243	36	20	141	HC:1
Ishikawa	11	213	843	71	10	43	HR:1
Yamanashi	1	270	232	81	16	8	
Aichi	69	1655	1458	619	176	56	HR:1
Kyoto	16	2062	770	221	115	18	
Osaka	49	3799	1307	624	578	52	HR:1
Hyōgo	34	1494	1039	192	253	77	HR:1

Note. The Liberal Party did not report any income in the following prefectures: Aomori, Akita, Yamagata, Gumma, Fukui, Gifu, Shiga, Nara, Tottori, Yamaguchi, and Saga. Data were not available for the following prefectures: Hokkaidō, Miyagi, Fukushima, Saitama, Chiba, Kanagawa, Nagano, Shizuoka, Mie, Wakayama, Shimane, Okayama, Hiroshima, Tokushima, Kagawa, Ehime, Kōchi, Fukuoka, Nagasaki, Kumamoto, Oita, Miyazaki, Kagoshima, and Okinawa. [a] The amounts reported by branches in Iwate include the surplus from the previous years, and for this reason are slightly higher than actual income. Data were compiled from websites of the various Electoral Prefectural Commissions and Prefectural Governments.

Table 6.9 presents the income figures reported by branches of the major parties in 12 prefectures[167], and individual prefectures generally mirror the overall average. The JCP and the LDP in most cases reported much higher incomes than other parties,

[167] The data used in the analysis has been assembled by accessing the websites of Prefectural Electoral Commissions and Prefectural Governments in all 47 prefectures. Data could not be found for 24 prefectures, and with the exception of Nagasaki, the PEC websites in these prefectures carried no information on the financial disclosure reports for 2002. With regard to Nagasaki, some data were available, but in a format incompatible with data from other prefectures, and Nagasaki was therefore excluded from the analysis. In 11 of the 23 prefectures, where data were assembled, the LP did not report any income at all, and these prefectures have been omitted from Table 6.9.

and although there was some geographical variation, the JCP's average income in the 12 prefectures was 1.4 billion yen, while the LDP on average amassed 898 million yen. Substantially below came the DPJ (225 million) and the CGP (170 million). Liberal Party branches on average reported 76 million yen, and only the JSP had a lower average of 60 million yen. The LP average, however, was propped up by the relatively high income reported in Iwate, where Liberal party branches had the highest income of all parties. On the other hand, the LP reported the lowest income of all parties in six prefectures, the lowest being Yamanashi with only one million yen. In several of these prefectures (Ibaraki, Yamanashi, and Kyoto) the party did not have an incumbent to attract contributions from local sources, although this was not the case in Toyama, Osaka, and Hyōgo, where the reported income of the Liberal Party was also the lowest. The Liberals reported a slightly higher income than the JSP in Tokyo and Aichi, ranked slightly above the CGP in Niigata and Ishikawa, and only in Tochigi did it surpass both the CGP and the JSP, even though there was no Liberal incumbent in the prefecture.

The general picture that emerges from the local level is of dominance by the LDP and the JCP, and the LP and other minor parties like the CGP and the JSP clearly had difficulties in attracting funds in areas other than their traditional strongholds. In the 12 prefectures included in this survey, the JCP accounted for roughly 49 percent of the total income, the LDP for 32 percent, while the DPJ (8 percent), the CGP (6 percent), the LP (3 percent) and the JSP (2 percent) trailed significantly behind.

6.11 Political Financing at the Local Level: Fund-Raising Activities of Individual MPs

Individual legislators and candidates are able to attract different degrees of financial support, and it is difficult to generalize since individual income depends on a range of factors, e.g., district type, or the candidate's seniority and personal background. Generally speaking, members of the LDP have always tended to have the upper hand vis-à-vis their district competitors, and there is no evidence that this trend is reversed in recent years (e.g., *Asahi Shinbun*, 2003, December 24). If we look at the income ranking lists published annually by various newspapers, the top spots are with a few exceptions dominated by members of the LDP, and this trend is becoming more pronounced every year (*Asahi Shinbun*, various years).[168] According to analyses conducted by the *Asahi Shinbun*, legislators from different parties exhibit different patterns with regard to collection of funds, and income tends to originate from different types of sources (*Asahi Shinbun*, 2003, December 24).[169] Generally newspaper reports tend to focus on differences between the two major parties, the LDP and the DPJ, but we now look at the case of the Nagasaki 3rd District, where Yamada Masahiko (LP) competed against Torashima Kazuo (LDP).

Torashima was elected from the district in the 2000 election, while Yamada was elected via PR after coming second in the district competition. The two district competitors differed in a number of ways. Torashima had the most parliamentary experience, having been elected from Nagasaki for four consecutive terms. Yamada,

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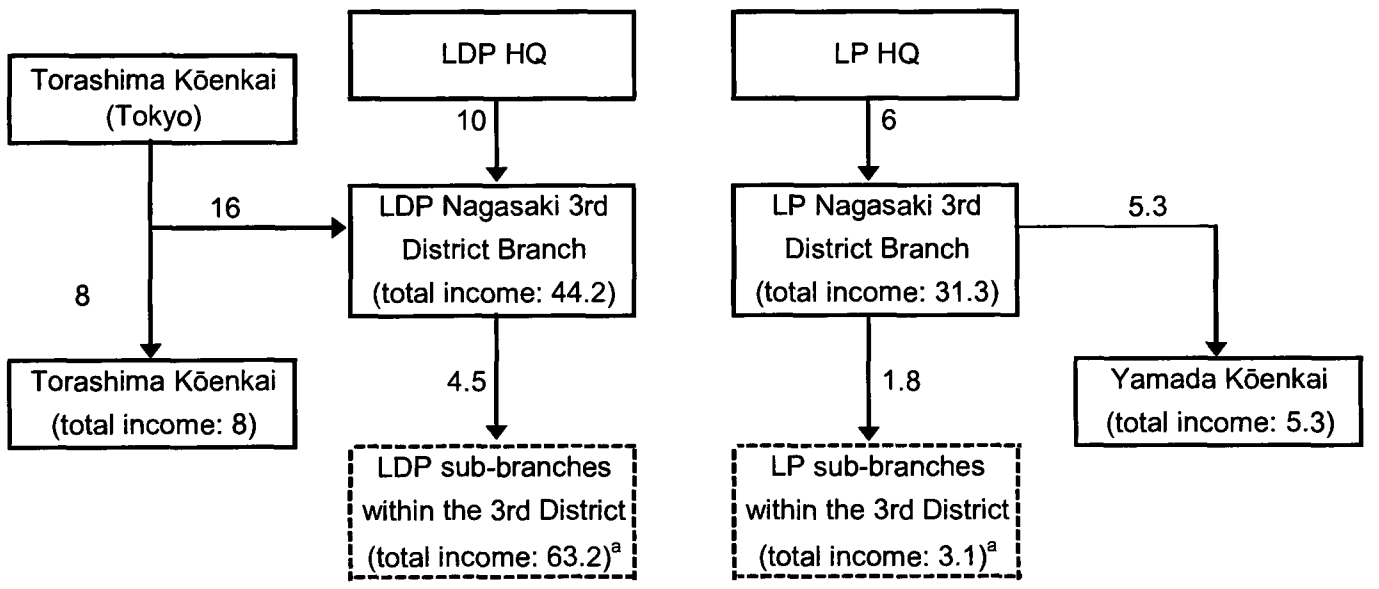
[168] For example, in 1998 Ozawa Ichirō ranked 7th on the list, but had fallen to 13th place in 1999. In 2000, 2001, and 2002, the top ten lists were populated solely by members of the LDP, all of whom were able to attract astronomical amounts of money (*Asahi Shinbun*, various years).

[169] In 2002, the average income of LDP legislators was 70.1 million yen, which was almost 43 million more than legislators from the DPJ, whose income on average amounted to 27.2 million yen. The main income sources for LDP legislators included fund-raising parties (34 percent), donations from companies or organizations (25 percent), and contributions from political groups and party headquarters (14 percent each). In contrast, members of the DPJ generally attracted large parts of their income from party headquarters and individual donations (*Asahi Shinbun*, 2003, December 24).

on the other hand, had been elected for the first time in 1993 on the Renewal Party ticket, but had failed to be reelected in 1996. Both candidates were born in Nagasaki, but Torashima had been involved in local politics prior to his entry into national politics, while Yamada was a newcomer to politics in 1993, having worked as a lawyer prior to this (Database, 2004). Based only on the personal background of the two candidates, we might anticipate that Torashima would have the more developed networks of the two, and not surprisingly we can also identify significant differences in the availability of resources for the two candidates.

Figure 6.10

Funding of Individual Legislators in the Nagasaki 3rd District: LDP vs. LP, 2002



Note. Figures indicate amounts transferred between different groups (unit=million yen). [a] The total income for sub-branches includes contributions from the 3rd District Branch. Data were compiled from Nagasaki Prefecture, 2003.

Figure 6.10 presents an overview of the funding organs associated with each candidate. Central for both candidates were the Nagasaki 3rd District branches of the LDP and the LP. The reported income of the LDP branch was 44.3 million yen, while the LP branch reported 31.3 million yen. Both received part of the public subsidy from party headquarters, but the LDP branch received almost double the amount of the LP branch. Both candidates also maintained personal support groups, and Torashima's local support group received significant amounts from his support

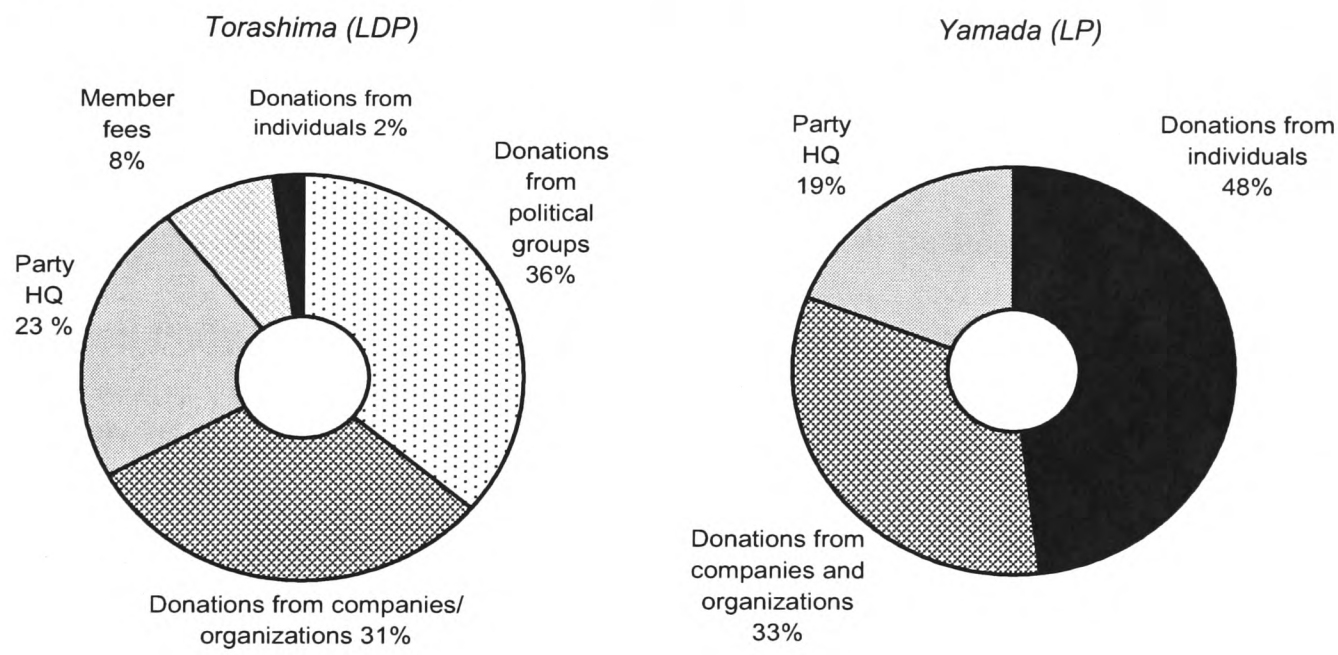
group in Tokyo, while Yamada's support group received funds only from the party branch.

Aside from the main party branches, additional sub-branches had been established in the district, and the total income reported by the LDP sub-branches amounted to 63.2 million yen of which 4.5 million were channelled through the main party branch. The income of LP sub-branches within the district amounted to only 3.1 million yen, roughly half of which had been channelled through the main party branch. The data on income of LDP sub-branches do not indicate whether they were related directly to Torashima or 'belonged' to local assemblymen. It is, however, not unreasonable to expect that at least some of these branches were related to the LDP candidate's activities, which is naturally also the case with the LP branches and the LP candidate. But even if we exclude the amounts commanded by these sub-branches, there were significant differences in the level of economic resources available to the candidates. If we combine the income of the LDP branch and Torashima's local support group, he had 52.3 million yen to his disposal, while Yamada had to make do with the 31.3 million yen collected by the party branch.

If we look at the income sources of the two party branches (Figure 6.11), we also find clear differences. Public subsidies received via party headquarters constituted almost the same proportion of the two branches' income, but while membership fees were an insignificant 0.2 percent of Yamada's income, they represented 8 percent for Torashima. Donations from individuals represented the most significant source of income for Yamada, and constituted almost half of his income. Donations from companies or organizations also played an important role for Yamada, and in fact 81 percent of his income consisted of donations. For

Torashima individual donations played almost no role, while 31 percent of his income consisted of donations from companies or organizations. Torashima also received significant contributions from political groups, including his own personal support group in Tokyo. Torashima's income sources were somewhat more varied than Yamada's, and the higher proportionate significance of membership fees and contributions from political groups give us an indication of his more extensive networks in the district. Thus, he seems to have had the upper hand in terms of human as well as financial resources.

Figure 6.11
Dependence on Different Types of Income Sources at the Local Level (Nagasaki 3rd District, 2002)



Note. Data were compiled from Nagasaki Prefecture, 2003.

CONCLUSIONS

The first part of the chapter examined the organizational framework of the Liberal Party as well as the role of the party leadership, most prominently party leader Ozawa Ichirō. We saw that Ozawa was dealt a quite strong hand by being able to pick the members of the party executive, who controlled the daily running of the

party. The formal arrangements left little opportunity for rank-and-file members to influence party decisions, although informal consultations allowed them some influence. The highest organ within the party was in principle the Party Convention, but in reality it was a largely symbolic event, which served more to foster party spirit and nurture human relations.

Ozawa played a pivotal role within the party, which had been created by his core followers from the NFP. The absence of other equally major figures within the party enhanced the impression of the LP being very much a one-man show. Although his leadership style had been the cause of some of the internal problems within the NFP, for Liberal MPs his charisma and strategic abilities seemed to overshadow any eventual problems in this regard, and MPs expressed great reverence for their leader, which was also seen in a survey of organizational cohesion conducted by Kabashima (2000). Ozawa has been a pivot in several of the new parties in the 1990s, but with the Liberal Party he finally found a stable vehicle for his political ideas. The LP had come into being following what can be termed a 'purifying process', and clearly embodied Ozawa's spirit and ideals. Only on one occasion was party unity shattered, which resulted in the party's split in 2000. This, nevertheless, represented a major setback for the party in terms of fulfilling its ambitions of becoming a truly significant party in terms of parliamentary strength.

At the top of the party organization was the party headquarters in Tokyo, and below it were a number of local party branches and in some prefectures also Prefectural Branch Associations. The local branches were important as the focal point for local activities, but also served as means to provide access to subsidy resources for the party's individual legislators and candidates.

The LP was dedicated to the task of building and expanding the organization at the local level, but nevertheless had a low number of local branches compared to other major parties, which indicates the lack of development at the local level. Attempts to expand the party's reach more widely were largely unsuccessful, and while other parties tended to increase the number of local branches over the years, the number of LP branches remained almost static.

The LP also failed to attract significant numbers of members, and its membership figures were negligible compared to other major parties. This should not, however, be seen as sign of negligence with regard to development of the grassroots aspects of the organization, which the party tried to nurture through various social events, e.g., the annual Study Meeting or its Student Club.

The second part of the chapter focused on the financial situation of political parties, and more specifically the difficulties faced by the LP in this arena. In terms of overall party income in recent years, the analysis demonstrated that all parties are facing increased difficulties in collecting funds for their activities, even if they are still able to gather significant amounts. The Liberal Party, however, was clearly in a weak position both in terms of fund-raising ability and resource availability.

We found that there were significant differences among parties in terms of income sources, and that public subsidies from the government played a significant role for most parties. While the larger parties clearly received the bulk, the LP received between 2.9 and 2 billion yen annually between 1998 and 2002. Public subsidies clearly played a large role for Liberal Party finance, and the analysis revealed an overwhelming dependence on subsidies to cover expenditures at the

central level (98 percent). We also found that in 2002 subsidies constituted no less than 89.5 percent of the party's total income at the central level.

Trends in party income were generally mirrored in the levels of party expenditures, although the LP was exceptional in that it spent proportionately more of its income than other parties. This must, however, also be seen in the context of it not having very much to spend in the first place. The spending patterns of the LP differed from other parties, and it spent a proportionately large amount on organizational activities, indicating its dedication in this area.

At the local level there was great variation between different localities, but in almost half of the surveyed prefectures the Liberal Party did not report any income at all. In most of the remaining prefectures the Liberals ranked lowest or second-lowest in terms of fund-raising ability, and surpassed all other parties only in the party stronghold in Iwate. The survey bears witness to the considerable difficulties faced by smaller parties in attracting funds at the local level.

At the local level the income of the JCP and the LDP tended to be much higher than that of other parties, and among individual legislators we also found that members from the LDP were in a strong position vis-à-vis their competitors. This was for example seen in newspaper listings of the most successful fund-raisers, where members of the LDP are clearly dominant. This trend was also evident in the case study of Nagasaki's 3rd district, where Yamada (LP) faced Torashima (LDP). The amounts amassed by the local LDP branch were significantly higher than those of the LP branch, and we also found that Torashima's income sources were somewhat more varied than those of Yamada.

The analysis presented in this chapter confirmed Ozawa's pivotal role within

the party, and also pinpointed the Liberals' difficulties in expanding the local organization. These difficulties were exacerbated by the difficulties in attracting funds and expanding the financial basis of the party. Organizational and financial limitations clearly impacted on the LP's options within the electoral arena, which is the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7

THE LIBERAL PARTY:

APPEALING TO THE ELECTORATE

> "If we use our party's ideas and policies to appeal wholeheartedly to the electorate, people will be certain to see [their value]".
>
> Ozawa Ichirō (*Asahi Shinbun*, 1998, June 24)

The Liberal Party was part of the Japanese party landscape for five-and-a-half years, during which its electoral doom was predicted on several occasions, but the party surprised by demonstrating considerable stamina. The LP participated in electoral processes at national as well as local level, but although the party was able to improve marginally on its preelection strength in each election, the electoral arena presented it with serious challenges. Throughout, it failed to accomplish its stated electoral goals due to organizational weaknesses, and also faced problems in the task of building and sustaining sufficient electoral support. Within the party there was a clear sense of frustration with the situation, and it was painstakingly clear to everyone within the party that the grand policy designs were of no use unless the party was also able to win elections. To be able to win elections, the party needed to consolidate and expand the organizational framework needed to support its efforts in the electoral arena, and summing up the situation, Ozawa stated that:

> "It is impossible to win local elections straight away unless there is the presence of a parliament member in the region, around whom to build the organization. In this way there is really only one way of going about building up the local organization, which is to run even more candidates in the national elections and then use these candidates as axles around which to develop the organization".
>
> (Jiyūtō Press Briefing, 1999, April 28)

Aside from the concrete task of building structures that would enable it to win elections, the Liberal Party also faced the challenge of finding sufficient numbers of attractive candidates to run in elections. For a minor party with insufficient resources and little to offer prospective candidates in terms of parliamentary influence, finding a way of tapping into new pools of candidates was of vital importance. Equally, if not more, pressing was the need to establish a support base within the electorate and to find efficient ways of strengthening the party's appeal to various electorate groups.

This chapter discusses the electoral performance of the Liberal Party and its electoral activities at national and local level. It also briefly touches upon the discrepancy between election results and official party aims. The chapter then proceeds to discuss two problem areas related to electoral activities, i.e., the apparent lack of nationwide organizational strength and the party's difficulties in finding sufficient numbers of attractive candidates. The second part of the chapter discusses the socioeconomic characteristics of Liberal Party support and also examines these in a comparative context in order to gain a better understanding of the party's strengths and weaknesses relative to other parties. The final part of the chapter discusses the modes of appeal employed by the LP in its attempts to reach out to the electorate as well as the electorate's response to these appeals.

ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION, 1998-2003

7.1 The Liberal Party's Electoral Record

The Liberal Party participated in three elections at the parliamentary level and in two nationwide local elections.[170] Its first electoral contest, the House of Councillors

[170] An additional 21 by-elections for vacant parliamentary seats have been held between January 1998 and September 2003, but the LP ran an official candidate in only one instance.

election in July 1998, followed only six months after its establishment, which complicated preparations, especially at the local district level. A party report subsequently described the election as a matter of 'do or die', which determined the party's potential for survival (Jiyūtō, 1999, p. 6). Prospects looked rather bleak for all opposition parties prior to the election, as preelection polls predicted a comfortable LDP victory. The LDP, however, suffered an unexpected defeat in the election (see also Chapter 2), as frustrated voters turned mainly to the DPJ and the JCP, thereby enabling both parties to add nine seats to their preelection strength. The LP also increased its parliamentary representation by one, winning one seat in a local district and five in the national PR district (for details see also Appendix G). The LP garnered slightly more than five million votes (9.3 percent), which was almost one million more than the JSP.

Significant changes occurred in and around the party prior to the next national election, which was held in June 2000. The LP had moved first from opposition to government and then back to opposition, and this move had caused the party to split, which reduced party ranks considerably. It remained uncertain whether the public would look favourably on these manoeuvrings and rally behind the party in the election. In spite of intense public dissatisfaction with the LDP, and in particular Prime Minister Mori, the ruling coalition maintained its majority, but results constituted a sharp decline compared to its preelection strength. The DPJ emerged as the big winner, while other opposition parties realized more modest gains. The LP again succeeded in improving on its preelection strength, winning a total of 22 seats, 4 more than it had held prior to the election. According to one party official, the results indicated that "the Ozawa brand [was] still in demand" (*Mainichi Shinbun*,

2000, June 6). Indeed, electoral results left little doubt that Ozawa's charismatic leadership played a crucial role for party survival. Only four seats were won in single-member districts – three of which were in Iwate – while the remaining 18 MPs were elected in the PR districts, largely propped up by Ozawa's personal popularity. And although the party's parliamentary strength increased, results were disappointing seen in the context of the party's aim of securing at least 10 seats in SMD and 20 or more seats through PR (*Mainichi Shinbun*, 2000, June 26).[171]

The provision of dual candidacy, i.e., the possibility of running in the SMD while also being listed on the PR party lists, was used widely by the Liberals in 2000. Only three candidates were running exclusively in the SMD competition (Ozawa, Nishioka, and Iwasa), and of these only Ozawa was elected. Most of the pure PR candidates were either party staff or former secretaries to MPs, and only four of these were eventually elected.[172] Incidentally, the strategy of filling the lower slots on PR lists with party staff – just in case the election results proved to be particularly favourable – is a trend also evident in other parties.

The Liberal Party's last national electoral contest was the July 2001 House of Councillors election, which came to be dominated by the media hype surrounding Prime Minister Koizumi, and most attempts to aim the spotlight at policy issues soon fizzled away in the media frenzy surrounding Koizumi's person.[173] The election failed to produce any major changes, and the ruling coalition again managed to

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[171] Ozawa afterwards commented, somewhat gloomily, that he had hoped for a little more support, and that the results mirrored the electorate's lack of sense of crisis (*Mainichi Shinbun*, 2000, June 26).
[172] Most unsuccessful candidates of this type subsequently returned to their jobs in the MP offices.
[173] As Koizumi had promised much, but yet delivered little, the election results could only be seen as a reflection of voters' expectations and not as an evaluation of his accomplishments. During the campaign Koizumi avoided explaining the details of his structural reform plans and accompanying pains, claiming that "whether one feels something as a pain depends on one's attitude". He also occasionally sidestepped discussions of concrete measures to be taken, and for example told reporters that "even if [voters] don't get the concrete details of reform, I'm sure they get my spirit toward reform....It's important to feel it, and I hope they did" (Japan Times, 2001, July 31).

secure a majority. Among the opposition parties, only the DPJ and the LP registered gains, winning an extra four and three seats, respectively. Unaffiliated voters, mainly in urban areas, tended to cast ballots for the LDP this time (Japan Times, 2001, July 30), and faced with Koizumi's overwhelming popularity, the election presented an uphill struggle for all opposition parties. The Liberal Party had, perhaps somewhat unrealistically, aimed at capturing at least 10 seats in the local districts (*Sankei Shinbun*, 2001, July 9), and the two seats won in Iwate and Niigata therefore was less than satisfactory. Even in Iwate, the Ozawa heartland, the Liberal candidate struggled to secure the seat, and in a last-ditch effort all personnel that could be spared from other districts had to be sent to Iwate in order to give the local campaign a final boost (Kobayashi Michiko [interview], 2003, May 14).[174] Although the aim had been to gather at least 10 million votes in the PR district, in the end the Liberals eventually received only 4.2 million votes – less than half of the targeted amount (*Sankei Shinbun*, 2001, July 9; *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 2001, July 30). When Ozawa afterwards expressed his gratitude for the support given to the party, he also lambasted the electorate for treating politics as a variety show (Ozawa, 2001).[175]

In addition to elections at the national level, the LP also participated in nationwide local elections in 1999 and 2003, and although its performance improved over time, it clearly remained difficult for the party to penetrate the sphere of local politics. Table 7.1 lists the number of Liberal candidates and number of seats won in local elections, and, as can be seen, in 1999 the party ran a total of 88 candidates for

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[174] In Iwate, Hirano Tatsuo (LP) faced Tamazawa Tokuichirō (LDP), and in the end a mere six thousand votes separated the two. A loss in Iwate, however, would have been a major loss of face for the LP, which is why all efforts were put into not losing this particular battle.

[175] In his weekly column Ozawa noted that "despite the fact that [the country] is driven into a corner, the Japanese people have only little sense of crisis. That the cabinet enjoys a temporary support rate of more than 80 percent while the voting turnout is only 56.4 percent is proof that people look at politics as a variety show. Only a small number of people take a serious approach to politics and understand that it directly impacts on their daily lives" (Ozawa, 2001).

Table 7.1
Liberal Party Candidates and Seats Won in Local Elections, 1998-2003

Election type	April 1999		April 2003	
	Number of candidates	Number of seats won	Number of candidates	Number of seats won
Prefectural assemblies	46	20	37	26
City assemblies (designated cities)	10	1	21	5
City assemblies	11	5	18	11
Ward assemblies	21	8	22	11
Town and village assemblies	0	0	1	0
Total	88	34	99	53

Note. Data were compiled from Jiyūtō, 1999, 2003a.

prefectural, city, and ward assemblies, and 34 (38 percent) of these were successful. It should, however, also be noted that almost half of the successful candidates were elected to the prefectural assembly of the party stronghold in Iwate. In addition, the LP endorsed 229 candidates of whom 161 were successful (Jiyūtō, 1999). In 2003, the number of party candidates had increased to 99, and the number (and proportion) of successful candidates also increased to 53 (54 percent). In addition, the party endorsed 254 candidates of whom 196 were elected. In this way, the party actually succeeded in expanding its representation at the local level, but it is, however, sobering to compare these figures with those of other parties. As Table 7.2 shows,

Table 7.2
Candidates in Unified Local Elections, April 2003

Electoral unit	Number of contested seats	Number of candidates							
		LDP	DPJ	JCP	CGP	JSP	LP	Other parties	Indp.
Governor	11	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	40
Prefectural assembly	2,634	1,497	263	386	178	104	37	99	1,290
City assembly[a]	831	284	153	171	146	27	21	97	260
Mayor	118	0	0	10	0	0	0	2	278
City assembly	10,218	869	326	1,106	1,137	268	18	126	8,178
Ward head	14	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	41
Ward assembly	837	325	91	153	172	26	22	51	262
Town/village head	541	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	873
Town/village assembly	17,563	90	50	1,056	471	72	1	19	17,539
Total	32,756	3,067	883	2,886	2,104	497	99	397	28,721

Note. [a] Assemblies in so-called 'designated cities'. Data compiled from MIAC, 2003a, 2003b.

in 2003, LP candidates constituted only 0.3 percent of all candidates running in the various elections, and its winners only 0.15 percent of all winning candidates. In comparison, the LDP, the CGP, and the JCP ran thousands of candidates, and even the JSP ran almost five times as many candidates as the LP.

As this brief overview of LP participation in national and local elections has shown, it participated in all major elections between 1998 and 2003, and over time improved its position at both national and local levels. Generally, however, these improvements were of a marginal character, and the party was clearly unable to realize the ambitions formulated by its executive committee. Nonetheless, at the national level its performance still compares favourably with other parties of similar size, e.g., the JSP and the JCP, which have both been experiencing significant shifts in support and representation in the same period.

While the Liberal Party's difficulties in the electoral arena were most likely influenced by a combination of factors – not least the structural settings surrounding the party's activities – party representatives have pointed to the significance of the party organization – or rather the lack of local organizational strength (interviews with various Liberal MPs, July 2003). In order to further illuminate this aspect, the following section examines the geographical penetration of the Liberal Party as mirrored in its electoral participation and performance.

7.2 Geographical Penetration and Electoral Performance

A number of factors impact on the electoral performance of a political party, but the establishment and consolidation of the party's organization in significant proportions of the involved localities are elements necessary to guarantee electoral survival.

Within Japan's electoral setup, the element of proportional representation allows minor parties to survive even without a firm local base, but a party that seriously seeks to contend for power must be able to contest elections in a significant proportion of the local districts, which elect the majority of parliament members. As the electoral system is tilted somewhat in favour of the local districts, there is, unsurprisingly, a heavy focus on the ability to build up organization and support machines at the district level.

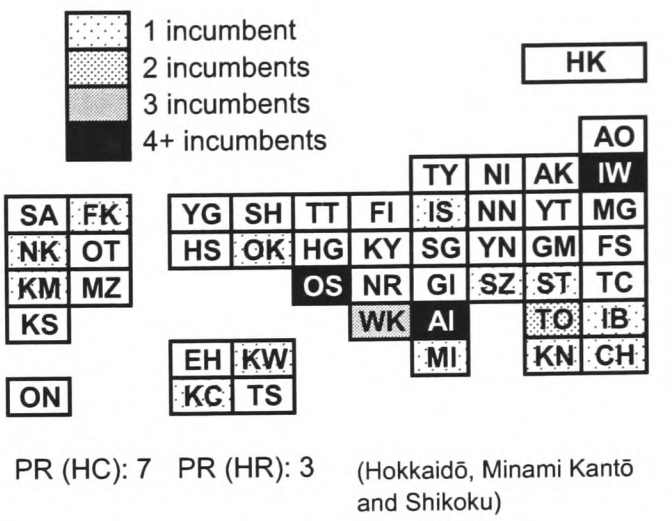
As we have seen previously, new parties in the 1990s largely originated from realignment at the parliamentary level, and those which existed long enough to contest elections all had to deal with the challenge of building their organization and support machines at the district level to expand party reach beyond their incumbent members. The Liberal Party was no exception. Its initial organizational framework was basically identical to the support bases of its 54 founding members. Forty-two of these were members of the House of Representatives, of whom 27 had won a SMD seat in 1996. The remaining 15 members had been elected from the NFP's PR block lists, but 11 had also contested a local district in 1993 or 1996, and therefore already had at least some extent of support networks in a local district. Five members of the House of Councillors had secured their seats in a local district, while seven had been elected in the national district. There was at least one MP elected in each of the 11 PR districts for the House of Representatives, and in this sense the party was represented in all corners of the nation, even if not in overwhelming numbers.

As Figure 7.1 illustrates, party strength was, however, concentrated in a limited number of regions and most MPs who had been elected from or run in local districts were found in central and eastern Japan. More than half of the party's district

incumbents were located either in Aichi, Osaka, Hyōgo, or in Iwate. In other words, the geographic scope of the initial organizational framework was limited to these areas with an additional handful of MPs scattered in other regions.

Figure 7.1

The Liberal Party's Geographical Representation at the Time of Formation



Note. A key to the abbreviated prefecture names can be found in the List of Abbreviations. Members of the House of Representatives, who had been elected in the PR districts in 1996, but who had previously run in a local district are listed as belonging in the district. Based on Database, 2004.

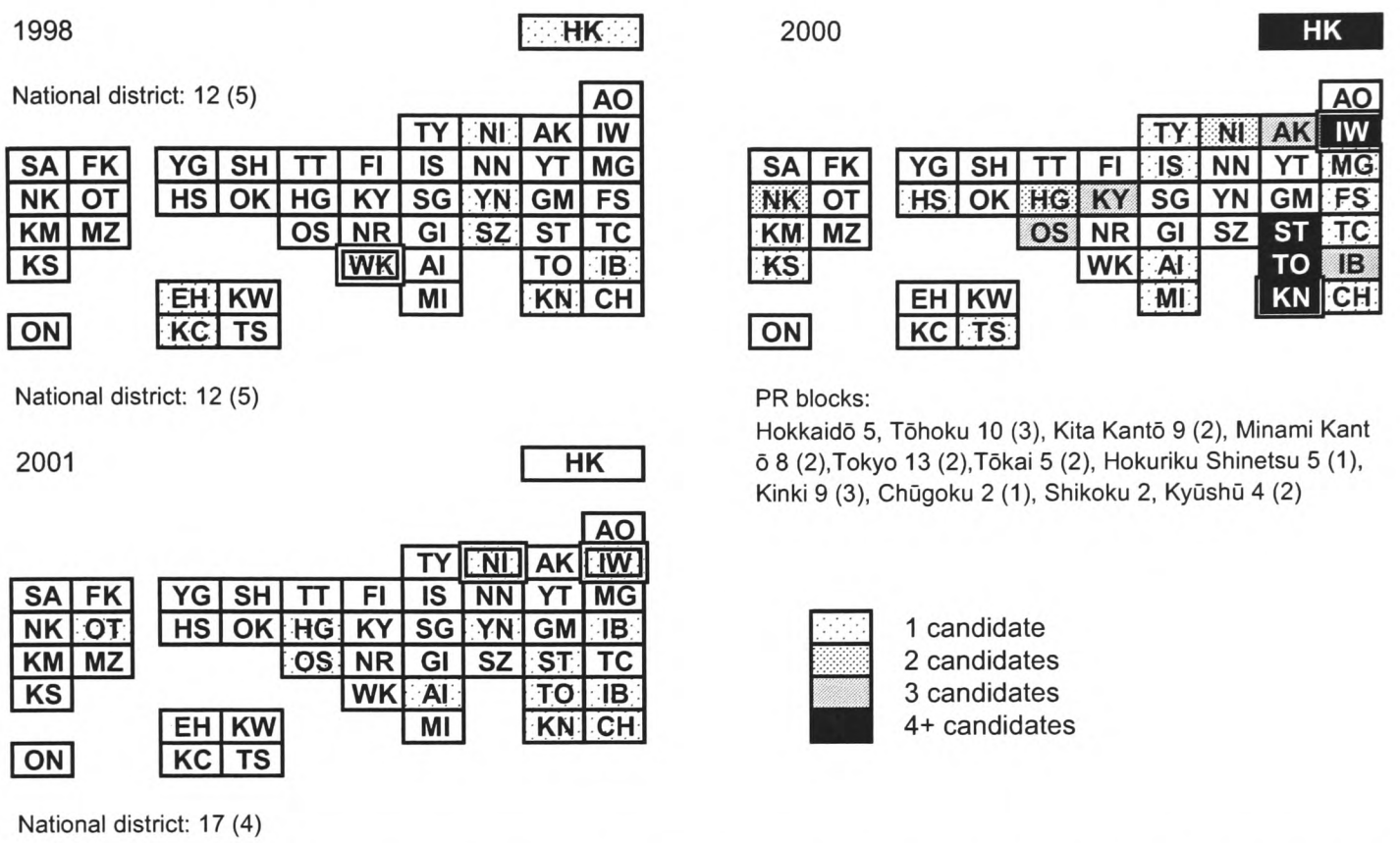
Results in PR districts played an important role throughout in sustaining the LP. Nevertheless, judging from the aims set forward by party executives, the LP from the outset had clear ambitions to be able to elect candidates from a range of local districts. At the core of party strategy was the belief that it was necessary to run as many candidates as possible in the local districts and in this way expand from the local level.

The local framework was limited from the outset, and in spite of the party's efforts to change this, it remained so until the end. The 1998 election, for example, bears witness to the limitations of the organizational framework. A total of 474 candidates vied for the 126 seats at stake in the election, but among the more significant parties the LP ran the second-lowest number of candidates.

Figure 7.2 shows the geographical distribution of Liberal candidates in national level elections in 1998, 2000, and 2001. In 1998, only 21 candidates were running under the Liberal label, and more than half of these were running in the national district. At the local level the party was only represented in nine districts, and quite spectacularly the party did not even field a candidate in Iwate, Ozawa's home district.

Figure 7.2

Geographical Distribution of Liberal Party Candidates in National Elections



Note. A key to the abbreviated prefecture names can be found in the List of Abbreviations. Numbers in brackets indicate number of successful candidates. Double borderlines indicate that one or more of the candidates in the district were elected. Based on Database, 2004.

In comparison, the LDP and the JCP ran candidates in 45 prefectures each, while the DPJ and the JSP had candidates in 20 prefectures each. Only one of the LP's local district candidates were elected, giving the party a success ratio of only 11 percent in this district type.[176] The Liberals were clearly rescued by results in the national district, and here it was primarily due to Ozawa's popularity that the party was able to secure 9.3 percent of the votes. In Iwate the LP received no less than 32 percent of all votes in the PR section, in spite of it not even fielding a candidate in the local district (*Seiji Handobukku*, 2000, p. 332).

The June 2000 election followed on the heels of the party split, which represented a serious setback in party efforts to solidify the organization. The former

[176] In comparison, 53 percent of LDP candidates and 65 percent of DPJ candidates in prefectural districts were elected. Both of the CGP's two candidates secured their seats, while the JCP and the JSP elected 16 and 5 percent of their candidates.

stronghold in central Japan (see also Figure 7.2) had vanished, since almost all MPs in this region had moved to the Conservative Party, and in fact only seven SMD incumbents had remained in the Liberal Party. Considering the limited geographical spread of these party incumbents and the turmoil that followed in the wake of the party split, it is really rather impressive that the Liberals were able to run candidates in 61 of the 300 single-member districts. This number was still low, however, compared to most other parties, and only the CGP and the CP ran fewer candidates. In comparison, the JCP ran candidates in all districts, the LDP in 271 districts, the DPJ in 242 districts, and the JSP in 71 districts (*Seiji Handobukku*, 2000). This time the LP was represented in 24 prefectures, stretching the entire length of the country from Hokkaidō in the north to Kagoshima in the south, but once again candidates were not distributed in a geographically even manner. Three quarters were concentrated in the eastern and northeastern regions, a smaller group in the Kansai area, and the remainder spread over the rest of the country. In comparison, the LDP, the DPJ, and the JCP had representation in all prefectures if not in all districts, while the JSP was represented in 39 prefectures. Again only the CGP and the CP had less geographical diversity than the Liberal Party, with representation in 10 and 8 prefectures, respectively (for more details on party representation in the 1998, 2000, and 2001 elections see also Appendixes P, Q and R).

In spite of its structural limitations, the LP did succeed in putting forward candidates in a substantial number of prefectures and districts in 2000, and thus seems to have been able to extend the physical reach of its organization. We should, however, probably note that representation in an increased number of localities was not necessarily an indicator of increased organizational strength. Despite moderate

success at covering a wider range of locations than previously, the party's ability to *win* in single-member districts remained extremely limited. Only four, or seven percent, of the 61 SMD candidates were successful. In comparison, the LDP was able to elect 66 percent of its SMD candidates, while the CGP and the DPJ elected 41 and 33 percent, respectively. Thus, although the party was becoming increasingly visible at the local district level, survival again depended heavily upon results in the PR blocks, where 14 district losers secured a seat. Furthermore, with no representation in almost 80 percent of the single-member districts, the LP clearly had a long way to go with regard to gaining a solid footing.

In 2001, 496 candidates were vying for 121 seats in the House of Councillors, and this time the LP ran candidates in 14 prefectures, which was less than in 2000, but an improvement over the previous House of Councillors election, when it had run only nine candidates in prefectural districts. Compared to 1998, it also increased the number of candidates in the national district from 12 to 17. Again, as had also been the case in 2000, the vast majority of candidates were concentrated in the eastern and northeastern parts of Japan. Only the LDP and the JCP were able to run candidates in all prefectures, while the DPJ was represented in 35 prefectures. As discussed previously, the 'Koizumi boom' tipped the electoral scales in favour of the LDP, allowing it to triumph in almost all local districts (it failed only in Iwate, Miyagi, and Mie), and seen in this context it was a considerable achievement that the LP was able to secure two local district seats. In terms of the success ratio for candidates in prefectural districts, the LP outdid the JCP, the JSP, and the CP, although larger parties like the LDP and the DPJ naturally displayed significantly higher success ratios.

This brief survey of the Liberal Party's geographical representation in national level elections presents a mixed picture. It is clear that the party's geographical reach increased over time, but it is also clear that its local base was not expanded in a significant manner. The party split in 2000 had shaved away the stronghold in central Japan, but the LP nevertheless managed to expand its geographical scope of representation in June 2000. In some cases local party representation, however, did not 'survive' between elections or did only extend to one type of election. Throughout the party was strongest in the eastern and northeastern regions of the country, and it continued to struggle with the task of building up support to ensure the actual election of its candidates in other localities. Due to its weakness at the local level, it was forced to depend on PR results for its survival and in this respect resembled other smaller parties like the JSP, the CGP, and the JCP.

7.3 Candidate Characteristics and Candidate Recruitment

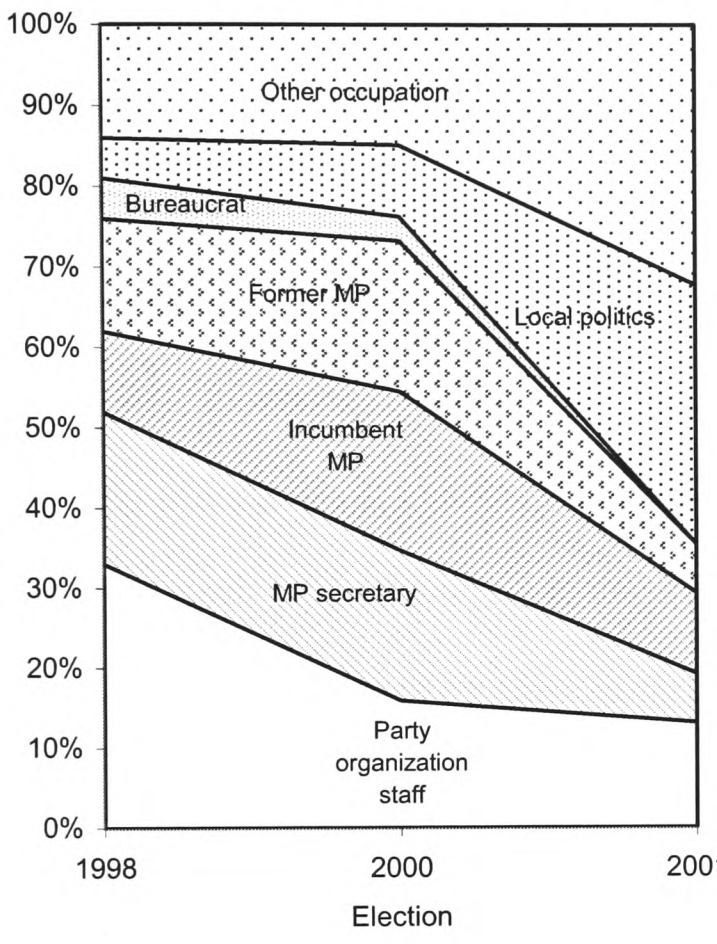
Aside from being able to sustain and develop on existing organizational structures, it was also important for the LP to find ways of gaining access to sufficient numbers of qualified and attractive candidates in order to enable it to win elections and thereby expand its strength. Although the number of Liberal candidates increased over time, attracting sufficient candidates often seemed to pose difficulties for a new and small party with little to offer ambitious candidates. This section briefly examines the background of party candidates and the measures taken by the LP in order to expand its pool of potential candidates.

Figure 7.3 shows changes in the occupational background of LP candidates between 1998 and 2001, and in 1998, with little time for assembling and

coordinating candidates, it appears that most of the 21 candidates had been recruited through traditional channels. Only two incumbents were running in the election, but most other candidates had either formerly been a member of parliament, a secretary to an MP, or had staffed the party office. In fact, no less that 76 percent of all candidates were recruited from these groups. Other parties also recruited candidates from within their own ranks, but generally the proportion of such 'internal candidates' was considerably lower than in the case of the LP. As the smallest party in the House of Councillors prior to the election, incumbents could not possibly constitute a large share of the Liberal candidate group. In fact, they constituted only 10 percent, compared to for example 51 percent for the LDP. The Liberals registered the highest proportion of candidates with a background as secretaries to MPs, and trailed only slightly behind the DPJ with regard to the proportion of former parliamentarians among its candidates (for data on other parties see *Sankei Shinbun*, 1998, July 8). In other words, with only little time and little opportunity to develop a more extensive recruitment programme the LP initially was forced to rely on the resources immediately at hand.

Figure 7.3

Changes in the Composition of the Liberal Candidate Group, 1998-2001



Note. Based on Database, 2004.

The background of candidates had not changed very much by the time of the 2000 election. The number of candidates was higher than in 1998, and the percentage of incumbents also a little higher due to the party's more extensive representation in the House of Representatives.[177] Perhaps as a consequence of this, the dependence on party staff to fill the slots on PR lists decreased slightly, but 'internal candidates' (party staff, secretaries, incumbents, and former MPs) continued to constitute almost three quarters of all candidates.

By 2001, however, the Liberal candidate group had become considerably more diverse. The percentage of candidates with a background in local politics had tripled, and candidates with a background in the category 'other' had doubled. Bureaucrats comprised a slightly larger proportion of candidates, while the representation of party staff and secretaries had decreased considerably.

The explanation for this shift in the composition of the candidate group may perhaps be found in the targeted recruitment drives launched by the Liberals on two occasions. In late 1998, the executive committee decided to arrange a 'contest' to find new potential candidates in order to solve the party's 'candidate problem'. The 'contest' was advertised in national media, including TV, where a commercial saw Ozawa appeal to 'people with specialized knowledge' [専門分野を持っている人]. But although the screening and interview process left the party with a list of 188 potential future candidates (Jiyūtō, 1999, p. 16), initially this recruitment drive did not significantly alter the composition of the candidate group between 1998 and 2000. The second recruitment drive, the so-called Ozawa Ichirō Politics School [小沢一郎政治塾] was launched in 2000 with the purpose of recruiting candidates and

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[177] Three Liberal incumbents (Gondō Tsuneo, Nishimura Shōzō, and Yonetsu Hitoshi) retired due to health or age reasons before the 2000 election.

nurturing people with a potential to lead Japan in the 21st century. Fifty-eight participants were selected from among the 4000 applicants, and 49 of these (40 men and 9 women aged between 20 and 35) participated in the first intensive course held in January 2001. The course involved a diverse curriculum of lectures from external lecturers, discussions with younger MPs, and social gatherings with 'school principal' Ozawa. (Jiyūtō, 2001, p. 14; Liberty and Reform, no. 17) Although it has been impossible to obtain data on exactly how many of the participants actually went on to represent the party in the 2001 election, it does seem a credible explanation for an increasingly diverse candidate group composition.

Having now considered the extent of the party's organizational framework, characteristics of Liberal candidates, and recruitment activities, we will turn our focus to the Liberal Party's supporters and their socioeconomic characteristics.

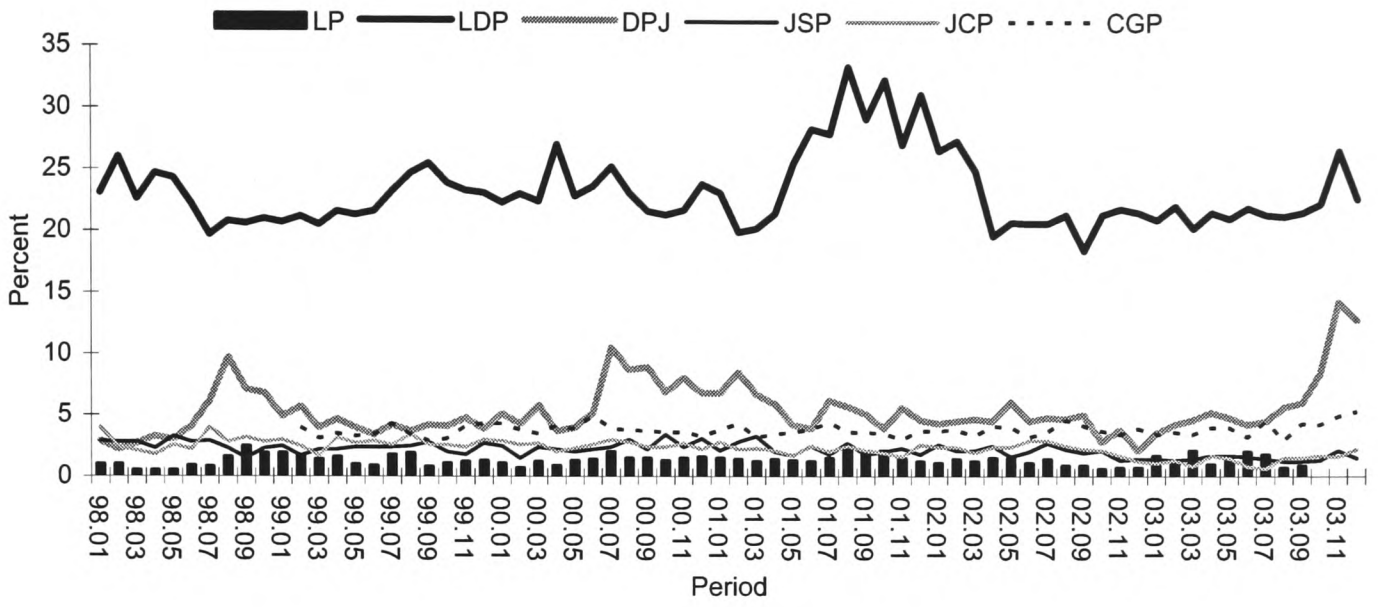
ELECTORAL SUPPORT, POLITICAL ACTIVITIES, AND ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

7.4 Liberal Party Support within the Electorate

The Liberal Party emerged at a time when almost all parties were suffering from dismal support rates within the electorate, and in this climate of distrust, it proved extraordinarily difficult for the party to carve out a support base. From 1998 to 2003 the number of respondents expressing support for the combined group of existing parties never exceeded 50 percent in monthly surveys conducted by Jiji Tsūshinsha. Indeed, the number of respondents expressing no support of any party generally ranged between 55 and 60 percent, topping at 67 percent in December 2002 (surveys from 1998-2003).

As Figure 7.4 illustrates, support for the LDP remained considerably above

Figure 7.4
Support Rates of Major Parties, 1998-2003



Note. Data were not available for November and December 1998. Data were compiled from Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1998-2003.

other major parties throughout the period, although the gap between the LDP and the DPJ narrowed somewhat in late 2003. The Liberal Party generally had the lowest support rate of all the major parties, and only surpassed the JSP on a handful of occasions. As Figure 7.4 also shows, there were considerable fluctuations in support rates of most parties during the period. Support for the LP was on average only 1.3 percent, while the LDP on average polled 23.1 percent, the DPJ 5.3 percent, the CGP 3.8 percent, the JCP 2.3 percent, and the JSP 2.2 percent. In comparison, the average number of respondents supporting none of the political parties was a sobering 58.9 percent. As the figure shows, in spite of its stated ambitions, the LP failed to significantly expand its reach within the electorate over the years.

7.5 Socioeconomic Characteristics of Liberal Party Support

This section takes a closer look at the socioeconomic components of party support and seeks to discern its characteristics. It has been suggested that Japan lacks the traditional cleavages common in most European societies (Hrebenar, 2000b, p. 28),

and Richardson (1997) suggests that social class theory is not very useful in understanding voting behaviour in Japan. Similarly, the literature on electoral behaviour in Japan finds only low levels of party identification among Japanese voters (e.g., Miyake, 1985, 1991, 1995). Survey results, nevertheless, indicate that most parties are particularly strong within certain constituency groups. This was also the case for the Liberal Party, and in the following we examine patterns along five socioeconomic dimensions, which are generally included in Japanese surveys of party support. These five dimensions relate to 'residence', 'occupation', 'gender', 'age', and 'education', and this examination seeks to clarify which segments of the electorate the LP appealed to – or indeed failed to appeal to.

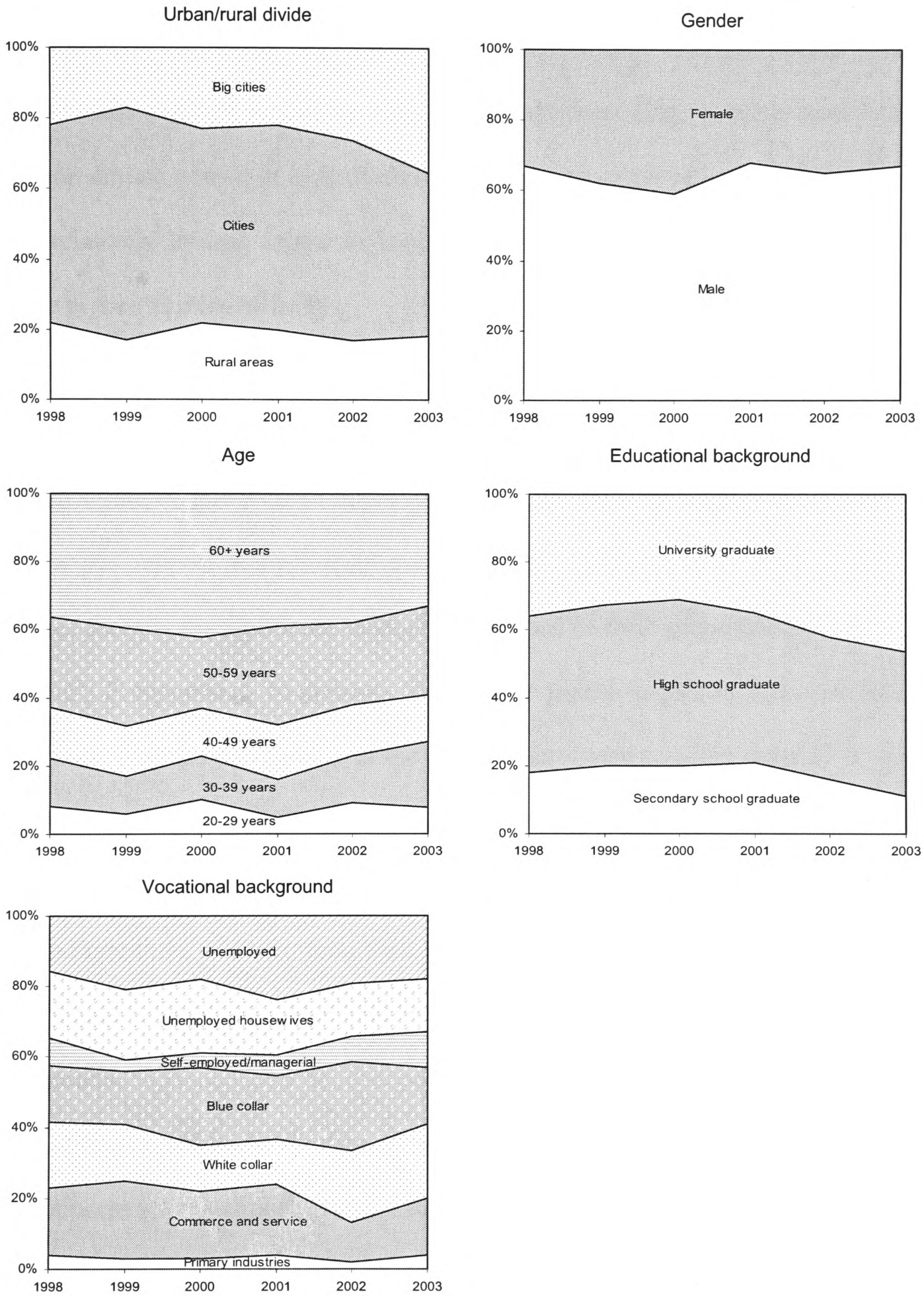
Figure 7.5 presents an overview of the Liberal Party's proportionate support within the various categories between 1998 and 2003, and traces changes in support within different societal segments. As can be seen, most party supporters resided in urban areas, with the largest group found in the category of 'cities' other than the major ones. Only one-fifth of supporters were found in rural constituencies, and this trend remained more or less the same throughout the party's existence. There was, however, a quite significant drop of almost 10 percent in ordinary cities, while a reverse trend is seen in major cities, where the party's appeal seemed to improve, leading to a 13 percent increase in support between 1998 and 2003. Simultaneously, support in rural constituencies declined slightly.

In terms of gender, there is a very clear trend throughout with significantly higher levels of support among male respondents. Indeed, although the distribution changed slightly on some occasions, throughout the period male supporters outnumbered female supporters by two to one, an indication of the Liberals' failure

to broaden their appeal to female members of the electorate.

Figure 7.5

Distribution of Liberal Party Supporters According to Socioeconomic Background, 1998-2003



Note. Calculated based on data compiled from Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1998 (January)-2003 (September).

Looking at supporters' distribution according to age groups, the overall trend remained almost the same throughout. The largest support groups were found among older voters (in the '50-59 years' and '60+ years' categories), who constituted almost two-thirds of supporters throughout most of the period. Younger people generally seemed less inclined to support the LP, and although there is an upward swing in support among people in their thirties in the last part of the period, the LP throughout had relatively limited appeal to voters in their twenties, and only slightly more to those in their thirties or forties.

The distribution of supporters according to educational level did change somewhat over the years, in particular with regard to people with low and high levels of education. People with an intermediate educational level (high school) constituted the largest support group throughout most of the period, and in spite of temporary swings there is no significant change with regard to their proportionate significance among LP supporters. In contrast, the party's appeal to people with low levels of education dipped considerably in the last couple of years, falling from 21 in 2001 to only 11 percent in 2003. University graduates, on the other hand, increasingly seemed to respond to the party's appeal, and while this group in 1998 had constituted around one-third of supporters, their numbers increased over the years, and by 2003 this group had become the most significant, comprising almost half of all LP supporters.

With regard to distribution of supporters according to occupation, the majority of supporters were almost evenly distributed among the categories of 'unemployed' (19 percent), 'blue-collar workers' (19 percent), 'commerce and service' (18 percent), 'unemployed housewives' (18 percent) and 'white collar workers' (17 percent),

alongside a small group in the category of 'self-employed and managerial staff' (6 percent), and an even smaller grouping in the 'primary industries sector' (3 percent). Over the years there were swings in the proportionate distribution, but no major shifts are evident. The proportion of support among people occupied in the primary industries or with blue-collar work remained unchanged, while the proportion of supporters in commerce and service and among housewives decreased three and four percent, respectively. On the other hand, support among white-collar workers and self-employed and managerial staff increased slightly (two percent each).

While some of the socioeconomic dimensions yield fairly clear results, others are more complex, but evidently some shifts occurred in the composition of LP support. Among these the most significant were growing support in major cities accompanied by a decline in rural areas, and growing support among well-educated respondents accompanied by a decline among respondents with a low level of education. Although the survey gives us an idea about the composition of LP support and the changes which occurred in its composition over time, it is, however, necessary to place these figures in a broader context to see how it compares with overall averages as well as with the composition of support for other parties. This will allow us to see how the LP differed from other major parties, where its appeal was stronger or weaker than average, and where it was stronger and weaker than those of other parties. The following section therefore examines support for Japan's major parties from a comparative perspective.

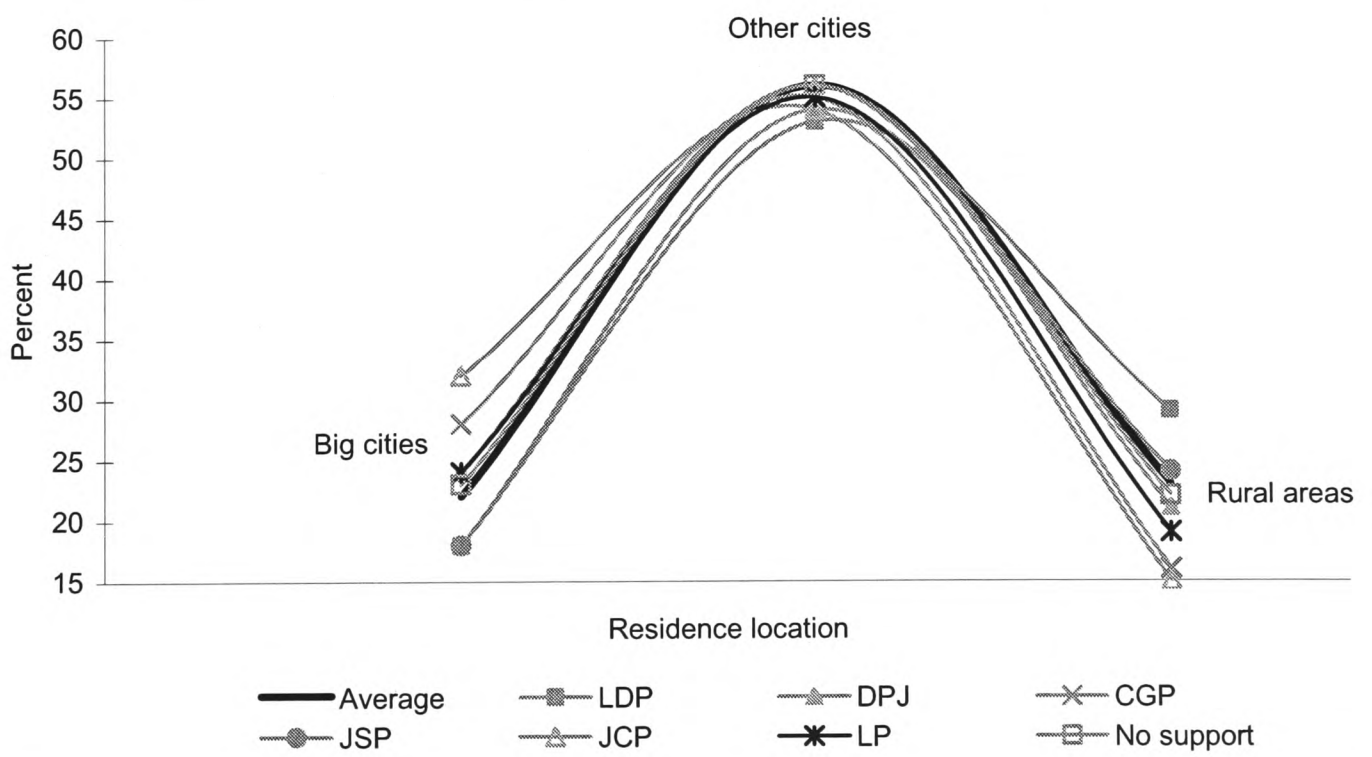
7.6 Characteristics of Support for Major Parties, 1998-2003

The previous section found that LP supporters were most likely residents of urban

areas, a pattern that is consistent with the overall composition of the Japanese electorate. The majority of respondents in surveys between 1998 and 2003 resided in urban areas, with an average of 22 percent in the major cities, 56 percent in other cities, and only 23 percent in rural areas. Figure 7.6 illustrates the support patterns of major parties along the residence dimension, and shows the deviation from the overall average of individual parties' support patterns. Some differences can be discerned along the urban/rural divide, and residence was a significant indicator of support for certain parties, in particular in the two categories at each end of the scale, i.e., major cities and rural areas. The LDP, for example, appeared to be particularly strong in rural areas, placed around average in urban constituencies, but below average in the major cities. The JSP similarly is weak among residents in major cities, but placed second after the LDP in rural areas. In contrast, the CGP and in particular the JCP did well in urban areas, but were weak in rural areas, while trends for other

Figure 7.6

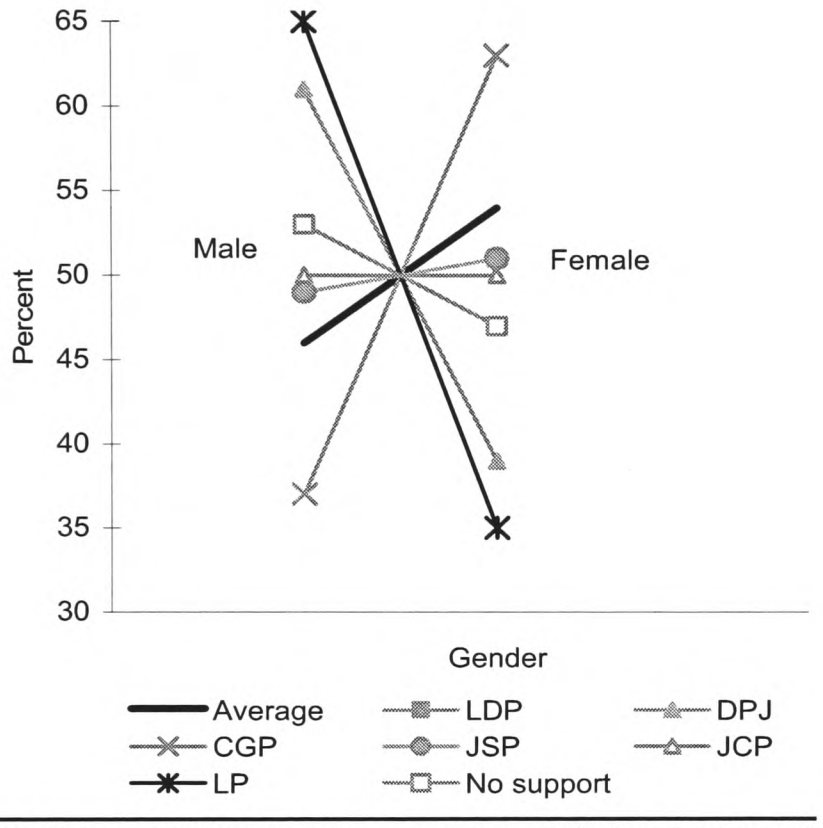
Party Support Patterns and Deviation From Average (1): Residence



Note. The graph is based on the proportionate distribution of sub-groups within the total support group for each party. Calculated based on data compiled from Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1998-2003.

parties generally followed the average distribution (see also Appendix S for more detailed data on party support in the various categories).

Figure 7.7
Party Support Patterns and Deviation From Average (2): Gender



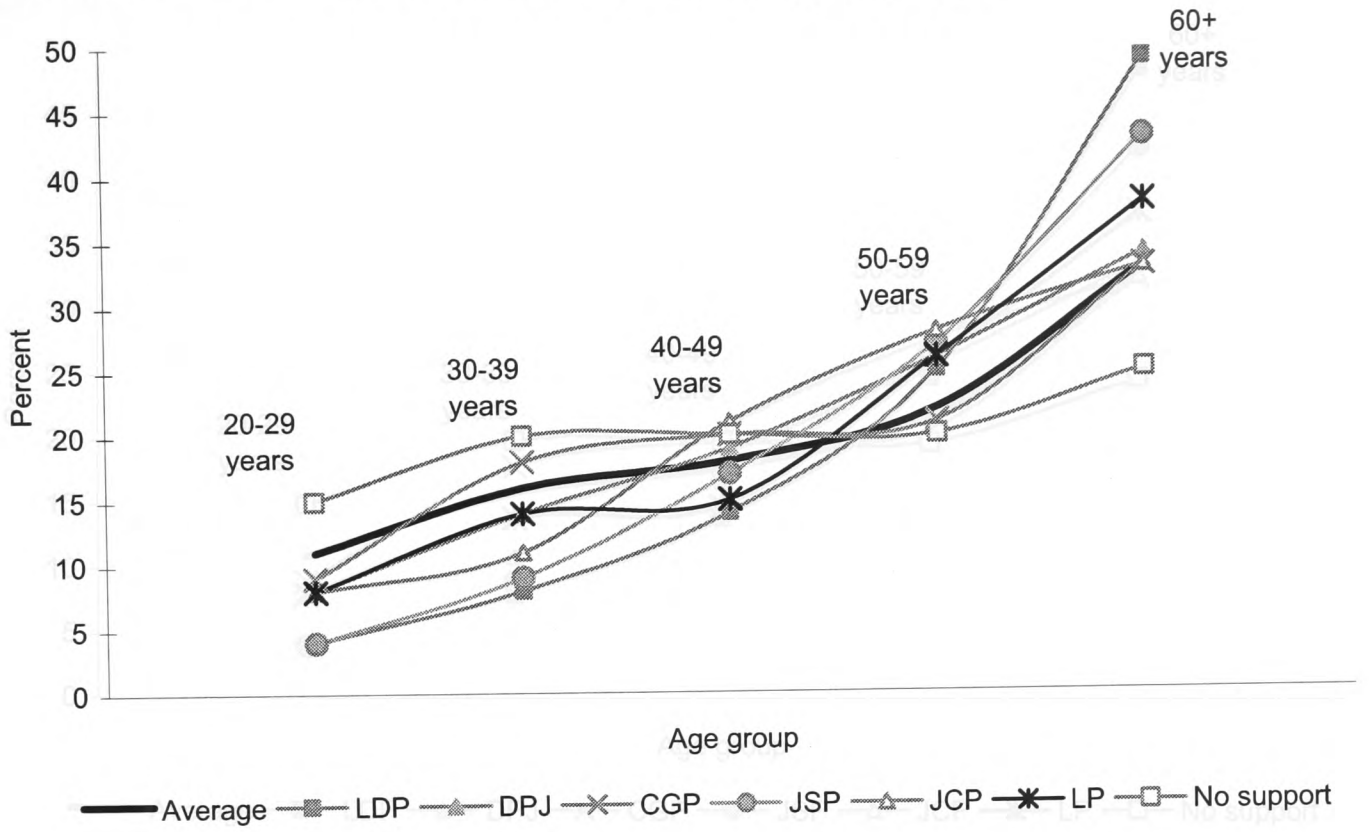
Note. The graph is based on the proportionate distribution of sub-groups within the total support group for each party. Calculated based on data compiled from Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1998-2003.

Gender was a very strong indicator of support for some parties, while patterns for other parties to a higher or lesser degree resembled the overall distribution of male (46 percent) and female (54 percent) respondents (see Figure 7.7). Most parties attracted relatively higher proportions of support from male than female respondents, but this trend is particularly strong for the LP and the DPJ, which hover 19 and 15 percent above average. The CGP, on the other hand, is significantly weaker than average among male respondents. Obviously, the reverse is evident if we look at female respondents, where the CGP hovers nine percent above average, and all other parties below. The LP is the most extreme outlier by far along this dimension, and there is little doubt that it appealed much more strongly to male than female voters.

Figure 7.8 illustrates trends in party support according to age groups, and the graph clearly shows that all parties had difficulties in attracting the younger voters, who seemed more likely to be indifferent to traditional party politics than other age groups. Consequently, the proportion of the no-support group is above average

Figure 7.8

Party Support Patterns and Deviation From Average (3): Age



Note. The graph is based on the proportionate distribution of sub-groups within the total support group for each party. Calculated based on data compiled from Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1998-2003.

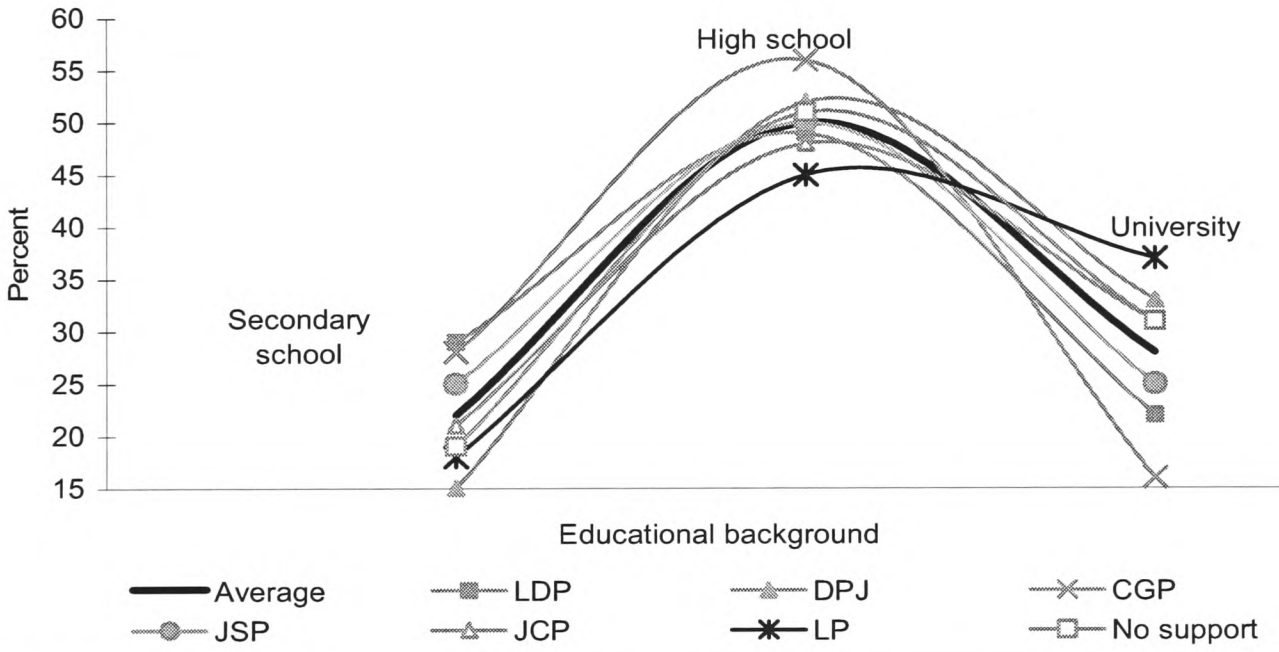
among people in their twenties and thirties, but decreases in proportionate size as the age of respondents rises. All parties deviate from the average age distribution of respondents, but deviations are particularly prominent with regard to older voters. Compared to an average of 33 percent of people aged 60 or above, this group, for example, constituted no less than 49 percent of all LDP supporters, and 43 percent of all JSP supporters. The pattern for LP supporters resembles these trends, and proportionate support for the party increases simultaneously with the age of respondents. Indeed, no less than 38 percent of all LP supporters belonged in the '60+ years' category.

Along the educational dimension there were some quite clear differences between parties (see Figure 7.9). The CGP, for example, gained much of its support from people with a low or intermediate level of education, which was also true to a lesser degree for the LDP and the JSP. On the other hand, the DPJ and the LP were

supported mostly by people with an intermediate or high level of education, and both were well below average among people with a low level of education. Among university graduates, the LP stands out with no less than 37 percent of its supporters belonging to this category, which is 9 percent above average. This might perhaps be an indication that its stubborn insistence on using policy in its appeals may have resounded better with voters with university background than people in the other categories. The educational dimension does not serve as a strong indicator for support of the JCP and the no-support group, where patterns more or less follow the average.

Figure 7.9

Party Support Patterns and Deviation From Average (4): Education

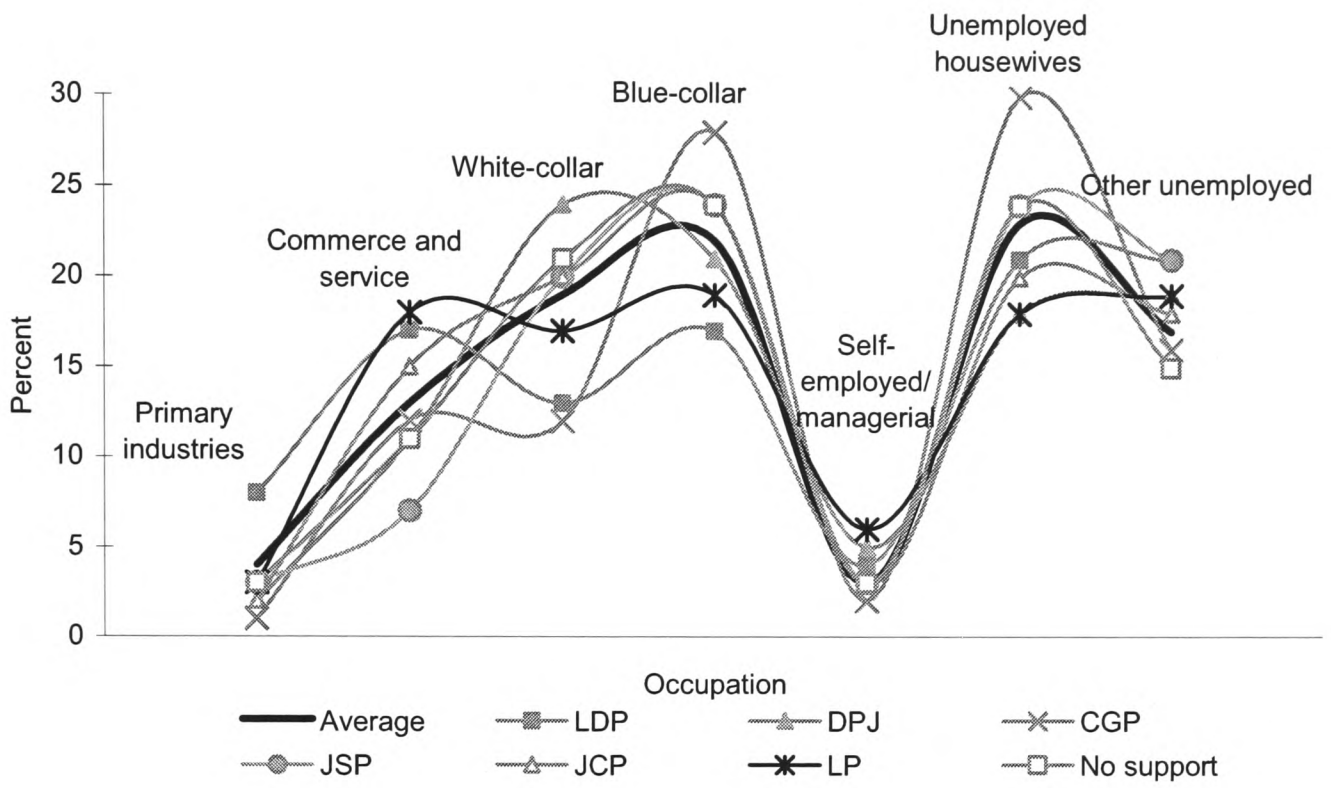


Note. The graph is based on the proportionate distribution of sub-groups within the total support group for each party. Calculated based on data compiled from Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1998-2003.

Surveys finally examined support according to respondents' occupational background (see Figure 7.10), and although the picture is not exactly clear-cut, the LDP appeared to be proportionately strong in the primary industries and the commerce and service sectors. On the other hand, it seemed to be relatively weak among white-collar and blue-collar workers. The DPJ only significantly deviates from the average in one instance, gaining above average support from white-collar

Figure 7.10

Party Support Patterns and Deviation From Average (5): Occupation



Note. The graph is based on the proportionate distribution of sub-groups within the total support group for each party. Calculated based on data compiled from Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1998-2003.

workers. The JSP was particularly weak among people in the commerce and service sector, but relatively strong among the unemployed. The CGP performed significantly better than average among blue-collar workers and unemployed housewives, but fell behind among white-collar workers. Occupation was not a strong indicator of JCP support, although the party seemed to have relatively little attraction for people employed in the primary industries and unemployed housewives. The LP gained more than average support from people employed in commerce and service, among the self-employed and managerial staff, and among the unemployed. On the other hand it performed relatively poorly with white- and blue-collar workers and unemployed housewives. The curve for the no-party support group more or less follows the average, although people employed in primary industries, commerce and service, or the unemployed constituted a smaller than average proportion of this group. In other words, people in these categories were more likely to be supporting a

party, while white- and blue-collar workers and housewives were slightly more likely than average to be unaffiliated.

This section sought to establish an understanding of LP support in a comparative perspective, and incidentally the patterns that emerge generally confirm many of the previous findings on party support in Japan.[178]

7.8 Political Activities and Election Campaigns

This section examines in more detail how the LP sought to appeal to the electorate. Activities of political parties in Japan can in theory roughly be divided into two types, i.e., political activities [政治活動] and election campaigning [選挙運動]. The latter is strictly regulated by the Public Office Election Law (POEL) [公職選挙法], and in principle involves activities that are intended to secure votes for a particular candidate in a specific election. In contrast, political activities are not considered part of electoral campaigning, as they are in theory not designed to obtain votes for particular candidates. Rather they are seen as a means of increasing public awareness of the party's principles and policies and aim at increasing the party's influence among the electorate (Curtis, 1988, p. 165). In practice, it is, however, often difficult to distinguish between the two since political activities between elections must widely be regarded as a means of building up support in preparation for a coming election.

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[178] For example, descriptions of the JCP brand it as a largely urban party, which on occasion attracts the votes of disaffected segments within the electorate. Stockwin (2003, p. 124) notes that it attracts much of its support not so much because of its policies but because it opposes the LDP and the 'establishment'. Hrebenar (2000e, p. 173) described the typical CGP supporter as more likely to be a woman than a man and more likely to be younger than older. The party was seen as performing well among voters employed in small or medium-sized businesses or blue-collar workers, and supporters tended to be among the less educated. These findings are all mirrored by the present analysis.

Liberal legislators, like almost all other incumbents and aspiring candidates, used traditional methods in their appeals to the electorate, e.g., the establishment and nurturing of personal support networks in local districts, but the party also attempted to use alternative and technology-based methods in its appeal.

From its formation the LP published a monthly party newspaper, the 'Liberal Party' [自由党], which was distributed through legislators' offices, prefectural associations, and the offices of candidates slated to run in future elections. The content of this newspaper primarily dealt with party activities in parliament, new policies, and other party-related developments at the national level. Individual legislators and candidates also produced a variant of the official party newspaper, known as the 'Liberal Party Extra Edition' [自由党号外], which dealt more specifically with local events or events involving individual legislators and candidates. These newspapers were then used as 'promotional' material and distributed widely within local districts.[179]

During parliamentary sessions Ozawa held weekly as well as extraordinary press conferences, and their content were summarized in the so-called 'Liberal Party FaxNews', which was then distributed to offices of party MPs and candidates as well as the party's prefectural associations. The official Internet mail magazine, the 'Liberal Party News Flash' [自由党ニュース速報] contained similar content, as well as Ozawa's weekly 'Iron-arm Column' [豪腕コラム].[180] The mail magazine was managed and edited by Party Headquarters and was generally circulated once or

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[179] The extent to which individual legislators and candidates resorted to this method as a means of broadening their appeal obviously depended on the extent of their existing networks. In the case of Azuma Shōzō, who was running in Tokyo's Kōtō ward without an established firm local basis, these 'Extra Editions' were distributed almost on a weekly basis to thousands of households in local residential areas and to people in the street at central locations of the district.

[180] These columns were initially published every Friday in the *Yūkan Fuji* (published by Sankei Shinbunsha).

twice per week, beginning from May 2000. By the time of the party's dissolution in 2003, the number of registered recipients had reached almost 15,500 people, and the mail magazine had been issued no less than 244 times.[181] While it is almost impossible to gauge the real extent of a mail magazine's readership, by comparison the number of subscribers for the CGP's mail magazine had only reached 7,300 by late 2004 (MaguMagu website, accessed on November 11, 2004).

In Japan, as in other countries, the advent of the Internet Age opened up new channels for parties and candidates to reach the public. As demonstrated by a recent study, the Internet presented all political actors, but perhaps in particular newer and smaller parties, with an efficient and inexpensive means by which to publicize themselves to a broader section of the electorate. The significance of this new media will almost inevitably increase, as the numbers of Japanese reporting access to the Internet continues to rise (Tkach-Kawasaki, 2003, p. 113).[182]

From its formation the Liberal Party maintained an official website [http://www.jiyuto.or.jp], which was, however, discontinued shortly after the Liberal-Democratic merger in 2003. The website carried most major party documents, updates on current events, as well as other materials relating to party activities. The party sought to encourage the use of the Internet as a medium of communication with the electorate, and by 2001, 60 percent of all Liberal MPs had a personal website, compared to 40 percent of LDP MPs, 50 percent of CGP MPs, and 65 percent of all DPJ MPs (Tkach-Kawasaki, 2003). By 2003, all Liberal MPs as

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[181] When the Liberal Party was dissolved, the party's e-mail magazine changed its name to the 'Ozawa Ichirō Mail Magazine', continuing along the same lines as before. All back numbers of the e-mail magazine are available at the MaguMagu website (the e-mail magazine service provider).

[182] Tkach-Kawasaki (2003, p. 113) found that by 1999 the numbers of Japanese reporting access to the Internet had trebled from the 1995 level to 16 million users. By early 2000, close to 20 million (or slightly more than 15 percent of the population) were reporting access to the Internet. Prior to the 2001 election, it was estimated that this figure had risen above 30 million, which means that a quarter of the population had access to the Internet through either PC-based or mobile telephone devices.

well as candidates for coming national elections maintained personal websites (Liberal Party website, accessed August 14, 2003).

Initially, the quality of many party websites was perhaps rather questionable, but a survey conducted during the 2001 election campaign ranked the LP website as the best among all parties, with 22 percent of respondents praising the format of the site, and 30 percent praising its content in terms of the amount of information and frequency of updates (Japan Times, 2001, July 14).[183] A survey of the 2000 and 2001 elections found that many parties targeted select groups within the electorate on their websites, or that their websites contained features designed to appeal more specifically to certain elements within the electorate, e.g., 'i-mode' which reached out primarily to younger voters (Tkach-Kawasaki, 2003). Table 7.3 summarizes some of the survey's findings, and compared to for example the LDP, the DPJ, and the CGP, the LP website clearly did not use this new opportunity for appeal to its fullest capacity. Aside from the policy content and party documents, the only means

Table 7.3

Summary of Party Website Features, 2000 and 2001 Elections

	LDP		DPJ		CGP		LP		JCP		JSP	
Features	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001	2000	2001
Targeted groups:												
Women	●	●	●	●		●				●		
Youth	●	●		●	●	●				●		
Urban voters	●	●	●	●								
i-mode website		●	●		●	●				●		
i-mode newsletter		●			●	●						
Cross-media:												
Audio message	●		●	●								
TV commercial		●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●
Internet broadcasts			●	●								
i-mode		●	●	●		●				●		

Note. "●" indicate that feature was available on website. Adapted from Tkach-Kawasaki, 2003, p. 116.

[183] The LDP ranked second in the survey, winning 21 percent support for design and 25 percent for content, followed by the CGP at 18 and 25 percent, while the DPJ won support from 15 and 17 percent, respectively.

of appeal on the website was the lineup of TV commercials prepared by the party, and the website may thus have been 'preaching mainly to the converted'.

In conjunction with these IT-based appeals, the party also published a range of more 'traditional' pamphlets between elections, and individual legislators published books on the Liberal Party, policy aspects, and the present state of politics. Several of these books were of a rather specialist nature, emphasizing the policy making strength of individual party members based on their professional backgrounds.[184]

While political parties in Japan have a range of options available in their political activities, electoral campaigning, on the other hand, is strictly regulated by the POEL.[185] The strict controls create a strong incentive for parties to use newer and more open forms of media such as the Internet, but initially usage of this avenue of appeal was hampered by the lack of clear guidelines for what types of website use was acceptable within the framework of the POEL (Tkach-Kawasaki, 2003). Thus, although the LP used the Internet as a means for communicating its message in between elections, it did not play a major role in campaigning. During campaign periods TV advertising therefore naturally came to play a pivotal role in the party's efforts to appeal more broadly, and its election broadcasts generally attracted favourable attention and were often quite innovative, graphic, and amusing.

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[184] These publications include among others, '*The romanticism surrounding defense*' (Fujishima, 2001), '*The challenge of the Liberal Party*' (Hirano, 1998), '*The crisis of Japan*' (Hirano, 2002), '*The Japanese, the Constitution and the Liberal Party*' (Hirano and Hidaka, 2000), '*A plan for reviving Japan*' (Hirono, 2003), '*What is ruining our country?*' (Nishimura, 2001), '*The fight still continues*' (Nishimura, 2003), '*The political economy of denomination*' (Suzuki, 1999), '*Reform and business are compatible*' (Suzuki, 2003), '*Policies for an escape from recession*' (Suzuki and Noda, 1998), '*Lives that could be rescued*' (Takeyama, 2002), and '*Parents without history and children without culture*' (Tamura, 2002).

[185] These restrictions include a long tradition of strict controls on how parties and politicians use the mass media during election campaigns. Japanese media are generally considered to play a reduced role in forming political impressions compared to other countries, and major news organizations tend to take a highly nonpartisan stance during elections (Flanagan, 1996). Consequently, networking and personal organizations have come to play a more important role for parties and candidates in terms of communicating their message (Akuto, 1996).

The first TV advertisement, 'What Japan needs' [日本に必要なワケ編], was launched during the 1998 campaign, and conveyed the party's spirit of perseverance as embodied in Ozawa's (unspoken) pledge of 'also today endeavouring to do his best'. It featured glimpses of his daily routine as he prepared to leave the house, and viewers were treated to scenes of him shaving and even engaging in some rather original gymnastic exercises. The commercial aired in October 1998 in order to attract new candidates [候補者募集編] depicted a serious-looking Ozawa intently listening to the ideas of a voter, presumably showing the party's responsiveness to new input and consideration for the average citizen. The 2000 campaign commercial, 'Renewal of Japan' [日本一新編], pictured Ozawa walking down a street being hit several times by invisible hands, while a narrator in the background stated that "it is impossible to move ahead if avoiding all pain" [痛みを避けていては前には進めない], and this commercial won the Special Price of the CM Databank in December 2000. The 2001 commercial, 'Renewal of Japan: Action through principles and ideas' [日本一新：信念と理想で実行する編] (outlined in Figure 7.11), pictured Ozawa taking on the challenge of pushing through the inertia of the old system. This commercial also placed highly in the surveys conducted by the CM Databank and brought home the International Broadcasting Award from the Hollywood Radio and Television Society in June 2002.

Figure 7.11

Outline of 'Renewal of Japan: Action Through Principles and Ideas (2001 election)



Japanese narration:
(1) 前に進むことをやめてはいけない
(2-3) たとえ、どんな障害があろうとも…
(4-5) 自由党の主張は一貫しています
(6) 日本一新
(7) 自由党です

Note. Images were retrieved from the Liberal Party Website on October 13, 2002.

The Liberals naturally also used more traditional means of appeals in their campaigning, but appeals on TV had a profound significance for the party due to its relatively weak organizational framework. The party was able to increase its appeal during election campaigns, which was almost certainly a result of its media strategies (Kawakami, 2001). While six parties had used TV advertising in 1998, by 2001 all parties were using commercials as part of their campaign appeals (for details see Table 7.4). This strategy was specifically aimed at the growing numbers of unaffiliated voters, who remain beyond the reach of traditional mobilization frameworks (Kawakami, 2001). The LP seemed to have quickly understood the value of this type of appeal, and in 2001 almost doubled the number of broadcasts. This

was true for all parties except the LDP, which remained at the same level as in 1998. Increased reliance on this type of media appeal was particular significant for the CGP, the LP, and the small LL. Party campaigns on TV were accompanied by advertising in the printed media, and the LP successfully used the TV media to portray an image of itself as a clear opponent of the LDP and Koizumi, and then used the printed media to outline specific policies (Kawakami, 2001).

Table 7.4

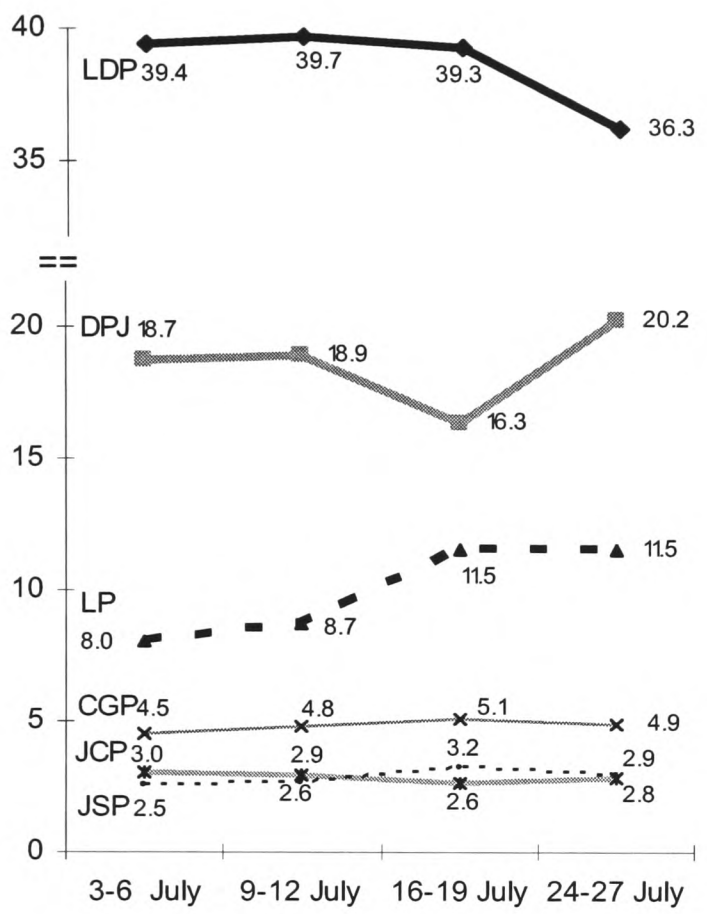
Political Parties' Use of TV Commercials in the 1998 and 2001 Elections

Party	1998 election (June 25-July 11)	2001 election (July 12-28)
LDP	375[a]	374
DPJ	196	384
LP	224	445
CGP	247	648
JSP	20	30
NPH	25[a]	0
JCP	0	117
CP	0	128
LL	0	449

Note. Figures indicate the number of times the commercial was broadcast in the Kantō region. [a] In 1998 the LDP also broadcast a longer version of its commercial on 69 occasions, and the NPH did so on 31 occasions. Adapted from Kawakami, 2001.

When respondents were asked which of the 2001 party campaigns (including TV and newspaper commercials, websites, and other material) had left the greatest impression, the LDP came out on top with 43 percent, and was followed by the LP with 19 percent, which compared favourably with other parties like the CGP (9 percent) and the DPJ (3 percent). When asked specifically about the TV commercial, the LDP and the LP came out on top with 48 and 34 percent, respectively, while other parties were generally rated quite low (Kawakami, 2001). According to Kawakami, the effect of the LP campaign was evident from surveys on goodwill towards individual parties conducted before and during the election campaigns (see Figure 7.12). As increasing numbers of respondents reacted to the Liberal Party campaign, the feeling of goodwill vis-à-vis the party also increased from 8 to 11.5 percent over the four-wave survey. Other parties generally registered little change, which is not surprising considering the lukewarm response to their campaigns.

Figure 7.12
Sense of Goodwill Toward Political Parties, July 2001 (%)



Note. Data from 'Yomiuri Netmonitor surveys', cited in Kawakami, 2001.

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The LP participated enthusiastically in elections at all levels during its existence, and each time improved on its preelection strength. But the gains were never on a truly significant scale, and certainly they were never sufficient to change the party's position as a minor party, positioned substantially below the LDP and the DPJ in terms of parliamentary strength. Electoral goals put forward by the party executive were never fully realized, and party ambitions were often thwarted, particularly in local districts. Overall election results leave little doubt that the personal popularity of Ozawa was of vital importance for party survival. Indeed, had there not been an element of proportional representation in the Japanese electoral system, the LP would have quickly disappeared from the party landscape. Still, the party's electoral

performance compared favourably with that of other smaller parties like the JSP and the JCP. In local politics, the LP increased its representation over time, but this happened primarily in areas of the country where there was already a solid support basis. Overall the party remained severely underrepresented compared to other major parties.

One of the biggest hurdles for the Liberal Party was perhaps its lack of organizational strength and the challenge of building and sustaining sufficient support at the electorate level. Again this was particularly evident in prefectural districts and single-member districts. The party's geographical representation in elections increased over time, but even though the LP ran increasing numbers of candidates, the local party branches that had emerged around unsuccessful candidates often seemed to be of a temporary character and difficult to sustain between elections.

As the party slowly gained a more solid footing – albeit narrow – it was able to overcome its initial problem of finding candidates from outside the party organization. Although it remained a problem for the Liberals to find sufficient numbers of candidates (and resources, one might add) to compete seriously in the majority of local districts, the data presented here shows that the party was able – after some years in existence, and after serious recruiting drives – to assemble a considerably more diverse candidate body than had been the case in the early days. Incidentally, the Ozawa Ichirō Politics School, which was one of the core activities of the LP recruitment drive, has survived the party and remains even now in existence as a 'private school' under the tutelage of Ozawa.

Support rates for the Liberal Party were generally among the lowest for all major parties. Although levels fluctuated over the years, by the end support seemed

to be on the decline and on several occasions did not even reach one percent. Although there are obviously differences between survey results and actual election results, the future did not seem to hold much promise for major expanses.

The party emerged at a junction, when increasing numbers of the electorate were disenchanted with their political representatives, and this further complicated the party's attempts to carve out a position for itself. The analysis of the composition of party support generally confirmed previous findings for established parties. In the case of the LP residence was not a particularly clear indicator, but the party was clearly most popular within the urban segments of the electorate. The vast majority of LP supporters were male, and the party clearly failed to reach out to the large group of female voters. This was also true for younger voters, who constituted only a small component of the support group. The party's appeal, however, seemed to increase among older voters, and particular so among people in their fifties and above. Supporters tended to be well-educated, and the LP's appeal to this group increased over the years. Like all other parties, the Liberals gained support from people in all walks of life, but seemed to have a somewhat higher appeal among people employed in the commerce and service industry, the self-employed, managerial staff, and the unemployed. On the other hand, the party's image and policy strategy seem to have had only limited appeal among housewives and blue-collar workers.

Our brief survey of the party's political activities and campaign activities showed that it engaged in a range of activities in order to appeal to electors. Along the more traditional lines were the party newspaper and localized extra editions, which were used as PR material in individual districts. Like all other parties, the

Liberals also appealed through TV commercials, which are playing an increasingly central role in nationwide campaigns. The party's engagement with the TV medium generally worked well and was received positively by the public. Appeals on TV, which by nature had to be brief and entertaining to capture a broad audience, were accompanied by more content-specific advertising in the printed media. The party website generally received praise for content and format, but although the Internet provides new ways for appeal and even provides the opportunity to appeal to targeted groups in different ways, the party did not experiment much in this regard, and website content generally added to the party's image as a policy-focused group and were of a rather 'austere' character. Thus, although the party sought to experiment with new modes of appeal, it did not pursue all options to their full capacity, nor did it compromise with regard to its serious insistence on policy in appeals. This may, however, also have been a matter of priority and resource availability. All campaign material focused on Ozawa and the LP's capacity as a policy group, and publications by Liberal MPs underscored the specialist strength of individual members. Although the focus on policy is certainly a laudable feature of a political party, it clearly also limited the effect of the LP's appeal among the broader nonspecialist audience.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

8.1 The Puzzle Revisited

In spite of Japan having gone through a decade of hectic political changes, a snapshot of the parliament's composition in late 2003 actually did not look so very different from one taken in 1993, prior to the realignment of political parties. The number of parties remained the same, and the LDP, which had by far been the dominant party in 1993, continued to be the largest party in 2003. And although the names and composition of several parties had changed, many of the players within parliament remained the same.

If, however, we try to look beyond these apparent similarities, important changes *have* occurred. The LDP may continue to rule, but following the appearance of two non-LDP governments in the early 1990s, its rule is no longer what Tani termed the "natural expression of Japanese political culture" (1998, p. 97). Furthermore, the LDP has been forced to enter into coalition in order to preserve power. And electorally it increasingly depends on cooperation from its coalition partner, the CGP, as the vote-gathering power of traditional support groups appears to be waning (Takahara, 2004). Thus, its restoration to power is no return to the *status quo ante.*

Developments have left little doubt that the LDP largely exists to rule, and recent years has seen it prepared to go to great lengths in order to do so. For example,

the idea of throwing LDP support behind a Socialist Prime Minister in 1994 did not appeal to many LDP legislators, but if this was what it would take to regain access to power, so be it. Credit should be given to LDP strategists for having been able to entice the JSP and the NPH to join it in coalition, but the LDP's return to power owes as much to the failed strategies of its opponents as to its own strategic strengths (or even possibly more). Of crucial significance in 1994 was the failure of Ozawa's attempt at putting pressure on the JSP and the NPH, which when it backfired led to the estrangement of both parties from the Hata coalition, and eventually made the rapprochement of the LDP and the JSP possible. Similarly, the fragmented character of the opposition and internal squabbles within its ranks throughout most of the past decade also prevented the emergence of a credible governing alternative. In other words, the LDP's continued rule owes less to the party's 'success' in keeping hold of power, than it does to the failure of other parties to prevent it from doing so.

The past decade has provided opportunities for other parties than the LDP to gain at least some governing experience, and party strategists have been able to learn through trial and error. Following the merger of the DPJ and the LP in 2003 the LDP is now faced with what appears to be an increasingly cohesive opposition. As noted by a Japan Times editor, the 2003 election resulted in the largest opposition party ever in Japan, and provided that the DPJ were to stay on its upward trajectory, the editorial suggested that "historians may well record 2003 as the beginning of a '2003 regime' – a two-party system – much as they recorded 1955 as the start of the '1955 regime', which opened the way for decades of LDP monopoly on power" (Japan Times, 2003, November 11). In the 2004 House of Councillors election the DPJ succeeded in winning one seat more than the LDP, and there now seems to be no

logical reason why dominance of the LDP should continue to be a defining characteristic of Japanese politics.

This thesis has examined the changing political scenery in Japan with specific focus on the role of new parties in the process of change. It discussed the successes and disappointments of one highly significant addition to the party system, namely the Liberal Party. Through the discussion and examination of the Liberal Party's experiences, it has sought to identify areas of party success and failure in order to reach a better understanding of the underlying reasons why this new party eventually failed to manifest itself as a permanent player. As a new party with a relatively weak organization, the LP clearly faced an uphill struggle in terms of consolidating its position, and although it sought to develop its organization in order to offset this weakness, it ultimately failed to do so in any significant manner. The thesis aimed to demonstrate how organizational weaknesses impacted on the party's possibilities for exerting influence and indeed for its potential for survival.

In spite of the multiple areas of obstacles and difficulties that emerge from the examination of the Liberal Party's trajectory, the thesis sought to also demonstrate how the Liberal Party was not merely a response to the ongoing process of change, but that it also served as an important catalyst for change, for example through its experimentation with interparty cooperation within the ruling and opposition camps at various times during its existence. In this way it clearly played a significant role in the development of the new political order.

A secondary aim of the thesis has been to provide a thorough discussion of developments at elite and electorate levels in order to cut through the confusion that has surrounded Japanese party politics in recent years. We have sought to establish a

basic understanding of the new party phenomenon and the new players that have emerged within the party system. Furthermore, we have attempted to clarify the extent to which aims for political reform, notably the establishment of a two-party system, have been achieved so far.

8.2 The Liberal Party and Its Experiences

As the discussion of the Liberal Party's case has shown, it was clearly an ambitious new party, and certainly does not belong in the category of short-term 'couch parties', which, as we saw in Chapter 3, often existed for very short periods. In most cases such new parties put little effort into developing features like a policy platform or even into developing the organization beyond incumbent members. On the contrary, the LP was one of the most durable new parties, and was part of both the ruling and opposition camps at different times during its almost six-year-long existence. It formulated ambitious policy packages, sought to build and solidify its organization, and enthusiastically participated in elections at all levels. As we saw in Chapters 6 and 7, however, consolidating the organization and expanding its electoral appeal proved to be an uphill struggle for the LP, and these difficulties greatly contributed to a narrowing down of its options and also impacted at least to some extent on the decision to give up the ambition of becoming a permanent player.

In the course of the case study we identified several obstacles and weaknesses that impacted on the LP's development, but also some points of strength. We now briefly discuss the main findings, and consider what they may tell us about the role and character of the LP.

8.2.1 The Liberal Party: Attempting To Influence the Political Agenda

As we saw in Chapter 4, the LP's experiences in and out of government amply illustrate some of the difficulties faced by smaller parties, which are seeking a way of influencing the political agenda. LP legislators have maintained that it was their desire to influence the policy agenda that prompted the decision to join the LDP in coalition. And while it would certainly be naïve to ignore other concurrent incentives, e.g., the electoral incentive, the party's continuous insistence on policy does lend credibility to this claim. The LP's attempt to make entry into coalition succeed, however, seemed doomed from the outset since it was in effect superfluous to the LDP. The coalition's structural weaknesses forced the LDP to solicit additional support, and it seems in fact somewhat ruthlessly to have used the LP as bait to hook the CGP as a coalition partner, after which it discarded the LP. That Ozawa, who knows the ways of the LDP from the inside, should have believed that things could go differently under the circumstances almost beggars belief, but he has since claimed that it was indeed naivety that led the LP to join the alliance in the first place (e.g., Ozawa, 2002). The LP's experience here certainly provides a lesson for other smaller parties, which might want to weigh their options before joining the LDP, or another larger party, in coalition.

Within the opposition the Liberal Party's experiences also became proof of smaller parties' difficulty in leaving their marks on the political agenda, and the decision to merge with the DPJ seems at least partly to have been based on the realization that the Liberals' aims and policies could not be realized barring a change of strategy. The merger plan met with scepticism within both the DPJ and the LP, and following months of negotiations without a breakthrough many members of the

Liberal Party seemed to have basically given up on the DPJ being able to reach consensus. At the same time several Liberal MPs worried about their future electoral prospects if a merger was realized. When Ozawa finally reached agreement with DPJ leader Kan Naoto, the Liberals nevertheless unanimously threw their support behind their leader in a final display of party unity. As noted previously, the merger appeared to have a positive impact on public perceptions of the DPJ, which emerged invigorated from the 2003 election. Realizing the merger, however, had taken considerable time and the idea had been faced with strong opposition from some groups in the DPJ. As we saw in Chapter 4, it was largely due to Ozawa's insistence that an actual merger, and not merely an agreement to cooperate electorally, materialized, and in this instance Ozawa and his LP were clearly able to function as a catalyst of change.

8.2.2 The Liberal Party: Leadership and Party Unity

The LP in a sense was the culmination of Ozawa's attempts to instigate reform of the political system. It resulted from a purifying process within the realignment manoeuvrings at the elite level, and the strength of the LP's organization was clearly found at central rather than local level. Despite intentions of expanding the reach of the organization, it remained a 'parliamentary party' throughout, and within parliament and central party offices Ozawa exerted strong leadership and largely controlled party affairs. While Ozawa's top-down leadership style was exactly what had alienated many of his former colleagues in the NFP, it caused no major discontent within the LP, where members seemed more occupied with the value and effect of his significant charisma and strategic abilities. Indeed, MPs tended to rally

enthusiastically behind Ozawa, and with the party being formed essentially by people who had agreed to support Ozawa and his visions, it largely resembled what could have been termed the 'Ozawa Party'. Ozawa's position remained unchallenged throughout most of the party's existence, and the LP appeared extremely cohesive, in some ways resembling the JCP and the CGP, both known for their relatively high level of cohesion (cf. Kabashima 2000). Significantly, however, the Liberals' extraordinary unity was shattered on the fateful occasion when their party split in April 2000, and this major division had the effect of altering the character of the party itself. While the split broke party unity, the people who remained with Ozawa seemed to pull even more tightly together around his person, and as the LP struggled to find a foothold within the opposition, the strength of the leader-follower bonds constituted a major asset for the party's sustenance. The split, however, had a devastating impact on the LP's options in that it diminished party membership and in effect left the party even more dependent on Ozawa's charisma to secure the election of party MPs through proportional representation.

8.2.3 The Liberal Party: Organization Building and Resource Availability

The LP numbered 54 MPs at the outset in 1998, which was a lower number than the founding group had hoped for. And it was clear to all within the party that it would have to expand its parliamentary strength in order to hope for a central role within the policy making processes. This need for expansion became even more pronounced following the split, when membership numbers were approximately halved. The conundrum faced by the LP was in all its simplicity, that to realize its policy ambitions it would have to expand its parliamentary strength; To do so it would have

to win additional seats in elections; And in order to do this, it would have to expand the reach of its local level organization. But with only a limited number of incumbents around whom to build the local organization, this turned out to be a laborious struggle, and although new party branches appeared regularly, sustaining these new branches proved difficult if the candidate did not succeed in gaining entry to the legislature. As we saw in Chapter 6, the LP's geographical penetration remained limited throughout, and it clearly failed to expand at the local level in any meaningful manner. It was hard for the party to attract sufficient numbers of candidates and provide support for the ones running. Within the sphere of local politics, which serves as an important stepping stone for national politics, LP representation was minuscule, which again emphasizes the party's 'parliamentary' character. Significantly, difficulties in accessing financial resources posed a major hurdle in efforts to develop the organization. Unable to generate income on a significant scale, the LP was forced to depend heavily on public subsidies for financial survival. At the local level candidates from the LP (and other smaller parties) also faced great difficulties in securing funding. This essentially came down to a chicken-and-egg dilemma: Without a wide-reaching organization the party could not hope to attract significant amounts of resources, and without resources it could not bring about organizational expansion. Thus, cause and effect of organizational weakness seemed to have become interlinked, which represented a highly significant obstacle for the LP.

While we have not looked in detail at other new parties, the survey of party finance did show that all newer parties face difficulties in attracting financial support, and even the DPJ, which has a more wide-reaching organization, appeared to have

difficulties. In this regard the Liberal Party's experiences indeed seem to embody the challenge faced by most new parties.

8.2.4 The Liberal Party: A Dynamo of New Ideas

Policy formed an integral part of the LP's self-perception throughout, and great efforts were put into building the image of a policy-based party. The LP was intended as a vehicle for promotion of Ozawa's policy visions, and the heavy emphasis on policy in its appeals contrasted greatly with most other new parties, and also with most established ones.

Policy was the LP's raison d'être. It was also the area, where it was at its most innovative. The party's policy activities culminated with the submission of the 'Japan Renewal: 11 Law Proposals' package, and the idea of using concrete legislative proposals as a means for appealing to the electorate was indeed a novelty within the Japanese context. By drafting concrete and realizable proposals, the Liberal Party in this way served as a source of inspiration with new ideas and visions, and the '11 Law Proposals' represented a gauntlet thrown in the direction of Koizumi and his reformers, in effect challenging them "to draft something better" (Feldman 2003, ¶ 9). The LP's insistence on drafting detailed policies quite simply forced other parties and groups to act and react. In this regard, it was again able to play the role of a catalyst of change.

8.2.5 The Liberal Party: Policy and Difficulties for a Policy-Based Party

Since the LP's final attempt at taking its policies directly to the electorate as a means of appeal was never put to a test due to the merger with the DPJ, it is uncertain

whether the electorate would have actually responded positively – or indeed at all. Initially, Ozawa seemed to believe that ideas and policy could serve as a significant mode of appeal in the electoral arena, stating that "if we use our party's ideas and policies to appeal wholeheartedly to the electorate, people will be certain to see [their value]" (Ozawa Ichirō, cited in *Asahi Shinbun*, 1998, June 24). But while the LP's contribution in the policy sphere clearly counts among its success stories, Ozawa's belief in policy as a mode of appeal was at least to some extent disappointed. The LP had been intended as a party that could debate policy seriously, but its attempts to aim the spotlight at competing policy positions largely fizzled away within a political climate inhabited by a disinterested and somewhat fickle electorate, and the LP's policy-based appeals appear to have had only limited resonance with voters. This was, for example, clearly seen in the 2001 election campaign, where the media hype surrounding Koizumi's person largely hijacked headlines. And within a political context where policy conflict has yet to manifest itself as a dominant feature, what might otherwise have been a strength failed to provide tangible benefits for the LP.

In its quest for putting policy at the centre stage the LP advocated reforms in a range of areas, and while, as discussed in Chapter 5, these were not of an extreme character, one extreme aspect of the LP's policy activities was its insistence on bringing to the fore its own pet policies, which in several cases did not mirror the preferences of the electorate. This was reflected in the party's support rates, which failed to increase significantly, and also in the electoral results registered by the party.

8.2.6 The Liberal Party and the Electorate

To increase its strength and bargaining leverage in parliament, the LP had to tap into

support segments, which would enable it to win seats in elections, but although it succeeded in expanding representation in all contested elections, gains were never significant. This again seemed to be linked to the general character of the party. Due to its weak organizational basis and the limited number of major personalities, Ozawa became the only strong card for the party to play in elections. And although the initial party membership had been relatively diverse, the LP in essence became a 'PR party' following the party split. Ozawa's charisma and personal popularity could go a long way in terms of securing the election of MPs through proportional representation, but obviously it also had its limitation. It was clearly not viable in the long term to solely depend on Ozawa to secure party survival, and to diversify its character the LP consciously sought to compete for as many SMD seats as possible. Nevertheless, it was unable to realize its aims due to the structural weaknesses in terms of organization and resources.

8.2.7 The Role and Significance of the Liberal Party

Summing up the findings of the case study we have seen that the LP, in spite of its stated intentions, developed into a party that could not realistically aspire to independent power. It first attempted to leave its marks on the policy agenda by forming the coalition with the LDP, but was unable to make this entry into coalition succeed. The realization that its grand policy designs would be left unaccomplished if it was to continue struggling on its own led to the decision to join forces with the DPJ. Throughout the LP functioned as a source of ideas and visions, and also as a source of pressure by forcing other parties to react to its proposals. It behaved in a highly principled manner with regard to its policy positions, which it stubbornly

stuck to even though the electorate's response was less than enthusiastic. The charisma of its leader set it apart from most other contemporary parties, and intragroup relations represented an intense version of the 'leader-follower' relationship often seen in Japanese party organizations (see Stockwin, 1987). By joining the DPJ, the LP in effect functioned as a catalyst of change within the party system, and helped clear up the lines of competition, thus pushing the party system further towards a two-party setup. While the attempts to transform the party into a strong independent political power ultimately failed, by a roundabout route the LP has been highly significant in shaping the developments in Japan during the past decade.

The thesis aimed to provide a comprehensive account of the Liberal Party's experiences in order to clarify the role and development of this particular party. This was done through the study and analysis of its characteristics, structured along the tripartite model outlined in Figure 1.1 (on page 13). This has illuminated key characteristics of the LP, but we have also sought to, whenever possible, to include characteristics of other Japanese parties in the discussion. As noted in Chapter 1, the focus on a single case study obviously limits the extent to which we can generalize more widely on the results presented here. The Liberal Party was in one way an anomaly even within the Japanese political system, but nevertheless it was charged with addressing some key challenges present for all emerging new parties. Further work, however, needs to be done in order adequately to probe variations in the experiences of new parties, and application of a range of case studies would certainly serve to complement the results described here. The analysis of the LP, however, has allowed us to discern its major features, and to gain a better understanding of its

character as well as an understanding of the role it played in the ongoing process of political change. In this way the present study has sought to provide a stepping stone for an improved understanding of the new party phenomenon in Japan and future research on the emerging party system.

Looking beyond the experiences of the Liberal Party, we have also sought to determine the extent to which aims for political reform were achieved, and more generally what exactly happened in connection with new party emergence and the process of realignment. The remaining part of this chapter briefly discusses the findings in these areas.

8.3 Towards a Two-Party System?

One of the cornerstones of political reform in the 1990s was the introduction of a new electoral system for the House of Representatives, which it was widely believed would produce a system based on two-party competition, decrease the cost of campaigning, and propel policy to the centre of Japanese politics. None of these anticipated results, however, were immediately forthcoming. Here we particularly focused on the emergence of a 'two-party contest', and Chapter 2 sought to determine whether a two-party system is indeed in the making.

The first attempt at creating such a two-party competition ended in a resounding failure with the NFP's disintegration in 1997, and even though enthusiasm for the ruling LDP was limited, the DPJ, which had become the major opposition party following the NFP's dissolution, initially failed to portray itself as a credible alternative to the LDP. This left the opposition in disarray, and allowed the LDP some leeway, especially after it succeeded in splitting the opposition by

forming first the LDP-LP coalition and later the LDP-LP-CGP coalition.

The need for concerted opposition efforts formed the rationale for the merger of the LP and the DPJ in September 2003, and although power did not change hands in the ensuing election, the DPJ emerged reinvigorated and increasingly looked like a viable and credible government alternative. Voters, who were for the first time presented with a clear choice between two major parties, appeared to take up the cue, and in effect the election did become a two-party contest. Claiming that Japan is now a 'two-party system' would obviously represent an overstatement. Minor parties remain represented in parliament and are unlikely to disappear barring changes to the electoral setup. But they are increasingly dependent on results in the PR segment of the electoral contest, and finding voice in media campaign coverage, which focus on the LDP and the DPJ, will almost certainly represent a major problem for these minor parties in the future. In short, while the existence of a PR segment creates scope for minor party persistence, the party system appears to be moving towards a shape containing two major parties and a limited number of minor parties. The confrontation of the DPJ and the LDP in recent elections represents a de facto two-party contest, and whether these two parties will in the future take alternate turns in power – in contrast to the situation under the 1955 system – now constitutes one of the most intriguing questions of Japanese politics.

8.4 New Parties and Political Realignment in Japan

The new party phenomenon stemmed from a change in the balance of the political system. As we saw in Chapter 2, the first new parties made their appearance within a climate conducive to change, and the disintegration of the existing political order

opened up new windows of opportunity in terms of a realignment of political forces.

The analysis of the realignment process (Chapter 3) strengthens the impression that a new party system is beginning to take root, and suggests a clear trend towards consolidation in major parties. Nevertheless, while the outcome of the process has been a move towards consolidation in larger parties, the prolonged process has been chaotic and resulted in the emergence of an extraordinary number of new parties. Although no less than 29 new parties appeared between 1992 and 2003, few were, however, truly significant, and most were of a temporary character. The confusion surrounding party-political developments caused one scholar in 1997 to succinctly ask whether Japan was indeed on a "highway of change or road to nowhere?" (Stockwin, 1997).

Another significant finding in Chapter 3 was that the project of political reform, which had originated at the elite level, remained very much an elite project throughout. Discerning the logic behind the manoeuvrings of parties as they split and merged and joined in a range of coalitions was clearly difficult, and while MPs moved about, largely disconnected from the sentiment of the electorate, the public grew increasingly critical of its political representatives. Simultaneously, disappointment was growing over the slowness or indeed failure of reforms to bring about the anticipated changes. Some reformers and observers had mistakenly believed – and caused the electorate to believe – that political reform could be achieved 'overnight', and in this light the slow and protracted nature of developments was almost inevitably bound to produce increased frustration and alienation among the electorate. It would be an exaggeration to say that party realignment caused the electorate to dealign, as the trend of dealignment and

increasing alienation has been underway for some time in Japan as well as in many other democratic systems. What we can note is that the manoeuvrings of actors at the elite level have done little to alleviate public distrust and disgust, but rather strengthened the public's sense that politicians will do as they please. Thus, although a window of opportunity had been opened in the early 1990s, the window was barely ajar at the end of the decade, and parties, which emerged in the later part of the period, had to fight within a largely hostile climate. The lukewarm responses from voters have added to the difficulties faced by new parties trying to consolidate and carve out positions for themselves.

Making conjectures as to the future course of the Japanese party system as it continues to evolve obviously remains a highly complex and uncertain matter. Nevertheless, the move towards consolidation in larger parties presents an important cue, and seems to be highly conditioned by the structural demands placed upon political parties within the confines of the electoral setup. This is especially evidenced by the difficulties faced by new and smaller parties within the single-member district competition for the House of Representatives, which covers the majority of the seats in the House. The trajectories of new parties show that while it was reasonably easy to establish new parties, sustaining and expanding them subsequently proved to be an immensely difficult task. Thus, although further realignment is almost certain to occur, it is rather unlikely that it will be characterized by an intense proliferation of smaller parties, similar to what we have witnessed in recent years. The experiences of new parties in the 1990s without doubt provide valuable learning lessons for their successors.

While the behaviour of political actors in Japan has not been an explicit focus

of the thesis, the issue of what incentives guide MPs' behaviour and choice has surfaced on several occasions. Notably this was seen in the discussion of what motivated MPs to participate in realignment activities, but also in the dissection of the Liberal Party split. In both instances we saw that incentives differed considerably according to MPs' individual circumstances. The party split clearly revealed the presence of strong electoral incentives among some MPs, while loyalty and policy preferences seemed to play more significant roles for those who remained behind. In other words, we have seen that multiple incentives are at play for individual MPs, which suggests the limited explanatory power of so-called single-incentive models (see also Chapter 3). In spite of such models' attractiveness due to their parsimonious nature, finding additional ways of deepening our understanding of politicians' behaviour represents an interesting area for future research.

8.5 The Road From Here

A major challenge for all parties in Japan now lies in the need to reach out to an increasingly apathetic electorate, but none have been able to do so with any particular success in recent years. This represents a major obstacle for new as well as old parties attempting to expand their support basis, which appears fragile, being as they are overwhelmingly centred on the parliamentary level. Indeed, none of the new parties seem to have been able to develop enduring support among voters. The existence of a large group of unaffiliated voters further complicates the development of stable support bases, and as Koizumi noted following the 2004 House of Councillors election, "no political party can rule without the support of unaffiliated voters, no matter how strong its organization" (cited in Nabeshima, 2004).

Ideally political parties within a democratic system should function as the representatives of the citizens. The political upheaval in Japan, however, did not originate with a revolt on the part of the electorate, and political realignment and political reform have largely remained elite projects throughout. The process has failed to reverse the trend of dealignment within the electorate, and has if anything added to the growing popular disenchantment with politics. Getting the electorate back on the bandwagon now represents the most crucial challenge for Japan's political parties. This, however, represents yet another chicken-and-egg dilemma: The public demands better quality from its political representatives and the political parties. But, as was also clearly seen in the case of the LP, appealing to a disinterested electorate is extremely difficult for parties, which may be trying to break the mould through new approaches. Unless the electorate responds actively to the parties' appeals, it appears unlikely that political actors will be able to complete Japan's political transformation, and, in the words of Ozawa, carry out "a revitalization of politics" (1994, p. 63).

9. REFERENCES

The reference section consists of five subsections: Section 1 contains information on the way Japanese works have been entered in the reference list, while Section 2 contains an alphabetical listing of all references cited in the thesis (including newspapers and magazines). Section 3 lists the MPs and secretaries to MPs interviewed during my fieldwork in Japan, while Section 4 contains a list of the websites referred to in the thesis, including their URLs. Finally, Section 5 lists reports on local political finance, retrieved from the websites of various Prefectural Electoral Commissions and Prefectural Governments (political finance reports from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication are listed in Section 2).

9.1 Note on Japanese Sources

Entries of Japanese sources use Japanese characters rather than transcription into roman letters. This option has been chosen, since neither Japanese characters nor Romanized titles make much sense to non-Japanese speakers. For a Japanese speaker, however, the presence of characters can be quite helpful in determining the exact title. Japanese sources are listed according to references in the text and in the following order:

Author (as cited)	*Year*	*Author (Jap.)*	*Title (Jap.)*	*Translation of title*	*Location*	*Publisher*
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In the case of articles from Japanese journals, the following order is used:

Author (as cited)	*Year*	*Author (Jap.)*	*Article title (Jap.)*	*Translation of title*	*Journal name*	*vol./no./date/pp.*
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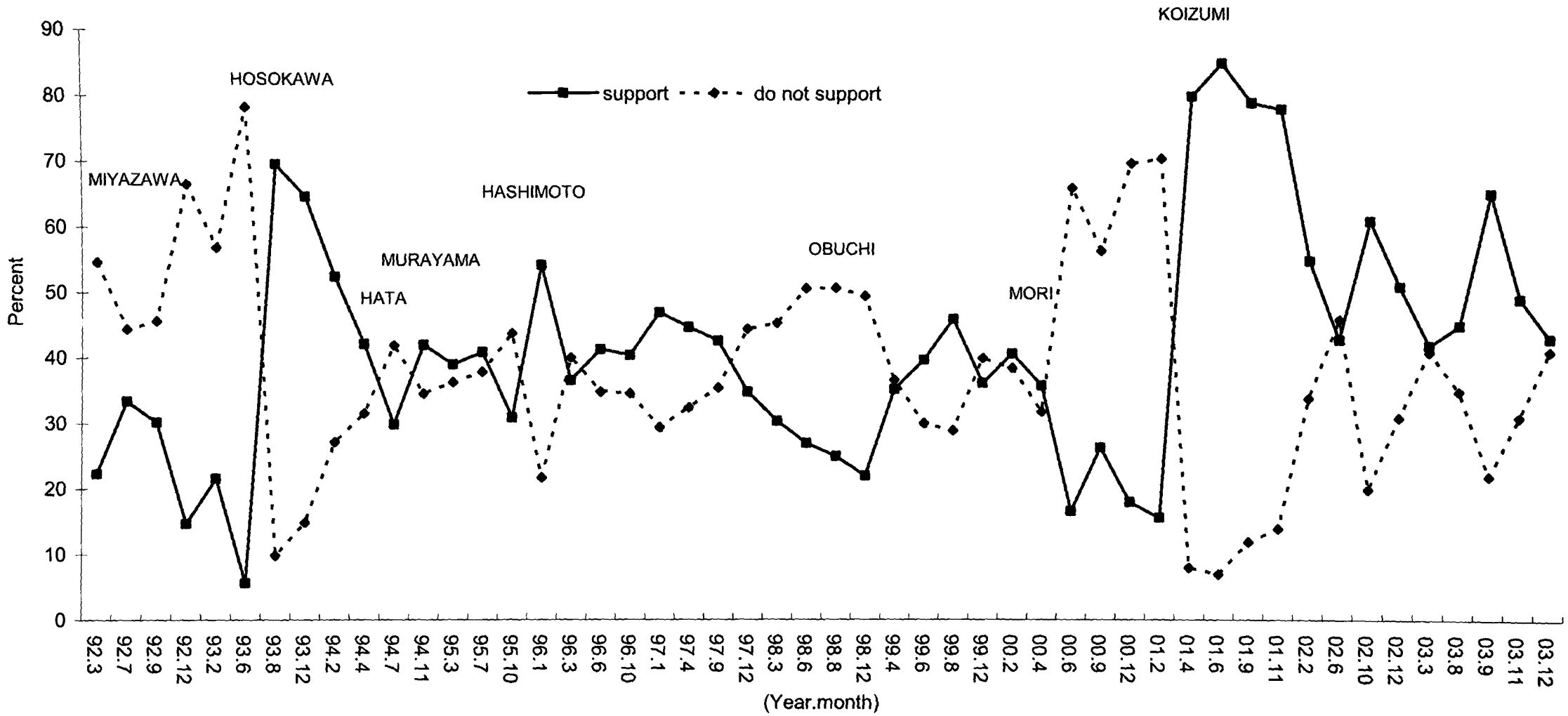
APPENDIX A
Chronology of Main Political Events in Japan, 1989-2003

Year	Date	Event
1989	June 2	Inauguration of Uno cabinet (LDP)
	July 23	15th House of Councillors election
	August 10	Inauguration of Kaifu cabinet (LDP)
1990	February 18	39th House of Representatives election
1991	November 5	Inauguration of Miyazawa cabinet (LDP)
1992	May 7	Formation of the JNP [Hosokawa Morihiro]
	July 26	16th House of Councillors election
	October 14	Kanemaru Shin resigns as chairman of the Takeshita faction
	December 18	Takeshita faction splits
1993	June 18	Passage of a motion of no confidence in Miyazawa cabinet; dissolution of the HR
	June 21	Formation of the NPH [Takemura Masayoshi]
	June 23	Formation of the RP [Hata Tsutomu and Ozawa Ichirō]
	July 18	40th House of Representatives election
	August 9	Inauguration of Hosokawa cabinet (coalition: JNP/JSP/CGP/RP/NPH/DSP/SDL/DRL)
1994	January 29	Enactment of political reform bills (including electoral reform bill)
	April 25	Inauguration of Hata cabinet (minority coalition: JNP/RP/CGP/DSP/LP[94]/NPF, with limited cooperation from NPH/JSP)
	June 30	Inauguration of Murayama cabinet (coalition: JSP/LDP/NPH)
	December 9	Formation of the NFP [Kaifu Toshiki]
1995	July 23	17th House of Councillors election
1996	January 11	Inauguration of Hashimoto cabinet (coalition: LDP/JSP/NPH)
	September 28	Formation of the DPJ [Hatoyama Yukio and Kan Naoto]
	October 20	41st House of Representatives election
	November 7	Inauguration of 2. Hashimoto cabinet (LDP with cooperation from NPH/JSP)
	December 26	Formation of the SP by defectors from the NFP [Hata Tsutomu]
1997	September 5	Restoration of LDP majority in the House of Representatives (by inclusion of independents)
	December 25	Formation of the FF [Hosokawa Morihiro]
	December 27	Dissolution of the NFP
1998	January 1	Formation of the LP [Ozawa Ichirō], the DC [Shirahama Kazuyoshi], the NFR [Nakano Kansei], the NPP [Kanzaki Takenori], the VP [Kano Michihiko] and the RC [Ozawa Tatsuo]
	January 23	Formation of the GGP (merger of VP/SP/FF) [Hata Tsutomu]
	April 27	Official launch of the 'new DPJ' (merger of DPJ/GGP/NFR/DRL) [Kan Naoto]
	June 1	The JSP and NPH terminate their non-cabinet cooperation with the LDP
	July 12	18th House of Councillors election
	July 30	Inauguration of the Obuchi cabinet (LDP)
	November 7	Re-establishment of the CGP via the merger of CG and NPP [Kanzaki Takenori]
1999	January 14	Inauguration of reshuffled Obuchi cabinet (coalition: LDP/LP)
	October 6	Inauguration of reshuffled Obuchi cabinet (coalition: LDP/LP/CGP)
2000	April 2	Prime Minister Obuchi is hospitalised with a massive stroke
	April 4	The LP leaves the coalition; the party splits in half and the CP is established [Ōgi Chikage]
	April 5	Inauguration of Mori cabinet (coalition: LDP/CGP/CP)
	June 25	42nd House of Representatives election
2001	April 26	Inauguration of Koizumi cabinet (coalition: LDP/CGP/CP)
	July 29	19th House of Councillors election
2002	December 25	The NCP is formed by members of the CP and defectors from the DPJ [Kumagai Hiroshi]
2003	September 26	The LP is merged with the DPJ
	November 10	43rd House of Representatives election
	November 11	The NCP is dissolved and its members join the LDP

Note. Names in brackets indicate party leaders. Compiled from various newspapers; Asahi Nenkan, various years; Asahi Kīwādo, 2000.

APPENDIX B

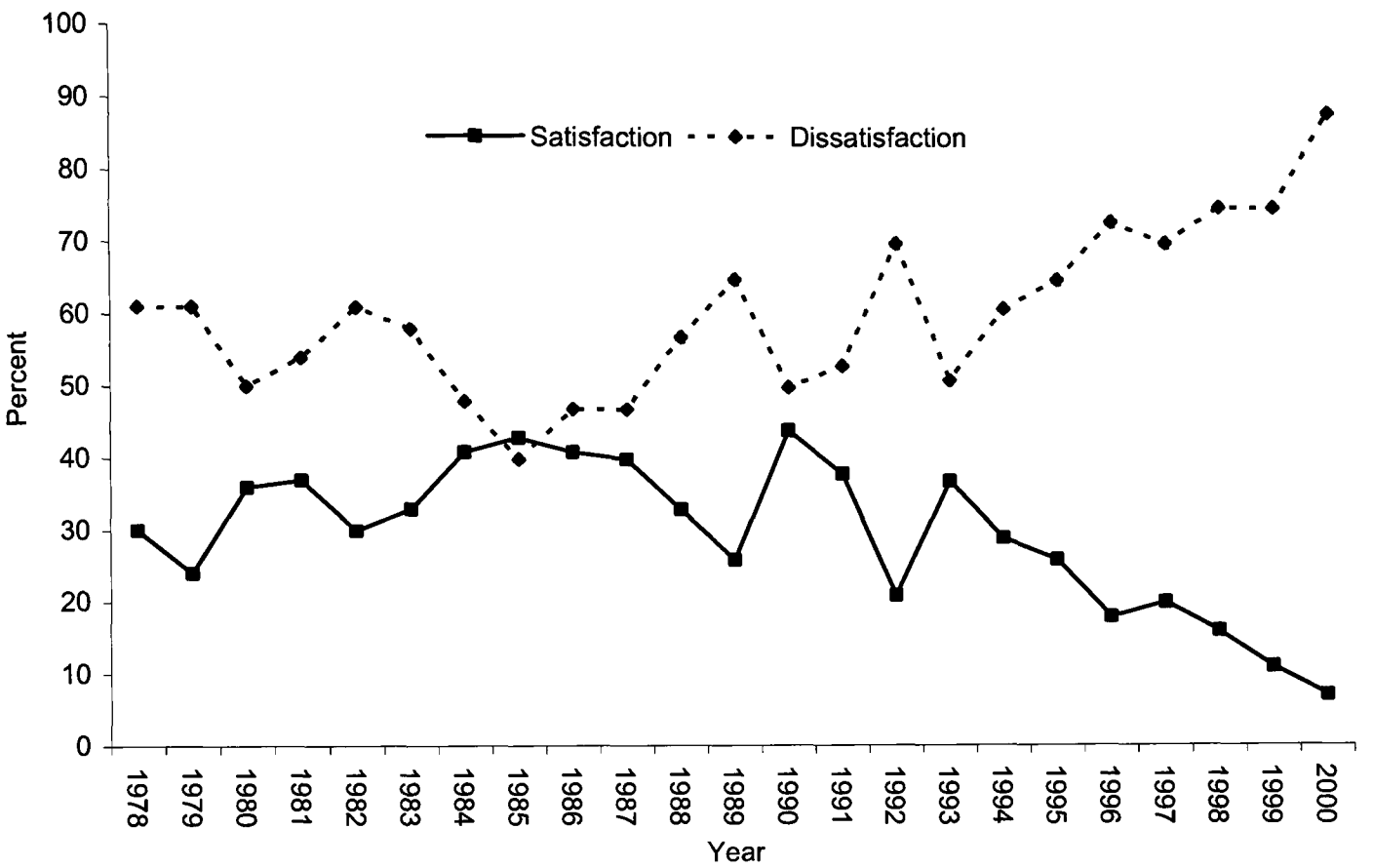
Cabinet Support Rates, 1992-2003



Note. Data were compiled from the Nikkei Shinbun website (http://www.nikkei-r.co.jp/nikkeipoll/naikaku.htm).

APPENDIX C

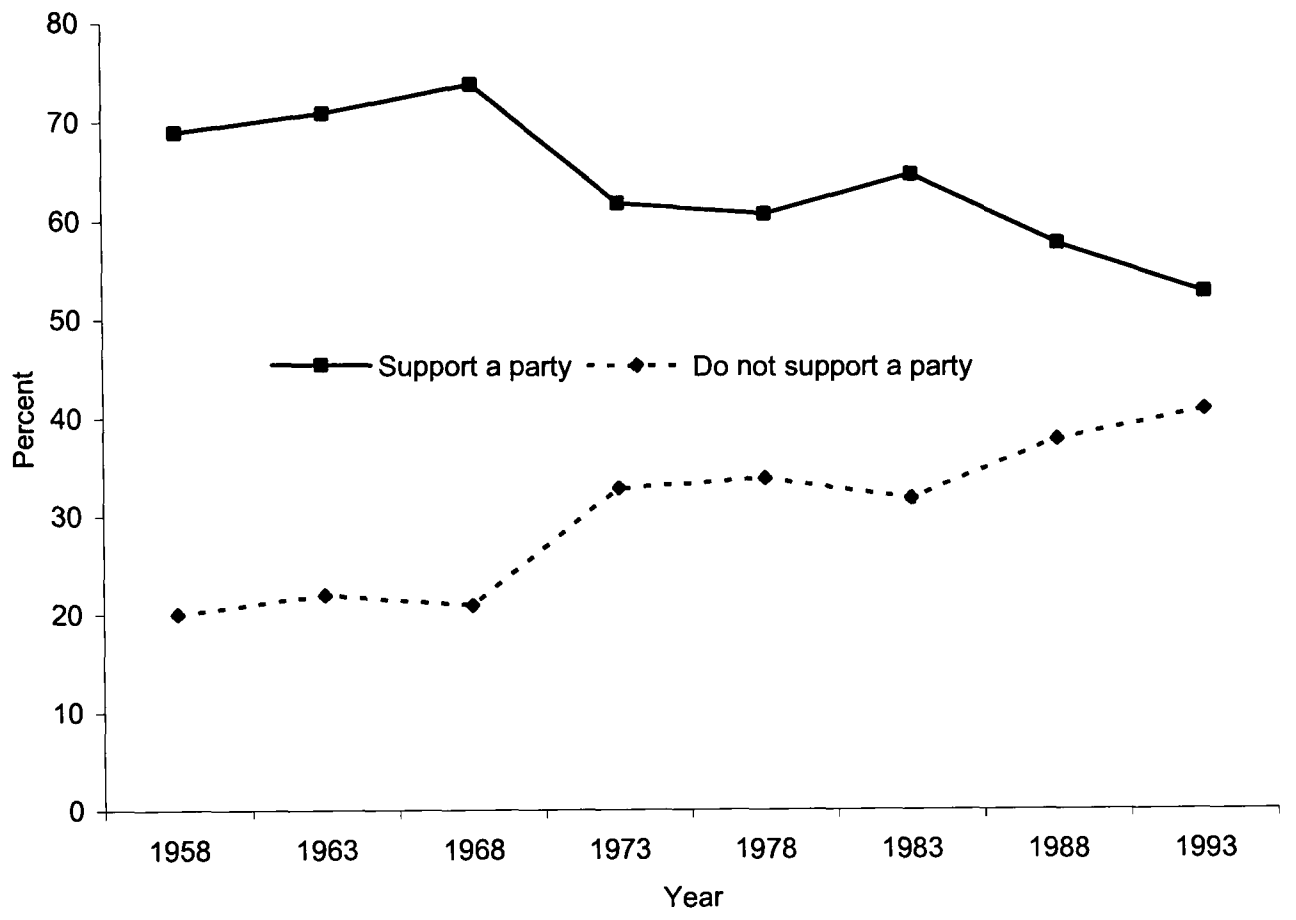
Public Satisfaction With Politics in Japan, 1978-2000



Note. Until 1999, 'Satisfaction' included two categories: 'satisfied' and 'somewhat satisfied'. In the 1999 survey, respondents were given only two options, i.e. 'satisfied' and 'not satisfied'. In 2000, the categories were changed to 'not dissatisfied', 'a little dissatisfied' and 'very dissatisfied'. Data were compiled from 'Survey of the population's attitudes' [国民意識調査], reported in Asahi Nenkan, 1979-2001.

APPENDIX D

Support for Political Parties in Japan, 1958-1993



Note. Based on data from Tōkei Sūri Kenkyūjo, 1994, p. 91.

APPENDIX E

Support for Political Parties in Japan, 1996-2003

(News Station Polls/percent)

Survey date	LDP	NFP	JSP	JCP	NPH	DPJ	SP	LP	CGP[a]	GGP	NFR	VP	RC	FF	CP[b]
1996.01.14	42.9	15.8	12.5	3.3	3.5										
1996.02.19	36.7	13.3	9.3	5.0	2.0										
1996.03.17	34.5	17.9	8.8	5.0	2.6										
1996.04.21	41.1	12.8	8.5	4.7	2.1										
1996.05.19	39.1	14.4	8.5	5.2	3.1										
1996.06.16	39.0	13.0	7.4	4.3	4.9										
1996.07.14	34.6	13.4	11.9	4.6	4.4										
1996.08.31	39.4	12.0	8.7	3.3	4.4										
1996.09.28	34.5	11.5	7.3	5.3	1.7	13.2									
1996.11.01	41.9	17.0	7.1	5.9	0.6	12.0									
1996.12.15	35.8	14.5	6.2	8.2	0.5	11.4									
1997.01.26	41.6	9.6	6.6	5.8	0.6	9.3	1.0								
1997.03.02	41.1	6.4	6.5	7.1	0.3	9.8	0.9								
1997.03.03	41.6	9.6	6.6	5.8	0.6	9.3	1.0								
1997.04.01	38.4	9.7	7.3	6.7	1.0	8.6	0.7								
1997.05.18	36.6	8.4	8.2	6.0	0.6	6.6	1.1								
1997.06.15	40.9	8.9	5.4	5.1	0.7	7.1	5.1								
1997.07.06	36.9	9.0	7.0	6.1	0.8	5.9	1.1								
1997.08.23	44.1	8.2	6.7	7.7	1.2	4.1	0.7								
1997.09.13	42.3	5.8	7.6	6.3	1.0	5.5	0.2								
1997.09.20	42.3	6.2	10.3	5.5	0.9	6.4	1.1								
1997.10.18	38.2	7.9	6.7	9.6	0.6	6.1	0.6								
1997.11.01	41.1	8.3	7.7	6.6	0.2	7.1	0.8								
1997.12.06	37.0	6.8	8.5	8.4	0.3	5.9	0.2								
1998.01.10	40.1		7.1	5.5	0.5	9.4	0.8	2.4	3.3		0.5	0.3	0.0	0.2	
1998.02.14	36.3		8.5	5.3	0.3	7.7		2.5	3.3	1.0	0.3				
1998.03.14	36.7		6.9	6.3	0.0	10.8		2.7	1.7	0.9	0.6				
1998.04.18	34.2		7.2	9.0	0.7	9.8		2.1	4.4	0.7	0.3				
1998.05.23	34.4		6.2	6.5	0.2	12.7		2.3	5.0						
1998.06.27	31.4		7.0	8.0	0.6	14.5		3.0	4.9						
1998.07.18	26.1		6.6	7.3	0.0	29.9		4.1	4.6						
1998.08.01	26.1		5.4	7.6	0.3	30.0		4.6	4.5						
1998.09.05	31.4		6.4	7.3		24.8		5.4	3.4						
1998.10.10	30.8		6.3	8.2		22.7		4.3	2.6						
1998.11.21	30.4		6.3	8.9		14.8		7.6	2.2						
1998.12.19	29.1		5.0	7.2		17.5		8.8	2.0						
1999.01.23	29.7		5.2	7.4		19.6		7.9	3.4						
1999.02.02	34.8		4.3	7.4		15.7		5.3	4.7						
1999.03.13	31.5		5.8	7.3		13.4		3.5	5.9						
1999.04.17	32.5		5.4	7.1		15.0		5.0	3.8						
1999.05.15	38.1		4.8	7.3		13.4		6.8	2.7						
1999.06.05	37.3		6.0	6.3		14.4		6.9	4.5						
1999.07.17	35.7		5.3	4.8		12.7		7.2	3.3						
1999.08.28	38.1		3.6	6.8		14.5		7.0	4.1						
1999.09.25	37.3		3.5	7.0		17.8		4.2	3.8						
1999.10.09	36.2		3.3	4.7		17.4		6.7	4.2						
1999.11.06	34.2		4.9	6.8		13.3		7.1	4.1						
1999.12.11	37.4		3.7	7.1		15.0		5.0	3.4						
2000.01.15	36.9		3.9	5.8		12.6		4.5	5.3						
2000.02.05	29.6		6.0	6.5		17.1		4.6	4.8						
2000.03.11	37.6		4.0	6.5		16.2		6.8	3.7						
2000.04.08	42.0		4.6	5.2		11.0		5.4	4.5						0.5
2000.05.14	39.6		5.9	5.4		10.6		4.1	3.9						0.5
2000.06.04	33.6		6.2	5.9		16.8		4.8	3.1						0.5
2000.06.11	34.7		4.1	4.6		18.9		4.0	5.0						0.5

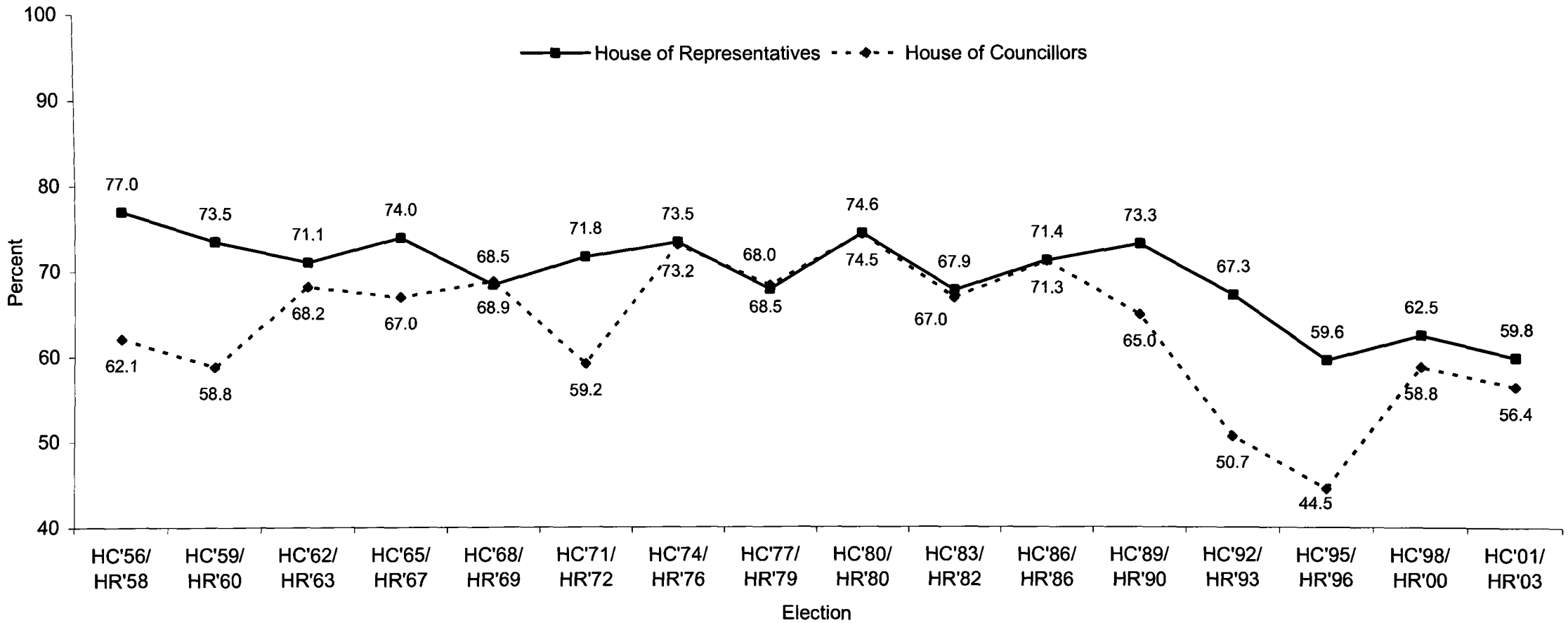
Continued on next page

Survey date	LDP	NFP	JSP	JCP	NPH	DPJ	SP	LP	CGP[a]	GGP	NFR	VP	RC	FF	CP[b]
2000.07.09	30.9		8.8	5.5		24.3		8.0	4.0						0.2
2000.08.06	33.4		5.4	3.7		21.9		6.4	5.1						0.3
2000.09.01	32.2		6.4	5.3		24.4		5.6	5.0						0.3
2000.10.08	34.9		5.4	5.4		22.1		4.9	3.4						0.2
2000.10.29	27.5		6.1	6.2		24.1		3.9	3.2						0.3
2000.11.19	36.2		4.8	4.0		16.6		5.1	3.3						0.9
2000.12.10	31.6		5.9	4.9		19.9		3.0	5.2						0.2
2001.01.14	31.0		5.5	4.4		21.2		6.1	2.9						0.2
2001.02.04	26.8		6.4	4.7		19.2		6.7	3.3						0.2
2001.02.18	26.4		6.6	4.2		16.9		4.5	4.5						0.4
2001.03.11	26.8		7.3	3.9		20.6		5.0	2.1						0.4
2001.04.08	28.2		6.2	5.1		17.9		4.1	4.1						0.5
2001.04.29	40.0		3.5	2.7		11.9		2.4	4.6						0.2
2001.05.27	43.6		3.7	2.6		13.2		3.5	3.5						0.0
2001.07.01	52.6		3.8	2.8		12.2		3.0	2.8						0.0
2001.07.15	47.9		5.1	4.9		11.8		3.2	5.1						0.0
2001.08.05	50.8		3.2	7.3		12.0		4.9	4.2						0.7
2001.08.19	49.5		3.9	4.5		12.8		5.7	5.3						0.3
2001.09.23	51.9		4.7	2.8		10.2		4.7	3.3						0.5
2001.10.14	48.0		4.4	3.5		12.0		6.1	3.2						0.2
2001.11.18	46.2		6.1	2.4		12.2		2.8	2.9						0.5
2001.12.16	48.9		4.9	3.3		11.1		4.3	2.9						0.0
2002.01.20	48.3		4.8	5.0		9.9		2.6	3.6						0.7
2002.02.03	40.2		5.1	4.2		13.1		4.1	4.7						0.0
2002.03.17	39.7		6.5	5.0		12.5		5.0	2.6						0.3
2002.04.29	43.4		8.1	5.7		13.7		3.3	2.8						0.2
2002.05.19	39.3		6.9	4.6		13.2		4.0	4.5						0.2
2002.06.23	33.5		9.1	4.8		12.2		5.2	4.3						0.3
2002.07.21	33.6		5.9	5.8		16.6		4.2	3.2						0.2
2002.08.25	39.0		6.1	4.4		14.1		3.9	2.6						0.0
2002.09.22	42.5		5.4	4.9		9.9		3.5	3.2						0.0
2002.10.06	44.0		4.2	3.9		11.9		3.4	2.9						0.2
2002.11.03	42.5		3.8	4.1		7.4		4.3	3.4						0.2
2002.12.15	45.6		3.0	4.3		9.6		3.5	2.9						0.2
2003.01.26	37.9		3.1	4.5		14.0		3.6	4.1						0.3
2003.02.23	39.2		3.2	4.2		17.9		4.6	4.2						0.0
2003.03.23	41.8		3.6	4.6		12.3		4.8	3.1						0.2
2003.04.20	39.9		2.1	4.2		15.9		3.7	4.6						0.0
2003.05.25	39.8		3.7	4.7		14.4		3.5	2.7						0.2
2003.06.29	45.7		2.2	3.7		11.0		3.9	5.1						0.0
2003.07.27	36.4		3.8	5.5		15.0		3.5	4.7						0.0
2003.08.31	45.6		3.3	3.9		15.6		2.6	3.3						0.2
2003.09.28	48.6		3.2	3.7		19.4			3.3						0.0
2003.10.19	46.1		2.3	3.1		19.6			4.9						0.2
2003.11.02	43.7		3.9	3.4		20.8			4.8						0.2
2003.11.30	41.3		2.7	3.4		30.5			4.7						

Note. Figures in News Station polls are slightly higher than other media polls due to the question phrasing. Respondents who do not volunteer a party name are asked to name the party which they feel the strongest in favour of (even if they don't necessarily support it). [a] The figures given from January to November 1998 are those registered by the NPP. [b] The figures given from January to November 2003 are those registered by the NCP. Data were compiled from the Asahi TV website (http://www.tv-asahi.co.jp/n-station/research/seitou.html and http://www.tv-asahi.co.jp/n-station/ research/siji_datail.html).

APPENDIX F

Voting Turnout in National Elections, 1956-2003



Note. Data were compiled from Asahi Nenkan, 1997; various newspapers, 1998-2003.

APPENDIX G

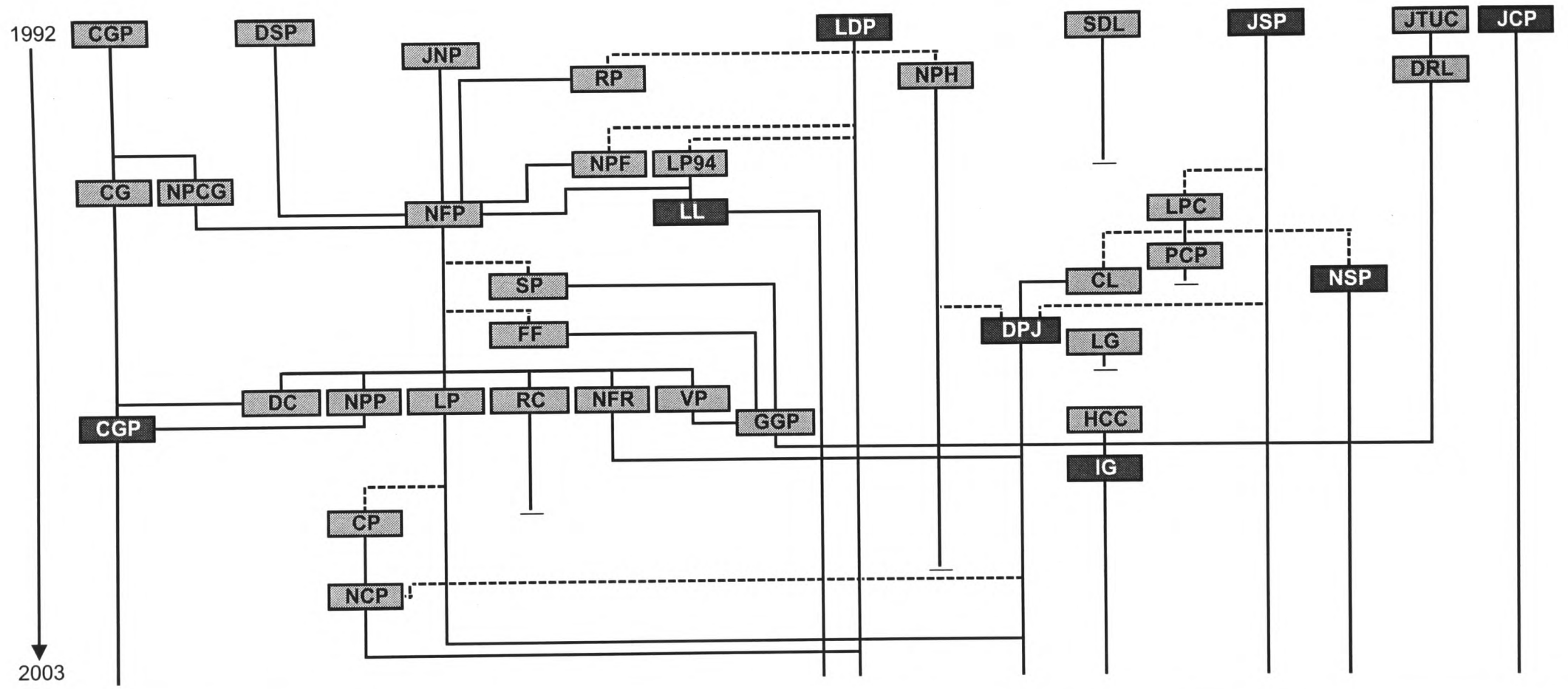
Results of National Elections, 1993-2003

Party	Elections for the House of Representatives, 1993-2003								Elections for the House of Councillors, 1995-2001								
	July 18, 1993		October 20, 1996		June 25, 2000		November 10, 2003		July 23, 1995			July 12, 1998			July 29, 2001		
	Pre-election seat total	Post-election seat total	Pre-election seat total	Post-election seat total	Pre-election seat total	Post-election seat total	Pre-election seat total	Post-election seat total	Number of seats up for contest	Number of seats won	Post-election seat total	Number of seats up for contest	Number of seats won	Post-election seat total	Number of seats up for contest	Number of seats won	Post-election seat total
LDP	222	223	211	239	271	233	247	237	33	49	110	60	46	104	61	64	110
JSP	134	70	30	15	14	19	18	6	41	16	38	12	5	13	7	3	8
RP	36	55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CGP	45	51	-	-	42	31	31	34	-	-	-	11	9	22	13	13	23
JNP	0	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DSP	13	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
JCP	16	15	15	26	26	20	20	9	5	8	14	6	15	23	8	5	20
NPH	10	13	9	2	-	-	-	-	1	3	3	0	0	3	-	-	-
SDL	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NFP	-	-	160	156	-	-	-	-	20	40	67	-	-	-	-	-	-
DPJ	-	-	52	52	95	127	137	177	-	-	-	18	27	47	22	26	59
IG	-	-	-	-	4	5	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
RC	-	-	-	-	5	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LP	-	-	-	-	18	22	-	-	-	-	-	5	6	12	3	6	8
CP	-	-	-	-	18	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	5
NCP	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other/Indp.	17	30	16	10	6	16	8	12	24	10	20	12	18	28	7	3	14
Vacancies	14	0	18	0	1	0	5	0	2	-	0	2	-	0	2	-	0
Total	511	511	511	500	500	480[a]	480	480	126	126	252	126	126	252	126	121[b]	247

Note. [a] The number of seats in the House of Representatives was reduced from 500 to 480 in 2000. [b] The Revised Public Office Election Law, passed in October 2000, reduced the number of seats in the House of Councillors from 252 to 242. Of the 10 seats to be eliminated, 6 were from the prefectural districts, and 4 from the nationwide constituency. As only half of the seats in the House are contested each time an election is held, 5 seats were initially cut in 2001 (leaving 121 seats distributed with 73 in prefectural districts and 48 in the nationwide constituency). The remaining 5 seats were cut in the 2004 election (Foreign Press Center, 2001). Data were compiled from Kokkai Binran, 1993; *Asahi Shinbun*, July 19-20, 1993, July 24, 1995, October 21, 1996, July 13, 1998, June 26, 2000; the *Yomiuri Shinbun* website (http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/election/general2003/); the Election.co.jp website (http://www.election.co.jp/database/2001/20010729.html).

APPENDIX H

Changes in the Party Landscape, 1992-2003



Note. "—" indicate that party was dissolved without a formal merger taking place subsequently. Broken lines indicate splinter groups breaking away from a party, which remained in existence. Dark grey areas indicate that party remained in existence by late 2003, while light grey areas indicate parties that had become defunct by late 2003.

APPENDIX I

Destinations for MPs Who Changed Their Affiliation

(Number of MPs)

Type of affiliation	Period																							
	92.8-93.2	93.2-93.8	93.8-94.2	94.2-94.8	94.8-95.2	95.2-95.8	95.8-96.2	96.2-96.8	96.8-96.12	96.12-97.2	97.2-97.8	97.8-98.2	98.2-98.8	98.8-99.2	99.2-99.8	99.8-00.2	00.2-00.8	00.8-01.2	01.2-01.8	01.8-02.2	02.2-02.8	02.8-03.2	03.2-03.8	03.8-03.11
Indp.	2	11	9	22	12	8		2	15	2	13	10	6	3	1	2	8	1	3	1		4		4
JSP		1	5	2		4			1	2														
LDP		1	1	2		2	9	1	6	4	9	17	4	2	1	5	4	8	1			3	1	8
CGP		1			1							15		43										
RP		44	4	10																				
NPH		10		8	3		2	2									1							
DRL		10					3			1		1												
DSP			2																					
LP[94]				7																				
JNP				3																				
NPF				5																				
NFP					211		3		1															
LL					7		3						1											
LPC					5																			
CL							5																	
NSP							5																	
DPJ									60	6	1	1	60	3	1	3			1					30
LG										5														
SP										13														
GGP												39												
NPP												37												
NFR												23												
LP												53		4										
RC												12				1								
HCC														5										
SCC															1									
IG																10		4						1
CP																	24							
NCP																						14		
Total	2	78	21	59	239	14	30	5	83	33	23	208	71	60	4	21	37	13	5	1	0	21	1	43

Note. Based on Database, 2004.

APPENDIX J

Initial Affiliation of MPs Who Changed Their Affiliation

(Number of MPs)

Type of affiliation	Period																						
	92.8-93.2	93.2-93.8	93.8-94.2	94.2-94.8	94.8-95.2	95.2-95.8	95.8-96.2	96.2-96.8	96.8-96.12	96.12-97.2	97.2-97.8	97.8-98.2	98.2-98.8	98.8-99.2	99.2-99.8	99.8-00.2	00.2-00.8	00.8-01.2	01.2-01.8	01.8-02.2	02.2-02.8	02.8-03.2	03.2-03.8	03.8-03.11
LDP	1	62	10	20	2	1						1			1	1	5	1						2
DSP	1				24																			
JSP		3		6	2	2	10		40	7	1		1											8
Indp.		3	9	15	27	6	14	2	5	9	7	13	3	13	3	9	2	12	1				1	3
JTUC		10																						
RP			1		75																			
SDL			1	4																				
NPH				1		1			15					3			1							
JNP				7	37																			
CGP				6	59							1												
LP[94]					7																			
DRL					1							1	5											
NPF					5																			
NFP						3	1	2	12	17	10	179												
LPC						1																		
LL							4	1	3															
SPP							1																	
CL									5															
NSP									3															
LG											5													
SP												13												
GGP													36											
DPJ													2						3	1		8		
NFR													23											
LP													1	5			27							30
NPP														38										
RC														1		6	1							1
HCC																5								
IG																	1					1		
SCC																			1					
CP																						12		
NCP																								8
Total	2	78	21	59	239	14	30	5	83	33	23	208	71	60	4	21	37	13	5	1	0	21	1	43

Note. Based on Database, 2004.

APPENDIX K

MP Movements Between Affiliation Types

1992.8-1993.2 (2)

DSP	→	Indp.	[1]
LDP	→	Indp.	[1]

1993.2-1993.8 (78)

Indp.	→	CGP	[1]
Indp.	→	JSP	[1]
Indp.	→	LDP	[1]
JSP	→	Indp.	[3]
JTUC	→	DRL	[10]
LDP	→	Indp.	[8]
LDP	→	NPH	[10]
LDP	→	RP	[44]

1993.8-1994.2 (21)

Indp.	→	DSP	[2]
Indp.	→	JSP	[5]
Indp.	→	LDP	[1]
Indp.	→	RP	[1]
LDP	→	Indp.	[7]
LDP	→	RP	[3]
RP	→	Indp.	[1]
SDL	→	Indp.	[1]

1994.2-1994.8 (59)

CGP	→	Indp.	[6]
Indp.	→	JNP	[1]
Indp.	→	JSP	[2]
Indp.	→	LDP	[2]
Indp.	→	LP^{94}	[1]
Indp.	→	NPH	[1]
Indp.	→	RP	[8]
JNP	→	Indp.	[1]
JNP	→	NPH	[6]
JSP	→	Indp.	[6]
LDP	→	Indp.	[7]
LDP	→	LP^{94}	[6]
LDP	→	NPF	[5]
LDP	→	RP	[2]
NPH	→	Indp.	[1]
SDL	→	Indp.	[1]
SDL	→	JNP	[2]
SDL	→	NPH	[1]

1994.8-1995.2 (239)

CGP	→	NFP	[59]
DRL	→	NFP	[1]
DSP	→	Indp.	[2]
DSP	→	LL	[1]
DSP	→	NFP	[21]
Indp.	→	CGP	[1]
Indp.	→	LL	[1]
Indp.	→	LPC	[5]
Indp.	→	NFP	[18]
Indp.	→	NPH	[2]
JNP	→	Indp.	[7]
JNP	→	LL	[2]
JNP	→	NFP	[28]
JSP	→	Indp.	[1]
JSP	→	NFP	[1]
LDP	→	NFP	[1]
LDP	→	NPH	[1]
LP^{94}	→	LL	[2]
LP^{94}	→	NFP	[5]
NPF	→	NFP	[5]
RP	→	Indp.	[2]
RP	→	LL	[1]
RP	→	NFP	[72]

1995.2-1995.8 (15)

Indp.	→	JSP	[4]
Indp.	→	LDP	[2]
JSP	→	Indp.	[2]
LDP	→	Indp.	[1]
LDP	→	Indp.	[1]
LPC	→	Indp.	[1]
NFP	→	Indp.	[3]
NPH	→	Indp.	[1]

1995.8-1996.2 (30)

Indp.	→	CL	[2]
Indp.	→	DRL	[1]
Indp.	→	LDP	[5]
Indp.	→	LL	[2]
Indp.	→	NFP	[2]
Indp.	→	NPH	[1]
Indp.	→	NSP	[1]
JSP	→	CL	[3]
JSP	→	DRL	[2]
JSP	→	NFP	[1]
JSP	→	NSP	[4]
LL	→	LDP	[4]
NFP	→	NPH	[1]
SPP	→	LL	[1]

1996.2-1996.8 (5)

Indp.	→	LDP	[1]
Indp.	→	NPH	[1]
LL	→	NPH	[1]
NFP	→	Indp.	[2]

1996.8-1996.12 (83)

CL	→	DPJ	[5]
Indp.	→	DPJ	[2]
Indp.	→	JSP	[1]
Indp.	→	LDP	[2]
JSP	→	DPJ	[37]
JSP	→	Indp.	[2]
JSP	→	NFP	[1]
LL	→	Indp.	[3]
NFP	→	DPJ	[1]
NFP	→	Indp.	[7]
NFP	→	LDP	[4]
NPH	→	DPJ	[15]
NSP	→	Indp.	[3]

1996.12-1997.2 (33)

Indp.	→	JSP	[2]
Indp.	→	LDP	[2]
Indp.	→	LG	[5]
JSP	→	DPJ	[5]
JSP	→	DRL	[1]
JSP	→	Indp.	[1]
NFP	→	DPJ	[1]
NFP	→	Indp.	[1]
NFP	→	LDP	[2]
NFP	→	SP	[13]

1997.2-1997.8 (23)

Indp.	→	LDP	[7]
JSP	→	DPJ	[1]
LG	→	Indp.	[4]
LG	→	LDP	[1]
NFP	→	Indp.	[9]
NFP	→	LDP	[1]

1997.8-1998.2 (208)

CG	→	Indp.	[1]
DRL	→	LDP	[1]
Indp.	→	GGP	[5]
Indp.	→	DPJ	[1]
Indp.	→	DRL	[1]
Indp.	→	LDP	[6]
LDP	→	Indp.	[1]
NFP	→	GGP	[21]
NFP	→	DC/CG	[15]
NFP	→	Indp.	[8]
NFP	→	LDP	[10]
NFP	→	LP	[53]
NFP	→	NFR	[23]
NFP	→	NPP	[37]
NFP	→	RC	[12]
SP	→	GGP	[13]

1998.2-1998.8 (71)

GGP	→	DPJ	[31]
GGP	→	Indp.	[3]
GGP	→	LDP	[2]
DPJ	→	Indp.	[2]

Continued on next page

1998.2-1998.8 (continued)

DRL	→	DPJ	[5]
Indp.	→	LDP	[2]
Indp.	→	LL	[1]
JSP	→	DPJ	[1]
LP	→	Indp.	[1]
NFR	→	DPJ	[23]

1998.8-1999.2 (60)

Indp.	→	CGP	[1]
Indp.	→	DPJ	[1]
Indp.	→	DPJ	[2]
Indp.	→	HCC	[3]
Indp.	→	LDP	[2]
Indp.	→	LP	[4]
LP	→	CGP	[5]
NPH	→	HCC	[2]
NPH	→	Indp.	[1]
NPP	→	CGP	[37]
NPP	→	Indp.	[1]
RC	→	Indp.	[1]

1999.2-1999.8 (4)

Indp.	→	DPJ	[1]
Indp.	→	LDP	[1]
Indp.	→	SCC	[1]
LDP	→	Indp.	[1]

1999.8-2000.2 (21)

HCC	→	IG	[5]
Indp.	→	DPJ	[1]
Indp.	→	IG	[5]
Indp.	→	LDP	[2]
Indp.	→	RC	[1]
LDP	→	Indp.	[1]
RC	→	DPJ	[2]
RC	→	Indp.	[1]
RC	→	LDP	[3]

2000.2-2000.8 (37)

IG	→	Indp.	[1]
Indp.	→	LDP	[1]
Indp.	→	NPH	[1]
LDP	→	Indp.	[5]
LP	→	CP	[24]
LP	→	LDP	[3]
NPH	→	Indp.	[1]
RC	→	Indp.	[1]

2000.8-2001.2 (13)

Indp.	→	IG	[4]
Indp.	→	LDP	[8]
LDP	→	Indp.	[1]

2001.2-2001.8 (5)

DPJ	→	Indp.	[3]
Indp.	→	LDP	[1]
SSC	→	DPJ	[1]

2001.8-2002.2 (1)

DPJ	→	Indp.	[1]

2002.8-2003.2 (21)

CP	→	NCP	[9]
CP	→	LDP	[3]
DPJ	→	NCP	[5]
DPJ	→	Indp.	[3]
IG	→	Indp.	[1]

2003.2-2003.8 (1)

Indp.	→	LDP	[1]

2003.8-2003.11 (43)

Indp.	→	DPJ	[1]
Indp.	→	IG	[1]
Indp.	→	LDP	[1]
LDP	→	Indp.	[2]
LP	→	DPJ	[29]
LP	→	Indp.	[1]
NCP	→	LDP	[8]

Note. Figures indicate the number of MPs who switched affiliation. Based on Database, 2004.

APPENDIX L

Routes Taken by Different MP Groupings in the Course of the Realignment Process

LDP → (59 routes)
LDP→DPJ (2)
LDP→Indp. (9)
LDP→Indp.→LDP (8)
LDP→Indp.→LG→Indp.→HCC→IG (1)
LDP→Indp.→LG→LDP (1)
LDP→Indp.→LP→DPJ (2)
LDP→Indp.→NFP (1)
LDP→Indp.→NFP→DPJ (1)
LDP→Indp.→NFP→DPJ→LDP (1)
LDP→Indp.→NFP→Indp. (1)
LDP→Indp.→NFP→Indp.→LDP (2)
LDP→Indp.→NFP→Indp.→LP→CP→NCP→LDP (1)
LDP→Indp.→NFP→LDP (1)
LDP→Indp.→NFP→LP→CP→LDP (1)
LDP→Indp.→NFP→LP→DPJ (1)
LDP→Indp.→RP→NFP (2)
LDP→Indp.→RP→NFP→Indp.→LDP (1)
LDP→Indp.→RP→NFP→LP→CP (1)
LDP→Indp.→RP→NFP→LP→CP→NCP→LDP (1)
LDP→Indp.→RP→NFP→LP→DPJ (1)
LDP→Indp.→RP→NFP→VP→GGP→DPJ (1)
LDP→LP[94]→LL→LDP (1)
LDP→LP[94]→LL→LDP→IG (1)
LDP→LP[94]→NFP→Indp.→LDP (3)
LDP→LP[94]→NFP→LDP (1)
LDP→NFP→Indp.→RC→Indp. (1)
LDP→NFP→LP (1)
LDP→NFP→RC (1)
LDP→NPF→NFP (1)
LDP→NPF→NFP→DPJ (1)
LDP→NPF→NFP→Indp.→LDP (1)
LDP→NPF→NFP→VP→GGP→DPJ→Indp. (1)
LDP→NPF→NFP→VP→GGP→DPJ→NCP (1)
LDP→NPH (3)
LDP→NPH→DPJ (2)
LDP→NPH→Indp. (1)
LDP→NPH→Indp.→DPJ (1)
LDP→NPH→Indp.→LDP (1)
LDP→NPH→LDP (3)
LDP→RP (1)
LDP→RP→Indp. (1)
LDP→RP→Indp.→LDP (2)
LDP→RP→NFP (4)
LDP→RP→NFP→Indp.→IG (1)
LDP→RP→NFP→Indp.→LDP (2)
LDP→RP→NFP→Indp.→LL (1)
LDP→RP→NFP→LDP (10)
LDP→RP→NFP→LP (2)
LDP→RP→NFP→LP→CP (3)
LDP→RP→NFP→LP→CP→NCP→LDP (3)
LDP→RP→NFP→LP→DPJ (3)
LDP→RP→NFP→VP→GGP (1)
LDP→RP→NFP→VP→GGP→DPJ (3)
LDP→RP→NFP→RC (1)
LDP→RP→NFP→SP→GGP→DPJ (6)
LDP→RP→NFP→SP→GGP→DPJ→NCP (1)
LDP→RP→NFP→SP→GGP→Indp.→IG (1)
LDP→RP→NFP→SP→GGP→LDP (1)

JSP → (22 routes)
JSP→CL→DPJ (3)
JSP→DPJ (49)
JSP→DPJ→Indp. (1)
JSP→DPJ→Indp.→LP→CP→LDP (1)
JSP→DRL→DPJ (1)
JSP→Indp. (5)
JSP→Indp.→DPJ (2)
JSP→Indp.→DRL→DPJ (1)
JSP→Indp.→DRL→DPJ→Indp. (1)
JSP→Indp.→JSP (1)
JSP→Indp.→JSP→DPJ (1)
JSP→Indp.→JSP→NSP (1)
JSP→Indp.→LPC (2)
JSP→Indp.→LPC →NSP (1)
JSP→Indp.→LPC→DPJ (1)
JSP→Indp.→NPH→DPJ (1)
JSP→Indp.→NSP (1)
JSP→Indp.→RP→NFP (1)
JSP→NFP (1)
JSP→NFP→LL (1)
JSP→NFP→SP→GGP→DPJ (1)
JSP→NSP→Indp. (2)

CGP → (14 routes)
CGP→Indp. (1)
CGP→Indp.→CGP (1)
CGP→Indp.→NFP (2)
CGP→Indp.→NFP→CGP (1)
CGP→Indp.→NFP→DC→CGP (1)
CGP→Indp.→NFP→VP→GGP→Indp.→DPJ
CGP→NFP (10)
CGP→NFP→CGP (6)
CGP→NFP→DC→CGP (2)
CGP→NFP→Indp.→CGP (1)
CGP→NFP→LP (1)
CGP→NFP→LP→CGP (5)
CGP→NFP→LP→DPJ (2)
CGP→NFP→NPP→CGP (32)

DSP → (13 routes)
DSP→LL→LDP (1)
DSP→Indp. (1)
DSP→Indp.→NFP→LP (1)
DSP→Indp.→NFP→NFR→DPJ (1)
DSP→NFP (2)
DSP→NFP→LP→CP (1)
DSP→NFP→LP→CP→LDP (1)
DSP→NFP→LP→DPJ (2)
DSP→NFP→NPH→DPJ (1)
DSP→NFP→DPJ (1)
DSP→NFP→Indp.→DPJ (1)
DSP→NFP→Indp.→DRL→DPJ (1)
DSP→NFP→NFR→DPJ (10)

SDL → (5 routes)
SDL→Indp. (1)
SDL→Indp.→LPC →PCP→Indp.→JSP (1)
SDL→JNP→NFP (1)
SDL→JNP→NFP→Indp.→ DPJ (1)
SDL→NPH→ DPJ (1)

Continued on next page

JTUC→ (9 routes)
JTUC→DRL (4)
JTUC→DRL→DPJ (1)
JTUC→DRL→DPJ→Indp. (1)
JTUC→DRL→JSP (1)
JTUC→DRL→LDP (1)
JTUC→DRL→NFP→LDP (1)
JTUC→DRL→NFP→LP→CP (1)
JTUC→JNP→NFP (1)
JTUC→JNP→NFP (1)

SPP → (1 route)
SPP→LL→Indp.→LG→Indp.→FF→GGP→DPJ

SCC → (1 route)
SCC→DPJ (1)

JNP → (24 routes)
JNP→Indp. (2)
JNP→Indp.→CL→DPJ (2)
JNP→Indp.→LDP (1)
JNP→Indp.→LL→Indp. (1)
JNP→Indp.→NPH→DPJ (1)
JNP→LL (1)
JNP→LL→NPH→DPJ (1)
JNP→NFP (4)
JNP→NFP→GGP (1)
JNP→NFP→GGP→DPJ (1)
JNP→NFP→DPJ (4)
JNP→NFP→FF→GGP→DPJ (1)
JNP→NFP→Indp.→GGP→LDP (1)
JNP→NFP→Indp.→FF→GGP→DPJ (2)
JNP→NFP→Indp.→HCC→IG (1)
JNP→NFP→Indp.→IG (1)
JNP→NFP→Indp.→LDP (1)
JNP→NFP→LDP (2)
JNP→NFP→LP→CP→LDP (1)
JNP→NFP→LP→DPJ (2)
JNP→NFP→LP→Indp.→DPJ (1)
JNP→NFP→VP→GGP→DPJ (3)
JNP→NPH (1)
JNP→NPH→DPJ (5)

RP → (16 routes)
RP→Indp. (1)
RP→NFP (1)
RP→NFP→Indp. (1)
RP→NFP→Indp.→FF→GGP→DPJ (1)
RP→NFP→Indp.→LDP (1)
RP→NFP→Indp.→LP (2)
RP→NFP→LDP (1)
RP→NFP→LDP→Indp.→LDP (1)
RP→NFP→LP (2)
RP→NFP→LP→CP (1)
RP→NFP→LP→CP→LDP (1)
RP→NFP→LP→CP→NCP (1)
RP→NFP→LP→CP→NCP→LDP (1)
RP→NFP→LP→DPJ (4)
RP→NFP→VP→GGP→DPJ→Indp. (1)
RP→NFP→SP→GGP→DPJ (1)

NPH → (4 routes)
NPH→DPJ (2)
NPH→DPJ→Indp. (1)
NPH→Indp.→HCC→IG (1)
NPH→Indp.→NFP→RC→DPJ (1)

DRL → (1 route)
DRL→LDP (1)

NFP → (19 routes)
NFP→DC→CGP (11)
NFP→Indp. (1)
NFP→Indp.→DPJ (1)
NFP→Indp.→LDP (5)
NFP→LP (6)
NFP→LP→CGP (1)
NFP→LP→CP (1)
NFP→LP→CP→LDP (3)
NFP→LP→CP→NCP (2)
NFP→LP→DPJ (5)
NFP→NFR→DPJ (10)
NFP→NPP→CGP (4)
NFP→NPP→Indp. (1)
NFP→VP→GGP→DPJ (6)
NFP→RC (2)
NFP→RC→DPJ (2)
NFP→RC→Indp.→LDP (2)
NFP→RC→LDP (3)
NFP→SP→GGP→DPJ (2)

DPJ → (4 routes)
DPJ→Indp. (2)
DPJ→Indp.→LDP (1)
DPJ→NCP (2)
DPJ→NCP→ LDP (1)

LP → (3 routes)
LP→CP→NCP→LDP (1)
LP→DPJ (8)
LP→DPJ →Indp. (1)

IG → (1 route)
IG→Indp. (1)

Indp. → (27 routes)
Indp.→CGP→NFP→NPP→CGP (1)
Indp.→DPJ (5)
Indp.→DRL→DPJ (1)
Indp.→DSP→Indp. (1)
Indp.→DSP→NFP→NFR→DPJ (1)
Indp.→FF→Indp.→IG→LDP (1)
Indp.→IG (3)
Indp.→IG→LDP (2)
Indp.→JNP→Indp.→LDP (1)
Indp.→JSP (5)
Indp.→JSP→DPJ (3)
Indp.→JSP→Indp. (2)
Indp.→JSP→Indp.→NPH→DPJ (1)
Indp.→JSP→NSP→Indp. (1)
Indp.→LDP (15)
Indp.→LG→Indp.→LDP (1)
Indp.→LL (1)
Indp.→LL→Indp.→LG→Indp.→LDP (1)
Indp.→LP[94]→NFP→Indp.→LDP (1)
Indp.→NFP→Indp.→IG→Indp. (1)
Indp.→NFP→Indp.→LDP (1)
Indp.→NFP→NFR→DPJ (1)
Indp.→NPH (1)
Indp.→NPH→DPJ (1)
Indp.→NPH→Indp.→HCC→IG (1)
Indp.→RP→LL→LDP→Indp. (1)
Indp.→SCC (1)

Note. Figures indicate the number of MPs who followed a given route. Based on Database, 2004.

APPENDIX M

Liberal Party Platform

We aim to realize a society and nation founded on liberalism, where people can express their abilities and individuality while maintaining respect for one another.

Our liberalism is a "a creative liberalism, where autonomous individuals can creatively and freely pursue their own way of life, based on diverse choices and a fair set of rules." To this end, we must take political responsibility to develop the structures necessary to maintain and develop the lives and lifestyles of the Japanese people. Further, we must make every effort to protect the global environment, which is the foundation on which human beings depend on for their existence.

We will pursue liberty and peace within the international community. We will realize the ideal of our Constitution that Japan not concentrate only on matters which concern itself, but also lend a hand to other countries.

We will build a "society where people take the lead," made up of people who do not rely on the nation or society, but set and strive towards their own goals, based on self-reliance, self-restraint, an appreciation for the importance of family, and a love for their country. Further, we will devolve the centralized state under which the people rule only in name, and will establish a "decentralized society where citizens take the lead," through real decentralized institutions.

Aiming for "small government," we will create a society of freedom and fairness, with a high level of transparency. We will build a "consumer-led society," establishing fair market rules and giving priority to the safety and choice of the consumer.

Rather than emphasizing "equality of outcome," we will create a society of "equality of opportunity," where, under a fair set of rules, people can compete fairly with one another, regardless of sex, age, ability, or resources.

We will establish a crisis management system capable of responding to national security, public peace, or disaster. We will create a "peaceful and safe society," which protects the well-being of people, and will establish a social security system protecting people's lives in old age and sickness. Further, we will create a "society in harmony with nature," which protects the environment.

We will carry out "open, transparent, fair, politics," not vested-interest politics which give precedence to the interests of specific groups or political forces.

We will do away with policies of 'domestic peace,' 'domestic prosperity,' and 'domestic self-righteousness,' and under the ideal of "coexistence with the international community," will instead actively participate in international activities in order to achieve world peace and prosperity.

Note. The text of the party platform (in English) was retrieved from the Liberal Party Website (now defunct) on September 25, 2001.

APPENDIX N

The Liberal Party's Vision for a New Japan

A Fair and Just Society
We will create a society where people are able to freely demonstrate their individual abilities with confidence. This is a free, fair, and open society, where all people are given the opportunity to participate in employment and other activities, regardless of gender, status, wealth, or handicap.

From Bureaucratic Reliance to Self-Reliance and Self-Responsibility
We will reform the system of reliance on the bureaucracy, where the administration sets the goals for the population, then protects and leads them towards it with their compliance. Instead we will create a society where individuals set their own goals, act to realize them, and also take responsibility for the results.

From the Center to the Regions
We will reform the system whereby the central authorities limit the regions through controlling the issuing of authorizations, subsidies, and so on, leading to the pedalling of influence, wining and dining of bureaucrats, and misuse of vast amounts of national taxes. Instead we will build a decentralized society, where people living in regional areas make the decisions which will affect them.

A Society which Ends the Collusion between Politicians, Bureaucrats, and Big Business
With the abolition of regulations, reduction of the bureaucratic authorization system, and disclosure of information, it will no longer be possible to operate by back-room dealing and collusion. A society which rewards diligence will begin to grow. Politicians will no longer represent the interests of a chosen few, but rather aim to realize benefits for all.

A Society which Favours Consumers
We will build a society based on a free and fair set of market rules, which avoids excessive intervention of the bureaucracy in the activities of the private sector through regulations and bureaucratic guidance. This system will allow companies to express originality and inventiveness in providing a diverse range of products to consumers. The success or failure of a company will be decided by consumers rather than bureaucrats. Consumers will be able to take responsibility in choosing products which match their needs.

A Society with a Vigorous Private Sector
We will abolish economic regulations with the exception of those which regulate environmental safety and the protection of people's health and wellbeing. Through this the intervention of bureaucrats will disappear, as will the rigid controls over the business sector.
We will transform the economy from one led by the bureaucrats, which has continued since the Meiji era, into a system led by the private sector. Companies will be free to enter existing markets, as well as challenge emerging markets such as venture businesses, while answering the needs of consumers. Tax and other supporting structures will be set accordingly. This will lead to a society which enjoys a vigorous private sector.

A Society were People are not Overburdened by Work
By reforming the salary system, we will change the situation where people must work excessively long hours of overtime in order to maintain their lifestyles. Through this family ties will be deepened, allowing people to enjoy their everyday lives.

A Normalized Society
We will create a society in which the elderly and handicapped are able to fully participate. This will be a society which is barrier-free in town planning, roads, transportation, housing, and other areas.

A Society in Harmony with Nature
We will give the highest priority to a green Japan with clean water. Environmental problems such as global warming and environmental hormones, are seriously threatening the future of mankind. We will create a society capable of living in harmony with nature, while dealing with these serious environmental issues on a global level.

A Japan which can be Relied upon by the International Community
We will do away with the principles of 'domestic peace,' and 'domestic prosperity which only consider the peace and wealth of Japan, and will abolish Japan's sense of 'domestic self-righteousness,' under which we have not involved ourselves in the peace and welfare of the citizens of the world. Japan can still make many contributions in the fields of economic cooperation, global environmental protection, famine, poverty, and disease. International peace is an issue which is fundamentally linked to Japan's existence, and we should actively participate in peace-keeping activities carried out by the United Nations. If we do not participate in activities as a country which can be relied upon by the international community, then we cannot expect to attain the physical and mental wellbeing which we seek.

Note. From Liberal Party, 1998, pp. 6-8.

APPENDIX O

'Blueprint for the Renewal of Japan': An Outline

I. OUR BASIC IDEALS

1. THE NEED FOR REFORM

2. THE PRINCIPLES OF REFORM – 'FREE', 'FAIR', 'OPEN'

3. THE JAPAN FOR WHICH WE AIM
- 3.1 A fair and just society
- 3.2 From bureaucratic reliance to self-reliance and self-responsibility
- 3.3 From the center to the regions
- 3.4 A society which ends the collusion between politicians, bureaucrats and big business
- 3.5 A society which favours consumers
- 3.6 A society with a vigorous private sector
- 3.7 A society where people are not overburdened by work
- 3.8 A normalized society
- 3.9 A society in harmony with nature
- 3.10 A Japan which can be relied upon by the international community

II. BASIC POLICIES

ON JAPAN AND THE JAPANESE

1. AUTONOMY AS THE HEART OF REFORM

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY TIES

3. THE STATE OF EDUCATION
- 3.1 Rethinking the Basic Law on Education
- 3.2 Educational reform
- 3.2.1 Promoting an education founded on moral teaching
- 3.2.2 Securing excellent teachers with a sense of mission
- 3.2.3 Establishing an educational system with a wide range of choices
- 3.2.4 Improving science education
- 3.2.5 Promoting private education
- 3.2.6 Improving vocational and other types of education

4. CULTURAL JAPAN
- 4.1 Establish a 'Basic Law for the Promotion of Culture and the Arts'
- 4.2 Establish a 'Basic Law for the Promotion of Sports'
- 4.3 Protecting cultural assets, and the inheritance and development of traditional culture
- 4.4 Promoting international cultural exchange, and contributing to the world cultural heritage

SUPPORTING THE NATIONAL LIFESTYLE AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

1. STRUCTURAL REFORM OF THE ECONOMY
- 1.1 Invigorating the economy
- 1.1.1 Abolishing and rationalizing economic regulations
- 1.1.2 Freedom of information in the economic ministries and agencies
- 1.1.3 Clarifying the management responsibility in companies? Corporate governance?
- 1.1.4 Establishing a 'Law of Free Economic Activity' (provisional title), and establishing a system of fair competition strengthening the Antitrust Law
- 1.1.5 Invigorating capital markets
- 1.1.6 Globalizing corporate accounting standards
- 1.2 Economic development begins with small business
- 1.2.1 Tax and financial assistance, and the fostering of new industries
- 1.2.2 Promoting new products and the development of new technologies
- 1.2.3 Increasing the technological standard of small businesses
- 1.2.4 Banning weekend orders and other business practices which penalize small business
- 1.2.5 Invigorating shopping districts through the development of retail stores
- 1.2.6 Training successors for small business
- 1.2.7 The tourist industry as a supporter of leisure activities
- 1.3 Reducing public costs
- 1.3.1 Redressing the high cost structure, and doing away with the domestic price differential
- 1.3.2 Introducing the principle of competition to public services
- 1.4 Disposing with bad loans, and reforming the financial system
- 1.4.1 Establishing a Japanese-style RTC
- 1.4.2 Disposing of bad loans through the disclosure of information and reappraisal of land costs
- 1.4.3 Reform of the financial system
- 1.4.4 Invigorating electronic commerce

2. FISCAL STRUCTURAL REFORM
- 2.1 Recovering the power of the private sector through large-scale tax cuts
- 2.2 Administrative reform through reducing expenses
- 2.3 Rebuilding fiscal health through recovery in the private sector
- 2.4 Increasing sales and dividends from shares

3. FUNDAMENTAL REFORM OF THE TAX SYSTEM
- 3.1 Concentrating consumption tax on social welfare
- 3.2 An 18 trillion yen tax reduction
- 3.2.1 Cutting income tax by half
- 3.2.2 Cutting corporate tax to an effective rate of 40%
- 3.2.3 Simplifying the land tax system
- 3.2.4 Abolishing the tax on securities trading, etc.
- 3.2.5 Reducing inheritance tax to international standards

4. RADICAL REFORM OF FISCAL INVESTMENT AND LENDING
- 4.1 Self-management of postal savings and other government reserve sources
- 4.2 General abolition of special-status corporations
- 4.3 Transforming the capital control department into a financing body within the government accounting department

5. EMPLOYMENT SECURITY
- 5.1 Emplacement of wage standards whereby workers can provide for themselves without the need for overwork
- 5.2 Provision of a comfortable work environment
- 5.3 Female worker security
- 5.4 Elderly worker security

6. REFORMING THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
- 6.1 Reforming the pension system
- 6.1.1 Consumption tax as the source of revenue for the basic pension

Continued on next page

6.1.2 Stabilizing individual and company pensions
6.1.3 Establishing a pension system which offers people a choice
6.2 Fundamental reform of the medical insurance system
6.2.1 Consumption tax as the source of funding for medical care for the elderly
6.2.2 Reforming the medical insurance system
6.2.3 Reconsidering the rebate system
6.2.4 Establishing a medical distribution system
6.3 Establishing a system of elderly care
6.3.1 Establishing a care system with cooperation between state, regions, the private-sector, and volunteers
6.3.2 Achieving an effective system of care, without regional differences, through the planned use of human resources and facilities
6.3.3 Consumption tax as the source of funding for a system of care
6.4 Invigorating society through the wisdom of the elderly
6.5 Building a society where children can be raised
6.5.1 Broadening the system of leave for child raising
6.5.2 Supporting child raising within the family
6.5.3 Establishing day care centres and nurseries
6.5.4 Establishing a 'Basic Law against Declining Birth Rates'
6.6 Independent assistance for the handicapped under the principle of 'normalization' (contributing to society according to one's abilities)
6.6.1 Securing workplaces
6.6.2 Creating a barrier free society
6.6.3 Assisting in daily life

III. MAINTAINING PEOPLE'S LIVING SPACES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

1. THE PROVISION OF SOCIAL CAPITAL
1.1 The provision of social capital
1.2 Town planning for comfortable living
1.2.1 Disaster-proof town planning
1.2.2 Comfortable and barrier free town planning
1.2.3 Town planning combining work and living
1.2.4 Providing affordable housing through the use of state land
1.3 Town planning for comfortable living begins with the provision of a transport network
1.3.1 Provision of bullet trains and other transport networks
1.3.2 Key airport and harbour development
1.3.3 Relieving rush-hour stress
1.4 Creating an information society
1.4.1 Providing an optic fibre network, reducing information transferral costs
1.4.2 Promoting computerization of the bureaucracy
1.4.3 Computer education from basic educational levels
1.5 Securing energy and other resources

2. DEVELOPMENT IN HARMONY WITH NATURE
2.1 Making recycling the basis of society and industry
2.2 Reducing garbage and industrial waste
2.3 Reducing greenhouse gases
2.4 Eliminating chemicals harmful to the environment
2.5 Establishing an effective system of environmental checks
2.6 Strengthening international cooperation in global environmental protection

3. BUILDING A NEW AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND FISHERIES INDUSTRY
3.1 Increasing self-sufficiency in food
3.2 Building vibrant farming and fishing communities
3.3 Building a new agricultural industry
3.3.1 Encouraging farming families and enlarging the scale of management
3.3.2 Establishing an income insurance system
3.3.3 Establishing a demand/supply mechanism which utilizes agricultural self-management
3.3.4 Realizing income support for farming families in mountainous regions
3.3.5 Encouraging organic farming
3.4 Building a new forestry industry
3.4.1 Forestry management from a long-term perspective
3.4.2 Establishing a forest protection corps
3.5 Building a new fishing industry
3.6 Securing and encouraging employment; developing and spreading technology
3.7 Promoting distribution systems, and reforming agricultural groups

4. STRIVING FOR LEADERSHIP IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
4.1 Towards a nation of science and technology
4.2 Improving basic research
4.3 Regular reviews of national projects
4.4 Promoting joint research between the private sector, bureaucracy, and academic worlds

IV. CONTRIBUTING TO WORLD PEACE AND PROSPERITY

1. A RESOLUTE FOREIGN POLICY
1.1 Peaceful foreign relations through the United Nations; promoting reform of the United Nations
1.1.1 Active participation in United Nations peace keeping activities
1.1.2 Reforming the United Nations, strengthening United Nations' functions, abolishing the 'enemies clause'
1.1.3 Becoming a permanent member of the Security Council
1.2 Strengthening the US-Japan relationship
1.3 Promoting a sincere foreign policy in Asia
1.3.1 Assisting the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula
1.3.2 Japan-Korean understanding and cooperation
1.3.3 Japan-China relations from a global viewpoint
1.3.4 Building a regional system of cooperation
1.3.5 Promoting cooperation around the Pacific Basin
1.3.6 Japan-Russian cooperation based on the return of the Northern Islands
1.4 Establishing a 'Basic Law on International Development Cooperation', and promoting economic cooperation
1.5 A new era for Japan-Europe relations
1.6 Strengthening responses to global environmental issues
1.7 Widening international exchanges between peoples

2. A RESPONSIBLE SECURITY POLICY
2.1 Three principles of security
2.2 Establishing a law for contingencies
2.3 Maintaining the credibility of the Japan-US Security Treaty
2.3.1 Establishing a new practical set of guidelines
2.3.2 Solving the Okinawa bases issue
2.4 Developing trust in bilateral and multilateral relations

3. PROTECTING THE LIVES AND PROPERTY OF THE PEOPLE THROUGH ESTABLISHING AN INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT

V. CHANGING THE NATION

1. POLITICAL REFORM
1.1 Reform of the electoral system

Continued on next page

1.1.1 Reform of the election system for the House of Representatives
1.1.2 Reform of the election system for the House of Councillors
1.1.3 Reform of the electoral system for representatives and chairmen of regional public bodies
1.2 Parliamentary reform
1.2.1 Reforming the two houses
1.2.2 Strengthening the investigative powers of the government
1.2.3 Invigorating parliamentary debate
1.2.4 Abolishing the government committee system
1.2.5 Freedom of parliamentary information
1.3 Reforming the cabinet system
1.3.1 Introducing a vice-ministerial and undersecretary system; increasing the number of parliamentary vice-ministers
1.3.2 Institutionalizing the 'Tomorrow's Cabinet' shadow cabinet system
1.3.3 Unifying the cabinet legislation bureaus
1.4 Reforming party politics
1.5 Improving the system of parliamentary ethics
1.6 Reforming and reorganizing the existing legal system
1.7 Establishing an investigative committee for constitutional issues

2. NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM
2.1 Clarifying the roles of national and regional public bodies
2.2 Reducing and reorganizing the national and regional administrations
2.2.1 Reorganizing the central ministries and agencies
2.2.2 Strengthening the Board of Audit and Fair Trade Commission
2.2.3 Reducing the number of public servants
2.2.4 Establishing a system of cabinet aides
2.3 Promoting decentralization and the integration of regional bodies
2.3.1 Establishing a 'Basic Law on Regional Government'
2.3.2 Reorganizing the country into 300 city authorities
2.4 Establishing a crisis management system
2.5 Reforming special government bodies and field operations
2.5.1 Abolishing and privatizing special government bodies
2.5.2 Comprehensive reform of field operations
2.6 Reform of the subsidy system, public works, and tendering
2.6.1 Abolishing subsidies; regionalizing grants
2.6.2 Making public works a regional issue
2.6.3 Interfering with tenders to be made a crime
2.7 Promulgation of an 'Administrative Information Disclosure Law'
2.8 Promulgation of a 'Public Servants Ethics Law'

3. REFORM OF THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM
3.1 Reorganizing the judicial system
3.2 Reforming the litigation system
3.3 Establishing a system for compensating crime victims
3.4 Protecting human rights

Note. From Liberal Party, 1998.

APPENDIX P

Candidates and Winners in the 1998 House of Councillors Election

District	LP	LDP	DPJ	CGP	JSP	JCP	Indp.	Other parties	Total
HK	1	1 [1]	1 [1]	0	1	1	1	4	10 [2]
AO	0	1	0	0	0	1	2 [1]	1	5 [1]
IW	0	0	0	0	1	1	2 [1]	1	5 [1]
MG	0	1	1 [1]	0	1	1	3 [1]	2	9 [2]
AK	0	1 [1]	1	0	1	1	0	2	6 [1]
YT	0	1 [1]	1	0	1	1	0	1	5 [1]
FS	0	2 [1]	0	0	0	1	2 [1]	3	8 [2]
IB	1	2 [1]	1 [1]	0	0	1	0	4	9 [2]
TC	0	2 [1]	1 [1]	0	1	1	1	2	8 [2]
GM	0	2 [2]	0	0	0	1	1	1	5 [2]
ST	0	2	1 [1]	0	1	1 [1]	2 [1]	4	11 [3]
CH	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	1 [1]	4	7 [2]
TO	0	2	1 [1]	1 [1]	1	1 [1]	5 [1]	12	23 [4]
KN	1	2	2 [2]	0	1	1 [1]	1	7	15 [3]
NI	1	1	0	0	1 [1]	1	2 [1]	1	7 [2]
TY	0	1 [1]	1	0	1	1	0	1	5 [1]
IS	0	1	0	0	0	1	1 [1]	1	4 [1]
FI	0	1 [1]	1	0	0	1	0	1	4 [1]
YN	1	1	0	0	0	1	1 [1]	1	5 [1]
NN	0	1 [1]	1 [1]	0	1	1	3	1	8 [2]
GI	0	1	1 [1]	0	0	1	2 [1]	1	6 [2]
SZ	1	2 [1]	0	0	0	1	1 [1]	1	6 [2]
AI	0	2	2 [2]	0	1	1 [1]	3	7	16 [3]
MI	0	0	0	0	0	1	2 [1]	1	4 [1]
SG	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	1	1	4 [1]
KY	0	1	0	0	0	1 [1]	1 [1]	1	4 [2]
OS	0	1	1	1 [1]	1	1 [1]	3 [1]	5	13 [3]
HG	0	1	1 [1]	0	0	1 [1]	2	3	8 [2]
NR	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	1	1	4 [1]
WK	1 [1]	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	4 [1]
TT	0	1 [1]	0	0	1	1	1	1	5 [1]
SN	0	1 [1]	1	0	1	1	0	1	5 [1]
OK	0	1 [1]	2 [1]	0	1	1	1	2	8 [2]
HS	0	2 [1]	0	0	1	1	1 [1]	2	7 [2]
YG	0	1	0	0	0	1	1 [1]	2	5 [1]
TS	0	1	0	0	0	1	1 [1]	2	5 [1]
KW	0	1 [1]	0	0	1	1	0	1	4 [1]
EH	1	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	1	1	5 [1]
KC	1	1 [1]	0	0	0	0	2	1	5 [1]
FO	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	3 [1]	3	8 [2]
SA	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	1	1	4 [1]
NK	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	1	1	4 [1]
KM	0	2 [1]	1 [1]	0	0	1	0	1	5 [2]
OT	0	1 [1]	1	0	1	1	0	1	5 [1]
MZ	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	0	1	3 [1]
KS	0	2 [2]	0	0	0	1	1	1	5 [2]
ON	0	1	0	0	0	0	2 [1]	2	5 [1]
Total (LD)	9 [1]	57 [30]	23 [15]	2 [2]	20 [1]	45 [7]	60 [20]	100 [0]	316 [76]
Total (PR)	12 [5]	30 [14]	25 [12]	18 [7]	17 [4]	25 [8]		31 [0]	158 [50]
Total (all)	21 [6]	87 [44]	48 [27]	20 [9]	37 [5]	70 [15]	60 [20]	131 [0]	474 [126]

Note. Figures in brackets indicate the number of candidates who won a seat in the district. Data were compiled from Seiji Handobukku, 2000.

APPENDIX Q

Candidates and Winners in the 2000 House of Representatives Election

Single-Member Districts

District	LP	LDP	DPJ	CGP	JSP	JCP	CP	Other parties and Indp.	Total
HK 1-13	4	13 [7]	13 [6]	0	1	13	0	4	48 [13]
AO 1-4	0	4 [3]	2	0	3	4	0	1 [1]	14 [4]
IW 1-4	4 [3]	4 [1]	1	0	3	4	1	2	19 [4]
MG 1-6	1	6 [2]	6 [4]	0	2	6	0	1	22 [6]
AK 1-3	3	3 [3]	2	0	1	3	0	0	12 [3]
YT 1-4	0	4 [3]	2 [1]	0	1	4	0	1	12 [4]
FS 1-5	1	5 [3]	4 [1]	0	2	5	0	2 [1]	19 [5]
IB 1-7	3	6 [5]	5 [1]	0	1	7	0	5 [1]	27 [7]
TC 1-5	1	5 [4]	4 [1]	0	1	5	0	1	17 [5]
GM 1-5	0	5 [5]	4	0	1	5	0	2	17 [5]
ST 1-14	4	12 [6]	13 [6]	1	3	14	0	9 [2]	56 [14]
CH 1-12	1	12 [7]	12 [5]	1	3	12	1	11	53 [12]
TO 1-25	14	22 [8]	24 [13]	3	3	25	1 [1]	25 [3]	117 [25]
KN 1-17	6 [1]	16 [9]	16 [6]	1	6	17	0	17 [1]	79 [17]
NI 1-6	2	4 [4]	2 [1]	0	2	4	0	2 [1]	12 [6]
TY 1-3	1	3 [3]	3	0	2	3	0	0	12 [3]
IS 1-3	1	3 [3]	2	0	0	3	0	1	10 [3]
FI 1-3	0	3 [3]	3	0	0	3	0	1	10 [3]
YN 1-3	0	3 [2]	2 [1]	0	0	3	0	2	10 [3]
NN 1-5	0	5 [3]	5 [2]	0	1	5	0	1	17 [5]
GI 1-5	0	5 [5]	5	0	1	5	0	1	17 [5]
SZ 1-9	0	9 [4]	9 [4]	1	1	9	0	9 [1]	38 [9]
AI 1-15	1	11 [5]	15 [9]	2	2	15	4 [1]	26	76 [15]
MI 1-5	1	4 [2]	4 [2]	0	0	5	0	2 [1]	16 [5]
SG 1-3	0	3 [2]	1 [1]	0	0	3	0	3	10 [3]
KY 1-6	3	6 [5]	6 [1]	0	2	6	0	2	24 [6]
OS 1-19	3	11 [8]	16 [5]	4 [4]	3 [1]	19	3 [1]	19	78 [19]
HG 1-12	2	7 [3]	7 [3]	2 [2]	3 [1]	12	3 [2]	16 [1]	52 [12]
NR 1-4	0	4 [4]	4	0	1	4	0	2	15 [4]
WK 1-3	0	1 [1]	1	0	0	3	2 [1]	3 [1]	10 [3]
TT 1-2	0	2 [2]	1	0	1	2	0	1	7 [2]
SN 1-3	0	3 [3]	2	0	1	3	0	1	10 [3]
OK 1-5	0	5 [5]	5	0	1	5	0	0	16 [5]
HS 1-7	1	7 [5]	3	0	2	7	0	3 [2]	23 [7]
YG 1-4	0	4 [3]	2 [1]	0	0	4	0	1	11 [4]
TS 1-3	1	3 [2]	2 [1]	0	0	3	0	1	10 [3]
KW 1-3	0	3 [2]	1	0	2	3	0	2 [1]	11 [3]
EH 1-4	0	4 [4]	2	0	3	4	0	1	14 [4]
KC 1-3	0	3 [3]	2	1	1	3	0	0	10 [3]
FO 1-11	0	11 [8]	10 [2]	0	3	11	0	11 [1]	46 [11]
SA 1-3	0	3 [3]	3	0	2	3	0	3	14 [3]
NK 1-4	2	4 [2]	2 [1]	0	1	4	0	5 [1]	18 [4]
KM 1-5	1	4 [2]	3 [1]	0	1	5	1 [1]	6 [1]	21 [5]
OT 1-4	0	4 [2]	2 [1]	0	2 [1]	4	0	4	16 [4]
MZ 1-3	0	3 [3]	2	0	1	3	0	4	13 [3]
KS 1-5	1	5 [4]	3	0	1	5	0	2 [1]	17 [5]
ON 1-3	0	2 [1]	2	1 [1]	1 [1]	3	0	3	12 [3]
Total (SMD)	62 [4]	281 [177]	242 [80]	17 [7]	72 [4]	298 [0]	16 [7]	219 [21]	1188 [300]

Continued on next page

Proportional Representation Districts

District	LP	LDP	DPJ	CGP	JSP	JCP	CP	Other parties and Indp.	Total
Hokkaidō	4	15 [2]	17 [3]	3 [1]	2 [1]	5 [1]	0	2	48 [8]
Tōhoku	10 [3]	31 [5]	19 [3]	6 [1]	12 [1]	4 [1]	0	2	84 [14]
Kita Kantō	9 [2]	35 [7]	27 [5]	7 [3]	7 [1]	7 [2]	0	3	95 [20]
Minami Kantō	8 [2]	33 [6]	32 [6]	6 [3]	9 [2]	8 [2]	0	5	101 [21]
Tokyo	13 [2]	26 [4]	26 [6]	8 [2]	5 [1]	6 [2]	1	6	91 [17]
Shinetsu	5 [1]	24 [4]	18 [3]	3 [1]	6 [1]	4 [1]	0	1	61 [11]
Tōkai	5 [2]	35 [7]	35 [7]	6 [2]	4 [1]	7 [2]	1	2	95 [21]
Kinki	9 [3]	41 [7]	39 [7]	11 [5]	8 [3]	13 [5]	1	8	130 [30]
Chūgoku	2 [1]	28 [4]	13 [2]	4 [2]	5 [1]	3 [1]	0	1	56 [11]
Shikoku	2	17 [3]	7 [1]	3 [1]	6	3 [1]	0	1	39 [6]
Kyūshū	4 [2]	41 [7]	26 [4]	6 [3]	12 [3]	6 [2]	0	11	106 [21]
Total (PR)	71 [18]	326 [56]	259 [47]	63 [24]	76 [15]	66 [20]	3 [0]	42 [0]	906 [180]
Total number of candidate listings	134 [22]	595 [232]	499 [128]	80 [31]	148 [19]	364 [20]	19 [7]	258 [20]	2092 [480]

Note. Figures in brackets indicate the number of candidates who won a seat in the district. Data were compiled from the Election.co.jp website.

APPENDIX R

Candidates and Winners in the 2001 House of Councillors Election

District	LP	LDP	DPJ	CGP	JSP	JCP	Indp.	Other parties	Total
HK	1	1 [1]	1 [1]	0	1	1	1	4	10 [2]
AO	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	2	1	5 [1]
IW	1 [1]	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	5 [1]
MG	0	1	1 [1]	0	1	1	1 [1]	1	6 [2]
AK	0	1 [1]	1	0	1	1	0	1	5 [1]
YT	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	1	2	5 [1]
FS	1	1 [1]	1 [1]	0	0	1	2	2	8 [2]
IB	1	1 [1]	1 [1]	0	0	1	0	3	7 [2]
TC	0	1 [1]	1 [1]	0	0	1	1	2	6 [2]
GM	0	2 [1]	1 [1]	0	0	1	0	1	5 [2]
ST	1	1 [1]	1 [1]	1 [1]	1	1	4	3	13 [3]
CH	1	1 [1]	1 [1]	0	0	1	1	2	7 [2]
TO	1	1 [1]	1 [1]	1 [1]	1	1 [1]	6	3	15 [4]
KN	1	1 [1]	1 [1]	1 [1]	1	1	1	4	11 [3]
NI	1 [1]	1 [1]	1	0	1	1	1	1	7 [2]
TY	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	1	1	4 [1]
IS	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	1	1	4 [1]
FI	0	1 [1]	1	0	0	1	0	1	4 [1]
YN	1	1 [1]	1	0	0	1	0	1	5 [1]
NN	0	1 [1]	2 [1]	0	1	1	0	1	6 [2]
GI	0	1 [1]	1 [1]	0	0	1	0	1	4 [2]
SZ	0	2 [1]	1 [1]	0	0	1	0	2	6 [2]
AI	1	1 [1]	1 [1]	1 [1]	1	1	8	8	22 [3]
MI	0	1	0	0	0	1	1 [1]	1	4 [1]
SG	0	1 [1]	1	0	0	1	0	1	4 [1]
KY	0	1 [1]	1 [1]	0	0	1	1	1	5 [2]
OS	1	1 [1]	1 [1]	1 [1]	0	1	1	5	11 [3]
HG	1	1 [1]	1 [1]	0	0	1	1	3	8 [2]
NR	0	1 [1]	1	0	1	1	0	1	5 [1]
WK	0	1 [1]	1	0	0	1	0	1	4 [1]
TT	0	1 [1]	1	0	1	1	0	1	5 [1]
SN	0	1 [1]	1	0	0	1	0	1	4 [1]
OK	0	1 [1]	1	0	0	1	0	1	4 [1]
HS	0	1 [1]	1	0	0	1	1 [1]	2	6 [2]
YG	0	1 [1]	1	0	0	1	0	2	5 [1]
TS	0	1 [1]	1	0	0	1	0	2	5 [1]
KW	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	1	1	4 [1]
EH	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	1	1	4 [1]
KC	0	1 [1]	1	0	0	1	1	1	5 [1]
FO	1	1 [1]	1 [1]	0	1	1	1	2	8 [2]
SA	0	1 [1]	1	0	0	1	0	1	4 [1]
NK	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	2	1	5 [1]
KM	0	1 [1]	1	0	0	1	0	2	5 [1]
OT	0	1 [1]	0	0	1	1	0	1	4 [1]
MZ	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	2	1	5 [1]
KS	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	2	1	5 [1]
ON	0	1 [1]	0	0	0	1	1	0	3 [1]
Total (LD)	14 [2]	49 [44]	35 [18]	5 [5]	14 [0]	47 [1]	47 [3]	81 [0]	292 [73]
Total (PR)	17 [4]	27 [20]	28 [8]	17 [8]	10 [3]	25 [4]	0	80 [1]	204 [48]
Total (all)	31 [6]	76 [64]	63 [26]	22 [13]	24 [3]	72 [5]	47 [3]	161 [1]	496 [121]

Note. Figures in brackets indicate the number of candidates who won a seat in the district. Data were compiled from the Election.co.jp website.

APPENDIX S

Socioeconomic Characteristics of Party Support, 1998-2003

	Average percentage of respondents	Deviation from average (percentage points)						
		LDP	DPJ	CGP	JSP	JCP	LP	No party
Residence								
Big cities	22	4-	2+	6+	4-	10+	2+	1+
Other cities	56	3-	0	1-	2+	2-	1+	0
Rural areas	23	6+	2-	6-	1+	8-	4-	1-
Vocation								
Primary industries	4	4+	2-	3-	1-	-2	1-	1-
Commerce and service	13	4+	2-	1-	6-	2+	5+	2-
White-collar	19	6-	5+	7-	1+	1+	2-	2+
Blue-collar	22	5-	1-	6+	2+	2+	3-	2+
Self-employed/managerial	3	1+	2+	1-	0	0	3+	0
Unemployed housewives	23	2-	5-	8+	1+	3-	5-	1+
Other unemployed	17	4+	2+	1-	4+	1+	2+	2-
Gender								
Male	46	7+	15+	-9	3+	4+	19+	7+
Female	54	7-	15-	9+	3-	4-	19-	7-
Age								
20-29 years	11	7-	3-	-2	7-	3-	3-	4+
30-39 years	16	8-	2-	2+	6-	5-	2-	4+
40-49 years	18	4-	1+	2+	1-	3+	3-	2+
50-59 years	22	3+	4+	1-	5+	6+	4+	2-
60+ years	33	16+	1+	0	10+	0	5+	8-
Education								
Secondary school	22	7+	7-	6+	3+	1-	4-	3-
High school	50	1-	2+	6+	0	2-	5-	1+
University	28	6-	5+	-12	3-	3+	9+	3+

Note. The figures given here represent an average value for the period from January 1998 to September 2003. Data were compiled from Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1998-2003.