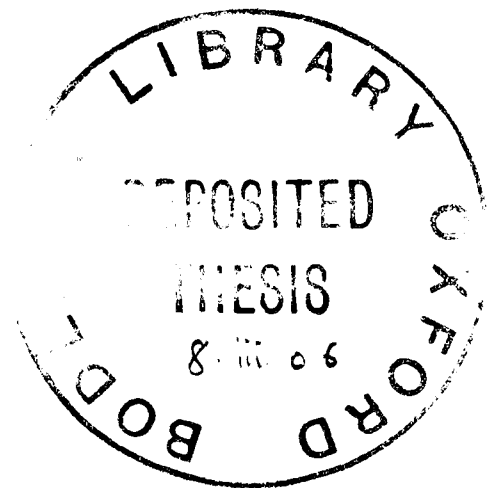


**From Old Socialists to New Democrats:
The Realignment of the Japanese Left**

by
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Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

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From Old Socialists to New Democrats

The Realignment of the Japanese Left.

In 1996, a new left of centre party emerged in Japan called the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and effectively replaced the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) as the main opposition party. This thesis asks what conditions caused this realignment and how the DPJ differs from the JSP.

An increasing distrust and disinterest of politics and politicians has meant that the non-aligned voter in Japan forms the largest group of the electorate. Every party has lost support, but the left faced the worst drop of support. With the end of the Cold War, and the intensifying call for Japan to reassess its role on the World stage, the traditional ideology of the Japanese left, which has become synonymous with peace and preservation of the Peace Constitution, has lost its stabilising effect on the party and on its supporters. The labour unions, which were once the key mobilisational force for the left-wing parties at election time, began to question their relationship with the JSP and found new links to government. Simultaneously, they were also losing members so mobilisation of voters for the left also declined. Finally, a new electoral system did not reward the opposition as much as the LDP.

Overall, the mobilisation of the electorate has become increasingly difficult for the Japanese left as a result of these factors. The DPJ has had to find ways of dealing with them and also has had to create its own identity. The way in which the party has dealt with this is by ‘widening out’ its types of candidate and using new methods to attract support. Furthermore, the DPJ has become more aware of its party coherence and has ensured that party unity is maintained even when ideological disputes occur.

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To

HH

...who supported the beginning, luckily missed the middle, and sadly
will never see the end.

With Love.

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The author accepts sole responsibility for the contents, and mistakes of this thesis.

Notes on Style

In this thesis, the following stylistic conventions have been followed. All Japanese names are given in Japanese order with the family name first. Macrons are used to indicate long vowels. Exceptions to this are well known Japanese place names such as Tokyo and Kyoto. In bibliographic references, all Japanese sources are assumed to have been published in Tokyo and as such, have not been noted.

Introduction

In 2001, the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) was in control of the Diet. It had 238 seats in the House of Representatives, which amounts to 49.5 percent of the available seats.¹ In 1989, a mere twelve years earlier, and before a period of considerable flux and realignment, the LDP had 58.6 percent of the seats.² Its main opposition came from the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) which in 1989 had 16.6 percent of Diet seats and 17.2 percent of votes.³ In 2001, the LDP's main opposition came from the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), which had 26.4 percent of Diet seats and 27.6 percentage of the vote.⁴ In contrast, what remained of the JSP only had 3% of Diet seats. Effectively, the DPJ had taken over from the JSP as Japan's main opposition party.

How can this change be accounted for? The LDP, which once made Japan an example of a predominant party system regime⁵, was rocked in 1993 when two groups split from it after a passed no-confidence motion in which party members voted against the party. These two groupings deprived the LDP of its majority and resulted in the first non-LDP government for 38 years. During the ensuing period between 1993 and 2000, 22 political parties were created and mostly dissolved; there were five coalition governments and 36% of Japanese politicians changed party. However, as mentioned above, in 2001, there was a party system which

¹ *Seikan Yōran* (Guide to Government and Bureaucracy). Autumn Edition, 2001, Seisaku Jijōsha, 2001.

² J A A Stockwin, *Governing Japan*. Oxford, Blackwell, 1999, pp 162-163.

³ The JSP is the name of the party from its formation in 1955 until 1991 when it was changed in English to the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ). In 1995, the party also changed its Japanese name to a similar title, *Shakai Minshutō*. For clarity the "JSP" will be used to refer to the party. When referring to the JSP, I refer to the pre-1996 manifestation of the Party. Even after the emergence of the DPJ, there has been a small group of the JSP which remains. When referring to this party is its post-1996 entity I will refer to it as the SDPJ. The Democratic Party of Japan was formed in 1996 and was drastically enlarged in 1998. The Japanese differentiates between these two periods as *Kyu* (Old) *Minshutō* and *Minshutō*. Once again, for reasons of clarity, only one term will be used and the English title DPJ has been adopted.

⁴ According to the most recent Lower House election in 2000, it consisted of 27.6% of the vote in the constituencies and 25.1% in the PR districts, These figures are according to www.electionworld.org/election/japan Site viewed 18 July 2002.

⁵ Whether counting the size of the party, or a party's role in the party system, Japan was an example of a predominant party system. Sartori's early work provides an explanation of such a classification scheme. Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: a Framework for Analysis*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1976. In a later Sartori schema, this was (admitted by Sartori himself) badly defined as a moderate multi-party system.

resembled that of 1992.

It is the contention of this thesis that of the changes described here, the most durable and significant were the changes experienced on the Japanese left, notably the decline of the former main opposition party, the JSP, and the emergence of the DPJ. The JSP declined from a party that had been the second largest party throughout the 1955 system (the period of LDP party dominance for 38 years from 1955-1993), to a party which had 19 seats in the Diet, with limited ability to win any seats in single-member districts.⁶ The majority of its previous politicians had joined the DPJ. The former Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), a small left-of-centre party, which had broken away from the JSP in 1960, had disappeared, and its members and interests (labour union backing) had been absorbed into the DPJ. The LDP had returned to its position as the only party that could attain a majority in the Diet and consequently continued to dominate policy formation even though it has been in coalition since 1998 owing to its lack of a majority in the Upper House, the House of Councillors. Whilst many LDP politicians defected in (and since) 1993 to other parties, by 2001, many had returned to the bastion of power that the LDP represents. In comparison to this, the face of the opposition had been completely changed with the emergence of the DPJ. Thus, whilst there had been little change to the party system, there had been some change within all the parties, and those with the most significant changes were the non-communist left-wing parties.^{7 8}

This thesis will examine the process whereby the main opposition party in Japan ceased to be

⁶ The party won four seats in the single-member districts and 15 PR seats in the 2000 House of Representatives election. The single-member seats were taken by long-term JSP politicians with the remainder from the PR districts.

⁷ Owing to a narrower ideological distance between the DPJ and the LDP, as opposed to the JSP and LDP, there could be an argument made that Japan has moved from polarized multipartism to moderate multipartism. However, Sartori himself suggested that 1955 system Japan is an example of moderate multipartism, although this does suggest that he overlooked the ideological distance between the JSP and LDP.

⁸ The Japan Communist Party (JCP) was formed in 1922 and is Japan's oldest political party. It puts up candidates in every electoral district. It has traditionally kept itself distant from other political parties and did not participate in any of the coalitions of the 1990s. This thesis will not include analysis of the JCP as it has not been included in any of the transformations of the 1990s and has remained constant in policy preferences and electoral strategies throughout the period of discussion.

the Japan Socialist Party and became the Democratic Party of Japan. The JSP, whilst only participating in government twice (in 1947-48 and 1994-96), was an important part of the Japanese party system prior to the realignment of the nineties because it could provide a balance on policy making. As long as the party was a force in the Diet, the LDP was unable to make radical change to policies, in particular those concerning defence and the Constitution. As will be discussed further in Chapter Three, the Japanese Constitution, which banned the use of force and military aggression, had become the source of the main policy cleavage between the LDP and the JSP. In the early years of the 1955 system, the LDP wanted to reform the Constitution, yet was prevented from doing so by the JSP holding a third of the seats of the Diet. (Over a two-thirds majority is needed to reform the Constitution, so at that time it was still plausible that the LDP would have the Diet member numbers needed to push through reform.) Even once this potential threat had been eroded, due to falling support for the LDP and the emergence of the smaller parties, Kōmeitō and DSP, which ate into the larger parties' majorities, the JSP maintained its role as a check on LDP policy and its desire to reform the Constitution.

At the end of its period as the main opposition party in the late 1980s, the JSP attempted to reform itself, yet this debate became an argument between those who wanted it to be a party that wanted to take control of power and those who were convinced that the party's main role should be to continue in opposition as a check to the power of the LDP.⁹ Whilst the party also backed other causes such as health care and anti-pollution legislation (though this type of policy was normally championed by citizen movements and then adopted by the LDP, thereby further negating the role of the JSP), it was predominantly concerned with the 'Peace Constitution' and issues which were related to this, such as the Japan-US Security Treaty, the legality of the Self Defence Forces and relations with the USSR and Asian neighbours.

⁹Kubo Wataru, *Renritsu seiken no shinjitsu*. (The Real Truth of the Coalition Government), Yomiuri Shinbunsha, 1998, pp 171-177.

Chapter Two will thus attempt to explain the creation of the Democratic Party of Japan in 1996. This party formation, which absorbed many of the JSP members, was carried out at the end of a three and a half year period of intense party formations and dissolutions and immediately before the 1996 Lower House election. There were several other failed attempts to reform the left which shall be discussed in Chapter Two. Nonetheless, the formation of the DPJ was seen at the time as an attempt to jump on the bandwagon of new-party booms and there was little faith that the party would survive. In 1993, Shinseitō and Sakigake had considerably benefited in the election from their new party status after they split from the LDP just prior to the Lower House election and it was suspected that the DPJ had been set up with the aim of getting similar short-term gains and would suffer a similarly limited lifespan.¹⁰ However, the DPJ party survived, grew in the 1998 House of Councillors election and, having received a further influx of members when Ozawa Ichiro's Shinshintō split in 1998, and is still in tact. Furthermore, the party had by this stage become the second largest party and began to be regarded on similar terms as the British 'official' opposition party. The remainder of the thesis, will explain why this left realignment was inevitable and in what manner these changes manifested themselves.

Studies of the left in Japan have been traditionally neglected in favour of attempts to explain the longevity of LDP governance. This, however, neglects the role of the left as a defining force in the political culture and policy of modern Japan. Operating from the outside of formal political power, the Japanese left has had an impact that extends far beyond its limited success at the ballot box. Studies on the Japanese left have hitherto focussed on the formal political entities of the Japan Socialist Party and the Japan Communist Party; at crisis points or specific activities, such as the Structural Reform debate of the 1960s and the decision of Eda Saburo to leave the party in 1977; or on single-issue factors such as Article 9 of the 1946 Constitution,

¹⁰ The author found that a high proportion of the candidates who had come bottom of their multi-member constituencies in the 1990 election, managed to be placed in either the top ranking or second ranking spot in the 1993 election. Consequently, it was felt by many politicians that changing party to a new party (with a more reform-centred platform) would be to their advantage *vis à vis* the electorate. In 1996, the suspicion was widely held that the DPJ had also been set up prior to an election in order to benefit from this kind of short-term benefit.

the Security Treaty Crisis of 1960, or the Gulf War of 1991. Virtually no work has been made to understand the transition from the JSP to the DPJ. This work will attempt to partly fill this lacuna in both the Japanese language and English language literature.

This thesis is premised on the assumption that the main non-Communist, left-of-centre political party in Japan, has changed from the Japan Socialist Party to the Democratic Party of Japan. What factors led to the near-destruction of the JSP and allowed the DPJ to emerge from its embers? Before these questions can be addressed, it is important to analyse the connection between parties and how and why they change. We need also to establish the extent to which we can 'link' the JSP and the DPJ.

Richard Rose and Thomas T. Mackie point out that parties have to change in line with their environment. Party systems are constantly evolving and if a party does not change accordingly, it will lose its role and position in the party system.¹¹ They analyse the life cycles or "careers" of political parties and what makes them successful. They believe that parties face two sets of pressure; the internal organisation of the party and the external environment. They add:

"to ask which is more important in the career of a party is to miss the point: every party must be both introverted and extroverted."¹²

According to Rose and Mackie, a party must be concerned with the internal demands of money and the recruitment of candidates and supporters, the initiation of policy and programmes, and should it be in power, the demands of running government. The party has to be aware of the wishes of its members and balance contrasting opinions and beliefs. However, party leadership must also be aware of the environment in which it is working;

"for no party can 'freeze' the world of which it is part."¹³

Rose and Mackie point out that a party which appears stable is static only because at that point

¹¹ Richard Rose and Thomas T. Mackie, 'Do Parties Persist or Fail? The Big Trade-off Facing Organizations' in Kay Lawson and Peter H. Merkl, *When Parties Fail. Emerging Alternative Organizations*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1988, p 534.

¹² Rose and Mackie, 'Do Parties Persist or Fail?', p. 540.

¹³ Rose and Mackie, 'Do Parties Persist or Fail?', p. 540.

in time the absence of movement represents a temporary equilibrium resulting from the tension between external and internal pressures.

As a result of Rose and Mackie's theory, this thesis will examine the external and internal pressures upon the JSP. A further question that needs to be addressed to ascertain a hypothesis is whether there are any ideological legacies between the JSP and the DPJ. To rephrase this question, it is important to discover whether the DPJ has inherited any political ideals from the JSP which can link the two parties and justify their being analysed together. Peter Mair, on investigating the persistence of parties in Western Europe emphasised that as individual parties do not exist alone, it was necessary to look at blocs or families of parties, for instance, parties that are cleavage allies as opposed to cleavage opponents.¹⁴ Electoral instability as represented by changes in voting patterns in a particular country can result either in an exchange of votes between the parties of a given political family or bloc or can result in the exchange of votes from one bloc to another which would involve a change in the balance of the overall alignment of parties.

Mair's first finding is that these blocs have remained along similar left-right divisions despite changes in political values such as the post-materialist values described by Inglehart.¹⁵ New policy preferences and ideologies have been absorbed into the blocs and therefore left and right wing blocs:

"have proved sufficiently flexible to endure as well as to absorb, and have thus acted as a fundamental force for continuity."¹⁶

He continues:

"for all the changes experienced in recent years, it is clear that left and right not only remain the major organising principles in modern West European politics, but also help to create a uniform foundation for contemporary patterns of policy competition."¹⁷

Mair found that in Europe the greater part of electoral instability has been contained within

¹⁴Peter Mair, *Party System Change*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997, p.28.

¹⁵ For example, Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies*. Princeton NJ, Princeton University Press, 1997.

¹⁶ Mair, *Party System Change*, p.27.

¹⁷ Mair, *Party System Change*, p.27.

each class-cleavage bloc and that inter-party instability has in fact declined over time. He uses the example of Denmark and the Netherlands, both of which experienced considerable flux during the post-war period. He found, however, that despite this, aggregate support for the left bloc as a whole, and therefore for the non-left as well, had proved persistent over time. In Denmark the four parties of the left (the Social Democrats, the Communist Party, the Socialist People's Party and the Left Socialists) between 1945 and 1986 consistently totalled between 45% and 50% of the vote apart from once in 1974. In the Netherlands there was also stability; the Labour Party, the Pacifist Socialist Party, the Communist Party and DS70 between 1948 and 1987 consistently received a total of between 30 and 37% of the vote. But there had been considerable fluctuation within these blocs in each country over time.

Mair argues that these countries, showing bloc-specific persistence, are not exceptional. Indeed this seems to be the case for the left in Japan. The decline of the JSP has been followed by the rise of the Democratic Party of Japan. As has been described above, we see consistent support for the DPJ, as was seen for the JSP. Bloc vote percentages have not changed significantly. The JSP had 20% of support in 1992 and the DPJ has 20% in August 1998.¹⁸ Therefore, despite instability of voting within this ideological bloc, there has been persistence of left-wing parties, and, to a certain degree, ideological aims. But whereas bloc support has remained consistent, there has been change within support levels for individual parties as voters no longer feel any special ties to a party within a bloc.¹⁹ This phenomenon within a Japan-specific context will be examined in Chapter One of this thesis. It will be shown that as there is no other real choice for the electorate within the left bloc, voters who have not decided to move their support from the JSP to the DPJ have instead become part of the growing non-partisan group in Japan.

This persistence of parties within an ideological bloc has been analysed by Rose and Mackie

¹⁸ Both of these figures are from *Asahi Shinbun* public opinion polls.

¹⁹ Mair, *Party System Change*, p.32.

who explain what can happen to the career of a political party during its life span.²⁰ They gave four different possible courses. The first was that the party would persist intact without any organisational change, and they found that this had happened to about 33% of their post-war European party sample. The second was that the party would persist with marginal modifications. It would most likely keep the same name but would occasionally lose a splinter or gain an element from another party. This was found to be the case for 22% of their sample. The two other options were that the party would disappear totally or would be disrupted in the sense that a party can change its name, face structural changes or merge or splinter. It is this final category that seems to be the pertinent description of the events that have affected the left bloc in Japan since 1995. Rose and Mackie say that the most important fact is that organisationally and ideologically the party leaves a discernible legacy within another party. This is how the category is distinguishable from the parties that disappear totally, and seems to be the pattern that best explains the change from the JSP to the DPJ.²¹

Thus, so far, the literature has shown that a transition from the JSP to the DPJ has reflected trends apparent in European politics; notably change tends to occur within bloc specific groups. However, two questions do still remain when we analyse the JSP and DPJ and their linked change. Has the JSP actually failed as a party? It was still in existence in 2001, still managed to gain votes in the 1996 Lower House election when the DPJ was formed and even improved its number of seats in the 2000 Lower House election. As a concomitant question, has the DPJ emerged as an institutionalised or successful party as it had had by 2001, no experience of participating in government, though some of its members participated in the coalition governments from 1993-1996?

Rose and Mackie define a successful political party as one which either wins elections or

²⁰Richard Rose and Thomas T. Mackie, 'Do Parties Persist or Fail? The Big Trade-off Facing Organizations', p.540.

²¹ No information is given about the sample that Rose and Mackie used to identify the different ways in which parties disappear.

propagates set goals, however few votes it receives.²² Similarly, a party needs to be institutionalised, which is a condition beyond just formation and existence and is the state which defines the difference between many of the 22 parties which have been created in Japan since 1992. To be institutionalised a party needs to:

- Create a cross-local organisation to contest elections nationwide
- Nominate candidates to fight national elections
- And, probably most importantly for Japan, owing to the large numbers of parties that have been created since 1992, continue to do this for at least three successive elections.²³

How do these definitions correspond to the JSP and DPJ? The JSP, despite only having effectively won the 1989 House of Councillors election, most definitely had a clear and defined set of goals for the majority of its existence.²⁴ Nonetheless, as will be shown in Chapters Two and Three, two years before the establishment of the DPJ, the JSP had renounced its traditional platform of peace ideals and consequently it could be argued that it was no longer an autonomous political party as its traditional policies were being highly influenced by the LDP. This renunciation of traditional policy and the effects it had on the party will be analysed in Chapter Three but in this sense it could imply that the JSP had thrown away its sole claim to being successful when it changed its policy platform.

As for the DPJ, by 2001 it had become an institutionalised party and is therefore worthy of study as the party that had inherited the legacy of the left bloc support of the JSP. It had fought two Lower House elections and two Upper House elections by 2001. It had created an infrastructure of party offices across the country and had Prefectural branches. However, when we analyse whether the party has been a success, within the Rose and Mackie definition, it seems to have failed both electorally and with policy. The DPJ has not yet managed to win an

²² Richard Rose and Thomas T. Mackie, 'Do Parties Persist or Fail?', p. 534.

²³ Richard Rose and Thomas T. Mackie, 'Do Parties Persist or Fail?', p. 536.

²⁴ For an explanation of the 1989 election, see Chapter One and Chapter Three.

election. Up to 2000, it managed to gradually improve its percentage of the vote in each successive election, a feat no Japanese political party had managed since 1955, not even the LDP. The 2001 House of Councillors election saw a slight drop in support. Yet, when it comes to the second requirement, the DPJ really begins to fail as it has no substantial set of goals to propagate, beyond standing as a centre-left opposition to the LDP. Its policies are of a liberal and reformist nature, yet they are expressed in an idealistic and unstructured manner. The party wanted to reform the bureaucracy so that it was more transparent to the electorate, but beyond this broad aim has not been able to articulate how it aims to do this. As will be shown in Chapters Three and Seven, it had a vague and ill-defined ideological position *vis à vis* the Constitution and defence issues (although this is partly a deliberate policy). The change we are analysing is therefore an organisational change rather than an ideological change between the DPJ and JSP. The JSP had already instigated an ideological change by the time of its demise in 1996.

Therefore to understand the events in the Japanese left we need to quantify and define the change. We believe that much of the ideological change that impacted upon the realignment of the Japanese left occurred before the decline of the JSP, because, as Rose and Mackie suggest, it was unable to react sufficiently to these transformations and consequently declined. This will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three. However we also need to analyse what has happened to the left since the emergence of the DPJ. Therefore, in this thesis, we shall have two questions to analyse. Firstly, why has the left been transformed in Japan in the 1990s? We shall look at the most significant variables that have impacted upon the left and shall analyse why they have forced the left to reorganise. The reasons for selecting variables will be discussed below. Secondly, we need to analyse in what way the DPJ has managed to distinguish itself from the JSP as it has inherited much of its organisation in many prefectures and has, as suggested above, an ill-defined ideological and policy platform. Therefore, the second question addresses how this transformation of the non-communist Japanese left manifested itself.

After the initial chapters in which we shall present trends in support levels for political parties and the events which led to the emergence of the DPJ, the following chapters will show the reasons the JSP declined and the left realigned. These will be the variables of voting behaviour and the increase of the non-aligned voter (Chapter One), the decline in the relevance of the JSP's ideological platform (Chapter Three), the changing relationship between the JSP and the labour unions and the decreasing need for the unions to rely upon the left for access to government (Chapter Four), and finally the institutional impact of the new electoral system on the DPJ in particular (Chapter Five). The next chapter will utilise a case study to assess the differences between the old JSP and the new DPJ in the Prefecture of Okayama (Chapter Six). Finally the last chapter (Chapter Seven) will describe the difference between the DPJ and JSP in terms of the new factional divisions of the DPJ and the party's need to 'cast a wider net' to gain electoral support.

Why were these variables selected as possible explanations for the realignment of the Japanese left? They have been selected as being key causal factors in other political systems' realignments such as those of Italy, France and the United Kingdom. These are the effects of electoral system reform (Italy), of the decline of the communist bloc and its impact on ideology (Italy), of the changing relationship between the unions and the left-wing party (United Kingdom), and of the increasing distrust of the electorate with regard to political parties (Germany). It is felt that all of these issues have impacted upon Japan.

A general *ennui* seems to have affected politics in Western Europe and the United States in the past ten years. This has taken various shapes and forms. In the United Kingdom it has taken the form of lower turn-out (59.4% in the 2001 General Election²⁵), and accusations of sleaze and corruption on the part of the ruling party. In 1996-1997, the Conservative Party was heavily criticised by the electorate and 63% of those polled thought that the party was corrupt

²⁵ The Electoral Commission of 2001,
http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/electoral_commission_of_2001.htm
 Site viewed on 26 April 2005.

with only 19% feeling the same about the Labour Party.²⁶ By 2002, the focus of this criticism was the Labour Party with the figures reversing to 56% and 33%. In France, White and Davies suggest that scepticism of politics is taking effect and a declining faith in the government's ability to solve problems.²⁷

In Germany, there was a growing sense of alienation and popular disillusionment with the party system, as parties were seen as too bureaucratic and failing to offer genuine opportunities for new ideas or groups to modify the established order. This resulted in members of the electorate feeling alienated and disillusioned with politics and moving away.²⁸

A far more serious lack of trust between voter and party emerged in Italy where there was increasing concern over corruption and scandals. The *Mani pulite* (clean hands) investigations into political corruption launched in 1992, instigated by Milan magistrates and came in the wake of the *tangentopoli* scandals in which 100 parliamentary deputies received *arriso di garanzia*, official notifications that they were under official investigation, hinted at the scale of political distrust.²⁹

Similarly in Japan, political scandal and a growing lack of respect for the political system have fuelled political dealignment and the concomitant realignment of the 1990s. As will be shown in Chapter One, the electorate is increasingly distrustful of politicians and politics, and this has resulted in a huge drop in partisan support that has affected all parties along the political spectrum. This is the first main variable which has contributed to the decline of the JSP, as dealignment has been greater for the left parties than it has for the LDP, as will be shown in Chapter One. The reasons for this decline have been thought to be the electorate's

²⁶ *Daily Telegraph*, 20 June 2002.

²⁷ John Kenneth White and Philip Davies, 'French Political Parties: A State within a State', in *Political Parties and the Collapse of the Old Orders*. Albany NY, SUNY Press, 1998, p 41.

²⁸ Charlie Jeffery and Charles Lees 'The collapse of the GDR and the "New German Party System"', in John Kenneth White and Philip Davies eds, *Political Parties and the Collapse of the Old Orders*. Albany NY, SUNY Press, 1998, p 58.

²⁹ Nick Carter, 'Italy: the demise of the post-war partyocracy' in John Kenneth White and Philip Davies, eds *Political Parties and the Collapse of the Old Orders*. Albany NY, SUNY Press, 1998, p 79.

irritation of the JSP's inflexible approach to the Gulf Crisis and Constitutional issues. The party was considered to be too ideologically embedded so the voters stopped voting for it. This will be discussed, in greater detail in Chapter Three

Ideological change has affected all political systems in the past decade since the collapse of the Cold War order, so this is not a phenomenon restricted to Japan. However, ideological shifts to the right have been particularly evident in Italy and the United Kingdom. Bettino Craxi and the Partito Socialista Italiano (PSI) dropped their socialist 'baggage' in the 1980s and embraced free market rhetoric, though this shift to the right has been superseded by the emergence of the right-wing party, Berlusconi's Forza Italia. In Britain, Tony Blair has taken the Labour Party from socialism to social democracy, abandoning the commitment to nationalisation, nuclear disarmament, and block voting power of the Trade Union Congress on party leadership elections. Similarly, the end of the Cold War has meant that Japan has had to question its defence relationship with the United States and accept some responsibility for United-Nations-led peace keeping activities and defence. This has brought into question the main divide of Japanese politics of the 'cultural cleavage' of the peace Constitution, and contributed to the demise of the party that backed the Constitution at all costs.

The changing relationship between trade unions and political parties has been particularly strong in the United Kingdom. Lewis Minton describes the relationship between the British Labour Party and the Trade Union Congress as a contentious alliance for several reasons.³⁰ The electoral mobilisation implications of the shared relationship are of particular importance. Minton observes that should a break in the relationship be initiated (he was writing in 1991 before the New Labour revolution) whether unions or the Labour Party made the first move, the consequences would be dire for the electoral mobilisation of trade unionists. Should the Labour Party make the first move, the unions would perceive it as a sign that policy would change in an increasingly anti-union manner. Should the trade unions initiate a split, it would

³⁰ Lewis Minton, *The Contentious Alliance*. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1991.

be a sign of the diminishing utility of the Labour Party to organised labour. Even though Minton said this would be difficult for the British Labour Party to achieve, the Party nevertheless managed to do it. In the changing relationship between unions and left-wing parties in Japan, a similar break occurred, but it was a case of the unions initiating the change. Yet, as Minton predicted, this has had a serious effect on the recruitment of political support for the Japanese left and it is felt that this too is an important variable in the study of the declining Japanese left. This will be analysed further in Chapter Four.

Nick Carter, in his study of Italian realignment, suggests that the successful referendum for electoral reform was a factor in the changes of the past ten years and the emergence of Silvio Berlusconi.³¹ Institutional rule-changes will affect a party system, or political parties in some shape or form. They might lead to a substantial increase or decrease in the number of parties in a party system, or simply create electoral districts that would affect campaign methods. Thus it is impossible to analyse the changes in Japan in the past ten years without analysing the new electoral system which was introduced in 1994. In Japan, an electoral system has been introduced which, whilst institutionally extremely different to the old one and should have changed the party system in some manner, the number and relative strength of the parties have remained similar. The new electoral system's main impact upon the party system seems to be that the opposition parties are faring worse than they might have done in certain districts had the old system been maintained.

Without doubt, other factors have contributed to the recent decline of the JSP, the political realignment in Japan during the 1990s and the emergence of the DPJ. Since the collapse of the bubble in 1990-1992, the Japanese economy has been facing severe difficulties because of the government's inability to sort out the problems of bad loans in the banking sector and a fiscal policy which still used public works to stimulate the economy. A similar economic recession

³¹ Nick Carter, 'Italy: The Demise of the Post-War Partyocracy', *Political Parties and the Collapse of the Old Orders*, ed. J K White and P J Davies, New York, SUNY, 1998, pp 80-86.

and financial crisis has afflicted Italy, and Nick Carter has attributed this to the political upheavals of the 1990s. In this thesis, we have decided not to assess the impact of the collapse on the political realignment of the early to mid 1990s because this crisis has led to no real drop of support for the LDP and fiscal responsibility is essentially the prerogative of the ruling party. The left, whilst being in power for the middle part of the decade, was in power with the LDP for over two years of that period. When the Asian financial crisis really began to hit Japan in the summer of 1998, the LDP was in power and receiving only a limited punishment from the electorate in the Upper House election. It is felt that the economy has had limited impact upon the fortunes of the left as compared to the impact that Constitutional-related issues and labour union reform have had.³²

We shall now analyse the second question, concerning the manner in which the change from the JSP to the DPJ has manifested itself. But before that can be done, it is important to state how we shall analyse that change. Despite little change to the party system with the upheavals of the 1990s, there have been discernible changes to the parties, Tani Satomi wrote:

“It is possible that the recent metamorphosis of the Japanese party system will end up being short-lived, if it fails to cause any profound changes in political life at the grass-roots level.”³³

Otake Hideo in his analysis of the formation of the Democratic Party in *Nihon seiji no tairitsu jiku* (The Axes of Political Conflict in Japan), argues that there are three ways to analyse the formation of the DPJ.³⁴ He analyses the ideological changes of the party, the seeming shift from socialism to social democracy, and the essential ideologies of each of the groups who joined the party. However, he mentions two further methods of analysing the change. He suggests that the party can be analysed from an organisational standpoint or a government standpoint should it participate in creating one. In this thesis, we have opted to study the party

³² One example where fiscal policy has had an important impact upon the fortunes of the JSP was the LDP introduced consumption tax in 1989. One of the factors that have been attributed to the success of the party in the 1989 Upper House election was the popular opposition to the consumption tax which gave the JSP a short-term electoral boost.

³³ Satomi Tani, ‘Political Realignment in Hyogo and Okayama’ in Hideo Otake ed, *How Electoral Reform Boomeranged in Japan*. Japan Center for International Exchange, 1998.

³⁴ Otake Hideo, *Nihon seiji no tairitsu jiku*, (The Axes of Political Conflict in Japan), Chukō Shinsho, 1999.

from the organisational perspective for various reasons.

Firstly, as stated above, an ideological analysis has been carried out by Otake. Secondly, the organisation of Japanese politics has long been of interest to political scientists, particularly the *kōenkai* strategies employed by the LDP.³⁵ In contrast to this, the organisational methods of the opposition were confined to descriptions of connections with labour union strategies which the JSP and DSP used, and the Kōmeitō's evangelistic support network, the *Sōka Gakkai*. The third reason for selecting the organisation of the party as the means of analysis is that, as stated above, we believe that the change in the Japanese political system during the 1990s has been the most significant on the left. This is because the DPJ was in the process of changing the methods by which the party attracted the electorate. These were being radically altered from the days in which the party relied upon unions for support. This was as a result of the loss of support for the party, owing to the variables described above. The DPJ was forced to create new means of approaching and accommodating the electorate. The second part of this thesis will analyse this change, which, while it is so far neither all encompassing nor entirely successful, is nonetheless an important change for the party. Joji Watanuki made this point about the DPJ saying: 'the new party (DPJ) is groping for a new form of party organisation but as yet have not found an effective system.'³⁶

Parties have to change or die, as Rose has said, therefore we are looking at the changes in their structure, and how they attract voters. This is a process known as linkage and it can be broadly thought of as the process of communication between party and the electorate; communication about mass opinion and public decision. However, linkage is more than this. It is also the process by which parties stabilise their own interests and gather supporters. As Thomas

³⁵ *Kōenkai* were first described by Gerald Curtis in *Election Campaigning Japanese Style*. These are the supporter groups which politicians, traditionally from the LDP, but increasingly from other parties, build around themselves to gather support for their campaign activities. *Kōenkai* members can be offered material and solidary incentives to vote for the candidate. Also the members of the *kōenkai* are used to disseminate information about the candidate to other members of the electorate in their communities.

³⁶ Joji Watanuki, 'Japan- from emerging to stable party system', in Lauri Karvonen and Stein Kuhnle (ed.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments Revisited*. London, Routledge, 2001.

Pogintke has argued:

“... linkage is not only the inevitable by-product of party competition, it also has an essential function for parties as organisations, which, like all organisations, seek to stabilise and control relevant organisational environments in order to ensure their survival.”³⁷

Thus, as Pogintke argues, the second question concerning how the transformation manifested itself will be considered from the perspective of organisation and how the party is attempting to stabilise its support and attract new support. Whether a party is of a mass type, catch-all, or a cartel party, political scientists who analyse party organisation agree that organisation is imperative. Within this debate are various sub-debates about whether the party should be in direct contact with the electorate, or whether the party leadership and its concomitant image are emerging as a stronger force of mobilisation.³⁸ Katz and Mair argue that members have a changing role and that the decision-making structures of parties need to be considered and possibly adjusted so that the different arenas in which members can exert an influence are considered. However, Muller-Rommel points out that whilst direct linkage between the party and the electorate is important, there is an increasing emphasis on the leader's capability as a media performer.³⁹ Nedelman has shown that both direct contact and a strong leadership image are of importance and that mobilisation from both directions is of importance in her conflict integration dialectic model.⁴⁰ She also concludes with the idea that it is essential for research on political mobilisation to be carried out if methods of strengthening the relationship between individuals and parties can be ascertained. In Chapter Seven, we shall ask whether the DPJ was showing signs of this ‘conflict integration dialectic model’ by attempting to introduce a stronger leadership and party identity through manifesto and websites whilst also

³⁷ Thomas Pogintke, *Parties Without Firm Social Roots? Party Organisational Linkage*, Keele European Politics Research Unit, Working Paper Number 13. (unpaginated)

³⁸ For example, Pogintke, *Parties without firm social roots? Party Organisational Linkage*, Richard Katz and Peter Mair ‘Three faces of party organization. Adaptation and Change’. Department of Government, Victoria University of Manchester. EPRU Working Paper.

³⁹ Taken from a manuscript of a book, ‘Political Parties in the New Europe, Political and Analytical Changes’, Luther and Muller-Rommel, which is no longer in the Bodleian Library catalogue. A similar article, though not the same, has been published: Ferdinand Muller-Rommel, ‘New Political Movements and “New Politics” Parties in Western Europe’, in Russell J Dalton and Manfred Kuechler, eds, *Challenging the Political Order. New Social and Political Movements in Western Democracies*. Cambridge, Polity Press, 1990.

⁴⁰ Brigitta Nedelmann, ‘Individuals and Parties – Changes in processes of political mobilization’. EU Working Papers No 87/275, March 1987.

attempting to widen its local web of support by making support with to date non political organisations such as the Kanagawa Netto mentioned by LeBlanc and Lam⁴¹

Furthermore, new technology has meant that party organisation has been challenged and need to be incorporated into party strategies.

“changes in mass communication techniques afford parties a capacity to compete for a wider audience, undermine the need for effectiveness in depth and therefore create the conditions which allow parties to become more effective.”⁴²

We shall show that the new styles of mobilisation within the DPJ are examples of this conflict integration dialectic model. ‘Citizen politics’, as this new style of mobilisation has been termed by the party itself, is the method by which the DPJ is furthering direct contact between the party and the electorate through such methods as home meetings, use of new forms of communication techniques such as e-mail and the Internet and shared community and political volunteer activities. This was introduced by certain members of the DPJ as a means of widening its ability to mobilise voters and also because many of the younger members do not have the mobilisation support of an organisation such as a well-established *kōenkai* or labour union support. Nonetheless, as Ware points out, direct contact with party workers and supporters constrains party leadership as the goals pursued by leadership are influenced by the electorate’s aims.⁴³ Within the Japanese context, this is not such a constraint due to the limited policy building nature of political parties, and instead, the direct contact merely reinforces personality-based politics. Determining whether these ‘citizen politics’ have increased policy awareness within the party however, could be a valid topic of research in the future. What remains more important is how citizen politics differs from existing definitions of citizen politics from the west.

Russell J Dalton argues that changing economic conditions, increased education levels, and

⁴¹ LeBlanc, *Citizen Politics*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1999. Lam Peng-Er, *Green Politics in Japan*, Oxford, Routledge, 1999.

⁴² Katz and Mair ‘Three faces of party organization. Adaptation and Change’, p 10.

⁴³ Alan Ware, ‘Activist-Leader Relations and the Structure of Political Parties: Exchange Models and Vote-Seeking Behaviour in Parties’, *British Journal of Political Science*, Volume 22, pp 71-92.

increasingly available information have made the public in the United States more aware and demanding, but also disaffected with politics.⁴⁴ Citizen politics thus refers, in his definition, to sophisticated electorates who have information and wealth and are concerned with how government is managed.

A further definition of citizen politics, this time in a Japanese context, is given by Robin M LeBlanc in *Bicycle Citizens*. In her ethnographic study of women's participation in Japanese politics, LeBlanc concluded that the average woman is alienated from politics. Should she become involved, it will be as a "bicycle citizen" in her community. Mainstream politics and politicians are referred to as "taxi politics" as they pass by local life and see it from the air-conditioned and protected environment of an expensive car. The rider is not as attuned to the locality or its idiosyncrasies as the bicycle citizen. A taxi citizen comes in from the outside and imposes change and opinions.⁴⁵

We shall show citizen politics to be the manner in which the Japanese left is radically changing its methods of gathering support. This will be presented in the case study of Okayama (Chapter Six) when we shall look at an example of this transformation of how the parties changed from JSP to DPJ and the concomitant effects on organisation. Chapter Seven will be a broader study of 'citizen politics' and will define and quantify them as a new method of mobilisation used by some members of the DPJ. It is providing a new method of recruitment strategies which compensate for the decline of some of the older methods based upon labour unions.

Thus, to return to Tani's point about the need to analyse what has happened at the grass roots level of the left-wing Japanese parties if we are to understand how far change has occurred since 1993, we believe that a study of the DPJ and its attempts to widen mobilization methods

⁴⁴ Russell J. Dalton, *Citizen Politics. Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Chatham, New Jersey, Chatham House Publishers, 1996 (Second Edition), p 9.

⁴⁵ Robin LeBlanc, *Bicycle Citizens*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1999.

and introduce these ‘citizen methods’ will prove that change has occurred. Too often, after the initial interest in the events of 1993 and the flurry of new political parties which emerged in the 1990s, political scientists have emphasized the apparent similarities between the pre- and post-1993 party systems and have overlooked the changes that have occurred. When analyzing the politics of the LDP, it is possible to argue that there has been little change as a result of the political turmoil of the nineties. In comparison to this, the left has been forced to change its mobilization techniques. Therefore, not only will this thesis contribute to the literature on the Japanese left, it will also show that a profound change is in the process of occurring.

Literature Review

It is hoped that this work will contribute to an understanding of the opposition, as well as party organisation change in Japan and to address the lack of literature on the topic concerning the opposition in general and the events of the nineties from the perspective of the opposition, in particular. The literature is divided into various sections, which all consist of both Japanese and English language works. Firstly, there is the literature on the opposition parties, and in particular the JSP, prior to the turmoil of the mid nineties. The second group of literature is based on the loose theme of reform, the events and results of the 1993 fall from power of the LDP and the subsequent political reform legislation of 1994. The literature which deals with party reforms has predominantly been written by Japanese political scientists. Included in this is a group of works analysing the ideological change of the 1990s. Finally, there is a small body of literature dealing with the emergence of the ‘new’ opposition in Japan. To date, there are only two known works about the DPJ.⁴⁶

Works on the opposition before 1993

The ideological bases of the JSP are most comprehensively studied in J A A Stockwin’s *The*

⁴⁶ When the author first met the leader of the DPJ, Dr Hatoyama Yukio, he expressed extreme surprise that the DPJ was the topic of study of this thesis. This probably reflects the lack of interest of Japanese scholars in the party.

Japanese Socialist Party and Neutralism. Here we see the explanation behind the ideological positions that were to dog the party throughout its existence and deny the party of the power to reform itself in the 1980s.⁴⁷ Stockwin describes the JSP prior to the 1963 House of Representatives election. He describes it as being a socialist party but not as one would be recognised in the west. The JSP was factionalised and over the period of its history, power had shifted between the right-wing group of the party and the left-wing side of the party. Straight after the Second World War, the left-wing had been the most powerful part of the party. This had shifted in the late 1940s to the right-wing but reverted to the left until the structural reform debate of 1961. When this attempt failed, the power base of the party switched back to the left. Structural reform was an attempt to modernise socialist discourse in order to recognise that Japan was rapidly becoming an advanced industrial nation, while not rejecting socialism *per se*.

Stockwin also discussed the methods in which the JSP mobilised the electorate through labour unions. He discusses the problems faced by the left as it did not have as strong support in rural areas as in urban areas, and voters were harder to mobilise in urban areas. It is worth noting that Stockwin identifies *kōenkai* without naming them as such, which has always been credited to Curtis in *Election Campaigning Japanese Style*.⁴⁸ Stockwin also discusses the problems of voter apathy that was an issue three decades before declining turnout became the ‘crisis point’ it did in the 1990s.

Stockwin’s book is of major significance to this thesis as it was the first work which identified the structure and working of the Japan Socialist Party. It fundamentally deals with the problem of dogma versus optimising electoral support and this is the same issue which the JSP was still dealing with in the late 80s and early 90s. It was the problem which the party had to deal with in response to the First Gulf War and it was also the problem that the party had to deal with

⁴⁷ J A A Stockwin, *The Japan Socialist Party and Neutralism*. Victoria, University of Melbourne Press, 1968.

⁴⁸ Gerald L Curtis, *Election Campaigning Japanese Style*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1971.

after the fall of the JSP/LDP/Sakigake coalition. Essentially, Stockwin defined in 1964-1968, the problems which the Japanese left continued to face for the next thirty years.

Another work that concentrates on the left is Stephen Johnson's *Opposition Politics in Japan*.⁴⁹ Johnson attempts to explain how the party failed to topple the LDP's one-party dominant regime because of its lack of cohesion and factional divisions which created crises. He observes correctly that the politics of the 1955 system are too often analysed from the perspectives of the successes of the LDP rather than the failures of the opposition. Johnson analysed the left from the crises of the 1970s which led to the defection of Eda Saburō and continues with this theme through to the Rengō attempts to reform the party in 1989. Analysing the failure of the JSP to take control of the Diet, Johnson analyses different reasons for this failure. Firstly, Johnson identified that the old single non-transferable vote electoral system had weakened the Japanese opposition. Their inability to compromise between themselves denied the opposition seats, as each party retained its identity and fought against each other rather than forming electoral or Diet coalitions to wrest seats from the LDP. He discusses the possibilities of the JSP seeking coalitions in order for the opposition to get into power. Johnson's overall conclusion though is that the opposition decided to compete with itself, rather than against the ruling party. This conclusion has obvious implications for a study of the decline of the JSP and the DPJ because, as shall be seen in Chapter Two, Chapter Four and Chapter Seven, the problems of the 1990s were also concerned with parties trying to find the party that they were going to fight against and who they were going to align with. Eventually, with the DPJ combining all of the old socialist opposition parties in one party from 1998 onwards, the divisions that Johnson described could be a problem of the past.

Also of relevance to this thesis are the chapters in Ronald Hrebenar's thrice-updated book on the Japanese party system.⁵⁰ In these chapters, Stockwin gives a comprehensive account of

⁴⁹ Stephen Johnson, *Opposition Politics in Japan – Strategies Under a One-Party Dominant Regime*. Oxford, Routledge, 2000.

⁵⁰ Ronald J Hrebenar, *Japan's New Party System*. Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 2000. The two earlier editions (1986 and 1992) are entitled *The Japanese Party System*.

the factional division, ideological beliefs, structure and history of the JSP. He identifies the factional 'narrative' of the JSP: how the different groups formed and moved throughout the party and explained which faction was in control at what time. He acknowledges that the JSP factions were different to the LDP ones as they were less defined and rigid, and Diet members' allegiance to their faction was not as easily known outside of the party. He also discusses in detail the build-up to the successes of the JSP in the late eighties and the leadership of Takako Doi. In the third edition which was published in 2000, much of this material was rendered out of date by the decline of the JSP to minor party status. Unfortunately, the overall book only dealt glibly with the emergence of the new parties and the appearance of the DPJ as the main opposition party and did not, therefore, allow for the correct degree of recognition that was needed of the changing party system in Japan in the late 1990s and early 21st century.

Several articles by Stockwin in *Japan Forum* in the early nineties concerned the 'indian' summer period for the JSP around the time of the successes of the 1989 and 1990 elections and prior to the losses of the 1992 and 1993 elections. The first of these, 'From JSP to SDPJ: The New Wave Society and the 'New' Nihon Shakaitō'⁵¹, analyses the new faction, 'The New Wave Society' which comprised of Diet members who won their first election in 1990, a relatively successful election for the JSP. He analyses the career backgrounds of these members and shows that they were not from the more usual unionist background for JSP members and instead, a large proportion of them were professionals: nine lawyers were part of the 29 member strong society. Stockwin described this group as being from a 'professional or intellectual background'.⁵² He also showed that some of this group were far more conciliatory and flexible about the JSP's response to the First Gulf War and wanted to find a compromise with the ruling party and as such were slightly in conflict with Doi. This also created tension within the New Wave Society because not all members, and particularly the women, agreed with the idea of compromising on the JSP's attitudes towards the war. Stockwin ends this

⁵¹ J A A Stockwin, 'From JSP to SDPJ: The New Wave Society and the 'New' Nihon Shakaitō', *Japan Forum*, Vol. 3, No. 2, October 1991.

⁵² Stockwin, 'From JSP to SDPJ: The New Wave Society and the 'New' Nihon Shakaitō', p 290.

article by warning that if the party wanted to do better, it needed to make sure that the name change of 1991 was done in substance and not just in rhetoric. This neatly summed up the problem of the difficulties within the JSP of reform in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

In Stockwin's 1994 article in *Japan Forum*,⁵³ he describes the life of Doi Takako, the JSP Chair and likens her life as the rise and fall from power of a Greek tragedy. The most interesting part of this article is the frank nature in which Doi spoke of her pessimism for the JSP in 1987. She said the party had changed significantly since she had been first elected in 1969 and that she did not want to be Chairman again.⁵⁴ In contrast to this pessimism of course, was the astonishing result that the JSP managed to achieve in the 1989 House of Councillors election, which, as shall be discussed in more detail below, was partly attributable to the popularity of Doi and the boom of political interest from women. In her discussions with Stockwin, Doi described the voters that the JSP managed to attract in 1989 as the 'citizen-movement based'. This phrase was not significantly used again, to the author's knowledge, until the DPJ began to utilise it as a means of attracting non-union support and differentiating between the block union vote and the normal electorate.

A book which deals with the inability of the JSP to reform (and then continues with the events after 1993) is the political memoirs of the secretary general of the JSP, Kubo Wataru. He recounts how he felt that the party should have reformed itself radically after winning the Upper House election in 1989 but that these attempts were thwarted because the party was riding high after its victory.⁵⁵ The party's success had ironically become its failure.

Literature on the 1990s and reform

There were a considerable number of books trying to explain the events of 1993 and what

⁵³ J A A Stockwin, 'On Trying to Move Mountains: The Political Career of Doi Takako', *Japan Forum*, Vol. 6, No. 1, April 1994.

⁵⁴ Stockwin, 'On Trying to Move Mountains: The Political Career of Doi Takako', pp 30-31.

⁵⁵ Kubo Wataru, *Renritsu seiken no shinjitsu*.

happened subsequently. The first group are of significance to this study because they provide the frameworks of analysis for the split of the JSP and the emergence of the DPJ, despite the fact they are dealing with the specifics of the LDP split. There are various approaches to explain the LDP's fall from power. The first approach is to analyse events in the context of international politics. Tominomori Eiji felt that the '1955 system' (the period of 38 years of LDP rule and opposition fragmentation) was a product of the Cold War since a pro-capitalist system had to be maintained during that time.⁵⁶ Thus the period of Liberal Democratic Party rule was one of business and government in a tight relationship. Therefore the ending of the Cold War brought with it the collapse of the Liberal Democratic Party.

Purnendra Jain offers a more convincing reason for the view of Tominomori by explaining that global economic, political and social forces have permeated Japan far more than is normally considered and that this ended the continuity and predictability which marked life under the "LDP regime".⁵⁷ This explains the external forces upon the fall from power of the LDP. The change of economic policy in China also supposedly meant that the Japanese public were more able to trust a non-LDP government. Jain goes on to describe how the international perspective can also have affected the internal structure of the LDP. Long-term factional divides began to be broken down because faction members were no longer as worried about its former ideological opponent, the Japan Socialist Party. This is an inadequate argument in some respects as it fails to recognise any responsibility for the fall of the LDP as being due to internal forces within the party. It also ignores any institutional or social issues. However, this argument is convincing in the sense that had the events of 1993 happened before the end of the Cold War, it is likely that the JSP would not have been considered by the Japanese electorate and the US as a reliable coalition partner of any government. Before the ending of the Cold War this would have been problematical and it is for this reason that it is not possible to reject entirely the interpretation of the events of 1993 in terms of the ending of the Cold

⁵⁶ Tominomori Eiji, '55-nen taisei hōkai no imi' (The meaning of the demise of the 1955 system) *Sekai*, August 1993, pp 58-61.

⁵⁷ Purnendra Jain and Takashi Inoguchi, *Japanese Politics Today. Beyond Karaoke Democracy?* Melbourne, Macmillan, 1997, p 4.

War.

Other interpretations of the events of 1993 are based on voting behaviour. Kabashima Ikuo points out that the new parties that had been created gave the voters conservative options that did not mean voting for the Liberal Democratic Party.⁵⁸ Ishikawa Masumi suggests that an all-encompassing political distrust meant that all the parties had to realign or bust.⁵⁹

The most convincing interpretations, however, of the fall of the Liberal Democratic Party in 1993 are those which explain it in terms of careerist politicians and generational clashes. They offer empirical evidence of which politicians defected from the party, rather than explaining events from a broad perspective. This literature is predominantly in Japanese and the main proponent of this view is Otake Hideo. He points out that there was a major generational shift between the leaders of the party and the younger politicians who were concerned about the issue of corruption as they felt that their seats were more dependent on floating voters. Therefore, the younger decided that leaving the LDP and being party of an organisation with a younger and fresher image would be in their interests to get re-elected.⁶⁰

In a volume edited by Otake Hideo and published in English, there has been the most thorough analysis of how politics have not really changed since the reforms of 1994. He provides a group of articles, by Japanese political scientists, who paint a picture of LDP campaigns where candidate-centred politics and *kōenkai* still predominate despite the reforms of 1994.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Ikuo Kabashima, 'Rise of New Parties and an End to the Liberal Democrats' Single-Party Dominance' (official translation of Japanese article) *Leviathan*, Vol. 17, Special Edition, Autumn, 1995.

⁵⁹ Miyake Ichirō 'The Three New Parties and the Candidate Evaluation Model' (official translation of Japanese article) *Leviathan*, Vol. 17, Special Edition, Autumn, 1995.

⁶⁰ Otake Hideo, 'Jiminto wakate kaikakuha to Ozawa gurūpu - Seiji kaikaku o mezashita futatsu no seiji seiryoku', (Two Currents toward Political Reform within the LDP: Young Reformist Dietmembers and Ozawa Group), *Leviathan*, Vol 17, Special Edition, Autumn, 1995.

⁶¹ This type of article predominates in Hideo Otake ed, *How Electoral Reform Boomeranged in Japan*, Japan Center for International Exchange, 1998. All of the articles are by Japanese apart from one by Steven Reed about boom politics, although this article was originally published in Japanese.

On an opposite trend however, is the group of literature which accompanied these reforms and speculated on the effects of the new electoral system and believed far more in the first-past-the-post effects of the system than it is probably institutionally capable of providing. This literature will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Five.⁶²

Literature on the DPJ

There are only two main works on the DPJ. Igarashi Fumihiko, a politician himself, has described the events that led up to the formation of the party in *Kore wa minshutō da* (This is the DPJ).⁶³ Whilst this is a somewhat biased account of the formation of the party, his account of the disagreement about the controversial question of who should join the party has provided a significant insight into the creation of the DPJ.⁶⁴ Whilst giving a biased view of the party's 'ideological' aims, it is a useful tool when attempting to understand how the DPJ became factionalised due to the different backgrounds of the politicians who joined it. As politicians were treated differently according to their party background, it also explains why there was animosity towards the DPJ from some JSP members and why some politicians with 'extreme' views, such as Hatoyama Kunio, were accepted into the party. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two.

The second work is far more scholarly and is a chapter of Otake Hideo's *Nihon seiji no tairitsu jiku* (The Ideological Axes of Division of Japanese Politics). Here he analyses the shift from socialism to social democracy, yet also questions why all the different factional groups were allowed into the DPJ.⁶⁵

⁶² Kobayashi Yoshikazu, *Gendai nihon no senkyo.*, Tokyo University Press, 1991 and Kawato Sadafumi, 'Nidai seitōsei ni chikazuketa shin senkyo seido', *Asahi Shinbun*, October 11 1996 will be discussed in Chapter Five.

⁶³ Igarashi Fumihiko, *Kore wa minshuto da.* (This is the DPJ), Taiyō Kikaku Shuppan, 1996.

⁶⁴ This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two and has been corroborated in interviews.

⁶⁵ Otake Hideo, *Nihon seiji no tairitsu jiku.* (The Axes of Political Conflict in Japan), Chukō Shinsho, 1999.

Literature on the organisation of Japanese political parties and campaigning techniques

In order to appreciate the changes in party organisation which have occurred in the past ten years, it is also important to cover the literature on party organisation in Japan. The most important work on Japanese party organisation, whilst being now somewhat out of date, is Gerald Curtis' *Election Campaigning Japanese Style*.⁶⁶ In this book, written in the late 1960s, Curtis lived with an LDP politician Satō Bunsei, and analysed how he conducted his election campaign and where he gained the majority of his electoral support. This book is the first which analyses the Japanese support network concept of *kōenkai* (though Stockwin had identified them in 1968 as has been discussed above) and paints a detailed picture of rural and urban style campaigns for LDP politicians. This book is also of importance when understanding the left as many left-wing Diet members also have *kōenkai* of some shape or form and Curtis also defined the horizontal, cross-electoral district method of left-wing recruitment as opposed to the vertical campaigning style of the right. Bestor also paints a picture of this old style of LDP campaign in *Neighbourhood Tokyo*, where he emphasises the importance of linkages between local politicians and the electorate, and highlights some of the networks such as *chōnaikai* (residents' associations) which are used in political recruitment.⁶⁷

Other works on Japanese party organisation are in the same volume, *How Electoral Reform Boomeranged in Japan*. Two of the Chapters are of particular relevance to this work: Tani Satomi's review of Okayama and Hyogo Prefectures, and Otake's analysis of changing *kōenkai* since the changes to the electoral system in 1994.⁶⁸ Both works present an image of campaigning methods and *kōenkai* style structures which were hardly changed as a result of the new electoral system. Instead, politicians restructured existing methods of mobilisation such as *kōenkai* and repackaged them as local party organisations to get around the political reform legislation of 1994. Finally, a work which is now old, but nonetheless provides a rare

⁶⁶ Gerald L Curtis, *Election Campaigning Japanese Style* Tokyo, Kodansha, 1983.

⁶⁷ Theodore Bestor, *Neighborhood Tokyo*. Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1989.

⁶⁸ Otake Hideo, *How Electoral Reform Boomeranged in Japan*, Japan Center for International Exchange, 1998.

portrait of the structure of a local party organisation in Japan is by James Foster, who analyses the linkages between business groups and residents associations and their connections with local politics.⁶⁹ Whilst the above four categories of the literature are of most concern, there are two further groups which need to be considered.

Literature on the Ideological Transformation of the 1990s

Otake Hideo and Yamaguchi Jirō have each written about the changes in ideology in the 1990s. Otake has analysed the emergence of a neo-conservative/conservative cleavage that Ozawa Ichiro had tried to introduce to replace the left-right cleavage that has to date dominated Japanese politics and explains the weakening of the left parties.⁷⁰ Yamaguchi feels that this new divide has left the country dangerously out of control and without direction as a result of the decline of the left. He feels that the lack of effective opposition by the DPJ and JSP has meant that the LDP has managed to force through neo-conservative policies such as the legalisation of the national flag and anthem, which previously had been taboos within the context of the peace Constitution.⁷¹

Literature on the 'new' left

Various political scientists have started to attempt to analyse the new movements that are emerging on the Japanese left. As mentioned above, Robin LeBlanc describes in *Bicycle Citizens*, how women are becoming involved in local interest groups and green networks.⁷² These women get involved with issues such as community cleaning projects and waste recycling groups. LeBlanc's theory is that these women are being politicised by non-political groups. She calls the women who are involved with these grass roots groups, which have no hierarchy or rules attached to them, 'bicycle citizens' as they have direct contact with the community within which they are working and there is no grandeur about what they are

⁶⁹ James J Foster, 'Local Party Organisation in Japan' *Asian Survey* Vol. XXII, 1982, pp. 843-857.

⁷⁰ Otake Hideo, *Nihon no tairitsu jiku*, (The axes of political conflict in Japan), Chukō, Shinsho, 1999.

⁷¹ Yamaguchi Jirō, *Nihon seiji no kiki*. (The Crisis of Japanese Politics). Iwanami Shoten, 2000.

⁷² LeBlanc, *Bicycle Citizens*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1999.

attempting to achieve. This is a direct comparison with mainstream politicians who drive around in their campaign cars and whom LeBlanc calls taxi citizens. She goes on to elaborate how Kanagawa Netto, a women's cooperative and citizen's movement is a more structured and almost 'taxi-politics'-like citizens group. This is of importance when analysing the transition from the JSP to the DPJ because it is these types of groups that the DPJ has targeted and tried to establish links with in order to mitigate against the lost labour union support and in order to 'widen the net' of possible supporters.

Lam Peng-Er paints a similar picture of a new green movement in his book *Green Politics in Japan*. He also analyses the organisation Kanagawa Netto and concludes that green politics in Japan, whilst seemingly having some similar values to their counterparts in the west, are structured differently. They are more hierarchical with men always forming the leadership and middle class females acting as volunteers. Also, this organisation has never managed to have an impact on national politics but is based within urban affluent areas. Lam paints a picture of a volunteer organisation with a top-heavy hierarchy and stresses these aspects as being the main difference to the western green parties. Nonetheless, what seems to be of more importance is that this organisation seems to have 'absorbed' two aspects from seemingly opposite directions of the Japanese political system. Firstly, Kanagawa Netto utilises *kōenkai* which is a particularly LDP type of method of mobilisation. In contrast, one of the main policy aims of this green party is also preservation of Article Nine of the Japanese Constitution and opposition to the Self Defence Forces being dispatched on Peacekeeping operations. It would seem that Kanagawa Netto is thus a strange mixture of LDP mobilisation methods (probably due to its lack of contact and connection with labour unions) and JSP ideology. This work is of significance because it highlights an organisation within Japanese politics that was not part of 'the traditional *kōenkai* for the LDP and union support for the left' world and have responded to this with a diversified mobilisation method.⁷³ This is a strategy which the DPJ have observed from Kanagawa Netto and applied it to its own mobilisation methods. Furthermore,

⁷³ Lam Peng-Er, *Green Politics in Japan*. Oxford, Routledge, 1999.

organisations such as Netto are the groups that the DPJ has begun to attract to try and widen its support networks. This issue will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven.

Methodology and scope of the thesis.

In this thesis, analysis was made of the independent variables from a macro perspective, with a single case study of Okayama Prefecture. The aim of the case study is to analyse whether the implications of the organisational crisis the DPJ faces, which have been indicated by the macro level analysis, have been faced in local-level politics. Whilst it is recognised that a single case study is not ideal, we feel that within this context, the advantages of such a study justify the limitations. Eckstein points out that case studies are at their “most valuable” where theories are tested, and warns against the use of single case studies because of the problems of alternative explanations, measurement error, and determinism. He warns that it is not possible to have a single case study that is theory-confirming.⁷⁴ However, a single case study has been justified for two reasons.

Firstly, this case study is a theory-building case study. As yet, no research has been undertaken into the effects of the changes political realignment have wrought upon the Japanese left. The case study has shown the tensions between the old JSP’s ability to mobilise certain groups of the electorate and the harsher reality of the DPJ having to ‘cast its net wider’ to attract electoral support. The DPJ has adopted new methods of mobilising support to deflect the effects of partisan dealignment, ideological change, declining structural support, and institutional change. It is the case study that has highlighted these tensions and is therefore “theory-building”. In Chapter Seven, this theory will then be tested with regard to its pertinence throughout the DPJ by means of some qualitative analysis of Diet members’ campaign methods (use of internet, types of staff at elections, union support etc). This will attempt to show a trend which can be confirmed in later research through the use of more

⁷⁴ Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1994. Chapter Six.

numerous case studies.

Secondly, for reasons of access to important sources and interviews, the use of a single case study is, in our view, justified within the Japanese context. Through detailed analysis of one district, with the concomitant level of contact with politicians this allows, it is possible to request access to party leaders, union leaders, and other national level actors. Without the initial depth of contact, this level of access would not be obtainable in Japan.

Okayama has been selected for both theoretical and practical reasons, as it is a prefecture that shows average tendencies. Okayama is a prefecture in the Chugoku region of Japan, situated between Osaka and Hiroshima. Its main city is also called Okayama. The population of the prefecture is 1,956,000, a figure that is growing at about 1.3% a year. This means that Okayama is one of the more urban prefectures in Japan, as less urbanised prefectures are suffering de-population. Okayama City has a population of 612,000. Other important parts of Okayama Prefecture are the second largest city, Kurashiki, with a population of 428,000, and the industrial zone of Mizushima (inside Kurashiki City), which is a centre of Japanese heavy industry, shipbuilding and car production.

Demographically, Okayama Prefecture's population is top heavy, with 364,000 people over the age of 65 constituting the largest demographic group. This might imply that the prefecture could be viewed as relatively conservative. On the other hand, there are only three prefectures in Japan where the largest segment of the population is not over 65.⁷⁵

When it comes to the urban/rural mix of the prefecture, Okayama again shows average tendencies. On average, there are 14 cities, 42 towns and 17 villages per prefecture in Japan, and Okayama has 10, 47 and 9 of these respectively. As rural and urban districts can have such

⁷⁵ *Nihon no tokei*, (Japanese Statistics), 1999. Sōmuchō Tokeikyoku hen. The Prefectures are Chiba, Saitama and Kanagawa.

different impacts upon mobilisation methods in Japanese election campaigns, it is important that Okayama is roughly equivalent to the average and as such, some comparisons can be made between it and the political parties in other Prefectures.

The time frame of the thesis is principally a twelve-year period from 1989 to 2001. This has been selected as 1989 is the year of the historic JSP victory in the Upper House election and also marks the beginning of political instability and realignment. Data used in Chapters One and Three ends at 2000. Some analysis of the 2001 House of Councillors election has also been included.

This thesis has employed participant observation, interviews, primary sources obtained from political parties and unions, and secondary literature. Participant observation was carried out in two election campaigns (Okayama District One campaign for DPJ, 2000 House of Representatives election, and Okayama District Two campaign for DPJ, 2000 House of Representatives election). The author worked in the campaign office and in the campaign cars, doing basic tasks such as filling envelopes and distributing official literature. This was carried out for various reasons:

- It was felt this was a method which retained the naturalness of the setting and provided a good insight into the complex social process of a changing political party.
- It was also done to further access to potential interviewees. Japanese society is one which divides those who are considered outsiders, *soto*, and insiders, *uchi*. Those who are *soto* are restricted from knowledge that is considered *ura*, or that which is hidden from the public eye, and are only given *omote*, knowledge for public consumption.⁷⁶

In order to avoid *omote* in interviews, it was important that the author was known to and trusted by the interviewees before the interview. Three months of work on these campaigns meant that the author was trusted sufficiently to be given highly

⁷⁶ Takie Sugiyama Lebra, *Japanese Patterns of Behaviour*. Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1976, pp 112-113.

confidential information, such as the example at the end of Chapter Four of illegal bribes. It also meant that greater access to party leaders was granted in return for hard work and a proven track record of knowing what was going on in the party.

The benefits of candid interviews and increased access outweighed the potential problems involved with participant observation. The problems associated with reliability, representativeness of the data and potential deception have been dealt with by comparing the author's experience with secondary sources and triangulating data obtained in this manner with interviewees. It is also thought that working on two campaigns, albeit two DPJ campaigns, has alleviated some of the problems of reliability.

Interviews were carried out with 55 union leaders and workers, party activists, and current and former politicians. A semi-structured style of interviewing was adopted as each interview was concerned with different time periods and experiences. However, the author was careful to triangulate data that were relevant from one interview finding with later interviews. Initially interviews were recorded but when this was shown to be restricting free speech, the decision was made to take interview notes and write up immediate transcripts rather than lose important insights. Once again the issue of *omote* and *ura*, and *uchi* and *soto* was of importance and needed to be considered both in the interview and in the process of gaining access to the interview. Interview data have been compared with primary and secondary sources to corroborate the testimony of interviewees.

We will now turn to the next chapter where turnout data, election data and public opinion poll data shall be used to make an initial assessment of how Japanese politics changed during the period of analysis.

Chapter One

The changes in Japanese Voting Behaviour and Attitudes towards Politics, 1980-2000

The intention of this chapter is to analyse the twenty year period of 1980-2000 and assess if and how the electorate changed its attitudes towards politics during this period. The 1990s was a period of great flux within the Japanese political system with many parties being created and disbanded. The Japan Socialist Party (JSP), which had been the main ‘opposition’ party in Japan¹, gradually declined in the mid 1990s and in 1996 won so few seats in the election that it became a mere shell of its former self. Between 1955 and 1993, it was the second largest party in the Japanese party system and was the largest party on the left of centre on the political spectrum. This period has become known as the 1955 system. In 1996 the JSP did extremely badly in the House of Representatives election gaining only 15 seats (although it managed to get 19 in the 2000 election). A new party of the ‘left’, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) was formed in 1996 and was still in existence and getting stronger with each election at the end of the analysis of this thesis in 2001. The aim of this chapter is to question what changes in voting behaviour and, or, public opinion attitudes towards the political parties occurred in this period. Therefore, utilising public opinion poll data, electoral data, and turnout data, we shall analyse how the Japanese voter changed its attitudes towards all political parties and in particular the ones on the left.

Turnout

Japan, as most post-industrialised economies, is suffering from an acute crisis of political mobilisation that is particularly manifesting itself in low turnout. Participation should arguably have increased in the past twenty years as access to information and education increased and Japanese demographics changed.² In reality, at a time when access to information has been at an all-time high and despite attempts to make voting easier, turnout is

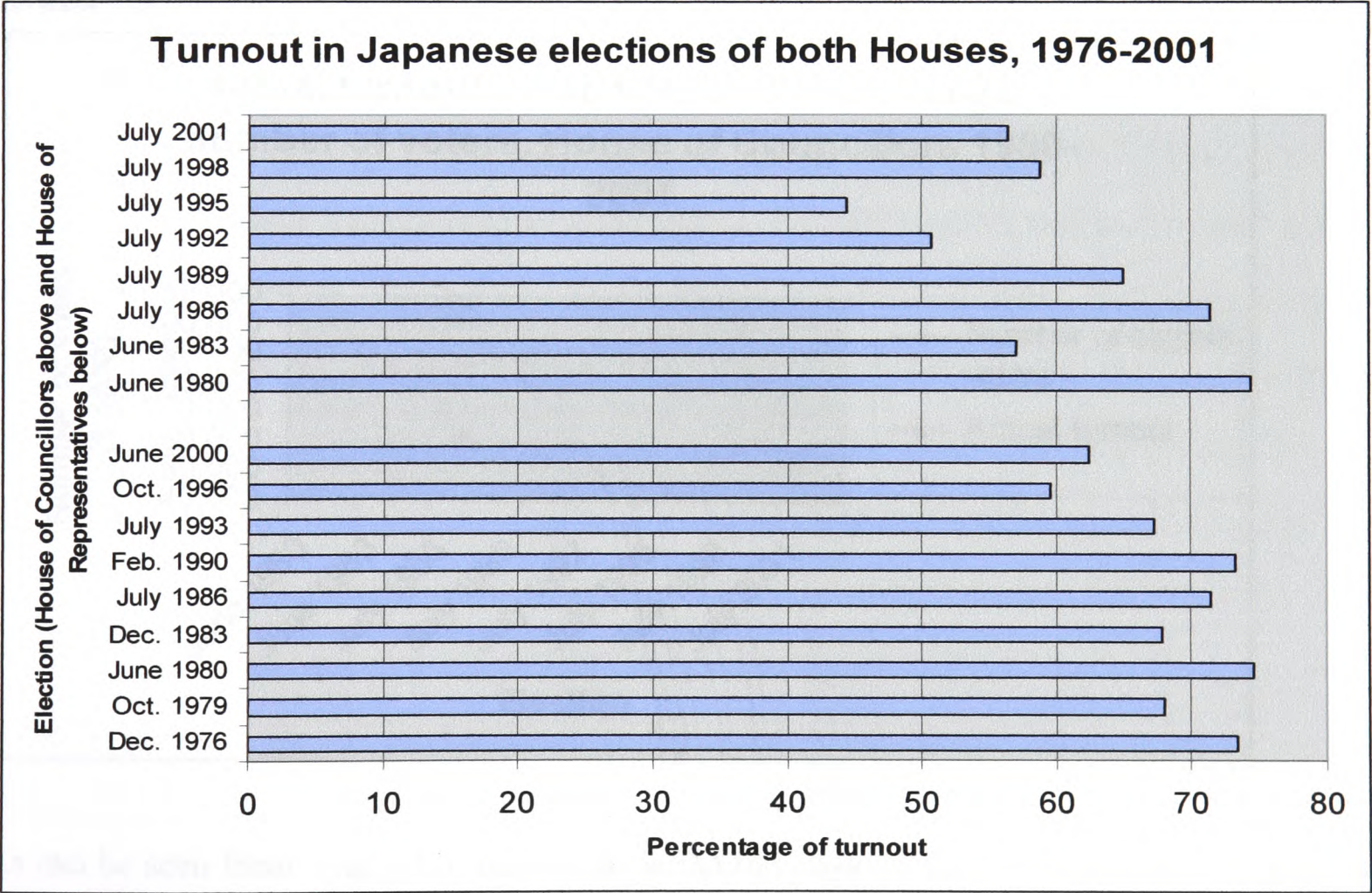
1 Unlike in the UK, there is no official opposition party in the Japanese system but the JSP was the largest and therefore could be considered to be the ‘main’ opposition party in Japan.

2 For example, Richard Topf, ‘Electoral Participation’, *Citizens and the State*, ed, H. Klingemann and D.Fuchs, Oxford, OUP, 1996.

low. Japan is suffering from a domestic economy which is in crisis, a failing bank sector, rising unemployment, and is in the midst of seismic changes in its attitudes towards peacekeeping activities abroad, global security and its long-standing Constitution. Furthermore, it has a population which is rapidly ageing. For all of these reasons, Japan should be seeing increased political participation. In fact, the traditional Japanese methods of voter mobilisation are no longer as effective as they once were and consequently turnout has fallen.

Turnout has become a particular problem in Japan since the House of Councillors election in July 1995. Whilst clear from Graph 1.1 that the problem of falling turnout already existed before 1995, it was the extent of the low turnout in this first national election since the historic defeat of the LDP in July 1993 that opened the eyes of the Japanese media and government to the problem. In this election, turnout was 44.5%.

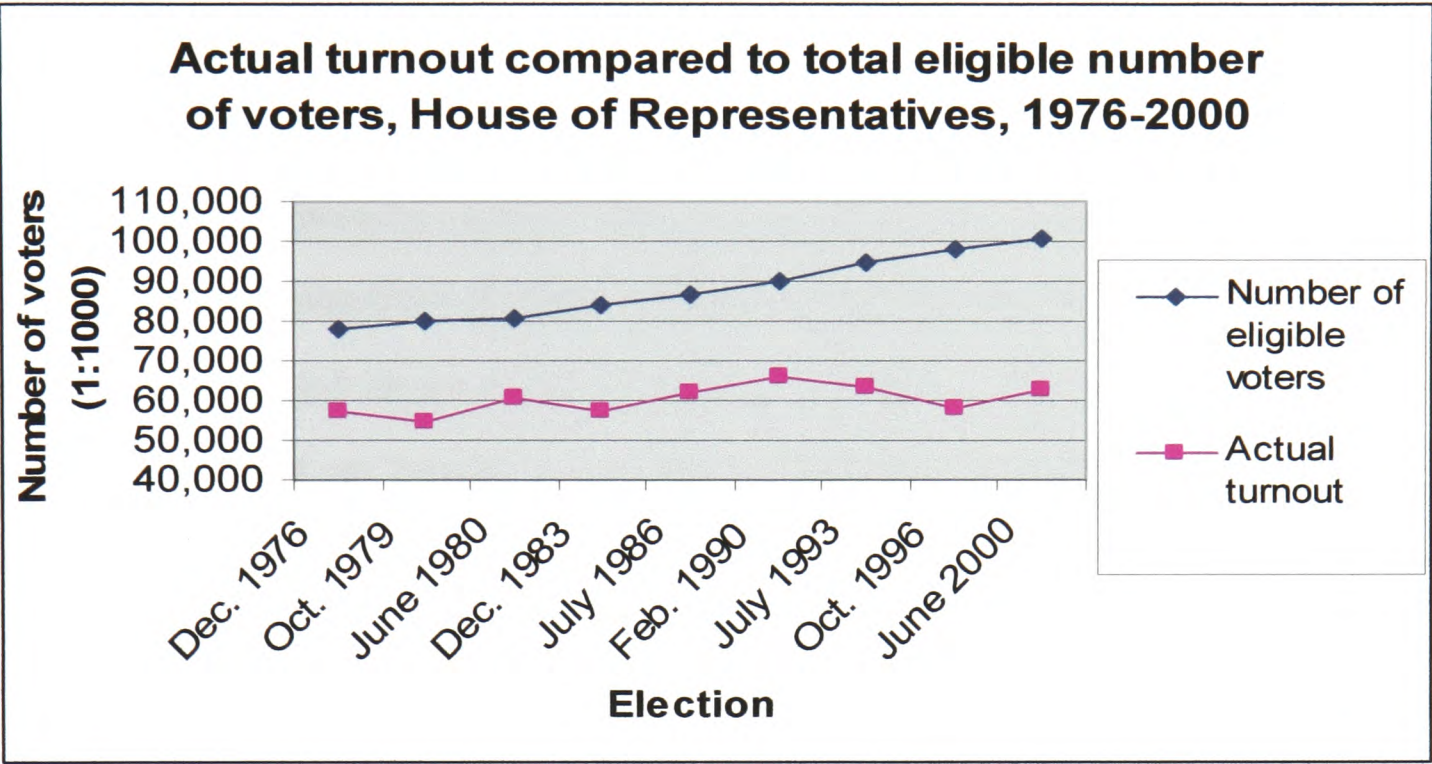
Graph 1.1



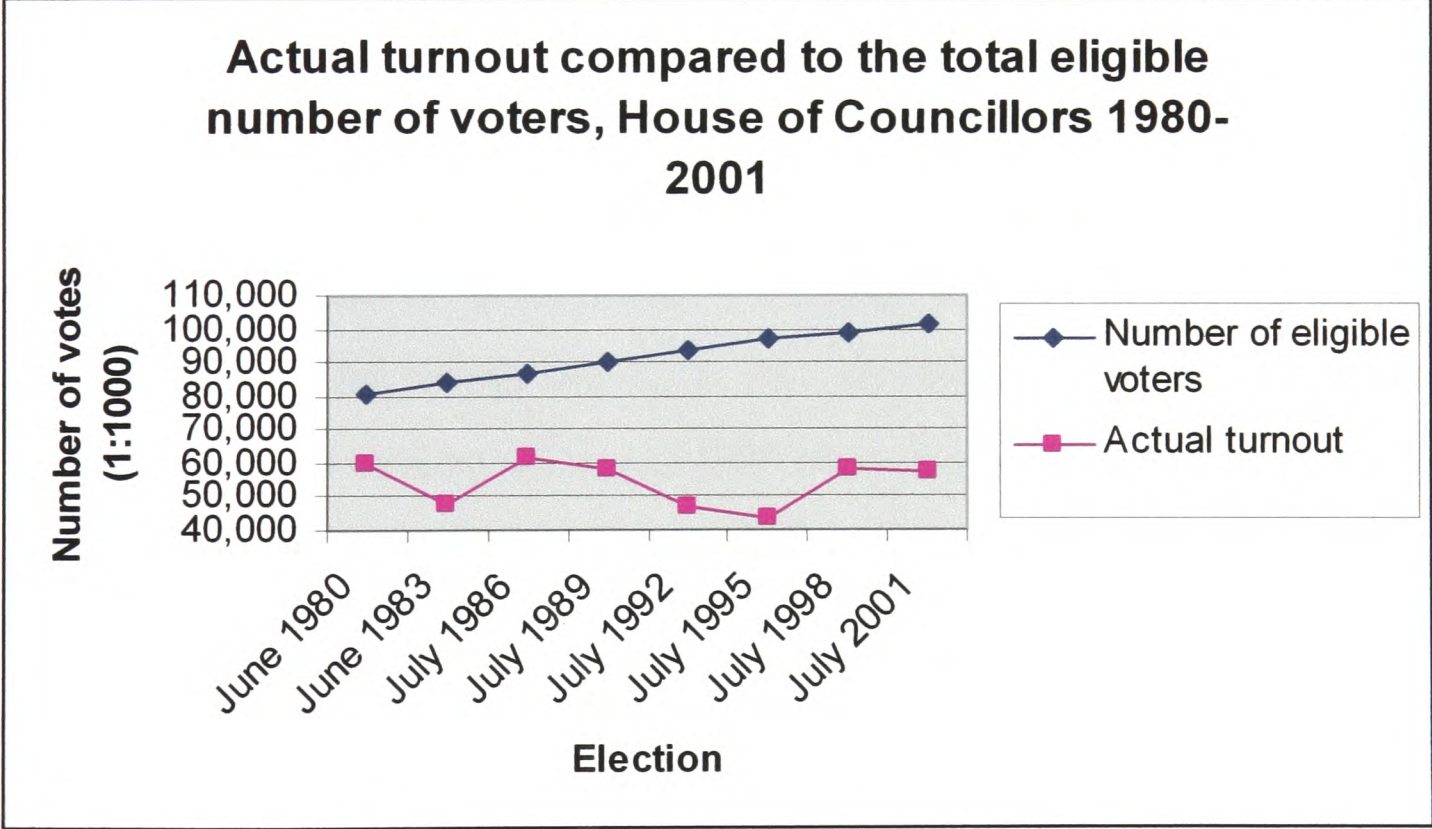
In graphs 1.2 and 1.3, the extent to which turnout has dropped becomes even more apparent. Graph 1.1 clearly shows the general drop in turnout at elections but, it is only when turnout is

seen plotted against the total number of eligible voters per election, that the trend towards falling turnout becomes truly apparent.

Graph 1.2



Graph 1.3



As can be seen from Graph 1.3, turnout is particularly low in the ‘second-order’ elections for the House of Councillors.³ Traditionally seen by the Japanese electorate as being unimportant

³ ‘Second-order’ being a term taken from Pippa Norris, ‘Nominations and reflections. Nomination: Second-order elections revisited’, *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 31, No.1, 2000, pp.

elections, these have seen lower levels of turnout. Whereas the importance of the Upper House has become increasingly important since the 1990s, (because of the LDP's lack of a majority in that House which affects the capability of the party to pass legislation), the electorate has not responded to this issue and turnout has dropped particularly in the Upper House.

The Japanese government started to take measures to increase turnout. Up to and including the 1995 House of Councillors election, polling stations were only open from 8am until 6pm. In 1998, polling station hours were increased to 12 hours with closing time moved to 8pm. Elections are held on Sunday to facilitate voting for businessmen who may work a long distance from home and toil for long hours during the week. In another move to increase turnout, the Government has made voting prior to the day of the election a less bureaucratic process. Whereas before, proof of being away from the electoral district on the day of election was required, anybody could now vote in the week prior to the day of the election at the local City, Town or Village Halls.⁴

Nonetheless, despite these changes, turnout is declining. Graphs 1.2 and 1.3 clearly show that even though turnout increases at some elections, the difference between the total eligible voters and the number of actual voters is diverging from each other. Individual elections' turnout does differ for various reasons: it was particularly good in the 1990 Lower House election because the exciting election of 1989 when the JSP won a majority for the first time since 1947 was still in the minds of voters. (More detail on this will be given in Chapters Two and Three.) Turnout was particularly bad at the 1996 election because of the newness of the electoral system and because the parties had been in such a state of flux in the entire period between that and the previous election. Nonetheless, the important issue is that the trend in election turnout in the 1990s was moving to one in which fewer members of the electorate were voting, as compared to the 1980s.

109-124.

⁴ This will also be discussed in Chapter Five as part of the discussions of electoral reform.

The aim of this Chapter is to question whether the decline in turnout has affected support for Japanese political parties, and in particular, the left-of-centre parties. We shall first discuss which groups in Japanese society voted for which party. These data have been accumulated from the Flanagan *et al* 1976 study which analysed the fundamental patterns of the 1955 system voting behaviour.⁵ We shall then turn to an examination of public opinion polls carried out between 1980 and 2000 to assess whether there have been any major changes to the attitudes discussed by Flanagan *et al*. We will also ask if the left has been affected more than the LDP by changes in public opinion.

Who voted for whom in the 1955 system? Mobilized voters resulting in stable voting behaviour.

The results of Flanagan *et al* showed that in Japan, age, community integration, occupational environment and the urban rural divide had an impact on who would vote for each party. In contrast, income and occupational status had less impact on the vote than would be expected from western norms of voting behaviour. Increasingly since the 1960s, a variable which no longer has an impact on voting behaviour is education, due to the wide spread participation in education in Japan.

Age has somewhat declined as an explanatory variable, especially in urban areas. In rural areas though, it had retained its salience in explaining voting and party preference with older members of the electorate being supporters of the LDP.

Further socio-structural factors which explained party support in Japan were type of occupation and unionisation and were more important than age as predictive variables. In particular, farmers and the self-employed (particularly in small-retail and manufacturing sectors) tended to be LDP supporters, whereas blue and white collar workers were divided over party of support depending on their unionisation. As unionisation in Japan is at the level

⁵ Scott C. Flanagan *et al*, *The Japanese Voter*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1991. pp. 66-83 in particular.

of company rather than as an industry or profession based 'trade' union, unionised workers are more likely to be white collar workers than blue collar workers.⁶ Therefore, left-wing party supporters in Japan in the 1955 system were more likely to be white-collar workers than blue-collar workers *as long as they were a union member*. Furthermore, union members were more likely to be from the public-sector rather than the private sector. As shall be examined in greater detail in Chapter Four, the JSP gained much of its support from large public sector companies such as the telecommunications company NTT and its union, Zendenstu and the government worker's union Jichiro. (In contrast the DSP gained support from private sector unions such as Mitsubishi.)

Nonetheless, a problem faced by the left in the period of analysis was that the number of unionised workers was dropping and this will be analysed further in Chapter Four. Furthermore, with the expanding tertiary sector in Japan, workers are increasingly likely to be part-time and shift workers and becoming less unionised. Thus, whilst sheer numbers of union members are dropping, so too, is the ability of the union to mobilise its existing members. In large corporations, unions are seen by many workers as being a social organisation rather than one which defends workers interests and has political aspirations. Thus, according to Flanagan *et al*, these changes which started to occur from the 1970s, accounted for the shift from hard core unionised support for the Japanese left to a more fluid support base. All of these issues have meant that the left-of-centre parties began to lose their key support from the late 80s onwards.

Self-employed workers are also declining as the smaller businesses they manage are being forced out of the market by such things as larger supermarkets in the commercial sector and outsourcing from South East Asia and China in the manufacturing sector. This has affected core support for the LDP, as the LDP traditionally did well from small business managers who were connected to the LDP via local business organisations.

⁶ Flanagan, *The Japanese Voter*, p. 69.

Finally, Flanagan *et al* confirmed that social networks have been an important variable in stabilizing Japanese voting patterns. This is particularly true for the LDP who relies on networks based on community, kinship, occupation, school, and other social ties. Such organisations are the small business associations mentioned above, parent teacher organisations, and *chōnaikai*, (the local resident's associations). These social networks are mainly effective in LDP mobilisation and work primarily in rural contexts. Community based networks have been particularly LDP oriented and these lose all effectiveness within an urban or metropolitan⁷ context.

Martin and Stronach⁸ found similar results with two major differences. They found that higher levels of education would result in higher turnout for opposition parties.⁹ Similarly to Flanagan *et al*, they also concluded that age would influence voting patterns although they suggested that young people are becoming conservative rather than tending to vote for opposition parties as they had done in the sixties and seventies. Agreeing with the conclusions of Flanagan *et al*, they found that being integrated into societal groups was important, as was the urban-rural cleavage as a means of assessing the left-right cleavage. Those in rural communities and engaged in societal groups were more likely to be supporters of the LDP. Personalism, or more simply, the local networks of Japanese society, which connect people through housing, residents associations, schooling and labour unions is also of importance, as discussed by Flanagan *et al*.

As has been acknowledged above however, this study was based on 1976 data. Flanagan *et al* attempted to bring their 1976 data up to date for their 1991 publication. In the conclusion they acknowledged that

“Japanese voters appear to be becoming more volatile and more responsive to social

7 Japan's largest 10-13 cities. In 1976 there were 10 cities classed as metropolitan in Japan. By 2001, there were 13 of these cities.

8 Curtis Martin and Bruce Stronach, *Politics East and West: a comparison of Japanese and British Political Culture*, New Jersey, M E Sharpe, 1992.

9 It will not be possible to analyse this in this study because the *Asahi Shinbun* do not ask this type of question in their party support questionnaires.

network cues and psychological influences that are not based on nor exclusive to broad occupational and demographic categories. This conclusion regarding increased volatility, or at least the increased potential for volatility, is reinforced by the findings regarding the declines in the proportions of self-employed and the falling levels and party loyalty of unionists... This change foreshadows a rise in electoral volatility.”¹⁰

In the next section, in order to assess whether this prediction that Flanagan *et al* made concerning increased electoral volatility is true, we shall now analyse public opinion polls from the *Asahi Shinbun*. These data will question the extent to which party support, according to the variables discussed above, has changed since 1980.

Public opinion polls, 1980-2000

Analysing party support can be difficult in Japan owing to the lack of data available to the researcher who does not have the resources to commission his own survey. Consequently, data have been obtained from the *Asahi Shinbun*'s monthly opinion poll on support for political parties.¹¹ An average of 2500 Japanese over the age of 20 are questioned monthly. Data are collected on support for parties according to age, sex, type of electoral district and type of employment. According to Yoshida Takafumi of the Opinion Poll Department, data are not collected on income or on education as Japanese would feel this as an infringement of privacy.¹²

Therefore, there are three main areas that will be analysed. Firstly, support for political parties according to age, secondly support for parties according to type of occupation, and finally support for parties broken down to the size of the town or city in which the voter is resident. We have opted not to analyse party support preferences according to sex, as this category has not existed in other voting behaviour surveys which we are using for comparison. All other categories will be analysed to show how that variable has affected party voting patterns. These

10 Flanagan *et al*, *The Japanese Voter*, p 82.

11 Asahi Shinbun Sha Seronchosa Shitsu, (Opinion Poll Desk, Asahi Shinbun), Naikaku shijiritsu-seitō shijiritsu 1946-1995 nen chōsa no zen de-ta, (Cabinet and Party Support Rates, 1946-1995. The Complete Data). Tokyo, Asahi Shinbun, 1995. (Unpublished)

12 Interview with Yoshida Takafumi of the Public Opinion Poll desk, Asahi Shinbun, Asahi Shinbun Kaikan, Tokyo, March 12, 2001.

variables have been selected for various reasons. Utilisation of the age data will test whether older people are still supporting the LDP as both Flanagan *et al* and Martin and Stronach suggest and whether younger people support the opposition as Flanagan *et al* suggest or the LDP as Martin and Stronach suggest. Analysing the type of residence of those polled (according to the 10-13 metropolitan districts, urban areas with over 100,000 residents, smaller towns and cities, and rural areas) will test whether voters are mobilised according to community integration. Voters in rural areas are expected to be more integrated into their communities and as such, could be more inclined to support the LDP according to both Martin and Stronach and Flanagan *et al*. Finally, analysing party support according to occupational environment will test the variables discussed above about left-wing support being contingent on labour unionisation and also will look to see whether such norms as agricultural workers being supporters of the LDP still hold true.

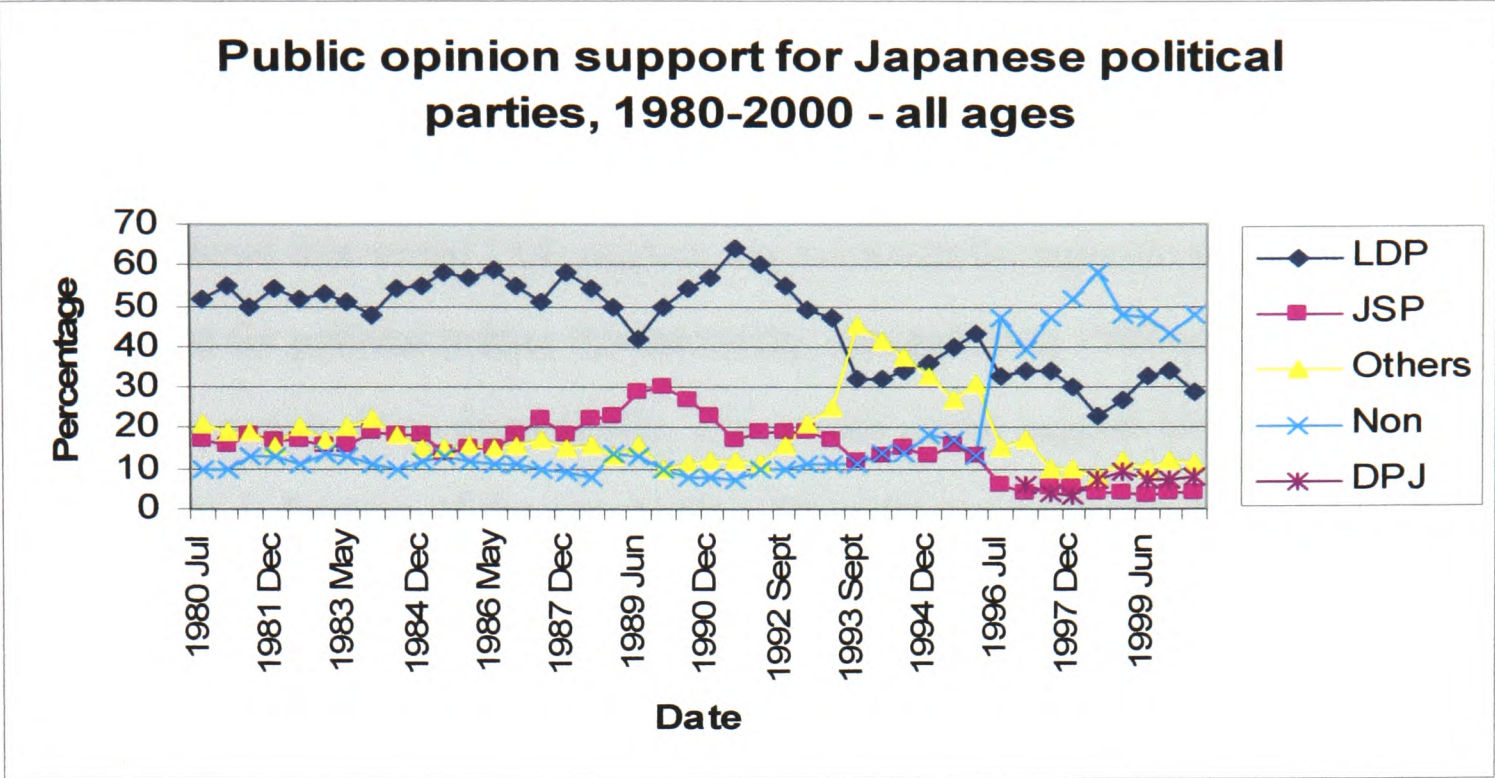
Parties have been split up into four groups, the LDP, the JSP, other parties, and non-voters.¹³ The category ‘non-voters’ includes those who do not know which party they support as well as those who do not support any party. Finally, after 1996, data for the DPJ have also been added to the graphs.

In the following data, the clear trend which becomes apparent is the increase of the non-aligned member of the Japanese electorate. All of the predictions discussed above are becoming increasingly less likely and the biggest change is the increase in those questioned saying that they support no party or don’t know which party they support.

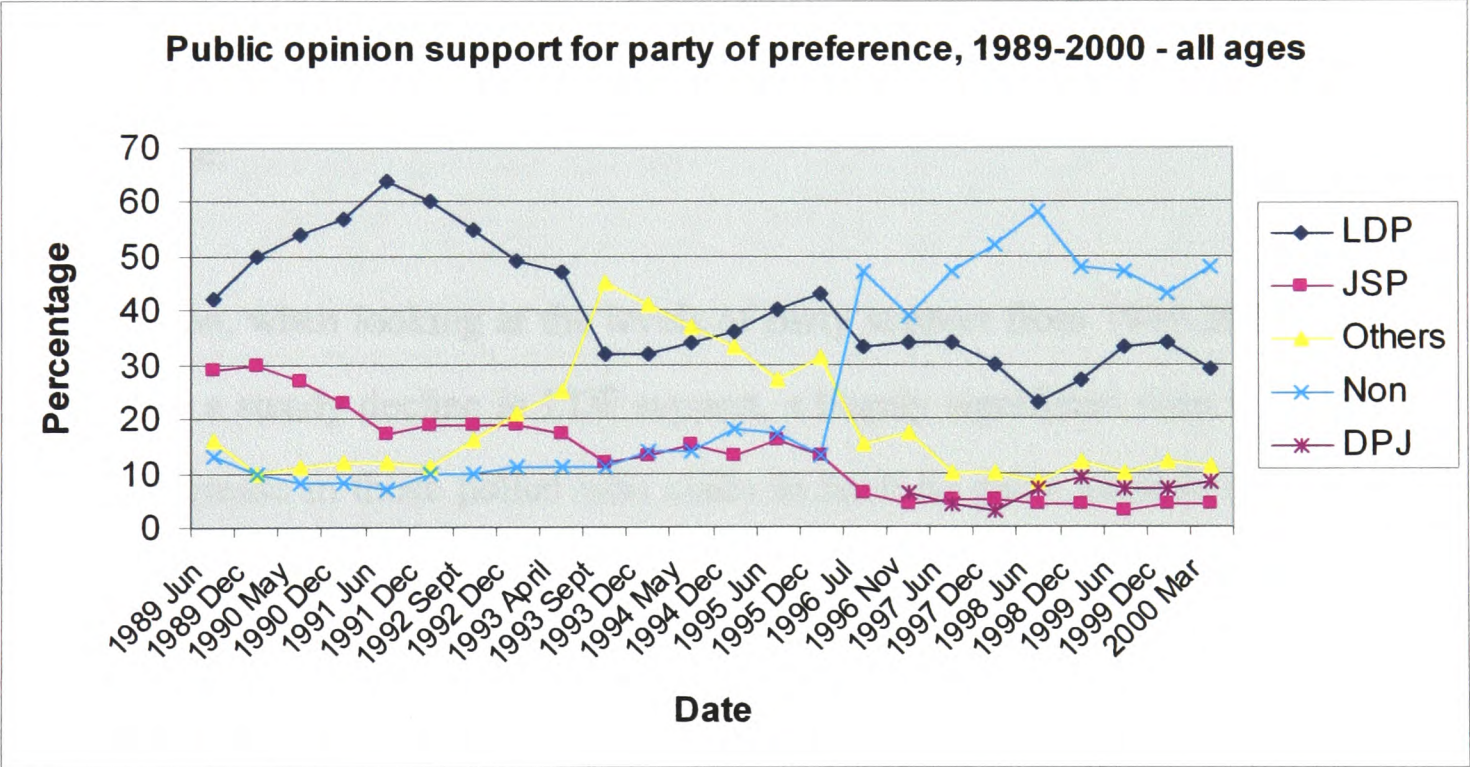
Graphs 1.4 and 1.5 show the relative stability of party of preference throughout the last 10-15 years of the 1955 system. At the beginning of this period of analysis in 1980, the LDP was the party which gained the most support in the *Asahi Shinbun* public opinion poll.

13 Other parties include the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), Kōmeitō, Japan Communist Party (JCP) and since 1992 the Japan New Party (JNP), the Shinseitō, Sakigake, and Shinshintō.

Graph 1.4



Graph 1.5



The party had peaks and troughs of support but in the first nine years of Graph 1.4, the LDP was by far the most widely supported party in Japan. In 1989, various scandals and political issues came together to result in the electorate turning against the LDP and voting for the JSP. In Graph 1.4, this tendency is shown to have emerged from the middle of 1988 and culminated in the Upper House election of 1989, a ‘second-order’ election which saw a protest vote against the LDP.¹⁴ 1989 was the first election which was not won by the LDP since

¹⁴ Norris, ‘Nominations and reflections. Nomination: Second-order elections revisited’, discusses the

1955.¹⁵ Graph 1.5 begins at this period and what is most apparent is the low level of support for the LDP. It is after this election that many things began to change in Japanese politics.

Graph 1.5 shows that whilst LDP support was momentarily restored until 1993, support from the electorate for political parties fundamentally changed from 1989 onwards. Support for the 1955 system parties drops dramatically. The growth of the support levels for the category of 'other parties' is because of the new parties, Shinseitō and Sakigake which broke away from the LDP and competed against it in the 1993 Lower House election. Support for the LDP begins to show a steady downwards trend. Similarly, support for the JSP drops below 15% in 1994 and never goes back up. Furthermore, it drops even more dramatically in 1996 when the DPJ is formed. The DPJ manages to get around 10% of support from the electorate from its formation onwards. The most noteworthy aspect of this graph, however, is the sudden increase from 1995 onwards of non-aligned voters. By 1998, 60% of the polled electorate has no party of preference.

In conclusion, when looking at the levels of party support from 1980-2000, the most notable features are a steady decline in LDP support, a hugely significant drop in JSP support, and a very big increase in those polled who claim to have no party identification or no interest in politics. We shall now turn to look at how public opinion support changes according to the age of the respondent, the type of occupation and the type of residence of those polled. We shall then make some conclusions about what the *Asahi Shinbun* data suggest about the changes in attitudes of the Japanese electorate.

Age and its impacts on voting behaviour

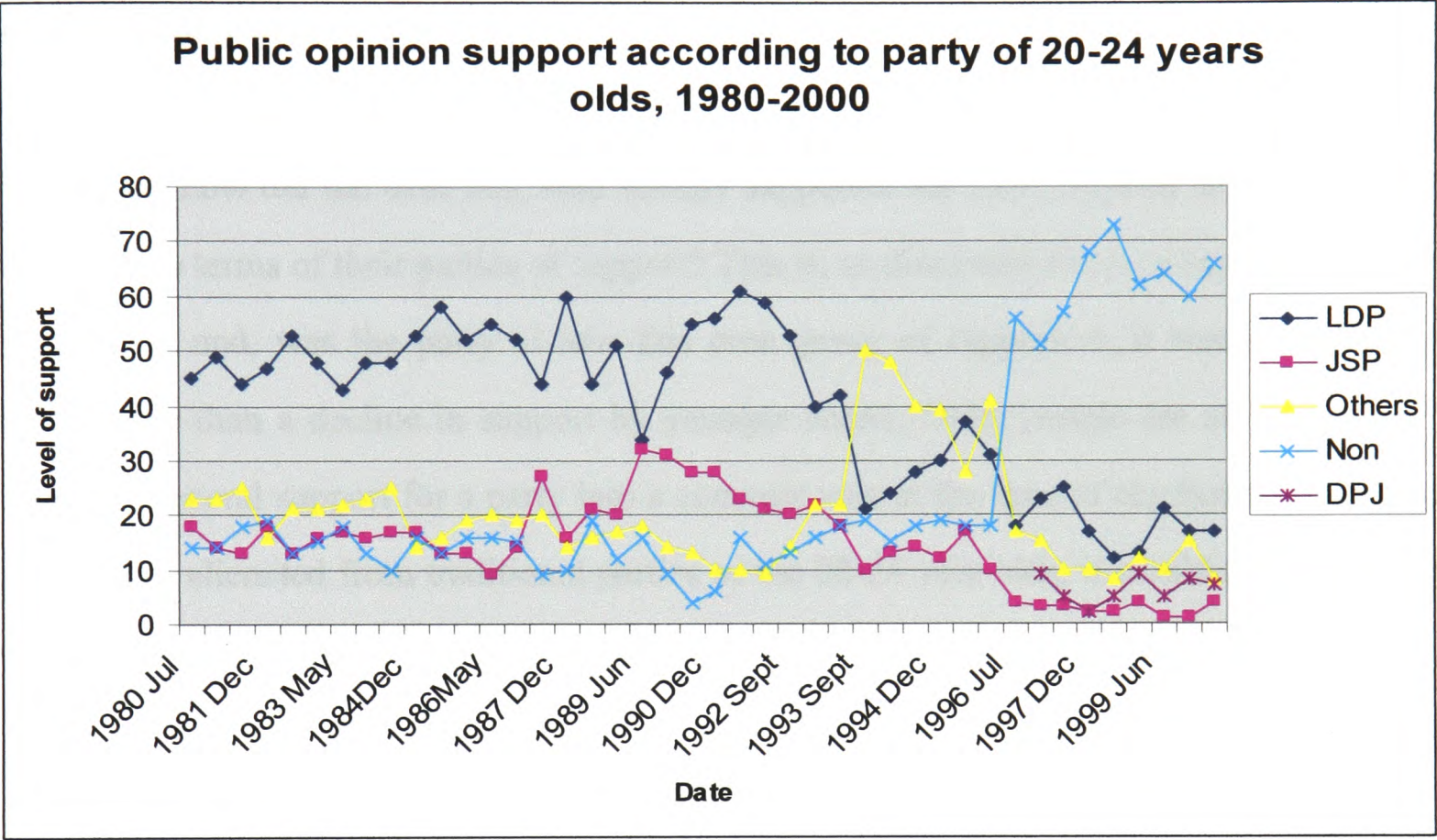
Prior to 1988, party support amongst 20-24 year olds was roughly comparable with other age groups. Fundamentally, despite this group being slightly more inclined to support the

use of secondary elections as occasions for protest votes.

¹⁵ The LDP needed to form a coalition with a breakaway party, the New Liberal Club, in order to form a majority government in 1976.

opposition than other age groups, the majority of it supported the LDP. This group particularly show a drop in support for the LDP in June 1989 when JSP support is virtually equal with that of the LDP. This is no doubt due to the 1989 House of Councillors election in which the LDP did very badly as a result of the Recruit scandal and the JSP managed to ‘win’.

Graph 1.6

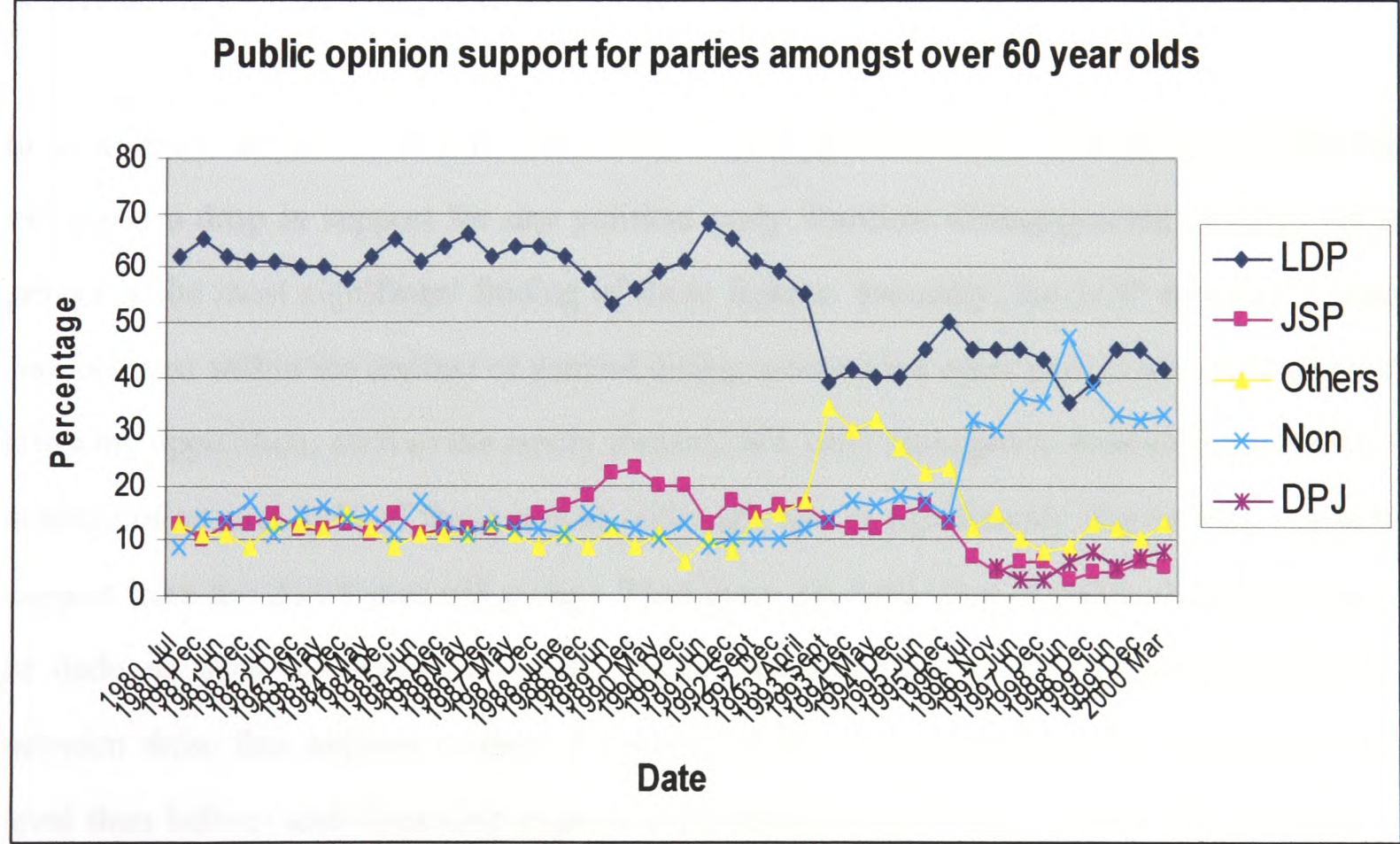


This election fuelled the electorate’s imagination and meant that politics became an exciting and interesting issue, even for younger members of the electorate. What is of more importance to the long term assessment of how the electorate perceives politics, however, are the huge changes which this group express in terms of the party it supports from 1993 onwards. Once there was a choice of party which meant these young voters could move outside the confines of the traditional LDP and JSP contest, they initially moved towards supporting the Shinseitō and Sakigake in 1993 (admittedly this ‘other’ category also includes support for the older parties such as the JCP and Kōmeitō, but these high levels of support for ‘other’ parties are mainly occupied by the electorate’s support for the new parties). However, once these new parties failed to make much of an impact on the political system, this group showed an emphatic move towards support of no political party. Those who say they support no party amount to over 70% in 1998. This effectively means that party politics had become

something which young people were disengaged from and had little interest in. This is a significant finding because it contradicts both Flanagan *et al* and Martin and Stronach who said that younger people were more inclined to vote for the left (Martin and Stronach) and conservatives (Flanagan *et al*). In fact, what becomes apparent from these data is that young people were becoming increasingly alienated in the 1990s and by far the largest majority did not support any party.

In contrast, how did the over 60s, who usually supported the LDP, respond to the changes of the 1990s in terms of their parties of support? This is, as discussed above, a key support group of the LDP and, was the party to lose this core group of supporters, it would be of more significance than a decline in support by younger voters. Older people are more inclined to turn their general support for a party into a concrete vote at the time of elections. If this group becomes as alienated from traditional parties as the 20-24 year olds, it would mean that there is a wide spread tendency across all eligible voters of dissatisfaction with politics.

Graph 1.7



Graph 1.7 looks at the support for political parties of over 60s from 1980 onwards. Prior to 1989, the over 60s had shown consistent support for the LDP. Indeed, in 1989, when the

Recruit scandal was causing the LDP to lose support, the over 60s questioned by the *Asahi Shinbun* still backed the LDP, despite the overall level of support dropping. In contrast to the 20-24 year olds (Graph 1.6) and all age groups, (Graph 1.5), where support for the JSP temporarily equalled support for the LDP, the drop in support for the LDP in 1989 was only marginal amongst the over 60s. Indeed, this high level of support for the LDP continues throughout the period of analysis amongst this group. There is a slight drop in 1993 and 1994 when the over 60s expressed support for the 'other' parties (again the new parties of 1993), but on the whole they retain a significant level of support for the LDP: even in 2000, 30% of this group express support for the LDP. Nonetheless, what is also significant is that in 1998 (at the time of the break up of Shinshintō) 60% of over 60s state that they have no real party they support. In 2000, at the end of the period of analysis, this level is at 50%. In other words, this group, which had been a major backer of the LDP, said that they either had no party they supported or did not know which party they supported. The over 60s thus tend to move towards both extremes over the 1990s: either they claim to have continued to support the LDP or support no party at all.

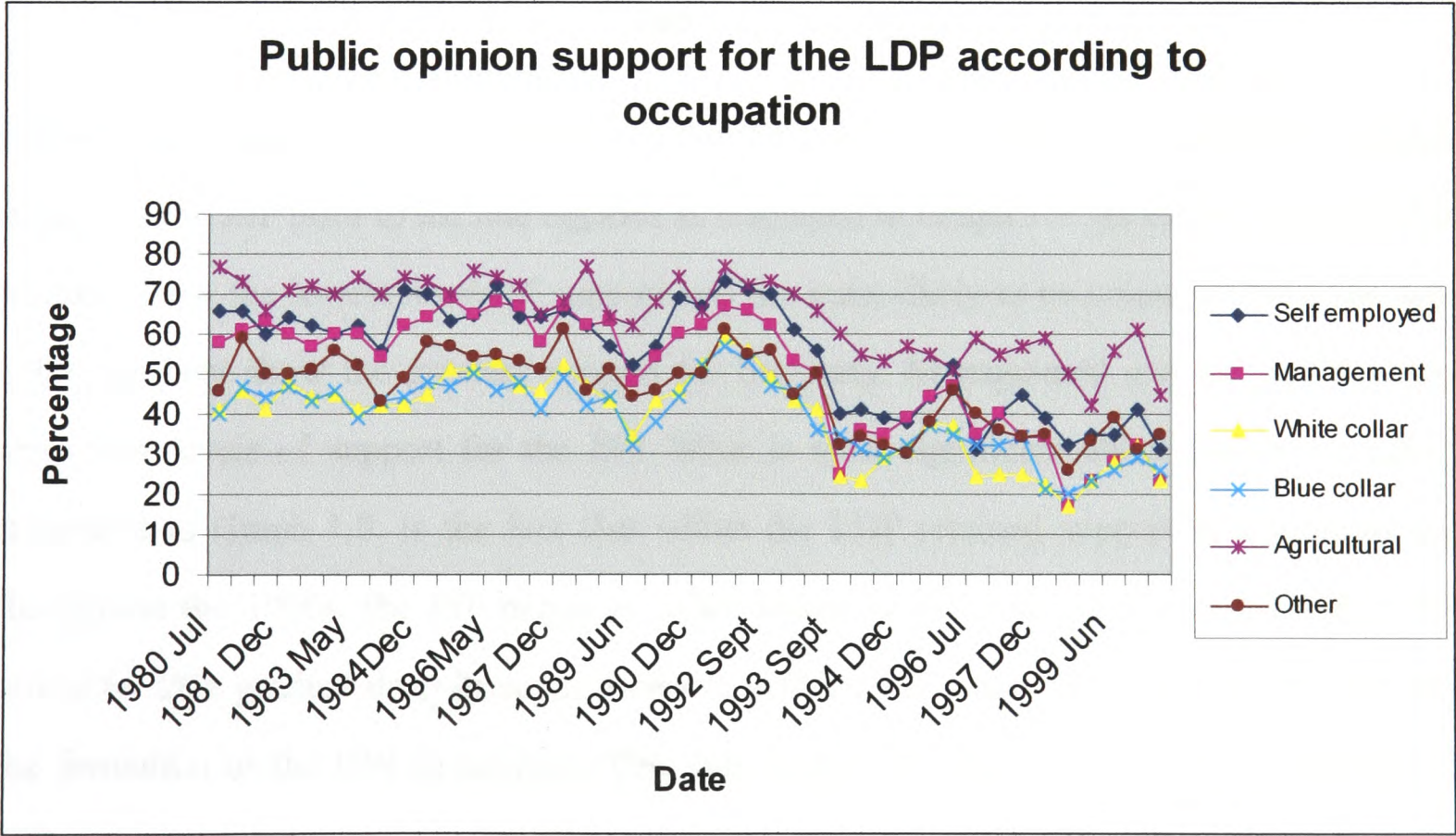
In conclusion, whilst some of the older voters still support the LDP, both young and old voters expressed a drop in support for *any* political party. Political disengagement amongst all age groups is the most significant finding of these figures. Secondly, the LDP manages to retain support even within the context of general disengagement but other parties and particularly the left-wing opposition, such as the newly formed DPJ, only managed to receive support from an average of around 20% of those polled (although this is significantly higher than opposition support from the 20-24 year old group). Thus the main battle line of political support that can be deduced from the figures on party support according to age, is that the main divide is between those that express continued support of the LDP (although at an admittedly lower level than before) and those that express dissatisfaction and have no party they support. We shall now examine how party support has changed according to residential location and occupation in the eighties and nineties.

Occupation

These data have been collected according to six main categories: five of these categories are professions and occupations that are key indicators of support for either the JSP (blue and white collar workers because of their potential to be unionised) or the LDP (management, agricultural workers and the self-employed, including both owners and those who work for small businesses). The sixth category is ‘other’ and refers to occupations that fall outside of these parameters.

Within this variable, we expect that farmers and the self-employed would support the LDP. Blue and white collar workers are expected to support either the LDP or the JSP, as according to the discussion above, their party of allegiance depends on whether they are in a labour union or not. Managers are expected to support the LDP. Graph 1.8 very much confirms these expectations. Throughout the period of analysis, agricultural workers show more support to the LDP in the *Asahi Shinbun* public opinion polls than any other occupational group. The occupations which display the lowest levels of support for the LDP are white and blue

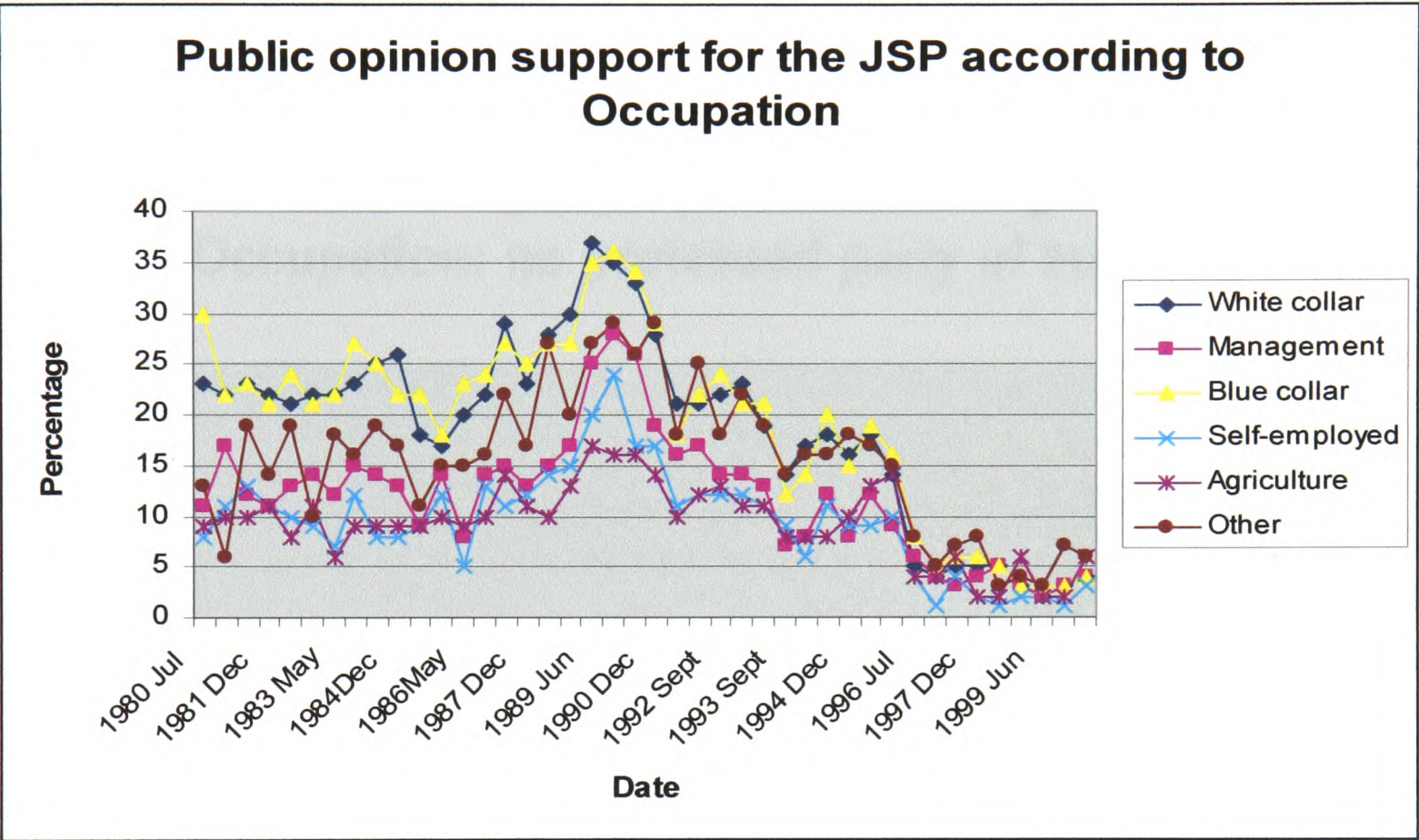
Graph 1.8



collar workers. These are the workers that are most likely to be unionised but whether their unionisation results in support for the JSP is an issue which shall be discussed below.

Management show expectedly high levels of support for the LDP as well as the self-employed who may well be brought into the LDP support structure through local business organisations and residents associations.¹⁶ The most significant thing about Graph 1.8 is that, despite the problems of the 1990s, the LDP does lose support but not to the dramatic extent of the JSP as shown in Graph 1.9.

Graph 1.9

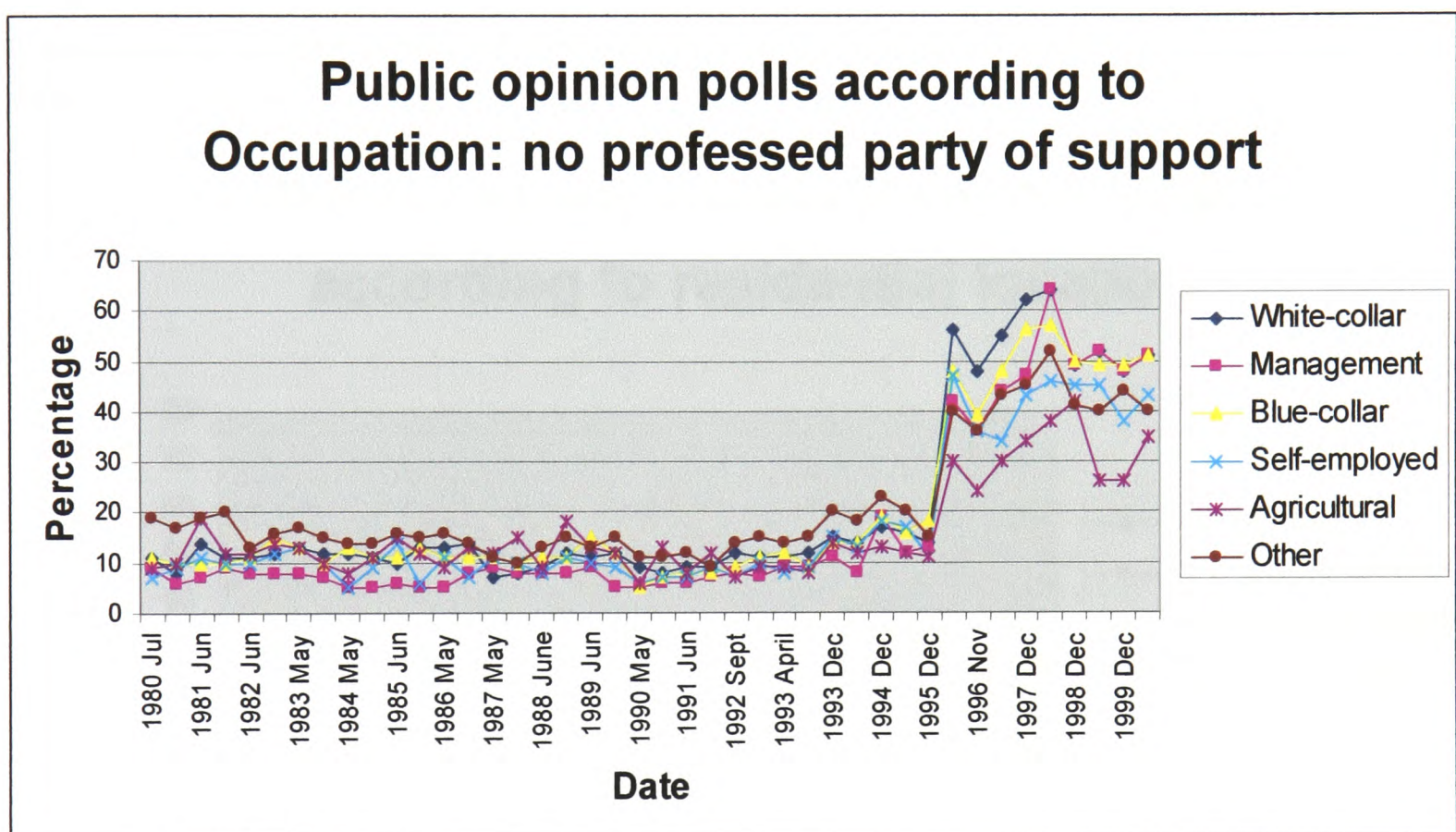


Before examining the drop in support for the JSP, we shall firstly look at which occupations supported the JSP prior to the late eighties as displayed in Graph 1.9. As expected, agricultural workers show the lowest levels of support and the most likely to be unionised blue and white collar workers show the greatest support for the party. Management and the self-employed show low levels of support for the JSP. What is most significant about Graph 1.9 though, compared to Graph 1.8, is the fact that whilst the LDP retained support at a reduced level throughout the 1990s, the JSP began to suffer lower levels of support from the early 1990s onwards. This gradual drop in support becomes more and more significant and, even before the formation of the DPJ in autumn 1996, only about 10-15% of those polled supported the JSP.

¹⁶ Residents associations which are known as *chōnaikai* in Japanese are utilised by the LDP to mobilise voters. Local businesses are often also members of *chōnaikai*.

Indeed when looking at Graph 1.10, it is the occupations that were traditionally supporters of the JSP who particularly say they support no party. This graph is especially startling because before the mid-1990s, apart from the group 'Other', which was always the highest category to profess to not support any party in the opinion polls, all other occupations display very low level of non-partisanship. However, from 1995 onwards, all occupations suddenly show a marked increase in non-partisanship.

Graph 1.10



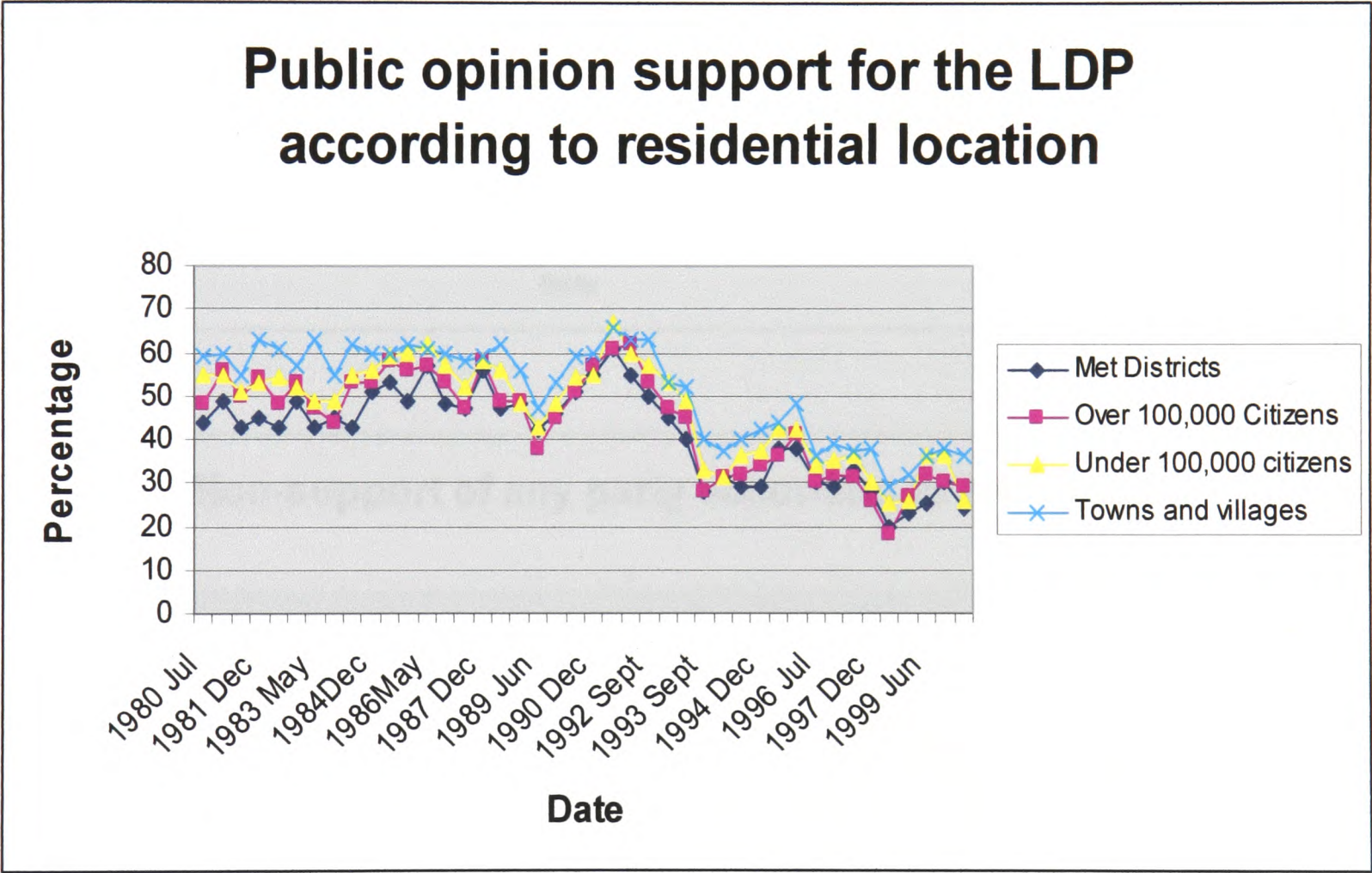
Furthermore, the groups which display two of the highest drops in support are the white and blue collar workers who would normally support the JSP.¹⁷ This does suggest that there is greater dissatisfaction with the JSP than for other parties. As has also been confirmed in Graph 1.8, the LDP seems not to have lost as much support from key LDP supporting occupations. We shall now turn to looking at public opinion poll data according to where the respondent is resident.

¹⁷ Graph 1.10 appears as if the white collar support disappears in 1997. Unfortunately, this is because the figures for management and white collar non-support of any party are identical for five consecutive polls and unfortunately, there is no way of clearly showing this on the computer package.

Type of Constituency

As has been discussed above, we would expect that the more urban the location, the more we would expect the respondent to the opinion poll not to be a supporter of the LDP. LDP supporters are most likely to be in rural communities where community integration is at its highest and where party organisations find it easier to mobilise the Japanese electorate, particularly in the old electoral system which was abolished in 1994 (see Chapter Five for more detail). JSP supporters tend to be in urban areas by default, rather than through any causal link that makes urban residents supporters of the non-LDP parties.¹⁸

Graph 1.11

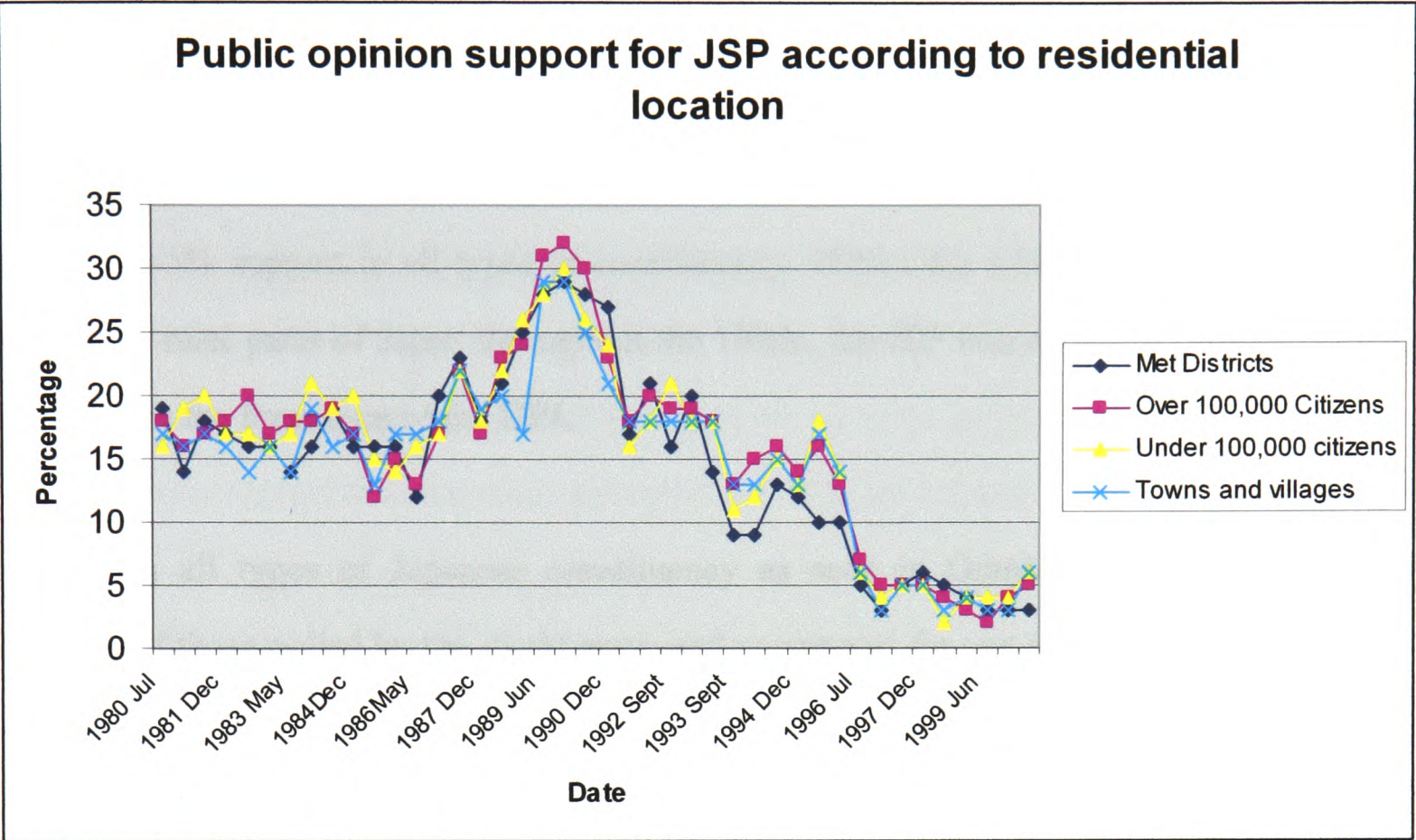


Graph 1.11 confirms the expectation that LDP supporters are predominantly in rural areas. As with key occupations which tend to support the LDP (as seen in Graph 1.8), whilst support for the LDP did drop throughout the 1990s, it dropped least in the districts that are rural. But the LDP still had supporters in all types of district in the last poll date which was March 2000. Furthermore, even the lowest levels of expressed support for the LDP only ‘bottomed out’ at

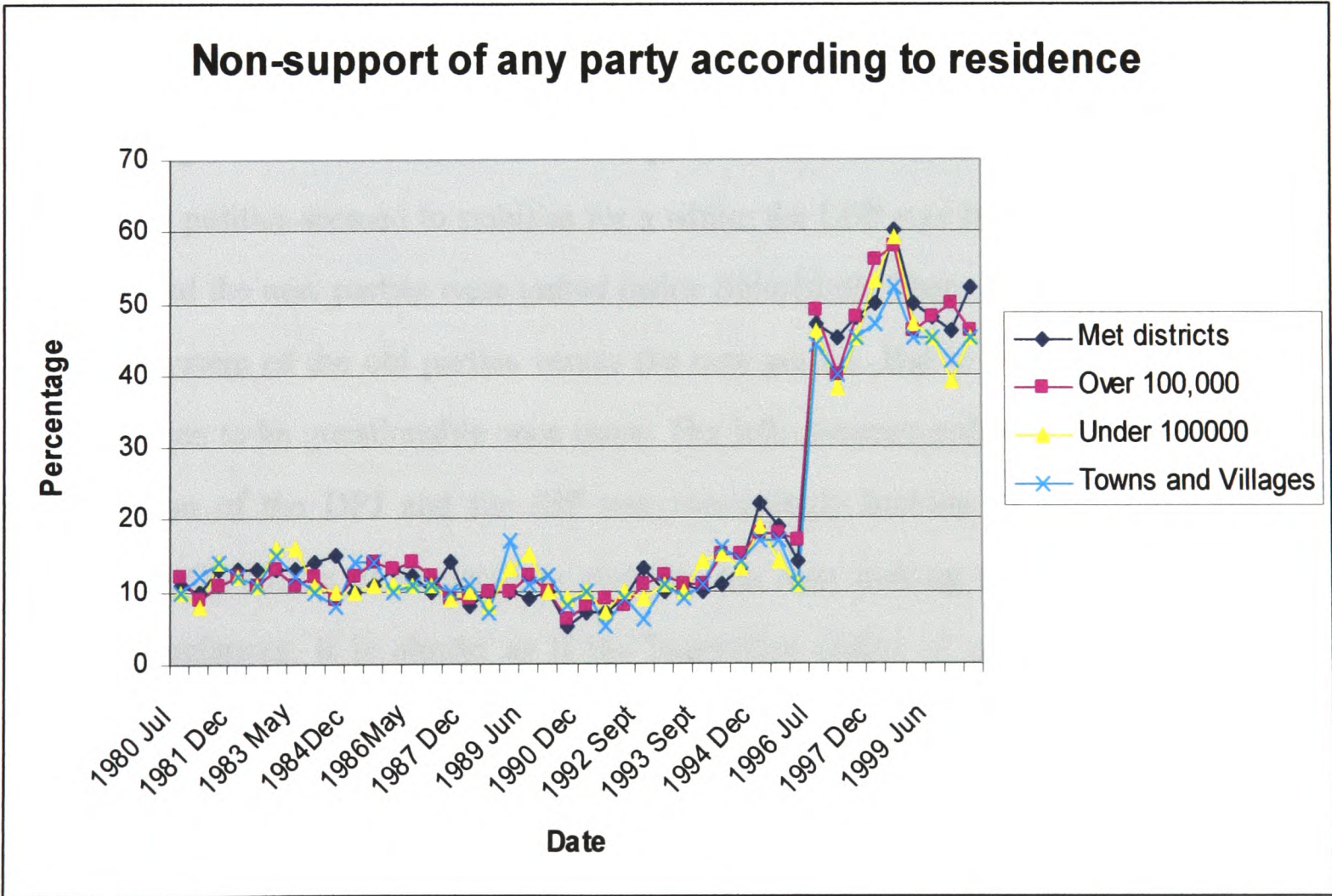
18 One party which is more likely to have urban support is Kōmeitō. This party is not being analysed separately in this chapter.

20% for several months in 1998.

Graph 1.12



Graph 1.13



In contrast, the JSP was doing well in the 1980s to have support levels of between 15-20%.

With the Doi boom of 1989-1990, the JSP did manage to get higher levels of support but this dropped back to the usual level of 15-20% until 1993. But after the election in July 1993 which, as will be discussed in the next Chapter, the JSP lost nearly 50% of its House of Representatives seats, the JSP's levels of support in all areas of Japan begin to drop significantly. Even before the formation of the DPJ in September 1996, the JSP had only between 3-5% support in all types of constituency. Whilst the LDP managed to maintain its support in rural parts of Japan throughout the 1990s, the JSP was on a downwards trajectory, even before the formation of the DPJ.

Finally, in all types of Japanese constituency as seen in Graph 1.13, the overwhelming majority of those polled by the *Asahi* expressed no support for any party. This was particularly acute in metropolitan constituencies in 1997-1998, but from mid 1996 onwards, there seems to be an *ennui* amongst all those polled towards political parties. This drop in support for any party is particularly evident in the *Asahi* data around the summer of 1996. A possible explanation for this sudden disengagement from politics is that the hope of 1993 finally began to disappear in 1996. As we shall discuss in the next Chapter, the failure of the Hosokawa cabinet brought about the creation of a new party Shinshintō. This party did well in the 1995 election and politics seemed to stabilise for a while: the LDP was back in power with the JSP at its side and the new parties were united inside Shinshintō. There seemed to be an emerging two party system of the old parties versus the new parties. But in the summer of 1996, this stability began to be questionable once more. The left-of-centre politicians were talking about the formation of the DPJ and the JSP was increasingly looking as if it would split. The upcoming 1996 House of Councillors election was also making the electorate question its political allegiances. It is almost as if the impending reality of an election under the new system meant that the electorate finally questioned the changes of the mid-1990s and decided that it no longer had faith in the existing parties.

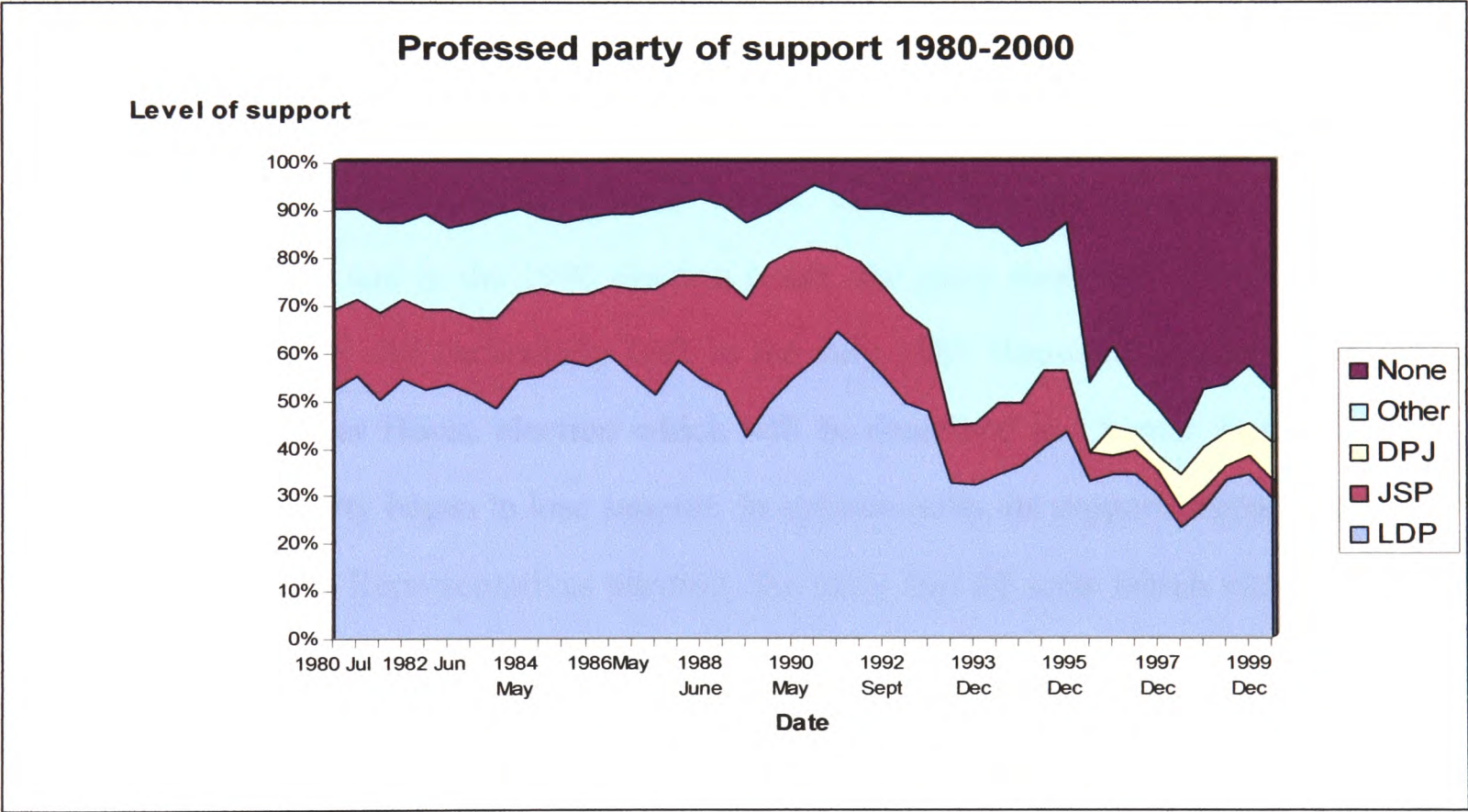
A further explanation for this sudden drop in support for the JSP in 1996 could also be connected to the fact that until January 1996, the Prime Minister was from the JSP. With the

resignation of Murayama, the coalition became one dominated by the LDP and this could have affected the public’s perception of the JSP.

Conclusions

The data in all of these categories thus confirm that there was an overwhelming disengagement with politics in Japan. The large number of those polled who said they supported no particular party suggests that dissatisfaction has caused this disengagement. The above data have suggested that whilst the LDP managed to continue to maintain reasonable levels of support, the JSP was losing support. In Graph 1.14, we have plotted the levels of support for all the parties being discussed.

Graph 1.14



What are the major conclusions that can be drawn from this discussion of support for political parties and the summary of Graph 1.14? Also, how do these professed levels of support compare to Table 1.1 which shows the levels of support that the parties obtained in House of Representatives elections since 1980?

As has been seen across each category of analysis, the LDP has suffered a decline in support but this has not been sufficient to make it significantly lose all its support, or an election *per*

se. The lowest point of support for the LDP was in 1993. The events surrounding the 1993 election meant that Diet members defected from the LDP. Consequently, the party lost both support in public opinion polls and control of the Diet as it were temporarily superseded by some new parties which were more attractive to the electorate. Nonetheless, after this election, support for the LDP returned. Support never returned to the level that it had reached during the 1955 system, prior to the events of 1993, but the LDP managed to regain control of the House of Representatives (in the form of a coalition initially and then in its own right again) since 1994 and maintained comprehensive levels of support in public opinion polls.

Table 1.1: The percentage of the total number of seats taken by each party at House of Representative Elections, 1983-2000

	1983	1986	1990	1993	1996	2000
LDP	48.9%	58.6%	53.7%	43.6%	47.8%	48.5%
JSP	21.9%	16.6%	26.6%	13.7%	3%	3.9%
DPJ					10.4%	26.5%

In contrast, the JSP seemed to be a party whose support was contained within the 1955 system. In both polls and in the 1990 election result, the party managed to have a period of success (and the party did particularly well in the July 1989 House of Councillors election before the 1990 Lower House election which will be described in Chapter Two.) However, soon after this, the party began to lose support. In opinion polls, its support began to wane and in the 1993 House of Representatives election, the party lost 66 seats which virtually halved the party’s representation in the Lower House. After this election, support for the party in public opinion polls plateaued for a while with around 15% of respondents supporting the party. But as the LDP and JSP coalition progressed into 1996, and the JSP lost the Prime Ministership when Murayama resigned in January 1996, support levels for the JSP dropped dramatically. It could be that by having the Prime Minister within the coalition, the party retained its identity but as soon as the JSP was the junior partner in the coalition, the party was finally rejected by the electorate.

There are further possible explanations for the decline of the JSP which become apparent from the public opinion poll data and election results. Initially the electorate seemed to have been

irritated by the emergence of another new party in 1996 when the DPJ was formed as another new party made politics appear more complicated.

The creation of the DPJ in September 1996, however, did prove to be a serious blow for the JSP. As can be seen in Graph 1.14, despite a weak start, the DPJ managed to gradually increase support from the electorate in public opinion polls. Similarly, and almost despite its poor showings in the *Asahi* polls, the DPJ managed to take 26.5% of the vote in the 2000 House of Representatives election.

Finally, if we return to the beginning of this chapter and look at the level of turnout that was becoming significantly lower in the nineties than before and compare it to the amount of those polled (Graph 1:14) who professed to having no party of support, there is a high correlation between the two. There is clear dissatisfaction towards politics amongst the electorate. This has displayed itself in low levels of party support and low turnout and the JSP seemed to suffer from this more than the LDP. Maybe because the LDP was stronger to start with, it was able to ride through this disengagement and dissatisfaction with politics.

We shall now turn to other variables which can help explain the decline of the JSP but before we do this, we shall examine the last ten years of the JSP in more detail and examine the process by which the DPJ emerged.

Chapter Two

From Old Socialists to New Democrats: Fifteen Years in the Life of the Japanese Left

The previous chapter has analysed the level of support for political parties in Japan from the 1980s onwards and the overwhelming impression from public opinion polls was that the Japanese electorate was increasingly dissatisfied with politics. Furthermore, the public's support for the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) dropped alarmingly, both before the formation of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), and after this party was formed. In this chapter, we shall move our emphasis to analysing the internal dynamics of the JSP and the DPJ. We shall analyse the last few years of the JSP and question what problems were happening within the party. We shall then look at the coalition governments of 1993-1996 and assess the impact that these had on the JSP. We shall analyse some of the attempted realignments and party formations within the non-Communist left-of-centre within the Japanese party system during the 1990s. Finally, we shall assess the new party DPJ and reflect on the make up of the party. This chapter will thus explain the changes in the Japanese left before we shall move in the next three chapters to analyse some of the factors which contributed to the decline of the JSP and the emergence of the DPJ.

The Japan Socialist Party and the 1980s: slow decline combined with unprecedented success.

The 1980s were a period of growing nationalist sentiment in Japan which was enhanced by the Prime Minister from 1982-1987, Nakasone Yasuhiro. Nakasone, a politician from the right of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), was extremely popular and gradually led the LDP to a level of high levels of support and electoral success. Were the JSP to have any success during this period, it had to find a way of competing with this Prime Minister and a resurgent LDP. Later in the same decade, the LDP was plagued by a scandal known as the Recruit Scandal which involved insider share dealing and resulted in the decline of public trust in the party and

forced the resignation of many LDP politicians.¹ This scandal combined with unpopular LDP policies concerning the protection of rice subsidies and in the 1989 House of Councillors election gave the JSP a false sense that its luck had changed and that it had finally come into its own.

Prior to this election, the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) was suffering from a slow and lingering decline. Factional and ideological conflict was hampering the party but there were other reasons why the party was declining. As has been discussed in the Introduction, it was limited by internal problems and a lack of its own support base. It relied upon the trade union association, Sōhyō, for mobilization of the electorate and for funds to support the party. It was a party which lacked dynamism when it came to policy and its ideology and appeared stagnant to the electorate. Although its committed support of the Constitution still retained public backing, its inflexibility meant that the party was not able to gradually change its policies and ideology to remain relevant as Rose has stated is imperative.² The JSP was gradually stagnating, yet there was little discussion within the party whether this should change or whether it was an acceptable state of affairs to stay as it was. It was divided as to its role in the Japanese party system. Was it a party that was interested in gaining power or a party that was there to perform a check-function on the LDP and curtail any excesses that could be caused by one-party-dominant rule? Kubo Wataru believes that this feeling hampered the party from 1986 right through to 1993 and prevented the party having a singular 'voice' vis à vis its political aims.³ There were reform-minded politicians within the JSP such as Kubo and to a lesser degree, Yamahana Sadao, yet it was swept along with the consensus and was unable to

¹ Interestingly, the Recruit Scandal also forced the resignation of a JSP Diet Member, Ueda Takumi, but because he resigned straight away and accepted responsibility, it had no real adverse affects on the party.

² Richard Rose and Thomas T. Mackie, 'Do Parties Persist or Fail? The Big Trade-off Facing Organizations' in Kay Lawson and Peter H. Merkl *When Parties Fail. Emerging Alternative Organizations*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1988, p 534.

³ Kubo Wataru, *Renritsu seiken no shinjitsu*. (The Truth about the Coalition Governments), Yomiuri Shimbunsha, 1998, p172.

push reforms through.

This problem seemed to change with the emergence of Doi Takako as party leader in 1986. She was the first female party leader in Japan and seemed to offer a fresh, reform-minded image.⁴ She was partly responsible for the success of the party in the 1989 election but never managed to become the panacea for the JSP she was expected to be. As can be seen in Table 2.2, in 1989, the party managed to more than double the number of seats than it had managed to win in previous elections, but it needs to be asked why it had achieved this level of success. Clearly when compared with the other Lower and Upper House elections that the party had fought prior to and after the July 1989 election (see Tables 2.1 and 2.2 for comparison), the 1989 election was an abnormal result. Therefore, was this result achieved because of the success of the party, was it because Doi Takako was the first female leader of a Japanese political party or was it due to other factors that the party did so well?

Table 2.1 Number of seats won in House of Representatives (Lower House) elections, 1983-1993

	Lower House 1983	Lower House 1986	Lower House 1990	Lower House 1993
LDP	250	300	275	223
JSP	112	85	136	70

In fact, there was a combination of reasons why the party did so well. The Recruit scandal, a scandal involving insider share dealing which benefitted many politicians, made the electorate feel jaded particularly with the LDP and its association with political corruption. This was combined with a boom interest in politics by women, due to the large number of women candidates (which became known within the media as the Madonna Boom) and the presence of Doi. Two other reasons which aided the JSP were an unpopular value-added tax of 3%

⁴ For analysis of Doi Takako see J A A Stockwin, 'On trying to move mountains: the political career of Doi Takako' *Japan Forum*, Vol. 6, No 1, April 1994, pp21-34.

which the LDP had introduced in April 1989 and an unpopular agricultural liberalization policy which angered one of the LDP's biggest backers, the agricultural co-operative, Nōkyō. As a result of these factors, which were not positive responses to the JSP but reactions against the LDP, the electorate turned towards the JSP. The JSP took a majority in an election for the first time since the 1955 system was formed and had an emphatic victory. In 1986 the party had taken 17.2% of the vote in the Upper House election. In 1989, this more than doubled to 35.1% of the vote. As mentioned above, it seemed as if the party had finally come into its own.

Table 2.2 Number of seats won in the House of Councillors (Upper House) elections, 1983-1992⁵

	Upper House 1983	Upper House 1986	Upper House 1989	Upper House 1992
LDP	70 (139 in total)	72 (142)	36 (109)	69 (108)
JSP	22 (44 in total)	20 (42)	46 (66)	22 (71)

In the same election, twelve candidates backed by the Rengō trade union organization also stood and eleven of them won their seats. Combining the JSP votes with these, the 'left-wing vote' accounted for nearly 40% of the turn-out. But debate remained as to whether this was not a vote for the JSP and the left and rather was an anti-LDP vote.⁶ Yet the party remained oblivious to this important distinction and instead saw it as its rightful victory after so many years. The literature of this period, even in English, reflects some of this triumphalism of the party.⁷ However, Kubo wrote that he believed that it was this victory which was responsible for delaying the reform attempts of the JSP indefinitely.⁸

⁵ As only half of the seats are contested in each Upper House election, the figure given in Table 2.2 is the number of seats and percentage won in that particular election, with the total number of seats that each party holds in the Upper House as a result of the election being the figure in brackets.

⁶ Kubo, *Renritsu seiken no shinjitsu*, p 173.

⁷ For example see J.A.A Stockwin, 'From JSP to SDPJ. The 'New Wave Society' and the 'New' Nihon Shakaitō', *Japan Forum*, Vol. 3, No 2 September 1991, pp 287-300 and J A A Stockwin, 'On trying to move mountains: the political career of Doi Takako' *Japan Forum*, Vol. 6, No 1, April 1994, pp21-34.

⁸ Kubo, *Renritsu seiken no shinjitsu*, p 173.

After the 1989 House of Councillors election, there followed an eighteen month period in which the party did reasonably well at the polls and confirmed the feelings that it did not need to do anything to reform the party. In 1986, as can be seen in Table 2.1, the JSP had done badly due to the popularity of Nakasone. It received only 17.2% of the vote in the Lower House election, amounting to 85 seats. However, in 1990, its boom of 1989 continued with 24.4% of the vote, which gave it 136 seats. For those in the JSP who felt that 1989 was an inevitable victory waiting to happen, the increase in its Lower House seats in 1990 confirmed that its prospects were improving.

This confidence in the party began to fade. Normality was restored when JSP support levels dropped back to around 17% of the vote. (This drop in support has been partly attributed to the debate over the United Nations Peace Keeping Bill, which was passed in that year after nearly two years of debate as a result of the Gulf War and will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three.) But the drop in support for the JSP was to get even worse. Kubo has written that he expected the result in 1993 to be bad but not as bad as it turned out to be.⁹

After a no-confidence vote was passed against Prime Minister Miyazawa in June 1993 because of his unfulfilled promises to implement political and electoral reform, two critical groups split from the LDP, formed their own political parties, fought the ensuing election and did well. Shinseitō was a party of 55 incumbent and new Diet members and was led by Ozawa Ichirō, a former Secretary General of the LDP. Sakigake was led by Takemura Masayoshi and gained 13 seats. These two new parties combined with Hosokawa Morihiro's Japan New Party (JNP), a party which had been formed to fight the 1992 Upper House election and who took 35 seats in 1993. The LDP managed to win most incumbent seats of members who did not defect to a new party, taking 223 seats. In contrast, the JSP did terribly. Whilst the majority of the votes supporting the new parties were from former LDP supporters (those who had supported in many cases the same politicians when they were in the LDP), some JSP support

⁹ Kubo, *Renritsu seiken no shinjitsu*, pp 174-176.

also went in the direction of the new parties. Furthermore, turn-out had dropped since 1990 and this also accounted for the loss of support for the JSP. Its number of seats was nearly halved from its 1990 total but this loss seemed worse because the 1990 election had given it its highest seat total for several decades. As Curtis has said, the election meant it was a party which was,

“too weak to lead, too strong to be ignored”.¹⁰

The Diet was left with no party with an overall majority, even though the LDP was still the largest party and the JSP the second largest party. A coalition government had to be negotiated, but the question remained whether the JSP were to be part of it.

The formation of the Hosokawa Coalition

The coalition that was formed took nearly three weeks to negotiate, which is a sign of the factional fighting which took place behind the scenes. The main groups in the discussion were Hosokawa and Takemura, the leaders of the JNP and Sakigake, Ozawa and Shinseitō, who were backed by Kōmeitō, and the LDP. Sakigake, in many respects, had considerable leverage in the coalition negotiations as it was a small party which had emerged from the LDP. Therefore it shared some familiar ground with the LDP, but had a more progressive policy platform.

The Socialists were not really a part of the coalition negotiations owing to internal fighting over whether its party leader, Yamahana Sadao, should resign to take responsibility for the party losses in the election. Its performance in the election had meant it was overlooked in the true negotiations yet, ironically, its place in the coalition was assured, as without it the non-LDP parties would not have sufficient numbers to gain a majority in the Diet.¹¹ In its place

10 Gerald Curtis *The Logic of Japanese Politics*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1999, pp 101-102.

11 The Socialists' lack of participation in the coalition negotiations has been suggested by Gerald L Curtis to have been minimal, owing to its poor election result. *The Logic of Japanese Politics*, pp 101-102. However, Yamagishi did suggest that Yamahana Sadao, the Socialist leader, participated in

Yamagishi Akira, the Chairman of Rengō, the Japanese Trade Union Council, was very active in trying to establish a coalition which would include all the former opposition parties, notably the JSP, the DSP, Kōmeitō, and Shaminren. He saw this as the opportunity to bring about the unification of the opposition which was something he had been working towards for a long time.

Finally, another party in the negotiations was the media, as it was very influential in passing around rumours which became established as fact.¹²

In the end, the coalition included all the parties except the LDP and the Japan Communist Party (JCP). Within the parties, however, there were some fundamental policy differences that meant that the coalition was unstable from the beginning. Ozawa was an ‘internationalist’ who wanted to turn Japan into a ‘normal’ country with an army that could participate in overseas conflicts and he wanted a two-party system which would force the Japanese electorate to make choices between two political parties. He was interested in political reform for the sake of developing a two-party system. Furthermore, Ozawa’s concept of a two-party system was based on two Conservative parties, the LDP and his new neo-conservative force, and had no scope for a left-wing force similar to the JSP. In contrast, Takemura, who had also left the LDP for the sake of political reform, had a completely different ideal. He wanted to rid Japanese politics of money and see Japan as a sparkling small country that improved the environment and welfare of its citizens. He was committed to the peace constitution and wanted a “benign civilian power abroad”. The viewpoints of Takemura and Ozawa were almost diametrically opposed to each other yet they were united by the fact that they had both

negotiations.

¹² Yamagishi was quoted from a meeting in Okayama Prefecture that Hosokawa would become the coalition’s Prime Minister. He did not in fact say this, yet the rumour persisted and is said to be the reason why Hata Tsutomu stood down as a potential candidate. This was quoted both in an interview with Yamagishi Akira, Former Chairman of Rengō, Diet Offices, Nagata-cho, Tokyo, 12 September 2000, Tokyo and in his book, Yamagishi Akira, *Renritsu shikakenin*. (A Creator of the Coalition Government) Kōdansha, 1995.

left the LDP and were leaders of new parties. Their differences became increasingly apparent throughout the life of the Hosokawa coalition. Combined with these two were the idiosyncratic power of Kōmeitō, which many of the coalition members distrusted, and the peace conscious JSP, who were reeling from its own defeat in the election. As Curtis has said, this was:

“a motley coalition of reformers, political opportunists, socialists, pacifists, internationalists, and others. The potential for conflict within the coalition was obvious from the beginning.”¹³

The Electoral Reform Bill

The Hosokawa coalition members were only united on one policy issue and that was the introduction of political and electoral reform legislation. However, their positions as to the content of an electoral and political reform bill were not as unified. They saw the need to change the electoral system and to try to limit corruption by the introduction of some form of state funding for parties, but the exact electoral system to be introduced and the level of state funding were issues upon which they found it difficult to agree. They managed to pass a bill within five months of the coalition being formed in December 1994, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five. The bill introduced a new electoral system based on 300 single-member districts and 200 proportional representation seats. Legislation was also introduced to implement state funding for political parties as an anti-corruption measure. These bills are considered to be the only real achievement of the coalition government and once this Bill was passed, the coalition lost its direction and its members began to argue between themselves. The resignation of Hosokawa was the spark which led to the eventual break up of the coalition government.

The Break-up of the Hosokawa Coalition

Before the collapse of the Hosokawa coalition can be understood, it is important to understand the existence and implications of the *kaiha* parliamentary caucus in the Japanese Diet. Most

¹³ Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics*, p 114.

members who are elected to the Diet are members of a political party yet within the Diet they are organized not in parties but in *innai kaiha*. There are separate *kaiha* in each House. The members and officers of each *kaiha* are registered with the speaker of each House. For the majority of politicians their *kaiha* and their party are one and the same and for this reason the institution of the *kaiha* has been largely ignored by political observers.¹⁴ When a Diet member votes in the House, he votes through his *kaiha* and not through his party. Therefore it is conceivable that there can be fission or fusion of political groupings within the Diet that can influence voting on legislation should *kaiha* be created, altered in size, or abolished even if there is no obvious change to the political party.

The Hosokawa coalition collapsed, apparently for reasons of corruption. A scandal about Hosokawa's financial affairs was uncovered in the Press, and this became the immediate reason for his resignation. But other reasons also existed. Hosokawa was becoming increasingly undermined by disagreements between the two reformers, Ozawa and Takemura. Hosokawa had been chosen as Prime Minister because he was a man whom both right and left-wing parties in the coalition could trust. But in every aspect he was thwarted in his plans by lack of cooperation from the Socialists and the problems of the Ozawa-Takemura feud. Hosokawa gradually began to effectively destabilise the coalition by getting closer to Ozawa than the left-wing members of the coalition. Hosokawa claimed that he resigned so that the coalition would have to be restructured and that the Socialists would not have the same amount of leverage that they had had.

His resignation caused a power vacuum and was a turning-point in Japanese political history. Most political commentators agree that had the LDP not managed to return to power in a coalition with the JSP in June 1994, two months after the resignation of Hosokawa, the LDP would have atrophied beyond any political return. Its Diet members would have lost support from the electorate. Its access to the bureaucracy and policy-making decisions would have

14 *Gikai Seido Hyakunenshi*, Okurashō Insatsu Kyoku, 1990, pp 212-213

become more limited and this would have weakened the ‘iron triangle’ of the relationship between big business, the bureaucracy and government. The events which caused its return to power were the result of a strategic mistake by Ozawa. He tried to restructure the Japanese party system by bringing together all the members of the coalition, apart from the Socialists, into one large group that could compete with the LDP and create a two-party system. He did this by forming a *kaiha* in the Diet from which the Socialists were excluded and he called this Kaishin.

Kaishin resulted in the collapse of the coalition government. Before this happened, Ozawa reputedly first tried to encourage further defections from the LDP, most notably attempting to encourage the faction leader, Watanabe Michio to join him in April-June 1994.¹⁵ He also tried to pressure the Socialists to back the policy platform of the coalition, in particular an increase in the consumption tax. He did this because he had mistakenly calculated that the Socialists would stay in the coalition, regardless of the amount of pressure that was applied to them, because they enjoyed being in power. Furthermore, he felt that some of them would split from the JSP and join the new party that he intended to become the end product of the Kaishin *kaiha*.

Despite this aim of Ozawa’s, the Socialists bided their time and overcame the taunts from Ozawa to leave the coalition. It supported the vote in April 1994 to allow Hata Tsutomu to become Prime Minister as a successor to Hosokawa. But it was at this point that the *kaiha* took on great significance in Japanese politics. The creation of Kaishin on the same day as the prime ministerial vote broke up the coalition for good. Ozawa’s *kaiha* angered the Socialists so much that the party left the coalition and this created many knock on effects within the

¹⁵ According to the Asahi Shinbun, in May 1994, Ozawa was in discussion with Watanabe Michio to leave the LDP and join Ozawa’s party. There is, however, some confusion as to the type of politician Watanabe was, and his influence on politics. This suggests he was seen as a reformer by Ozawa yet Gerald Curtis describes him as having an image of “an ideological conservative and political operator who followed the tried and true practices of traditional LDP factional politics”. Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics*, pp 109-110.

Japanese political world. Firstly, this left the JSP back in the political shadow of opposition. It also left the coalition government as a minority government. Initially, this move meant there was a minority government with Hata Tsutomu as Prime Minister which both the JSP and the LDP were in opposition to. But within two months, the creation of Kaishin paved the way for two much more significant results. Firstly, it allowed the LDP to return to power in an almost unthinkable LDP/JSP/Sakigake coalition in June 1994, when the Hata minority government became unviable. Secondly, it divided the JSP. With the Socialists in an uneasy coalition with its traditional enemy the LDP, tensions within the party became increasingly apparent and groupings began to emerge that favoured reform, new parties and fission of the JSP and conflicted with the more conservative members of the party.

The LDP/JSP/Sakigake Coalition

The LDP/JSP/Sakigake coalition, established in June 1994, was formed as a pragmatic attempt by both the LDP and the JSP to get into power. The JSP were enticed into the coalition by the LDP's promise of allowing it to nominate the first socialist Prime Minister since 1947-1948. The LDP saw the coalition as a means to the end of returning to the seat of government, to avoid the possible atrophy discussed above as a result of losing access to government, policy making influence and the iron triangle. But this coalition was a strange marriage of convenience and meant two parties with seemingly incompatible agendas were now in coalition. Sakigake further complicated this coalition because even without the 13 Sakigake Diet members, the JSP and LDP had a majority in both Houses of the Diet so the inclusion of Sakigake was more a result of the factional feuding of spring 1994 rather than because of any necessity of it being in the coalition. It was rewarded for having also left the Hosokawa coalition.

One of the most significant points in which the coalition was untenable was in defence policy. The JSP allowed this tension to be solved by Murayama declaring in July 1994, a few weeks after the formation of the coalition, that the JSP would accept the constitutionality of the SDF

and would drop its traditional opposition to the legalising of the national anthem and flag. He also declared his intention to maintain the US Security Treaty. The effects of such a radical turn around of policy were far-reaching and will be discussed in Chapter Three. This move also led to JSP members lining up against JSP members and it became a problem of old members who grudgingly supported Murayama's pragmatic actions as a means for the party to be in power, against the younger members who wanted genuine reform and did not think that such a pragmatic compromise of coalescing with the LDP would engender reform.

1994-1996: The Murayama Supporters and the younger JSP members. Tensions based on reform preferences.

Prior to and during the defections and formations of new parties on the left between 1993 and 1996, the politicians in the JSP who were least reform minded were the traditional left-wing of the party whereas the conservatives were very much pro-reform of the party.

Supporters of Murayama who were extremely supportive of the JSP's participation in the coalition government and who were traditionally left of centre in the JSP were in conflict with their more radical juniors in the party as they wanted to maintain the status quo. Indeed, it was the more right-of-centre members who were committed to reform. This situation created a tension within the JSP that became difficult to overcome. Reformers felt that despite having tried to get into government for so long to reform Japanese politics, their attempts to do this were being thwarted by the concessions they had to make to the LDP about such things as Murayama having to state that the JSP recognised the position of the SDF as acceptable within the Constitution. Thus it was the right-wing younger members within the JSP who were trying to come up with radical opposition proposals to the coalition government. Many of the new groupings and attempted parties that emerged between 1994 and 1996 began as a result of these radical attempts of the right-wing of the JSP to reform the party or create a new party. The JSP had thus created its own tension by going into coalition with the LDP. We shall now

examine these new left-wing party attempts that emerged between 1994 and 1996. We shall examine the impact that these groupings had on the decline of the JSP and ask if the new groups paved the way for the DPJ.

Shin Minshu Rengō

Shin Minshu Rengo was a group which attempted to form a new party from within the JSP in 1994. The party never quite managed to get off the ground, yet even had events not been so unfortunate, the party was likely to fail. The group had its roots in the members of the JSP who had voted against Murayama in the June 1994 debate for the Prime Minister and had voted either shiro shiro, shiro umi or umi umi in the two rounds of votes to select a Prime Minister. Shiro refers to those who abstained (shiro meaning white) and umi means those who voted for Kaifu Toshiki, the candidate of the non-LDP/JSP/Sakigake coalition parties (umi being an alternative reading of the first character of Kaifu's name).¹⁶ It has been suggested that the group who had voted against Murayama in this manner were badly treated by Murayama's supporters and decided to create their own *kaiha* within the Lower House in autumn 1994. This attempted *kaiha* was called Shin Minshu Rengō.

Within Japanese political parties there is a tendency for politicians to split into various informal 'policy study' groups. These serve various purposes, ranging from informal faction-like groups to groups which are hoping to break away from parties and are forming themselves into an interim faction such as the move engineered by Ozawa in April 1994 when he formed Kaishin which has been discussed above. It would seem that this study group method was the course favoured by Yamahana Sadao who on August 31 1994 set up the 'New Democratic Union' (Shin-Minshu Rengō) to be a study group within the JSP. Yamahana's actions were initially in an attempt to support the JSP General Secretary, Kubo Wataru, who was attempting to establish some kind of party which would act as a third force in Japanese

16 Interview with Takagi Hiroshi, Aichi Prefectural Diet Member, Aichi Prefectural Offices, Nagoya, 31 July 2000.

politics along with the LDP and the other centrist forces which were about to merge together as Shinshintō.¹⁷ Shinshintō united several smaller parties and meant that the JSP now had to compete against two large conservative parties, Shinshintō and the LDP. As Shinshintō had an image of reform, it proved to be a kick-start for the reform efforts of the Socialists, lest it be left in the shadows of conservatism. At this point in time Kubo was very supportive of Yamahana and his supporters' attempts to realign the left, and he declared that he would not mind if this new party would result in the dissolution of the JSP.

Initially Yamahana was intending to form the party within a month and had the support of up to 60 MPs, ranging from some members of the Japan New Party, the Democratic Socialist Party (which had also predominantly joined Shinshintō) and Sakigake. Yamahana found that when the time came only 20 MPs were willing to support him openly. This Yamahana 'policy study group' formation resulted in the left-wing anti-reformers of the party forming their own study group; the 'Murayama Government and Social Democratic Liberal Politics Promotion Society'. Therefore the divide of the pro-reform movements and the anti-reform movement within the JSP became apparent.

Yamahana continued his activities to create a new party throughout November and December 1994 but there was little success. The political world was unpredictable, as Ozawa was in the process of creating Shinshintō. It has been charged that Yamahana needed to be quick off the mark in creating the new party or he would have been forced to support Shinshintō as that incorporated the DSP, which Yamahana and his followers regularly supported. But his non-action could also be seen as an anti-Shinshintō move. Had Yamahana created the new party, he could have brought down the Murayama Government. This could have resulted in a united opposition, the newly created Shinshintō, gaining power and for this reason Yamahana opted not to do anything with his new party until the New Year, when Shinshintō was established as a party and the situation could be better predicted. Therefore one of his motives, both for the

¹⁷ *Japan Times*, September 1 1994.

delay and for postponing the launch of the party, could have been to check the strength of Ozawa Ichirō, who was the power broker politician forming Shinshintō. Also it could have been because pressure was being applied to Yamahana and his group from the left-wing of the JSP not to do anything which would damage the coalition government.

In January 1995 events finally began to take off. On January 1, Yamahana declared that they intended to leave the JSP by February 11. Murayama hinted at the expulsion of Yamahana and his supporters from the party if they continued with their plans. Furthermore, Yamahana was losing support from his supporters as even Kubo began to worry that the formation of Shin Minshu Rengō could bring down the coalition government. On 16 January, Yamahana and 24 supporters met in the Capital Tōkyu Hotel, near the Diet and announced that on the morning of the 17th they would submit their papers of resignation from the JSP and register themselves as a new *kaiha*. They did submit their resignations but after this no further mention of the Shin Minshu Rengō can be found in papers. This is due to the fact that on the same morning Kobe was destroyed in one of the worst earthquakes in recent Japanese history.

In the *Japan Times* of January 18 there is an article that the JSP had decided to stop arguing and concentrate on the crisis management of the earthquake. This could of course be expected, as there is no way that the politicians could continue to argue amongst themselves whilst thousands of people were killed, injured, and made homeless. Yet once the initial crisis of the earthquake had been calmed, it is reasonable to expect that some attempts could be made to get the Party going again.

Their failure to restart the party lies in an historical comparison. According to Takagi Hiroshi, an Aichi Prefectural Diet member in 2000 and the administrator of Shin Minshu Rengō in 1995, their daily meetings at the Capital Tōkyu Hotel became increasingly desperate after 17th January.¹⁸ Kaieda Banri, a young first term Diet member who had won a seat under the Japan

¹⁸ Interview with Takagi Hiroshi, Aichi Prefectural Diet Member, Aichi Prefectural Offices, Nagoya,

New Party¹⁹ in 1993, wanted to continue with Shin Minshu Rengō but Kawabata Tatsuo was strongly opposed to this. Kawabata had been one of the founding members of the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), which had been formed in January 1960 as a right-wing splinter group from the JSP. In October of 1959, the conservative Socialist leader, Asanuma Inejiro, had been assassinated days before the JSP's Congress. In Kawabata's opinion, forming a new party straight after the situation in Kobe was like the DSP being formed straight after the tragedy of Asanuma's assassination. The DSP, which had opposed Asanuma whilst it was in the same party, felt as if a cloud of ill portent had passed over its party's opposition to the JSP.²⁰

Shin Minshu Rengō thus failed. Kubo Wataru held on to their *kaiha todoke* (the form expressing their desire to leave the JSP and form a new *kaiha*) without processing it and returned it to them about a month later. The group was never mentioned again, and in an interview in April 2000, one of its key members, Kaieda Banri remembered little about the attempt, needed to rely on his secretary for the name of the administrator, Takagi Hiroshi, and said that the only person who would have known the facts was Yamahana Sadao who died in 1999.²¹

What of lasting significance can we draw from this failed attempt? Clearly this was a group of JSP Diet members who wanted reform. To them, Murayama represented the conservative nature of the JSP and did not value their aspirations of reform. But is there a connection between those who voted against Murayama in 1994 and those who decided to join Shin Minshu Rengō and those who eventually joined the DPJ?

31 July 2000.

¹⁹ He actually won an independent seat but soon switched to Japan New Party.

²⁰ It must also be noted that of the politicians (See Table 2.3) who expressed an interest in joining Shin Minshu Rengō, four of them were from Hyogo Prefecture which was the one hit by the Kobe earthquake.

²¹ Interview with Kaieda Banri, Member of the Diet, Diet offices, Nagata-cho, Tokyo, April 20, 2000.

Table 2.3

Members of the JSP who expressed an interest in joining the Shin Minshu Rengō

	District	Electoral Wins	Age	Voted for Kaifu in First Ballot	Voted for Kaifu in Second Ballot	Participate in Shin Minshu Rengō/ (Joined the DPI in 1996)
Takeuchi Takeshi	Ibaragi 3	2	45	Yes	Yes	Yes (No)
Yamaguchi Tsuruo	Gunma 1	11	71	Unknown	Unknown	Yes (No)
Yamahana Sadao	Chiba 3	2	71	Yes	No	Yes (Died)
Ito Shigeru	Tokyo 11	7	57	Unknown	Unknown	Yes (PR seat JSP)
Tsuji Kazuhiko	Ishikawa 1	8	68	Unknown	Unknown	Yes (Yes, SMD in Fukui)
Kitazawa Seikō	Nagano 2	2	51	Yes	Yes	Yes (No)
Maepima Hideyuki	Shizuoka 1	4	58	Unknown	Unknown	Yes (PR seat in JSP)
Amioka Yu	Aichi 1	2	49	Unknown	Unknown	Yes (No)
Sato Kanji	Aichi 2	3	65	Unknown	Unknown	Yes (No)
Kawashima Minoru	Aichi 3	9	51	Unknown	Unknown	Yes (No)
Hayakawa Masaru	Aichi 4	2	57	Yes	Yes	No (No)
Ishii Satoshi	Aichi 6	2	45	Unknown	Unknown	Yes (No)
Inoue Issei	Osaka 2	4	56	Yes	Yes	Yes (No)
Doi Ryuichi	Osaka 7	4	62	Yes	Yes	Yes (Yes, SMD in Hyogo)
Nagai Takanobu	Hyogo 1	2	54	Yes	Yes	Yes (No)
Goto Shigeru	Hyogo 3	5	63	Unknown	Unknown	Yes (No)
Yoshioka Kenji	Hyogo 4	6	68	Unknown	Unknown	Yes (No)
Nosaka Kōken	Hyogo 5	2	55	Yes	Yes	Yes (No)

Table 2.3 includes all Diet Members who expressed interest in joining Shin Minshu Rengō in January 1995.²² There are two inferences that can be made from this data. Firstly, those who expressed a desire to join Shin Minshu Rengō did seem to have been a group that disliked Murayama. Secondly, those who joined Shin Minshu Rengō were particularly numerous in the Kansai and Aichi regions, traditional bastions of the JSP, with Aichi later to become a

²² *Asahi Shinbun*, January 17 1995.

stronghold of the DPJ. But did these Diet members go on and join the DPJ in 1996 when a new left-of-centre party was finally created?

The overwhelming conclusion is that those who joined Yamahana in January 1995 to leave the JSP did not join the DPJ. 13 (72%) of those who attempted to join Shin Minshu Rengō did not join the DPJ. 2 members (11%) stayed in the JSP in PR seats and 2 members did join the DPJ in the particularly sought after SMDs. There is no way of knowing whether the 13 members who showed interest in Shin Minshu Rengō attempted to join the DPJ and were rejected under the *haijō* policy which shall be discussed below. Nonetheless, the conclusion of Shin Minshu Rengō, is that it was a failed attempt within the JSP for reform and seemed to have little influence on the future format of the DPJ and reform attempts within the JSP. What remains significant about Shin Minshu Rengō though, is that it was the first significant attempt to reform the left.

Akamatsu's Group

Another attempt at a party from within the JSP was made by Akamatsu Hiroyuki. This attempt to create a new party was first brought to the attention of the author by Takagi Hiroshi, a member of the Prefectural Diet of Aichi. He ghost-wrote a book on behalf of Akamatsu detailing the ideology of the group. This book is not available on the National Diet catalogue, and Takagi could not give me a copy as he had only one himself.²³

This group appears to have been formed by Akamatsu Hiroyuki, using Kubo Wataru as a figure-head, to bring about a third non-LDP coalition government in June 1994. Little else can be ascertained about the group. The group is mentioned in the *Asahi Shinbun* of the 16 June 1994. The *Asahi Nenkan* of 1995 suggests that it was a faction of the JSP²⁴ and that all

23 Akamatsu Hiroyuki did not respond to the contact I made requesting interviews, or a copy of the book.

24 *Asahi Nenkan*, 1995, p 258.

members joined the Shin Minshu Rengō.²⁵ Nonetheless, this group needs to be considered as a part of the path of new reform-minded politicians which emerged from the JSP between 1994 and 1996.

Shintō Tsukuri

Shintō tsukuri is what is referred to as the attempts made internally within the JSP to create a 'superficial' new party in 1995 and 1996 in order to appeal to voters that it was reforming the JSP from within. The only real result of this move was the renaming of the party from the equivalent of Japan Socialist Party (Nihon Shakaitō) to Social Democratic Party of Japan (Shakai Minshutō).²⁶ In effect, it was a last ditch attempt by the Murayama group to placate the reformers and prevent a split of the party. No specific details are really known about who was involved behind the scenes of this attempt to reform the party, and it rather seems to be a party-wide attempt to arrange events and create new supporters for the party. At the time, the JSP could see the attempts being made by the British Labour Party to remove their commitments to nationalization and nuclear disarmament and the party was very keen to emulate these attempts.²⁷

Sakigake 1993-1996

It would be impossible to understand the transformation of the Japanese left without an understanding of the small party, Sakigake, which has had a far greater influence on politics than its size would suggest. When it was first formed, it had 13 members. It increased in the General Election of 1993 to 20 members and in the 1995 House of Councillors election

²⁵ *Asahi Nenkan*, 1995, p 241.

²⁶ This in fact reflects the name change that the party had effected in English in the Party Conference in January 1991. Between 1991 and 1996, the party was called the Social Democratic Party of Japan in English and The Japan Socialist Party in Japanese. In this thesis, we are consistently referring to it as the Japan Socialist Party for clarity, rather than attempting to use the two names which is potentially confusing.

²⁷ The author was asked to talk about the attempts by the Labour party at a Shintō tsukuri event in Okayama in March 1996.

managed to get three members in the Upper House. By the 2000 General Election, the founder, Takemura Masayoshi, was the only member of the party to stand in the General Election from the party. The party went from being a small break-off from the LDP to becoming an (unnecessary) member of the coalition which caused the collapse of the non-LDP coalition in 1994 to virtually disappearing in 1996 after the majority of its members joined DPJ. Sakigake was thus never a numerically large party but its influence on government and reform was very strong during the mid-nineties and even in 2001 its legacy was having a pervasive influence on the workings of politics.

The first reason Sakigake has been so pervasive is the value it attributed to research, policy formation and the future image of the DPJ. When Kan Naoto became Health and Welfare Minister as part of the First Hashimoto Cabinet, he was able to turn the tables on the traditional induction of Ministers by bureaucrats. Instead of reading the inaugural speech that had been written for him by the Ministry, he had Sakigake policy advisors write one in which he brought to the notice of the public an issue that was going to make him famous and a champion of the average citizen. Sakigake had been doing research for a while about the Green Cross Haemophilic Aids problem which, up till then, had been covered up by the Ministry of Health and Welfare. Therefore, as soon as he was made Minister, he was able to say that he intended to force an enquiry into the problem and bring anybody guilty of negligence to justice.²⁸ It was this crusade against the Japanese bureaucracy which made Kan so famous and was why he was such an important 'face' for the new DPJ. He became synonymous with research and battling against the embedded structures of the bureaucracy.

Sakigake also influenced the formation of the DPJ in other ways. Members of Sakigake who eventually joined the DPJ, were all very nostalgic and appreciative of their backgrounds.²⁹

²⁸ Interview with Masuo Kazuhiro, DPJ employee, DPJ Headquarters, Nagata-cho Tokyo, 12 September 2000.

²⁹ Interview with Masuo Kazuhiro, DPJ employee, DPJ Headquarters, Nagata-cho Tokyo, 12 September 2000. Interview with Honda Hirao, secretary to Edano Yukio, Diet offices, 13 September

Iguchi Masako talked of the culture shock of joining the Democratic Party of Japan after working for Sakigake, as there had been high level of policy discussion within Sakigake. Party workers would sit and have discussions which were not monopolised by party leaders allowing each member to express his or her own opinion. She also compared Sakigake with the JSP and said:

“the JSP has nothing to do with policy, just ideology.”³⁰

It seems that compared to Sakigake, any party was not as policy orientated. Sakigake was a dynamic experience to be part of because, according to its participants, it was full of people who were intensely interested in politics and was also a combination of both young and old liberals. Iguchi felt that policy formulation has taken a backward step in the DPJ, as it has returned to becoming more ideological than Sakigake had been, although she did stress that this was still not as ideological as the JSP. Nonetheless, the clear image those involved with Sakigake had of the party did not bode well for any other organisation that they were later in. This will be discussed below as Sakigake was part of a faction within the DPJ. But beside from its effects on the factionalism of the DPJ, Sakigake influenced the emergence of the party through its attitude to the policy of *haijō* which shall now be discussed.

The creation of the DPJ. The Policy of *Haijō*

We will now turn to an account of how the Democratic Party of Japan was formed. We will analyse who was allowed into the party and why. An understanding of this policy is important as the screening of entry of politicians into the DPJ was unprecedented. No other political group during the whole of the political turmoil of the 1990s had made any attempt to limit members in terms of their ideological or policy positions. All other new political parties allowed anybody who was interested into their party and felt that there would be strength in numbers. The DPJ alone, had a policy of limiting entry according to key factors of attitudes towards political reform and, it is said, age and the number of previous electoral wins. This is

2000. Interviews with Arakawa Miki and Iguchi Masako. Both held in the Diet Offices, Nagata-cho, Tokyo. 9 April 2001. Both Arakawa and Iguchi work for the DPJ, yet were former Diet member's secretaries.

30 Interview with Iguchi Masako, employee of DPJ, Diet Offices, Nagata-cho, Tokyo, 9 April 2001.

what was known as the policy of *haijō* and was seen as a highly contentious decision by the majority of other left-wing politicians and parties, as well as some who were involved in the party. Here, we will discuss the positions of each of the major groupings towards this policy before analysing the outcome of the discussions. We shall then analyse whether this policy of *haijō* was beneficial or detrimental to the long-term prospects of the party.

The formation of the DPJ has been extensively documented by the insider to the party, Igarashi Fumihiko.³¹ This book was written to coincide with the launch of the party and was used as an opportunity to voice the policy concerns, aims, and ideals of the new party. For this reason, the book must be taken with a degree of scepticism yet it still remains a key primary source as to the organization of the party and some of the decisions that were taken prior to its launch. As well as describing the events leading up to the party and those who became involved in the launch, its value to this study is its detailed description of the policy of *haijō*.

Igarashi says that the beginnings of the Democratic Party lie in the younger politicians in Sakigake, although the party did go through considerable twists and turns before it finally emerged. These young politicians felt at home in the reform-minded atmosphere of Sakigake yet they felt stymied by being in coalition with the LDP and JSP and felt that their ability to formulate policy was restricted. At the end of 1995, these young politicians began to group around Hatoyama Yukio with the intention of forming a new party.

Originally Hatoyama was discussing the possibility of a new party with Funada Hajime of Shinshintō. Funada was initially very passionate about starting a new party but was very angry when his intentions were leaked to the press. He said that he would not be able to join the new party because his opinions on key issues such as diplomacy and the Japan US Security Treaty were irreconcilable with those of Hatoyama. It is more likely, however, that his eventual decision not to join the party was because he wanted to be the leader of the party and there

31 Igarashi Fumihiko, *Kore wa minshutō da.*, Tokyo, Taiyō Zenkaku Shuppan, 1996.

was disagreement about this. He was more senior than Hatoyama as he had six previous electoral wins compared to Hatoyama's three. But Hatoyama was a fourth generation politician and the grandson of a former Prime Minister and it was thought that he would have more 'pulling power' than Funada. Funada refused to be part of the new party. Consequently, when this connection with Shinshintō was dissolved it began to be assumed that the new party would be a home for former JSP and Sakigake members. This image of a new 'left-wing' party did not last for long because in January 1996, the link to the new party of Hatoyama Kunio, Yukio's brother, was revealed by the press. Consequently the party lost its pure left-wing image. Hatoyama Kunio was in Shinshintō and was a neo-conservative. He was to have a large influence on who would join the new party.

Hatoyama Kunio was concerned about the left-wing image of the party. He made the policy of *haijō* or exclusion. This policy eventually alienated the new DPJ from other left-wing groups who were not allowed to join and divided the party internally between those who thought that *haijō* was an acceptable policy and those who were strongly opposed to it.

The main parties involved in the creation of the DPJ were the JSP, Sakigake, younger members who had been in the Japan New Party who did not join in Shinshintō, and some members from the LDP. *Haijō* revolved around the debate whether politicians were to be allowed into the new party as *marugoto*, (the whole party en masse), or as individuals who applied for admission.

Haijō became a debate concerned with the age of the politicians, their seniority in the Diet, and their ideological attitudes, and sometimes, these became blurred at the edges. Physical age became incorrectly associated with inflexible and hard-line policy attitudes associated with the JSP. This became a justification for leaving people out of the party for various concerns. Some leaders and politicians were concerned about the 'image problem' of old politicians by the electorate and thought that they would threaten the success of the whole party. Others were

concerned about politicians with many electoral wins behind them, since they would feel that their opinion was more important than that of junior politicians and consequently could drown out the voices of younger people. The concerns were also connected to the problem of whether or not to allow in the aged and politically experienced leaders of JSP and Sakigake; Murayama and Takemura.

The different instigators of the new party had very different opinions on who should be allowed in and whether any groups should be allowed in *marugoto*. They either wanted all politicians to have to gain individual entry to the party (the right-wing position), allow Sakigake but not the JSP to enter *marugoto*, or allow both the JSP and Sakigake to enter *marugoto* (the left-wing position). This latter position was one which allowed anybody who wanted to join the party to join without any conditions of entry being dictated. We shall first turn to this position.

Yokomichi Takahiro was the main proponent of the *marugoto* policy. He was heavily backed by the trade union general council, Rengō, and, in particular, former Sōhyō-based unions. For this reason, he felt that anybody who wanted to join, from whichever party, should be allowed in. He felt that the policy of *haijō* was prejudiced against politicians with a union background. Yokomichi argued strongly against the policy of *haijō* when interviewed in 2000.³² In fact, the group who supported *haijō* felt that trade union backing would taint the party with old images of the JSP, and would allow politicians to enter the party who were unable to develop their own policies and relied on the unions for support and financial backing.

Part way between complete *haijō* and free entry was the position of Kan Naoto. He felt that JSP members should be vetted, but all Sakigake members should be allowed into the party

³² Interview with Yokomichi Takahiro, Deputy Leader of the DPJ, Diet offices, Nagata-cho, July 26 2000.

because of their attitudes towards political reform.³³ He felt that it would be acceptable for Takemura to enter the party for this reason, but was opposed to the entry of Murayama on the grounds that he was not representative of the reform movement as he had carried out little reform whilst Prime Minister. Sonoda, Tōkai, Mihara and Tanaka Shūsei of Sakigake were also quite conservative and were resistant to let the JSP join the DPJ. At first they were happy to join the DPJ, but obviously wanted *marugoto* for Sakigake. Eventually, for the reason that there was no *marugoto* for Sakigake, they did not join.

On the right, Hatoyama Kunio and Funada Hajime (even though he was not eventually part of the party), were the most opposed to *marugoto* entry. They believed that everyone should apply for membership regardless of their old party, and in this manner, politicians could be rejected according to their ideological preferences and their potential image as reformers to the electorate. Hatoyama Yukio was heavily criticised for being so dogmatic about this viewpoint. It was felt that he had followed this policy only because he was following in the footsteps of his brother. Honda Hirao, policy advisor of Edano Yukio, said in 2000 that he could not believe that Hatoyama Yukio had followed that policy, because he had been close to Takemura in Sakigake and they had had a very co-operative relationship.³⁴ Nonetheless, individually assessed membership eventually won through and when questioned about the policy, Hatoyama Yukio said that whilst it was an extremely pragmatic policy, he did not feel that it had damaged the party.³⁵

Despite much criticism, however, there are those who feel that had *haijō* not happened, DPJ would never have been founded. *Haijō* allowed all the reformers on the left, and some from the right, to join together in a party which showed a certain degree of policy cohesion. This was the first party since the Japan New Party that was formed according to such ideals, and

³³ Interview with Kan Naoto, 25 July 2000. Diet Offices.

³⁴ Interview with Honda Hirai, 13 September 2000, Diet Offices of Edano Yukio.

³⁵ Interview with Hatoyama Yukio, Leader of the DPJ, DPJ, Headquarters, Nagata-cho, Tokyo, July 29 2000.

was not merely a random collection of politicians who were in a party merely for reasons of loyalty to a particular party leader. This gave the new party an image of robustness from the start. All the young Sakigake politicians such as Edano and Maehara were told by party leaders to join DPJ, even if they did not want to, so that they would retain their seats.³⁶

Table 2.4 Comparisons of JSP members who joined and did not join the DPJ

Average number of wins of JSP Diet members who did not join the DPJ (n=35)	Average age of JSP Diet members who did not join the DPJ (n=35)	Average number of wins of JSP Diet members who did join the DPJ (n=20)	Average age of JSP Diet members who did join the DPJ (n=20)
4.71	63.71	2.95	57.8

The policy of *haijō* and the influence that it had on the eventual DPJ becomes clearer when the former JSP members who joined the DPJ and those who did not are compared. The *haijō* policy supposedly rejected politicians according to their future image within the party: age and experience were reasons to include or exclude members and younger politicians with less experience were considered to be more ‘DPJ-like’ than older politicians who would seemingly be tarred with the dogma of their old party. Nowhere was this truer than in the party’s absorption of former JSP members. As discussed above, this group were the people who the new DPJ party bosses most wanted to restrict *marugoto* entry to. Whilst it is impossible to know which JSP Diet members attempted to join the DPJ in 1996, as this was strictly a private process, when we analyse the JSP members who did join the DPJ and those who did not there are marked differences. Table 2.4 shows these figures. What is immediately obvious is that it was the younger members in the JSP who joined the DPJ. Furthermore, it was those who had less Diet experience who joined the DPJ. The most significant point though is that of the 20 who did join the DPJ, 15 of them (75%) had been elected to the JSP in the 1990 election and at the time of the formation of the DPJ had two electoral wins behind them. The Diet members elected to the JSP in 1990 formed their own ‘faction’ which was known as the New Wave

³⁶ Interview with Masuo Kazuhiro, Former party worker for Sakigake and DPJ party worker, DPJ Headquarters, Nagata-cho, Tokyo, 12 September 2000.

Society.³⁷ Stockwin described this group of politicians and we have discussed it above. Not all members elected in 1990 were part of the New Wave Society but there was a remarkable homogeneity amongst those who did. Nine of the members were lawyers and only two had been unionists. The majority were from what Stockwin describes as ‘professional or intellectual career backgrounds’. In total there were 29 members in the New Wave Society. It is therefore possible that the 15 Diet members who joined the DPJ from the JSP with two wins behind them had been members of the New Wave Society.³⁸

The formation of the DPJ and its initial policy objectives.

The Democratic Party of Japan was finally formed in 1996. It did reasonably well in its first election, approximately three weeks after the party launched itself. It managed to take 55 seats: mostly candidates won who had defected from other parties, along with a few new candidates. (The party became much bigger, as will be discussed below, by the break-up of Shinshintō and the absorption of the Hata group into the DPJ in 1998.)

The initial policy aims of the DPJ were proclaimed to be:

- rationalised government
- a pension scheme that would provide sufficient benefits to the pensioner whilst also accumulating sufficient funds to distribute to all contributors
- a health system geared to the post-war generation
- an education system which would provide more freedom for children
- a recognition of Japan’s past whilst also maintaining the peacekeeping nature of the Japanese Constitution

³⁷ J A A Stockwin, ‘From JSP to SDPJ: The New Wave Society and the ‘New’ Nihon Shakaitō’, *Japan Forum*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1991.

³⁸ As a further means of assessing whether the DPJ accepted a certain ‘type’ of membership, Stockwin’s 1992 analysis of JSP factions, the Doi faction was considered to be one of the more right-wing factions. Despite this, she stayed in the JSP and became its leader again after the break which formed the DPJ. J A A Stockwin, ‘The Japan Socialist Party: Resurgence After Long Decline’ in Ronald J Hrebenar, *The Japanese Party System*. ed 2, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1992.

- a deepening of Japanese/US relations.

With the exception of the point about the Constitution, all of these policy aspirations were idealistic and lacked any concrete detail about how they would be introduced. Igarashi did make the point that they did not want to be like the JSP, which only criticised what others tried to do and had no policy aspirations of its own. These policy aspirations are also articulated in a book published by the DPJ in 2000.³⁹ There had been no change in the policy platform since the creation of the party and the publication of the document, and very little progress or change is reflected through analysis of these two documents.

The enlargement of the DPJ.

In April 1998, the Democratic Party of Japan was enlarged when it absorbed the Hata group, who had briefly been the Sun Party (Taiyō) since their break with Ozawa the year before, and the Yuai Kaigi group (the former DSP group from within Shinshintō). For the first time since 1960, members from the old JSP and the DSP were now in the same political party and as will be discussed in Chapter Four, the labour unions now had only one party to support at elections. With this expansion of the party, the DPJ became the second largest party next to the LDP, and in June 2000, in the first Lower House election that it fought in this enlarged state, it increased its seat total in the Lower House to 126 seats. Thus it was roughly the size the JSP was from the late seventies onwards. The DPJ lost some ground in the 2001 House of Councillors election. It went up from winning 47 to 59 seats but this was not such an emphatic victory as others had been. This can largely be accounted for by the fact that Koizumi Junichirō had taken over as Prime Minister in April 2001 and this had resulted in a surge of support for the LDP.

The effects of enlargement on the DPJ.

The DPJ gradually has become quite factionalised. Factions have always been an inevitable

³⁹ Yukio Hatoyama, *Atarashi seifu wo jitsugen suru tame ni*, DPJ, January 2000.

part of Japanese politics but the DPJ factions in 2001 were beginning to appear more similar to the LDP factions based on loyalties, financial support, and support for leadership elections rather than the former JSP factions, which were based on ideological groupings. The DPJ's factions were broken down according to where the politician was before the creation of the party and are analysed in Table 2.5.⁴⁰

Table 2.5 Factionalism within the Democratic Party of Japan, 2001

Name of Faction Leader	Former Party/Parties	Number of Members ⁴¹
Hatoyama Yukio	LDP members and Sakigake members from LDP	30
Kan Naoto	Sakigake members from JSP and Shaminren	30
Hata Tsutomu	LDP, predominantly the Takeshita faction(Shinseitō and Shinshintō)	20
Yokomichi Takahiro	JSP and Members backed by Unions	20
No leader – group known as Yuaikaigi	DSP members and those backed by former Dōmei unions	30

The DPJ members included in this table consist of both Upper and Lower House and do not constitute the full quota of DPJ Diet members, as the factional alliance of every member is not known. It was assumed by the informant that Hatoyama Yukio had considerably more supporters, as he has managed to win the leadership battle for the past two terms.⁴²

⁴⁰ Interview with Eda Yōichi, Secretary to Eda Satsuki (they are not related), Diet Offices, Nagatacho, 9 April 2001.

⁴¹ This only refers to those who openly declare their factional alliances within the party as there is no official record of which faction DPJ members belong to.

⁴² A good example of the influence of factions within the DPJ was seen in the Gubernatorial Election held in Chiba Prefecture in March 2001. The DPJ was divided about who should stand as its candidate. The local chapter wanted Dōmoto Akiko, a former Sakigake member, to stand. The central party headquarters wanted a newcomer, Wakai Yasuhiko, to stand, as he had no history within the party. There was a suggestion that because Dōmoto was formerly a member of Sakigake, her selection would have created division within the DPJ. Dōmoto was far more popular than Wakai, but, the DPJ persisted in giving Wakai a high degree of support with Kan Naoto, Hatoyama Yukio, and Eda Satsuki regularly travelling to Chiba to give him support. A DPJ Lower House Diet member in Chiba District Ten, Tanaka Kō, was opposed to Wakai and because of their joint Sakigake backgrounds was highly supportive of Dōmoto. He became increasingly tired of being unable to support Dōmoto fully and on 22 March 2001, five days before the election, he left the DPJ so that he could fully support Dōmoto. This was an example of the lasting influence and linkage that Sakigake manages to produce, and is an indication of the factional divides inside the DPJ.

Conclusion: What effects did *Haijō* have on the long-term success of the DPJ?

The DPJ was formed in 1996 and was still in existence at the end of analysis of this thesis. It was therefore, even by late 2001, the most durable and large party that had been created in Japan since the LDP and JSP in 1955. What can account for this success? To answer this question we need to turn to further analysis. In Chapter Seven, we shall analyse the structure of the DPJ. We shall also look in Chapter Six at how one Prefecture, Okayama, has managed to create and maintain a local DPJ branch. But in this chapter, we have described the decline of the JSP and the need felt by left-wing groups to form a new left party prior to the formation of the DPJ. These groups all failed in their aim and it was not until a reform attempt from outside the JSP happened that there was any success. We have then analysed how prior to its launch, the DPJ was extremely particular in who it accepted into the party by utilising what has been called the policy of *haijō*. We shall thus conclude this chapter by analysing what impact *haijō* had on the party.

Due to the limitation of older Diet members, the party did benefit immediately from a reform-minded image. This gave the party an image of having a desire to take hold of power and formulate a clear set of policies through manifesto-like documents. Nonetheless, as Stockwin has suggested, its weakness remains that it does not know how it wants to do this: is it by initiating fission from another party such as it did in 1998, creating a coalition government, or trying to take power in its own right?⁴³ Nonetheless, the party was ideologically driven from within in an idealistic attempt to draw the electorate back into politics. It wanted a fresh, clean image to do this and therefore it is possible to concur with Hatoyama Yukio when he said that the policy of *haijō*, whilst ostensibly being pragmatic, was partly ideological as it created a party with a clear identity.⁴⁴ The DPJ was the first party in Japan to be so completely pragmatic, (whilst being ideological and not valuing size over substance) and this probably accounts for why this attempt was successful compared to other attempts to reform the left

⁴³ J A A Stockwin, *Governing Japan*. Oxford, Blackwells, 1999. p 156.

⁴⁴ Interview with Hatoyama Yukio, DPJ Headquarters, 29th July 2000.

which failed. But the groups which came before it, were an essential part of the process towards the creation of the DPJ. Groups such as Shin Minshu Rengō highlighted the need for reform amongst both the electorate and the politicians themselves and also probably contributed to the long term success of the DPJ because by the time it was eventually formed, it seemed as if the creation of a new left-of-centre party was the most obvious and logical thing to happen.

Before returning to analyse the structure and membership of the DPJ, both at the central level and in the Prefecture of Okayama, we shall turn to assess what impact the Constitution, labour unions and the electoral system have had on the shift from the old JSP to the new DPJ.

Chapter Three

The decline of the Japan Socialist Party and ideological constraints

Introduction

As has been seen in Chapter One, the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) lost considerable support during the 1990s. Support began to drop in the early 90s after the First Gulf War and the hopes of the 1989 victories of the party began to subside. Support then dropped incrementally before ‘bottoming out’ in early 1996 before the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) was formed. This drop in support was not confined to the JSP, as there was a general decline in support across the whole political spectrum but the drop in support for the JSP was particularly large. In this chapter, we shall consider why the JSP lost support, by concentrating on the ideological basis of the party.

The party had become associated with a strict ideological Marxist stance from its formation until virtually its demise, although reforms in 1986 were of a social-democratic character. Issues such as pacifism, defence and the restraints of the 1947 “Peace Constitution” were the focal point of its ideological platform. In effect, socialist thought became interwoven with pacifism to create an ideology for the JSP which was inflexible and dogmatic.

After the defeat of the Second World War, the occupation forces attempted to democratise and stabilise Japan. One of the fundamental principles of the reforms was to prevent a repetition of the military action and fascism which had dominated Japan since the thirties and which had been regarded as the cause of the Pacific War. The Constitution was thus introduced to bring human rights to the Japanese public, to turn them into citizens instead of subjects, and to constrain the Japanese military from attempting a policy of aggrandisement along the lines of their attempt to take over Asia prior to and during the Pacific War.¹ Although the emperor was

¹ There is considerable debate about the extent to which the Constitution was entirely written by the Americans, or whether the Japanese also participated in the process. Ray A Moore and Donald L Robinson, *Partners for Democracy: Crafting the New Japanese State under MacArthur*, Oxford,

acknowledged as the symbol of the state and the unity of the people, he was stripped of any power. A bicameral legislature was established, and with the exception of the Imperial family, all rights of peerage were abolished. Other articles dealt with “basic human liberties,” including universal adult suffrage, labour's right to organize, and a host of marriage and property rights for women.

The most striking and one of the most important and controversial provisions came in the Preamble and Article Nine, which outlawed the creation of armed forces and the right to make war. It is not clear whether the “No-war clause” originated with MacArthur or from discussions with the Prime Minister Shidehara Kijūrō, but it certainly would not have been included without MacArthur’s consent, and its presence in the constitution has had a defining impact on Japan's post-war history. The preamble states:

“We, the Japanese people, desire peace for all time and are deeply conscious of the high ideals controlling human relationship, and we have determined to preserve our security and existence, trusting in the justice and faith of the peace-loving peoples of the world. We desire to occupy an honoured place in an international society striving for the preservation of peace, and the banishment of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance for all time from the earth. We recognize that all peoples of the world have the right to live in peace, free from fear and want.”

Article Nine states:

“Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.”

Nonetheless, as Hook and McCormack state, the Constitution created problems from the

Oxford University Press, 2002, suggested that the Japanese did contribute to the final document whilst John Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, London, Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1999, suggests that the SCAP occupation forces were wholly responsible for the Constitution. Whether written by Japanese or Americans, the introduction of a new Constitution was an Occupation-driven reform.

beginning.² The Japanese became concerned about the restrictions that the Constitution placed upon them, whilst the US began to realise that it curtailed Japanese involvement in the Cold War. Both Japanese and Americans began to find ways of working around the limitations of the Constitution. In 1954, the Self Defence Forces were created, originating from a National Police Reserve, and were intended to be able to defend Japan in case of an attack.³ In 1952, the Japan US Security Treaty was passed which committed Japan and the United States to a mutual defence agreement. The United States would defend Japan in return for land to create US military bases in the Japanese archipelago. Consequently, all of the above issues lined up those who believed Japan should be in control of its own sovereignty (pro- revision of the Constitution, expansion of the SDF and the Japan US Security Treaty) against the pacifists who believed the Constitution was not to be tampered with, the SDF were unconstitutional, and the Japan US Security Treaty would bring Japan into Cold War conflicts.

This chapter will examine how this debate impacted upon politics under the 1955 system. During this period, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) wanted to reform the Constitution to do away with the pacifist clauses, and it is likely that it would have done so had it ever managed to get the two-thirds majority in the Diet necessary to reform the Constitution.⁴ In contrast, the Japanese left's *raison d'être* became the preservation of this Constitution. It was these two forces pulling in opposite directions, which became the most important political cleavage of the 1955 system.⁵ Since the end of the Cold War, the Constitution became even more of a major focus of Japanese politics. Thus, in this chapter we

² Glenn Hook and Gavan McCormack, *Japan's Contested Constitution*. London, Routledge, 2001, p 13.

³ Because of Article Nine, the JSP maintained until 1994 that the SDF were unconstitutional and unlawful.

⁴ The LDP had a majority of just under the required two-thirds between 1955 and 1960 when it had approximately 61% of the Diet seats.

⁵ There were times during the 1955 system when the Constitution was not at the forefront of debate such as in the 1950s when the Yoshida doctrine channelled attention towards economic expansion under the safety blanket of US protection.

will examine this focal point of Japanese politics, the “cultural cleavage” as defined by Watanuki Joji.⁶ We will firstly examine how the JSP embedded the Constitution as the lynchpin of its ideological platform, what the reform of the Constitution implied to the party and why it took the measures it did to protect the Constitution. We shall then look at the post-Cold War era, when the norms of the 1955 system began to break down, and the relevance of the Constitution once again began to be debated. We shall analyse the First Gulf War as the catalyst of this renewed questioning and then briefly look at other events which have made the Japanese question their Constitution.

Next, utilising public opinion polls, we will examine what the ideals of the Constitution meant to the Japanese public. Were they more supportive of the JSP position or LDP position? Did this support change over time? What effects did the debate about defence and the Constitution after the First Gulf War have on public opinion? Did the JSP gain or lose support because of that ideological stance. Was the party justified in maintaining its ideological dogma or would it have gained by becoming more flexible?

We will argue that the decline of the JSP was partly due to the loss of two separate groups of supporters. The moderate supporters abandoned the party in the early nineties because they felt that the party had not dealt well with the crisis of the First Gulf War. The hard-line policies of pacifism at all costs and the determination not to allow the Self Defence Forces (SDF) either a legal status or an international role began to be questioned by moderate supporters who could see that Japan needed to exert more influence on the World stage. It is symbolised in the drop of nearly 50% of the JSP’s seats in the 1993 Lower House election.

In 1994, when the JSP joined Sakigake and the LDP in a coalition government, a whole new

⁶ Joji Watanuki, *Politics in Postwar Japanese Society*. University of Tokyo Press, 1977, pp 92-98.

problem emerged. The JSP now was in power with its arch-rival and consequently adjusted its policies in line with this. We believe that the dropping of traditional JSP values in order to be in power caused the loss of hard-line supporters who had remained loyal throughout the PKO debate.

Finally, we shall turn to examine the impact that the Constitution has had on the Democratic Party of Japan. The DPJ is divided on the issue of the Constitution but is reluctant to articulate a policy for fear of causing a drop in support similar to that of the JSP. Also, we shall argue that by not defining a position, the party has managed to remain united.

What was the Japan Socialist Party's role in the 1955 system? How was its role connected to its ideology? What was the Traditional Ideology of the Party?

The JSP have often been referred to in Japanese as the “*mannen yatō*” (opposition for ten thousand years). Since its creation in 1955, until 1993 when it joined the non-LDP coalition government, the party did not participate in the formation of a government. Nonetheless, Stockwin has shown that the party was always effective as “a powerful brake on the ambitions for change manifest among members of the political Right”⁷ and as such had a role to play in the 1955 system. Therefore, in order to understand the events that happened in the nineties with the decline of the party, we shall firstly examine the JSP's policy preferences throughout the 1955 system. We shall briefly analyse which of its policies overlapped with the LDP and which allowed it to influence the national agenda.

⁷ J A A Stockwin, “The Social Democratic Party (Formerly Japan Socialist Party): A Turbulent History” in Ronald J Hrebennar, *Japan's New Party System*. Boulder, Colorado; Westview Press, 2000. pp 209-251.

The JSP's policy preferences under the 1955 system.

Some JSP policy formation during the 1955 system was developed in reaction to the policies of the LDP rather than through any attempt of its own to formulate new ideas. Its policies were strongly against the Ministry of Education's strong control over the curriculum and the centralisation of education (with this tendency continuing until the nineties with its attempts to push for text book reform and the inclusion of comprehensive accounts of Japanese aggression during World War II).⁸ It was also against the exclusion of labour unions from central decision making (and generally against the centralised nature of the Japanese state), anti-labour legislation and in particular the public sector's lack of the right to strike. In recent years, these policy preferences have been expanded to include cheap and comprehensive health care for the elderly and an opposition to the consumption tax which the LDP introduced in 1989 as a means of solving the problem of the financial demands of the ageing population. The JSP's policy was created out of a rhetoric based on Marxism. Stockwin has pointed out that it was unlikely in the fifties and sixties that those who voted for the party did so through much sympathy for its Marxist feelings. Rather, they did so to support its championing of democratic and pacifist reforms, which the Occupation forces had originally introduced before there had been any conservative reaction against them.⁹

The JSP's main policy preferences, however, were concerned with defence and security. It repeatedly inveighed against rearmament, and the SDF, which it considered to defy the Constitution. It was highly critical of the posturing of Japan on the US led, anti-Communist side in the Cold War. The irony of this is that whilst it felt that Japan should repudiate the Japan US Security Treaty owing to the position that Japan was being forced into, it still fervently sanctioned the Constitution, which, whilst not maybe directly written by the US, had

⁸ As Hook and McCormack point out, the Japanese Government, in stark contrast to the Germans, has never considered the issue of war crimes once independence was restored to it by the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1952. Hook and McCormack, *Japan's Contested Constitution*, p7.

⁹ Stockwin, 'The Social Democratic Party: A Turbulent History', p 212.

a strong Occupation influence. The LDP, a conservative party, was in the unusual position for a government party of being the proponent of radical change to a Constitution, whereas the Socialist (and Communist) opposition was a conservative force.¹⁰

In order to push forward its preferences, the JSP adopted some disruptive tactics to prevent what it saw as controversial legislation. These tactics included boycotts of both Diet sessions and committees, various methods of filibuster, and such attempts as in May 1960 when it tried to physically prevent passage of the Japan US Security Treaty by preventing the Speaker from putting the motion to vote. It justified these as attempts to prevent the dangerous reactionary changes which the LDP were trying to enact. Former JSP Chairman Ishibashi Masashi took the position that the JSP were justified in this because democracy in Japan had not fully taken root and therefore it could not rely upon institutions. He maintained that the successes in not increasing military spending and build-up prior to the nineties were due to their party's constant successful resistance. Otake Hideo referred to this as "advancement of policy without debate" as the LDP was afraid of interruptions of the Diet and acquiesced to the JSP.¹¹

In *Kiki no nihon seiji* (The Crisis of Japanese Politics), Yamaguchi Jirō has divided Japanese twentieth century politics into three sections.¹² Firstly, pre-war politics represent the values of military aggrandisement and aggression and in an immediate post-war context represented those who wanted to reform the Constitution to do away with the restrictions of the Preamble and Article Nine. In the immediate post-war period, these forces were out-weighed by the strength of the post-nuclear war force. This value was embedded in the exhaustion and disillusionment many Japanese felt because of the war. This anti-war feeling became symbolised by the atomic bombs, as many Japanese felt singularly victimised by the attacks

¹⁰ Hook and McCormack, *Japan's Contested Constitution*, p 15.

¹¹ Quoted in Joseph P Keddell, Jr., *The Politics of Defence in Japan*, New York, M.E.Sharpe, 1992 p. 23.

¹² Yamaguchi Jirō, *Kiki no nihon seiji*. (The Crisis of Japanese Politics), Iwanami Shoten, 1999.

on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Thus, the post-nuclear war position was the opposite force to the pre-war reform of the Constitution force. These two forces continued in equal strength until the 1960s Japan US Mutual Security Treaty ratification riots which engulfed Tokyo in May 1960. Whilst the treaty was ratified against the wishes of the demonstrating millions of citizens, it became apparent that there needed to be something else, which would unite the country.¹³ Thus in the 1960s, the LDP introduced its 'income doubling' policies, which would eventually become its most famous policy and would unite the Japanese electorate around less divisive issues than the Constitution. This compromise, to which he refers as post-war politics, continued until the 1990s, when it began to decline with the emergence of a younger generation of politicians such as Ozawa Ichirō and it was at this point that Japanese politics began to decline into the current state of crisis. Yamaguchi was writing in 1999, the year of the ratification of the Guidelines Treaty, the legalisation of the Japanese National Anthem and Flag. He believes that these developments have happened because mainstream politicians no longer remembered the war, which was the levelling factor in the pre-war and post-atomic politics balance. Yamaguchi concludes that in the 1990s, Japanese politicians had shifted irrevocably in their attitudes to symbols of defence and peace. It is these changes that we believe have been of central importance to the decline of the JSP and the changes in electoral support for left-wing parties. We shall now examine what these changes imply to the different political parties.

What does Constitutional Reform imply to different parties?

The following three extracts have been taken from the *Asahi Shinbun*, July 1999 and represent leaders from the LDP, the JSP, and the DPJ.¹⁴ The comments by Nakasone Yasuhiro represent

¹³ In George Packard, *Protest in Tokyo*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1966, there is discussion of the actual numbers of protesters. The true figure of protesters will probably never be known. Some commentators suggest there were millions and some suggest there were far less. Whilst in Nagata-cho, Tokyo seemed to be engulfed in protest, in other areas of the city, it was possible to imagine that there was no protest taking place.

¹⁴ Odawara Atsushi, "The Dawn of Constitutional Debate", *Japan Quarterly*, Volume 17, January-March 2000. pp17-22.

views of the LDP and express the *kaiken* viewpoint - reform of the Constitution. The comments by Doi Takako were made as party leader for the second time during the late 1990s but would equally summarise the position of the JSP in the 1970s and 1980s (but would not describe its conciliatory attitudes when the JSP was in coalition with the LDP in the mid nineties). These comments represent the *gōken* position – maintenance of the Constitution. Finally, the comments by Kan Naoto represent a new force in the Constitutional debate which has emerged in the late nineties. This position is that of *ronken*, or discussion of the Constitution, with an acknowledgment that whilst the Constitution does not have to be reformed, it might be considered to be an improvement if it were. (This position's relevance in the debate will be discussed at the end of the chapter but it is included here for ease of comparison.)

Nakasone Yasuhiro

So Japan is finally entering an era in which people can openly discuss the Constitution. Unlike the previous Constitution research commission (established within the Cabinet in 1956 [without the participation of the Socialists and other opposition parties]), the new commissions have been approved not just by the LDP but with the cooperation of the other leading parties as well. That in itself represents significant progress. Supporters of the commissions make up the vast majority of the Diet. The term *ronken* is being used, as opposed to *kaiken*, because discussion will not be conducted on the *a priori* assumption of revision. This sets the foundations in place for a national debate on the Constitution...It is my hope that the Constitution research commissions will ignite nationwide discussion. Public forums of various kinds should be held throughout the country, on, for example, a vocational basis and by region.

Doi Takako

Reading the legislation, I still cannot understand at all the purpose of setting up the Constitution research commissions. The Diet Law must not be changed simply to establish organizations of such nebulous purpose. To those who consider constitutional discussion necessary, I would ask: Why not discuss the Constitution in the existing relevant standing committees? I have discussed the relationship between

the Constitution's Article 9 and self-defence capabilities in the Committee on Foreign Affairs. I find it very odd that those who have previously refrained from such discussion are now suddenly very enthusiastic supporters of the Constitution research commissions.

Those who slight the existing Constitution or interpret its provisions loosely are incapable of establishing a better Constitution. What revision advocates really contrive to do is to change Article 9. Supporters of the "constitutional debate" are playing right into their hands. Revision in undesirable directions must not be allowed. The LDP, Liberal Party and New Kōmeitō represent an overwhelming majority within the Diet, so I would rather place more emphasis on proceedings outside the Diet. Together with scholars and experts, I want to make specific proposals about what must be done within the scope of the present Constitution in terms of education, welfare and various other fields. I intend to take the offensive in protecting the Constitution.

Kan Naoto

Discussion in the Diet of whether the Constitution is appropriate for today's Japan and what parts of it, if any, are inadequate should be encouraged. Security issues, including the question of whether Japan should participate in United Nations peacekeeping forces, should be studied not just in the context of Article 9 but in view of the ideals expressed in the Preamble. Rights of ownership, environmental rights, information disclosure and assistance to private education will be important topics. But I believe discussion that assumes revision of the Constitution is going too far. And debate of the Constitution in the Diet is not enough. It should unfold in all walks of Japanese life – academia, the press and in the political parties....

Even if it becomes necessary to revise the Constitution, doing so would make no sense if the people do not consider the Constitution on their own initiative. Japan's Constitution has never been revised. Popular sovereignty means that the Constitution can be amended if the people judge it necessary. Some fear that amendment could change the Constitution's framework. In my view, however, it is a strong point of democracy that the Constitution can be changed by democratic consensus.

We shall now turn to a more detailed analysis of the early 1990s which, as Yamaguchi describes was the turning point to this new discussion of the Constitution.

The late eighties – the beginning of the end of the 1955 System? JSP victory in the midst of ideological debate and the end of the Cold War.

The late eighties were a period of huge turmoil for the JSP. It was, as has been described in Chapters One and Two a period of unprecedented success which masked the party's decline. Doi Takako taking over as party leader in 1986 and becoming the first female leader of a political party brought the party much support, both from traditional supporters and from the non-aligned voter and deprived the LDP of a majority in the Upper House for the first time in the 1955 system. But as has been described in Chapter Two, this victory was a result of a coming-together of various other factors as well.¹⁵ At the time, much was made of this unprecedented success of the party, and there were even those who believed that this would finally be the time that a JSP government would take over from the LDP. But this was wishful thinking for two reasons. Firstly, the political cleavage of Japanese politics was about to be questioned as the Cold War began to end with the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Secondly, the victory of the 1989 Upper House election lulled the JSP into a false sense of security which stalled any reform attempts. Both of these were to have a huge impact upon the party.

The end of the Cold War had two effects. Hook and McCormack have described the 1955 system as the “domestic cold war political system of single party LDP rule.”¹⁶ Therefore, according to them, the confrontation of security and ideology within the 1955 system collapsed. The decline of the Cold War meant that old allegiances of Soviet support from the JSP and US support from the LDP declined and the *raison d'être* of the traditional policy of opposing everything the LDP stood for became less defined and concrete.

¹⁵ The LDP's introduction of the consumption tax was unpopular and gave the JSP support. Simultaneously, *Nōkyō*, decided to support the JSP as a means of punishing the LDP, for attempting to liberalise rice and other agricultural imports. The large number of female candidates, ‘the Madonna Boom’, also gave the JSP support.

¹⁶ Hook and McCormack, *Japan's Contested Constitution*, p 30.

The secondary importance of the end of the Cold War and its impact on the Japan US Security Treaty was the decline of threat of nuclear war. To the JSP, who held the experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as one of the main pillars justifying its policies, nuclear war was of great concern and something it feared becoming entangled in because of the Security Treaty. The end of the Cold War meant that this threat was no longer important, so another pillar of its platform had been lost.

The Upper House election in 1989 was the other turning point. The party was enjoying unprecedented support and had it reformed the party at this stage, it is possible that this support would have continued. Instead it wallowed in its new feeling of success and failed to heed the warnings of the early eighties. Doi had said that the party needed to reform when she had become party leader in 1986¹⁷, but by 1989 nothing had yet been done. Instead, according to Kubo Wataru, the party's secretary general at the time, 1989 lulled the party into a false sense of security. He said:

“At that time, they should have jumped at forming a new political force. Instead, according to the JSP, that victory was seen as a victory of the JSP. In fact, it was a victory of the real power of the unions and the anti-LDP force” (Author's own translation).¹⁸

So, the malaise of the JSP continued. In 1991 it lost support because of the Tokyo Governor election and also fared badly in the local elections.¹⁹ But a far larger shock emerged for the party which would challenge its entire attitude to peace and defence.

¹⁷ J A A Stockwin, 'On trying to move mountains: the political career of Doi Takako' *Japan Forum*, Vol. 6, No 1, April 1994, pp21-34.

¹⁸ Kubo Wataru, *Renritsu Seiken no Shinjitsu*. (The Real Truth of the Coalition Government), *Yomiuri Shinbunsha*, 1998, pp 172-173.

¹⁹ Purdendra Jain in 'The 1991 Tokyo Gubernatorial Election and its Implications for National Politics' *Japan Forum*, Vol.3, No 2. pp 275-286, discusses the failure of the opposition parties in general, and the JSP in particular, to put up a candidate. The Tokyo chapter of the LDP and the National LDP were pitted against each other as to which candidate to support. This would have given the JSP an excellent opportunity to put forward a candidate of its own and Eda Satsuki and Kan Naoto were discussed as potential vote-winning candidates. However, in Jain's words, the JSP "displayed its traditional weaknesses both through a lack of consensus among its various competing factions and of quick decisions leading to a disastrous performance", pp 275.

The First Gulf War as a catalyst – the end of incremental change.

There are two contrasting works on defence policy in Japan which are of interest when analysing the events of the First Gulf War and how this affected the JSP. Kent Calder in his book *Crisis and Compensation* has said that Japan needed the external pressure of a crisis in order to change its defence policy.²⁰ In contrast to this, Joseph Keddell believes that defence policy changes incrementally in response to events which are not necessarily crises.²¹

Both views seem to be pertinent when it comes to Japan. The First Gulf War changed Japanese defence policy radically between 1990 and 1992. It initiated a debate which continued well beyond 1992 when the UNPKO Bill was finally passed. This was the Bill which allowed Japan to send SDF troops abroad on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. From the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in August 1990 and throughout the period of fighting, the Japanese were unable to define a response despite increasing pressure from the US. This crisis was widely debated in Japan and effected a change in public opinion. But, as shall be seen below in the public opinion polls, it is apparent that some change had already occurred prior to the nineties, especially since the Nakasone neo-conservatism of the 1980s and therefore, Keddell's incremental theory also seems to be a valid explanation. When it comes to the public's support of the JSP, these two views of crisis and incrementalism also have validity. As will be seen in the public opinion polls below, the JSP was suffering from declining support from the seventies onwards. Public support declined for the party incrementally, yet it was the crisis of the First Gulf War which dealt a larger blow to its traditional ideology and the public's perception of it

The First Gulf War deeply shocked Japan. Its impact on the JSP as an individual party, and upon the government as a whole is summarised by Courtney Purrington:

"But the impact of the crisis on Japan's foreign policy and domestic political

²⁰ Kent Calder, *Crisis and Compensation*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1988.

²¹ Joseph P Keddell Jr, *The Politics of Defence in Japan*, New York, M.E Sharpe, 1992.

system was more far reaching. The crisis served as the catalyst for an emerging consensus that Japan must play a more proactive political role in international affairs, commensurate to its international economic power, and also remedied the "allergy" of the Japanese people and opposition parties to military matters. In addition to sweeping changes in public attitudes concerning what role Japan should play in international affairs, the crisis also had an impact on Japan's domestic political system, serving as an impetus for renewed government attempts at administrative and political reform, and even policy reform within the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ)".²²

The implications of the First Gulf War dawned slowly on Japan. Funabashi Yoichi describes how, after the initial shock of rescuing Japanese nationals in the area, the Japanese were shocked by the increasing pressure put upon them by the US to supply funds to support the war. Funabashi made the analogy of Japan being an automatic teller machine which needed a kick before dispensing the cash.²³ After the UN resolution for Iraq to pull out of Kuwait was approved by an overwhelming majority of nations, Japan offered \$100 million as a contribution to the multinational forces and those allied countries suffering from the crisis in the Middle East. This pledge soon increased to \$4 billion.

Meanwhile, on the domestic stage, the debate about what influence the Japanese Constitution and US Japan Security Treaty would have on Japan's expected contribution to the war began. In August and September, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs drafted a United Nations Peace Co-operation bill (UNPCO) which attempted to make non-military contributions to the multinational forces and not to send the Self-Defence Forces (SDF) to the Middle East. But, LDP leaders were being lobbied by the US ambassador, Michael Armacost, to do more, so the first draft of this bill was revised to incorporate more forward-looking policies which effectively meant the deployment of the SDF at the call of the US.

²² Courtney Purrington, 'Tokyo's Policy Responses During the First Gulf War and the Impact of the "Iraqi Shock" on Japan', *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 65, No. 2, p162.

²³ Funabashi Yoichi, 'Japan and the New World Order', *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 91/92, Vol 70, No.5, p58.

The LDP did not handle the passage of the bill well. Internal division within the LDP complicated the matter and this was combined with large scale public disapproval of it. Whilst Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki was in the Middle East, Ozawa Ichirō, the LDP Secretary General, opted to include the use of the SDF in the UNPCO, which he knew Kaifu, who was on the left of the party, would oppose.²⁴ Once Kaifu returned from his trip, Ozawa threatened to resign if the use of the SDF was taken out of the bill.²⁵ The debate on the bill was fierce and two-thirds of the nation opposed it. Media opposition to the UNPCO bill also helped kill it. The *Asahi Shinbun* and the *Nihon Keizai Shinbun* both called for the bill to be scrapped. The *Yomiuri Shinbun* had only hinted that it wanted the bill to be passed, and even opposition to the bill from within the LDP began to mount.²⁶ The government eventually backed down from the bill in late Autumn 1990 since it was unable to get opposition support. This failure was greeted with approval; the headline of *The Japan Times*, said

'After Round One of the UN Peace Co-operation Bill debate, the score stands at Japanese Democracy 1, LDP 0.'²⁷

The LDP, however, also saw this as a success because not only did it educate the public about the need to make a contribution, but it also showed the US that Japan was making an effort.

Before the beginning of the bombing of Iraq on January 17 1991, the Japanese believed that peace would prevail. Thus, again, it was shocked, and its response was again very reactive instead of proactive, though it was faster than the previous response. After lobbying from the US, Japan pledged \$9 billion to the US. It also announced that the SDF aircraft would be sent to transport refugees. The government managed to make this gesture by referring to an administrative directive that enabled SDF aircraft to be sent abroad to collect overseas dignitaries, and the cabinet extended this to refugees.²⁸ The government needed Diet approval

²⁴ *Shūkan Bunshun*, November 9, 1990.

²⁵ *Shūkan Yomiuri*, November 4, 1990.

²⁶ *The Japan Times Weekly*, November 12-18, 1990.

²⁷ *The Japan Times Weekly*, November 19-25, 1990.

²⁸ These aircraft were eventually never sent because, quite simply, they were never requested by an overseas government. Some private organisations and individuals went to Iraq and Kuwait to rescue

for the financial contributions as it had to issue new bonds and legislate new taxation to pay its contribution. This was particularly difficult for the LDP as it was in a minority in the House of Councillors and had to co-operate with the opposition to get a majority to pass the Bill. Eventually it managed to agree with Kōmeitō not to increase taxes on tobacco (which had been one of the suggestions for raising the \$9 billion) and to cut the defence budget slightly in return for support in passing the bill. The supplementary budget bill enabling the \$9 billion contribution was passed in the Diet on March 6 1991. The problem of whether this piece of legislation had gone beyond the confines of the Constitution remained a disputed and controversial point.

In 1992, this issue was finally part-resolved with the passing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Bill (UNPKO). This, however, was not without its limitations and Japan could participate in UN-sponsored peace keeping operations only so long as five conditions were adhered to. These were:

- the parties in the armed conflict have agreed to a cease-fire;
- the parties in the armed conflict and host countries have given consent to the deployment of the operation and to Japan's participation in the operation;
- the operation must ensure strict impartiality;
- the Japanese contingent must withdraw should any of the above requirements cease to be satisfied and
- the use of weapons is limited to the minimum amount necessary to protect the personnel's lives.²⁹

Keddell analysed why the UNPKO Bill was able to be passed. The LDP was very careful in its handling of the non-JSP opposition parties as it realised that without its support in the Upper

refugees and Doi Takako made a famous visit to assess the situation in Baghdad.

²⁹ Itoh Mayami, 'Expanding Japan's Role in the United Nations', *The Pacific Review*, Vol 8, No.2, 1995, pp285-286.

House, it would not get the bill passed. Consequently, the LDP managed Diet affairs well and allowed the second longest committee hearing of 100 hours.

The First Gulf War, however, was a disaster for the JSP both in terms of public approval of the way in which it dealt with the crisis and also because its main shibboleth began to be questioned. It criticised the decisions that were being made without thinking of the problem within the context of what Japan should and needed to do.³⁰

Public Opinion 1988-1993

We will now turn to an examination of public opinion, both of public opinion polls of support for the JSP and public opinion polls carried out by newspapers, press agencies, and the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on defence issues, and of reasons why the public supported the JSP. We believe that public opinion polls will help explain the drop in support for the JSP shown in Chapter One. In particular, public opinion polls show sudden drops in support at certain times (First Gulf War, the 1993 Lower House election, and Murayama's abandonment of traditional JSP policy in July-September 1994 and in early 1996 when Murayama resigned as Prime Minister). The steady changes over time concerning defence policy suggest that Kedell is correct when he talks about incremental change in Japanese defence policy and JSP support. But there are also some 'catalytic events' such as the 1989 anti-LDP election in the Upper House, the First Gulf War, 1993's political upheaval and the Murayama government which seemed to have influenced the public's support for the JSP.

Hook has neatly described the difficulties that the Japanese electorate has when responding to government defence policy. It had had contradictory experiences of both militarism and pacifism and this has meant that the public have had to respond to a range of defence and

³⁰ Glenn D Hook, *Militarism and Demilitarization in Japan*. Oxford, Routledge, 1995, p 93.

security policies.³¹ Hook and McCormack have also said that the Japanese public have resigned themselves to these shifts and consequently support both the pacifism of Article Nine and accept the fact that Japan needs to make a global contribution.³²

In the following tables, public opinion poll questions regarding defence and peace have been presented. These polls represent what the author has found to be a representative sample of polls published in the annual Prime Minister’s Office collection of statistically significant polls.³³ All of the polls quoted in this chapter supplied the respondents with closed questions, giving possible answers from which the person could choose a response. This type of questioning will thus generate a response which will not fully represent public opinion but will allow for analysis to be more over time as often a polling organisations will repeat questions every month, quarter or year. It must be noted that polls were particularly carried out during the mid-eighties and early nineties, when there was a sense of crisis about defence issues. Therefore, at other times polls are far fewer.

Is Japan’s Contribution sufficient?

Table 3.1

<i>What do you think about Japan’s contribution to world peace and security within a context of UN activities?</i>	
PM’s Office, Diplomacy Survey, August 1979	
Contributing Sufficiently	10.7%
Making some contribution	52.5%
Not really contributing	15.1%
Not Contributing at all	0.6%
Don’t Understand	21%
Don’t Know	16.5%

Table 3.2

<i>What do you think about Japan’s contribution to world peace and security within a context of UN activities?</i>
PMO, June 1983

³¹ Hook, *Militarization and Demilitarization* p 100.
³² Hook and McCormack, *Japan’s Contested Constitution*, p 14.
³³ For it to be considered statistically significant, there need to be at least 2000 respondents to a poll.

Contributing Sufficiently	2.3%
Making some contribution	38.1%
Not really contributing	35.4%
Not Contributing at all	2.8%
Don't Understand	21.4%

In Tables 3.1 and 3.2, we observe a shift in the public’s perception of Japan’s role in UN activities. Whereas in 1979, 63.2% thought that Japan was making some contribution, by 1983 this had declined to 40.3%. More importantly, the ‘not really contributing’ group rose from 15.1% to 35.4%. This represents a significant shift in public attitude, without any real international or domestic crisis to impact on defence policy issues.

Self Defence Forces, PKO and Constitutional Questions

Table 3.3

<i>What should happen to the SDF?</i>	
<i>Asahi, November 1983</i>	
Enlarge and strengthen them	10%
Maintain the status quo	60%
Reduce its size and strength	19%
Abolish them	5%
Don't Know	6%

Table 3.4

<i>Do you support Article Nine?</i>	
<i>Mainichi April 1982</i>	
Support it	70%
Do not support it	25%
Don't Know	5%

Table 3.5

<i>Do you think the SDF are unconstitutional?</i>	
<i>Mainichi April 1982</i>	
Unconstitutional	20%
Constitutional	29%
I cannot say which	51%

Table 3.6

<i>Do you agree that the current constitution needs to be reformed?</i>	
<i>Asahi, May 1983</i>	
Agree	28%
Oppose	45%

Don't Know	27%
<i>Of those who agree, why do you agree?</i>	
This is the second part of the Table P <i>Asahi</i> , May 1983	
28%	
The content is not in line with current times	15%
We must recognise people's freedom and rights	5%
We are being pushed around by America	3%
In order to rearm	1%
To strengthen the position of the Emperor	3%
Can't answer	3%
<i>Of those who disagree, why do you disagree?</i>	
This is also connected to Table P <i>Asahi</i> , May 1983	
45%	
Because it is useful to Japan's peace	16%
Because it is recognised by the public	12%
Because it values freedoms and rights	10%
Because it is a constitution revered around the world	4%
Because it is useful to economic growth	1%
Cannot answer	2%

Table 3.7

<i>What do you think about the SDF going abroad</i>	
<i>Yomiuri</i> , September 1991	
They should go without limits	30.4%
There is no need for them to go	23.9%
The current level is good	40.7%
Cannot answer	5%

Table 3.8

<i>Do you support PKO Bill</i>	
<i>Asahi</i> , April 1992	
Yes	47%
No	41%
Don't Know	12%

Table 3.9

<i>In order to support UN activities, and for the SDF to go abroad, is there a problem with the Constitution?</i>	
<i>Asahi</i> , July 1992	
There is a problem	58%
There is no problem	26%
Don't Know	16%

Table 3.10

<i>Do you agree that the SDF should make an international contribution?</i>	
<i>Yomiuri</i> , September 1992	

I agree	26.6%
I tend to agree	27.7%
I tend to disagree	23.6%
Disagree	16.9%
Cannot answer	5.3%

When it comes to Constitutional questions and the concomitant issues of the Self Defence Forces and the PKO Bill, in Tables 3.3.-3.10, the fundamental impression given is the increase of flexibility by the public and the ability to tolerate changes from the *status quo*. Some of the explanation for this change has to be that the public responded to catalyst events.

In 1983 (Table 3.3), 60% of the public thought in the *Asahi* that the SDF should neither be enlarged nor reduced in strength. In 1982, over 51% of the public did not know where they stood on the question of the constitutionality of the SDF (Table 3.4) and 70% supported Article Nine (Table 3.5). Table 3.6 summarises the 1980s position on the Constitution well. 28% of the public supported its reform, whereas 45% opposed it.

In contrast, after the First Gulf War crisis, public opinion clearly shifts. Table 3.10 shows a majority in favour of the SDF making an international contribution, Table 3.8 in 1992 shows strong support for the PKO Bill and whilst the public still recognise the controversial position of the SDF *vis à vis* the Constitution, (Table 3.9), they realise that they need to be sent abroad to undertake Japan’s international responsibilities (Tables 3.7 and 3.10). Keddell’s argument of incrementalism seems to be corroborated by these data: the public seems to have changed its opinion between the early 80s and 90s and realised that Japan needed to contribute more to international security but the crisis of the First Gulf War certainly contributed to this.

Support for the JSP

We shall now turn to analysis of the changes in public opinion support for the JSP during the same period and will ask whether the incremental change in defence attitudes shown above are reflected in changes in attitudes towards the JSP which, as seen above, ardently supported the Constitution and was opposed to the Japanese contribution to the First Gulf War and the

UNPKO.

Table 3.11

<i>To JSP supporters, why do you support the party?</i>	
<i>Yomiuri April 1985 (Multiple answers have been given)</i>	
Because I support its policies	18.5%
Because my workplace and affiliated groups support it	46.9%
Because it is the main opposition party	17.7%
Because talented people are gathered in it	4.4%
Because it solves problems close to my heart	14.8%
Because I support Chairman Ishibashi	6.3%
I have a feeling for it	17%
Because I dislike the LDP	30.6%
Other, Don't Know	6.6%

Table 3.12

<i>Why did the JSP do well in the 1989 Upper House election</i>	
<i>Yomiuri, August 1989</i>	
The appeal of Doi	15.7%
An expression of anti-consumption tax sentiment	37.3%
The amount of women candidates	3.2%
The anti-LDP mood	35%
The new image of JSP	3.9%
Others, no real reason, don't know	4.8

Table 3.11 and 3.12 summarise the position that the JSP was in before the First Gulf War. In 1985, 18.5% of respondents supported the JSP because they liked the party, 6.3% liked Ishibashi and 14.8% felt that the party solved problems ‘close to their heart’. In contrast, the overwhelming majority expressed support because they had been mobilised at work (46.9% - this issue will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four) and over 30% only supported the party because they dislike the LDP. When analysing in Table 3.12 why the JSP did well in 1989, again, many of the responses are as a result of the anti-LDP sentiment. 37.7% supported the party because they opposed the consumption tax and 35% supported the JSP simply because they were anti-LDP.

Table 3.13

<i>Why do you support JSP</i>

<i>Yomiuri</i> , July 1990	
Because its anti-consumption tax stance is good	21.7%
It sees the perspective of workers	14.7%
I have expectations of it as the leading opposition party.	14.7%
Because I dislike LDP	10.2%
Because of Doi Takako	8.8%
Because of contacts at work	8.6%
Because I have supported it for a long time	6.7%
Because my family and friends support it	1.9%
Because it is promoting women	1.6%
Because there is a politician from my locality	1.6%

By 1990, (Table 3.13) the JSP’s support was dropping significantly. Those who supported it because it opposed the consumption tax fell from 37.3% to 21.7%. By 1990, in comparison to 1989, there even seems to have been a shift in the ‘anti-vote’ for the JSP. Whereas in 1989, 35% supported the JSP because they did not like the LDP, only 10.2% said this in 1990. The LDP had managed to overcome its problems of 1989 which were a result of the introduction of the consumption tax etc. and this meant that the ‘boom’ of anti-LDP support which the JSP benefited from in 1989, was once again taken away from it. The impact that the First Gulf War had on the JSP is neatly summarised in Table 3.14. Overwhelmingly, negative views of the JSP seem to be reflected in this *Yomiuri* poll carried out in August 1991. 20.1% say the party has no ‘international sense’, 31.2% say it is only a party of opposition and 42.7% say the party has no reality. The First Gulf War seems to have been a catalyst which caused the public to reflect on its support for the JSP and its main policy attitudes towards the Constitution and defence.

Table 3.14

<i>What is your impression of the JSP?</i>	
<i>Yomiuri</i> , August 1991	Multiple responses given.
It emphasises the Constitution	11.9%
It is a “socialist” party	12.2
It stands for workers	12%
It is a check against the LDP	21%

It is the centre of opposition power	16.7%
Whatever happens, it is a party of opposition	31.2%
Its policies have no reality	42.7%
It lacks an international sense	20.1%
It is too concerned with ideology	12.6%
It does not do enough for normal people	20.9%
Don't Know, other	15.4%

When asked why the JSP had done badly in the 1992 House of Councillors election, over 32% of respondents said that it was because of the party’s inability to understand the need of a contribution to Peacekeeping operations. On a similar vein, 44.2% of the public polled said they believed the JSP’s belligerent handling of the UNPKO Bill by staging protests in the Diet had also contributed to its poor result.

Table 3.15

<i>Why do you think the JSP did badly in the last election</i>	
<i>Yomiuri, August 1992</i>	
Mass resignation threats and cow-walking in the Diet	44.2%
PKO Bill and discussion of a contribution and its failure to recognise that	32.9%
It is not sincere about political reform	16.7%
It is not sincere about recession counter-measures	11.7%
With things like the consumption tax, it is not sincere about tax reform	18.3%
Its political ability is doubted	40.2%
Don't Know, other	13.4%

Table 3.16

<i>The JSP suffered an unprecedented defeat in July 1993 election. Why was that?</i>	
<i>Yomiuri, August 1993</i>	Multiple responses given
Because the reason for the party to exist has disappeared	36.9%
Its policies are unrealistic	34.1%
It does not have attractive people in the party	30.5%
Without any policies, it got caught up in the dream of a coalition government	16.2%
It depends too much on unions	21.5%
The party is divided between its left and right	23.7%
It was not the fault of the party itself	4.9%
Don't Know	13.8

After the historic election of 1993, the party that was ‘too weak to lead, too strong to be ignored’ had lost public faith.³⁴ In Table 3.16 the JSP was criticised for its unrealistic policies, not having charismatic people in the party, and for depending too much on the unions. But the main reason why the public felt that the JSP had done badly was because it was felt the ‘reason for the party to exist had disappeared’. We shall now look at the events of 1993-1994 and then turn to some more public opinion polls from those years before analysing party support ratings.

The JSP/LDP/Sakigake Coalition and Attitudes Towards the Constitution

In June 1994, after the JSP forced the formation of a minority government by walking out of the Hata coalition, it joined a coalition government with its arch-rival of the 1955 system, the LDP (and Sakigake). Under the Hosokawa coalition, the JSP’s position on Constitutional matters had been hardly questioned so it had not needed to define its position. In contrast, once it was in coalition with the LDP, it had to clarify its position on constitutional pacifism.³⁵ On July 18 1994 Murayama therefore expressed his intention to maintain the US Japan Security Treaty and to accept as necessary a minimal number of defence forces. This was a historic moment when the JSP dropped the platform it had endorsed for 39 years.

Shinkawa quotes Murayama as saying

“It would have been better if the decision had resulted from open debate within the party. In that case, the policy change would have been more warmly accepted. There was no time for that, however, since I was elected as Prime Minister by chance, with no preparation whatsoever. At that time, I firmly resolved that I would resign as prime minister if my decision was rejected at the convention”.³⁶

At the convention in September, the party was furious. Kubo managed to push the approval

³⁴ Gerald Curtis *The Logic of Japanese Politics*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1999, pp 101-102.

³⁵ Shinkawa Toshimitsu, ‘Failed Reform and Policy Changes of the SDPJ’, in *Power Shuffles and Policy Processes – Coalition Government in Japan in the 1990s*. ed. Otake Hideo, JCIE, pp 168-169.

³⁶ Shinkawa, ‘Failed Reform and Policy Changes of the SDPJ’, p 168.

through as a case of the end justifying the means *because* Murayama was Prime Minister. This was the only thing that seemed to justify making such a huge compromise to the JSP’s traditional beliefs.

To some degree, the bad feelings created by discarding its ideological platform amongst its supporters was placated by the August 1995 war apology, which Murayama managed to push through government. Mukae Ryuji discusses the debate between the JSP and the LDP and Ozawa over the wording and content of the apology.³⁷ Whilst it was watered down to placate the LDP, former grass-roots socialists in Okayama were still pleased that it had taken place and felt that this alone had justified the JSP/LDP/Sakigake coalition and the discardment of its pacifist ideology.³⁸

Public Opinion 1993-1998

Public opinion polls during this period concerning issues of defence, the Constitution, and the JSP all became quite rare, particularly questions on the JSP. However, in this period it is possible to detect a consolidation of the incremental changes we saw in the previous ten years over attitudes towards defence policy. Table 3.17 shows that the Japanese public have become far more inclined to accept that the SDF have an international role to play in the UNPKO activities. An overwhelming majority of respondents in January 1995 said that Japan should send the SDF on peacekeeping operations.

Table 3.17

<i>Do you feel the SDF should participate in Peace Keeping Activities</i>	
<i>Yomiuri, January 1995</i>	
Yes	65.8%
No	25.2%

³⁷ Mukae Ryūji, ‘Japan’s Draft Resolution on World War Two’, *Asian Survey*, Vol XXXVI, No 10, October 1996.

³⁸ Interviews with Mizuya Minoru, March 29, 2000, Mori Nobuko, September 6 2000 and Ogame Yukio, 12 July 2000.

Do not know	8.9%
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Table 3.18 confirms this sentiment and states overwhelming support for revision of the Constitution. 3.18 gives the responses to the same question from January 1995 and March 1998. Those who supported no revision of the Constitution remained at the same level. Of more significance though, is that more than 50% of respondents say they thought revision would be best in 1995 but by 1998, this figure had increased by 1.9%. (It must be acknowledged that this opinion which shows strong support for Constitutional revision was in a *Yomiuri* poll which is the newspaper that most espouses Constitutional reform.)

Table 3.18

<i>Do you think we need to revise the current Constitution?</i>	
<i>Yomiuri</i> , January 1995 (and March 1998)	
Revision would be best	50.4% (52.3%)
Non revision would be best	30.9% (30.9%)
Cannot answer	18.7% (16.8%)

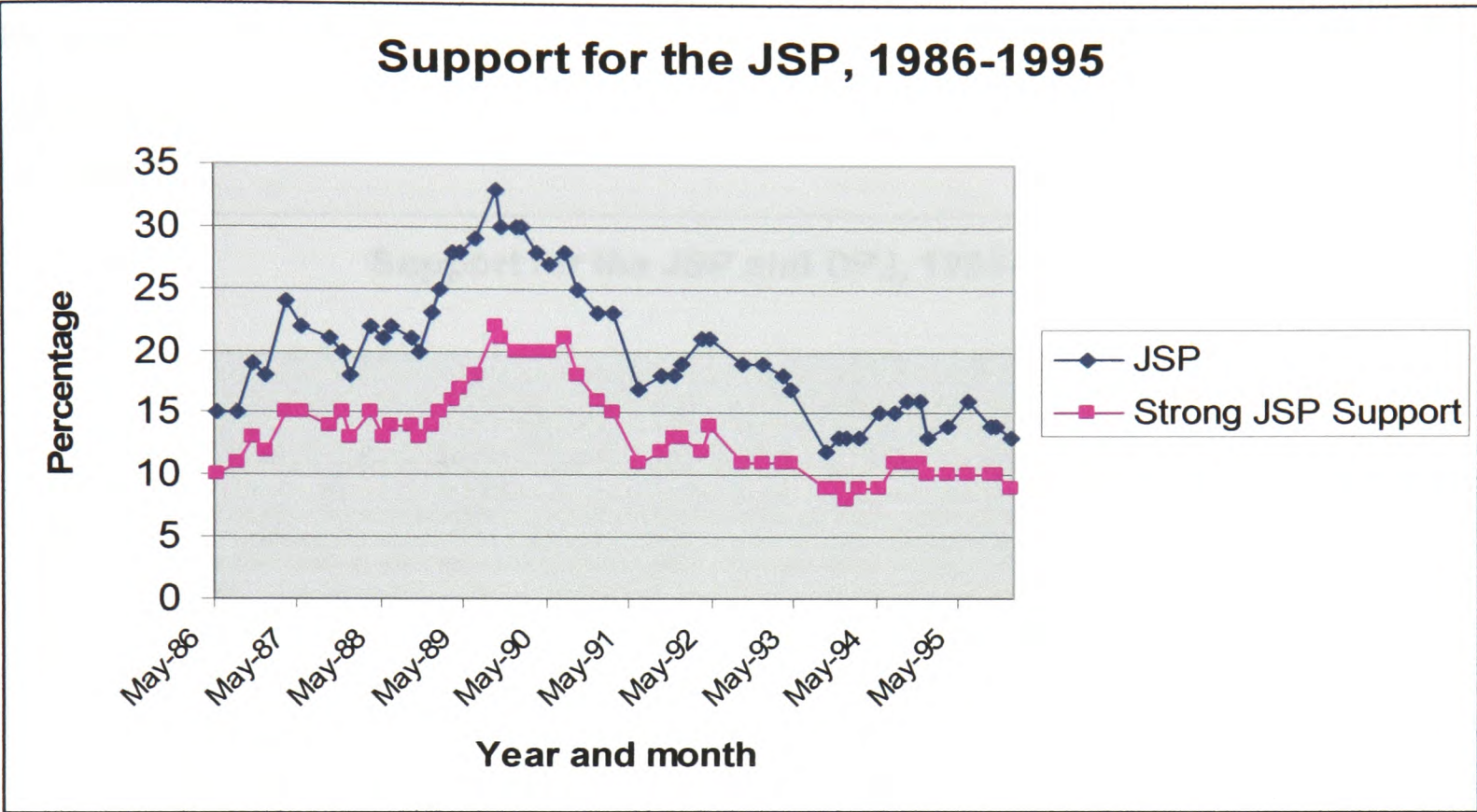
The trend of these polls does seem to concur with the view of Keddell. Public attitudes towards defence issues seem to have moved incrementally. In the 1980s the public were far more supportive of the peace Constitution yet in the mid and late 1990s began to show that they understood the necessity of possible revisions to it. Similarly, views supporting the necessity to send the SDF on peacekeeping operations gradually increased throughout the period of analysis. We shall now turn to see if the changes in attitudes expressed in polls, affected support for the JSP.

Support Ratings for the JSP 1986-1996

In the Graphs below, we shall examine the support for the JSP according to the *Asahi* monthly public opinion polls. The aim of this is to examine whether the public opinion poll questions which have been analysed above are comparable to the levels of support which the JSP received in the *Asahi* party support polls.

Graph 3.1 shows support figures plotted monthly for the party from 1986-1995. 1986 has been selected as a starting point because it represents what support figures for the JSP had been like since the mid-seventies, which was about 15-20% of normal support

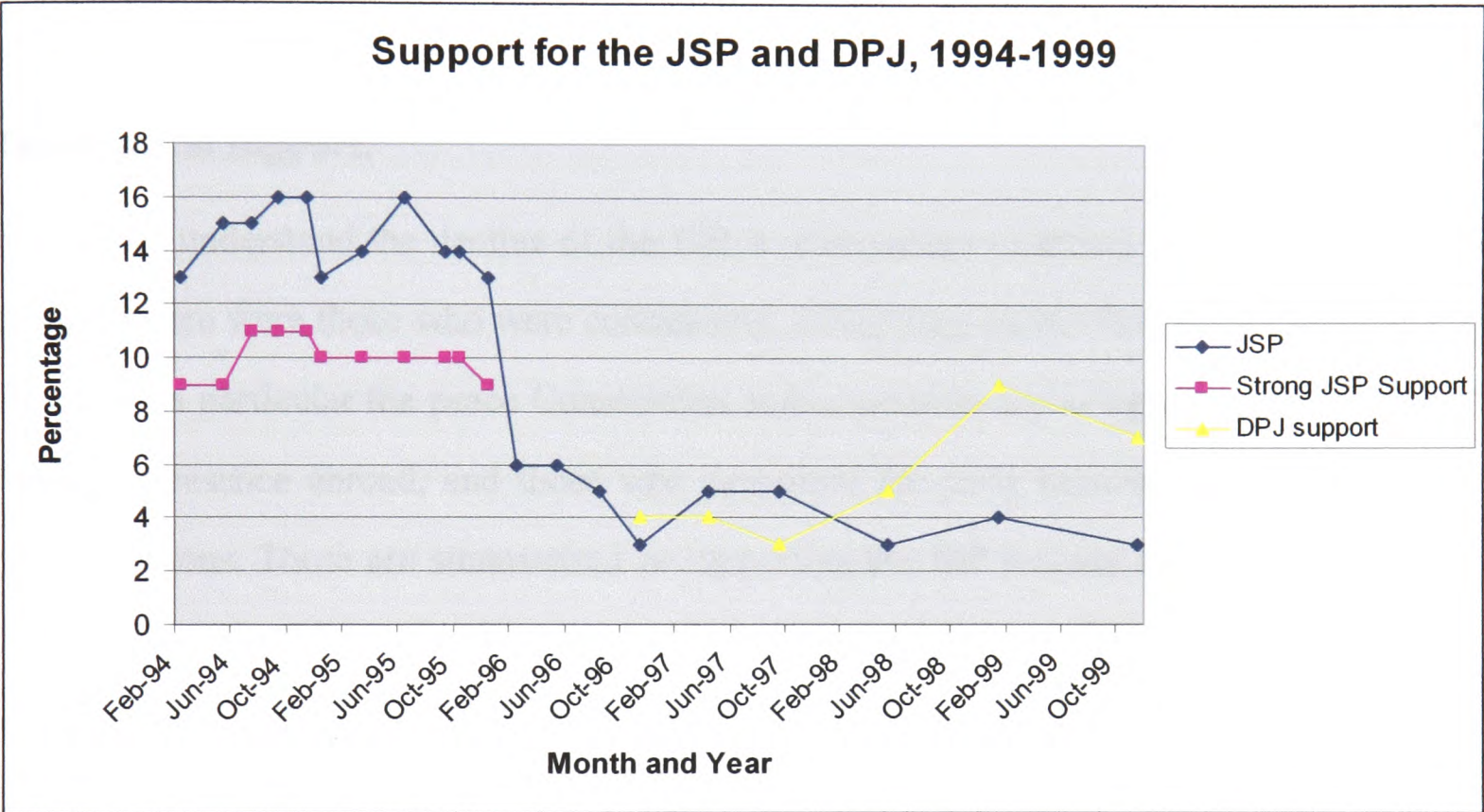
Graph 3.1



Graph 3.1 shows similar results to those discussed above. The public turned towards the JSP from the middle of 1989 onwards and these high levels of support last from the anti-consumption House of Councillors election in July of that year until the 1990 Lower House election. Support for the party does then drop gradually. General support drops at a greater level than the strong supporters who show quite constant levels of support until the end of 1995. This group in particular expresses higher levels of support once the JSP join the coalition government and this is retained throughout Murayama’s compromise to accept the LDP’s attitudes towards defence issues and the Constitution. In contrast, those who just express normal levels of support for the JSP dropped dramatically in 1994. There is a slight resurgence after this but the level does go back down.

Graph 3.2³⁹ shows the effects of the 1994 coalition with the LDP and Murayama’s apology more clearly. After this point, support levels began to drop dramatically. What is also of extreme significance is that *before* the creation of the DPJ, the JSP support drops dramatically. This happened in the same period in which the support ratings according to occupation, sex and residence discussed in Chapter One, also showed a large drop in support for the JSP in particular and all parties in general.

Graph 3.2



It would seem that the main explanation for this result is that those polled could no longer support the JSP as it had ‘failed’ in its potential of changing Japanese politics. Once the Prime Minister of the coalition reverted to the LDP, ‘life was back to normal’. Even though the JSP was still in the Cabinet, it appears as if this had reduced in its salience to those polled. The party had been supported as long as Murayama was Prime Minister but the public abandoned the party once he resigned.⁴⁰ This drop in support which started in early 1996 can probably also be accounted for by the fact that from the early part of 1996 onwards, the JSP was

³⁹ Two other points are worth noting. After 1995, the *Asahi* stops asking those polled whether they have strong support for the JSP or just support the party.

⁴⁰ In Chapter One this has also been discussed because of the drop in support for all parties. It would seem that the return of the LDP to power also alienated supporters of all parties as ‘politics had returned to normal’.

increasingly seen as a party which was about to split and there was talk of the emergence of a new party.⁴¹

Graph 3.2 also shows that the new 'left' party, the DPJ, even after its expansion in 1998, never really manages to 'get' from the public, the support that the JSP had lost. It did take some support from the JSP but the overwhelming conclusion of Graph 3.2 is that the Japanese left lost support both before and after the formation of the DPJ.

Two strata of support.

In order to understand the decline of the JSP, it is important to divide its supporters into two groups. There were those who were consistently strong supporters who backed the policies of the party, in particular the peace Constitution and opposition to the legality of the SDF and a Japanese presence abroad, and those who supported the party because of other, non-policy related reasons. These are summarised as supporting the JSP because they opposed the LDP, because they have been mobilised at work by labour unions, or because they have liberal views which did not extend to a firm belief in the Constitution.

These two groups complemented each other as long as there was no conflict on the extent of the First Gulf War and the JSP was the main opposition party. But as soon as the Japanese were faced with the reality of the JSP's reaction to the First Gulf War, when it expressed hard-line support for the Constitution and showed disinclination to compromise, we believe that the public opinion polls have showed that the party lost the weak supporters. This left the JSP with its hard-core support throughout the 1991-1994 period.

When Murayama decided to reject traditional JSP policy in order to coalesce with the LDP in July-September 1994, the strong supporters felt betrayed and confused. They no longer had a

⁴¹ An example of this is the Shintō tsukuri debate which was discussed in Chapter Two.

party which stood for their beliefs. Whilst some of these supporters returned to support the JSP in its post-1996 incarnation after the defection of members to DPJ, in 1994 they felt that they could no longer support their party. This was a situation in which the party lost its strong support. Nonetheless, some JSP supporters stayed with the JSP because even with the ‘betrayal’ of traditional policy by Murayama, it was seen as a compromise worth being in power for.

Without dividing JSP support into these two groups, it is difficult to analyse why the party gradually declined between 1990 and 1996. In Graph 3.1, the sudden dip in support from January until June 1991 is when the weak support left the party. In Graph 3.2 depicting support from 1994-1999 for the JSP, there is an initial slight surge of support for the party when it coalesces with the LDP in June 1994. Once the policy platform is questioned in July 1994, this support plateaus and then drops suddenly when the party’s annual conference endorses the policy in September. This was the beginning of a downwards trajectory which was finally increased by the splitting of the JSP with the formation of the DPJ. The formation of the DPJ reduced support for the JSP further but the JSP did survive.

Did the DPJ absorb the support that the JSP lost? Graph 3.2 shows that whilst the DPJ did start to do better than the JSP after the expansion of the party in 1998, the DPJ’s support levels, even at the end point of analysis on the graph of March 2000, never returned to the levels of support that the JSP had once had.

The problem of the ‘two strata of support’ on defence issue related policy for the DPJ.

As we have argued above, the JSP’s main policy preference was protection of the Constitution. We have shown that the party lost support because of its mishandling of the First Gulf Conflict. Some Japanese showed an increasing ability to be flexible surrounding the issue of the Constitution and such things as the SDF participation in peacekeeping activities.

For the other end of the spectrum of supporters who did not agree with incremental change, the JSP/LDP/Sakigake had originally provided hope. Murayama's influence on the apology of August 1995 made the compromises needed seem worthwhile. These two groups occupied two separate strata of support for the JSP.

Therefore there were various groups of people with specific views on defence issues, which thus had to be 'absorbed' into the post-1996 parties. Because of the survival of the JSP as a minor party, it is likely that some of the electorate who held staunch pro-Constitution views opted to continue to support the JSP. This view of anti-reform of the Constitution was expressed above by Doi Takako as has been seen above. But there were those who would prefer to support a party which has a realistic chance of taking power and forming a government. There are also those members of the electorate who were prepared to question the Constitution and the role of the SDF in peacekeeping operations and might want to support a party which is left of centre but which has not declared itself as being either opposed to or supportive of reform of the Constitution. We believe that this is the attitude that the DPJ has taken towards the Constitution: rather than lose potential support by articulating a position, it has opted to agree to disagree about potential reform of it!

Indeed, in a book published by the DPJ in January 2000, entitled, '*A New Government – how to make it happen*' (*Atarashi seifu – wo jitsugen suru tame ni*), there is no mention of the Constitution.⁴² The party has managed to articulate policies on peaceful diplomacy between Asia and Japan and the US and Japan without even a mention of the most important document which affects these relations. This is clearly seen as both a good and bad strategy. Sasano Teiko, a former Rengōkai politician who joined the DPJ, said in an interview that she was extremely concerned about the lack of debate within the DPJ about the issue of defence, the

⁴²Hatoyama Yukio *Atarashi seifu o jitsugen suru tame ni*. DPJ, January 2000. This vagueness concerning defence policy is indicative of the vagueness about all policy issues in this document.

US security treaty and the Constitution.⁴³ She felt that this issue would eventually emerge as the party has never articulated a position on it as there is so much division about it.

Above, we defined the new position on the Constitution which was expressed by Kan Naoto, a leader of the DPJ that has been titled the *ronken* debate. This is a position of accepting that the Constitution needs to be discussed in the proposed ten year period multi-party forum which began in 2000 in the Diet. Moreover, this position also emphasises that reform should not take place for the sake of reform and is therefore tending more towards the pacifist camp than the revisionist camp.

As has been seen in Graph 3.2, the party is slowly managing to obtain a similar number of seats as the JSP had in the mid to late eighties, yet in public opinion polls, the party seems to gain less support than the JSP did. This suggests that support for the DPJ is far less solid and it is reliant on short-term support near to and at elections.

This is the predicament that the DPJ finds itself in. It does not have that much support. Whilst it might gain support from articulating a position on the Constitution and defence related issues, as this would allay the fears of the former JSP supporters who wish to support a party which has a more realistic chance of forming a government, yet still wants to support a party which is committed to maintaining the Constitution, it could also lose support should the party articulate a position on either side of the fence, it would risk losing many supporters at best and splitting the party at worst. (For more discussion of how the DPJ dealt with these potential divides see Chapter Seven.) The party is never going to be able to increase its support whilst the Constitution is an unarticulated issue and yet it could lose support as soon as it does. This is the legacy of the old JSP on the new DPJ – the peace Constitution is a central issue which over all other policies affects support levels for left-wing parties in Japan.

⁴³ Interview with Sasano Teiko, July 26 2000.

Conclusions

This chapter has attempted to explain what the main ideological stance of the JSP was, and how this 'political space' on the left of the Japanese party system has been filled by the DPJ. The traditional ideology of the JSP, based on preservation of the Constitution and non-recognition of the SDF (seeing them as legal but not constitutional), had gradually declined in its salience, particularly since the First Gulf War. This crisis highlighted the need for Japan to question its role in the post-cold war order.

The Japanese public still have faith in the validity of their peace constitution and its special non-aggression clause and prohibition from maintaining an army. They want to protect it as much as possible and would prefer to find a way to make an international contribution inside the parameters of the Constitution through United Nations-led peace-keeping activities. This is a widely held opinion which has changed incrementally over the past twenty years, in particular since the First Gulf War. All of these positions have been reflected in public opinion polls. Therefore, when the JSP was not able to show a similar flexibility in the period immediately following the First Gulf War, the party lost some support. In other words, the party was not able to adapt and change to remain relevant as Rose and Mackie warn parties must do.⁴⁴ This decline in support has been reflected by public opinion polls. Whilst the public had been aware of the JSP's doctrinaire nature for some time, the First Gulf War proved to be a turning point and public opinion polls showed that the public were increasingly tired of the party's inability to reform.

We believe that after the crisis of the First Gulf War, the JSP began to be supported by two strata of support. The first are those who had soft liberal tendencies and voted for the party because of its ideology but were flexible and changed with the times. Also in this group were

⁴⁴ Richard Rose and Thomas T. Mackie, 'Do Parties Persist or Fail? The Big Trade-off Facing Organizations' in Kay Lawson and Peter H. Merkl, *When Parties Fail. Emerging Alternative Organizations*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1988, p 534.

those who were supporting the party because they were mobilised to do so or were voting for the JSP merely because they disliked the LDP. We believe that this ‘soft support’ began to drop off from about 1991 onwards as the electorate disagreed with the methods employed by the party in its dealings of the First Gulf War, and labour union mobilisation became less successful as will be discussed in Chapter Four. The anti-LDP voters also dropped off from supporting the JSP from 1992 onwards once the new parties described in Chapter Two appeared. The electorate was finally given an alternative to the JSP and the LDP and grasped the opportunity by voting for the Japan New Party, Shinseitō and Sakigake in the 1992 Upper House and 1993 Lower House elections.

On the other hand, a group who believed in the peace platform of the JSP remained steadfast supporters of the party. These are the voters who supported the party despite the lack of adjustments and accommodations that Rose and Mackie suggest are necessary. They continued to back the party through the new party booms of 1993. However, these ‘hard’ supporters also questioned their support of the party when Murayama dropped the JSP’s traditional allegiance to Article Nine and the Security Treaty and opposition to the national flag and anthem in the summer of 1994.

We thus believe that the decline in the JSP can partly be explained by these two drops in support. Also, to some extent, the party lost support because the DPJ accommodated its political space when it emerged in 1996. Questions do need to be asked though about whether the DPJ are in the JSP’s political space and inherited its ‘policies’ since the DPJ has a very vague policy on defence issues as members in the party have joined the party from all ends of the political spectrum.

The reason, however, for the DPJ’s not defining a defence policy is that it is unable to do that for fear of losing its support. Members of the electorate who currently vote for it do so both

because the party has a flexible attitude to questions about defence (as shown by Kan Naoto's comments quoted above), yet there are those who only vote for the party because it has not yet articulated its lack of a defence policy.

Thus, ideology remains a significant and controversial side of Japanese politics. The debate has moved on to a more ill-defined and vague position than before the early nineties, and the public now accepts this as inevitable. In this sense, the Japanese left has proved to be flexible and adaptive and moves with the electorate to a certain degree.

Chapter Four

Rengō and the Changes in the Japanese Left

‘The fate of the union movement... has a direct bearing on the destiny of a viable political opposition in Japan’¹

Introduction

As the quotation above suggests, the relationship between the labour movement and the political left in Japan has been complex and mutually dependent. In this chapter, we shall attempt to show how this relationship has changed in the past twelve years and the consequent effects on the success of the political left.

The relationship between the left-wing parties and labour unions has been described as at best symbiotic. The charge has often been made that the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) and the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) had no organisation of their own and were able to mobilise the electorate only through the support of the unions. Similarly, much of their money came from the labour unions. In return, the unions received representation of their interests in the Diet. However, the relationship became increasingly contentious for the labour unions, as during the 1955 system they were supporting the JSP and DSP financially yet receiving little in return, as the parties were ‘permanently’ part of the opposition.

In this chapter, we shall analyse the relationship between the left and unions by examining their interactions and how they changed from that described during the 1955 system through to 2001 by analysing two questions:

- How did the relationship between the non-communist left-wing parties, the Government, and labour unions change between the mid 1980s and 2001?
- What effect has the decline of unionism and the changing relationship had on the non-communist left’s ability to mobilise voters?

¹ Gary D. Allinson and Yasunori Sone ed., *Political Dynamics in Contemporary Japan*. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1993, p157.

We shall show that past mutual dependence has declined owing to the unions' extending their own influence in government. Also, the unionist movement's dream of corporatism has declined as a result of a growing realisation that it was unobtainable. A change of unionist leadership has also installed an attitude of detachment from political parties. As a consequence of these influences, the relationship between the left and unions has become more *ad hoc* and less predictable. In order to illuminate these changing relationships, two case studies of influential Japanese unions, Jichirō, the All-Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers' Union, and Zendentsū, the All NTT Workers of Japan Union (telecommunications) will be presented. In the final part of this chapter, we shall conclude with an analysis of the implications these changes have had for the JSP and more importantly, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), in attracting electoral support. We shall show that a decline in union membership and the decreasing ability of unions to engage their members in political activity have contributed to the crisis that the left is facing in terms of attracting voters.

As we have shown in the Introduction, one reason accounting for change in several left-wing parties in Europe during the 1990s is said to be reduction in mutual dependence between parties and labour unions.² Lewis Minton describes the relationship between the British Labour Party and the Trade Union Congress as a contentious alliance for several reasons.³ The implications of this symbiotic relationship for electoral mobilisation are of particular importance. Minton observes that should a break in the relationship be initiated (he was writing in 1991 before the New Labour revolution), whether unions or the Labour Party made the first move, the

²The most notable change is the abolition of union bloc voting in the British Labour Party's leadership election thereby limiting trade union influence on the Labour Party. For example, Andrew Richards, *The life and soul of the Party. Causes and Consequences of Organisational Change in the British Labour Party 1979-1997*. Madrid, Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones, 1997. and John K White and Philip J Davies, *Political Parties and the Collapse of the Old Orders*. London, Albany Press, 1998, Chapter 2 on United Kingdom.

³ Lewis Minton, *The Contentious Alliance*. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1991.

consequences would be dire for the electoral mobilisation of trade unionists. Should the Labour Party make the first move, the unions would perceive it as a sign that policy would change in an increasingly anti-union manner. Should the trade unions initiate a split, it would be a sign of the diminishing utility of the Labour Party to organised labour. Even though Minton said this would be difficult for the British Labour Party to achieve, the Party nevertheless managed to do it in the mid-1990s. In the changing relationship between unions and left-wing parties in Japan, a similar break occurred but it was a case of the unions initiating the change. The JSP had realised that it was too dependent on the unions, yet because it lacked other support it was unable to break the relationship. Before we turn to an analysis of this union-initiated change, we shall look at the history of the unions in Japan.

The Development of Unions, 1945-1990, and their Political Role

Labour unions in Japan have their roots in the period of Taishō democracy in the 1920s but their activities were controlled and restricted by the State before and during World War II. During the war, independent unions were banned, and a single state-run union, Sangyō hōkokukai, existed. Prior to the war in 1936 420,000 workers were unionised. In 1945, the Japanese labour union movement re-started, virtually from scratch, and soon became an important force. Workers had been organised during the war at the company, industry and national levels and thus were in structures that the political left could easily mobilize.⁴ In the few months from the end of the war until December 1945, 380,000 members of the workforce became unionised. A month later, a million had been added to this number. The number of unionised workers finally peaked at 6.7 million in 1948 comprising, at the time, over half of the non-agricultural workforce.⁵

This was the peak of unionisation in Japan. Since then, the 1950s domestic economic problems and the policies of the Allied Occupation's later period, influenced by the growing salience of the Cold War and the subsequent Red Purge of communists, saw the authorities support for

⁴ John Dower, *Embracing Defeat*. London, Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1999, p257.

⁵ pp 256-257.

unions begin to diminish.⁶ Unions began to form within large private companies (later to become Dōmei backed unions) and public sector ‘businesses’ such as the telephone company NTT (Nippon Telephone and Telegraph) and local government workers (Sōhyō backed unions between 1950 and 1989) but never took off within tertiary industry or within small and middle-sized firms, which in some respects are the backbone of the Japanese economy.

Sōhyō (Nihon Rōdō Kumiai Sōhyōgikai - General Council of Labour Unions of Japan) was formed in 1950 and was intended to be a democratic union federation in opposition to the Communist led labour union, Sanbetsu Kaigi. Management, government and the Allied Occupation GHQ all welcomed its existence but within a year Cold War politics had taken over Sōhyō and it had become a heavily Marxist-oriented group.⁷ It made huge wage increase demands during the 1950s that were impossible in the economic climate of the recession after the Korean War. Moderate union leaders could see that such requests were futile, yet Sōhyō leaders perceived their failure to obtain such increases as being due to management’s hard-line policy. Kume believes that this attitude is what led Sōhyō into a political course that was to affect its whole existence until it dissolved in 1989. Dōmei (originally called Zenrō) resulted from an ideologically-driven right-wing split from Sōhyō in 1954. Dōmei tended to represent private firms and less dogmatic unions in the public sector (sometimes unions which had split from their ‘ideologically driven’ parent union) and had an accommodating approach to labour relations, whereas Sōhyō displayed a far more adversarial approach.

The beginning of the end of Sōhyō and Dōmei influence on politics can be seen in the reforms of the 1980s, when large public companies were broken up and privatised. This was an opportunity for Sōhyō unions to show their anti-capitalist, anti-management colours. Mike Mochizuki compared the Railway workers’ approach with the communication workers’

⁶ The occupation forces helped (or hindered?) the formation of the General Council of Japanese Trade Unions (Sōhyō) in 1950.

⁷ Ikuo Kume, *Disparaged Success*. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1998, p 75.

approach. Railway workers who were members of Japan National Railways (JNR) called strikes and refused to co-operate with management. In comparison, with the break up of NTT, the Zendentsū Union Chair, Yamagishi Akira, went straight to the leaders of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) to negotiate a good settlement for his union rather than see it break up. He did this because he realised the limitations of the JSP's traditional partner, the unions.⁸

This act by Yamagishi signifies a crucial turning point of labour unions for two reasons. Firstly it is important as it is the emergence on the national stage of Yamagishi Akira, an innovative and politically committed unionist who became the first Rengō Chairman and was highly influential in the politics of the mid-nineties, as will be shown below. It is also significant because it reflects the beginnings of a working relationship between the LDP and the labour unions, which would eventually reduce the dependence of the unions on the left-wing parties. Both these events were of crucial importance to the formation of Rengō, which can be considered as the first stage of the transformation between the parties and unions.

The Formation of Rengō

Between 1987 and 1989, the two labour union umbrella groups, Sōhyō and Dōmei, merged to form one of the largest labour union organizations in the world, Rengō.⁹ In 1987, Dōmei officially became Rengō, an organisation that was originally just intended to consist of private

⁸ Mike Mochizuki, 'Public Sector Labor and the Privatisation Challenge: the Railway and Telecommunications Unions in Gary D. Allinson and Yasunori Sone ed., *Political Dynamics in Contemporary Japan*. p193.

⁹ It is important to note that the formation of Rengō did not amount to the full unification of Sōhyō and Dōmei that so many political analysts seem to believe. In each region the former Sōhyō building became the Heiwa (Peace) Centre and Dōmei became the Yuaikaigi, thereby maintaining the former differences. In Okayama, there is no new Rengō building *per se*, rather Rengō just used offices in the Workers Welfare Building whilst the former Sōhyō and Dōmei offices continued to exist in their respective buildings. The top level of the organisation, Rengō National Headquarters, was housed in the former Sōhyō building. In 1999 the Yuaikaigi and the Heiwa Centres were disbanded, although these terms for the old union groupings are still used amongst left politicians to differentiate between the former Sōhyō and Dōmei backed unions.

sector unions. The public sector unions were scheduled to join Rengō when they had removed all hard-line left-wing influences in their unions. It was thought that this process could take up to ten years but eventually it was completed in two.¹⁰ Unions such as Jichirō and Nikkyōso were keen to join Rengō and were happy for their Communist members to break away to facilitate their membership in Rengō. Thus by 1989, private and public sector Rengō was formed.¹¹ But why was Rengō created?

There are various interpretations for the unification of the union movement but they all seem to point to two main reasons: the need to defend the union movement from what was perceived as a right-wing backlash from the LDP during the Nakasone government and the goal of bringing about a government which would be more sympathetic to the demands of the workforce than the LDP. We shall now discuss the first point.

Tsujinaka believes that the Sōhyō leftism described above kept it excluded from the corridors of power, so a principal reason for the formation of Rengō was to bring unionism back into being a political force.¹² In a similar vein, Mochizuki believes that the creation of Rengō was inextricably linked to the administrative reform campaign of the 1980s.¹³ In the 1980s, because of Rinchō (Second Provisional Commission on Administrative Reform), the electoral resurgence of the LDP, and the decline in union membership, the labour unions realised the need to push for more labour unity. The government's administrative reform was designed to weaken unionism by forcing public companies (which had Sōhyō-backed more militant unions) to become private corporations (and therefore to conform to the more conciliatory style of

¹⁰ Interview with Mamiya Yukio, Head of the Political Section of Rengō, July 28 2000.

¹¹ Two other national union centres were established in 1989 to compete with Rengō. The Socialist Zenrōkyō (Zenkoku Rōdō Kumiai Renraku Kyōgikai) and the Communist Zenrōren (Zenkoku Rōdō Kumiai Sōrengō).

¹² Yutaka Tsujinaka 'Rengō and its osmotic networks' in Gary D. Allinson and Yasunori Sone ed., *Political Dynamics in Contemporary Japan*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1993.

¹³ Mike Mochizuki, 'Public Sector Labor and the Privatisation Challenge: the Railway and Telecommunications Unions in Gary D. Allinson and Yasunori Sone ed., *Political Dynamics in Contemporary Japan*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1993.

unionism favoured by Dōmei). This would have two benefits for the LDP. It would remove large nationalised company unions which had been militant in their demands for higher wages and better working conditions. Two of the principle targets were Nippon Telephone and Telegraph (NTT) - the telecommunications monopoly - and Japan National Railways (JNR). Secondly, it would also weaken the JSP, which would lose its main union backer, Sōhyō. Creating Rengō was an attempt by the unions to unite and make a comeback against this conservative attempt to weaken them.

Another similar explanation for the formation of Rengō is that it was formed to increase influence over politics and policy beyond that which Sōhyō and Dōmei had exercised. As early as the end of 1989, Rengō had ten standing committees, including three that dealt exclusively with the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, and the Ministry of Health and Welfare. This is in comparison to Sōhyō that only had links with the Ministry of Labour. Tsujinaka points out that in this way, Rengō was able to expand its potential to influence policy-making resulting in it being far more heavily involved with affairs of state than any of its predecessors.¹⁴

These changes between Rengō and the bureaucracy were probably more as a result of the transformations that had occurred prior to the inauguration of Rengō in 1987-1989. Nonetheless, these extended linkages between government and labour unions still constituted a significant change for the relationship between the unions, the left parties, and the Government. Labour began to go directly to the bureaucracy and government over issues such as the privatisation of NTT and the Japan National Railways, JNR. The Leader of Zendantsu, the NTT workers union, Yamagishi Akira went straight to Kanemaru Shin of the Telecommunications *zoku* of the LDP rather than approach the JSP for support when the government wanted to break the company up

¹⁴ Yutaka Tsujinaka, 'Rengō and its osmotic networks' in Gary D. Allinson and Yasunori Sone ed., *Political Dynamics in Contemporary Japan*, pp 209-210.

and privatise it.¹⁵,¹⁶ Moreover, when in the mid-eighties the LDP were facing lower levels of electoral support and had to rely upon the New Liberal Club (NLC) to form a coalition government, the unions were able to make more inroads into creating a good relationship with the government party as they desperately wanted to provide new sources of potential votes.¹⁷ As Carlile has said:

“ At the regime level, the widely heralded “moderation of the Japanese labor movement has transformed organized labor from an excluded, anti-system movement into an interest group that is an important pillar supporting the existing political economic order”¹⁸

These changes had meant that the labour organisation, even before the formation of Rengō, had less need to rely solely upon their relationship with the left parties as a means of representing their interests to government. With new access to the LDP and the bureaucracy, the first cracks in the traditional dependence between the unions and the left had appeared.

The Theory of Union-Led Political Change

Yamagishi Akira believes that the only way to change workers' lives in Japan is to have a union movement that is not only interested in increasing wages but is also concerned about workers' living conditions, education, and health care.¹⁹ When he was Chairman of Rengō, in the early nineties, he felt that in order for the union movement to achieve this, they needed better access to government, and for this to happen, an opposition government needed to be formed. This was his dream of corporatism. For corporatism to exist, three main criteria need to be fulfilled. Firstly, a labour or social-democratic party needs to identify with union power and can be

¹⁵ Toyonaga Ikuko, “The Battle over the Break-up of NTT” *Power Shuffles and Policy Processes: Coalition Government in Japan in the 1990's*. Otake Hideo ed., Japan Centre for International Exchange, 2000, p85.

¹⁶ *Zoku* refers to the groups of politicians, mostly in the LDP, which specialise in a particular aspect of policy.

¹⁷ Lonny E. Carlile, “Party Politics and the Japanese Labor Movement. Rengō's “New Political Force”, *Asian Survey*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 7, July 1994, pp 611-612.

¹⁸ Lonny E. Carlile, “Party Politics and the Japanese Labor Movement. Rengō's “New Political Force, p 607.

¹⁹ Yamagishi spoke passionately about the need for unions to consider all aspects of workers' lives, in the interview with him on 12 September 2000.

assumed to have close links with unions. Secondly, there needs to be a reasonable expectation that those parties can form a government, and finally, there needs to be an institutional arrangement whereby labour and big business can meet and secure their influence on policy-making and can expect to be able to bind their members to the agreements formed.²⁰ In Japan, the first and last of these expectations had been fulfilled by the end of the eighties as a result of the denationalisation discussed above and the creation of Rengō. The only one which was not in existence was the second one: a reasonable expectation that an opposition would be able to form a government.

To gain access to government he felt that the non-communist opposition parties, which consisted at the time of the Japan Socialist Party (JSP), the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), Komeitō, and the Social Democratic League (SDL), should combine into either one political party or form electoral and/or Diet coalitions. The formation of Rengō thus was, not only a means to strengthen unions against the growing power of the right under the Nakasone initiated right-wing Rinchō reforms, but was also a means of reducing division amongst the political left, which had been drawn along a JSP/Sōhyō, DSP/Dōmei cleavage with the other opposition parties (Kōmeitō and the SDL) further complicating these divisions. Rengō would mean that unions would be able to support any candidate of the opposition, regardless of their party. Furthermore, with the backing of all unions, it would be more likely that greater numbers of opposition candidates would win seats in the single non-transferable vote electoral system which was in use at the time. Finally, it would also remove the connections the electorate made between the hard-line Sōhyō and the equally dogmatic JSP, which was a factor considered to be losing both unions and the party support. As an added bonus, it was thought that the removal of these hard-line images would encourage workers to join unions, which would further mobilise support for the left-wing parties. Rengō had thus been formed to play a catalytic role in the “new political force” in Japanese politics.²¹

²⁰ Toyonaga, “The Battle over the Breakup of NTT” *Power Shuffles and Policy Processes*, pp 73-74.

²¹ Lonny E. Carlile, “Party Politics and the Japanese Labor Movement. Rengō’s “New Political Force””,

Unions and Political Change 1987-2001

The first major political move of Rengō came before the public sector Rengō had been fully incorporated within private sector Rengō in 1989. In the House of Councillors election of that year, Rengō decided to put forward its own candidates rather than back candidates from one of the left-wing parties. The reason for this was partly because Rengō was not sure whether to back the JSP or the DSP, so it decided to put forward its own candidates to prevent having to make any decision. Furthermore, it also thought that a new political force might kick-start the process of reform and left-wing unification.²²

Rengō instigated an approach of supporting candidates with policies it was in agreement with rather than just supporting candidates who had links to unions in the past.²³ Of the twelve candidates that Rengō backed in this election, eleven won, and thus the Rengō attempt to launch itself into politics directly, rather than remain as a support structure, was initially a huge success.²⁴ This success came in tandem with an important victory for the JSP when it won its first majority in a House of the Diet since 1947. As discussed in Chapter Two, this success was due to support for the female party leader, Doi Takako, anti-LDP sentiment because of the consumption tax and rice liberalisation and the effects of the Recruit Scandal. This was an election in which anti-LDP feeling was at an all-time high so any non-LDP candidates were likely to appeal to voters who wanted a change. This was an election in which voters were no less wary of the hard-line socialism of the JSP and its ties with the unions yet they supported the party mostly because of anti-LDP sentiments.²⁵ Whilst Rengō was a direct connection to the

p 613.

²² J A A Stockwin, 'The Social Democratic Party (Formerly Socialist Party): A Turbulent Odyssey', edited by Ronald J Hrebenar, *Japan's New Party System*. Third Edition, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 2000, p 163.

²³ Toyonaga, "The Battle over the Breakup of NTT" *Power Shuffles and Policy Processes*, p 88.

²⁴ The one candidate who did not win will be examined below in the Okayama case study as it is felt that the reasons for his failure were more to do with the factional politics of Okayama and a strong female support network which his rival candidate had had.

²⁵ Otake Hideo *Nihon seiji no tairitsu jiku*. (The Divisions of Japanese Politics)- Authors own translation, Chūkōshinsho, 1999, pp 26-29.

union movement, even using its name, the candidates selected were a change from the traditional union image. Only one of the candidates was a former unionist, the others being lawyers, teachers, journalists, and TV celebrities. This image consoled an electorate wary of hard-line socialism and unionism. What is even more remarkable about the Rengō victories of 1989 is that 10 of the candidates were from two-seat House of Councillor districts.²⁶ As the Upper House has fixed terms and the seats are divided and fought in alternate elections, each of these ten candidates was the sole winner that year in his district, which meant they fought head to head with the LDP and won.

Table 4.1 – Politicians who campaigned under the Rengōkai name in 1989.

Name	Constituency	Sex/Age	Previous Career	Inclusive or exclusive	Election in which seat was lost
Awamori Takashi	Ishikawa	M/50	Unionist	Exclusive	1995
Ikeda Osamu	Ehime	M/58	Lawyer	Inclusive	1995
Inoue Jetsuo	Mie	M/49	Lawyer	Inclusive	1995
Imai Harumi	Tokushima	F/59	Teacher	Inclusive	1995
Isomura Osamu	Yamanashi	M/59	Journalist	Inclusive	1995
Furukawa Tasaburo	Fukui	M/54	Lawyer	Inclusive	1995
Hoshikawa Yasumatsu	Yamagata	M/57	Local Politics	Inclusive/ Exclusive	1995
Nakamura Eiichi	Shiga	M/59	Celebrity	Inclusive	1995
Sasano Teiko	Kyoto	F/55	Celebrity	Inclusive	Still holds seat, DPJ
Shinsaka Kazuo	Nara	M/50	Director	Inclusive	1995
Takahara Katsuya	Okayama	M/45	Lawyer	Inclusive	Lost in '89
Takai Kazunobu	Gifu	M/47	Lawyer	Inclusive	1995

In a survey in which the candidates were asked which factors affected their victories in 1989, seven of the eleven candidates indicated that the electorate’s sense of outrage against the consumption tax was the most important factor suggesting that this was an anti-LDP vote rather than a pro-Rengō vote.²⁷ The second most common response also pointed to the anti-LDP

²⁶ A similar number of JSP candidates also won in these two-member districts which means no LDP candidate won in over half of Japan’s prefectures.

²⁷ A simple survey was carried out in which the candidates who stood in 1989 were questioned about the election. One of these candidates has since died and therefore only 10 candidates who were victorious in 1989 were available for survey of which a response rate of 60% was achieved. This question was also put to Sasano Teiko, the remaining member of the group still in the Diet, and her reply is included in the data.

sentiment raised by the corruption of the Recruit Scandal. Both of these factors show the candidates felt that the advantages that Rengōkai (the name of the ‘party’ that the Rengō candidates were fighting under) offered were in fact no different to any of the other opposition parties. It would seem that Rengōkai only managed to be so successful because it was an opposition party in an election in which opposition parties were rewarded for not being the LDP.

Stephen Johnson in *Opposition Politics in Japan* has extensively examined the Rengō candidates and developed the theory of exclusive and inclusive candidates. Exclusive candidates are those who came from a union background and could therefore count on hard-line union support, but support from a wider sample of the electorate is doubtful. They tended to be middle-aged and male. These types of candidate were ‘the traditional face of socialist politics’.²⁸ The inclusive candidates were ones who tried to exploit non-partisan and anti-LDP votes as well as traditional left-wing supporters. Here image was important, so the candidate tended to be younger and sometimes even female and had a professional background. It is significant that, according to Johnson’s typology, eleven of the twelve candidates in 1989 were inclusive candidates (Johnson gives one candidate an exclusive/inclusive classification) and this distinction of candidate type can be utilised to explain the successes of 1989. Candidate type is an issue which will be discussed further in Chapter Seven and it is interesting that the attempt by Rengōkai to ‘widen’ the image of the traditional left-wing candidate is also something that the DPJ has attempted to do since its formation in 1996.

Further reasons for the 1989 victories also exist. Aurelia George Mulgan has pointed out that the victories in Yamagata, Ishikawa, Yamanashi, Gifu, Mie, Shiga, Tokushima and Ehime (eight out of the twelve districts) were all in rural districts. As briefly discussed in Chapter Two, in 1989, Nōkyō, the Agricultural Cooperatives Association, were opposing plans to liberalise beef and citrus imports and consequently did not support LDP. George Mulgan has pointed out that in

²⁸ Stephen Johnson, *Opposition Politics in Japan*. London, Routledge, 2000, p161-162.

these rural districts, the Rengō candidates gave Nōkyō an alternative candidate to the JSP, which can partly explain their success.²⁹ It would have been less difficult for traditional LDP supporters to vote for Rengōkai than to vote for the JSP (although the election results of 1989 show that many did do this).

Whatever the reasons for the victory in 1989, the opposition parties managed to create the impression that Yamagishi's dream of a united opposition might be a reality. Opposition co-operation had resulted in eleven candidates' being elected in difficult districts. Nonetheless, the question needs to be asked whether these victories were really as a result of the success of opposition unity, or were they merely as a result of opposition to the LDP?

Opposition Disunity 1990-1992

On the back of the success of the opposition in 1989, the left-wing parties went into the 1990 Lower House election with a regained sense of enthusiasm and a positive attitude. Their successes continued for that election but things began to collapse before the 1992 Upper House elections. In February and March 1992, prior to the election, Rengōkai managed to win two by-election victories, in Nara and Miyagi, but this was the end of its roll of good luck. In 1992, on its second attempt at direct action politics, all 22 of its candidates lost. The 22 candidates comprised eleven inclusive and eleven exclusive type candidates yet all lost their elections. Does this invalidate Johnson's exclusive/inclusive candidate theory and does it represent a larger failure for Rengō?

What in fact had happened was that the group had split over the issue which had always divided it: defence and the Constitution. Had the First Gulf War not intervened, Rengō might have been able in time to gloss over the differences regarding this policy issue, which also contributed to a worsening divide between the JSP and DSP. (See Chapter Three for more detail on the impact

²⁹ Aurelia George Mulgan, *The Politics of Agriculture in Japan*. London, Routledge, 2000, p 488.

the war had on the parties and the legislation that was passed as a result of it.) Events culminated in Kōmeitō and the DSP backing the LDP's Peacekeeping Operations Bill in 1992, which the JSP tried to filibuster. Rengō desperately tried to salvage the emerging two-year JSP/DSP cooperation that had been a result of the 1989 victory of the JSP and the successes that Rengōkai had had, yet neither side was keen to iron out a compromise over the PKO bill. This resulted in the opposition once again being distracted by dissent and meant that not only did the Rengō candidates of 1992 lose, but the opposition as a whole failed to make any gains in the election. As a result, the policy of *ad hoc* candidate support from the unions emerged – and remained as a policy throughout the nineties and thus marked a significant change for labour union and party relations.

The Beginning of *ad hoc* relations between unions and parties

The turmoil over the First Gulf War ultimately led to the abandonment of the social democratic political party merger efforts and stimulated a more aggressive approach to find a solution to the failure of the opposition to be involved in government from Rengō. Yamagishi called the 1992 election “a complete defeat”, declared the JSP-DSP merger dead, and announced that labour would be attempting to find a new means of achieving its new political force. In autumn 1992 Rengō announced that it would now consider supporting any candidate who had an appreciation of labour concerns and also considered vetting potential JSP and DSP candidates for their pragmatism on defence and security issues.³⁰ As a result, there was some dissent from left-leaning groups, but this was ignored by the Rengō executive, who tried to push forward its reforms. From October 1992 onwards, candidates who wanted to gain the support of Rengō had to commit to a pragmatic line on peace and security as well as other issues.³¹ This pragmatism about candidates' attitudes towards policy has remarkable resonance with the vetting of potential member's policy attitudes which the DPJ carried out in 1996 before accepting Diet

³⁰ Lonny E. Carlile, ‘Party Politics and the Japanese Labor Movement. Rengō's “New Political Force”’, p 618.

³¹ *Asahi Shinbun*, March 26 1993.

members into the new party and is an interesting indication of how left groups in Japan began to deal with the problems of ideological and policy division.

In the meantime, political disarray within the LDP and opposition from early 1993 onwards meant that the ground was being cleared for the eventual opposition government formation strategy of Rengō. Hosokawa's Japan New Party (JNP) had emerged, Eda Satsuki had created the opposition group Sirius, and then in June 1993, the LDP split. The new political force and Yamagishi's dream of corporatism would now be formed by splinters of each party. This new Rengō approach was shown in the 1993 Lower House election, when Rengō backed not only DSP and JSP candidates but candidates from the new parties, JNP, Sakigake and Shinseitō.

Yamagishi and Coalition Negotiations

In July 1993, the LDP failed to secure a working majority in the House of Representatives for the first time in 38 years. This left the political arena in a state of deadlock for several weeks as negotiations were conducted on which parties would form a coalition government. The next largest party after the LDP in terms of number of seats was the JSP but it had suffered a huge rejection at the hands of the electorate. It received a mere 70 seats, slightly over half of its pre-election strength of 136. As Curtis describes the JSP in 1993, and as we have described it in Chapter Two, its role in the coalition negotiations was pivotal.

“The election results put the JSP in an anomalous position. The voters had responded to the opportunity to end LDP dominance by inflicting a defeat on the Socialist Party that was worse than any it had ever suffered before. Yet they left the JSP with enough seats to make it the second largest party in the Diet and to make its participation in government essential if non-LDP parties were to have enough members to constitute a majority. The Socialists were too weak to lead and too strong to be ignored”.³²

The Socialists were therefore an essential and delicate part of the coalition negotiations. The other parties in the discussions were Ozawa Ichirō and Shinseitō, Hosokawa's JNP, Kōmeitō, the DSP, Takemura's new Sakigake, and finally the tiny SDL, insignificant to a coalition

³² Gerald Curtis *The Logic of Japanese Politics*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1999, pp 101-102. It must be noted, however, that in 1949 the Socialist's election result had been worse.

majority. It was in the interests of these parties to co-operate as much and as quickly as possible in order to prevent the LDP from managing to create a coalition with either the Kōmeitō or the DSP. The negotiations became increasingly based on the issue of each party's position on electoral reform; specifically its position for or against the introduction of a single-seat majority electoral system as will be discussed in Chapter Five. The parties grouped into factions: Hosokawa's JNP and Takemura's Sakigake versus Ozawa's Shinseitō and Kōmeitō. In the midst of all the turmoil, one party, the Socialists, stood apart from the negotiations.

Yamagishi Akira wrote a book concerning the coalition negotiations which he entitled *Renritsu no shikakejin*; 'The Creator of the Coalition'. He seems to be extolling his own importance by using this title, yet on analysis of the detailed events which he recounts in the book, he certainly seems to have had a significant influence on the formation of the coalition. His role seems to have been to have been one of constraining the JSP members who did not want to join the coalition, restraining the DSP from its potential co-operation with the LDP and pressuring Hosokawa and Takemura into participating in a non-LDP coalition.³³

Ozawa Ichirō held meetings with Yamagishi even prior to his formation of Shinseitō in June 1993 and even though Yamagishi implies that he did not trust Ozawa, they had established a working relationship by the end of July. Ozawa turned to Yamagishi for information on the Socialists, and Yamagishi thus became the 'channel' between the left and right elements of the coalition negotiations. In his book he also recounts that he was asked to evaluate Hosokawa Morihiro to establish whether his intentions of becoming Prime Minister were serious. Yamagishi, along with Eda Satsuki, met Hosokawa and both felt that he was committed to the job; an opinion which Yamagishi regretted.^{34, 35}

³³ Toyonaga, "The Battle over the Breakup of NTT" *Power Shuffles and Policy Processes*, pp 89-90.

³⁴ Interview with Yamagishi Akira, 12 September 2000. Owing to the early resignation of Hosokawa, the LDP gained the leverage to get back into power. Yamagishi feels that Hosokawa gave in too easily and did not control the forces of Ozawa, Takemura, and the JSP sufficiently.

³⁵ He also recounts the story of how he was the person, whilst attending a meeting in Okayama Prefecture, who unwittingly leaked to the press that Hata Tsutomu, Ozawa Ichirō's candidate for Prime

On reflection, Yamagishi was not a catalyst of change to the degree of Ozawa and Hosokawa but he was an important actor in the negotiations of the 1993 non-LDP coalition government. Owing to the personality of Yamagishi, the unions managed an important behind-the-scenes influence on the coalition. A non-JCP, non-LDP coalition was formed, as had been the intention of Yamagishi since he had taken over as Chairman of Rengō. His long-dreamt-of corporatist government which had sympathetic links to a unified Labour movement, was at last a reality.³⁶

1994-1996 – A period of Turmoil

With the formation of the coalition government in 1993, Rengō was in the position for the first time of having all the parties that it supported united in one coalition. This was not to last for long, because in April 1994 the JSP ‘bucked’ away from the coalition which meant it lost its majority, and two months later the JSP joined with Sakigake and the LDP to form a government. Nonetheless, Rengō still found itself in the position of having one of its traditional support parties *in* government but the old Sōhyō and Dōmei divisions re-emerged.³⁷ With the break-up of the coalition, the DSP joined with Ozawa Ichirō in the creation of a super opposition party Shinshintō. This resulted in the old Heiwa Centre (Sōhyō) and Yuaikaigi (Dōmei) divisions coming to the fore again. Thus by 1995 the unions were back to supporting the parties they had backed ten years previously; this time the JSP was in government and the DSP members were now in a party second largest only to the LDP. Furthermore, there was now a further reason for division amongst the labour union movement. Rengō was now divided into the unions who agreed with the JSP joining its enemy, the LDP, in a coalition, and those who did not, like Zendantsū.

Meanwhile, with the collapse of the original plan of uniting the opposition into one party which

Minister, had been dropped in favour of Hosokawa.

³⁶ For the definition of corporatism used here, Toyonaga, “The Battle over the Breakup of NTT” *Power Shuffles and Policy Processes*, pp.73-74.

³⁷ This had also been the case under the Hosokawa coalition but here only one of Rengō’s partners was in power.

had proved to be unfeasible in the 1993-1994 Hosokawa coalition, the unions and Rengō were increasingly concerned with the need to create a new political party which could effectively challenge the LDP. Consequently they fully backed the various attempts of politicians to create parties. One of these attempts was headed by the Socialist politician Akamatsu Hirotaka which was discussed above in Chapter Two. The other main attempt to create a political party during this period was that of Shin Minshu Rengō, also discussed in Chapter Two. Yamagishi Akira was initially involved in the formation of Shin Minshu Rengō – the right-wing breakaway party that Yamahana Sadao tried to create from the JSP in 1995, which was thwarted by the Kobe earthquake. But throughout this period of attempted new left-of-centre parties, the unions did not know whom to support, and whilst the political turmoil continued, support was very transitory. Union backing was given to candidates and new parties, and just as simply taken away again.

It has been implied that Yamagishi was forced to retire owing to criticism of his heavy involvement in politics.³⁸ Whatever the reason, the retirement of Yamagishi, who emphatically stated that he retired because of ill health, meant the link between politics and the labour movement changed dramatically. His successor, Ashida Junnosuke, and then his successor, Washio Etsuya, had no interest in politics and were determined to take unionism back to more fundamental tasks of negotiating wages and protecting jobs. To do this they felt that policy-by-policy co-operation with whichever party agreed was superior to the Yamagishi style. Thus, not only had Yamagishi's dream of corporatism really died when the JSP joined the coalition with the LDP, but also with his retirement, the idea that the unions could influence politics and possibly place parties in government had been challenged. Nonetheless, Yamagishi had been in the right place at the right time. Had his successors been the Chair of Rengō at the time of the 1993 negotiations, their attitudes towards politics suggest that they would not have been as active in attempting to construct a non-LDP coalition.

³⁸ Mamiya Yukio of Rengō contradicted this rumour and said that Yamagishi stood down because it was the turn of a former Dōmei member to be Chairman.

Another problem for the unions was that it was now difficult to decide through which party they could gain access to the Diet (particularly when the LDP and Shinshintō took about 70% of the electorate's vote between 1994 and 1996). This confusion, combined with the fact that the unions' traditional partner, the JSP, was in government with the LDP (and therefore was in a position to gain greater access for unions to government decision-making bodies), meant that increasingly unions were told that in elections they should support whichever candidate they deemed most fit to gain them access to power. In effect, the period 1994-1996 was one in which the traditional support networks of left-wing party and labour unions began to dissolve. The left-wing and the labour movement began to see each other in different terms. The left-wing parties were currently in a position in which they were in power and did not need the support they once needed. The unions had access to government and this had been increasing since the eighties. They also had a new-found freedom to support candidates according to policy preferences. Nonetheless, as we shall show, whilst this situation remained preferable to the unions, the left-wing parties once again needed union support after the collapse of the JSP/LDP/Sakigake coalition in 1996 and the break-up of Shinshintō in 1997.

1996-1998 Formation of DPJ and the 1996 Lower House election.

The Democratic Party of Japan, when it was finally launched in September 1996, was the first new left-of-centre party since 1960 when the DSP was formed. It was formed just in time to fight the 1996 Lower House election and came out of the election with slightly fewer seats than it expected with 55. The launch of the party is considered in detail in Chapter Two, but what is significant to this chapter is the degree of consultation between Hatoyama Yukio and Yokomichi Takahiro with unions before the launch of the party. In interviews the leaders of the party emphasised the importance of union support. Even Kan Naoto, whose own electoral campaigns were originally conducted without any union support, stressed that the co-operation of the unions was important.³⁹ A new left-wing party without union backing was thus considered impossible by these new party leaders, despite the changes described above. Whilst

³⁹ Interview with Kan Naoto, 25 July 2000.

the unions had changed their goals and were now supporting parties and candidates on an *ad hoc* basis, the left, even a new party, fronted by a politician renowned for not using union backing, did not even fathom not being supported by unions.

The October 1996 election was the first held under the new electoral system. (The electoral system changes will be discussed in Chapter Five). It was a period of turmoil for both unions and parties. With the emergence of the DPJ, Rengō opted to support some of its candidates. In *Rengō Weekly*, the weekly Rengō newsletter, the official candidates for the 1996 election were nominated. In 41.7% of the single-member-districts in which the DPJ nominated candidates, Rengō supported the party. No doubt owing to the presence of former Dōmei candidates, it also supported Shinshintō candidates in 39.2% of districts. This meant that in total, Rengō supported Shinshintō and DPJ candidates in approximately 10% of the total 300 SMDs. It supported JSP candidates in 8.8% of districts. It also supported non-aligned and Minseiren candidates, who accounted for about 10% of all candidates.⁴⁰ These figures represent only the official candidates and the fact that support was given for only 79 districts suggests that in other areas Rengō may have provided unofficial support for the LDP or the opposition parties.⁴¹

The break up of Shinshintō – the beginning of a united Rengō?

In December 1997, Ozawa Ichirō decided to break up Shinshintō, the largest opposition party which had ‘included’ various political parties: Hata Tsutomu and Ozawa’s Shinseitō group, the former DSP, the former Kōmeitō group, Eda Satsuki’s Social Democratic League, and Hosokawa’s JNP. This party, founded in December 1994, had been glued together by the need to ‘unite’ the opposition against the LDP, effectively what Rengō had been trying to achieve since 1989.

⁴⁰ Minseiren seems to have been a *kaiha* (See Chapter One), rather than a party. It seems to have been an Ozawa connected group of politicians who eventually ended up in the enlarged DPJ in April 1998. Little is known of them apart from the fact that in *Seikan Yōran*, the Diet handbook, certain members say that their former party before the DPJ was Minseiren.

⁴¹ *Rengō Weekly*, 11 October 1996.

The break up of the party was very influential, as the splintered parties were in a position to affect politics and union relations, in particular the former DSP group. Mamiya Yukio, an employee of Dōmei, who is now employed by the political section of Rengō, was present at the meeting on December 27 1997 when the former DSP members had to decide whether they would go with Ozawa into the new Liberal Party he was intending to form, or whether they should remain independent and form their own party, even though this could mean that there would be only six members. Mamiya describes this day-long meeting as the most exciting day of his life as the discussion was so intense and the members were divided over what they should do. The decision was eventually made that they would form their own party, the Yūai, but this was supposedly only because one of the members was called away, giving the Yūai group a numerical advantage.⁴²

Lonny Carlile described in 1993 the efforts of former Sōhyō and Dōmei groups to paper over their differences and form a union movement that could then influence the opposition parties to compromise and create a strong united front *vis à vis* the LDP.⁴³ This papering over of the union movement was finally achieved in the winter and spring of 1998 precisely because the Yūai group opted out of going with Ozawa in December 1997. As a result, along with Hata's group, the Yūai joined the DPJ in April 1998. This had many results. Firstly it created the largest opposition party and a group that was beginning to have the potential to challenge the LDP. Secondly, it meant that the DSP group and some of the former JSP group were together in the same party for the first time since 1960. Finally, it meant that the Sōhyō (Heiwa Centre) and Dōmei (Yūaikaigi) differentiations were no longer important. The break up of Shinshintō thus facilitated what the labour movement had been trying to do for ten years - a united labour movement working alongside a united left opposition.

⁴² Interview with Mamiya Yukio, Political Section of Rengō, 28 July 2000.

⁴³ Lonny E Carlile, 'Party Politics and the Japanese Labor Movement Rengō's "New Political Force"',

2000 General Election

The 2000 House of Representatives election was the first since the formation of Rengō when the union organisation could strategically support one political party. When Yūai joined the DPJ in 1998, the old union groupings, each Prefecture's Heiwa Centre, and Yūaikaigi were officially broken down and combined into one organisation. The Rengō political section was formed and this section was responsible for gathering votes for the DPJ.

This form of vote gathering is quite different from the tactics employed at the local level. At the local level, a union will give its list of members to the candidate to be used alongside the other addresses which the candidate receives from many varied sources. The candidate is then able to send 'mail-shots' informing the member of meetings and events where he or she will be present. In comparison, Rengō Headquarters are highly secretive about the contact details of the people they are trying to get to vote for the DPJ. They refuse to give the party the names and contact details but take the responsibility themselves to ensure that those contacted vote for the DPJ.⁴⁴ Mamiya also refused to divulge the numbers of votes that they felt they had been able to attract for each candidate and the DPJ although this information exists and is highly recorded by Rengō. We shall discuss below how these numbers have dropped in the past twenty years.

The election in 2000 thus saw the result that Rengō had been working towards for years. A united opposition (the former DSP, JSP, SDL and centre left politicians) now existed, which a united union movement could support. Nonetheless, the *ad hoc* policy instigated between 1992 and 1996 of unions voting for candidates from any party had had effect on some unions, as we shall discuss in these case studies of Jichirō and Zendentsū.

Jichirō – The government workers union

Jichirō is an important union as it has branches in each city, town, village and prefectural office incorporating most civil servants who are grade 2 and below.⁴⁵ It has 1,250,000 members. Like any union, it attempts to improve workers' living conditions, to provide better social services and health care, and to improve wages. It also conducts annual campaigns against such things as discrimination against women workers and HIV awareness.

Jichirō has an active policy of getting its former members into local, regional and national government in order to further awareness of local government needs and their workers' lives. Although it would not be possible to say that other labour unions do not follow this strategy, Jichirō is unique in that this is a major goal of the union, and it sends employees to help with the campaigns of these politicians.⁴⁶ This strategy is used to increase the political education of Jichirō employees.

Jichirō was part of Sōhyō prior to 1989. During the formation of Rengō in 1989, the absorption of Jichirō into the umbrella organisation was a contentious issue as there were a certain percentage of Jichirō groups which were supportive of the Japan Communist Party (JCP) rather than the JSP, but Jichirō expelled the communist sectors of its union in order to unite with Rengō. Joining Rengō was thus of greater importance to the union than Rengō officials had estimated.

⁴⁵ Grade One civil servants are mostly employed in Government ministries and are managers at the regional level. They are allowed to join unions but rarely do and are not 'invited' to join a union when they take up their posts. (Private communication, Oct 2000, Iikura Chikara.) Professions which are not allowed to join unions are: police, fire workers, prison workers, and sea rescue workers. Judges, even though they are civil servants, are also not allowed to join unions on the basis that they are in a 'supervisory' role. (Private communication, Norifumi Shibata, 22/01/01.)

⁴⁶ This policy was witnessed by the author in the 2000 election, as the office receptionist of the Okayama District Two candidate, Nakagiri Shingō, was a young woman, Aida Mariko, who had been sent from Tokyo. Her expenses and hotel costs were covered by Jichirō.

Jichirō, despite its Sōhyō background, has become a union which is committed to reform of the left and actively supported the attempts throughout the nineties to create a new party which could have the power to challenge the LDP.

Jichirō actively supported the formation of new parties. In its policy document, it outlines its dissatisfaction with the inability of the JSP to be an effective opposition party. In 1991, Jichirō called upon the JSP to carry out internal reform and to shed certain ideological constraints.⁴⁷ The document further indicated that there were parts of the JSP which Jichirō could not deny were now outdated but it still felt that it agreed with the JSP on the issue of peace and the US Japan Security Treaty and for that reason would support it. However, after 1993, this support for the JSP began to disappear. In a chronology of events documented in a union publication, every attempted new party grouping is mentioned, despite the fact that these groups are seldom even remembered by most political commentators, let alone documented.⁴⁸ Jichirō had become committed to attempts to create new political parties which could challenge the LDP. Jichirō was very supportive of the attempts by Shin Minshu Rengō in January 1995 to establish a new party.⁴⁹

With this background of reformism, co-operating with the Hatoyama brothers, Kan and Yokomichi in establishing the DPJ in October 1996 was a natural step. Furthermore, in the 1996 House of Representatives election, Jichirō turned its back on the JSP and supported DPJ candidates only.^{50 51} This is of deep significance: the JSP were part of the coalition government

⁴⁷ 'Jichirō seiji hōshin tōgi no shinka no tameni. Minshu riberaru seiryoku no sōkeshu ni mukete.' ('In order to deepen Jichirō's political objectives. Towards a general emergence of a Democratic Liberal Power') Published by Jichirō, 1997, p18. (This book includes a history of Jichirō.)

⁴⁸ This chronological list includes the obvious parties such as Ozawa and Hata's Shinseitō and Japan New Party, but it also includes some lesser known *kaiha*, groups and attempted parties including Akamatsu's Democrats, Shin Minshu Rengō, Eda Satsuki's Sirius and the forerunner to the DPJ, Hatoyama and Yokomichi's Liberal Forum.

⁴⁹ Interview with Takagi Hiroshi, the Secretary of Shin Minshu Rengō and Aichi Prefectural Diet member, July 31 2000.

⁵⁰ Interview with Takayanagi Hideki, Jichirō employee, 13 September 2000. According to Takayanagi,

prior to the 1996 election and the DPJ was only three weeks old when the election happened, yet in 46 prefectures Jichirō supported the DPJ.

By the 2000 House of Representatives election, Jichirō's unity had begun to crumble.⁵² 13 prefectural Jichirō organisations supported the JSP and 34 supported the DPJ.⁵³ The prefectures in which DPJ candidates did not do well, or where there were organisational tensions in the 1996 election, returned their allegiance to the JSP.

Jichirō reflects the tensions faced by all opposition parties and unions in Japan in the nineties. It has managed to liberalise its policy and aims from a dogmatic Marxist perspective to a more open and flexible one and accordingly has been extremely supportive of attempts by new parties to break into, and hopefully shake up, the party system. On the other hand, Jichirō began to find itself divided regionally over supporters of the JSP and the DPJ. The Head Office is now meant to be in close contact with the DPJ but, according to a staff member, relations with the JSP remain far easier to deal with as they have a better understanding of each other.⁵⁴ Jichirō also feels more comfortable with the predictability of JSP policy as opposed to the vagueness of DPJ policy which will be discussed in Chapter Seven. Old ties are hard to break, and Jichirō, whilst being an excellent example of an organisation which tried to restructure itself in the nineties, has been left in the position of not quite knowing which party is the best one to support. Whilst the DPJ is probably the most logical party to support as it is the leading opposition party, the union still does not feel comfortable doing so.

this was Jichirō's policy, yet according to Rengō Weekly 11 October 1996, Jichirō supported some JSP and non-affiliated candidates.

⁵¹ The only exception was Oita Prefecture where Jichirō supported the then Prime Minister Murayama Tomoichi, according to Takayanagi.

⁵² This is the opposite of what happened in Rengō, which was able to support one party for the first time in its history in that year.

⁵³ JSP-supporting prefectures included: Aomori, Iwate, Akita, Yamagata, Niigata, Miyagi, Toyama, Nagano, Kagawa, Saga, Oita, Miyazaki, and Okinawa.

Zendentsū – The NTT telecommunications giant union

In comparison with Jichirō, Zendentsū is a union which follows a centralised blueprint of the parties that it should support. Thus, any regional information about the support networks between Zendentsū and the left-wing parties can be considered to be a generic pattern which has been used by all other regional branches of Zendentsū. Information was obtained from the Okayama branch of Zendentsū, which can be used to determine the general trends of its support country-wide.⁵⁵

In the 1989 House of Councillors election, Okayama Zendentsū supported the Rengō candidate, Takahara Katsuya, as opposed to the JSP candidate, Mori Nobuko. This decision indicates the union's commitment to the Rengō attempt to enter politics. This support could also be the result of personal networks. The first Rengō Okayama Chairman in 1990⁵⁶ was Morimoto Tetsuma. He was the former Chair of Zendentsū and therefore in 1989 was concerned with presenting himself in a manner that would emphasise his Rengō credentials.

The 1990 House of Councillors election is indicative of the wide support of parties that Zendentsū followed as a national trend. In District One, Zendentsū supported Eda Satsuki and the Social Democratic League, showing the deep Zendentsū/SDL/Eda connections.⁵⁷ In District Two, it supported the JSP candidate Mizuta Minoru and also a LDP candidate Hiranuma Takeo, showing that the union was supportive of candidates beyond the confines of its Sōhyō background.

⁵⁴ Interview with Mamiya Yukio, Employee of Rengō, 28 July 2000.

⁵⁵ All documents are photocopies of internal policy documents which I obtained. To guard the privacy of the decision makers I was given only the necessary pages. I have documents which suggest the general national policy and then the documents which show the decision which has been made in Okayama as a result of that policy direction.

⁵⁶ Okayama Rengō was not formed until January 1990.

⁵⁷ The Districts referred to here are the districts in the medium sized constituencies used in the electoral system that was abolished in 1994.

1992 was an example of Zendentsū returning to its Sōhyō and Heiwa Centre roots. It supported the House of Councillors candidate for the JSP, Ichii Junji, who was solidly backed by unions.

From 1993 until 1995, Zendentsū's candidates reflected the political turmoil of the time.⁵⁸ In the 1993 Lower House election, the union supported Eda Satsuki, the Kōmeitō and DSP candidates. In the 1995 Upper House election, it supported the JSP in the proportional representation district, but did not support any candidate in the Okayama district.

From 1996, Zendentsū shows its backing for the creation of the DPJ by supporting its candidates. In the 1996 House of Representatives election it supported Nakagiri Shingo and as with Rengō, it fully supported the DPJ candidate in each district of Okayama in the 2000 Lower House election, with particular responsibility for District Two⁵⁹. Despite this support for the DPJ in House of Representatives election, it was divided in the 1998 Upper House election owing to the intense rivalry between Eda Satsuki and Ichii Junji. Ichii was the official candidate of the DPJ, yet not only had Zendentsū always supported Eda, but Eda reflected the type of left-of-centre candidate it admired as opposed to the union-dominated Ichii. Thus, it supported Eda in the Okayama district and Ichii in the proportional representation district.

Zendentsū has always shown eclectic tendencies in deciding which party to support rather than just following the Sōhyō pattern of supporting the JSP candidate. This is understandable in the view of the fact that it was Zendentsū who produced the maverick union leader, Yamagishi. However, despite the ideals of this union, since the formation of the DPJ, it has seemed to have

⁵⁸ It is important to note that in Okayama there were no candidates for the Sakigake, JNP, and Shinseitō in 1993, so the fact that Zendentsū did not support them does not imply that they did not support these parties in other parts of the country.

⁵⁹ Rengō tried to rationalise union support for each district in Okayama in June 2000 by making different unions responsible for each district. Jichirō was responsible for District One, Zendentsū for Two, Nikyōso for Three. The former Dōmei and Yūaikaigi unions supported Four (owing to closer links between the candidate's mentor and Dōmei than any of the other districts) and the Mitsubishi Union was responsible for district five.

developed a strategy of supporting the DPJ.

The flexible support of labour unions.

We have discussed above how Yamagishi Akira was far more motivated to influence the political world in Japan than were his two successors as Rengō Chair. Furthermore, we have discussed that in the case of both Jichirō and Zendentsu that they became far more flexible in the parties they supported, particularly in the 2000 House of Representatives election in comparison to the 1996 election. Whereas in 1996, it had supported DPJ candidates, by 2000 Jichirō also backed JSP candidates and Zendentsu backed candidates from most parties, including the LDP.

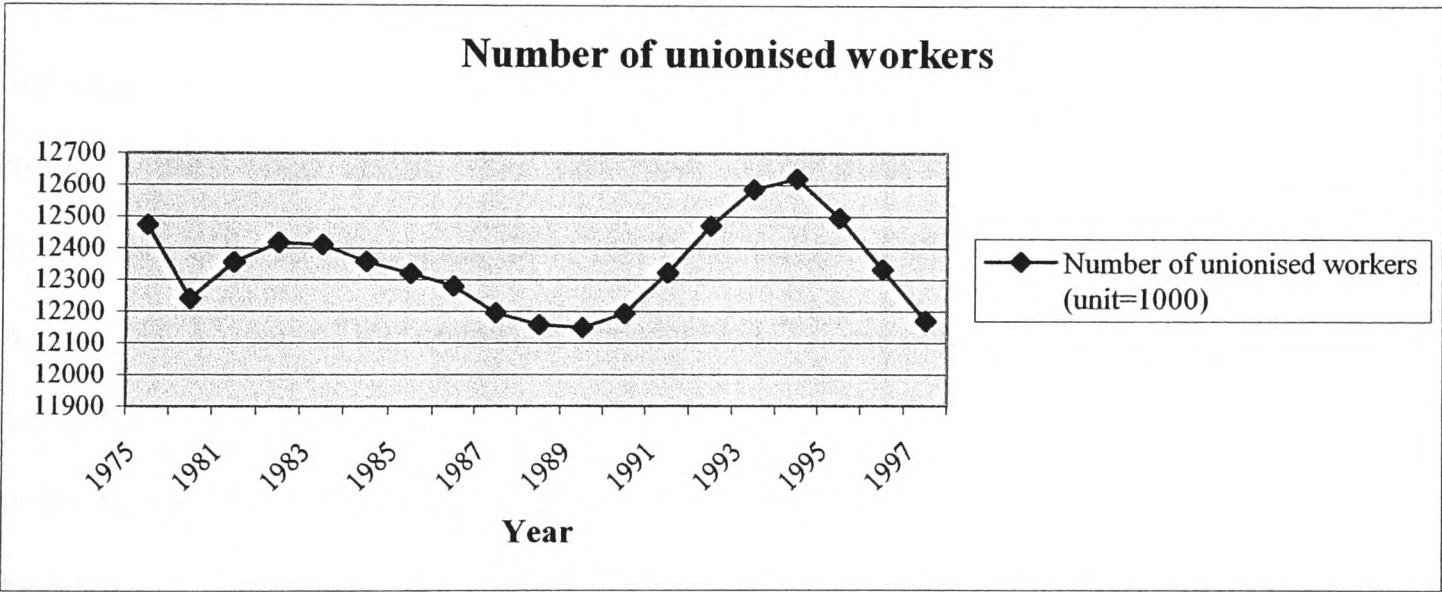
This flexibility is difficult to explain and account for. As long as the leader of Rengō was a committed supporter of the concept of a united and strong opposition such as the DPJ, it could have been likely that Rengō would have exerted more influence on unions to support the party. Once Yamagishi no longer had influence on labour unions, and furthermore, his successors were not as interested in political involvement, it would seem that individual unions were more free to support who they liked. This meant that, as we have seen above, some unions in some Prefectures, decided to return or continue to support the JSP, or even support the LDP, whereas, many supported the DPJ. Fundamentally, the DPJ was the most pragmatic party for the unions to support as it was the main opposition party. Furthermore, as we have discussed above, for the first time since 1960, Rengō was a labour union umbrella organisation which supported one political party. This provided ‘strength in numbers’ and partially can explain why many unions decided to back the DPJ, even though as suggested above, the JSP was sometimes an easier organisation to work with.

The decline of unionism

At the beginning of this chapter we posed two questions: How has the relationship between left-wing parties, the Government, and labour unions changed since the mid-1980s? And what

effect has the decline of unionism, and the changes described above, had on the left’s ability to mobilise voters? Above, we have seen that the parties can no longer expect guaranteed support from a union. In this section, we shall show that not only has this made mobilisation of the electorate difficult in elections, but this has been made worse by the fact that union membership is declining and unions can no longer mobilise their workforce to vote for the candidates they are backing. Graph 4.1 shows that the number of unionised workers has been quite constant since 1980. In comparison to this, Graph 4.2 shows the percentage of unionised workers to total workers.⁶⁰ This graph shows that unionised workers have dropped since 1975 by about 5% of all workers which is an effective drop in union membership of approximately 4.5 million workers. With a declining unionised membership (and also with an increasing part-time tertiary

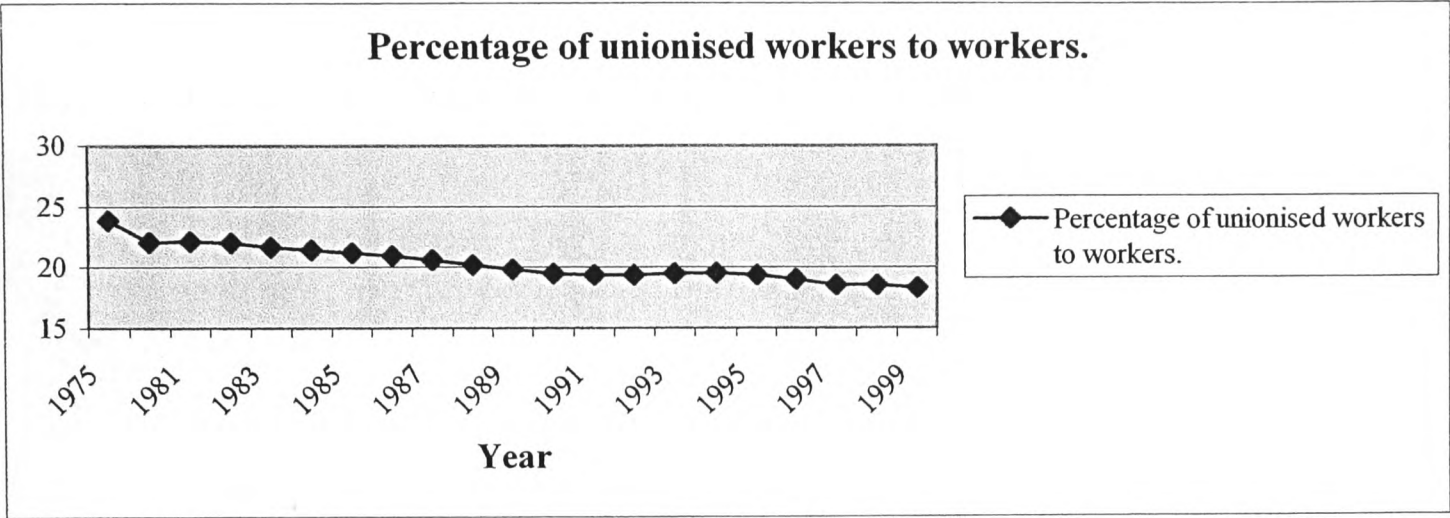
Graph 4.1: Number of unionised workers



sector in the workforce), there are less and less potential ‘unionised workers’ for the Japanese left to mobilise at elections. Nonetheless, despite the falling numbers of unionised workers, there is also a drop in the capability of the unions to actually mobilise the workers to vote for party they support. Table 4.2 gives figures which show how many votes the unions can gather

⁶⁰ ‘*Jichirō Book*’ (The Book of Jichirō), Zen Nihon Jichiro dantai rōdō kumiai, 1 March 2000, p 30.

Graph 4.2 Percentage of unionised workers to workers



for the DPJ and JSP, in comparison to 1980. Not only does this show that support has dropped to about a fifth of what it was, they show that fewer workers actually vote for the party than are being requested to do so. Traditionally, these votes, however much they are declining, would have been ‘given’ to the candidate as part of the relationship of mutual support between party and labour unions.⁶¹ So, union support has changed, whilst unions can no longer offer as many votes as they once could, they still have some kind of organization, which many new DPJ candidates lack. In Okayama, there has been a case of a DPJ politician paying Rengō for support in the 2000 House of Representatives election.⁶² This candidate was in a weak position and paid six million yen to gain access to union membership lists. It can be assumed that without this bribe, Rengō would not have supported (or supported to the degree it did) this candidate and it is therefore a significant symbol of the decaying relationship between unions and parties. In addition, the parties also complain that it is no longer possible to get the support once considered possible, as unionised workers do not have the influence over their families that they

⁶¹ Neary said that out of a total of 8 million unionists, about 20% can be mobilised in elections. Ian Neary, *The State and Politics of Japan*, Cambridge, Polity, 2002, p108.

⁶² This information was given to the author by the person who supposedly acted as the go-between. He has no official role in the party. Owing to the illegal nature of this payment, my informant, who had handed over the money, was very careful that we were not overheard. Consequently, we had to change venues before he would tell me, but it seemed very important to him that I knew this had happened so that I fully understood the changing relationship between the left and the unions.

once had and parties see this as a worrying trend.⁶³

Table 4.2 Decline in Union Vote Mobilisation Ability⁶⁴

Union	Number of Votes 1980	Number of votes 2001	2001 as a percentage of 1980	Union members 2001	Percentage of votes in 2001 compared to members
Denryoku Soren (Electricity)	890,000	250,000	28	250,000	100
Jidosha Soren (Automobile)	1,100,000	230,000	20.9	740,000	31
Ichiro	1410,000	360,000	24.8	1,000,000	21
Denki Rengo (Electronics)	840,000	200,000	23.8	720,000	27.7
Nikkyoso	660,000	170,000	25.7	340,000	50
Zensen Domei (Textiles)	680,000	150,000	22	580,000	19.2

Conclusions

In this chapter we have shown that the relationship between the unions and left-wing parties in Japan has irrevocably changed. Firstly we showed that the unions have managed through the creation of Rengō to gain access to the government and bureaucracy. This meant that the unions had less incentive to continue to support the left-wing parties in their traditional relationship of access to government in return for financial and mobilisational support.

We then showed that in order to fulfil a dream of corporatism, the unions merged into one umbrella organisation and attempted to unify the left-wing opposition parties and create a united party or, at the least, electoral coalitions. Owing to deep-seated divisions in the left, this could

⁶³ Interview with Morimoto Tetsuma, Former Okayama Rengō leader and Prefectural Diet member, 6 April 2001.
⁶⁴ Private communication with Patrick Kollner, September 29 2001.

not be brought to reality. However, the political turmoil of the mid-nineties in Japan brought with it two new issues. It was thought that the non-LDP coalition government and the new political parties that were emerging would form a social democratic corporatist government. However, the ensuing collapse of the 1993 Hosokawa coalition and the creation of the JSP/LDP coalition meant that existing assumptions about which parties the unions supported had to be ignored. With the emergence of an enlarged opposition party in 1998, the DSP and JSP have become united for the first time since 1960, and, as a result, some of the problems about which party to support have been alleviated.

Thus Yamagishi Akira's dream of uniting the left into one co-operative force has been attained, yet it is a pale imitation of the ideal he envisaged in the late eighties. His dream has not been attained because, firstly, union membership is lower than ever before. This has meant that there are fewer members for unions to mobilise in political support activities. Furthermore, it has been suggested that union members used to be able to mobilise their entire families but this family mobilisation capacity is also declining. Secondly, unions now have unprecedented access to government. They have managed to attain this through their closer links with the LDP and also because of the liberalisation of the economy in the eighties. They have lost some of the militancy associated with the old Sōhyō unions and been allowed greater consultative privileges. Thirdly, the new DPJ, whilst not rejecting links with unions, is not as reliant on them as it is establishing wider support networks as compared to the JSP and DPJ. This will be examined more in Chapter Seven.

Nonetheless, the left parties, and mostly the DPJ, need the unions as much as ever. As will be examined in the next chapter, the new electoral system introduced in 1994 has meant that the opposition parties need to get far more votes per electoral district, to have any hope of winning a single-member-district seat. As a result, the DPJ is maintaining its links with unions whilst trying to find new supporters. The crises of trying to mobilise the non-aligned voter, the *mutōhasō*, and ideological pressures have also played their part in this decline of support.

Yamagishi Akira's dream of a united Japanese left was attained, but far too late and without achieving the effects he thought it would. The relationship between unions and opposition parties has become unpredictable and *ad hoc* and will never be as simple as it was under the 1955 system.

Chapter Five

Electoral System Reforms and their Impact on the Japan Socialist Party and the Democratic Party of Japan

In 1994 the Japanese electoral law was radically changed. The electoral system of the Lower House was changed from a single non-transferable vote system to a mixed single-member district and proportional representation system. Public funding for political parties was also introduced along with harsher penalties for electoral malpractice. The Japanese political system had been widely criticised for being too candidate-centric and prone to corruption. This fault was perceived to be due to the old electoral system and consequently there were increasing calls for electoral reform. Electoral reform became the focal political issue between 1993 and 1994 and the electoral law of December 1994 was the result of that debate.

Between 1994 and the next Lower House election in 1996, the main political parties had to decide how they were going to benefit most from the new electoral rules and how they could modify or change current practices in order to deal with the system. Indeed, even in 2002, after two elections under the electoral system, the parties were still coming to terms with how they would deal with the new electoral system and how they would attract voters and maintain their organisations at an efficient level along with maximising party funds within the labyrinthine rules which now affected them.

After briefly analysing why the old electoral system was felt to require change and why the new electoral system was chosen, we shall ask the following questions in this chapter:

- What institutional impact was the new electoral system expected to have on the Japanese party system?
- What effects did the new electoral system and funding rules have on campaigning methods and voter mobilisation for political parties, and, in particular, opposition parties?
- What effects have the new electoral system had on the Japanese party system, with

particular attention paid to the effect it has had on the survival chances of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and the Japan Socialist Party (JSP).

In this chapter we shall show that the new electoral system has been both beneficial and detrimental to the DPJ. The benefit is that one main opposition party competes against the government party because of the heavier weighting of the single-member districts (SMD) to the PR seats. This has resulted in the opposition DPJ consolidating itself despite some factional divisions. A party needs to put forward more diverse candidates in a SMD than under the old electoral system known as *chū senkyoku sei* in Japanese and this has been the incentive for the party to overcome factionalism and choose candidates that are younger, more of whom are women, and candidates who are not as connected to labour unions as would have been the case for the JSP in the 1955 system. Fundamentally, the new system has thus benefited the DPJ and been an incentive for the party to retain its coherence.

On the other hand, the new electoral system also created many difficulties for the DPJ and these difficulties seem not to affect the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) as much. These shall be described below in detail but mostly concern the way in which the DPJ manages to deal with the problem of putting candidates up in both the SMD and PR seats of the new system.

There has been another important side effect of the new electoral system for the Japanese left. The JSP was already declining in 1993 (when its Lower House seats dropped from 136 to 70). This decline gradually worsened throughout the 1993-1994 Hosokawa and Hata coalitions and also during the 1994-1996 JSP/LDP/Sakigake coalition. However, with the creation of the DPJ prior to the first election under the new electoral system in October 1996, the JSP was split by members defecting to the new party and thus fought the election in a much weaker state. The new electoral system managed to support the weakened JSP to a limited extent because of the PR seats but this 'version' of the JSP is very different to its old manifestation as

the main opposition party. The JSP became a party which could only win seats in the PR part of the vote and this has resulted in the party having limited scope in the party system.

The Japanese Electoral System 1925-1994

The former Japanese electoral system is often referred to in English as the single non-transferable vote system (SNTV) in medium-member-constituencies. This refers to the fact that the electorate were given a single ballot on which it was required to write the name of its preferred candidate.¹ (It was a requirement that the name of the candidate was actually written and this is still an important issue, as will be described below, because despite the new electoral system originally being designed around electors ‘ticking’ the name of a candidate which was printed on the ballot paper, the LDP changed the system in 1995 so that it returned to the old method of electors writing the name of their chosen candidate.) The term “non-transferable” refers to the fact that the district elected more than one candidate yet there was no strategy for transferring the votes from one candidate to another. The district was what is commonly referred to as “medium-sized” since voters elected between two and six members from each district. (The term “medium” is taken from the Japanese, *chūsenkyokusei*. This distinguishes the system from the large electoral districts that were used before 1925 and in the 1946 election, *daisenkyokusei*, and the small districts introduced in the reforms being discussed in the chapter and used in the UK for example, *shōsenkyokusei*.)

The combination of single votes and multi-member constituencies meant that for a party to

¹ This has obvious implications for name recognition politics. As voters have to write the name of the candidate, they need to know both the name of the candidate and the characters which are used to write his or her name. Owing to the complexity of the Japanese language, this means that candidates have to write their name in the simplest characters, sometimes changing parts of it, or putting sections into the phonetic alphabet, *hiragana*. As discussed below, name writing on the ballot also has further implications for the desired reforms of the new electoral system of making party recognition more important than name recognition. Names are given on the booths in polling stations but it is thought by politicians that as all candidates’ names are given, they still have to distinguish their names from others so that candidates know how to write their names. As long as candidates have to make their name well-known, there is little chance that party recognition will begin to outweigh name recognition in importance.

win a majority of seats in the House of Representatives (256 seats of the 511 available), it had to run multiple candidates in all, or nearly all, districts. Thus, it became crucial that politicians managed to distinguish themselves from their colleagues in the same party and it was for this reason that the old system was highly criticised for engendering candidate recognition politics rather than party recognition politics. This was particularly true of the LDP, which became in the 1970s and 1980s, the only party that consistently put up more than one candidate in each district.

Candidate recognition in turn created “pork barrel politics”. Politicians were forced to emphasise what they could bring to the district in terms of infrastructure and prestige, so that politics were reduced to a form of ‘bribe’. Party platforms were rarely if ever discussed and were certainly not amongst the LDP candidates who needed to distinguish themselves from each other. The JSP and the minor parties were able to put forward their party platforms, but this was only because they were rarely fighting against candidates from their own parties.² Since the LDP did not emphasise policy and instead politicians considered their own personal image, the opposition parties had no incentive to put forward carefully considered or budgeted policies.

Candidate recognition politics created the need for money. In order to win voters, LDP politicians created *kōenkai*, (personal support networks) in which they wooed their supporters to vote for them.³ These networks required enormous sums to maintain, and politicians were forced to gather money from bribes and donations, as well as from their factional bosses who distributed money down the ranks of the party.

Factions within the LDP have been one of the most discussed aspects of the party, but also resulted from the electoral system. One of the reasons suggested for the existence of factions

² In the 1950s and 1960s the JSP did put up to three candidates in some districts.

³ A typical *kōenkai* is painstakingly described by Gerald Curtis in the seminal text, *Election Campaigning Japanese Style*. New York, Columbia University Press, 1971.

is that bosses of the party bought support in the party presidential elections by passing on money down the faction to fund politician's activities.⁴ It is for this reason that it was normal for LDP politicians in the same district to be in different factions. The existence of the factions has also been attributed to the electoral system. Ramseyer and Rosenbluth conjectured that the existence of five main LDP factions explained that the majority of districts were five-member districts thus causing five factions to emerge.⁵ Factionalism in turn, promoted a corrupt environment of ever increasing money transactions and bribery. The SNTV electoral system was thus thought to be responsible for candidate-centric politics, corruption and bribery, and factionalism.

Associated with the problem of candidate-centred politics was also the problem that as the SNTV system did not produce two large parties, there was no real chance of two parties alternating in power. But the system allowed for small parties such as the Kōmeitō, the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), and the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) to survive, as, according to Gerald Curtis, it was a system of imperfect proportional representation.⁶ In a five-member district, a party with only 20% of the vote could win a seat, and furthermore, if the electorate had disproportionately favoured one particular candidate (almost certainly a LDP candidate), a candidate from a smaller party could be elected with a much smaller percentage of the vote.

This dynamic meant that the system was not one which was highly advantageous to incumbents or, conversely difficult for new politicians to break into, so there was considerable turnover of new politicians, even within the LDP. However, this also created one of the

⁴See for example, Curtis, *Election Campaigning Japanese Style*, Chapter 1.

⁵Mark Ramseyer and Frances Rosenbluth, *The Japanese Political Marketplace*. Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1993. Chapter 2. This theory is questionable because it was very rare for the LDP to put forward more than three candidates in any district. It is also suspect because there were nearly equal numbers of three, four, five member electoral districts (with two, six member electoral districts).

⁶Gerald Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1999, p 140.

biggest problems for the LDP of putting up too many candidates. This was referred to in Japanese as *tomodaore*, 'falling down together'. During the period of LDP dominance it was not unusual for the party to run too many candidates (or for the party to be challenged by an independent conservative). When the party ran three candidates where they were likely to win only two seats, they risked winning only one, and when they put up two when they should have run one, they won none, so the candidates 'fell down together'. Should the LDP vote be divided between different candidates unequally, it enabled an opposition member to benefit and take one of its seats.

The electoral system also meant that parties were not centralized, which left candidates with a high degree of independence to do as they would. Curtis describes the system as a franchise between the party organisation and candidates because, even though the party offered a name and some support to the candidate, he was then responsible for becoming his own political entrepreneur.⁷ Thus, there was no umbrella-like influence on policy in the LDP, though the JSP, because of the greater importance of ideology for it, did not suffer from this problem to the same extent.

Criticism of the old electoral system gradually snowballed to the point where the disadvantages were seen to outweigh the advantages, and according to Curtis, this belief became stronger with each election. He said:

"By the early 1990s, a consensus had emerged within the mass media and among business leaders, other public figures, and bureaucrats in the Ministry of Home Affairs who were election-system specialists. It was that Japan's election system was primarily responsible for factionalism, money-politics, the power of special interests, candidate- rather than party-oriented election campaigns, an emphasis on personality rather than policy in voting behaviour, and LDP one-party dominance. If there were going to be meaningful political reform, there would have to be radical change in the electoral system. Those politicians who were not in the forefront of the campaign for electoral reform got caught up in its wake. It became virtually impossible to be a proponent of "reform" and not be in favour of abolishing the medium-sized election-district system."⁸

⁷ Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics*, p.143.

⁸ Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics*, p.142.

Electoral reform became a panacea that would solve all ills.

The debate about the new electoral system and why the mixed system was introduced.

A mixed system was introduced in Japan as a political compromise. Gerald Curtis has described in detail the process of electoral reform debate in the early nineties. One of his first comments recounts in detail the electoral reform process:

“...in the complex process of moving the legislation through the Diet, all political parties, with the exception of the Communists, wound up supporting an electoral system that was virtually identical to the one every party opposed to the LDP, and many members of the LDP as well, had rejected when a government commission had proposed it some three years earlier.”⁹

Why then was an electoral system chosen which the non-LDP parties had rejected prior to 1993? It is assumed that each party was able to evaluate the relative benefits and disadvantages of each proposed electoral system for its own individual prospects. It can also be considered that most parties were comfortable within the current electoral system. It had given the LDP 38 years of power and the JSP knew that the semi-PR nature of the SNTV system meant that it would be able to maintain a certain electoral presence despite its significant decline in 1993. The smaller parties (Kōmeitō, DSP, and Shaminren) had all survived under the old system and were thus suspicious of the potential ill effects a new system could have on small parties. The JCP was ideologically committed to a pure PR system regardless of the vote-winning potential for itself. But the climate in the reform movement of 1993-1994 was a climate of electoral change and furthermore it was a climate of introducing single-member districts along with some PR seats. No other potential electoral system would do, as some form of single-seat majority system was going to be the panacea which would save Japanese politics. Other electoral systems would not fall into the ‘historically constructed Japanese universe of electoral system alternatives’.¹⁰

Gerald Curtis, in his chapter on the politics of electoral reform, concludes that the story of

⁹ Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics*, p.137.

¹⁰ Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics*, p.168.

electoral reform in Japan shows that politicians can do irrational things for perfectly sensible reasons.¹¹ The Socialists and smaller parties had wanted a PR system to hinder the LDP's attempts to introduce a simple first-past-the-post system. (This was an attempt to force the smaller parties out of politics and get a two-thirds majority to amend the Constitution. This had been one of the aims of the LDP since 1955 when the Prime Minister, Hatoyama Ichirō, had introduced his famous "Hatomander" policy to redraw the election districts to benefit the LDP.¹²) The Election System Advisory Councils met periodically from the sixties onwards but it was in the late eighties that the calls for electoral reform began to grow. The eighth Council started in 1989 with the assumption that, because of the positions of the LDP and JSP mentioned above, neither a straight single-member-district system, nor a pure PR system would stand any chance of being adopted. The Council and parties then turned to the strategy of introducing a mixed system and the debate became one of the relative numbers of PR and single majority seats.

The eighth Council suggested 300 single-member districts and 200 PR seats in eleven regional PR districts, which is nearly identical in every respect to the system that was eventually introduced in 1994.¹³ It was rejected at the time as being unacceptable to both sides of the political spectrum and in particular to the opposition.¹⁴ The opposition wanted a heavier weighting than the LDP of PR seats to SMD seats as this would benefit them more.

The eventual electoral reform was adopted after one-to-one talks between Hosokawa Morihiro, the Prime Minister, and Kōno Yōhei, the President of the LDP in 1994. As discussed above, 300 SMDs and 200 PR districts were selected. The elector votes for a candidate in the

¹¹ Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics*, p.140.

¹² Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics*, p 146.

¹³ The system of allowing failed SMD members to be resurrected in the PR blocs was the only point not in the eight Council recommendations.

¹⁴ This dissatisfaction with the proposed system is due to the relative weighting of the SMD and PR seats. Prior to the no-confidence bill against Miyazawa which overtook their proposal, the JSP and Kōmeitō had proposed a system of 300 PR seats and 200 SMDs but the bill was shelved because of the crisis after the no-confidence motion.

SMDs (and now has to write the name of the chosen candidate¹⁵) and has a second vote to select a party in the PR seats.¹⁶ The new electoral system was passed through the Diet by means of a Constitutional provision that had not been used in 43 years; convening a joint conference committee to resolve the differences between the Upper and Lower Houses over political reform. But what impact was the new system likely to have on the Japanese party system?

What effects was the electoral system likely to have on the Japanese party system?

The only conclusion that can be made about political scientists' attempts to assess mixed electoral systems, and in particular Japan's mixed system, is that there is wide disagreement about whether the single-member districts would be dominant or whether the PR part of the ballot would have sufficient impact to counterbalance the effects of the first-past-the-post seats. This is important when analysing what impact the new system would have on the Japanese opposition. We shall first analyse what political scientists felt would be the dominant aspect of the electoral system: the 300 SMDs, or the 200 (later 180¹⁷) PR seats and the extent to which they will both influence the eventual balance of the Diet.

Murakami is probably typical of the climate of belief in the single-member electoral system which underpinned the reform debate in Japan, when he argued that in the Japanese mixed system, the 3/2 ratio in favour of the SMD, and in particular the fact that the PR vote had been diluted by the split into eleven blocs, would result in a two-party system.¹⁸ Kobayashi and Kawato also expressed belief in the strength of single-member districts.¹⁹

¹⁵ This was originally implemented as a system in which the candidate put a cross against the name of the elector he or she wanted but the LDP reinstated the system of the elector writing the name of the candidate in 1995. The reasons and significance of this will be discussed below.

¹⁶ There are some additional complicated details to the new system which will be discussed below.

¹⁷ The number of PR seats was reduced in 2000 to 180.

¹⁸ Murakami Eichi, "Yōyaku ketchaku shita seiji kaikaku: fuhai bōshi wa fujūbun", *Asahi nenkan*, 1995.

¹⁹ Kobayashi Yoshikazu, *Gendai nihon no senkyo*. Tokyo University Press, 1991 and Kawato Sadafumi, *Nidai seitōsei ni chikazuketa shin senkyo seido*, *Asahi Shinbun*, October 11 1996.

Even if this prediction that the SMD would prove to be dominant is true, the question needs to be asked whether single-member systems will necessarily produce party dualism, which has become the accepted view of Duverger's law.²⁰ Even Duverger contradicted this rule when he said

“[a] particular electoral regime does not necessarily produce a particular electoral system; it merely exerts pressure in the direction of this system; it is a force which acts among several other forces, some of which tend in the opposite direction”²¹

Thus, even Duverger suggests that the SMD part of the new electoral system would not necessarily strengthen two parties at the expense of the smaller parties as the JSP and Kōmeitō had feared.

So, what were the other opinions about the effects of a mixed system? Hosokawa, the Prime Minister who introduced it, felt that it would produce a “moderate mixed system”. Huang suggested that there would be a coalition government with one larger party.²² Lijphart, whilst not analysing this exact system, considers the PR part of mixed systems to dominate.²³ Wada suggests that if voters are not strategic, this electoral system will provide a multi-party system.²⁴ Herron and Nishikawa suggest that there are three possible outcomes from a mixed system with two separate ballots (like the Japanese one) when voters act strategically. Voters could vote for two different parties in each ballot, which would be to the advantage of small parties rather than large parties and would result in a stronger PR effect. Alternatively, voters could vote for the same party in both ballots but if they voted sincerely in the PR and then

²⁰ Maurice Duverger, *Political Parties and Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*, New York, Wiley, 1959.

²¹ Maurice Duverger, “Duverger's Law: Forty Years Later” in Bernard Grofman and Arend Lijphart eds., *Electoral laws and Their Political Consequences*. New York, Agathon Press, 1986. p 70.

²² David W. F. Huang, “Electoral Reform is no Panacea: An assessment of Japan's electoral system after the 1994 reform”, *Issues and Studies*, Vol. 32, No.10, Oct 1996.

²³ Arend Lijphart, *Electoral Systems and Party Systems: a study of twenty-seven democracies 1945-1990*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994.

²⁴ Wada Junichirō, “Shōsenkyoku hireidaihyō heiritsu ni kansuru geimuronteki ichi kōsatsu” *Senkyo Kenkyū*, 10, 32-40, 1995.

chose a party which was closest to that party's platform in the single-member district, the result would be a mixed system, whereas if they voted sincerely in the SMD and also chose that party in the PR, a two-party system would emerge.²⁵ Bean and Wallenburg caution that ticket splitting and tactical voting are only likely to happen in a country such as Australia where the parties have a strong identity and it therefore poses the question whether ticket splitting is such an issue in Japan.²⁶ Curtis makes the observation that the new electoral system has tendency to produce a two-party system and thereby influences parties to coalesce, but also has centrifugal pressures from the PR that cause it to fragment. Herron and Nishikawa conclude that a mixed system can never produce a two-party system since the contamination from the PR is too great. They argue that this electoral system does have a PR effect and whilst it will probably create one large party (currently the LDP), it will also maintain another reasonably large party (the DPJ) and other small parties.²⁷ Curtis in 1999 ended his analysis of the new electoral system by saying 'it is not at all clear whether Japanese party politics will evolve in the direction of a two-party system'.²⁸

Thus, political scientists are divided as to what impact the new electoral system in Japan would have on the party system. But there is also the issue of what the new electoral system would have on candidates' attitudes towards policy and 'party ideological positions'. In Japan, it was long assumed that if the district magnitude was reduced from the medium sized districts used during the 1955 system, party identity and policy would become more important than the personal identity and 'pork barrel' politics that the politics of 1955 to 1993 became renowned for. The introduction of single-member districts was considered in the Election System Advisory Councils as a means of reducing 'pork' politics. However, does the new electoral

²⁵ Erik S Herron and Misa Nishikawa, "Contamination effects and the number of parties in mixed-superposition electoral systems" *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2000. pp 63-86.

²⁶ C S Bean and M P Wallenberg, "Attitudes towards divided government and ticket splitting", *Australian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 33, No 1 1998.

²⁷ Herron and Nishikawa, "Contamination effects and the number of parties in mixed-superposition electoral systems" pp 63-86.

²⁸ Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics*, p 166.

system have the potential to do this?

Carey and Shugart²⁹ and Lancaster³⁰ disagree what affects the magnitude of a district have on personal reputation but this is because they seem to be discussing different levels of increased magnitude of electoral districts. Lancaster believes that as district magnitude increases, personal reputation declines and party identification becomes greater. In contrast, Carey and Shugart believe that the importance of personal reputation increases with magnitude in systems in which candidates from the same party compete against each other. Essentially, they seem to be talking about different degrees of increasing magnitude. Lancaster seems to be discussing districts which are very large such as national constituencies whereas Carey and Shugart are discussing districts such as the old Japanese electoral system which consist of around five candidates. Thus, in a district with one vote and one candidate being elected, Carey and Shugart's suggestion that personal reputation becomes less important means that the party can become more of a focal point than the candidate.³¹ Should party become more of a focal point, it becomes more likely that policy positions and ideology take on more importance to the electorate when voting, rather than consideration of the individual benefits candidates from different parties can bestow.

Whether the electorate is voting increasingly according to policy preferences as Carey and Shugart suggest would happen is still difficult to say. As will be discussed in the case study of Okayama, policy preferences still seemed not to be of major significance in the 1996 and 2000 elections. But as discussed in Chapter Three, the major parties are now working within 'the same ideological space'³² with a less antagonistic and confrontational approach to the

²⁹ John M Carey and Matthew Soberg Shugart, 'Incentives to Cultivate a Personal Vote: a Rank Ordering of Electoral Formulas', *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 14, No 4. pp 417-439.

³⁰ Thomas D. Lancaster, 'Electoral Structures and Pork Barrel Politics' *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 7, No 1, 1986. pp 67-81.

³¹ Carey and Shugart, 'Incentives to Cultivate a Personal Vote: a Rank Ordering of Electoral Formulas', pp 430-431.

³² Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics*, p 226.

contentious issue of the Constitution. So there is evidence that the new electoral system may have emphasised policy and party over candidate. However, as will be discussed below, because of the aspect of the new electoral system which is called *sekihairitsu*, candidate differentiation remains important in the PR districts for candidates from weaker parties (which is mostly the DPJ) and also weakens the effect of party emphasis that Carey and Shugart state could be possible. We shall return to this issue below after looking at the difficulties the new electoral system has created for the political parties and in particular for the weaker opposition parties.

The new electoral system and the problems that it has created with particular reference to the opposition.

The first election held under the new electoral system was in October 1996. The author was present at speeches made by politicians before and during the campaign and the prevailing impression created was that politicians were worried about the single-member districts. They were not used to competing in an election in which only one person won and the phrase ‘*kore wa kiken na senkyo*’ (this is a dangerous election) was heard many times, even from LDP candidates. According to Steven Reed, it will take between three and five elections before the politicians fully understand the new electoral system and can use it tactically to their advantage.³³ We will now look at some of the problems which the new electoral system has created, whether long term ones, or as Reed suggests, just in adapting to the new system, and will particularly look at the problems it has created for the opposition. We will first look at the effect that the SMDs has had on the opposition.

In the old SNTV, the districts were geographically much larger, which meant that organized mobilisation of the vote was highly efficient and effective. For the left, this required a horizontal mobilisation of the unions across the district and this support would provide

³³ Taken from SSJ Internet forum. 15 April 1998. Archived at <http://ssj.iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp/> as of 6 January 2002.

sufficient votes for one JSP and maybe one DSP candidate to win a seat in each medium-sized district. Union support has declined for various reasons as has been shown in Chapter Four. In figures published in 2001, Nikkyōso's ability to attract the vote had declined to 25.7% of its level in 1980 and Jichirō's ability (including both JSP and DPJ support) had dropped to 24.8%.³⁴ This has meant that traditional support for the main opposition party (JSP and later the DPJ) has dropped by approximately 75%.

The new electoral system has compounded this problem as it has required candidates to obtain a higher density of votes in a district to win a seat than under the old system. For example, in the last election held under the old system, the *bottom* of the five candidates elected in Okayama Prefecture won with 67,451 and 62,468 votes respectively in the two electoral districts. To win a seat in either the SMD or the PR district (even on a *sekihairitsu* basis) under the new electoral system, a candidate in 2000 needed to get between 55,000 and 60,000 votes. However, the electoral districts are now 2.5 times smaller in magnitude than the old districts, which means that candidates need roughly two times more support density in each district than they had under the old system. This affects the weaker candidates more than stronger candidates, which means that in Okayama, the DPJ and other opposition parties need to improve their mobilization techniques drastically.

The gravity of this problem for the opposition is clearly visible when comparing the number of members elected from the non-LDP parties during the 1955 system and in the 1996 and 2000 elections. Okayama had ten politicians elected in 1990 from two constituencies. It now has five SMDs, plus a possible share of eleven members between four prefectures in the PR Chūgoku bloc. In terms of numbers elected, Okayama used to have an average of four opposition members elected from the two medium sized constituencies to the House of Representatives. (Mostly between them, the non-LDP parties managed to get four members elected from the two districts, but sometimes if the LDP put up too many candidates and

³⁴ *Nikkei Kezai Shimbun*, 5 August 2001, p 8.

divided its core total support, resulting in each LDP candidate getting less votes, (this is called *tomodaore*), they managed to get five or even six opposition members elected to the Lower House.) In contrast, under the new electoral system, the non-LDP parties won no SMDs in either 1996 or 2000. In 1996, Okayama did manage, as will be discussed in detail below, to win a PR seat for Nakagiri Shingo because of *sekihairitsu* but lost this in 2000. Whilst these figures do not provide direct comparisons (partly because direct comparisons are impossible), they paint a picture of a new system which has affected the main opposition party in Okayama. Okayama, as discussed below, is a 'conservative' district, but the opposition were more able to win seats under the old system than under the new system.

Aspects of the new electoral system which affect all political parties and not just the opposition parties in a district.

In the previous section, we have discussed the problem of the new district magnitudes and the effects that this has had on the opposition. In this next section we shall discuss the impact that the new electoral system has had on all parties. It has helped and hindered both the opposition and government parties.

The *sekihairitsu* system

Sekihairitsu is the only part of the 1994 electoral system which differed from the proposal of the Election System Advisory Council proposal of 1989. This aspect is one which makes the new Japanese electoral system unnecessarily complicated. *Sekihairitsu* allows candidates who are nominated in both the SMD and on the PR list to potentially win a PR seat should they lose their SMD election. PR seats can be allocated to politicians in different ways. Either, the party can dictate the order in which its PR list candidates will win by simply ranking those on the list 1-10 for example. However, the party can also leave the choice of PR candidates who are elected to the fate of the electorate by ranking PR candidates equally on the list. If there are candidates equally ranked on a party's PR list, the candidate with the smallest ratio between their losing number of votes in the SMD to that of the winner, wins the PR seat. But

this system has created many benefits and problems for politicians.

Firstly, politicians have decided upon a ranking system according to how each member was voted into the Diet, and this suggests that the *sekihairitsu* system is treated with derision by the politicians it elects. Members who only stood in the single-member district and win are considered gold medal winners. Those who were dual candidates but win in the single-member district are ranked silver. Pure PR ballot politicians are bronze medal winners and the lowest of the low, the brass medals, are those who were dual candidates, lost in the SMD, and were rescued by the PR seat.³⁵ More serious is the problem that those who are rescued by *sekihairitsu* are particularly thought to be ‘the bottom ranking’ members of the Diet. Whilst at the moment we have no way of predicting the effects of such a hierarchical system, it might prove to affect promotion to cabinet positions and party office placements. On a more positive stance, it is possible that politicians elected as ‘brass’ members have the potential once in position to become excellent Diet members and be elected in the future as a ‘gold medal winner’.

It has to be acknowledged that the system of *sekihairitsu* has made the electoral system more democratic and accountable than it seems on first inspection. *Sekihairitsu* is particularly democratic as it can allow the candidate with the smallest ratio compared to the winner of the SMD within an entire large PR bloc to win a PR seat. The system means that Japanese voters do, even if unintentionally, manage to dictate who will be elected to the Diet.

A further benefit of the *sekihairitsu* system is that candidates who are placed in both ballots are likely to campaign harder in their single-member districts in order to do well in the SMD so as to enhance their *sekihairitsu* potential. As SMDs are essentially campaigns of one candidate from each party campaigning against each other, this means that party identification

³⁵ Tabusa Keiko, ‘Will the New Electoral System Change Japanese Politics?’ *Current Affairs Bulletin*, Vol. 72, Number 5 pp 13-20.

can also benefit from the *sekihairitsu* system.

Not all feel that there are benefits to this system however. According to Scheiner and McKean, it appears to the electorate as if losers can escape defeat. Even when defeated in the SMD, they can win anyway by getting a PR seat through the *sekihairitsu* system. Voters feel they cannot get rid of politicians they do not want and it turns politicians into local-centric politicians, which can be seen to defeat the purpose of electoral reform and nullify the reforms. In the 1996 election, several candidates who lost, not by coming second in the SMD, but by coming third or fourth (or in one case fifth), managed to have a sufficiently high place on their party's list for them to be rescued by the PR seat.³⁶ The fact that these politicians need never have stood in the SMD and could win in the PR bloc (dependent on their list ranking) is of little relevance to the electorate as all they can see is the higher profile SMD candidate who loses badly and still becomes a member of the Diet.³⁷

There also seems to be a structural facet of the new electoral system and *sekihairitsu* that tends to weaken any party in a district which relies upon the PR vote (and therefore is mostly a problem for the opposition) to get its politicians into power. This phenomenon is something the author witnessed during fieldwork and will be examined again in Chapter Six. The electoral reforms were concerned with emphasising party platforms over personal platforms, which in theory should mean that politicians of the same party would benefit fully from advocating their party platforms and co-operating with their fellow party candidates to do this. Yet for politicians who are unlikely to win in their SMD seat and are reliant on their *sekihairitsu* ranking to be elected, the opponents who they sense pose the largest threat become, not the members of other parties they are competing against in the SMD, but members of their same party in their same bloc. This is particularly true for the few candidates

³⁶Margaret McKean and Ethan Scheiner, "Japan's New Electoral System: Plus ça change." *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 4, 2000. pp 447-77.

³⁷ Interview with Eda Satsuki, 28th September 2000. This was his response to the point raised by Scheiner and McKean.

in a PR bloc who are most likely to stand a chance of winning a seat in this manner and who expect to gain a decent *sekihairitsu* scoring. This can potentially lead to a lack of co-operation amongst candidates of the same party and can detract from the party's success in the PR system. This problem could be referred to as the new opposition *tomodaore* as it could have the effect of dragging candidates 'down together'. In this respect, the new electoral system has parallels to the old system, yet it is a *tomodaore* that is confined to weak parties rather than strong parties in a district.

Other noteworthy points about how politicians perceive the electoral system is that after decades of medium-sized districts, the perception is that the current system is very dangerous and unfair because, in the SMD system at least, only one candidate can win. Whether both these attitudes will fade with time or whether they will provide incentives for the system to be further reformed remains to be seen but do not suggest that the system is thought to be highly credible.

As Otake has shown, *kōenkai* have changed little and are still being used by politicians albeit in under a new guise of local party organisations as a means of gaining support for an individual politician. Furthermore, as will be discussed below in Chapter Seven, the opposition DPJ politicians are also busy trying to court the non-labour union mobilised vote by setting up their own *kōenkai*-like support groups, even though some opposition politicians are trying to emphasise the role of party within these activities.³⁸ It would therefore seem that public funding is having little to do with the break-up of *kōenkai* and the real establishment of local party organisations.

In contrast, however, to this maintenance of individual candidate centred 'local party organisations', the financial reforms mean that parties are becoming more coherent and solid.

³⁸ Hideo Otake, *How Electoral Reform Boomeranged in Japan*, Japan Center for International Exchange, 1998.

As part of the reforms, parties get money (amounting to ¥250 for every member of the population) divided between them according to the number of Diet members they have and the percentage of vote they have taken in previous elections over the past six years. This is an incentive for parties to be as large as possible and to stay intact for as long as possible, as payment is made on the previous year's figures. Thus, the institutional impetus of the public funding for parties could well be on maintaining the LDP and the DPJ together as cohesive units, even as increasing pressures are showing up their fault lines.

Prior to the 2000 House of Representatives election, additional new laws were introduced to the electoral law in order to emphasise the concept of party over the personality of the candidate. One of these measures was that candidates could no longer have just their own picture on their campaign posters but also had to have someone else from their party who would provide a party identity. Thus, candidates were forced to show a party leader or a regional party figurehead on their campaign posters. The photos of the two people also had to be the same size to avoid the possibility of candidates' merely having a tiny picture of someone else on their posters. Also, provision was made for unlimited numbers of posters with only the party and no candidate details to be displayed. Whatever the long term impact of these reforms are, it is interesting and important that these adjustments are being made to strengthen the concept of party politics in Japan.

The attempts to strengthen party can also be seen in the provision of newspaper advertisements paid for by public funding in which the candidates in single-member and PR districts can be introduced to the public on a one-page spread.³⁹ It is important to distinguish this from the ban on candidates publishing anything in newspapers to publicise themselves individually. The 2000 election also saw the introduction of party political broadcasts. Again, this was an attempt to emphasize party over politician-centred politics but was a reform which

³⁹ Clauses 167-170 of the Public Election Law stipulate size of posters according to how many candidates there are in the district.

seemed to initially fail.⁴⁰

Other recent changes in electoral law have proved to be a step backwards in the fight to make party recognition more dominant than candidate recognition. When Hosokawa introduced the reform bill in 1994, the electorate was meant to be able to simply choose a candidate and put a cross next to the pre-printed name on the ballot paper. This was intended to remove the rule under the old SNTV electoral law in which the electorate had to actually write the name of the candidate. This system was criticised as it was thought that it reinforced the candidate, rather than party.⁴¹ This was thought to give the LDP an advantage as it had more resources to make the electorate aware of candidates' names. In December 1995, the system of writing the names of the candidate was reinstated by the LDP and for this reason there has been no empirical test of the effects of the electorate being allowed to select candidates rather than being forced to write their names.

Another change since the initial new electoral law of 1994 was passed, has been the introduction of measures to encourage voting in both House of Councillors and House of Representatives elections. In the 1995 Upper House election, turnout dipped below 50% and

⁴⁰ The author participated in the making of the DPJ's party political broadcast. No expense was spared to bus about 400 volunteers to the edge of Tokyo Bay, provide them with food and drink, and get them to create a large 'red ball' the symbol of the DPJ and then to throw red balls into the air. All party leaders were drafted in to be filmed in this event. But the eventual party political broadcast seemed to be a damp squib after the extent of the preparation. The broadcast lasted for about three minutes, was shown eight times during the 12 day campaign and the showings were either at 6am or at midnight. The part showing the actual ball throwing in Tokyo Bay was mere seconds of the three minutes. It seems that the party went to much effort to make this, despite seeming to have little intrinsic benefit. However, during the 2003 and 2004 elections, party political broadcasts became a much more common feature and were shown at during normal television viewing times. (Discussions with Japanese students in November 2004).

⁴¹ Writing the candidate's names could potentially only involve copying it, as all names are given in each booth in the polling station. As party allegiance is also given, the problem of writing the name versus selecting the candidate may not be so important but the LDP must have considered that name writing gave them added benefits in order for them to change the law back in 1995. (This issue was discussed in a phone interview with Yukawa Norifumi on 31 March 2001.)

forced the government and local election management committees to try to come up with counter-measures to this problem. In 1998, polling booths were kept open until 8pm for the first time (they had closed at 6 pm), attempts were made to persuade people to vote by advertising on carrier bags distributed at supermarkets, and announcements were made at large department stores and shopping centres at the request of the local election management committees for people to vote.⁴²

One final important change in the electoral system has been the reduction in 2000 of PR seats from 200 to 180. Ozawa Ichiro has always been a supporter of a pure SMD system and put considerable pressure on the LDP to reduce the number of SMD seats. The effect of this seems to have hit the opposition particularly hard, as there are now one or two fewer PR seats in constituencies that are particularly rural. These tend to be more conservative areas anyway so with a reduction in the electable PR members, the seats are more likely to fall to the LDP.

A further problem of this reduction of seat numbers is that it is in the PR part of the electoral system, rather than in the SMDs. This is particularly problematic for the opposition as they are more likely to win PR seats. Ozawa was attempting to create a two-party system by reducing the number of PR seats. He has weakened the opposition as fewer PR seats has the potential to reduce opposition seats (the DPJ) whilst giving the LDP an advantage.⁴³

The effects of the political reforms of 1994

At the time that electoral reform was introduced, legislation to try and remove the corruption and money in Japanese elections was also brought in. The rules of the new legislation were aimed to make it harder for individual politicians to obtain large amounts of money. This was

⁴² The author was in a Department Store during the afternoon of the Polling Day, 25 June 2000, and announcements were made that the polls were open and would be until 8 pm.

⁴³ The DPJ actually increased its number of winning seats in 2000 so this is more of a rhetorical point.

coupled with the logic that the new electoral system would engender more concentration on party if the need for individual politicians to obtain money was removed by introducing single-member districts.

Laws were introduced that concerned where campaign money could come from and who would be held responsible for any wrongdoings. The new rules concerning political donations were:

- The requirement for disclosure of financial contributions were made more stringent. Parties and other political organisations had to declare any donations over ¥50,000 (approximately £250).⁴⁴
- Labour unions and companies could now contribute funds of a maximum of ¥500,000 to either a political party, a political funding body or an individual politician. The important thing was that they could only donate this to one of the organisations. Prior to this law change, donations were made to several different fund ‘receiving’ organisations.
- After 2000, these contributions were to be made illegal.
- A candidate would now be held liable for any illegal funds received in a campaign had he been privy to the contribution.
- Were a candidate found guilty of having received or using illegal funds, he would be banned from standing in the same constituency for five years after the conviction.

More important than these rules concerning donations from private organisations, was the introduction of public funding for political parties. According to Samuels, who was analysing candidate-centric campaigns in Brazil, public funding should make campaigns more party-centric.⁴⁵ Parties would get ¥250 per annum, per head of the population and it would be

⁴⁴ Previously, there had been an inherent vagueness in the legislation and whilst parties had to declare donations of over ¥10,000, other political organisations did not have to declare any donations until they were over a million yen. This was the legislation that engendered *kōenkai* as these were organisations that were not parties.

⁴⁵ David J Samuels, “Incentives to cultivate a party vote in candidate-centric electoral systems”, *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol.32, No. 4, June 1999.

divided according to the previous election results. Certain limitations were imposed on this fund so that money only went to 'true' political parties which had a certain degree of support from the electorate.⁴⁶ Also a party could only receive up to a maximum of two-thirds of the amount received in contributions in the previous year. To make sure they got as much money as possible from the government, this resulted in parties trying to get as much other funding as possible which was in some ways counter productive as the idea of government funding was to prevent individual parties having to find funds. In 2000, rules were once again changed so that politicians could get up to ¥1.5 million per annum from private donors, but beyond that all donations to party organisations were unlimited. This has meant that many *kōenkai*, as suggested by Otake above, have switched to 'local party organisations'. Curtis describes these 'party organisations' as franchises to facilitate legal funding from companies and from the government to make local funding appear as if it is being given to the party.⁴⁷

The introduction of public funding has undoubtedly helped the DPJ. For the first time after the reforms, the opposition parties in Japan were no longer reliant on such organisations as the labour unions for financial support. This has meant that the party managed to distance itself from the unions more than it would have been able to were it solely reliant on them for funding. The issue of union funding of the left parties is discussed further in Chapter Four.

How has the new electoral system and political funding rules affected the party system in Japan?

The new electoral system was established to remove corruption and candidate-centred politics from Japanese politics. In order to achieve this, the assumption was made that a two-party system would be effective. However, a pure SMD system was not introduced because the new system was introduced under the eight party coalition government of Hosokawa. As this coalition included smaller parties, there was no way that a pure SMD system would be

⁴⁶ A party had to have won either at least 2% of the vote in the previous election or to have at least 5 Diet members.

⁴⁷ Suggested by Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics*, pp 165-166.

introduced. Consequently a mixed system of 300 SMD and 200 PR seats was introduced. There were some particular rules such as *sekihairitsu* which added complications to this system. But, as has been discussed above, there was a huge difference of opinion between analysts about which part of the electoral system would be more dominant: would the 300 seats mean the system became more like a two-party system or would the PR seats maintain the strength of the smaller parties which had been helped by the old SNTV system in Japan?

After the first election held under the new system on October 20 1996, there was superficial evidence that a two-party system was beginning to emerge. (See Table 5.1 for the election results.) The LDP was the main winner of the election and managed to form a government in its own right in the House of Representatives without the necessity of the coalition that it had needed in 1994. (However, because of its continuing lack of a majority in the Upper House it still needed a coalition with the JSP.) Shinshintō managed to take 156 seats and between the two of them, they took 79% of the total seats. But the PR part of the vote strengthened considerably the JCP compared to previous elections and also gave the new DPJ the majority of its support. The PR also sustained the JSP, although its support dropped from 70 seats in 1993 to 19 seats in 1996. Whilst conclusions are almost impossible to draw from one election, the 1996 election ‘suggested’ that the new system would create two larger parties whilst protecting the smaller ones.

Table 5.1: 1996 Lower House election results

	Total number of seats won (and percentage of vote)		Number won in SMD	Number won in PR	Ratio of PR seats to SMD
LDP	239	(47.8%)	169	70	1/2.41
Shinshintō	156	(31.2%)	96	60	1/1.6
DPJ	52	(10.4%)	17	35	2.05/1
JCP	26	(5.2%)	2	24	12/1
JSP	15	(3%)	4	11	2.75/1
Others	2	(0.4%)	2	0	-

Even after the second election under the system in 2000, the debate continued as to whether the new system has empowered the non-LDP parties and the true possibility of a two-party system. The LDP was not as strong as sometimes it had been in SNTV and have been forced to be in coalition with Kōmeitō and the Liberals prior to 2000, and afterwards with the Conservatives and⁴⁸ Kōmeitō, because of its lack of a majority in the House of Councillors. The DPJ had 126 seats in the Lower House which is roughly the level that the JSP ‘plateaued’ at during the SNTV system (and started to seem to be a main opposition party’s glass ceiling). A further note-worthy point of the 2000 election is that, compared to 1996, the number of parties had once again increased because of the break up of Shinshintō. The expected two-party system was maybe appearing through the LDP, DPJ contest, but the views of political scientists who had predicted the strength of the PR part of the system were vindicated by the good results the Liberal Party, Kōmeitō and the JCP got. The JCP had declined from 1996 but was still doing better than under SNTV and more importantly, the JSP did better than in 1996. The PR part of the vote seemed to have displayed its importance in sustaining the smaller parties.

Table 5.2: 2000 Lower House election results

	Total number of seats won (and percentage of vote)	Number won in SMD	Number won in PR	Ratio of PR seats to SMD
LDP	233 (48.5)	177	56	1/3.1
DPJ	127 (26.4)	80	47	1/1.7
Kōmeitō	31 (6.4)	7	24	3.4/1
Liberal Party	22 (4.6)	4	18	4.5/1
JCP	20 (4.16)	0	20	All PR
JSP	19 (3.95)	4	15	3.75/1
Conservative	7 (1.45)	7	0	All SMD
Other	6 (1.25)	6	0	All SMD

But how were these votes obtained? Were they achieved through 1955 system methods of the ‘personal’ vote or were they due to the growing relevance of party and policy? The new

⁴⁸ The LDP was in coalition with the Conservatives between 2000 and 2003 but this was a small party and it was absorbed (back) into the LDP after the November 2003 election.

electoral system was in place, the new measures such as party political broadcasts and party advertisements were happening, party leaders had a far greater 'profile' than before and the PR part of the vote required the electorate to choose a party. But was party beginning to be more important than personality?

By the 2000 Lower House election the vote-gathering techniques of each party were beginning to settle down after the first experience in 1996. The LDP, depending on the district, could still manage a victory in the SMD by maintaining its traditional *kōenkai* method of attracting the vote. The Kōmeitō could also rely on its traditional evangelistic methods of vote gathering and aimed for PR seats where it was likely to do best. The JSP and the Liberal Party became "one issue" parties and managed to get well-known politicians elected in certain SMD districts but relied on the PR vote for the remainder of their seats, as did the JCP. In sum, it seems as if the LDP was managing to sustain personality based support whereas the smaller parties had managed to stabilise (admittedly at a low level) its support through party-centred voting in the PR part of the vote.

There is not such a cut and dried answer for the DPJ. Its Diet members have many different backgrounds, ages and experience. Therefore, the DPJ has seemed to need to utilise both parts of the electoral system. It needed to attract voters both in SMD *and* to promote the party for the PR ballot if it was to have any hope of making any further inroads into the LDP's majority. The DPJ's response to this will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven. It cannot be ignored, however, that the DPJ's support grew significantly by 2.5 times between 1996 and 2000.⁴⁹ The DPJ is a party that has grown and which has managed to expand within a new and complicated electoral system. It seems that the new electoral system has tendencies towards sustaining two larger parties and consequently has empowered the DPJ and has forced it to overcome any faction disputes to gel as a coherent political party.

⁴⁹ If we include in this analysis the 2003 election which is not within the time frame of this thesis, the DPJ had further increased its support to 177 seats.

So ultimately, electoral and political reform has been both good and bad for DPJ. Party funding has given it money to stop being reliant on labour unions, and the SMDs have strengthened its identity as being the main party of opposition. Conversely, as long as it is the second party to the LDP, it will find the SMDs difficult to win and will find that many of its candidates are affected by the problems of *sekihairitsu*.

How did electoral reform impact on the JSP?

As has been described in Chapter One and will be discussed also in the case study in Chapter Six, the JSP was already a minor party by the first election under the new electoral system. The party had slowly declined between 1993-1996 and public opinion had slowly ebbed away. Ironically, the party split before an election was held under the electoral system it had helped to facilitate. As discussed in Chapter Two, when the Yokomichi faction joined the new party, the JSP was further weakened. The JSP was thus not really affected by the new electoral system as it was already severely weakened by the defections of many of its members prior to the first election under the new system. In the first election under the system, the JSP fell to 15 seats, 11 from PR and 4 from SMDs. In 2000, it expanded this number to 19. So the JSP has not disappeared. Rather it turned from the second largest party in Japan to a minor party that is being protected by the PR part of the electoral system. It is impossible to know how the new electoral system would have affected the JSP had it not split in 1996. But, within the framework that the party now found itself in, the PR part of the ballot protected the party to a certain degree. So, as discussed in the case of the DPJ, the new electoral system has been both kind and severe to the JSP. Effectively, the two-party system that seems to be being created by the new system means that the JSP has been weakened, but it was weakened anyway by the 1993 election result, factional infighting and its loss of identity after joining the 1994-1996 coalition.

If Steven Reed's theory that the system will need four to five elections to bed down is true, it

will be interesting whether the electoral system strengthens the DPJ and whether the JSP is sustained as a minor party or loses even more seats. Any of these possibilities are plausible. The new electoral system has been difficult for both the DPJ and the JSP but it has allowed the DPJ to grow and become 'the second party' in the Japanese party system and it has sustained the JSP to a limited degree.

Chapter Six

The decline of the Japan Socialist Party and the emergence of the Democratic Party of Japan in Okayama Prefecture.

A case study

Introduction

It has been argued that the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) declined owing to voter dealignment, stemming from four major issues. Firstly the JSP was challenged by an adherence to ideology making it seem inflexible to the electorate and it therefore lost the support of voters. (Chapter Three.) This was compounded by a general dealignment and increase in the non-partisan voter (Chapter One.) Thirdly, the JSP declined because one of its main backbones of support, the labour unions, stopped supporting it. The party becoming weaker meant it was no longer as effective in facilitating access to the policy-making arena for unions. Also, the unions became stronger and independent as a result of the creation of Rengō. (Chapter Four.) Added to these factors was that of institutional reform. The Lower House electoral system was completely changed in 1994. (Chapter Five.) This new system did have certain benefits for the JSP. Prior to the election, the party split and the PR part of the vote sustained the smaller and weaker JSP. Nonetheless, the electoral system, as a whole, did benefit the strongest party, the LDP. It was a difficult system for the opposition parties to navigate and the need for an organised campaign became more important than ever.

Using Okayama Prefecture as a case study, these changes over the past twenty years and the effect they have had on campaign methods will be analysed. The four variables discussed above will be examined to establish the impact they had on Okayama politics, in order to elaborate further the questions of this thesis: Why did the Japanese left realign and how did this realignment manifest itself within left wing parties. By combining the results of this case study with the results above, we shall then attempt to understand the changes to the structure of the left and its campaign methods in Chapter Seven.

In the next two chapters we shall attempt to show how the Japanese left has responded to the problem of voter dealignment by changing its campaign methods and voter mobilisation techniques. We suggest that the types of supporters in these organisations are changing away from unionists towards a wider cross-section of society. The methods used by politicians to recruit support are far more diverse and range from the methods used by the unionists supporting the 'old left', the strategies employed by the LDP such as *kōenkai*, to the new methods of 'citizen politics' and mobilisation of interest groups. These latter changes are what are referred to as 'citizen politics' in Okayama Prefecture, and this is a strategy which is being copied nationally in the DPJ. (Citizen politics in Japan implies something crucially different from the definition supplied by Russell Dalton about western politics which refers to a sophisticated electorate which is concerned about politics and want to influence government decisions that have impact on their lives.¹) The case study of Okayama will illuminate some of the problems that the DPJ has faced in its general restructuring of campaign and mobilisation methods and these issues will be analysed more generally in Chapter Seven.

As has been discussed in the Introduction, Okayama Prefecture has been selected for both theoretical and practical reasons, as it is a Prefecture that can provide good data for a regional comparison to be made to the national level. Okayama is a prefecture in the Chūgoku region of Japan, situated between Osaka and Hiroshima. Its main city is also called Okayama.

The JSP still exists in Okayama but arguably has had no politicians in the National Diet since 1998. When the DPJ was formed in 1996, the JSP was originally left stronger, in infrastructure terms, as it inherited the party's offices and organisation. Since then, the DPJ has built up, not only a new physical infrastructure, but also an 'infrastructure' of supporters and voters. Thus the political history of Okayama in the period 1980-2000, shows many of the structures and problems which can now with hindsight be linked to the decisions for JSP politicians all over

¹ Russell J. Dalton, *Citizen Politics. Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Chatham, New Jersey, Chatham House Publishers, Second Edition, 1996, p 9.

Japan, either to defect to the DPJ or to decide to stay in the JSP. There is tension between the trade unions and parties, there are factional disputes that influence party alignments, there are ideologues that favour left-wing ideology above anything else and there are politicians who are attempting to ‘widen’ their arena of support regardless of ideology and historical alignments.

Okayama Politics 1980-2001

In 1980, Okayama’s seats in both the Upper and Lower House were divided equally between the government party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), and different parties of the opposition. By 1998, the LDP held all the seats for the single-member districts of the new Lower House electoral system and the DPJ had managed to win only one PR seat in the Lower House. The Upper House seats were divided between the DPJ and the LDP. In 2000, the DPJ lost its House of Representatives seat and in the July 2001 House of Councillors election, lost a Councillor. This has left the party with only one representative in the Diet, Eda Satsuki, who is in the House of Councillors.

House of Representatives Election Results, Okayama Prefecture 1980-2001

Table 6.1

<i>The House of Representatives Election, June 22 1980</i>			
<i>Okayama District One</i>		<i>Okayama District Two</i>	
Hiranuma Takeo	LDP	Hashimoto Ryutarō	LDP
Aisawa Hideo	LDP	Fujii Tatsushi	LDP
Yayama Yusaku	JSP	Mizuta Minoru	JSP
Yamada Taro	Kōmeitō	Katō Mutsuki	LDP
Ōmura Jōji	LDP	Hayashi Yasuo	DSP
Summary		Summary	
3 x LDP, 2 x Opposition (inc One Kōmeitō and one JSP)		3 x LDP, 2 x Opposition with no Kōmeitō	

Table 6.2

<i>The House of Representatives Election, December 18 1983</i>			
<i>Okayama District One</i>		<i>Okayama District Two</i>	
Eda Satsuki	Shaminren	Katō Mutsuki	LDP
Hikasa Tatsuyuki	Kōmeitō	Hashimoto Ryutarō	LDP
Ōmura Jōji	LDP	Mizuta Minoru	JSP
Yayama Yusaku	JSP	Kainuma Jirō	Kōmeitō

Hiranuma Takeo	LDP	Fujii Katsushi	LDP
Summary		Summary	
2 x LDP, 3 x Opposition (inc. Eda and one Kōmeitō and JSP)		3 x LDP, 2 x Opposition (inc. one Kōmeitō and JSP)	

Table 6.3

The House of Representatives Election, July 6 1986			
Okayama District One		Okayama District Two	
Eda Satsuki	Shaminren	Katō Mutsuki	LDP
Aisawa Ichirō	LDP	Hashimoto Ryutarō	LDP
Ōmura Jōji	LDP	Hayashi Yasuo	DSP
Hiranuma Takeo	LDP	Mizuta Minoru	JSP
Hikasa Katsuyuki	Kōmeitō	Kainuma Jirō	Kōmeitō
Summary		Summary	
3 x LDP, 2 x Opposition (inc. Eda and one Kōmeitō)		2 x LDP, 3 x Opposition (inc. one Kōmeitō)	

Table 6.4

The House of Representatives Election, February 18 1990			
Okayama District One		Okayama District Two	
Eda Satsuki	Shaminren	Hashimoto Ryutarō	LDP
Tanimura Keisuke	JSP	Mizuta Minoru	JSP
Aisawa Ichirō	LDP	Katō Mutsuki	LDP
Hiranuma Takeo	LDP	Murata Yoshitaka	LDP
Hikasa Katsuyuki	Kōmeitō	Kainuma Jirō	Kōmeitō
Summary		Summary	
2 x LDP, 3 x Opposition (inc. Eda and one Kōmeitō and one JSP)		3 x LDP, 2 x Opposition (inc. one Kōmeitō and JSP)	

Table 6.5

The House of Representatives Election, July 18 1993			
Okayama District One		Okayama District Two	
Eda Satsuki	Shaminren	Hashimoto Ryutarō	LDP
Aisawa Ichirō	LDP	Ishida Mie	Independent/DSP
Hiranuma Takeo	LDP	Katō Mutsuki	LDP
Hikasa Katsuyuki	Kōmeitō	Kainuma Jirō	Kōmeitō
Kumashiro Akihiko	LDP	Murata Takayoshi	LDP
Summary		Summary	
3 x LDP, 3 x Opposition (inc. Eda and one Kōmeitō)		3 x LDP, 2 x Opposition (inc. one Kōmeitō)	

Table 6.6

The House of Representatives Election, October 20 1996		
District	Winner	Party
District One	Aisawa Ichirō	LDP
District Two	Kumashiro Akihiko	LDP
District Three	Hiranuma Takeo	LDP

District Four	Hashimoto Ryūtarō	LDP
District Five	Murata Yoshitaka	LDP
Summary : 5 x LDP in single-member districts Okayama Prefecture² PR: Katō Mutsuki LDP(from District Four equivalent) Nakagiri Shingo DPJ (from District Two equivalent)		

Table 6.7

<i>The House of Representatives Election, June 25 2000</i>		
District	Winner	Party
District One	Aisawa Ichirō	LDP
District Two	Kumashiro Akihiko	LDP
District Three	Hiranuma Takeo	LDP
District Four	Hashimoto Ryūtarō	LDP
District Five	Murata Yoshitaka	LDP
Summary : 5 x LDP in single-member districts Okayama Prefecture PR: None		

House of Councillor Election Results, Okayama Prefecture, 1980-2001

1980

Katō Takenori	LDP
Terada Kumao	JSP

1983

Kimura Mutsuo	LDP
Akiyama Chouzō	JSP

1986

Katō Takenori	LDP
Ichii Junji	JSP

1989

Katayama Toranosuke	LDP
Mori Nobuko	JSP ³

1992

Katō Norifumi	LDP
Ichii Junji	JSP

1995

² Okayama is, of course, not a constituency for PR seats as it is part of the Chugoku Constituency. However, as DPJ politicians are single-member district (SMD) candidates who also are put in the PR election, they fight their PR campaign through their SMD region and as such it is possible to understand PR candidates as being the product of a particular part of the entire PR district.

³ The top loser for elections was from the Japan Communist Party in 1980, 1983, 1992, Takahara Katsuya (Rengōkai), 1986 and 1989, JSP, 1995 and 1998, with Mori Nobuko and Ichii Jyunji respectively. Finally, Ishida Mie from DPJ in 2001.

Katayama Toranosuke	LDP
Ishida Mie	Shinshintō
1998	
Eda Satsuki	DPJ
Katō Norifumi	LDP
2001	
Katayama Toranosuke	LDP

In some respects, Okayama is a complex case study because the Eda family are Okayama based. Eda Saburō, a former leader of the JSP, was a member of the House of Representatives for Okayama since 1963.⁴ He had switched to the right-wing of the JSP when he became the proponent of the Structural Reform movement within the JSP in 1961.⁵ He left the JSP in 1977 and formed a new left-of-centre party the *Shaminren* (Social Democratic League). He died before the next election happened. His son Satsuki, a renowned Judge and former student political activist, took on the campaign, announcing his intention to stand, at the memorial service on the 50th day after Saburo's death.⁶ Thus the history of the Shaminren and the attempted revitalization of the old JSP in the seventies were carried out partly on the Okayama stage. This has contributed to the complexity of the factions within the left in the prefecture, but it must be recognised that this is by no means a rarity in Japan. Any case study involves an awareness of the networks and connections present in a particular prefecture and to reject a potential case study on the basis of complicated factional division in Japan would most likely leave no examples to analyse. However, Okayama's factions are made slightly more complex by the fact that Eda is a politician with a national presence in Japanese politics, rather than being confined to acting only in Okayama. This means that he has a better chance of being elected irrespective of party-affiliation, a factor which became more important from the mid-nineties onwards.

⁴ Prior to this Eda Saburo was in the House of Councillors for two terms, in 1950 and 1956.
⁵ J A A Stockwin, *Dictionary of the Modern Politics of Japan*. London, Routledge, 2002, Pg 47.
⁶ Stockwin, *Dictionary of the Modern Politics of Japan*, p. 47.

In 1980, of the ten seats available (two districts of five seats each), in the old medium sized single non-transferable vote electoral system in the Lower House, five were held by the LDP, Kōmeitō held one in each district, and the remaining three were split between the left parties, the JCP, the JSP, and the DSP. The Upper House was split between the LDP and the left in the Prefectural seats. As mentioned above, Eda from the left-wing *Shaminren* won an Upper House seat in 1977.

At the beginning of the period of analysis, 1980, various points about Okayama are worthy of note. Firstly, in District Two, Hashimoto Ryūtarō, who was only 42 years old, had six election wins behind him. This implied, even at this early stage, that he was destined to be a stalwart of the LDP, and this is shown by the fact that in 1996 he became Prime Minister. Secondly, Eda Satsuki's win in the PR National Constituency is important because he was an Okayama politician with a nationwide appeal. Finally, it must also be reiterated that in 1980 and 1983, the Lower House seats were well divided between the left, right, and centre, and each of the three left-wing parties were represented.

In 1982, the election system for the Upper House changed with the first election under the new system in 1983. The National Constituency first-fifty-past-the-post system disappeared, and in its place a national constituency PR system was introduced. Eda Satsuki decided that this was an opportunity for him to leave the House of Councillors and use his popularity in Okayama to contest a House of Representatives seat. His support network was well organised and confined neatly within the old Okayama One electoral district, so he was easily able to win his seat. He remained a constant of the Okayama national political scene until he decided to resign from the House of Representatives in 1996 to stand for the Governorship of the Prefecture.

The next most significant change was in 1989 when socialist politics in Okayama were both strengthened and weakened by the House of Councillors election. Until that point, the JSP had

managed to be constantly represented at Nagata-cho, despite gaining considerably fluctuating percentages of votes in each election. In 1989, the year of the ‘Doi’ and ‘Madonna booms’ mentioned above, the JSP managed to strengthen this representation further by gaining another House of Councillors seat with the victory of the schoolteacher, Mori Nobuko. She was heavily supported by women. Mori joined Ichii Junji, who won his seat in 1986, having ‘inherited’ support from Terada Kumao. Also, in the 1989 Upper House election, the left was weakened by the fact that Okayama was a Prefecture where the Rengō organisation put forward a candidate, Takahara Katsuya. By doing this, left-wing support was split, as was the union backing of these candidates and this is what, in many respects, caused some rifts between politicians that are still present in the Prefecture today.

Conservative politics remained constant in the Prefecture until 1996, when the new electoral system analysed in Chapter Five had profound effects on the future of politics. The first-past-the-post system meant that the LDP was in a supremely strong position: it took 63.6% of the vote total and won each of the five single-member constituencies. This level of success was once again achieved in 2000.

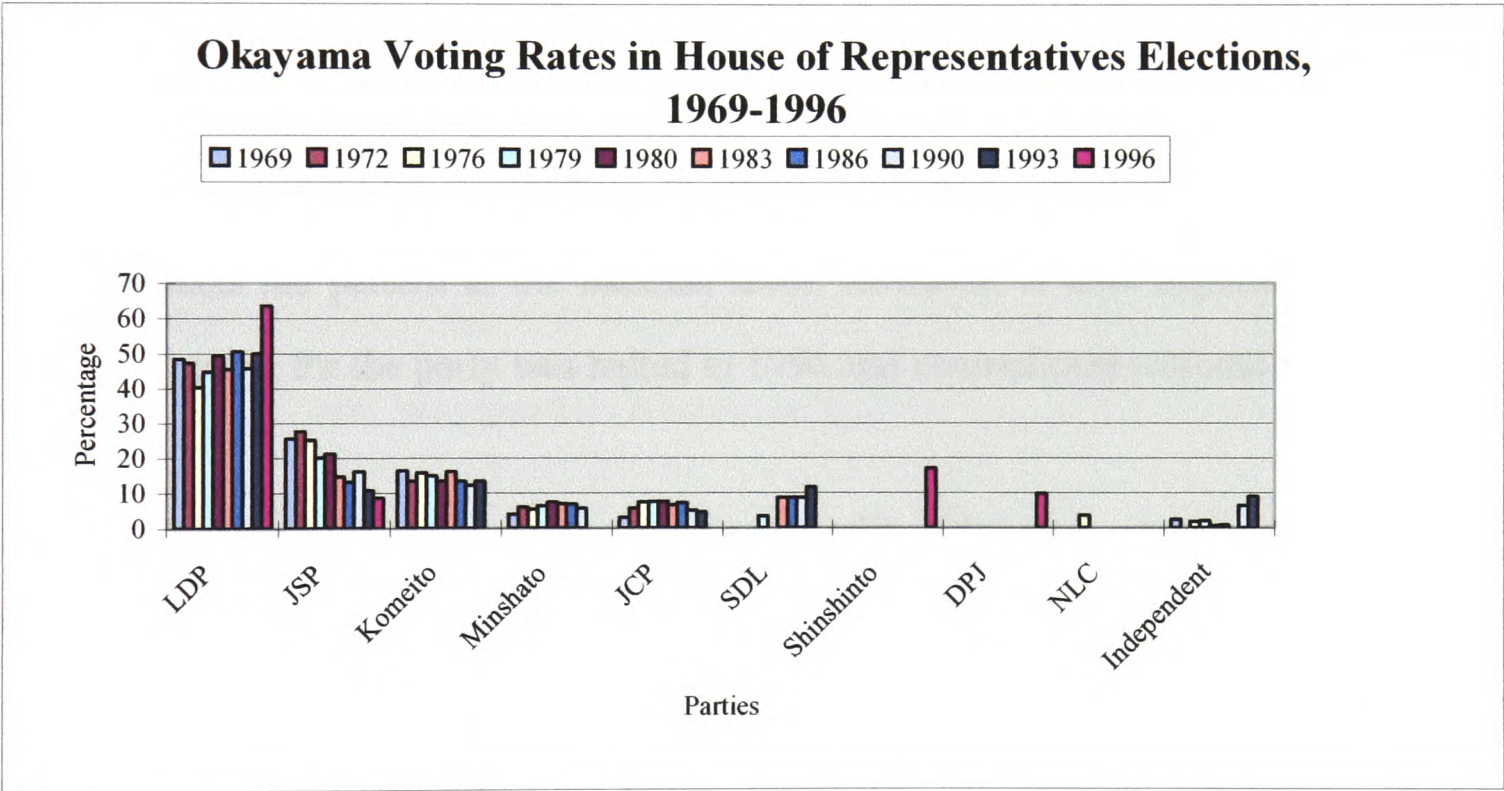
The period of 1996 onwards will be dealt with in more detail below, but in summary the post-1996 period has been difficult for the opposition. After winning one PR seat in the 1996 Lower House election (Nakagiri Shingo), this was lost in 2000, leaving the DPJ with no representation in the all-important House of Representatives. In the 1996 election, the JSP was reeling from the defection of party members to join the DPJ and consequently put up no candidates, but regrouped for the 1998 Upper House and 2000 Lower House elections. In both elections, its campaign was more symbolic than effective, gaining hardly enough votes to be recorded.⁷ Finally, in the 1998 and 2001 Upper House elections, the DPJ has suffered a

⁷ There is some confusion about this result. Mori Nobuko told the author that she stood in the 1998 Upper House election (Interview 6 September 2000), yet there is no reference to her result in *Kokkai Binran*, the Diet handbook, under the Chūgoku constituency. Ishida Mie, an Upper House Diet member, has also corroborated that Mori stood, as Ishida feels sorry that she knocked her out when she won her

progressive but steady decline, only rescued by the presence of Eda Satsuki. It is in these Upper House elections that the real factional tensions of Okayama have been displayed, and they will be analysed in greater detail below. It is in these factional rivalries that the argument between organised union politics and the more personality led support campaigns of ‘citizen politics’ has been the most heated and intense. This very local argument has highlighted the difficulties and tensions within opposition politics after 1993 and is suggestive of the problems faced in other prefectures where the opposition had to reorganise itself to respond to the changing electorate’s values, union support, and electoral system.

Comparison between Okayama and National voting behaviour

Graph 6.1

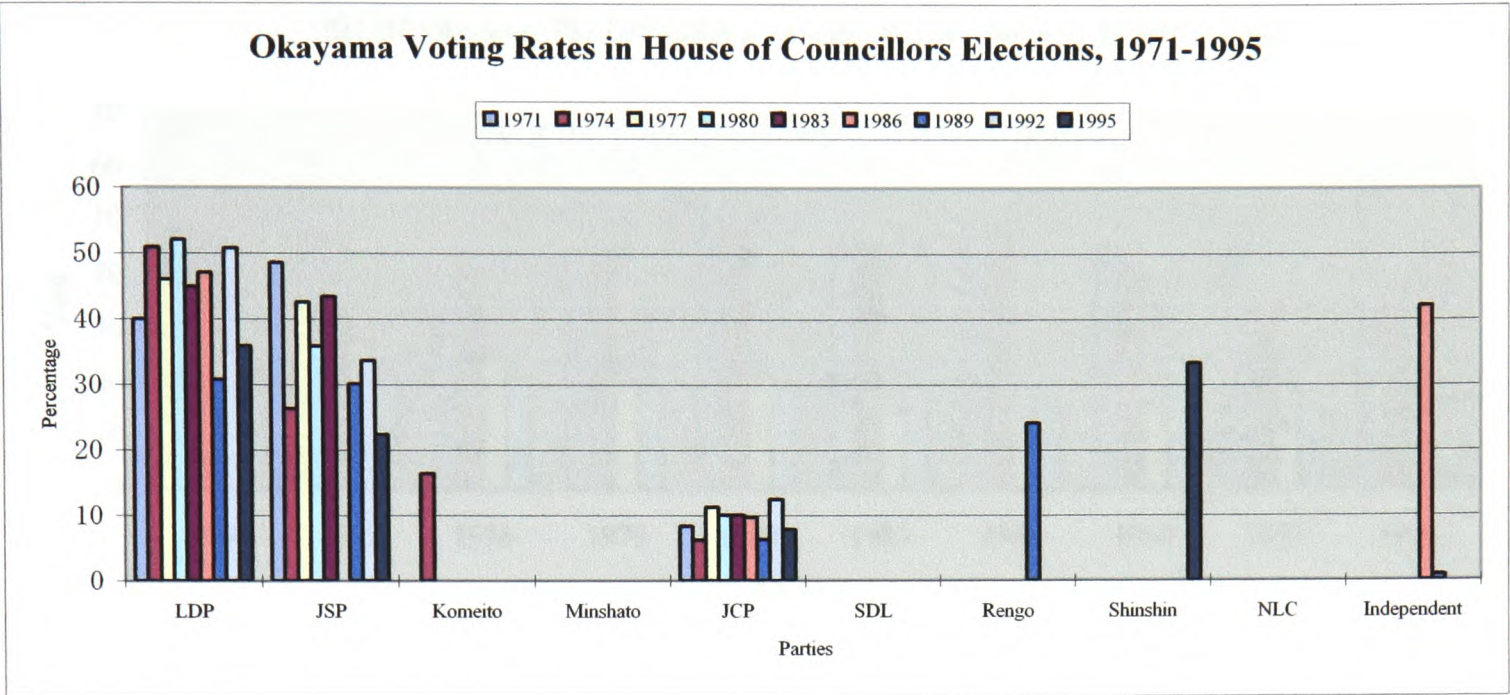


The most important thing about the decline in votes for the JSP in Okayama during the period studied, is that the party suffered a heavy drop in votes in the House of Representatives (Graph 6.1) but voter totals remained consistent in the House of Councillors (Graph 6.2) until the break-up of the party in 1996. Possible explanations for this phenomenon are firstly, the

seat in 1995. (Interview with Ishida Mie, 6 September 2000). It seems that despite the regional terms in which Mori and Ishida discussed the election, Mori in fact stood in the PR national constituency. According to the *Asahi Nenkan*, 1999 (p.186), Mori came 7th of the JSP candidates, yet only the top four got elected.

‘conservative’ Okayama electorate felt more able to elect potentially ‘risky’ candidates from the opposition in ‘second order’, Upper House elections.⁸

Graph 6.2



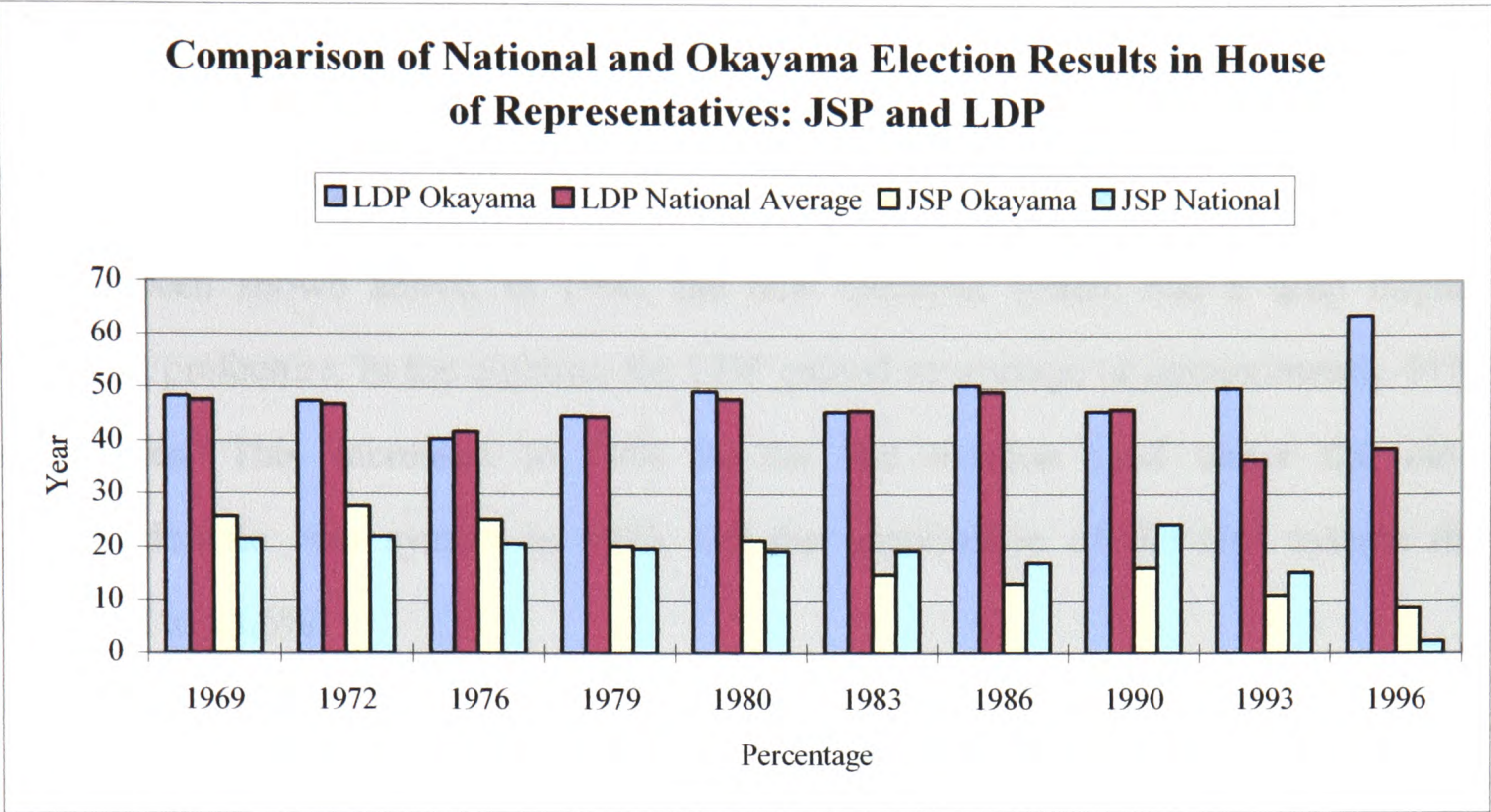
In contrast, within the Okayama Lower House seats, voting rates for the JSP gradually fell from 1979 onwards, with two slight recoveries in the 1980 and 1990 elections. This pattern of voting reflects the pattern at the national level. However, is also important to note that the decline in voting for the party was halted in 1996 and contradicted national trends.⁹

Graph 6.3 compares national voting trends with Okayama voting patterns. The most significant difference between Okayama and national voting patterns is the increase in the vote for the LDP since 1993 in Okayama. In 1990, the LDP had a national vote average of 46%. This dropped to 36% in 1993 and little progress was made by the party to improve that figure, as in 1996 it gained 38% of the vote. Okayama results are in complete contrast to

⁸ Second-order’ being a term taken from Pippa Norris, ‘Nominations and reflections. Nomination: Second-order elections revisited’, *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 31, No.1, 2000, pp. 109-124.

⁹ This is probably due to the fact that in Okayama in the October 1996 Lower House election, there was no candidate from Shinshintō, the then leading opposition party. In many other districts, this party would have won the anti-LDP vote whereas in Okayama, the JSP was still an option as an opposition party in some districts apart from in Districts Two and Four where the DPJ’s Nakagiri Shingō and Kiguchi Kyōko.

Graph 6.3¹⁰



these. In 1993, when the electorate ‘turned’ away from the LDP, the Okayama electorate rewarded the party with one of its best ever results of 50%. Institutional changes have had even better implications for the LDP in Okayama, to whom the first-past-the-post system has given a huge advantage over the opposition. The LDP took 63% of the total votes in the Prefecture in 1996 and this pattern was repeated in 2000.

Four variables have been discussed between Chapters Two and Five concerning the main issues, which we believe have been influential in the decline of the JSP and we shall now turn to analyse these on the Okayama stage. Changing ideological values is an issue which can be more effectively examined across the party country-wide and there are no specific issues to Okayama which merit discussion here. Voting behaviour is another issue which beyond the analysis above cannot be discussed at an Okayama level as a break-down of voting data according to age, occupation etc is not compiled at a prefectural level. But analysis of the changes in union-party relations will be discussed in detail below when we examine the changing relationship between the JSP and DPJ and the changing union support of campaigns.

¹⁰ The 2000 House of Representatives election data were not made available.

Furthermore, this case study is useful in analysing the impact of the changes to the electoral system. We shall now turn to this issue.

The institutional effects of the 1994 Electoral Law on Okayama

As has been shown above, in 1996, the new electoral system had a deep impact upon Okayama prefecture. In the eighties, the LDP gained an average of approximately 44% of the total votes. This increased to 50% in the last election held under the old single non-transferable vote system in 1993. On the introduction of the new system this total increased to 63.6%.

As discussed in Chapter Five, the new electoral system is more likely to benefit large parties which have the ability to mobilise a large number of voters in a defined area. The system is likely to penalise an opposition whose support tends to be more diffused. The exceptional results for the LDP in Okayama since 1996 are thus partly due to these institutional effects, though it is also important to note that the opposition parties have been unable to put forward attractive candidates. The fact that the LDP has been able to take consistently all five single-member districts from 1996 onwards has been partially because Eda decided to resign from the Lower House in order to stand in the gubernatorial election. Having lost that election, he opted to stand for the sooner contested Upper House. Had Eda stood in Lower House District One or Two, it is possible that he would have won a seat and reduced the extent of the LDP win.

Another aspect of institutional reform that has impacted particularly upon the opposition is the rivalry which the *sekihairitsu* system has engendered between members of the same party. This problem was described theoretically in Chapter Five but the 2000 Lower House shows an example when this problem has affected Okayama. Okayama, as mentioned above, is a conservative stronghold, so the winners of each of the five single-member districts in 1996 and 2000 were LDP candidates. This means that the only way that the DPJ could expect to

win a seat is through the Proportional Representation List system. The DPJ placed all the single-member party candidates in the Chūgoku bloc equally as number one on the list which means that the *sekihairitsu* system discussed in Chapter Five comes into consideration to calculate which of the DPJ candidates will win the seats awarded to the DPJ under the PR bloc vote.¹¹ *Sekihairitsu* means that in a district such as Okayama where the opposition has little hope of winning in the single seat, each candidate for the DPJ is competing *most* not with the LDP candidate in the same district (though of course the campaign is aimed against this person) but with the other DPJ candidates in the District. This is best illustrated through an example from the 2000 election.

Of the five Okayama districts, Districts One and Two are urban districts and therefore have more DPJ supporters than in the other three districts which had young candidates with little chance of winning a seat. This meant that Kawada Hidemasa and Nakagiri Shingo's main rivals for a seat in the Diet were each other, (along with the other politicians in the Chūgoku region who had a chance of winning a high enough *sekihairitsu* to win a PR seat). This resulted in zero cooperation between Kawada and Nakagiri's offices and strained relationships between the two of them. The aim of the electoral revision in 1994 was to help promote party awareness over candidate awareness and for this reason the PR seats were introduced. Despite this, *sekihairitsu* has had this detrimentally divisive affect on the opposition in Okayama. If this is the case in Okayama it can be surmised that this is a situation which the opposition faces in other districts. As shown above, the old electoral system had a more divisive effect on the LDP than it had on the opposition as it had a greater chance of putting up too many candidates and splitting its vote and causing the effect of *tomodaore* (candidates pulling each other down). The new electoral system solved this problem for the LDP but has created a new

¹¹ As discussed above, *Sekihairitsu* is the proportion of votes of the winning candidate that the losing candidate wins in a single-member district (SMD). Should the party have sufficient votes to receive a PR seat, once the proportional difference of all the candidates is known, the candidate with the smallest difference in vote to the winning candidate in the single-member district takes the seat. This process continues until the party manages to fill each seat that it has been allotted on the PR system

form of *tomodaore* for the opposition. Had the DPJ's candidates in June 2000, Kawada and Nakagiri, not sensed that each was the greatest competitor of the other, the chances are that there would have been a greater level of co-operation which could have resulted in higher PR votes for the DPJ which in turn would have meant that, in this specific example, Nakagiri, with the largest *sekihairitsu* of the DPJ candidates, might have got elected.¹²

We shall now examine how the support from unions has changed over the past twenty years, and analyse the factional struggles of Okayama politics. We shall begin at 1986, as this was the first election in which the formation of Rengō had an effect on party campaigns and consequently was the first election which affected the *status quo* of Sōhyō backing the JSP and Dōmei backing the DSP.

The Emergence of Factions, Okayama Politics and Union Support, 1986-2001

1986 Double Election.

The 1986 election was a double election, which means that the elections for the House of Councillors and the House of Representatives were held on the same day. Elections being held on the same day are cheaper bureaucratically and also are thought by the parties to increase the margin of the winning party as campaigning can be combined and resources pooled.¹³ The electorate is also less likely to become irritated by having to go out to vote several times in one year. Political commentators have also suggested that elections held on the same day tend to result in a higher voter turnout than a single election.¹⁴ The election had two important impacts upon Okayama politics. Firstly, because it was a double election, it resulted in the

¹² Nakagiri lost his *sekihairitsu* seat by a small margin to a DPJ candidate from Hiroshima Prefecture.

¹³ According to Himei Shigeru, an election costs a Prefecture 600 Million yen to stage, once costs such as hiring staff, administration, renting polling stations are calculated. A double day election for a gubernatorial and Diet, or for both Houses of the Diet costs around 900 Million yen, which reduces an annual Prefectural cost by around 300 Million Yen. Interview 5 August 2000.

¹⁴ This argument seems to be somewhat validated by the high turnout for the 1980 election of 73.7%. However the turn-out of 70.2% in 1986's same day election was lower than the 73.3% turnout of the February 1990 simple Lower House election.

removal from Okayama politics of one political force, Takahara Katsuya, who would probably have gained Eda Satsuki's support had it been a single Upper House election. Secondly, this election created an initial pairing of support that was later to be one of the crucial points upon which the future of the DPJ in Okayama depends. The factional dispute between the citizen campaigns and the union-backed campaigns first became apparent in this election and was still a problem in 2002, the end of the period of analysis in this thesis.

The Lower House election was in many respects straightforward, as the usual candidates stood and were expected to win. In the Upper House election, there were two candidates who were standing for opposition parties. Takahara Katsuya, stood with no official backing, and Ichii Junji, who was standing as the official JSP candidate. Takahara had been involved with politics for far longer than Ichii, as he had been connected with Eda Saburō since the early seventies. As Eda Saburō's son Satsuki was a Judge in Tokyo, Takahara became a surrogate son of Saburō and helped with his political endeavours. Takahara also gave free legal briefings in Saburō's offices once a week. On the sudden death of Saburō in 1977, it was Takahara who went to Tokyo to accompany Satsuki back to Okayama and who was entrusted with the task of persuading him to take over his father's political career.¹⁵

Whilst Takahara was officially an independent candidate, his supporters changed as the election progressed. At first there had been a possibility that he would have been backed by the JSP and be its official candidate. However, the retiring JSP candidate Terada favoured Ichii Junji, as he was a graduate of Tokyo University Law Faculty (as Terada was) and pushed for Ichii to gain Sōhyō backing. Also, Takahara was not backed by unions because of his links with the Eda family. These links were not easy for the Okayama Sōhyō unions to accept, as Eda's campaigns had been traditionally unconnected to unions, apart from a few Dōmei backed unions such as Mitsubishi's. After much deliberation, it was decided that Takahara was to be backed by Eda's Shaminren group, and the DSP by default, as they had no candidate. He

¹⁵ Interview with Takahara Katsuya, 18 July 2000.

was also initially backed by two other Eda supporters, Ogame Yukio and Morimoto Tetsuma. Ogame was the policy maker of Eda's office and held great influence over all left-wing politics in Okayama. Morimoto Tetsuma was leader of Okayama Zendentsū, the telecommunications industry union. As mentioned in Chapter Four, whilst Zendentsū is a mainstream public sector union and therefore was part of the Sōhyō union structure, it was innovative and flexible and therefore not a hard-line supporter of the JSP.

This support for Takahara gradually declined as Morimoto Tetsuma realised that he had to have the backing of the Sōhyō unions if he was to become the first Chairman of Rengō Okayama when it was formed in 1989. (See Chapter Four for an explanation of the transformation of Sōhyō and Dōmei into Rengō). For this reason he decided to support Ichii Junji and to drop Takahara Katsuya. However, as Eda Satsuki was still in the Takahara camp and his high-level support could result in a Takahara defeat of Ichii, Morimoto persuaded Eda that supporting Takahara in the House of Councillors election would detract from his own House of Representatives campaign.¹⁶ Eda thus abandoned Takahara, and Ichii won a seat to the House of Councillors as a result of being backed by both the Sōhyō union organisation and the Eda group. Takahara went on to be one of the Rengō-kai candidates in 1989 and again lost to a JSP candidate, Mori Nobuko. (She won because of the 'Madonna Boom' described in Chapter Two.) Nonetheless, Takahara lost in 1986 as a result of an Ichii/Eda partnership and it is the existence of these two politicians and their respective support organisations and strategies for mobilising the vote that are crucial to understanding the Okayama DPJ. Their rivalry impeded the strengthening of the party when new DPJ was formed in 1998 and their rivalry also partially accounts for the problems of the 2000 House of Representatives election. 1986, however, was a rare example of these two cooperating to a common end.

¹⁶ Yukawa Norihiro, Eda's policy advisor, explained this abandoning of Takahara as being due to the potential loss of Eda's seat because he was so busy campaigning for Takahara. According to Yukawa, they contacted Den Hideo to get the latest opinion poll results and it appeared that Eda would come 6th in his district. Interview 9 September 2000.

1989 – The Rengō election

The Rengōkai attempt for unions to increase their influence on politics by becoming directly elected members of the Diet has been discussed in Chapter Four. Okayama is of particular importance when analysing this period of left-wing politics as it was the only electoral district, out of 12, where a Rengōkai politician failed to win. After his failure to win backing from the Eda group in 1986, Takahara Katsuya managed to be proposed as the Rengō candidate for Okayama. It is strange that he failed – as he had both Okayama Sōhyō and Dōmei backing him. Indeed, all the other 11 candidates nominated across the country won. However there were factors which explain why he was the only Rengōkai candidate who lost.

In other districts where Rengōkai candidates were running, the whole of the opposition and the unions backed the Rengō candidate. This was also the election in which Nōkyō, the Agricultural Co-operative Association, decided to punish the LDP for the introduction of the consumption tax. Therefore, where there was only one candidate, that person gained the support of Nōkyō, Sōhyō, Dōmei, the JSP, the DSP and Kōmeitō.

In contrast to this, in Okayama, the opposition group was divided because the JSP refused to back Takahara. Doi Takako had told Okayama JSP that she wanted it to put forward a female candidate, and if it did not, she threatened that she would not make a crucial support-gathering trip to the Prefecture. Consequently, the JSP decided to put forward a female candidate and not back Takahara.¹⁷ With these added factors of the JSP and the ‘Madonna Boom’, this meant that Mori Nobuko beat Takahara, who had been in politics far longer and had got himself into heavy debt in order to campaign. Okamoto Kazuko, the current Chair of Nikkyōso in Okayama (the first female to achieve this status) was Chair of Nikkyōso’s women’s group at the time of Mori’s campaign. She said that she had not expected Mori to win but they had done lots of innovative things like incorporating drama and song into the

¹⁷ Interview with Satō Toyoko, former member of the JSP’s women’s group and Chair of the Retired Female Teachers Group in Okayama, 7 April 2000.

campaign, which had probably swung in their favour. However, she too recognised that the result was more a result of the ‘Madonna boom’ rather than an endorsement of Mori Nobuko.¹⁸

With two JSP members in the Upper House, (Ichii, 1986-1992 and Mori 1989-1995) these few years until 1992 were an Indian summer for the JSP supporters and this made them feel more deeply the eventual decline of the party in 1996. The party is still trying to understand why it declined so suddenly when Ichii Junji and his supporters joined the DPJ in 1996.

The 1993 Election and the formation of Shinshintō

The 1993 election for the Lower House caused shock waves around the world, as it managed to remove the LDP, which had been in control of government for nearly 38 years. But it had little or no effect on Okayama where the LDP, as discussed above, increased its percentage of the vote to 50%. In fact, the most tangible result of the defeat of the LDP in 1993 to Okayama was the fact that Eda Satsuki became part of the Cabinet in the Hosokawa coalition as Head of the Science and Technology Agency. However, the new political party formations of 1993 were soon to impact upon the Prefecture because Katō Mutsuki, a long-time LDP member in the old District Two, defected to Shinseitō and Eda combined his tiny Shaminren with the Japan New Party in June 1994. Meanwhile, Shinshintō was formed, which absorbed Shinseitō, the DSP, Kōmeitō and Japan New Party. Consequently, Okayama’s politics suddenly changed, as senior politicians, and erstwhile enemies were suddenly in the same camp.

Shinshintō’s main problem as a party was that it was a composite of disparate parts. This is no better symbolised than in Okayama, where the party became a group of self-important senior politicians. In 1995, the following politicians were in Okayama Shinshintō: Eda Satsuki (former Shaminren and Japan New Party, four electoral wins), Hikasa Katsuyuki (former Kōmeitō, 4 electoral wins), Kato Mutsuki (former LDP, Tanaka faction and part of Ozawa’s

¹⁸ Interview with Okamoto Kazuko, 6 September 2000

Shinseitō, 10 electoral wins), Kainuma Jiro (former Kōmeitō, seven electoral wins) and Ishida Mie (former DSP backed by Mitsubishi Union, one win in Lower House). Firstly, this strange group of politicians had a problem deciding which one of them was to have the advantage of being party leader in Okayama. Eventually, because they could not agree, it was decided that the most junior, and only woman, would fulfil that role. Then, with no candidate for the July 1995 Upper House election, the party began to court Mori Nobuko, a JSP Upper House member, to stand for Shinshintō.¹⁹ When she refused, Ishida Mie was persuaded to change House and she resigned the Lower House seat she had won two years before and entered the Upper House and won a PR seat in 1995.²⁰ This also gave Shinshintō Okayama the benefit of Ishida's union backing (former Dōmei). This lack of coherence of Okayama Shinshintō is probably indicative of the problems that the party faced nationwide. However, in Okayama, the party seemed overly disparate and personality clashes severely hampered any chance of coherence.

1996: The Gubernatorial Election, the Lower House Election and the Formation of the DPJ in Okayama.

The 1996 Okayama Gubernatorial election is an event peculiar to Okayama and therefore cannot be used in any way to compare with other districts. However, this election is crucial to an understanding of how the DPJ emerged in Okayama. Whilst the Gubernatorial election was a week after the Lower House election, many of its variables had been decided long before the Lower House election had been fixed, and for that reason it considerably influenced candidate selection for the Diet contest.

Eda Satsuki resigned from the Diet and Shinshintō in June 1996 in order to stand in the gubernatorial election. (Gubernatorial elections are normally considered to be non-partisan, or are fought by multi-party coalitions.) A reason for Eda standing in this election was that he

¹⁹ Interview with Ishida Mie, at her home, 6 September 2000.

²⁰ Interview with Ishida Mie, at her home, 6 September 2000.

had lost some political credibility by joining Shinshintō in 1994 and wanted to distance himself from the party. Within the left-wing political groups of Okayama politics, Shinshintō was derided as a party with no ideology and only in existence because of the desire for power of its leader, Ozawa Ichirō. However, the main reason he stood was as a result of his more elderly advisors' winning out over his younger supporters. The elderly group of Satsuki Kai, Eda's *kōenkai*, felt that Eda had lost influence in Tokyo and they felt that it would be better for him to come back to Okayama where he is greatly respected.²¹

Eda's decision to stand for the Governorship meant that his Lower House seat was now open for a member of the opposition to take using his support. But, as mentioned above, the opposition was now in a divided state in Okayama and there was no obvious person to fight the seat. Furthermore, it was not immediately apparent in which seat Eda would have stood and could now help someone to stand in, as the electoral districts had changed. He traditionally had much support in Okayama City, which was predominantly in District One under the new electoral system. However, he also had strong support in District Two, which is where he lives. Meanwhile, a budding left-wing politician, Nakagiri Shingo, was making known his desire to stand and was originally going to stand for District Two under the JSP banner.

Ichii Junji was the sole JSP politician in the district (Upper House) and was keen to bring Nakagiri Shingo into the JSP fold as he recognised that he would be supported for two reasons. Firstly, Nakagiri was a medical doctor. Secondly, Nakagiri had been the doctor handling employment related medical disputes at Jichirō's headquarters and would ensure valuable Jichirō support for the 1996 election *and* in Ichii's *own* 1998 Upper House election. Thus, initial estimates saw Nakagiri slotting into the union support grouping of Ichii/JSP/ former Sōhyō unions in Rengō. Furthermore, both Nakagiri and Ichii were active in promoting the reform attempts for the JSP known as *Shintō Tsukuri* (new party formation - described in

²¹ Interview with Morimoto Sakae, 11 April 2000.

Chapter Two) at the national level and were showing support for the reform efforts within the JSP.

Running alongside these attempts, meanwhile, were the attempts described in Chapter Two of Hatoyama Yukio and Yokomichi Takahiro to create the new party, Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). They were keen to attract young left-wing candidates who had some form of support of their own but also were not too entangled with the JSP. Nakagiri fitted this bill nicely and was thus courted by the DPJ as a candidate. In the meantime, Eda Satsuki realised that Nakagiri would also be an acceptable candidate for him to give the support of Satsuki-Kai. In this manner, the events which led to Nakagiri's becoming a DPJ candidate evolved organically rather than being systematically planned. Also, Nakagiri fought the 1996 campaign without setting up a *kōenkai* of his own – instead relying on the unions and Satsuki-Kai for support as he had been courted from both sides to stand. As he was an unknown candidate, representing an unknown party, he was unable to take a single-member seat but was successful in gaining a PR seat under the DPJ banner.

The DPJ put forward another candidate in the 1996 election, Kiguchi Kyōko, a woman in her late twenties. She stood in District Five, which was where her home town was. She had worked with Kan Naoto and then was a staff member for the party Sakigake. She has since felt that she was foolish to have been persuaded to stand for the DPJ when the body of young politicians in Sakigake defected to the DPJ and decided to win her over to the new cause.²²

Kiguchi Kyōko, whilst being a candidate for the DPJ and receiving campaign funds from the party, received very little institutionalised support from the DPJ. Her campaign needs to be compared with the campaign of Hata Tomoko, who was to follow her as the DPJ candidate for District Five in the 2000 election. In many ways they were similar as they were both women in their early 30s who had been selected to give an image of a political party which did not

²² Interview with Kiguchi Kyoko, 29 July 2000.

just select middle-aged men as candidates. But this is where the comparison ends. Hata Tomoko had three campaign offices, whereas Kiguchi Kyōko used her parents' home as a centre of the election. She had no *kōenkai* and received no recommendations from any organisations. She relied upon her own connections and union support. She received no backing from Ichii Junji or Nakagiri Shingo,²³ but did receive endorsement from Eda Satsuki when he was campaigning for the governorship in District Five. It is important to remember that at this time Eda was not a member of the DPJ.

Kiguchi Kyōko did very badly in the election, managing to win only 42,555 votes, which reflects the lack of strategy and party support given to her campaign. She spent a few months working for the DPJ in Okayama after the 1996 election, but eventually became disillusioned by the lack of ideology of the DPJ and decided to move back to Tokyo, where she left the world of politics. The story of Kiguchi Kyōko represents a failure of the DPJ. It gave her no resources, and even the traditional JSP style of utilising the support of unions was weakly organised for her campaign. The party also did nothing to endorse her. In conclusion, her campaign shows the extent of the disorganisation of the fledging DPJ in Okayama in 1996 and suggests that this could have been a problem faced in other Prefectures.

Whilst these events were haphazardly taking place, the Okayama JSP was the victim of defections and confusion. Faced with the 1996 election, the party was able to put forward only one candidate in the PR district and gained a mere 7000 votes.²⁴ Thinking that Nakagiri Shingo would be its candidate and shocked by his transfer to the DPJ, it accused him of stealing 6 million yen which had been saved for the election, although as no criminal proceedings were established, it is reasonable to assume that these were funds that Nakagiri

²³ This is another example of the problem described in Chapter 5 and above in this chapter of the opposition *tomodaore* effect.

²⁴ This was the figure given to me locally by Mizuta Minoru, former JSP Diet member from Okayama and now Chair of Okayama JSP (Interview 30 March 2000). This compares to the JSP total in the Chūgoku bloc of 234, 642, *Asahi Nenkan*, 1997, p 198.

and Ichii had put into party coffers and took with them when they left the party.²⁵ The JSP were left with a group of elderly supporters and former politicians, although it did benefit by inheriting the offices and infrastructure of the party when the DPJ members defected.

A week after the Lower House election in 1996, Eda Satsuki contested the governorship election, which he lost to the LDP candidate Ishii Masahiro. This election was extremely close and Eda lost by 5712 votes out of a turn-out of over 927,000 voters. This reflects the strength of the LDP's organisational skills in Okayama, as it was able to combine the efforts of all LDP support networks. The most significant issue about this election, however, was the fact that Eda Satsuki was left without a political role. This would mean that his return to politics was via the DPJ and was to cause future problems and tensions within the left-wing groups of the Prefecture.

1998 Upper House Election

The 1998 Upper House election in Okayama is the one in which the rivalry between Eda Satsuki and Ichii Junji escalated into a serious factional dispute and showed the differences in their styles of backing and support and the advantages and disadvantages of such styles of support. Furthermore, this difference in style is indicative of the different methods of campaigning style and support networks within the whole of the DPJ and helps explain the emerging factionalism within the DPJ which can be largely accounted for by analysing which party the politician had been in before joining the DPJ.

Eda Satsuki had inherited his father's *kōenkai* that consisted of union backing and left wing supporters. However, Eda Satsuki also had a national reputation as he had been elected to the Diet in the seventies under the old national constituency system. He came second in the whole country as a result of his image as the flamboyant student protest leader at Tokyo University in

²⁵ Interview with Mizuta Minoru, 29 March 2000.

1968 (which was heavily publicised owing to his father's position in the JSP) and because of his reputation for being brilliant; he came top of his year at Tokyo University and in the notoriously difficult Bar Examination. Thus, Eda's supporters also included the urban middle classes and he combined these new and old support networks into the Satsuki Kai, an organisation with around 66,000 members.

With his defeat in the Governorship election, Eda was forced to find an election in which he could win if he were to continue in politics. His first move was to officially join the DPJ and this enabled him to decide which House of the Diet he would campaign for. A politician of Eda's background meant he wanted to be in the more important House of Representatives, but these seats were now filled with LDP candidates with huge majorities and the election had only just happened which meant he probably would have at least three years to wait for another one to be called. As mentioned above, his supporters were based in either Okayama Districts One or Two of the new electoral system. At first Eda decided that he wanted to stand in House of Representatives Okayama District Two, where Nakagiri Shingo had campaigned in the 1996 Lower House election (but had won a PR seat). Nakagiri was happy to give this district over to Eda and stand in District One in the future since he recognised that his victory was achieved as a result of the support given him by Eda because he had no real support network in either district. However, Hatoyama Kunio and Kan Naoto intervened from Tokyo and told Eda to leave District Two for Nakagiri and to stand in District One, the most urban of Okayama districts, as this was the natural home for the type of support group that Eda had.

Some of Eda's older supporters felt that he would be foolish to hold out for a Lower House seat as the next election seemed a long way away and as he could stand in the Upper House election in 1998.²⁶ The problem with this strategy was that Ichii Junji had already declared that he wanted to stand in his third election. Whilst two Upper House seats were open for re-election in Okayama in 1998, the chances that the opposition could win both were very

²⁶ Interviews with Ogame Yukio, 12 July 2000 and with Himei Shigeru, 5 August 2000.

slim. Thus, when they both decided to stand, what resulted was a heavily-fought contest between Ichii Junji and Eda Satsuki who used two styles of politics. Ichii used the union backed style whereas Eda used *kōenkai* and urban voters alongside unions.

In April 1998, as mentioned above, the DPJ became the 'new DPJ' by combining the old DPJ with some of the splinter parties from Shinshintō. This move saw the party become broader ideologically, as it managed to combine more right-of-centre politicians with the left-of-centre politicians who had previously been the main force of the DPJ. The party was strengthened by the move and managed to increase its size in this Upper House election. In contrast the rivalry between Eda and Ichii threatened to split the local party indefinitely. Even in the 2000 House of Representatives election, there were visible and divisive splits between members of the DPJ due to the 1998 Upper House election.

Eda's supporters believed that after his election defeat in 1996, it was important for him to get back into politics as soon as possible and for this reason they persuaded him to stand in the Upper House election.²⁷ In the meantime Ichii Junji was under the impression that Eda only wanted to stand for the Lower House, so when Eda declared that he was going to stand in the Upper House, it came as a great shock to Ichii. When asked why he did not stand down at this point, Ichii Junji made the point that the unions had already backed him and he was not the kind of person to abandon a group that had always supported him just because his chances looked slimmer than they had been.²⁸ Also Ichii Junji confided that he thought that Eda would lose. In fact, Eda beat Ichii by 363,697 votes to 115,751.

The resentment of Ichii Junji towards Eda continued past the election and is important because it meant that his supporters, the unions from the former Sōhyō group, were also heavily against Eda. (Eda campaigns using a *kōenkai* style support network and some unions which

²⁷ Interview with Ogame Yukio, 12 July 2000 and with Himei Shigeru, 5 August 2000.

²⁸ Interview with Ichii Junji, 9 August 2000.

were formerly part of the independent Labour Union organisation, Chūritsu Rōren also backing him.) This election was also divisive because it required other DPJ-connected local politicians and unions to decide whether they were supporters of Eda or of Ichii. Nakagiri, whilst being a Jichirō-backed politician who would normally have supported the ‘Sōhyō’ candidate Ichii, (Jichirō campaigned rigorously to get its own members and affiliates in to the Diet) was forced to support Eda, as it was Eda’s support network that had allowed him to win his seat in 1996. However, Jichirō, as a staunch part of the former Sōhyō network, were supporting Ichii and this resulted in a strained relationship from then onwards between Nakagiri and Jichirō. The tensions created by the 1998 Upper House election continued until the 2000 Lower House election, where they played a crucial part in determining who was actively supporting whom. The 1998 election meant that the potential for the blurring of old distinct campaign strategies into a new DPJ structure, combining old union support methods with the Satsuki Kai, was now virtually negligible. Old structures were proving too hard to change and this had serious implications for following elections.

2000 Lower House election.

The rivalry between Eda and Ichii from 1998 spread into the campaigns of Districts One and Two of the Lower House election in 2000, and the lack of cooperation that this caused, can possibly account for the fact that no DPJ candidates managed to win a seat, even in the Proportional Representation section of the election. This rivalry spread into all aspects of the election, but the main problem of the 2000 Lower House election was that no one really trusted anyone else and each group became factionalised by infighting between the old socialist style of campaigning and the ‘newer’ ‘citizen’ style of campaigning.

The candidate for District One was a lawyer, Kawada Hidemasa, who had become famous for dealing with the religious cults of Aum and the Unification Church. He had worked for Ichii Junji’s law practice on finishing his law apprenticeship, and therefore was considered part of the Ichii camp. His office manager was Yokoyama Izumi, a former official of Okayama JSP,

and part of the group that defected to the old DPJ in 1996. Yokoyama, whilst being only in his forties, has an 'old-fashioned' background and understanding of elections which is based in traditional left organisation and mobilisation methods and therefore his strongest relationship was with the unions and not with the citizen groups that Kawada was trying to incorporate into his support networks.

Yokoyama's main supporter amongst the Okayama party elite is Ichii and this is why he was given the job of being Head of the Office of Kawada's campaign, even though he was not really suited to a new style post-JSP style campaign. This created a huge amount of tension between the Kawada family and Yokoyama's group, which included a Prefectural Diet Member, Kusakari Takayuki, a former Jichirō member and a strong supporter of the union segment of the vote. Ichii Junji supported the position of Yokoyama/Kusakari as Ichii felt that Kawada was not being fair in dismissing the unions and failing to pay them due respect. Ichii believes that the only thing that is necessary for the left to win is to court the unions and get their block vote. After the election, Ichii and Kawada were no longer on speaking terms as a result of this tension over campaign style.

The Kawada campaign believed that without wider support than just the unions, there was no way it would be able to penetrate the conservative vote, which was heavily behind the incumbent in the single-member district, Aizawa Ichirō, a second-generation politician with huge backing and resources. To this end, they appealed to the Eda family for help. Eda Satsuki had already supported the Kawada campaign but with this personal plea in the form of a letter from Kawada Naoko, the wife of Hidemasa to Eda Kyōko, (Eda Satsuki's wife), the Eda group despatched four women to lead a Kawada 'citizen' group. The four women sent were the main organisers of the Azalea Organisation: Eda Satsuki's *kōenkai* for women.

At this stage, the campaign office split into two with the unionists moving out and setting up their own office and the women left to organise the campaign that was intended to mobilise

the 'citizen' vote. They planned and implemented a campaign of telephoning the electorate based upon information on various address lists that the office had managed to obtain. Examples included alumni organisations of schools and universities attended by each of the Kawada family, church lists (as Kawada Naoko is a Christian) and other lists supplied by supporters. The author was present when, during the official campaign, the owner of a restaurant where the campaign cars had stopped for lunch gave Kawada Hidemasa a list of his special customers. This list, which included fewer than ten names, represents the nature of this style of campaigning. If each and every supporter of a political party introduces a few names with whom the campaign can make contact, the ability of the candidate to meet as many members of the electorate as possible soon increases.

These women also spearheaded a campaign of visiting voters to make greetings. Whilst it is illegal for politicians to visit homes, it is considered permissible for them to make rounds of visits to people with whom they have a connection, no matter how tenuous that connection is. This office also became a sub-branch of the Satsuki-Kai and rang each member of the Satsuki-Kai within the Kawada district, to confirm that a vote would be recorded for Kawada. In this way, Kawada managed to achieve, to a certain degree, a form of a non-union and more 'citizen-based' election. This co-operation with Eda Satsuki further worsened relations between Eda and Ichii, and Ichii and Kawada.

District Two of Okayama showed similar tensions between the 'citizen support' group and the hard-line socialist and union supporters, although superficially relations between each of these groups was far more smooth during the campaign than it was in District One. District Two had the advantage, both financial and psychological, of having an incumbent Diet member, Nakagiri Shingo. However, when he failed to win another seat in the Chūgoku PR bloc on June 25, the recriminations between these groups were far more intense and bitter than any of the problems of District One.

Nakagiri is an ideologue who believes in the necessity of party politics as a way to cure the embedded problems of long-term LDP rule and the ensuing corruption that this has brought about. He believes that *kōenkai* are the cause of the failure to introduce party politics into Japan, as they take away party identity and instead just result in a relationship between the Diet member and his supporters. As a result, policies of different parties are not considered by the average voter. Whether the Diet member is effectively fulfilling his role or not, the *kōenkai* will continue with their support, as according to Nakagiri, it is not aware of the alternatives.²⁹

For this reason, Nakagiri refused to establish a *kōenkai* of his own. A group of his supporters established a group on their own initiative, the *Yume, Shimin* (Dream, Citizen type action!). This group was principally set up to distribute information about Nakagiri but its problem was the fact that Nakagiri and the more traditional male members of his campaign, never really approved of its existence. Members of *Yume, Shimin* complained bitterly about the way they were ignored by the other members of the Nakagiri campaign office, yet they made random decisions about how the campaign was to be run. This worsened their relationship with other members of the campaign and unionists. Routes for campaign vehicles tend to be planned considerably in advance of the official campaign and are distributed to all supporters so that they can visit a 'spot' where the cars stop to show their support. During the last few days of the official campaign, *Yume, Shimin* members completely ignored the plans and instead took the cars to Okayama station, officially part of District One, causing tension not only within the Nakagiri camp, but between the Nakagiri and Kawada camps. In contrast, relations between Rengō (labour unions) and Nakagiri's team were far more effective than in District One, as they were spearheaded by a capable young unionist, Motobayashi Toshihiro from Zendentsū. Nonetheless, the citizen group/old style socialist supporter tension was just as evident in this campaign as it was in District One.

Since Nakagiri did not really have a support group of his own apart from *Yume, Shimin*, (as

²⁹ This point was made to the author frequently throughout the campaign by Nakagiri Shingo.

well as a small group that was set up as a rather desperate last measure just before the election for Okayama University graduates), he used the Eda group and his list of supporters in 2000 as he had done in 1996. Thus, when *Yume*, *Shimin* randomly changed decisions which the Eda group had helped make, Nakagiri was also annoying his main backer. These tensions were further exacerbated after the election when Nakagiri began to openly ignore members of the Eda group. Thus, relations between Eda and Nakagiri had degenerated as they had between Ichii and Kawada, although both Kawada and Nakagiri had originally been key parts and even protégées of the Ichii and Eda ‘groups’.

This ‘group’ concept is an essential part of understanding campaigns in a conservative district such as Okayama. Each politician will have his own unions and group of supporters who consist of a ‘group’ or faction. Eda Satsuki’s group is without doubt the strongest and most influential of the left in Okayama. Ichii Junji’s group were the former Sōhyō unions. Neither Kawada nor Nakagiri had their own group and were forced to piggyback on the Ichii and Eda groups, which is why tensions occurred. Furthermore, these groups and rivalries are exacerbated and provoked by groups within the main DPJ.

Kan Naoto was a member of Eda Satsuki’s Shaminren and thus openly supported Eda and Nakagiri. For the first time in the 2000 election, as described in Chapter Five, candidates were not allowed to have only their own photograph on posters and were required to include a leading party member’s photograph. The various factional alliances in Okayama were thus shown by the fact that Kan appeared on Nakagiri’s posters and Hatoyama appeared on Kawada’s. Kan and Eda were still close since the time they spent together in Shaminren. Hatoyama appeared on Kawada’s at the request of Ichii so as to appear different to Eda. The candidates in Districts One and Two were thus blighted by internal rivalries, both at the national and local level. Any kind of mobilisation of the electorate was carried out despite these difficult conditions. Nonetheless, it must be recognised that even though their attempts were not successful, as neither candidate won a seat, apart from the union vote, both

candidates were attempting to widen the traditional left strategy for obtaining votes. They both made contact with ordinary citizens, on the basis that Japanese will tend to vote for politicians with whom they have had contact.³⁰ This strategy resembles the traditional LDP *kōenkai* method of voter mobilisation and thus represents a new strategy for left parties to mobilise the vote. Neither Kawada nor Nakagiri made much more of an attempt to try anything particularly innovative to attract votes away from the LDP. A notable exception to these strategies of vote collection in the 2000 election was attempted in District Five, a heavily rural district on the western side of Okayama.

Okayama District Five has five ‘cities’ according to the Japanese method of categorising towns and cities, yet all of these five, Ibara, Niimi, Takahashi, Soja, and Kasaoka, have only a combined population of 210,000. In this rural environment the LDP predominates so Himei Shigeru, a doctor (who also happens to be Kan Naoto’s brother-in-law) has adopted a strategy of infiltrating the LDP vote. He has tried to persuade ‘traditional’ LDP candidates to stand for the DPJ and in this manner, aimed to ‘bring’ that candidate’s conservative votes with the candidate to the DPJ. Himei tried this strategy first between 1999 and 2000 by trying to bring Katō Katsunobu into the DPJ fold. Katō Katsunobu is the son-in-law of Katō Mutsuki, the politician who left the LDP with Ozawa in 1993 and joined Shinseitō and later, Shinshintō. On Mutsuki’s retirement, he inherited his political organisation. Katō had made it plain that he wanted to stand in District Five but he never really made a commitment to any party. Supposedly, he was being courted by Ozawa’s Liberal Party, by the LDP and by Himei Shigeru for the DPJ. Eventually, the LDP won out and on May 10 2000, about six weeks before the general election, Katō announced that he was going to stand for the LDP on its Proportional Representation list. He sacrificed a chance at winning a single-member district in order to ‘return’ to the LDP fold.

³⁰ This view was expressed in an interview with Eda Satsuki, 28th September 2000. Nonetheless, this was an opinion which was frequently expressed by those who were working for the two DPJ campaigns that I worked with for the June 2000 House of Representatives election.

This attempt by Himei is significant for various reasons. Firstly, it emphasises the points made above regarding the difficulties created by the new electoral system (one candidate, one district) and the changing parties. In 2000, in the second election under the new system, even politicians were not sure about where their ‘ideological’ allegiance was. The parties had seen so much upheaval since 1993 that no one was quite sure which party they were ‘meant’ to be in. Whilst Katō knew he wanted to be ‘the candidate’, he was not sure under which banner that candidature was to be. More significantly, this attempt by Himei Shigeru to ‘attract’ a ‘typical’ LDP candidate into the DPJ fold shows that the old reliance on labour unions for left-wing campaigning and vote mobilisation was over. Himei saw that it was necessary for this to change and that the DPJ had to move towards the LDP, both in terms of methodology of vote mobilisation and candidate-type. Ideology and labour union connections were no longer as important as they had been.

The attempt to bring in a ‘LDP’ candidate is an extreme example of the necessity to redesign the typical opposition candidate. Nonetheless, what Okayama highlights is the fact that the old left mobilisation methods of labour unions supporting a left-wing politician were gone. Nakagiri and Kawada in 2000 were somewhere in the middle of these two extremes. They both relied to some extent on the old union methods of mobilisation, but also tried to a greater or lesser degree, and with limited successes, to break away from sole reliance on labour unions and attempted to use *kōenkai* (Eda’s *kōenkai*) and bring non-unionised people into politics. The problems they faced within their support groups were a result of the tensions between these two forms of campaign method. Old methods were clashing with new methods and the failure of both of them to be elected was partly attributable to this. In contrast, throughout his political career, Eda Satsuki had somehow managed to combine both methods of support. Okayama thus is an example of the directions in which the DPJ needed to develop in order to grow and explains well the changes necessary for old socialists to become new democrats.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to analyse the decline of the JSP and the formation of the DPJ in Okayama in order to establish some of the issues that were a problem. The formation of the DPJ in Okayama was unplanned and random and at times opportunistic. It may be possible to say that when Nakagiri and Ichii joined the party, they joined because they felt that the JSP had problems, but it is not possible to say that they believed passionately in the concept of the DPJ. For Ichii Junji and Nakagiri Shingo, the DPJ was a means to getting elected as opposed to standing under the old JSP banner and possibly losing the election. Neither of their campaigns or strategies for mobilising voters changed much from JSP methods. The principal method of obtaining votes for the opposition remains as it was during the 1955 system, piggy backing on Eda's Satsuki Kai and the former Sōhyō and Dōmei organisations. All candidates in 2000 attempted to broaden these mobilisation methods without much success. Eda Satsuki in 2001 continued similar campaign methods to those used when he first won a seat in Okayama in 1983 (with some changes as a result of advances in technology etc). He is a politician without dogma and has been flexible and responded to the changing electoral system and to his failure in the gubernatorial election. Alongside union and *kōenkai* support, his strategy is based upon the notion of mobilising the citizen, attracting as many 'normal' people as possible and being a politician of the people. This is a strategy, as we shall see below, which many in the DPJ are trying to introduce. Eda has shown that these methods of 'citizen politics' are successful but are they a strategy that can be employed by less famous DPJ politicians, from other districts, and from different political backgrounds? Indeed, are these techniques being used at all beyond the confines of Okayama? In the remainder of this thesis, we shall attempt to answer this question of how the different parts of the DPJ manage to mobilise support and ask how these new democrats differ from old socialists when it comes to vote mobilisation methods.

Chapter Seven

From Old Socialists to New Democrats: The Realignment of the Japanese Left

In this chapter, we shall analyse how the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) differs from the old Japan Socialist Party (JSP) in order to show how old socialists have become new democrats. In Chapters One and Three, it was discussed how voters became disillusioned with politics in general and how the ideological aims of the JSP meant they became disillusioned with the party in particular. This was compounded by the traditional backers of the JSP, the labour unions, withdrawing their support and distancing themselves from the party. The new electoral system with 300 single-member districts (SMD) aided the largest party the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Even though the new Proportional Representation section of the vote maybe could have supported the JSP, the formation of the DPJ prior to the election denied the JSP the opportunity to benefit from this new part of the vote. Instead, the DPJ became the party which was supported and sustained by the PR vote. Had the DPJ not been formed, it might have been possible for the JSP to have become the beneficiary of the new electoral system. But, as has been discussed above, and particularly in Chapter Two, the DPJ was formed and proved to be the final blow for any hope of a resurgence of the JSP. The DPJ has thus taken on the political space of the JSP – left of centre and the main opposition/non-government forming party. It has become a successful party as it has survived as a new party longer than any of the other new parties that were created between 1992 and 1998.¹ Furthermore, it is the only new party since the beginnings of the 1955 system that has grown at consecutive elections. But how does it compare to the JSP? In this chapter, we shall examine how the DPJ differs from the JSP in terms of the composite parts of it, (the different groups or factions of politicians who formed the party), its key support groups, its target voters and vote-gathering mechanisms, and finally

¹ The other major new parties that were created between 1992 and 1998 apart from the Democratic Party of Japan are: Japan New Party (1992-1994), Shinseitō (1993-1994), and Sakigake (1993-1998). At the break up of Shinshintō, many tiny parties were formed. When Shinshintō broke up in 1997, Kōmeitō initially remained in a group called Shintō Heiwa before joining back with their Upper House former colleagues who had remained in Kōmeitō and formed a party called Shin Kōmeitō. Thus, Shin Kōmeitō cannot be considered to be a new party as it joined Shinshintō and regrouped and as such, at the end point of analysis of this thesis, the DPJ is the longest surviving new party that has been created since 1993.

how the party is aware of its 'image' vis a vis the electorate and ensures that it maintains its popularity by having strong, popular leadership. By assessing the party in this way, we shall discuss how the Japanese 'left' has transformed itself from the old socialists to the new democrats.

Before turning to the DPJ, we shall examine the discussion about how political mobilisation is changing in the west. This body of literature suggests that politics and politicians are adapting and becoming more receptive to the citizenry. Whilst not about Japan, this body of literature is a useful tool in analysing how and why parties have been forced to diversify their mobilisation methods. Citizens are no longer as interested in politics, thus forcing politicians to mobilize support in different and diverse ways. We suggest that this literature, which describes a generic change in political mobilisation within the west, is a useful analytical tool to assess the changes between the JSP and the DPJ and the shift from the 1955 system voter to the 21st century Japanese voter. Whilst in Japan some traditional methods of mobilisation such as union support still has validity as a means of attracting the voter (although admittedly less effective than under the 1955 system), the DPJ is trying to widen the strategies used by the 'old socialists' in order to maintain and even increase the number of supporters it can get. This is a three-pronged strategy: in some ways it is doing this to get support from traditional JSP voters, it is also trying to get traditional LDP supporters (by changing the type of candidate, for example, as described in Chapter Six) but it is also attempting to attract members of the electorate who have been previously disengaged from politics. This is where the idea of citizen politics, as described particularly by Russell J. Dalton, gives us a theoretical comparison which can be used to understand the widening of the DPJ's political support strategies

How have politics changed? Comparisons with the United States. Citizen Politics.

Russell J Dalton argues that changing economic conditions, increased education levels and ever increasingly available information in the United States have made the public more aware and demanding.

‘Western publics now hold the government responsible for protecting and managing society’²

In his view, ‘citizen politics’ refers to sophisticated electors who have information and wealth and are concerned with how government is managed. However, he recognises that traditional political mobilisation methods and networks are declining. The time when a member of the electorate’s political allegiance was based on their socio-economic background has finished and this means that citizens are questioning what and who they support and these loyalties may be more transitory than they were before. Citizens now want more of a say in political decision making, particularly the decisions that closely affect their lives. Dalton suggests that there is more inclination amongst the ‘citizen’ to be proactive in influencing decisions that affect their lives. A further point made by Dalton is that as postmodern values become more widespread, affluent citizens have the ability to think beyond their basic needs. This has resulted in the emergence of new interest groups and parties such as green parties, environmental groups, racial equality movements and campaigners such as the Pro-Life, anti-abortion movement in the United States.

Despite this apparent continuing politicization of the electorate, Dalton also describes a decline in traditional partisanship within the political system and also a declining inclination within voters to vote. This is partly caused by the blurring of traditional socio-economic strata in society but is also due to a declining satisfaction with politics in general. The electorate makes a constant reassessment of political leaders and institutions. This leads on to what Dalton describes as the paradox of citizen politics: there are new issues which are being debated in politics and people are becoming more educated and have interest in these new issues. Government has, on the whole, improved the quality of life of citizens. But the citizen has become less satisfied with politics and displays increased scepticism with bureaucracy and government.

Dalton ends his analysis of these changes to politics in a very positive manner. He suggests

2 Russell J. Dalton, *Citizen Politics. Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Chatham, New Jersey, Chatham House Publishers, 1996 (Second Edition).p9.

that whilst political mobilisation of the electorate has become more diverse and complex because of the reasons mentioned above, electorates still have ideals and expect their governments to live up to them. His conclusion is that government needs to adapt to live up to these ideals. Evolution of the process is necessary and this is a sign of the vitality of the political system if the system can change. This is citizen politics.

This viewpoint is pretty much endorsed by Robert Putnam in his analysis of changes to American society. The book which is cryptically entitled *Bowling Alone* is called this because whilst there has been a decline in bowling club membership, there has been no decline in the numbers of people who bowl socially within smaller *ad hoc* groups. The title of the book rather exaggerates the point that Putnam is trying to make but he paints a picture of disengagement from traditional politics through such measures as voting³, participation in political campaign activities⁴, and general community and political activities such as writing letters to a newspaper, signing petitions or participating in a demonstration.⁵ On the other side, however, is the increase in other forms of societal groups which is a similar point to the one made by Dalton. Religious organisations are growing in the US, people are involved in environmental movements, in the pro-life and pro-choice movements, in some forms of exercise and sports groups and in neighbourhood watches. Each of these groups can mobilise support for main stream politics. However, in many cases, the ways in which they mobilise support differ greatly from main stream politics. A particularly good example of how this type of mobilisation differs is within the opposing sides of the abortion issue. The pro-life movement is predominantly based around evangelical churches: participation in one form of group means that there is a concomitant support for another group so the pro-life movement does not have to actively seek supporters unlike the pro-choice movement. This group need to advertise for supporters and organise them themselves into groups as they are not able to piggyback onto the existing church network. Thus citizens are engaged and brought into

3 Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, New York, Touchstone, 2000. p. 32

4 Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, p. 39.

5 Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, pp. 41-47.

politics and political issues, but in different ways. Whilst Putnam's aim is not to prescribe how politicians need to respond to these new norms of society, this description of changing connections and mobilisation methods within society is a useful normative comparison to how the DPJ has had to and will have to diversify in order to gain support.

In this chapter, we shall show that the DPJ differs fundamentally from the old JSP because it is a party which has widened its political appeal through using different types of candidate, aiming to attract widening political support strata in order to counteract the falling support levels and declining voter turnout that has impeded the non-Government parties since the 1990s. It has realised that in order to be an effective political party that has any hope of breaking the 'habit' of the old JSP and actually becoming able to participate in government, or even form a government of their own, it needs to widen its appeal and use new methods of voter mobilisation. It needs to attract new types of supporter and devise new methods of attracting supporters in order to engage previously apolitical members of the electorate to engage or reengage with politics. Thus, Dalton's ideas of citizen politics, and how it has been necessary for politicians to engage the electorate in novel methods and respond to new issues and movements in the US, throws light on how the DPJ are assessing what needs to be done in Japan. The actual methods of reengaging/engaging the politically disengaged do not necessarily bear comparison between those described by Dalton and those used by the DPJ but the fundamental issue is that the DPJ has realised that the old method of opposition mobilisation, the labour unions, is no longer sufficient and that new methods need to be found. Admittedly, the DPJ still manages to get support from the old JSP labour union supporters. In the 2000 election, with the former DSP and JSP supporting Dōmei and Sōhyō unions combined inside Rengō and, for the first time, supporting *one* party in the DPJ, unions were able to provide more support than they had been able to for several years because of this new clarity and unity of the labour movement supporting one party.

Thus, in this chapter, we shall show that the DPJ has tried to learn the lessons of the 'new style' of politics that Dalton discusses and combine it with traditional labour union support. It

is this flexibility and wider perspective that defines their biggest difference to the JSP. Admittedly, this new flexibility is not necessarily a perspective that all politicians within the DPJ share. Indeed, the fact that not all politicians use these diversified methods of mobilisation is also not necessarily a problem. Some politicians within the DPJ who have come originally from the LDP (e.g. Hatoyama Yukio) or from the JSP (e.g. Yokomichi Takahiro) continue to use the methods of voter mobilisation they have always used, i.e. principally using their *kōenkai* and union support groups. The methods employed by politicians are mostly based upon their party backgrounds as mentioned above. The methods used will also have been influenced by the mentors and supporters of politicians who have been elected since 1996 and the formation of the DPJ and do not have any previous party links. However, the ‘younger’ a DPJ politician is (both in physical and political age), the more likely he is to use newer methods of attracting support such as linking up with local citizen groups and grass roots movements, using the Internet to express their views, setting up ‘interest’ based *kōenkai* style groups of their own, *as well as* using the labour unions. Also, campaigning within their constituency using policy and the DPJ manifesto as a means of attracting support is becoming more possible with the party’s increasing emphasis on policy formation. Fundamentally, diversification of methods of attracting support is the name of the game for younger, less experienced politicians.

These types of candidates can be described as being ‘inclusive’ candidates. In the days of the JSP, when left-wing politics were dominated by the labour unions, candidates were often former unionists, the type of candidate Stephen Johnson described as ‘exclusive’.⁶ They were more often than not male and middle aged. Their image was of little consequence as they would be elected through the organised vote of the unions. Now that the DPJ are doing their best to endorse these ‘inclusive’ candidates, it is taking into consideration its candidates’ experience, age, and personality. As discussed in the Okayama case study, Kawada Hidemasa was considered a good candidate as he was a socially-aware lawyer, who appeared on TV

⁶ Stephen Johnson, *Opposition Politics in Japan*, London, Routledge, 2000, pp 161-162.

through high-profile cases. Hata Tomoko was the candidate in Okayama District Five for the 2000 election. Despite being young and completely inexperienced as a politician, she was considered to be a good candidate for the district, an extremely rural district with an ageing population, as it was thought that her experience as a manager of an old-persons' care home and as a pharmacist would mean that not only could she relate to her electorate, but they would be able to relate to her.

The DPJ is thus trying to find candidates who are younger, more educated than its previous unionist candidates (who often got to their position by starting work in a factory or company), and can relate well to its constituents. It is also trying to find more female candidates. Mizushima Hiroko, lawyer who at the time she was elected was 34 years old, is a mother with two children, and was elected to the Diet for the DPJ from Miyagi Prefecture in 2000 is an example of the ideal type of candidate. She is the type of 'novel candidate' that attracts the apolitical or disengaged voter the best. She is also the type of candidate that has had no previous experience in politics and had no real political connections or supporters or links before being selected as a candidate. She is thus the type of candidate that has had to develop new and 'inclusive' methods of vote mobilisation and does not have any obvious factional allegiances within the DPJ as she was not involved in politics during the 1955 system. For this reason, it is now important to discuss what factions exist within the DPJ before turning to analysis of some of the new methods of vote mobilisation that have been employed by the party.

What groups and factions exist in the Democratic Party of Japan?

The DPJ has become quite factionalised. Factions have always been an inevitable part of Japanese politics but the DPJ factions in 2001 were beginning to appear more similar to the LDP factions based on loyalties, financial support, and support for leadership elections rather than the former JSP factions, which were based on ideological groupings.⁷ The size of the

⁷ See for discussion of factions within the JSP, pp.101-105, in J A A Stockwin 'The Japan Socialist Party: Resurgence After Long Decline' in Ronald J Hrebienar, *The Japanese Party System*, Second

DPJ's factions were discussed in Chapter Two so will just be analysed here for the impact they are having on the party.

The effects that factionalism has on vote mobilisation methods within the DPJ

The factions that have been described in Chapter Two means that there are quite different methods employed by different politicians when it comes to campaigning for elections within the party. No longer are mobilisation methods for the non-Government, main opposition party as limited as they were for its predecessor the JSP, and for the other former opposition party that has been absorbed into the DPJ, the DSP. The single non-transferable electoral system allowed for parties to be elected with limited 'attraction-capability' whereas the new electoral system requires them to have a wider number and range of political supporters (as discussed in Chapter Five) as so many more votes are needed to win a SMD compared to the bottom places of the old electoral system. The old system meant they could appeal to a limited range of voters and still be elected. In the JSP's and DSP's cases, they were able to be elected based upon their union support and needed little else. The LDP, on the other hand created *kōenkai* as has been discussed above and as long as its *kōenkai* were powerful in relation to the LDP candidates standing in the same district, the politician was ensured of a victory. However, as seen above, with the new electoral system, parties needed to have more diverse support in order to get elected. The limited support networks of labour unions and *kōenkai* were no longer going to be able to ensure a victory in the new system.

These old methods of mobilisation amongst the former JSP and LDP members of the DPJ are still being utilised to varying degrees of effectiveness. As discussed in the Okayama case study in Chapter Six, Ichii Jyunji predominantly used this method of campaigning even after moving to the DPJ. Yokomichi Takahiro of Hokkaido One, maintains his victories by relying on union support with little other methods of mobilisation. Hatoyama Yukio and Ozawa Ichiro, both former members of the LDP, rely on *kōenkai* so also manage to maintain their old

Edition, Colorado, Westview Press, 1992. The factions in the JSP have also been discussed in Chapter One.

1955 style of voter mobilisation. But as discussed above, when examining Diet members in the DPJ, there are many who have been elected since 1996, have no former party or faction leader, and as such have no previous allegiance or established support groups to rely upon. These members have had to find new methods of finding support.

Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter Five, the new electoral system means that even older more established members of the Diet need to find wider levels of support than they could rely upon during the 1955 system. Therefore, all Diet members of the DPJ, and in particular the younger ones, are being forced to find new supporters, new networks to tap into for support and new methods to attract these new supporters. Before assessing these new methods, we will turn to analysis made in 1980 of Kan Naoto's first campaign which can be understood as a trend setter for these new methods of mobilisation. We shall then turn to analysis of the new groups that sometimes DPJ members are trying to tap into to mobilise support. Finally, we shall analyse how DPJ Diet members are using the Internet as a form of political communication and mobilisation. We shall show that whilst all of these new innovative methods are being used across the party, they are predominantly being used by the younger, less established members. This shows that whilst the more established members have had to respond to the new electoral system and widen their mobilisation methods, it is predominantly the younger Diet members, who have no real established support and are having to create new support networks for themselves, that are being forced to be the most innovative.

These techniques used by younger politicians will be referred to as 'citizen politics' techniques. This term has been selected because of two reasons. Firstly, it comes from the theoretical idea developed by Russell J Dalton discussed above. He talks about the diversification of politics, the absorption of new issues and new organisations, the widening of the traditional party-centric methods of mobilization.⁸ However, these methods will also be described as citizen politics because this is the term which those within the DPJ, who are

8 Russell J. Dalton, *Citizen Politics. Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Chatham, New Jersey, Chatham House Publishers, 1996.

trying to use the Internet and tap into citizen movements and civil groups, use to describe their activities. Whilst Dalton and the DPJ see citizen politics as different things, there is a link between how citizen politics are perceived: both Dalton and the DPJ see citizen politics as a method of diversifying and widening their existing support levels and furthermore see it as the necessary response to the decline of existing mobilisation structures.

The forerunner of citizen politics within the DPJ?

Citizen politics is by no means a phenomenon happening across the whole of the DPJ as we will see below. Citizen politics is a style of politics that is being adopted by certain factions of the DPJ and is being increasingly adopted by new politicians in the party. Kan Naoto, who has been trying to gain votes from ordinary citizens without being dependent on labour unions since his first victory in the Double Election in 1980, can be partly seen as the trend setter of citizen politics.

Yukawa Norihiko, who was the campaign manager of Kan's first election in 1980, said that he conceptualised citizen politics through his experience in his first job on graduating from university. He joined with a friend and launched a magazine *PIA* which is a 'what's on' magazine in Tokyo. Today this magazine is extremely popular and is sold weekly. Yukawa described how they spent all day walking around newsagents and asking them to take ten copies to sell. They made a point of developing good relationships with their 'selling agents'. They targeted areas of Tokyo where people needed to find out at short notice what movies and concerts were on. Their contacts gradually snowballed and they soon managed to increase sales.⁹ It was through this personal relationship with their vendors that *PIA* became a success, and it was this strategy that Yukawa applied to citizen politics.

Yukawa's creation of a network of supporters that gradually snowballs as the idea becomes more popular is the approach that he sees is the most effective way to engender an increase of

⁹ Interview with Yukawa Norihiko, 31 March 2001.

DPJ supporters. If one can get citizen groups, or an environmental group to support the DPJ, this will bring along support. If a member of one of these groups is also connected to a Parent Teacher's Association (PTA) for example, it is likely that they could then express support for the candidate at their PTA meetings. This could then bring on new supporters who may be connected to other groups. This is the strategy that Yukawa adopted for Kan Naoto's first campaign in 1980.

In 1981, Purnendra Jain wrote an article about a new style of politics in Japan. He described Kan Naoto's attempts to get elected, before, and during, his successful 1980 campaign. Jain described how he had been active in the student protest movement and then had organised a citizens group called *shimin no kai* (Citizens Association). *Shimin no kai* campaigned for clean elections, the transparency of political finances and a rejection of large organisations in elections. He persuaded the famous feminist Ichikawa Fusae to stand as a candidate in the 1974 Upper House election and he was her campaign manager. She came second in the national constituency.

Kan himself stood in four elections before he was successful. Jain describes his electoral district (Tokyo 7 during the old SNTV system and Tokyo 18 under the new system) as being difficult and time consuming,

‘for they had to approach a large number of new voter[s] and a changing electorate during each election’.¹⁰

In 1977, Kan became closely involved with Eda Saburō and consequently joined his new party, Shakai Minshu Rengō (Shaminren), which was formed slightly before Eda's sudden death. He continued to fight elections, coming up with his funding through schemes such as *kan kabu* (shares in Kan – effectively small-scale donations of between 500 and 10,000 yen), and *kampa* (donations). He also placed limits on what he would spend, restricting it to one quarter of the money permitted by law. At the time, according to Jain, \$55,000 was allowed by law for a campaign in an urban area. However, at the same time there was a popular saying

¹⁰ Purnendra Jain, *Kan Naoto: Symbol of a new politics in Japan*. Unpublished document.

that in order to win a campaign 100 million yen was needed, which at the time was \$333,000. Kan used 4.5 million yen (around \$16,000 at the quoted exchange rate) which included the one million yen deposit that would be returned if he received the minimum required number of votes.

Kan used students and housewives as volunteers. He set up the *shiriai* system, whereby he asked people to ask five friends to do some favour for him. They then asked five people, and, as with *PIA*, the campaign soon snowballed. He also asked housewives connected to the campaign to paste up five posters near their houses. This would no longer be allowed by law, but Jain says that, at the time, it was effective and was a further example of the snowballing effect of many people each performing a small task.

Jain did not call these campaign attempts citizen politics, and instead labelled them ‘lively politics’, using the theme also discussed in Yukawa’s *Shimin seiji no nō hau*, that elections should be like festivals.¹¹ He contrasted ‘lively politics’ to ‘high politics’ and ‘interest politics’. The former was described as being ideologically based politics, which describes the JSP and ‘interest politics’ is the politics of protecting the interests of certain groups which describes both the LDP and JSP. According to Jain, ‘lively politics’ :

‘comes into focus mainly in the post-industrial-society, is related to the quality of life, pollution, environment, welfare measures, consumer problems, protection of nature and natural resources, participation in politics and decentralisation and administration.’¹²

It is in this respect that Jain probably overemphasised his assessment of Kan. ‘Citizen politics’ or ‘lively politics’ are more pragmatic than Jain has allowed his reader to believe. ‘Citizen politics’, whilst trying to bring in citizens connected with the groups mentioned by Jain, is essentially an attempt to maximise votes for a political party. It is also not solely about the

11 Unfortunately, Jain does not give the Japanese equivalent of ‘lively politics’. No similar type of phrase has ever been used in the presence of the author so there is no way of knowing to what Jain is referring. This could be a term that he has devised himself or it could be a term which was used by those participating in the mobilisation strategy and therefore could be Jain’s translation of ‘shimin senkyo’ (the term used by Yukawa Norihiro, Kan Naoto and Eda Satsuki) or another term.

12 Jain, *Kan Naoto: Symbol of a new politics in Japan*, p 19.

parties responding to voter's concerns and policy interests. Whilst this was probably the ideal of Kan Naoto, this style of politics has developed into a response to the drop in support of the electorate. However, Jain's concluding remarks are of significance. He writes:

'All said, there is no denying the fact that a new and healthy trend in Japanese urban politics is in the offing. But it is equally necessary for the opposition parties to create a pattern of activities appropriate to this lively and participatory politics. The new kind of trend that has been set by Kan Naoto in Japanese politics might go a long way in shaping the future course of elections in which the role of money is minimised and the process is based on closer and informal relationships between the voter and their representatives.'¹³

The new types of groups that the DPJ is trying to connect with. Citizen politics in action

A further elucidation of citizen politics is given by Robin M LeBlanc in *Bicycle Citizens*. This has been discussed above in the Introduction but is essentially the idea that women are likely to become involved in small scale, local movements to resolve such things as local environmental or educational problems.¹⁴ Unfortunately, LeBlanc found that as bicycle citizens become involved with voluntary work, their activities are likely to become less localised and amateurish as bureaucracy and rules are imposed. Groups begin to need more and more resources, which will often come from government funds. Receiving such funds means that the groups have to be aware of and work within more regulations and restrictions. An example of this is the movement which LeBlanc calls *Netto*.¹⁵ *Netto* comes from the English word 'network' and those involved with establishing it understand it as being a connected set of independent societies or organisations or clubs. LeBlanc became involved with *Netto* during her fieldwork in the food co-operative, Seikatsu Club in Nerima Ward, Tokyo during the early nineties. The political wing of Seikatsu Club was called *Netto* and principally consisted of women being elected to ward councils and their support groups in order to campaign for better school meals and for more organic farming to take place.

¹³ Jain, *Kan Naoto: Symbol of a new politics in Japan*, pp22-23.

¹⁴ Robin LeBlanc, *Bicycle Citizens*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 1999.

¹⁵ This organisation has also been described in the Introduction as it is the same group that Lam Peng-Er discusses in *Green Politics in Japan*, 1999.

LeBlanc does not discuss the connections of the citizen's groups analysed to mainstream politics. In fact, many of the DPJ are now attempting to 'tap into' these groups in order to extend their support networks. Politicians are using these groups as a method of increasing support because these movements which are more 'progressive' and often have aims and ambitions which the DPJ feel fit in well with its own policies and ideas.

The new type of DPJ politicians and Internet campaigning. A micro-study of Internet politics

In this next section, the DPJ's usage of the Internet will be examined in order to assess how the DPJ is changing. We shall also assess whether politicians show on their websites whether they are linked to the type of Non Profit Organisations (NPOs) such as *Netto* discussed above. Furthermore, this analysis of the DPJ's usage of the Internet will examine which websites are 'proactively' used as a means of campaigning. This analysis will be made on the premise that it is politicians who are younger and have less established networks of supporters who attempt to connect with NPOs and are more likely to use the Internet. More senior politicians (who were elected during the 1955 system) will have existing labour union support or *kōenkai* and as such do not have as much of a need to widen their networks of support utilising NPOs or use the Internet.

Furthermore, a politician's use of the Internet and e-mail has been selected as a good test of whether he uses the methods of 'citizen politics' which have been discussed in Chapter Six. This is because, as described above, it provides a politician with a cheap and easy method of making contact with his existing supporters and increasing the numbers of new supporters. There are other benefits to having websites. Search engines mean that a potential Diet member can be found by 'random' Internet surfers and the inclusion of such things as adverts for NPOs bring benefits to both the politician and the NPOs in terms of advertising their existence and aims. Nonetheless, much of the real reason for using the Internet is that it is a method for 'unknown' politicians to widen their networks of support. Of course, well known politicians are also using the Internet but their prior reputation is just enhanced by having the additional

form of communication method with their electorate. It is not for them such an intrinsically necessary or economical way of attracting supporters.

In July 2001, DPJ Diet members from the Lower House were assessed as to whether they had a website or not. 116 of 126 DPJ members had their own websites, which were independent from the party. Not all of these websites were effectively maintained or utilised. They were examined for some key features which were considered to indicate whether the politician was attempting to widen their support networks by using a website proactively and attempting to widen his potential catch of supporters through ‘citizen politics’.

In order to analyse how politicians were utilising the Internet, data were collated on the following points:

- Name of the Diet member utilising a website
- Constituency and Constituency type. Four classifications were established to categorize constituency type: Metropolitan for cities over 5 million residents, Urban, for cities such as Sendai and Tokyo and dormitory prefectures such as Chiba and Saitama, Semi-urban for constituencies which combine a city with rural parts of a constituency and rural for constituencies which are predominantly rural. We expected that ‘citizen politics’ were predominantly being carried out by politicians in urban and metropolitan districts where it is more difficult to mobilise voters through face to face contact.
- Election in which candidates won their seat; constituency elected Diet members or elected through the proportional representation blocs.
- Age of the candidate. We expected that younger politicians were more likely to use the Internet and ‘citizen politics’ techniques. This is because they are less likely to have links with the old JSP and labour unions. Also, candidates who had been selected since the formation of the DPJ were more likely to have been selected according to the image that the party wanted to portray of young, professional, attractive candidates. We expected also that constituency candidates would be younger than bloc candidates

as their ‘image’ is far more closely monitored by both the party, before they are selected as a candidate, and by the electorate at the time of the election.

- Number of previous electoral wins of a politician. We expected that politicians with fewer wins would have less of an organisation behind them and would therefore attempt to use citizen politics campaign methods as they are cheaper and require no initial contact with unions or other support networks. Also, politicians with a larger number of electoral wins would be more likely to have been elected before 1993 and therefore to have come from the DSP, JSP and have union backing, or from the LDP and have an established *kōenkai* and money.
- Former Party. On a similar vein to the number of previous electoral wins, we expected that politicians who had won their seat since the DPJ was formed, or who were part of Sakigake, were more likely to use ‘citizen politics’ methods of voter mobilization. Members who were members of the JSP and DSP would have union backing. Members of the Hatoyama and Hata factions could benefit from having a faction leader who had private wealth, in the case of the former, and a large LDP style support group for the latter. Both could be expected to guide their faction members in *kōenkai*-style techniques.

Each politician’s website was then analysed for some key features which are considered to be indicated that the candidate was undertaking a ‘citizen’ campaign rather than a union campaign. All websites were examined for around five minutes. When the relevant data were not immediately visible on the Home Page, or with simple and visible links to it, the feature was recorded as not existing. In this, it is felt that the author would be similar to the electorate who would not navigate a confusing or overly complex website. The features examined were as below:

- The most recent update on the site. This may include a daily or weekly diary, Diet reports, or photographs of events. We believe that updates once every fortnight can be considered sufficient for our purposes. Kan Naoto and Hatoyama Yukio set the standard for this by writing a diary on their website every day. If there has been no

update for over two weeks, the website was not classed as having frequent updates, as regular maintenance and additions to websites were thought to be an important facet of a useful website for campaigning purposes.

- The second feature of analysis is also a test of the politician's pro-activity. The point being checked here was evidence of an e-mail newsletter which the politician *sends out*. This could either have been a link to apply for this newsletter or a mention of this kind of newsletter. On many of the websites there was a feature by which the electorate can contact its Diet member, but we believe that this shows little evidence of the pro-activity of the politician. E-mails to a politician from the electorate could be ignored just as easily as they are responded to. In contrast to this, a newsletter *from* the politician *to* the electorate requires regular work for the Diet member and his team.
- The final two features assessed were whether or not there were obvious references on the site to either labour unions or NPOs and citizen groups. We did not expect there to be many websites with reference to unions, whereas links to NPOs are a central feature of a *shimin*, citizen supported campaign.

In summary, politicians were considered for the sake of this survey to be attempting 'citizen politics' if they updated their website at least once a fortnight or if they sent out an e-mail newsletter.¹⁶ The links on the website were indicative of the importance the candidate placed on different supporters such as unions or citizen's groups and thus suggest which type of method the politician predominantly uses when campaigning.

The Upper House candidates were not studied. Campaigning in these elections is different as many candidates do not come from a constituency *per se*. Whilst Internet campaigning in this type of situation should be more effective than old fashioned visiting and speeches, it is felt in

¹⁶ Some politicians have links to apply for their newsletter which is often monthly and is sent by post. Whilst this is good, this does not fulfil the real financial benefits of a citizen's campaign. E-mail is free to the sender and receiver, yet a newsletter requires considerable work, money and does not fulfil the environmental criteria of the DPJ. Furthermore, as Upper House districts are geographically larger than Lower House districts, web campaigning would seem to make more sense than in Lower House elections.

the party that Upper House candidates are not as adventurous in mobilising supporters as in Lower House elections.¹⁷

The Results

In July 2002 when this analysis was carried out there were a total of 126 DPJ Lower House Diet members. Of these, 78 (61.9%) were elected from constituencies and 48 (38.1%) were from proportional representation blocs. The average age of all the DPJ politicians in the House was 51 years and 6 months. The average number of electoral wins in the party was 2.45. Constituency members proved to be younger with an average age of 49 years and 7 months, and 54 years and 8 months for politicians from PR blocs. Politicians from the constituencies had a higher average of electoral wins than those in the blocs, 2.9 each as compared to 2.31. We would have expected constituency Diet members to be younger to fulfil the ‘image criteria’ discussed above. We explain this as being due to the presence of Hata Tsutomu with 11 wins and Hatoyama Yukio and Kan Naoto with five and seven wins respectively in the constituencies, which would have affected the average.

Table 7.1
The average age and electoral wins of DPJ candidates

	All DPJ Politicians		Constituency Politicians		PR Bloc politicians		Politicians using citizen politics techniques	
Age	51	years 6 months	49	years 7 months	54	years 8 months	47	years 9 months
Number of electoral wins	2.45		2.9		2.31		2.05	

In the constituencies there were 22 politicians who regularly updated their websites at least once a fortnight or sent an e-mail newsletter on a regular basis. Within the blocs, there were 12 politicians who did this. This amounts to a total of 34 which is 26.9% of the entire party in the Lower House. The average age of this group was 47 years and 8 months, which is lower than the average age of the party. Of Lower House members in constituencies with a well used

¹⁷ Telephone conversation with Yukawa Norihiko, March 20, 2002. This is a surprising conclusion as Yukawa is the policy advisor of a Upper House councillor, Eda Satsuki, who is one of the leading proponents of citizen campaign methods.

website, the average age was 44 years and 8 months as opposed to those from blocs who had an average age of 53 years and 6 months. Thus, within constituencies, these methods were used by younger politicians, whereas, in the blocs, older candidates seemed to be maximising their support networks in this way. The average number of electoral wins of politicians utilising 'citizen politics' was 2.05 which again confirms our hypothesis that it would be less established, 'younger' (in terms of experience) politicians who would use the Internet more. Of the 22 Diet members using these techniques in constituencies (it is not possible to analyse the exact campaigning area of PR bloc candidates), eight were from metropolitan constituencies and a further seven were from urban constituencies which amounted to 68% of the total. This has confirmed our expectations that 'citizen politics' within the DPJ would also be an urban phenomenon.

We also analysed the numbers of politicians who updated their websites daily. This requires a huge commitment from politicians who already commute between their constituency and Tokyo, (although by 2002 their ability to log onto their own website through a mobile phone has made this task more portable and flexible¹⁸). A total of 14 politicians updated their website daily, which is 11.1% of the total number. Of these, four were PR politicians and ten were constituency politicians, which confirms our expectations that constituency politicians would be more concerned about 'citizen politics' and developing their own image vis a vis the electorate. However, this still shows a high proportion (28%) who were elected from a regional bloc who were concerned about their campaigning techniques. Of the ten politicians from constituencies, eight were written by politicians with urban or metropolitan districts, with only Hatoyama Yukio of Hokkaidō Three and Hiraoka Hideo of Yamaguchi Two writing daily from rural or semi-urban constituencies. Hiraoka is a 'one-time-win' politician and as such could be expected to use 'citizen politics' strategies. The four PR elected politicians were predominantly from urbanised regional blocs (Minami-Kanto, Tokyo and Kyushu).

¹⁸ Japan introduced Third generation mobile phone technology in 2001 which facilitates using mobile phones to write and receive complete e-mails.

We shall now turn to analysis of the links of the websites. Of the 116 personal websites, seven had links or mentions of labour unions. We expected there to be very few mentions of unions and we also expected no website with a mention of a union, being updated frequently in the manner we had associated with ‘citizen politics’. This is because politicians who used union support have less need to diversify and modernise their campaigning methods. To a certain extent this prediction was confirmed. Of the seven with links to unions, two only had the website designed and provided by the DPJ and had no personal site like the majority of DPJ Diet members. Three more had websites with no recent updates. They merely gave contact information, a biography and little else. Of the remaining two, one, in Ibaragi Five gave a weekly update and Fukuoka Nine gave a daily update. These politicians obviously had a philosophy of maintaining support from all quarters. Fukuoka Nine, Kitahashi Kenji, was a former DSP member and had four wins behind him which suggests that he probably had sufficient support from Rengō. Similarly, Ohata Akihiro was a former JSP member with four wins behind him. Both these men were using every possible method to gain support. However, one feature which unites all of these politicians with references to unions on their websites is that they had a high average of election wins of 3.71 which is considerably higher than the party average of 2.45. Of the seven, three were formerly connected with the DSP, one to the JSP, two had unknown party origins (they had not declared it in the Diet members’ handbook) and one, Ozawa Sakihito of Yamanashi One, had been in Sakigake and had three wins behind him. (There is no explanation for this discrepancy, since Sakigake is not normally associated with its links to the unions.)

It is very difficult to establish the extent to which Diet members have links with NPOs so this is why analysis of this was carried out through websites. It is surprising that so few DPJ members had NPO details on their sites as the figure is only slightly higher than references to labour unions. Of course, no mention of a connection with an NPO, does not necessarily imply that the Diet member has no connections with one but it was expected that younger, less established Diet members would have utilised NPOs to widen their support and would have shown links back to the organisation on their website. 17, or 13% of DPJ politicians had

references to non-profit organisations (NPOs). The majority of these politicians come from urban or metropolitan constituencies, confirming the image portrayed by Lam Peng-Er and Robin LeBlanc in their descriptions of citizen groups inside urban environments. Examples of the NPOs that are mentioned on sites are an organisation, Renk, which is concerned with poverty in North Korea on Nakagawa Masaharu of Mie District Two's site¹⁹ and Edano Yukio's site has a lot of information on the HIV AIDS scandal which resulted from the Green Cross Pharmaceutical company not heat-treating Factor 8 for haemophiliacs correctly and has links to HIV/AIDS charities.²⁰

A further organisation which younger DPJ politicians seemed to mention frequently on their websites was Matsushita Seikei Juku. This is an organisation which has been designed to create the politicians of the future and enhance the discussion and implementation of policy in Japanese politics. There were 16 websites which had reference to Matsushita Juku which indicates that this organisation has influence within the DPJ.²¹

In summary, the DPJ does seem to differ from the JSP in terms of the candidates that it is putting forward and the means by which these are connecting with the electorate. Before moving to analyse how the DPJ has changed in its approach to ideology and policy making, the differences between the old JSP and the new DPJ are succinctly described in Table 7.2. DPJ Lower House Diet members in 2002 (elected in 2000) are considerably younger and have less experience in the Diet in comparison to the JSP Diet members elected in the Lower House election of 1993. The DPJ is younger and fresher than its predecessor and as discussed above is diversifying its mobilisation techniques, both through necessity to stem declining support but also as a way to attract more of the electorate to support the party.

19 www.masaharu.gr.jp as seen on the site on 23/01/2003

20 www.edano.gr.jp as seen on the site 12/02/03

21 An example of a Diet member mentioning Matsushita Seikei Juku is www.genkil.com/ as seen on 22/01/2003.

Table 7.2: Average ages and number of wins of JSP members elected in 1993 and DPJ members elected in 2000.

	JSP July 1993	DPJ June 2000	DPJ June 2000, PR constituency winners only	DPJ June 2000, Single-Member District Winners
Average age of Diet members	60.3	51 years, 6 months	54 years, 8 months	49 years, 7 months
Average previous electoral wins of Diet members	4	2.45	2.31	2.92

We shall now turn to analyse the image that the DPJ has attempted to create in terms of policy issues and leadership. This is an important way of the DPJ distancing itself from some of the problems that have been discussed in Chapters One, Two and Three, of the JSP’s inability to compromise on policy issues and to create a coherent and attractive image for the party.

Party Image: Success of leadership

The DPJ has managed to maintain a strong party identity and image partly through having a leadership which the public clearly relate to. On the formation of the DPJ in 1996, the two main leaders were Hatoyama Yukio and Kan Naoto. Kan Naoto had become a high profile ‘good guy’ of politics in 1996 when he has exposed the problem mentioned above of the HIV AIDS and Green Cross Pharmaceuticals scandal to the world. This meant that he was considered to be a hero of the common people. His entry into the DPJ meant that the party had an instantly identifiable and popular figure at its head.

Hatoyama Yukio who was Joint Party Leader was nearly as well known. He came from a long-standing political family. His grandfather had been Prime Minister at the beginning of the 1955 system and he was the fourth generation in his family to be a Diet member. Whilst not as popular a figurehead as Kan, he was nonetheless considered to be suave and

sophisticated. Together they created a leadership team that attracted voters. After sharing the leadership between 1996-1998, Hatoyama took over as sole leader until 2002 when Kan became Leader.²² It is clear that the DPJ were conscious of the benefits a popular leadership would give it vis a vis the electorate and it made sure that it utilised it.

Party Image: Ideology and the Introduction of Policy Manifestos

The DPJ has also become extremely concerned about creating the correct image with its policy platform and party ideology. Ever since the formation of the party in 1996, the DPJ has published a manifesto. Furthermore, its initiative in ground-breaking this practice within Japanese electoral politics meant that the other parties have followed suit. The 1996 manifesto was a weakly defined one page document which listed ten aims of the party as has been described in Chapter Two. By 2002, the DPJ's manifesto was a 60 page document which clearly states the party's intentions with regards to the bureaucracy, economic policy, education the environment etc.²³ This clear definition of the party's policy aims has also meant that the DPJ has managed to handle well difficult policy problems that the party has been in contention with other parties about in the Diet. It must be noted though, that the party's discussion of the Constitution in the 2000 manifesto was left deliberately vague. The reason for this will be discussed below.

Party Image: Changing Ideology

One of the main features of the DPJ in comparison to the JSP is that the party has been able to maintain flexibility when it comes to party ideology and policy issues and has not been as dogmatic or as rigid as the JSP was before it. This adaptability is expressed in the following two pieces of legislation that the DPJ was able to compromise on in terms of policy and

²² It is interesting to note that whilst not within the time frame of this study, the new leader of the DPJ who was chosen in May 2004 after Kan was forced to resign after a scandal concerning unpaid taxes. The new leader was an unknown figure called Okada Katsuya but he also became extremely popular because like Kan, he was jovial and outspoken. He also dressed well and became a popular leader of the opposition.

²³ www.dpj.org.jp/manifesto/ Site was viewed on 30 August 2002.

ideology and organisation to get passed. For the 1998 Non-Profit Organisation Bill (NPO), Hieiridantai hō, the DPJ was prepared to accept other parties' demands in order to be able to get something for itself out of the Bill. For the 1999 Hinomaru and Kimigayo legislation, the party was flexible enough to stave off a potentially difficult party ideological split by allowing all members to vote freely of party demands and restrictions.

1998 Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) Bill (Hieiridantai hō)

On 4 March 1998, the NPO legislation, which had been first mooted within the Diet in 1996, was passed. This was a Bill that was in line with the liberal attitudes of the left-of-centre faction of the DPJ. Originally an LDP proposal, this private-member's Bill was eventually pushed through the Diet by the DPJ, who saw the strengthening of NPOs as an important facet of its new policy of creating networks with citizen groups. From 1996 the Bill was stymied in permanent committees with the definition of whom it would apply to (i.e. the connection to political organisations it would be allowed to have, the DPJ only wanted to limit it to the candidate but the JCP and Kōmeitō wanted to limit all connections to politics) and what tax benefits would be given to those who were designated as being NPOs. Eventually, the DPJ gave in to the other parties' demands on the basis that by merely strengthening NPOs and allowing them the status of a limited company would ameliorate any contact the party could have with citizen movements. This allowed the Bill to be passed in the Upper House and it became law on 1 December 1998.

The Bill to legalise the use of the National Flag and Anthem, August 1999.

This Bill is one of the most contentious bills to pass the Japanese Diet since the UNPKO Bill passed in June 1992. It allowed for the Hinomaru Flag and Kimigayo National Anthem to be legalised within Japanese law. This was a hugely contentious bill for the opposition parties and in the July 22 1999 vote in the Lower House, the DPJ made it a free-vote for its members, as the party could not come to any consensus on how it would vote for the Bill. The Bill split

the party in two with 45 members voting for it and 46 voting against it.²⁴ On the 9 August hearing in the Upper House, once again the DPJ made it a free vote for its members and once again, some members voted for the Bill, augmenting the numbers of government supporters, allowing the Bill to pass the Upper House with ease. This support for the Bill led a Japan Times columnist at the time to declare:

“Until last year, there was rationality in Japanese Politics...But this year, things went awry”.²⁵

Both of these pieces of legislation suggest that in comparison to the JSP and the opposition parties of the 1955 system, the DPJ have been able to maintain coherence within the party despite major and controversial differences within the party. Whilst these fundamental and important differences were not ignored and were allowed to be expressed in 1999, the party seems to be able to defend and value the party's coherence over ideological difference.

Party Image: The DPJ has maintained coherence despite being formed from different parts.

The DPJ, like Shinshintō, which was formed in 1994 and broke up in 1998, is a party which was formed from the break up of other parties. Nonetheless, the DPJ has managed to maintain a party coherence as indicated by policy issues such as the National Flag and Anthem legislation of 1999. However, the composite parts of the DPJ are many and varied and the party absorbed politicians from the right by taking the Hatoyama and Hata groups and from the left by taking the Yokomichi group. So why has the party managed to stay together despite what could be seen as an inauspicious background which is very similar to Shinshintō? Shinshintō did well in the polls for four years but imploded in 1997 as first Kōmeitō left and then the composite parts broke up. Why did the DPJ manage to survive compared to Shinshintō? Firstly, the DPJ did not have the idiosyncratic and well-organised Kōmeitō as part of it which was one of the reasons for the instability of Shinshintō. But the coherence of the DPJ has to be fundamentally ascribed to the fact that the party seems to want to stay together and believes in compromise to keep itself as one functioning unit. As the party has become

²⁴ *Asahi Shinbun*, 23 July 1999.

²⁵ Tada Minoru, *Japan Times*, 30 July 1999.

larger, it has become stronger, which is a difficult feat to maintain within Japanese factional politics.

Nedelman's conflict integration dialectic model.

In the Introduction, the conflict integration model was discussed. Nedelman suggested that this was a strategy which aims to prevent problems occurring within a party by understanding the importance of party identity and image and this being maintained at both levels of the party. Individual politicians work at their individual level to gain support and work with the electorate. At the same time, it is also important that the leadership of the party is also aware of the overall image and policies of the party.

This model seems to be a good way to understand the structure and strategy of the DPJ. Individual politicians are linking with NPOs, labour unions, and their own *kōenkai* style groups. Simultaneously, the party is also aware of the 'overall' image of the party. Such debates as the national anthem and flag in August 1999 were made free votes so that the party 'controlled' the differing views and managed to show that despite conflicting views, there was an overall coherence to the party and uncontrolled conflict could be avoided. Similarly, the DPJ's attempts in 1996 to 'vet' the Diet members who joined the party and the recent push to write manifestos for elections are all indicators of the party's attempt to control the overall party from above. Individual Diet members have their own methods of creating their identity but the party is also striving to maintain its own identity which it can also impose on its members when the party's well being requires it.

Party Image: Success breeding success?

Thus, so far, in this chapter we have shown that the DPJ is a party which has diversified and widened its appeal compared to its predecessor, the JSP. It has diversified methods of voter mobilisation and policy attitudes and organisational structures. By 2000, as is seen in Table 7.3., these changes seemed to have rewarded it in elections. The DPJ had clearly managed to take a good proportion of the seats in the election. The test for the DPJ would therefore be for

it to continue to break, or even crash through the ‘glass-ceiling’ of JSP won seats which averaged 24.1% of the total number of Diet seats during the thirteen elections held in the 1955 system. In the 2001 Upper House election, the DPJ did actually lose a seat in comparison to 1998 when it took 27. This was the first time the party had not increased seats in an election but was not really a significant drop.

Table 7.3: The percentage of the seats taken by each party in House of Representatives elections, 1983-2000

	1983	1986	1990	1993	1996	2000
LDP	48.9%	58.6%	53.7%	43.6%	47.8%	48.5%
JSP	21.9%	16.6%	26.6%	13.7%	3%	0.3%
DPJ					10.4%	26.5%

Compared to the other new parties that were created between 1992 and 1998, the DPJ has become the longest surviving party. Despite the fact that it changed from the Old DPJ to the New DPJ upon its enlargement in 1998, the party fundamentally was the same and just absorbed new members. Thus by 2002, the DPJ is 6 years old and had ‘out survived’ the previously longest lasting party created in the 1990s, Shinshintō, which survived from April 1994 until December 1997. So, the DPJ seems to have become increasingly successful. It managed to take a higher proportion of the available seats and has remained in tact longer than other parties. Success does indeed seem to breed success.

Conclusion

We have seen in this chapter that the shift from the Japan Socialist Party to the Democratic Party of Japan has meant the main left-of-centre opposition party in Japan has diversified as a means of responding to the LDP’s continuing success and the new ideological, social and institutional framework that the party has to work within. In order to respond to the new realities that the 1990s brought, the DPJ as the inheritor of the JSP main support has had to find support beyond the traditional confines of labour unions. It has done this by attracting younger candidates, has tapped into networks of NGOs and citizen groups and has tried to use new forms of communication techniques in order to facilitate connections with its electorate. Nonetheless, the DPJ has managed to maintain a coherent party structure which includes

candidates who do not utilise these new methods. The former LDP and JSP candidates have continued to use their *kōenkai* and labour union support as they did during the 1955 system.

A further important change that the DPJ seems to have made is that it has created a workable party leadership and structure. The party leaders are well known and have a clear identity. The conflict integration dialectic model is a useful tool of analysis for the party because it emphasises that whilst the Diet members within the DPJ do have autonomy to gather support from many more sources than the old JSP did, the DPJ is still careful to maintain party control over major policy issues and the 'identity' and 'image' of the party.

The DPJ is thus a party which has responded to a changing environment and has shown flexibility to adapt to the different 'parts' the party now consists of. The shift from old socialists to new democrats has effectively resulted in the diversification of Japan's main opposition party. This process took nearly ten years to happen and to result in a stable opposition party but it seems to have been successful as the new Democrats are the longest lasting and most successful of the new parties that have been created since 1992 and look set to become even stronger.

Conclusion

At the beginning of this thesis, we suggested that, within the substantial changes that have affected Japanese politics in the past ten years, the parties which have experienced the most long-term change have been the parties of the left. In 1993, when the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) lost control of the Government for the first time in nearly 38 years, it seemed as if the political world had changed for ever. The LDP had split, with some its most influential faction's members forming parties that competed against it in the General Election. A coalition government followed which included all the opposition parties apart from the Japan Communist Party. This government managed to pass electoral and political reform legislation before breaking up owing to internal divisions. A minority opposition government was formed, which lasted for approximately two months before the previously unthinkable partnership of the LDP and JSP formed a government together. It was this coalition government that paved the way for the final effects of the changes which 1993 wrought.

As a result of managing to get back into the seat of government, the LDP ensured that its split in 1993 and its ten month period away from government would not have any long-term effects on the party. Many politicians who had defected from the party began to trickle back in the period 1994-1996. When, one of the new parties, Ozawa Ichirō's Shinshintō, broke up at the end of 1997, many defectors returned to the home of the LDP. The LDP thus managed to return to within striking distance of its former glory, with a few notable differences. Firstly, the party did lose some long-term politicians, as Ozawa remained outside the party in Jiyūtō (Liberal Party) and then the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). Secondly, the LDP remains without a majority in the Upper House and consequently had to form coalitions to get a majority in both Houses of the Diet.¹

¹ They formed a coalition with various groups of former LDP politicians Jiyūtō (who were part of Ozawa's Shinshintō), before forming a coalition with the tiny party Hoshutō, (Conservative Party). The Kōmeitō were also part of these last two coalitions.

In contrast to this, the changes that the left-wing parties have seen in the past ten years have been far greater. The JSP was the largest opposition party in 1989 and had a majority in the Upper House. It split in 1996 and the majority of its members joined the new Democratic Party of Japan. Furthermore, the left has suffered a decline in support and funding from its traditional partners, the labour union movement. The ideological divide, the authoritarian – libertarian cleavage that Watanuki Jōji described as the ‘cultural cleavage’, which divided the Japanese electorate according to its views on the Constitution and defence related issues, has declined as a cleavage-creating issue and the left has had to redefine the debate on the issue of defence.² Finally, because of these institutional, organisational and ideological factors, the left have been forced to re-evaluate the methods by which it recruits the electorate to support its party. The change of the left has been deep and long-standing and this thesis has examined the reasons for these changes.

It has examined these changes by asking two questions. Firstly, we asked what factors caused the left to realign. Secondly, we have asked how the changes that have occurred have manifested themselves. Before answering these questions, we discussed the linkages between the JSP and DPJ and showed that the DPJ has inherited most of the political role and space of the JSP.

Richard Rose and Thomas Mackie say that it is important for a party constantly to change and reassess its internal and external environment, if it is to remain successful.³ In Chapters Two and Three, we showed that the JSP was not able to do this. There was internal dissent about what its external role should be; whether it should be a party which desired and attempted to win elections, or whether it was merely a party which performed a check balance on the LDP.

² Chapter by Watanuki Jōji from Scott C Flanagan, *et al.*, *The Japanese Voter*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1991.

³ Richard Rose and Thomas T. Mackie, 'Do Parties Persist or Fail? The Big Trade -off Facing Organizations' in Kay Lawson and Peter H. Merkl *When Parties Fail. Emerging Alternative Organizations*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1988.

The party was also unable to respond to the needs of the electorate, who no longer wished to support a party which dogmatically refused to reassess the Constitution. The First Gulf War made the electorate realise that Japan needed to consider its future international role, yet the party did not see that. It is parties such as this that Rose and Mackie suggest are destined to decline.

Peter Mair discussed the implications of 'political space' when a party disappears.⁴ He found that ideological blocs tend to continue to gain a similar amount of support, and that even if a new party appears, it will remain locked within an ideological bloc and thus inherit the support of a failed or disappearing party. We believe that this is what has happened with the change from the JSP to the DPJ. Rose and Mackie discussed what tends to happen to this kind of failing party. They suggest four possible options, ranging from continuance of the *status quo* to the party disappearing completely. In the middle of these options is the position whereby a party disappears or declines in some form but has its ideological mantle taken over by another party. This is the pattern that best explains the example of the change from the JSP to the DPJ. The ideological mantle of the JSP has been partly handed over to the DPJ, but as the JSP is still in existence, it has saved the issue of non-revision of the Constitution to be its *raison d'être*. But, the DPJ has inherited some of the roles and ideological tendencies of the JSP. The DPJ is the main opposition party. The party has a pro-reform, liberal agenda. Nonetheless, it has no clear position on the Constitution and it is on this issue that the DPJ differs from the JSP most. Half of the party was opposed to the legalisation of the national anthem and flag in August 1999 and the party's position on the Constitutional revision debate is one of cautious discussion, with no assumption that revision should or should not happen.

We have thus shown that realignment did take place within the Japanese left and that the JSP and DPJ are connected, but what factors caused this to happen?

⁴ Peter Mair, *Party System Change*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997.

In European democracies, we found that variables which are consistent with changes in Japan, have affected political realignment. Italy changed its electoral system in the same year as the Japanese changed theirs. Consequently, Berlusconi's Forza Italia has managed to dominate the political system. The move of the British Labour Party away from the trade unions has influenced both policy-making and the financial health of the party. Bettino Craxi and the Partito Socialista Italiano (PSI) dropped their socialist baggage in the 1980s, similar to the way the Labour Party dropped its commitment to nationalisation and nuclear disarmament to attract the electorate.

We believe there are four major issues which have affected the Japanese left in particular and Japanese politics in general since the beginning of the nineties. Firstly, the electorate has become disenchanted with politics and some have stopped voting, resulting in a large increase of the numbers of non-aligned voters. (Chapter One) This has affected parties across the whole political spectrum. Voters have also changed their attitudes towards the issue of the Constitution and defence which hit the JSP, but also makes it difficult for the DPJ to articulate its position on the issue. (Chapter Three). The left-wing parties' mobilisation techniques were particularly hard hit by a decline in the 'power' of the labour union movement. Also, labour unions no longer needed to rely upon the left-wing parties as they now have their own links to the bureaucracy and LDP policy makers. Finally all parties have had to reassess their campaign methods and type of candidate because of the new electoral system, a system we have shown to have hit the opposition parties particularly hard.

In Chapter One we saw that there is a disillusionment and dissatisfaction amongst the electorate vis a vis party politics in comparison to the 1955 system. Levels of voting and partisan support have declined significantly. This was the result of the voter's growing *ennui*, disillusionment, and distrust about politics which has gradually increased during the nineties. This has created a crisis of political mobilization across the whole political spectrum.

In Chapter Three, we analysed in greater detail why the JSP lost the support of the electorate. The traditional ideology of the JSP, based on preservation of the Constitution and non-recognition of the SDF, had gradually declined in its relevance, particularly since the First Gulf War highlighted the need for Japan to question its position in the post-Cold War order. Whilst the public had been aware of the JSP's doctrinaire nature for some time, the First Gulf War proved to be a turning point and public opinion polls show that the Japanese were increasingly tired of the party's inability to reform and were, on the whole, only voting for it because they were trying to make a protest vote against the LDP. We showed that the JSP lost support in three stages. Firstly, during the First Gulf War, the party lost its 'soft supporters' who were frustrated that the JSP did not try and be more constructive. Secondly, some 'hard supporters' felt betrayed when Murayama decided to abandon the JSP's traditional stance on defence issues to accommodate the LDP and to maintain the JSP/LDP/Sakigake coalition by recognizing the Self Defence Forces and the Japan-US security treaty. (Some 'hard supporters' however, did feel that it was worth even this compromise in order for the JSP to participate in Government.) In 1996, the JSP also lost support when the leadership of the JSP/LDP/Sakigake coalition returned to the LDP and the hope that the JSP could achieve anything declined considerably. Finally, of course, the JSP also lost support when the DPJ meant the electorate had a choice of parties within the left-wing bloc.

The extent to which the ideological problem of the Constitution remains such a significant and controversial issue in Japan is reflected in the fact that the DPJ, owing to the diversity of its members, has yet to clarify its position on the controversial issues. Nonetheless, even though the debate has moved on to a more ill-defined and vague position than before the early nineties, the public now accepts this as inevitable. In this sense, the DPJ has proved to be flexible and adaptive and to move with the electorate to a greater degree than the JSP. It has also been a defence mechanism against the party splitting because as long as it does not define its policy, neither side will feel it cannot be part of the party anymore. Similarly, as long as it does not define a policy, it is less likely to alienate potential voters.

The changes to the labour union organization which we described in Chapter Four have further worsened the crisis of mobilization on the Japanese left. Firstly we showed that the unions have managed through the creation of Rengō to gain access to the government and bureaucracy. This meant that the unions had less incentive to continue to support the left-wing parties in their traditional symbiotic relationship of access to government in return for financial and mobilisational support. We then showed that in order to fulfil a dream of corporatism, the unions merged under one umbrella organisation and attempted to unify the left-wing opposition parties and create a united party or, at the least, electoral coalitions. With the emergence of an enlarged opposition party in 1998, the old Democratic Socialist Party and the JSP have become united for the first time since 1960. As a result, some of the problems about which party unions support, have been alleviated. But this has been tempered by the fact that union membership is lower than ever before. This has meant that there are fewer members for unions to mobilise in political support activities. Furthermore, it has been suggested that union members used to be able to mobilise their entire families but this family mobilisation capacity is also declining. Once again the Japanese left has suffered from a crisis of mobilisation.

The final reason we believe that the Japanese left has suffered a crisis of mobilisation was discussed in Chapter Five. The new electoral system was shown to be difficult for the opposition, as it has meant that weaker candidates have to fight against candidates in their own party because of the problems of the *sekihairitsu* system. Also, in the single-member-districts, opposition party members have to compete one-on-one against LDP politicians, who probably have access to far greater levels of financial and strategic support. Despite this, the new electoral system seems to have influenced the DPJ to break away from traditional methods of mobilising the vote which are declining anyway, and to investigate new strategies, thereby bringing it into more contact with the electorate. This has been a positive influence on the party, as it has forced it to innovate and listen to the electorate more than ever before.

Our second question was concerned with how the realignment has manifested itself. We believe there to be a significant change in the mobilisational methods which the DPJ is developing, which have come as a response to this crisis of declining support.

Watanuki Jōji and Tani Satomi have both pointed out that an increase and introduction of mobilisation and grass-roots techniques would be an important and necessary change for the party. Pogintke stressed that the survival of a party is entirely dependant on successful linkage, but questioned whether this should be linkage in the sense of direct linkage, or a link formed through knowledge and appearance of the party through different forms of media? Political scientists have discussed the importance of party leaders and the image of parties in the world of information technology and mass media.⁵ Nedelman said that successful mobilisation of the electorate requires this successful leadership image but it also requires increased contact at the bottom of the party at the grass-roots level between electorate and party.

We have shown that the new mobilisation attempts by the DPJ are an example of this grass-roots contact between politics and the electorate and an attempt to clarify the identity, structures and organisation of the party from the top down as Nedelman suggests. The party is trying to establish new support for itself by breaking away from its inherited past from the JSP, of reliance on labour unions, and is trying to create a new image, both through the successful leadership and through increased politician/electorate contact at the grass-roots level. The DPJ are attempting to follow the Nedelman model of both a leadership with a positive image and improved grass-roots networking. This is what we refer to as 'citizen politics'. The DPJ is attempting to 'cast its net wider' than it used to. New methods of contact are used, such as e-mail and the Internet. The party is also trying to establish links with other liberal groups who are likely to sympathise with the main policy aims of the party.

⁵ Russell J. Dalton, *Citizen Politics. Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, Chatham, New Jersey, Chatham House Publishers, 1996 (Second Edition),

This is a system that is by no means used across the whole of the party, yet is an important attempt to change the methods of political recruitment and to alleviate the flow of decreasing partisan support. We have shown that it is being increasingly used by young politicians who have none of the organized support of their elders in the party who have come from the JSP and DSP and have union-linkage. These techniques are also predominantly used by younger Diet members who do not have existing support networks.

So the new DPJ differs from the old JSP because it is a party with a wider appeal and broader aims. It is a party which is committed to developing policy beyond the confines of the 'constitutional cleavage' and is attempting to overcome the problems that disengagement of the electorate, the new electoral system and changing labour union support have wrought upon the party. In conclusion, in comparison to the JSP, it is a party which is more dynamic and proactive and is trying hard to increase its chances of one day having a sufficient majority to form a government.

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Arakawa Miki	DPJ Party Worker	April 9 2001
Aya Daisuke	Okayama DPJ Party Worker	July 12 2000 August 23 2000 April 5 2001
Den Hideo	Diet member	April 26 2000
Eda Satsuki	Member of the Diet (DPJ)	December 27 1999 September 12 2000
Eda Yoichi	Eda's Satsuki's secretary	April 9 2001
Furukawa Motohisa	Member of the Diet (DPJ)	September 28 2000
Haba Yorisaburō	City Council DPJ Representative	September 6 2000
Hata Tomoko	DPJ Candidate in Okayama	Various conversations through summer of 2000
Hatoyama Yukio	Leader of the DPJ	July 29 2000
Himei Shigeru	Brother-in-Law of Kan Naoto, Okayama DPJ supporter and medical doctor	August 5 2000 September 7 2000 April 4 2001
Himei Yumiko	Okayama Prefectural Representative	August 15 2000
Honda Hirao	Secretary to Edano Yukio and former Sakigake Party worker	September 13 2000
Ichii Akiko	Ichii Junji's office worker	Conversations through Autumn 1999
Ichii Junji	Former Diet member	August 9 2000

Iguchi Masako	DPJ Party Worker	April 9 2001
Ishida Mie	Member of the Diet (DPJ)	September 7 2000
Kaieda Banri	Member of the Diet (DPJ)	April 20, 2000
Kaifu Toshiki	Former Prime Minister	April 18 2000
Kan Naoto	Secretary-General of the DPJ	July 25 2000
Katō Mutsuki	Son-in-law of Katō Mutsuki	September 7 2000
Kawada Hidemasa	Candidate for DPJ Okayama	August 6 2000
Kiguchi Kyoko	Former DPJ candidate	July 27 2000
Kurotani Kōyoshi	Former Ichii Campaign manager	March 26 2001
Kusakari Takayuki	Okayama Prefectural Diet member and campaign manager for DPJ.	September 6 2000
Mamiya Yukio	Rengō employee	July 28 2000
Masuo Kazuhiro	DPJ Party Worker and former Sakigake employee.	September 12 2000
Mizuya Minoru	Former JSP Diet Member	March 29 2000
Mori Nobuko	Former JSP Diet Member	September 6 2000
Morimoto Sakae	Current Chair of Rengō	April 11 2000
Morimoto Testuma	Okayama Prefectural Diet Member and Former Rengō Chair	April 6 2001
Motobayashi Toshihiro	Employee of NTT Workers Union and campaign manager for Nakagiri	July 18 2000

Murakami Itaru	Former Rengō Chair	April 4 2000
Nakagiri Shingō	Former DPJ Okayama Diet member	August 14 2000
Nakahara Naruo	Okayama, Town Council Representative For DPJ	September 15 2000
Nakayama Ichirō	DPJ Party worker	September 11 2000
Ogame Yukio	Okayama DPJ Supporter and former Eda Satsuki's Campaign Manager	July 12 2000
Okamoto Kazuko	Chair of Okayama Nikkyoso and former Chair of Okayama Nikkyoso women's group at the time of Mori Nobuko's campaign	September 6 2000
Sasano Teiko	DPJ Member of the Diet	July 26 2000
Satō Toyoko	Former member of JSP Okayama and Member of Nikkyoso	April 7 2000
Takagi Hiroshi	Aichi Prefectural Diet Member	July 31 2000
Takahara Katsuya	Former Rengō candidate and lawyer	July 18 2000
Takayanagi Hideki	Jichiro employee and election co-ordinator	September 13 2000
Tanaka Noriyoshi	Former Okayama Prefectural Diet member	January 22 2000
Tanimura Keisuke	Former JSP Member of the Diet	September 18 2000
Yamagishi Akira	Former Chairman of Rengō	September 12 2000
Yamaguchi Jirō	Japanese Political Scientist	June 21 2000
Yokomichi Takahiro	Deputy Leader of the DPJ	July 26 2000

Yokoyama Izumi	Campaign manager for Kawada campaign and former JSP party worker.	January 28 2000 March 29 2000
Yoshida Takafumi	Analyst, <i>Asahi Shinbun</i> Poll Dept	March 12 2001
Yukawa Norihiko	Eda Satsuki's policy advisor	July 22 2000 August 28 2000 March 31 2001

