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The Liberal Democratic Party of Japan: Its Organization and Decision Making Process

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THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF JAPAN: ITS ORGANIZATION AND DECISION MAKING PROCESS

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Western Michigan University, 1995

This study analyzes the behavior of the politicians of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan (LDP) and the decision making process of the LDP. This study draws heavily on Japanese language sources as well as interviews with leading Japanese Diet persons.

The characteristics of Japanese culture are explained by introducing the works of three scholars. They are: Ruth Benedict, Chie Nakane, and Takeo Doi. It was discovered that the relationships among LDP Diet persons and between supporters and Diet persons are based on traditional societal norms. Furthermore, it was found that the decision making process of the LDP was in harmony with the most significant Japanese cultural value--harmony. Because the organizational basis of the LDP, the factions, and the *koenkai* (personal support groups) are sustained by the behaviors of the LDP politicians and supporters, these informal organizations gave the LDP its organizational strength.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Significance of the Study of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan

Japanese politics has often been said to be difficult to understand. Undoubtedly, this impression was a byproduct of the complexity of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) government. The LDP has been deeply involved in Japan's policy making process for about 40 years. Although the one party rule by the LDP collapsed in 1993, it is important to study LDP politics for the following two reasons. First, the LDP is still the most influential party within the current Murayama administration. Thirteen out of 20 ministerial positions are held by the LDP. In addition, LDP Diet persons are the largest force in the parliament. As of 1995, 206 out of 506 Diet persons in the lower house were from the LDP, while 95 out of 252 Diet persons in the upper house were from the LDP. Second, LDP politics tend to be described as complex, opaque, and unique. However, these characteristics have not been clearly explained (Nakano, 1993).

This study will clarify the unique characteristics of LDP politics which have not changed since the formation of the LDP in 1955. Before explaining the theme of this study, the philosophy of the LDP will be examined as well as how the LDP maintained its rule.

The Emergence of the LDP and Its Philosophy

The Occupation Period and the Conservatives

Before discussing the LDP, it is necessary to explain how conservative politicians survived the dramatic socioeconomic changes during the occupation period following World War II. In September 1945, the Japanese government formally surrendered to the allied forces thereby ending World War II. General Douglas MacArthur was appointed as the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) to act as the agent of the United States in Japan. The Allied Powers ruled Japan from 1945 to 1952 when the Treaty of Peace at San Francisco formally ended the occupation.

The policies of SCAP consisted of two goals: the demilitarization and democratization of Japan. Demilitarization was a simple problem compared with democratization. It involved the conversion of Japan's arms-making capacity to peaceful uses and the repatriation of Japanese military personnel from other countries. All these tasks were accomplished by the end of 1948. In addition, Article 9, the so-called peace clause, was written into Japan's new constitution. It renounced war and denied the nation's right to use force as a means of settling international disputes. This article has been effective in applying constraints on the growth of military power in postwar Japan.

Another major goal of the occupation, the democratization of Japan, was more complicated and difficult to achieve. In 1945, intensive efforts were made to revise Japan's political structure. A series of directives guaranteed the Japanese people certain

fundamental human rights such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the right to assembly. A new constitution for Japan was promulgated on November 3, 1946 and went into effect on May 3, 1947. It reduced the status of the emperor from a sovereign ruler to a symbolic representation of the Japanese state and people. Furthermore, a British-style parliamentary system was introduced and women were given the right to vote.

In order to insure that these institutional changes would be successful, some fundamental socioeconomic changes had to take place in order to democratize Japan. The dissolution of the *zaibatsu* (the great family-dominated holding companies) and the implementation of agricultural land reform were the most significant changes. Those reforms were also important for conservative politicians because the *zaibatsu* and landlords were the most important supporters of the conservative politicians.

The dissolution of the *zaibatsu* was aimed at equalizing the wealth in the country. The *zaibatsu* were the giant family-dominated financial and industrial combines that dominated the Japanese economy between the Meiji period (1868-1912) and World War II. The concentration of economic power in the *zaibatsu* was considered a obstacle in the development of Japanese democracy.

The prewar conservative parties, however, were primarily assisted by the two largest *zaibatsu*, the Mitsui, and the Mitsubishi (Masumi, 1992). The influence of the *zaibatsu* was so great that the influence and money from them corrupted the parties (Richardson & Franagan, 1984). Moreover, politicians were ranked by their ability to

raise funds from the *zaibatsu* (Masumi, 1992). There is little doubt that prewar government policies were largely influenced by the *zaibatsu*. "In the prewar period, political activity was concentrated at the top of the business community so that the full economic power of the *zaibatsu* could be felt" (Richardson & Franagan, 1984).

The dissolution of the *zaibatsu* after World War II eliminated the major source of funding for the conservative politicians. However, the close relationships between conservative politicians and the business community did not change even after the *zaibatsu* were dissolved. The conservative politicians could still establish close relationships with wealthy individuals and enterprises (Fukui, 1970, and Rothacher 1993). For example, Ichiro Hatoyama received money from the nationalist ideologue, Yoshio Kodama, and built the Liberal Party with those funds in 1945. In addition, frequent scandals involving conservative politicians in the 1940s and 1950s indicates they and the business community sustained their intimate relationships. From 1947 to 1954 there were 22 scandals. The most notable of these was the Shipbuilding Scandal of 1954. In this case, 105 conservative politicians, bureaucrats, and businessmen were arrested for receiving and giving bribes.

It should be noted that behind the re-establishment of close ties between conservative politicians and the business community, was the 1948 change in the U.S. occupation policy. Following the communist victory in China in October 1949 and increase in cold war tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States, Washington increasingly lost interest in radically reforming Japan (Campbell & Noble,

1993). Instead, the United States took the position that it was better to rebuild the Japanese economy as part of the western block. Thus, in 1952, former *zaibatsu* gathered together again as loose corporate groupings called *keiretsu*.

Another major goal of the occupation was land reform. This reform aimed at redistributing land holdings shifting ownership from landlords to tenants. It also aimed at broadening the democratic base through the creation of a class of yeoman farmers.

At the end of World War II, almost 50% of the Japanese people lived in largely rural areas. Of these, about one-half to two-thirds of Japan's arable land was worked by tenants (Fukui, 1970). Tenants paid rents that averaged as much as 60 % of the crop. In fact, landlordism was structured on the feudal ownership of land catering to a small number of landlords who hindered the democratization process. Moreover, rural poverty and discontent had contributed greatly to the rise of militarism in prewar Japan.

A land reform bill was imposed in 1946. The bill placed a ceiling on land holdings limiting landlords to an average of about seven and one-half acres. Those possessing larger holdings were ordered to sell their excess to the government, which, in turn, resold the land to the tenants. As a result, the number of tenant farmers decreased dramatically, and percentage of cultivator-owned paddy land increased from 55.7% in 1947 to 88.9% in 1949 (Campbell & Noble, 1993). As a result of this reform, the conservative politicians lost their old support base, however, in 1946 and 1949 elections they developed alternative support groups. In the 1946 election of the lower house, the conservatives obtained 51.3% of the Diet seats, and in the 1949 election of the lower house, the

conservatives obtained 64.8% of the Diet seats (Hirose, 1994). The percentage of the Diet seats obtained by the conservatives increased significantly from the election of 1946 to the election of 1949 even though the power of the landlords declined.

Two reasons account for this fact. First, even before the prewar conservative party leaders were removed from their party posts, the organization of conservative parties had been fully re-established (Fukui, 1970). In 1945, despite the U.S. occupation of Japan, two major conservative parties, the Liberal party and the Progressive Party, were formed. Moreover, these parties were organized along lines that were almost identical with the prewar conservative parties. Each had a president, an executive council, a secretary general, and a political affairs research council (PARC).

Second, the conservative politicians successfully reestablished their support base by organizing the *Koenkai* (personal support groups). In the prewar period, the conservative politicians were totally dependent on landlords in the election. As mentioned, the land reform had destroyed these support groups. Ever resourceful, the conservative politicians built a different type of support group or *koenkai* which is explained in Chapter 5. It is now clear that the conservative politicians moved quickly in adapting to the dramatic socioeconomic changes wrought by the occupation. Moreover, their sagacity and determination soon produced the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) formed in 1955, and the LDP constructed a network of support groups which sustained its one party rule for 38 years.

The Emergence of the LDP and Its Philosophy

The LDP was formed in 1955, through the merger of the two major conservative parties of the time, the Japan Democratic Party led by Ichiro Hatoyama, and the Liberal Party led by Taketora Ogata and earlier by Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida. The reunification of the Japan Socialist Party, the English name of which was changed in 1991 to the Social Democratic Party of Japan, was a major reason for this merger. Not only conservative politicians but also the business community, important supporters of the conservatives, felt it was necessary for conservative parties to be united in order to maintain a conservative rule.

Throughout the history of the LDP, the philosophy and ideology of the LDP have been vague and flexible (Hayes, 1992, and Kishimoto, 1988). When the LDP was formed, the LDP characterized itself only, as: (a) a national political party, (b) an advocate of pacifism, (c) a democratic party that rejects communism, (d) a party that respects the parliamentary system, (e) a progressive party, and (f) a force aiming for realization of a welfare state (Rothacher, 1993).

According to LDP thinking, the lack of a systematic philosophy and ideology is the strength of the party. In a private document of the LDP, *Nihon no seitou* (The political parties in Japan) (1979), which was compiled for the purpose of educating party members, the following statement was made:

> The LDP is the party that has no ideology. On the surface, it seems that
> the LDP lacks a clear philosophy and principle. However, because of this
> lack of an ideology, the party can include various kinds of opinions. The

LDP does not care what kinds of thoughts, creeds, and faiths the party members have. . . . "Why does the LDP maintain unity?" "Because the LDP has coherent human relationships" (p. 161).

The organizing principle that unites the LDP is not ideology but the interpersonal relationships formed among politicians and between politicians and their supporters. The purpose of this study is not to detail LDP relationships but rather, to develop an understanding of the significant influences that shape the behavior of Japan's ruling politicians. Familiarization with LDP behavior also helps explain the long term stability of the party.

LDP Dominance

There are three explanations for the question, "Why did LDP one party rule last for 38 years?" The first explanation is that the LDP maintained its unity as one party since 1955, whereas the opposition parties never united to form a coalition (See, Okimoto, 1989, Rothacher, 1993, and Stockwin, 1988). In the 1950s, there were only two opposition parties: the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ) and the Japan Communist Party (JCP). In the 1970s, there were five opposition parties: the SDPJ, the JCP, the Komei Party (the Clean Government Party), the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), and the Social Democratic League (SDL).

This explanation is persuasive to some extent, but not crucial. The crucial question is why the LDP has been successful in avoiding fragmentation. A second explanation addresses this question.

The second explanation is that LDP Diet persons could obtain benefits by belonging to the ruling party. For example, by being members of the ruling party, LDP Diet persons obtained a great deal of information about policy matters from bureaucrats and hence developed considerable expertise in policy matters. This relationship between the LDP members and the government civil servants will be explained in Chapter 3. In addition, LDP Diet persons obtained considerable financial assistance from the business community through their faction leaders (Campbell, 1989).

LDP Diet persons who left the party, also yielded their financial benefits. The failure of the New Liberal Club (NLC) offers evidence of this relationship. In 1976, one upper house and five lower house members of the LDP led by Yohei Kono left the LDP to form the NLC. They criticized the LDP for its corruption. Immediately after its formation, there was an "NLC boom" in membership and the Diet persons in the club increased to 17. Ten years later, however, the NLC lost popularity and their number of Diet persons was reduced to six. The others all rejoined the LDP. The most significant reason for the NLC loss of popularity was its difficulty in raising political funds that could attract strong candidates (Curtis, 1989).

This raises still another question. "Why did the LDP hold a majority of the seats in the Diet for 38 years?" Neither the first nor the second explanations can fully answer this question, hence we can look for a third explanation.

The third explanation is that the LDP maintained its rule because it always changed its policy according to the social and economic conditions of the day (See,

Curtis, 1989, Okimoto, 1988, Pempel, 1982, Pempel, 1990, and Ryuen, 1994). Given its capacity to adapt a variety of policies, the LDP attracted people in every occupation and in every social class. In this sense, the LDP was a "catch-all party" (Ryuen, 1993).

In the 1960s, LDP policies were aimed at achieving high economic growth to satisfy the business community but which also improved the standard of living of average Japanese citizens. Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda's policy to double the national income, implemented in 1960, was a typical example of satisfying several sections of society at the same time. The plan had as its goal the doubling of the national economy in 10 years, and that goal was attained in 1968, two years earlier than the initial plan.

During this period of high economic growth, the increased national budget made it possible to expand public works and increase financial support for farmers. Such LDP economic policies contributed to the achievement of a relatively equitable income distribution through investments in the less developed regions and in weak industries (Curtis, 1989).

The LDP also improved the medical and health insurance system. As a result, since 1961, all Japanese citizens and aliens resident in Japan have been covered under one of six alternative health insurance plans. It should be noted that the extension of the welfare system was a major program of the socialists, and the LDP seized the opportunity to exploit it for their own purposes.

In the late 1960s, the LDP also began to assist small and medium-sized enterprises which had been important support groups for the JCP. That assistance

included making lenient tax provisions, ignoring large-scale tax evasion, and providing special loans (Okimoto, 1989).

These are some examples of the policies that were adopted by the LDP. Flexibility in executing these policies added to the strength of the LDP. However, Krauss and Ishida (1989) point out the LDP's adaptability to the changing socioeconomic condition was a direct result of the strong competition offered by the opposition parties. Thus, in the 1970s, the LDP placed a priority on environmental issues because "It [the LDP] felt itself in very real competition with the opposition parties" (p. 334). But while the LDP overwhelmed its opposition in Diet elections, the LDP actually ignored the consequences of widespread pollution. In fact, pollution was already a serious problem in Japan in the 1950s, and meaningful environmental policies were not implemented until the 1970s (Masumi, 1992). But even with the enactment of the Pollution Countermeasures Basic Law, little was done to protect the environment because a rigorous program would have slowed economic development (Campbell & Noble, 1993). It was not until the Kakuei Tanaka Administration (1972-1974) that the problem of pollution was seriously addressed. The Pollution Related Health Damage Compensation Law of 1973 was the result of this effort. Compensation benefits to those most affected by environmental degradation included medical care allowances, compensation payments to survivors, and child compensation allowances. By implementing this law, the LDP appeased an angry citizenry, but it took almost 20 years for the government to take effective action.

While noting LDP successes it is just as important to cite the party's failures, especially the frequency and magnitude of LDP corruption. LDP Diet persons were indicted in 10 different bribery cases from 1957 to 1992. These included a 1957 case involving compensation for people who lost their homes due to the construction of a hydroelectric project. Corruption was also proven in an anti-prostitution law case in 1957, in the Toubu Railway Company Case in 1961, in the Osaka taxi case in 1967, in the Lockheed Scandal Case in 1976, in the case related to raw silk industries in 1986, in the Recruit Scandal Case in 1989, and in the Sagawa Kyubin Case in 1992. All of these corruption cases were directly or indirectly related to political donations and the unfair use of political power or influence. Every time a corruption case was uncovered, the LDP Administration suffered a loss of popularity. Nevertheless, the party managed to maintain its position of power for several decades in spite of severe criticism in the press. The question that this raises is how the LDP survived for so long under such intense public scrutiny. For an answer to this and other questions we need to return to the behavior of LDP politicians and the interpersonal relationships between politicians and their supporters. This is the theme of this study.

Theme and Questions

This study will answer the following questions and explain the durability of the LDP:

1.   What patterns of Japanese political culture influence the behavior of the Japanese people ?

2.   What cultural/psychological characteristics influence the LDP decision making process ?

3.   How do LDP Diet persons collect and spend money for political purposes?

4.   What is the importance of the factions and the *koenkai* (personal support groups) to the LDP ?

Answers to these questions will help to explain current political and social conditions in Japan, and in particular the role of the LDP in Japanese society.

CHAPTER II

A BIBLIOGRAPHIC REVIEW OF JAPANESE CULTURE AND LDP POLITICS

Importance of the Study of Culture

Political culture has a vital importance in the study of politics. Plato argued that "governments vary as the dispositions of men vary, and that there must be as many of the one as there are of the other" (Jowett, 1936, p. 445). In spite of the profound insight of this ancient Greek philosopher, later social scientists have generally misunderstood the importance of political culture.

It has been an intellectual tradition of social scientists to analyze society or human behavior from the standpoint of Western experience. Therefore, as is often argued, some approaches to the study of politics have limits when applying their theories to Asian societies. Marxism and the rational approach are examples of them. Marx thought that nineteenth-century society had been sustained by a social system which leads to the bourgeois exploitation of workers. As the exploitation becomes severe, the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie becomes intense. As a result, these societies will be overthrown by a proletarian revolution.

Yet, when his thought is applied to Japan, his ideas are unrealistic. Japan has been characterized as a hierarchical society. However, Japanese society has less social unrest or social alienation compared with other industrialized countries (De Vos, 1984).

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As will be discussed in this chapter, there are stable, interdependent relationships between subordinates and superiors in Japanese hierarchical social organizations regardless of the existence of social class. Marx's thought does not seem to be applicable in Japan. By examining Japanese culture, it is apparent that conflict is not inevitable in human society.

Rational approaches are also antagonistic to political culture studies. For rational approaches, history, psychology, and cultural context have no explanatory power because the political scientist who employs a rational theory thinks that a political actor is rational. However, it should be noticed that "there is no universally accepted paradigm" (Isaak, 1985, p. 192). All of the approaches of political science have merits and defects. Thus rational approaches do not suffice, and as such, each approach should make up for the shortcomings of the other.

Another criticism from the rational approach is that political culture is based on "fuzzy thinking and sloppy explanation" (Pye, 1985, p. 20). In order to answer this criticism, it is necessary to consider the stability of political culture. If a consistent feature of political culture in one country can be found, then it would be significant in establishing behavior patterns or in shaping public opinion. Pye states:

> People cling to their cultural ways not because of some vague feelings for their historical legacies and traditions, but because their culture is part and parcel of their personalities-and we know from psychoanalysis how hard (and expensive) it is to change a personality (p. 20).

However, it is important to distinguish the differences between the stable side of political culture and changeable side of it. On the latter side, political moods involving

trust in political incumbents and confidence in political and social institutions are quite changeable. On the stable side, the most persistent aspects are attitudes, identities, and value commitments associated with ethnicity, nationality, and religion (Almond, 1990).

Turning to Japanese culture, it is important to notice that despite two major incidents (the Meiji Restoration and World War II) which brought a political transformation, Japanese society has kept many of its historic features. Johnson (1993) argues that there has been a high degree of consistency in traditional behavioral norms concerned with regulating social behavior for the past 120 years. This consistent and stable side of Japanese culture will be discussed in this thesis.

An examination of the following three books will reveal certain behavioral patterns and cultural traits of the Japanese people. These behavioral patterns and cultural traits have sustained Japanese society since World War II. This review will explain the continuity of Japanese culture.

The books are: Benedict, R. (1946). The Chrysanthemum and the Sword. MA: The Riverside Press; Nakane, C. (1970). Japanese Society. (C. Nakane, Trans.). Berkeley: University of California Press. (Original work published 1967); Doi, T. (1973). The Anatomy of Dependence. (J. Bester, Trans.). Tokyo: Kodansha. (Original work published 1971). A review of these sources will show that analyzing Japanese culture is vital to understanding the unique characteristics of Japanese politics, regardless of the fact that many political scientists studying Japan tend to ignore the cultural explanation of Japanese politics.

The Work of Ruth Benedict and Behaviors of LDP Politicians

The Chrysanthemum and the Sword, written in 1946, contains a comprehensive description of Japanese society. Although anthropologist Ruth Benedict wrote this book without doing field research in Japan, this book has been one of the most thorough studies on Japanese culture.

Benedict (1946) studied Japanese society on the premise that "the most isolated bits of behavior have some systematic relation to each other" (p.11). Benedict suggests that all economic, religious and political behaviors are related to each other because they are sustained by the same rationale. All men who have acquired the value systems of their society must behave according to those values. "Economic behavior, family arrangements, religious rites and political objections therefore become geared into one another" (Benedict, 1946, p.12). It can be assumed that if political behavior was contrary to the value systems, it would result in chaos within the political system.

Benedict studied many aspects of Japanese society. Among these, two important aspects for understanding Japanese politics will be discussed here. The hierarchical structure of Japanese society and the importance of group consensus building. The psychological characteristics which sustain hierarchical society will also be discussed.

In her attempt to grasp Japanese society, Benedict stressed the hierarchical structure of Japanese society. One is expected to know one's place in society because this results in a sense of security within the society. In every area of society such as government and industry, carefully separated hierarchies exist and everybody is expected

to behave according to the values associated with the hierarchical position which he/she occupies.

The family is the place where every Japanese learns the norm of hierarchy first, and one applies it in society. The father is, in this case, responsible for the household. However, it is important to note that he does not have unconditional authority in spite of his highest position in the hierarchy.

A family council is a typical example which explains power in a hierarchical system. When a very important affair occurs in a family, the head of the family calls a family council to discuss the matter. In this discussion, all of the members of the family are involved, and persons in a lower position such as a younger brother or a wife sometimes sway the verdict. The head of a family does not exert power arbitrarily. Benedict states (1946):

> The Japanese do not learn in their home life to value arbitrary authority, and the habit of submitting to it easily is not fostered. Submission to the will of the family is demanded in the name of a supreme value in which, however onerous its requirements, all of them have a stake. It is demanded in the name of a common loyalty (p. 55).

Also important is the fact that the head of the family is faced with great difficulties if he acts without regard for group opinion.

Although Benedict did not apply this norm of the family to other social organizations, it is important to do it in order to confirm her basic assumption, that is, that "the most isolated bits of behavior have some systematic relation to each other " (Benedict, 1946, p. 11). As can be seen in the Japanese family, the decision is not always

made by the top-down system in other social organizations in Japan. The *Ringi* system is the most typical Japanese decision making system. In that system, a decision is made by the use of circular letters that are commonly used in Japanese companies and bureaucratic organizations. This system is a group-oriented, bottom-up, consensus-making process that is often initiated by middle management personnel rather than by senior executives. As the circular letter moves from one group to another, each group can participate in the decision making process. Complaints and objections are dealt with through bargaining, compromise, or accommodation at each step of the process. Thus the final decision that emerges from this process can be effectively implemented, because the decision is a product from the process of group interaction rather than being made by an individual leader.

The consensus of a group is more important than the leadership of a head of a group even in a critical condition such as a war. The Manchuria Incident is a case in point. This was the conquest and pacification of Manchuria by the Guandong Army, Japan's field army in Manchuria, from September 1931 to January 1933. During the night of September 18-19 1931, the Guandong Army attacked the Chinese army. This was a fatal moment for Japan because it propelled the nation to foreign confrontation.

The amazing thing about this is that the commander of Guandong Army Lieutenant General Honjo was not involved in planning the attack. He was ignorant of it until the battle started. The attack was planned and led by lower-level officers. In other words, the Guandong Army invaded Machuria without a decicive leader like Hitler or

Mussolini (Pye, 1985). The lower-ranking officers formulated a consensus within the Army, then they were able to push their own strategy (Komuro, 1992). The General Headquarters of the Army ignored the order from the September 19th Cabinet meeting not to expand this battle. More importantly, the Emperor expressed his support for this Cabinet decision (Irie, 1992).

This fact indicates that the Guandong Army's deed was unconstitutional. The Constitution of the Empire of Japan, which was in effect from November 29 1880 to May 2 1947, stated that "the Empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages extent" (Article 1). Sovereign power was clearly vested in the Emperor.

As mentioned above, in spite of the hierarchical order in Japanese society, strong leadership can rarely exist in Japan. On the contrary, lower-ranking persons often play a significant role in a group. Their position gives them advantages in forming a consensus.

In Japanese society, a leader has to be a person who can understand group members' feeling and can coordinate various opinions. If a leader wants to determine policy by his own will, and impose it on his followers, it is necessary for him to go through *nemawashi* which means that prior to expressing his opinion, he must make contact with members of a group to explain his ideas and create a consensus.

Considering the case of the normalization of Japan-China relations in 1972 it is useful to understand the importance of consensus building. The normalization was done

through the leadership effort of the then Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka (Minor, 1985).

However, Tanaka made an effort to create a consensus in the government before starting

negotiations with China. A diary of Akiko Sato, who was the secretary and mistress of

Tanaka, provided information about the behavior of Tanaka. In the entry for July 7

1972 when Tanaka was inaugurated as prime minister, Sato (1994) writes that in the

night, Tanaka invited the Director of the China Division of Foreign Ministry, Hashimoto

to a first-class Japanese restaurant and asked him for his cooperation on the normalization

with China. It is important to note that the first person whom Tanaka asked for

cooperation was a middle-class government officer. He knew that this officer was a key

to creating a consensus in the ministry and to negotiating with China.

In the Japanese hierarchical society, inferiors are required to show respect to their

superiors. However, superiors have to be sensitive to the feelings of subordinates. The

top-down decision making system is alien to Japanese society. Shillony (1990) writes,

"The political tradition of Japan emphasizes the primacy of harmony and the importance

of consensual decision" (p. 121).

In the hierarchical society of Japan, the relationships between superiors and

subordinates are not dictatorial but reciprocal or one which is connected by the

psychological norm called *on* and *giri*. The Shogakukan Progressive Japanese-English

Dictionary (1993) defines *on* as "an obligation, moral indebtedness" (p.263). Johnson

(1991) defines it as "a sense of ongoing, undischargeable obligation within a relationship;

a concept of permanent indebtedness to another" (p.379). Benedict (1946) states: "The

word for 'obligation' which covers a person's indebtedness from greatest to least is *on*" (p. 99).

The Shogakukan Progressive Japanese-English Dictionary defines *giri* as a "duty", or "obligation" (p. 462). More precisely, "*giri* is one's obligation to repay *on* to one's fellows" (Benedict, 1946, p. 134). Johnson (1991) defines *giri* as "a deep sense of duty or social obligation toward (an)other person(s), as dictated by a (sic.) relationship of relative closeness or distance" (p. 376). *Giri* includes all the duties one owes not only to one's family members but members of the group one belongs to.

It is the combination of *on* and *giri* which permeates all social relationships, and, in particular, those between leaders and subordinates in groups in Japan. Benedict (1946) asserts that this is the psychological process underlying the Japanese hierarchical society.

The norms of *on* and *giri* appeared during the feudal era (12th-16th century) of Japanese history (Campbell & Noble, 1993). In feudal Japan, *on* refered to the debt a warrior incurred in receiving land and protection from his lord. A worrior had a moral obligation to return this favor. This was *giri*. *Giri* referred to a warrior's obligation to serve his lord, even at the cost of his life.

The reciprocal norms *on* and *giri* are clearly manifested in Japanese gift-giving customs (Befu, 1974). The heads of most households bring gifts twice a year to company superiors or to persons who gave them assistance. In other words, a man brings gifts in ceremonial fashion to the persons in thanks for the *on*. Therefore, *giri* is a moral imperative to give gifts toward other members of a society.

It is impossible to understand Japanese politics without considering these psycho-cultural traits -- *on* and *giri*. The former Director General of Environment Agency Masahisa Aoki (1994), writes in his reminiscences that in the summer he usually receives about 500 gifts and in the winter he receives about 600 gifts. Most of them are from those he took care of in his constituencies. Furthermore, about 40 or 50 Diet persons gave him gifts twice a year. This gift giving activity is a traditional Japanese custom to express one's gratitude for others. Therefore, it is not a bribe.

Also important is the fact that Aoki sent cards of thanks to every person who gave him gifts. By doing so, people thought he was a responsible and trustworthy person. Aoki (1994) continues that when he and Diet person Kikuchi made a trip to Washington in order to attend an international conference, Kikuchi sent more than 1000 greeting cards to his supporters. This is an example of *giri-* based behavior because Diet persons have a moral indebtedness or *on* to their supporters.

The values of *on* and *giri* are the fundamental and the most important principles of the behavior of Japanese politicians. Benedict (1946) points out that "in the Cabinet of Japan, people are 'forced with *giri*' and 'concerned with *giri*'" (p.140). Even today, *on* and *giri* are the most important elements among the relationships of politicians in Japan (Wakata, 1991).

Interviews with Diet persons will illustrate the importance of *on* and *giri* in the behavior of Japanese politicians. In an interview that this writer had with former Minister of Labor, Akira Ohno, he stated:

> I belonged to the Murakami faction at first because I had *on* to a faction leader Murakami by asking him to be a middleman of my marriage. I knew that the Murakami faction was so weak because there were not so many members, but I decided to belong to it until Murakami died (personal communication, December 24, 1994).

By belonging to the Murakami faction, Ohno tried to repay *on* to Murakami.

The politician who most recognized the value of *on* and *giri* was former Prime Minister Tanaka. In 1978, four Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) leaders were running for the election of the party presidency. They were Takeo Hukuda, Masayoshi Ohira, Yasuhiro Nakasone, and Toshio Komoto. Although most people including the press predicted the triumph of Hukuda, Ohira won that election and became the prime minister. Sato (1994) writes in her diary of November 26th 1978 that because Ohira was a close friend of Tanaka, Tanaka called many local assemblymen, mayors, and influential business persons who had *on* to himself to ask them to help Ohira. Therefore, they worked very hard in asking and persuading party members in each local area to vote for Ohira. This is the reason why Ohira came from behind and finally won the election.

Diet person Yasuoki Urano also stresses the significance of *on* and *giri* in Japanese politics. In an interview that this writer had with Urano, he said the following:

> When I became a Diet person for the first time, the then Prime Minister Takeshita told me 'Hello ! son of Diet person Urano. I'm very sorry because your father passed away so soon' [His father-in-law was a Diet person.] I was deeply moved by Takeshita's remark because even though that was the first time for me to see Prime Minister Takeshita, he knew about me a lot. Thus, I felt *on* to Takeshita (personal communication, December 26, 1994).

It can be concluded that in a Japanese hierarchical society, leaders and subordinates are united by the reciprocal norm *on* and *giri*. Because of these norms, leaders can easily make a consensus and wield power, on the other hand, their followers can ask leaders for various kinds of assistance. *On* and *giri* often regulate the behavior of Japanese politicians.

The Work of Chie Nakane and the Organization of the LDP

The next book examined is <u>Japanese Society</u> written by Chie Nakane. She analyzes the characteristics of Japanese social organizations that have survived the process of modernization. Nakane (1970) argued that the entire social structure of Japan is characterized by the existence of vertically organized groups.

Figure 1 shows that in a group, members are positioned hierarchically.

```
            (a)
            / \
           /   \
        (b)-----(c)
        / \   / \
       /   \ /   \
     (d)-----(e)-----(f)
```
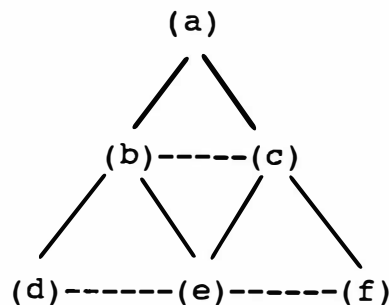
Figure 1. Hierarchical Structure of a Japanese Group.

Nakane points out many important characteristics of this hierarchical organization. Among these, the following five comments are helpful in analyzing the cultural background of Japanese politics.

First, the vertical relationship between two individuals is the basis of the structural principle of Japanese society. In other words, a group can exist without a horizontal relationship among the members. Furthermore, Nakane (1970) argued that the higher the degree of the functioning of a vertical relationship, the stronger is the degree of the functioning of the group. Therefore, if there is a group which does not have an obvious vertical relationship, it is unstable and can hardly be successful and increase in size.

According to Nakane's model, hierarchical relationships between individuals can be applied to the relationships between groups. Nakane (1970) stated that "it is almost impossible to create a horizontal link between two or more independent groups" (p. 54). The merger of two groups is possible if one group absorbs or dominates the other. The merger of two groups is also possible if a satisfactory leader emerges from each. Nakane maintains that this is very rare.

Second, the rank of each member is based on his/her "relative age, year of entry into company or length of continuous service . . ." (Nakane, 1970, p. 25). This characteristic is known as the seniority system. This seniority system is a system of employment in which worker's rank and salary are based on the length of service in the company.

Since the 1970s, however, private enterprises have been forced to focus more on their employees' talents and abilities. Japanese corporations started to suffer from huge labor costs as they hired more workers, and since 1980s, this tendency has accelerated.

Third, the leader (a) is personally and directly related to members (b) and (c). On the other hand, the relationship between (a) and (d), (e) and (f) are indirect. Therefore, a group is most stable if it consists of two levels with all members linked directly to the leader. Nakane (1970) stated that normally, one or two dozen members comprise the ideal size of an effective core of a group. In a group of this size, members on the lowest level stand very close to the leader. This statement implies that the effectiveness of a group in Japan is based on a cohesive relationship between leaders and followers.

Fourth, the personal and emotional relationship between an upper and a lower status individual is expressed by the Japanese term *oyabun-kobun* (boss-subordinate relationships). *Oya* and *ko* refer to parent and child respectively. Literally, the *oyabun* in Japanese society plays the role of the father.

The relationship between *oyabun* and *kobun* is closely related to the norm of *on* and *giri* which was discussed above. Nakane (1970) states as follows:

> The essential elements in the relationship are that the *kobun* receives benefits or help from his *oyabun*, such as assistance in securing employment or promotion. . . . The *kobun*, in turn, is ready to offer his services whenever the *oyabun* requires them (pp. 42-43).

This is exactly the same as the reciprocal relationship between *on* and *giri*, which often regulates the behavior of Japanese politicians. Figure 2 illustrates the interaction between the *oyabun* and the *kobun* and *on* and *giri* in Japanese human relationships.

Oyabun

on | ↓ ↑ | *giri*
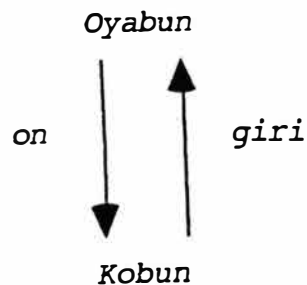
Kobun

Figure 2. The Relationship Between *Oyabun* and *Kobun*.

Fifth, the qualification of the leader in Japanese society does not depend on wealth or intelligence but on his/her ability to understand and attract his followers. If a man cannot capture his followers emotionally, he/she can not be a leader. This characteristic is consistent with the Japanese decision making system which was explained above. Consensus building is necessary in order to make decisions in Japanese organizations. Thus, it is necessary for a leader to understand his/her followers in order to make the consensus building process operate efficiently. Kyogoku (1987) describes the ideal leader in Japanese society as follows:

> Leaders are expected not to be cold-hearted, but rather warm persons, kind, astute, and personable individuals who get rid of bureaucratic formalism, and who establish a human relationship between themselves and their subordinates (pp. 89-90).

Nakane's model on the Japanese hierarchical society is helpful to the understanding of LDP politics (Wakata, 1991). The most probable reason for this is LDP factions are easily explained by the model. Factions in the LDP are more obvious, active,

and durable than factions in other parties, and as such, the LDP has been called a coalition of factions (see, Ishikawa, 1992; Sone and Kanazashi, 1989; Wakata, 1991).

However, by December, 1994 all of the five LDP factions were dissolved officially as a means of reforming the LDP. This action was based on the report submitted by the LDP internal reform headquarters. Most of the LDP members recognized that LDP factions became a hotbed for corruption and scandals that were alienating voters. Under such circumstances the paper called for the dissolution of the factions and closure of their offices (LDP, 1994).

In spite of these developments, it would be premature to consider this as the end of LDP factions. The LDP party headquarters allows bodies such as policy study groups to remain (Habatsu, 1994). Currently, all five faction leaders have been contemplating the maintenance of their groups as policy study groups, (Kakuha, 1994). On February 1, 1995, Michio Watanabe, who was a faction leader, held a meeting for policy study and reported the impossibility of maintaining his faction. However, he wanted to keep the unity of members who belonged to the Watanabe faction (Jimintounai, 1995).

More time is needed to judge whether or not the factions are actually dissolved. In any event, however, the study of factions is essential for the understanding of LDP politics. In the following part, the behavior patters of LDP politicians both inside and outside of factions will be analyzed according to Nakane's (1970) model.

The first characteristic is that the vertical relationship between two individuals is the basis of the structural principle of Japanese society. Factions were formed by

gathering Diet persons around leading politicians (Iseri, 1988). The fact that all of the factions were named after the names of the faction leaders indicates that factions had a hierarchical structure with faction leaders serving as the head of a group.

The second characteristic is that the system of ranking is determined by seniority. Thayer (1973) points out that positions in faction hierarchies were determined by considering age and the number of times a Diet person had been elected. He considers the most important criteria to be "length of time in faction and degree of service to the faction" (p. 23). Former Director General of the Environmental Agency Masahisa Aoki (1994) writes in his reminiscences that he had a handicap in being promoted because he had to move from one faction to another one when a faction was dissolved because of a faction leader's death. Generally, the length of time in a faction seems to be more important than age in the hierarchical organization of factions.

The third characteristic is that the relationship between leader and followers has to be personal and direct in order to maintain the stability of the group. Each faction has its own office and has a regular meeting every week (Iseri, 1988). These offices exist for faction members to exchange information and communicate with each other. This face-to-face communication contributes to the enhancement of morale within factions.

Conversely, the lack of communication between leaders and followers sometimes results in critical situations for factions. In her entry for February 26, 1985, Sato (1994) writes in her diary that she advised former prime minister Tanaka, then the faction leader, to take more opportunities to talk with young members of his faction and suggested that

he have lunch with them regularly. Sato noted that an internal cleavage within the Tanaka faction was occurring because of the lack of communication between Tanaka and faction members. At that time, the Tanaka faction had about 80 members, and about 40 members or one half tried to form a new faction.

The fourth characteristic is that the relationship between the leader and followers is a personal and emotional one which is called *oyabun-kobun* (boss-subordinate relationship). Sone and Kanazashi (1989) pointed out that in factions, leaders are called *oyaji* (father) by faction members, and members are recognized as *kobun* (children). The relationship between faction leaders and members can be considered as *oyabun-kobun*.

In factions, the reciprocal norm *on* and *giri* does exist. *On* from leaders to members includes the provision of money and ministerial posts or party executive posts. *Giri* from members to leaders means to work for leaders in order to help their leaders to become a party president. The details of factional politics will be discussed in Chapter V.

Oyabun-kobun is apparently manifested in the relationship between Tanaka and the members in his faction. *Oyabun-kobun* is a boss-subordinate relationship which can be interpreted as father-child relationship. Therefore, even though a leader may have to resign from an official post or may have to leave the party, he can still retain power and have influence on the decision making process both within the LDP and the government (Yamamoto, 1989). Tanaka's arrest on July 27, 1976 because of his role in what came to be known as the Lockheed Scandal, did not eliminate his position as a faction leader and power broker. In other words, Tanaka's influence in the Japanese political system,

and especially within the LDP, however, was not broken by this otherwise embarrassing event. Even though he had officially resigned from the LDP, Tanaka was instrumental in assisting Masayoshi Ohira, Zenko Suzuki, and Yasuhiro Nakasone to serve as prime ministers in subsequent Japanese governments (Uchida, 1987).

The fifth characteristic is that the qualification of a leader in Japanese society depends on his/her ability to understand and attract followers. Nakane (1970) minimizes the importance of wealth and intelligence as a qualification for a leader. However, as far as factions are concerned, all of these qualifications are required for being a leader. Kitaoka (1985) pointed out four conditions for becoming a faction leader. These are: (1) the ability to collect money; (2) popularity to attract followers; (3) experience and ability to deal with international and foreign affairs; (4) experience and ability to manage the party.

Iseri (1988) emphasized the following three qualifications for faction leaders. First, the number of times being elected as a Diet person is important: at least 10 times is essential to be a faction leader. Second, it is necessary for faction leaders to take care of faction members by giving them government posts and party executive posts. Third, faction leaders have to provide money to members especially when elections are held.

It is concluded that faction leaders have to satisfy the needs of their followers mentally and physically. A more detailed explanation is necessary to analyze the roles of the faction leaders. These will be discussed in Chapter V. However, it follows from what has been said that the psycho-cultural norm *on* and *giri* (*On* is man's indebtedness and *giri*

is man's obligation to repay *on*.) make the relationship between faction leaders and followers coherent and stable.

Factions have to satisfy the psychological needs of their members. Otherwise the needs of about 400 LDP Diet members could not be fulfilled (see, Rothacher, 1993; Thayer, 1973). Thus, undoubtedly, the existence of LDP factions, which were more active and durable than those in any other parties, played a significant role for the stability of LDP administration. Moreover, the fact that Nakane's (1970) model is well-applicable to LDP factions gives the factions 'cultural legitimacy' because the factions were in harmony with traditional Japanese organizational and cultural traits.

Outside the factions, a hierarchical relationship among LDP politicians also exists. It can be seen in the relationship between Diet persons and local politicians or *koenkai* (personal support groups), which will be discussed in Chapter V. Wakata (1991) stated that in local areas in Japan, the existence of hierarchical human networks of politicians with Diet persons as heads can be commonly observed. Most of the LDP politicians belong to those networks. Former Director General of the Environment Agency Aoki (1994) who was a Diet person for 25 years writes that some local politicians joined his hierarchical network. "Now, five assemblymen at prefecture belong to my network and these members have not changed yet" (Aoki, p. 180, 1994).

The relationship between Diet persons and local politicians are also connected by the reciprocal norm *on* and *giri*. Diet persons provide assistance to local politicians by making speeches and giving money when there are elections (*on*). In an interview that

this writer had with Diet person Takashi Kawamura, a LDP renegade, he stated that "I am supporting three municipal assemblymen, that is, they could be elected with my assistance. They are totally dependent on me. This is very rare in the Shinseito (new party's name)" (personal communication, December 19, 1994).

Another type of assistance from the Diet person to local politicians is for him/her to accept their wish, which is identical with the wish of *koenkai* members, to receive government funding for local projects. If the wish is beyond the ability of the Diet person to grant, he/she must ask his/her fellow Diet person or a faction leader for assistance.

Local politicians have to repay these *on* (repaying *on* is *giri*). If there is a general election, not only the *koenkai* members who support a Diet person but also the *koenkai* members who support local politicians work for the campaign of a Diet person because they received *on* from the politicians. Anthropologist Theodore Bestor conducted a fieldstudy in Tokyo and described the behavior of assemblyman Tsurumi during the election. Bestor (1989) stated that whenever an election approached, Tsurumi mobilized many of his *koenkai* members to provide volunteer workers for the campaign of the same party's Diet person. Those *koenkai* members solicited votes from their personal networks including family, relatives, and colleagues.

It is important to note that the *koenkai* is a key factor in the relationship between Diet persons and local politicians. It is the *koenkai* members who work for politicians, and it is also the *koenkai* members who ask the help of the politicians in getting subsidies

for local projects. Currently, regardless of the party they belong to, most Diet persons have personal support organizations even if they are not called *koenkai*.

Originally, however, *koenkai* were organized by LDP politicians. More importantly, *koenkai* for LDP politicians are more active than those for the politicians of any other party (Shindo, 1994). In election campaigns, LDP candidates rely mainly on *koenkai* not only by asking supporters to vote for them, but also by asking supporters to assist them financially. On the other hand, the candidates of the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ) can count on organized labor unions, and the candidates of the Japan Communist Party (JCP) have a "highly mobilized party organization" (Shindo, p. 173, 1994).

On both the inside and the outside of the factions, LDP politicians are organized hierarchically. There is a coherent and vertical relationship among LDP Diet persons, local politicians and their support members. In Japanese society and hence in politics, the higher the degree of the functioning of the vertical relationship, the stronger is the degree of the functioning of a group.

The Work of Takeo Doi and Relationships Among Japanese Parties

The last book examined is the Anatomy of Dependence written by Takeo Doi, a Japanese psychiatrist and psychoanalyst. After being translated in English in 1973, this book has made a significant contribution to the cultural and psychological study on Japan in both Asian and Western countries. However, only a few political scientists have

applied Doi's work to the analysis of Japanese politics. Douglas Mitchell (1976) and Kyoji Wakata (1991) are examples of them. In this section, Doi's work will be explained, and it will be applied to analyze the relationships among the LDP and the opposition parties under LDP rule for 38 years. This analysis is significant to the understanding how the LDP maintained the stability of its administration until 1993 because few political scientists have analyzed this through an application of Doi's work. Only Mitchell (1976) analyzed the case of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty Crisis in 1960 by applying Doi's work. However, one case study is not enough to describe general traits of the relationships among the LDP and the opposition parties. The fundamental principle that existed in the relationship among them will be discussed in the following part.

The term *amae* (pronounced "ah-my-eh") which expresses the fundamental human need to be dependent is the key in Doi's (1973) work. Doi states that *amae* is a key concept for understanding the personality structure of the Japanese. The term *amae* is difficult for non-Japanese to understand. While it is a commonly understood expression in Japanese, *amae* has no exact counterpart in the English language. *Amae* is a noun derived from the verb *amaeru*. A Japanese-English dictionary lists the vernacular equivalents of "behave like a baby (spoiled child), depend on others; kindness" (Kondo and Takano, 1994, p. 51). Doi himself suggests the word "wheedle" as an English word for manifesting the desire to *amaeru*.

Amae may be an universal human need expressing the wish for dependency. However, in Western culture, adult dependency is considered to be a sign of immaturity.

Apparently, the values which are expressed in the words "independence and autonomy" have been idealized in Western culture. Conversely, Doi (1973) points out that although dependency is a psychological motive expressed during infancy and childhood, this behavior pattern is maintained throughout one's life span and is even institutionalized into the social structure of Japan.

If true, this statement illustrates the fact that *amae* is a very useful concept which can explain behavior patterns of the Japanese and the characteristics of Japanese society. Frank Johnson (1993) examines the concept of *amae*: "(1) as an individual, organic trait; (2) as an interactional phenomenon occurring between two persons; (3) as a relationship of an individual with groups and family; (4) as a series of relationships between large groups themselves" (p. 156). In the following part, the relationships between large groups will be examined, that is, the relationships among the LDP and the opposition parties will be discussed. It will be shown how opposition party members incorporated the values of *amae* into their seemingly aggressive attitude against the LDP. It will also be shown how the LDP could maintain a stable relationship with opposition parties.

In order to understand the behavior of opposition party members in the Diet, it is necessary to look at the legislative process and to look at how the LDP effectively controlled it. Baerwald (1986) lists the following eleven steps which have to be taken before a legislative bill is introduced into the Diet,

1.   Government officials within a Ministry prepare a draft.

2.   The draft is circulated within the Ministry for general approval.

3.   Discussions begin to take place between the Ministry's officials and the relevant division in the LDP's Policy Affairs Research Council (PARC).

4.   Within the government, the draft of the new legislation is discussed at one or several meetings of the Council of Vice Ministers to ensure that the prerogatives of all ministries or agencies have been considered.

5.   Within the governing party, the draft legislation receives consideration by the full Policy Research Council.

6.   Within the government, the bill is considered by a meeting of the Cabinet.

7.   Within the governing party, the bill is discussed by the executive council in order to determine its place on the party's legislative agenda for that particular session of the Diet.

8.   More or less simultaneously (within the governing party) discussions begin between the party leadership and its Diet Strategy Committee, generally that of the House of Representatives first.

9.   Meanwhile, the opposition parties may be informed, either directly by Ministry officials, or through the media, that the Cabinet is likely to introduce this particular bill to this session of the Diet.

10.   The opposition parties discuss the stance that they will take.

11.   In turn, the opposition parties' positions will be communicated by their "Diet Strategy Committee (*Kokutai*)" members to the House Management Committee, whose members determine whether the bill may or may not be controversial (p. 117).

After these procedures, the standing committee of the Diet starts to process the legislative bill by holding public hearings. It should be noted that before the bill is brought to the committee, a consensus among the LDP and the opposition parties needs to be reached. At the 11th step in this long consensus reaching procedure, the *kokutai* (Diet Strategy Committee) plays a significant role in assisting the LDP and the opposition parties to have "mutual consultations". The *Kokutai*, an informal organization, was not affiliated to the Diet, but to each party.

Ohi (1990) points out that members in *kokutai* often decide whether or not to pass the bill. In order to pass the bill, the opposition parties were often given money by the LDP. In an interview that this writer had with the former Minister of Labor, Akira Ohno, the former minister said:

> Under the LDP administration, the LDP gave money to the opposition parties for the purpose of formulating and influencing Diet strategy. I know many examples, but I cannot tell you more about this (personal communication, December 14, 1994).

Financial assistance from the LDP to the opposition parties was routine. The then secretary to former Prime Minister Tanaka, Shigezou Hayasaka (1994) wrote:

> Tanaka told me several times to bring money packed in a paper bag to the opposition Diet person. When I asked him to stop giving money to them [opposition party members], he said 'Calm down. He [opposition Diet person] called me as many as five times in the midnight to ask me to assist him. He was in trouble for lack of money. All I can do for him is to give him money. Go to his office quickly'. (pp. 115-116).

This was an instance in which an opposition Diet person asked assistance from the LDP Diet person personally.

In the Japanese Diet, the bill can be passed by a majority of votes. Moreover, according to the Diet Law, members of Standing Committees and Special Committees shall be allocated to various parties in proportion to their numerical strength. (Article 46) Therefore, while the LDP obtained a majority of the seats in the Diet, the LDP had an absolute prevalence in committee balloting as well as in the plenary Diet session.

It is evident that the fewer the seats the LDP obtains, the more confrontation there is among the LDP and the opposition parties. However, it is the reverse that actually occurred. Although the LDP had been reduced to 49% of the seats in the Lower House from an overwhelming majority since the 1970s, the opposition parties' obstructionist tactics disappeared. (Krauss, 1984)

Ever since 1955 when the LDP was organized, a mutually dependent relationship among the LDP and the opposition parties existed. When the LDP tried to force a bill through the Lower House, the LDP Diet persons who belong to the *kokutai* (Diet Strategy Committee) gave money to the opposition parties. Furthermore, the *kokutai* members in the LDP sometimes organized the entire election campaign of socialist candidates. (Department of politics in Asahi Newspaper, 1992) These strategies were employed when the Tanaka faction of the LDP became dominant in the 1970s.

As the mutual dependency deepened, the conflict among the LDP and the opposition parties disappeared. This was undoubtedly a manifestation of *amae*. *Amae* is a deep-seated desire for dependent and interdependent relationships. Johnson (1993) states "perhaps *amae* does represent a sociobiological drive for strong, dependent

affiliation and indulgence, . . . " (p. 200). As has been discussed, *Amae* is viewed more positively in Japan than in the Western countries.

In conclusion, the oposition parties became dependent on the LDP through the application of *amae*. Opposion parties cooporated with the LDP in passing legislation proposed by the dominant party, and in return the opposion parties were given financial payoffs by the LDP factions. This mutually beneficial relationship enhanced the power of the LDP and reinforced the *amae*-based set of relationships that were so expressive of deep-seated Japanese psychological desires.

Conclusion

Important national characteristics of the Japanese people were discussed in this chapter. Behaviors of LDP politicians were based on these characteristics. It became clear that the organization of the LDP and behaviors of LDP politicians were in harmony with Japanese culture. Direct personal relationships are the basis of the hierarchically organized relationships among LDP politicians and among LDP politicians and their supporters. In these relationships, the traditional norms *on* and *giri* often regulate the behaviors of the politicians.

Amae was another useful concept in the analysis of Japanese politics. Mutual dependent relationships among the LDP politicians and the politicians of opposion parties could be analyzed by applying this concept. The next chapter will describe how the *amae-*

based psychological characterisitcs of LDP politicans influence the decision making process of the LDP.

CHAPTER III

LDP DIET PERSONS AND DECISION MAKING
ORGANIZATIONS OF THE LDP

Introduction

In this chapter, characteristics of LDP Diet persons and decision making organizations will be examined. This examination is essential for the understanding of LDP politics. More specifically, it will be determined that the decision making processes of the LDP are largely influenced by the Japanese cultural emphasis on harmony.

Harmony has been one of the most important values for the Japanese. Article One of the Seventeen-Article Constitution, promulgated by Prince Shotoku in 604 a.d., says that harmony is the most significant Japanese value. In the 20th century, this value continues to influence the behavior of the Japanese. Lebra (1986), in a study analyzing the psychological characteritics of the Japanese people, found that the Japanese are sensitive to the feelings of one another, and "find smooth, harmonious, co-operative human interaction most indispensable for achieving a goal" (p. 57).

Japanese culture, which emphasizes harmony, originated in the deep-seated psychological characteristic *amae* (mutual dependency). *Amae* was explained in the previous chapter. Lebra & Lebra (1986) argue that, because of the existence of mutual dependency in Japanese culture, the Japanese have higher affiliative proclivities. Moeran

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(1986) argues that the Japanese people provide each other with extensive emotional support. He says, "Members of a group are expected to conform and co-operate with one another, to avoid open conflict and competition. The emphasis, therefore, is on harmony, and behavior tends to be ritualized," (p. 64).

LDP Diet Persons

First of all, the characteristics of the occupational background of the LDP Diet persons will be examined. Former bureaucrats (especially, high-ranking public servants) and former local politicians have been numerically the most important. Fukui (1970) states, "The top-ranking public servants and prefectural assembly members, together accounting for about less than 1% of the working population of the country, provide just about a half of it" (pp. 61-62).

These characteristics have not as yet changed. As of 1995, slightly over 25% of the LDP members of the lower house were identified as former local politicians, and slightly over 30% of the LDP members of the upper house were identified as former local politicians. As for former local politicians, they also exist in great numbers in the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ). As of 1994, approximately 30% of Socialist Diet persons in the lower house were identified as former local politicians, and approximately 20% of the socialist Diet persons in the upper house have been identified as former local politicians.

Compared with the other parties, the LDP has a much greater percentage of former high-ranking bureaucrats among its members. As of 1995, approximately 17% of the LDP members of the lower house and 20% of the LDP members of the upper house are identified as former high-ranking bureaucrats. On the other hand, there are no Socialist Diet persons who were former bureaucrats in the lower house, and there are only two socialist Diet persons who were high-ranking bureaucrats in the upper house.

A high-ranking bureaucrat in this thesis means a "career" civil servant who is on the elite track involving higher pay and greater opportunities for promotion. There are also the "noncareer" civil servants. They become bureaucrats by taking different kinds of examinations. For most of the "noncareer" civil servants, the position of assistant section chief is the highest position they can attain before they retire (Koh, 1989).

The fact that there are a significant number of LDP Diet persons who were former top-ranking bureaucrats reveals another of their characteristics: the academic background of the LDP Diet persons is biased. As of 1995, over one fifth of the LDP members of the lower house were graduates of the University of Tokyo. The University of Tokyo is the most prestigious university in Japan. This university produces the largest number of top-ranking bureaucrats in the country. In the examination which is used to identify prospective elite bureaucrats, approximately one third of the successful candidates in 1994 were graduates of the University of Tokyo (Ohmiya, 1994).

There are three reasons why there are so many former bureaucrats in the LDP. First, the LDP has recruited top-ranking bureaucrats because their expertise is useful for

the LDP. Unlike American civil servants, Japanese bureaucrats work in the same department until they retire. More importantly, the Japanese bureaucracy dominates every kind of information and technology concerning policy making (Kitagawa, 1993). Civil servants can acquire enough expertise which is relevant to legislating functions not only through training within departments but also through communications with politicians. Thus, the ability of the bureaucrats to formulate policy is useful for the LDP. In reality, LDP Diet persons who were former top-ranking bureaucrats are highly rated in the party. Sato & Matsuzaki (1986) write that Diet persons who were former elite bureaucrats are promoted faster than other Diet persons. They point out that on the average the former become ministers one term earlier than the latter.

Second, former bureaucrats come from affluent families which traditionally are conservative in their political affiliation. Their conservative affiliation leads them toward the LDP. Koh (1989) states that University of Tokyo students have grown up in relatively affluent families. Over one half of the University of Tokyo students attended private supplementary schools or preparatory schools and were taught by private tutors (Koh, 1989). Furthermore, the list of the top ten high schools that produced successful applicants to the University of Tokyo Law Department is led by eight private high schools and two schools attached to national universities (Ohmiya, 1994). These ten schools are far more expensive than public high school.

Koh (1989) argues that the affluence of the families of the students is related to the political orientation of the students. He points out that about 41% of the freshmen

at the University of Tokyo in 1983 considered themselves conservative or somewhat

conservative, whereas about 34% of the general public considered themselves as

conservative or somewhat conservative. According to this study, family affluence of

University of Tokyo students affects their political orientation. Affluent families tend to

be conservative in political orientation. As a result, elite civil servants tend to become

members of the LDP rather than the SDPJ.

Third, former top-ranking bureaucrats became LDP Diet persons because the LDP

Diet persons are able to make decisions from a broader perspective than bureaucrats. In

an interview with this author, a LDP renegade, Diet person Iwao Matsuda, said:

> I was a civil servant. [He was a director of a division in the Ministry of
> International Trade and Industry (MITI) before becoming a LDP Diet
> person.] I wanted to work for public interests, but I felt a limitation of
> my power as a bureaucrat. . . . I experienced the negative side of
> sectionalism frequently. In the past, there were no problems. However,
> there are many issues which have to be decided by politicians (from a
> broad perspective). . . . Bureaucrats can not make decisions without
> ignoring the framework of other ministries (Personal communication,
> December 17, 1994).

He became a LDP Diet person not because he was conservative, but because he

was an concerned person who wanted to work for the public interest. As long as a one

party system dominated by the LDP existed for 38 years, becoming a LDP Diet person

was the only way for bureaucrats to get involved in the government decision making

process.

Another characteristic of the LDP Diet person is that many of them are second

generation Diet persons. About 45% of the LDP Diet persons have fathers, fathers-in-

law, grandfathers, or elder brothers who were also Diet persons (Ohmiya, 1994, and Uchida, 1989). On the other hand, only 10% of the Socialist Diet person are second generation (Ohmiya, 1994). Among the second generation LDP Diet persons, 9 Diet persons are third generation, and one LDP Diet person and three LDP renegades are fourth generation.

The number of second generation Diet persons started to increase in the 1970s (Kitaoka, 1990). In 1960, only 10% of LDP Diet persons were second generation (Kitaoka, 1990). The increase in the number of second generation Diet persons has accelerated. As of 1995, all of the four top party executives of the LDP, the party president, the secretary general, the chairman of the PARC, and the chairman of the executive council, are second generation.

Interviews of second generation Diet persons will clarify the reasons why they became Diet persons. The first person to be examined is Akira Ohno. Although Ohno was not reelected as a Diet person in 1993, he served nine terms as a member of the lower house and also served as the Minister of Labor and Minister of Transport. His father, Banboku Ohno, was one of the most influential faction leaders and power brokers in the history of the LDP. In an interview with this author, Ohno stated his reason for wanting to become a Diet person:

> As you know, my father was a politician. Before I entered the university, my father told me, "Study political science and become a politician." At that time, I was not interested in politics at all. However, my elder brother had already been studying economics in order to be a businessman. So, I was the only son who could follow in my father's footsteps. There were no particular reasons to become a politician, but

I wanted to improve this country and society (Personal communication, December 24, 1994).

Judging by this interview, Ohno became a politician because his father persuaded him to be one.

The second person to be examined is Kabun Mutou. He is currently chairman of the executive council. (As mentioned, this is one of the four top leadership positions.) He also served as Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, Minister of MITI, and Minister of Foreign Affairs. Both his father and his grandfather were LDP Diet persons who served as members of the lower house.

In an interview with this author, Mutou said:

In the beginning of the 1960s, I was selected as a member of a delegation of young people dispatched to foreign countries. During a 75 day tour in other countries, I came to realize that Japan was developing only economically, and its politics and diplomacy were far behind those of other developed countries. Immediately after this trip, there was a lower house special election. At that time, I decided to become a politician (Personal communication, December 18, 1994).

Unlike Akira Ohno, Mutou did not mention either his father and his grandfather. However, he probably did not become a Diet person through his own effort alone. In the interview, Mutou also said that, because he was on good terms with Yasuhiro Nakasone before becoming a politician, he became his follower. Therefore, he had a relatively close relationship with LDP politicians before becoming a politician himself. It is reasonable to conclude that his father, being a politician, gave Mutou opportunities to make acquaintances with LDP politicians and they influenced him to become a LDP Diet person.

The third person to be examined is Yasuoki Urano. He is currently chairman of welfare committee in the lower house, and has served six terms as a Diet person. His father-in-law was a LDP Diet person who served as Minister of Labor.

At this point, it is necessary to explain the concept of adoption in Japan. Traditionally, the household (*ie*) was the basic social unit in Japanese society. Therefore, the continuation of the house was extremely important. Under the Meiji Constitution (pre-World War II constitution), only a son can be an heir of the household. This regulation does not exist in the current constitution. Nevertheless, if there is no son in a family, the adoption of a son-in-law by his in-laws has been a common practice. If adopted, the husband takes his wife's surname and he becomes an equal heir in his wife's family (Campbell & Noble, 1993). In Diet person Urano's case, he was adopted into his wife's family because her family did not have any sons.

In an interview with this author, he explained why he became a Diet person:

As my father and father-in-law were close friends, I married my wife with the condition that I never became a politician. However, in 1976, my father-in-law died suddenly. So, [supporters of my father-in-law] thought one of my new family members should become a successor to my father-in-law, and they enthusiastically pushed me to become a politician. I did not want to be a politician, but finally, I could not help agreeing to become a politician (Personal communication, December 28, 1994).

Under these circumstances, Diet person Urano could not ignore his traditional moral obligation. It can be concluded that he became a politician to meet the expectation of supporters of his father-in-law. Considering this case from the point of view of the supporters of a politician, they want to support someone who represents their interests.

Yasuoki Urano was probably the person most likely to be elected because he was viewed as being in a position to best represent the interests of *koenkai* (personal support groups).

The last person to be examined is Seiko Noda. As mentioned, she is a freshman Diet person. Her grandfather served in the lower house for nine terms and also served as Minister of Construction.

In an interview with this author, she explained her motivation in becoming a Diet person:

> I wanted to be a politician when I was a small child. Fortunately, I had many supporters who educated me politically in Gifu. [This is a city where her grandfather's constituency existed. It was not until she became a local assembly person in Gifu that she started to live in Gifu.] Furthermore, I noticed that there were neither very many young Diet persons in the LDP, nor were there very many female Diet persons. So, I wanted to positively impact the LDP (Personal communication, December 26, 1994).

Apparently, she became a politician with the assistance of her grandfather's constituency. She did not mention her grandfather's name in this interview. However, supporters of her grandfather were essential because she resigned from a hotel job when she was in her late twenties in order to run for election in an unfamiliar city.

In addition to their own motivation to be a politician, the expectation of the constituency is a key factor in a emergence of the second generation Diet person. Uchida (1989) says that the increase in the number of second generation Diet persons can be acounted for by two reasons. First, In the 1970s, the first generation Diet persons started to retire. Second, when older leaders retire, their supporters try to maintain the organizational strength of *koenkai*. As a result, they believe it preferable to support the

son of a retired Diet person. If a son does not become a politician, *koenkai* dissolves and supporters must find another candidate to represent their interests and give him/her their support. Therefore it is much easier for *koenkai* members to have a son of retired Diet person whom they have supported become their political representative. The *koenkai* members have invested considerable time and energy in building relationship of mutual understanding with the Diet person as well as with each other, and they believe it best that their relationship be sustained and deepened.

The Decision Making Organizations I

Until 1994, the decision making organs of the LDP were officially three in number: the party conference, the assembly of the members of both houses of the Diet, and the executive council. In 1995, by revising the Party Law, the party officials' council (*yakuinkai*) was added to formal decision making organs (Party Law, Art. 22). This organ will be explained later, however, the function of this organ is not very clear because it has not played a significant role in actual policy making cases since August 1995. Therefore, the functions of the original three organs will be discussed here.

The first official decision making organ is the party conference. According to the Party Law, the party conference is "the supreme organ of the party" (Party Law, Art. 24). The party conference consists of the LDP Diet persons and four representatives selected in each prefectural branches (Party Law, Art. 24). This conference is convened once a year (usually in January) by the president of the LDP (Party Law, Art. 25). In addition,

this conference can be held either if the assembly of the members of both houses of the Diet request it or if more than one third of the prefectural branches of the LDP request it (Party Law, Art. 25).

At the party conference, several routine activities are carried out. Those include: greetings from the party president and guests; addresses discussing policy for the coming year; asking for approval of the party's budget by the party leaders; and announcing names of the people who have contributed to the party (Thayer, 1973). At the party conference which was held in 1995, party leaders announced new policies, made new declarations, revised the Party Law, and revealed a new party logo (Jimintoutaikai, 1995).

The Party Law also stipulated until 1994 that the president of the party be elected by ballot at the party conference. The revised Party Law, however, simply stipulates that the president be elected (Party Law, Art. 6). The most probable reason for the elimination of the requirement that the election be held at the party conference was that in the history of the LDP, only about half of the presidents of the LDP were elected by ballot at the party conference.

Ideally, at the party conference, Diet persons and regional delegates should ask questions directly to party leaders about party policies, and through this procedure, influence the policy making process of the LDP. In reality, however, no serious debate exists at the party conference. In an interview with this author, Diet person Seiko Noda said, "The party conference is a ceremony which is held once a year" (Personal communication, December 26, 1994).

At the party conference in 1995, Diet person Noda, who was the youngest female LDP Diet person, was the mistress of ceremonies at the conference. The atmosphere of the party conference in 1995 was entertaining and included a performance by some cheer leaders (Jimintoutaikai, 1995) In addition, Socialist Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama attended this conference. All things considered, the party conference is not a place for LDP members to engage in serious discussion of the political issues of the day.

In an interview with this author, Diet person Yasuoki Urano said, "Before the party conference is held, all of the decisions concerning the issues presented at the conference have already been made" (Personal communication, December 28, 1994). He explained that any objections to party policies must have been expressed previously.

Two other reasons can account for the ceremonious evolution of the party conference. First, it is difficult for Diet persons and regional delegates to get together quickly. There were 295 LDP Diet persons as of 1995 and 188 delegates from 47 prefectures. A party conference can be held with a quorum of more than half of the members (Party Law, Art. 27). Thus, attendance of at least 242 people is necessary to open this conference.

A group like this is too large to discuss the issues extensively and to reach immediate conclusions. At the assembly of the members of both houses of the Diet held in July 1993, Secretary General Seiroku Kajiyama said, "It is necessary to elect a party president before the Diet session finishes, . . . but regrettably, we do not have time to

have the party conference" (The department of politics of the Asahi Newspaper, 1993, p. 234).

Second, regional politicians can not express their own opinions at the party conference because most of them are in inferior positions to Diet persons. As discussed in the previous chapter, vertical human relationships characterize the relationships among LDP Diet persons, local politicians, and their supporters. It is impossible for local politicians to express ideas which are against the opinions of their superiors. Boss-subordinate relationships limit the individual activities of the politicians.

The second formal decision making organ of the LDP is the assembly of the members of both houses of the Diet. According to the Party Law, there are two functions of the assembly. The first one is "to examine and decide especially important questions concerning party management and activities in the Diet" (Party Law, Art. 30). The second one is "to substitute for the party conference in matters requiring an urgent decision" (Party Law, Art. 30).

The functions of this assembly are also ceremonious. When this author asked Diet person Seiko Noda how many assemblies were held in 1994, she could not answer this question. She asked her secretary and then answered, "There were probably three assemblies" (Personal communication, December 26, 1994). Moreover, she could remember the topics of only two of the assemblies. This is an indication of the unimportant, ceremonious nature of assembly meetings.

The assembly which was held in July 1993, however, was an exceptional one. There were heated debates among the Diet persons, and there was a lot of public criticism directed against party leaders, indeed in front of TV cameras. At that time, the LDP was divided and fractured by the controversial nature of the political reform bill. Although Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa and his followers tried to pass that bill, many Diet persons were opposed to it. Under these circumstances, the secretary general stated that the new president would be selected not by a ballot, but through a discussion in an ad hoc committee consisting of senior Diet persons. As a result, the reformers, especially young Diet persons, became angry and heavily criticized the management and decision making process of the LDP.

In the prevailing discussions, some Diet persons noted that decisions of the LDP were often made informally, without open discussions in the assembly (The department of politics of Asahi Newspaper, 1993). The exact same situation occurred in the 1960s. Thayer (1973) said, "In short, what constitutes a matter important enough to be brought before the assembly is decided by the party leadership" (p. 251).

By revising the Party Law in 1995, one rule was added that stipulated that an assembly must be held at the request of at least one third of the Diet persons. This was an attempt to hold assembly more frequently and encourage substantial deliberations in the assemblies.

The Decision Making Organization II (Executive Council)

The third official decision making organ of the LDP is the executive council. There are 30 members in the executive council (Party Law, Art. 36). Fifteen members are selected by ballot by the members of the House of Representatives. Seven members are selected by ballot by the members of the House of Councilors. Eight members are appointed by the president of the party (Party Law, Art. 36).

As can be seen in Figure 3, the chairman of the executive council is one of the three top officials in the party. The secretary general and the chairman of the Policy Affairs Research Council (PARC) are the other top posts. A faction leader or a person in the second position in a faction usually becomes a chairman of the executive council (Itagaki, 1993). Although the Party Law stipulates that a chairman is selected by the members of the executive council, most of the chairmen are selected by the president of the party.

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                            President
                               |
_____
    |                          |                           |
The chairman of          The secretary general         The chaiman
the executive council                                  of the PARC
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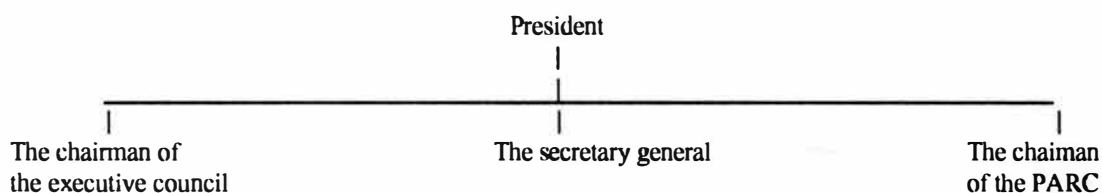
Figure 3. Top Executives of the LDP.

This reveals an important aspect of the decision making process of the LDP. As previously mentioned, the maintenance of harmony within the group is one of the most important mores of Japanese society. Thayer (1973) said

> Japanese decisions are reached by *hanashiai*, which literally means talking together. The ideal solution is to reach a unanimous decision, and the Japanese politician will spend many hours trying to reach a compromise that will satisfy all the interests concerned (p. 251).

In order to reach an unanimous decision, official decision making organs often leave the decision making power to the informal meetings of top executives of the party or the party president. Once a decision is made within those informal meetings or by an individual, every Diet person is expected to obey that decision. By giving up the power to make a decision, the Diet person expresses tacit approval for the decision made by the top executives.

In September 1994, the executive council left its power to elect the chairman of the executive council to the party president (Jiminsanyaku, 1994). In this case, there were factional conflicts concerning who should be selected as the chairman. Therefore, party President Kono chose the chairman by consulting other party leaders.

Article 35 of the Party Law stipulates that "the executive council examine and decide important matters concerning party management and activities in the Diet". Also, article 46 requires that the executive council give its consent to the decisions made by the PARC before they become official party policy. Judging by these articles, the executive council is a powerful organ in the sense that the approval of the executive council is necessary to introduce a bill into the Diet.

However, the executive council could not always wield the power prescribed for it in the Party Law. In an interview with this author, Diet person Yasuoki Urano stated:

> There are heated discussions in the executive council only when members deal with politically controversial issues. For example, when we discussed the bill to relieve victims of Atomic bomb (last year), we had very serious discussions whether or not the responsibility of the government should be added to the Articles of the Law for Relief A-bomb Victims (Personal communication, December 28, 1994).

While it is evident that serious discussions sometimes occur in the executive council, most of these discussions are ceremonious. Sato & Matsuzaki (1986) state that the executive council always approves the decisions made by the PARC. One party official said "The executive council is an organ to give satisfaction to the Diet persons who want to express their own opinions" (Murayama, 1994).

The executive council held in 1977 was a typical example of this. In 1977, the opening of the orange market was the most important and controversial issue pending between Japan and the United States. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, Ichiro Nakagawa, and his followers tried to persuade Diet persons who were supported by orange farmers to agree to open the orange market. Under these circumstances, Diet persons supporting the opening of the orange market planned to force opponents to express their objections in the executive council. By forcing them to express their objections freely, Diet persons who supported the opening of the market expected their opponents to give up their decision making power. After many strong objections to opening the orange market were expressed, every member agreed to leave

his/her decision making power to the party leaders in the executive council (Kusano, 1991).

There is another example which indicates that the executive council is merely ceremonial. In the executive council meeting held in December 1994, members discussed the kind of words that should be used to express LDP policy concerning the revision of the Japanese Constitution. The LDP were divided into two groups: Diet persons who supported the current constitution and those who insisted on revising it. At the end of the meeting, the secretary general, Yoshiro Mori, said, "I understand you have various kinds of opinions. All opinions are reported to the party leaders. Lastly, I'd like to ask all of you to leave your decision making power to the Three Leaders' meeting" (Jiminsoumukai, 1994). Obviously, the discussion of this meeting was held to enable the LDP Diet persons to express their opinions. That was the procedure used to reach a unanimous agreement. No decisions were made by ballot or majority rule in the executive council (Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 1994). The meetings of the executive council are often held again and again until members reach a unanimous agreement. If they can not reach consensus, there are two ways to come to a unanimous decision. As mentioned, one of them is to leave the power of decision making to the party executives. Another way is that opponents against the majority absent themselves from the meeting (Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 1994).

At this point, it is necessary to distinguish between the decision making process of the LDP and democratic centralism. On the surface, both of them are similar because

decisions are made unanimously in each case. However, the major difference between them is based on the position of leaders who often make a final decision.

In democratic centralism, the position of the leaders is unchallengable. "The position of the top party leadership is sacrosanct; it can not be subjected to challenge or criticism" (Fainsod, 1965). On the other hand, as is discussed in this chapter, top leaders of the LDP can wield power only when they are supported by a majority of the Diet persons. Leaders of the LDP always express their opinions freely and criticize the party executives openly. An LDP president who loses the support of the majority is replaced by another leader. Therefore, the decisions made by the leaders are the result of a long procedure of negotiation and consultation among Diet persons who represent various opinions.

There is no provision in the Party Law that decisions in the executive council must be made by unanimous agreement. However, this has been a customary practice since the LDP was formed. LDP Diet persons feel that this is an ideal way of making decisions (Sone & Kanazashi, 1989). The decision making process of the LDP conforms to traditional Japanese culture which respects harmony or order in a group.

The members of the executive council have customarily been senior Diet persons. Until recently, Diet persons who served as parliamentary vice ministers and as committee chairmen in the Diet were considered for the executive council (Thayer, 1973). Today, however, members of the executive council are younger officials who have not necesarily attained such status. In an interview with this author, Diet person Yasuoki Urano stated:

At an early stage of the history of the LDP, a member of the executive council had to be a person who had served as a minister. Gradually the members became younger. After the LDP became an opposition party [in 1993], this tendency was accelerated. The current members were selected through the discussion and consultation among faction leaders. The number of times having been elected is also taken into consideration as is the recommendation from a group of Diet persons who have served the same number of terms (Personal communication, December 28, 1994).

The current emphasis in youth in the executive council is explained by the need for party reform. The LDP leaders wish to improve the morale of the younger LDP Diet persons, notably after the LDP lost power to a coalition government led by Ichro Ozawa in 1993.

It follows from what has been said that the three official decision making organs are ceremonious to a large extent. It is the PARC that plays the most significant role in the decision making system of the LDP.

The Decision Making Organization III
(Political Affairs Research Council)

The Political Affairs Research Council (PARC) was established "for study, research, and planning of policy" (Party Law, Art. 39). PARC is made up of 17 divisions (Party Law, Art. 40). Besides 17 divisions, there are investigative commissions (*chosakai*), committees (*iinkai*), and special committees *(tokubetsu iinkai)*. Sato & Matsuzaki (1986) state that the function of the division is to formulate specific policies. On the other hand, the functions of the investigative commissions, committees, and special committees are to establish a goal for the policies of the LDP and to clarify the

interests of the Diet persons concerned. According to 1993 PARC membership lists, the functions of the investigative commissions and special committees are to investigate political issues from a long range perspective and to formulate policy as the result of extensive deliberations.

It is difficult to distinguish the difference among the investigative commissions, committees, and special committees. Thayer (1973) wrote that the special committees deal with more particular problems than the investigative commissions. Sato & Matsuzaki (1986) stated that there are no differences among the three organs mentioned above. However, the 15 committees existing as of 1994 have one common feature. All of them are related to the policies which promote development in specific areas of Japan. The 15 committees cover all of the regions of the country.

The basic unit of the PARC is the division, and it is within the divisions that specific policies are formulated. The divisions of the PARC correspond to the ministries and the standing committees of the Diet. These divisions include cabinet affairs, local government, national defense, foreign affairs, judicial affairs, financial affairs, construction, social affairs, labor affairs, commerce and industry, fisheries, educational affairs, science and technology, environmental affairs, transportation, post and telecommunication, and agriculture and fishery.

Every LDP Diet persons has to belong to one of the divisions (Party Law, Art. 44). In general, LDP Diet persons are permitted to belong to three divisions. Some Diet persons, however, serve in four divisions because Diet persons have to belong to divisions

which correspond to the standing committees they serve. Besides these, Diet persons can belong to two other divisions (Inoguchi & Iwai, 1994). For example, Diet person Seiko Noda is a member of the Commerce and Industry and the Environment Committees in the lower house. She belongs to the commerce and industry, environmental affairs, social affairs, and foreign affairs divisions of the PARC (Membership lists of the PARC, 1993). In an interview with this author, Diet person Noda said, "I chose the social affairs and foreign affairs divisions because I am interested in these issues" (Personal communication, December 26, 1994).

In the division, *zoku* Diet persons (informal policy support Diet persons) take initiatives for the formulation of the policy. The detail of the *zoku* Diet persons will be discussed in the next chapter. Although bureaucrats have the expertise to formulate policies, *zoku* Diet persons also have enough knowledge to alter the ideas of the bureaucrats. In many cases, the initial policy plans are formulated by bureaucrats, and those plans are submitted to the division. However, *zoku* Diet persons sometimes request bureaucrats to formulate policies which are in line with the interests of the LDP (Kawakita, 1991).

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The Roles of the President, the Secretary General,
and Informal Leaders Meetings

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As mentioned, members of the formal decision making organs leave their decision making power to the president, the secretary general, or the meetings of party officials when they can not reach an unanimous agreement. In the following part, the roles of the

two top leaders in the LDP, the president, and the secretary general, will be explained.

This will be followed by an explanation of the informal meetings of the party leaders.

I: The President

Among party leaders, the president is the top leader in the party hierarchy. Under

the LDP administration, the president was also the prime minister. The prime minister in

Japan is selected by the Diet persons. The Japanese Constitution gives the House of

Representatives the authority to select the prime minister (Japanese Constitution, Art. 67).

When the LDP had a majority in the lower house, the party president of the LDP became

the prime minister automatically. The current LDP president, Yohei Kono, became the

first LDP president since 1955 who was not a prime minister.

Hayao (1993) maintains that the following four qualifications are necessary for a

person to become president. The first is that it is necessary to be a faction leader. All

of the past 16 LDP presidents except three were either the formal head or acting heads

of their factions. Three exceptions, Sousuke Uno, Toshiki Kaifu, and Yohei Kono were

among the top leaders within their factions.

The second qualification is that it is necessary for a person to be a member of the

lower house. Neither the Constitution nor the Party Law prohibit members of the upper

house from becoming the president. However, all of the past presidents were members

of the lower house. Moreover, all of the past faction leaders and party executives were

also members of the lower house. In addition, most of the ministerial posts have been

dominated by members of the lower house. As of 1995, 11 out of 13 ministers who belonged to the LDP were members of the lower house.

The Constitution gives the lower house the ultimate authority to make decisions on bills and budgets as well as the selection of the prime minister. Thus, the lower house has an advantage over the upper house.

The third qualification is that it is necessary for a person to be a senior member of the Diet. Hayao (1993) observed that all of the presidents who were inaugurated since 1974 (after the resignation of Kakuei Tanaka) served in the Diet at least 10 terms before their inauguration as president. It should be noted that at an early stage in the LDP history, presidents served a relatively small number of terms in the Diet. The second party president, Tanzan Ishibashi, was inaugurated when he was in his fourth term in the Diet. The third party president, Nobusuke Kishi, was inaugurated when he was in his fourth term in the Diet. The fourth president, Hayato Ikeda, was inaugurated when he was in his fifth term in the Diet. The fifth president, Eisaku Sato, was inaugurated when he was in his seventh term in the Diet.

As the LDP continued to be the dominant party, the number of terms a person was elected became an important element in becoming president. This change can be interpreted as a shift from the merit system to the seniority system. In the 1950s and early 1960s under a chaotic situation after World War II, a charismatic style of leadership was necessary for one to become a top leader of the party. Considering the fact that

promotion in organizations in Japan has been related to seniority, the existence of the merit system in the early stage of the LDP history was unusual.

The fourth qualification is that it is necessary for a person to be a "relative youth" (Hayao, 1993). Hayao points out that the mean age at which the LDP prime minister assumed office was 65. No matter how important the seniority system is to the LDP, no presidents were older than 72 when they were inaugurated.

The rule for selecting the president has been changed eight times since 1955. Although the rule was altered frequently, one provision still exists and that is that the president must be elected.

According to the rule for the selection of the president which was revised in 1995, the president is to be elected by the LDP Diet persons and party members of which there were about 1.5 million persons as of 1995 (Jiminsousaisen, 1995). Each Diet person has one vote, and every 10.000 votes of the party members is calculated as one vote (Jiminsousaisen, 1995. If a candidate wins a majority of the valid vote, he/she becomes president. In the case that no candidates receives a majority of the valid vote, a run-off election between the two candidates who received the largest number of votes is held. The candidate who receives the larger number of votes will become the president (Jiminsousaisen, 1995).

As mentioned above, the rule mandating the election of the president has often been ignored. Among the past 23 party presidents, 10 presidents were selected by

negotiation or consultation. Even in cases when the presidents were elected, negotiations and consultations took place in order to decide who should be elected (Tanaka, 1986).

Party leaders, especially faction leaders, have played significant roles in the negotiations and consultations in selecting presidents. "The factions are the basis for the presidential election" (Thayer, 1973, p. 161). Conversely, the factions existed in order for faction leaders to become presidents with the support of their followers.

The influence of the faction can be recognized clearly in the selections of the following presidents: Sousuke Uno in June 1986, Toshiki Kaifu in August 1986, and Kiichi Miyazawa in 1991. Each of these men became presidents through the support of Noboru Takeshita who was the faction leader of the largest faction at that time. From all appearances, Kaifu and Miyazawa were elected by ballot, however, the results were determined before the elections (Ishikawa, 1995). In reality, when Takeshita decided to support these candidates, their victories were assured.

As has been previously discussed, the selection of the president by negotiation or consultation can be described as a manifestation of Japanese culture which emphasizes harmony in a group. In other words, the way of selecting the LDP president is in harmony with traditional Japanese culture. By deciding who will become president through negotiation or consultation, LDP Diet persons try to avoid serious conflict within the party.

Sometimes an unexpected person is selected as the president in order to keep harmony in the party. The selection of the president in 1974 is an example of this. After

the resignation of Tanaka as prime minister because of the Lockheed Scandal, three faction leaders, Masayoshi Ohira, Takeo Fukuda, and Takeo Miki expressed strong interest in becoming president. Ohira, who was backed by the Tanaka faction, insisted that the president should be elected. The other two candidates insisted that the president should be selected by negotiation. Each candidate was so adamant in his position that he maintained that if his position were ignored, he would leave the party (Ishikawa, 1995).

In order to avoid a split in the party, party leaders finally agreed to yield their decision making power to the LDP vice president, Motoo Shiina. Shiina's decision was based on three principles: (1) faction leaders of the major factions should not be selected as president in order to avoid factional conflict; (2)a person who has a long career as a Diet person and has a clean public image should be selected; (3) a person, who has the support of every faction leader should be selected (Sone & Kanazashi, 1989).

In the end, Takeo Miki, who was a faction leader of one of the smallest factions, was selected as the president of the LDP, that is, the prime minister of Japan. When Miki was appointed prime minister, he said, "This is like a bolt from the blue" (Uchida, 1989, p. 59). It may be irrational to select a person who did not intend to be a prime minister, however, this selection prevented the party from falling into total confusion.

It is apparent that although the party president is a top leader of the LDP, he/she is not always very powerful. It is difficult to identify the kind of role the president plays in the party. It depends on president's personality and mindset. For example, Prime Minister Miki could not exercise effective leadership in the party because his prime

ministership was a consequence of compromise among influential faction leaders. On the other hand, the presidents who have been leaders of large factions, or presidents who were supported by a majority of the factions, could wield enough power to execute their policies. Eisaku Sato, Kakuei Tanaka, and Yasuhiro Nakasone are examples of the latter.

The formal election of the president of the LDP is also circumvented for another reason. Huge sums of money have often been spent in presidential elections to buy votes (See, Iwai, 1990, Hayao, 1993, Sone & Kanazashi, 1989, and Thayer, 1973). For example, retired LDP Diet person Koichi Hamada (1994) wrote that when Nakasone was reelected as the president, he gave one billion yen (approximately $ 10 million) to Kakuei Tanaka. The support of the Tanaka faction was essential for Nakasone to be reelected.

Not all presidential elections are corrupt, however indeed, the presidential election in 1993 was exceptionally "clean". In an interview with this author, Diet person Seiko Noda said, "No money was delivered in this election. In fact, no one knew who would win the election" (Personal communication, December 26, 1994).

II: The Secretary General

The second powerful person in the LDP is the secretary general. Among the 15 LDP prime ministers since 1955, eight of them held the position of secretary general. The secretary general is appointed by the president with the consent of the executive council (Party Law, Art. 9). Although this position has been considered very important, no detailed description exists concerning his power in the LDP Party Law. The LDP Party

Law just states, "The secretary general assists the party president and manages party affairs" (Party Law, Art. 8).

Thayer (1973) states that although the formal responsibilities of the secretary general are vague, the following responsibilities can be recognized. Those are: "collecting and distributing party funds, handing out posts within the party, government, the Diet, assisting in policy decisions, quarterbacking election campaigns, overseeing the party secretariat, managing legislation in the Diet, and directing the press campaigns on behalf of the party" (p. 274). Among these responsibilities, the power to appoint persons to party and government posts and controlling the party funds are considered the most significant (Itagaki, 1993 and Ohmiya, 1994).

The secretary general appoints the parliamentary vice ministers and the chairmen of the standing committees in the lower house (Thayer, 1973). Those appointments are largely influenced by the opinions of the faction leaders. In an interview with this author, Diet person Yasuoki Urano stated, "At first, I wanted to be a parliamentary vice minister of the MITI. However, I had to give up that post because it was allocated to a Diet person who belonged to another faction" (Personal communication, December 28, 1994). Giving up the post was the result of the negotiation among faction leaders.

The secretary general does not always have the power to determine who could become authorized candidates for Diet persons. As of 1995, the vice president of the LDP, Keizo Obuchi, had the responsibility to decide who should be the authorized LDP

candidates for LDP (Jimintounai, 1995). He was a faction leader, and apparently, in a superior position to the secretary general, Yoshiro Mori.

It should be noted that becoming the secretary general does not mean that a person acquires the power inherent in that position. That power is based on the political ability of the person and the degree of support he/she can get from other Diet persons. This is also true for the president of the party.

The power to raise funds and control finance varies with each secretary general. Not all of the secretary generals have controlled party funds. Former Secretary General Takeo Miki was considered as a week secretary general because he was not good at raising funds. Furthermore, an influential faction leader has at times controlled the party budget. Under the Ohira and the Nakasone administrations, the secretary generals were selected by Kakuei Tanaka. Under the Uno and the Kaifu administrations, the secretary generals were selected by Noboru Takeshita. Under these administrations, Tanaka and Takeshita, who were powerful faction leaders, controlled the party budget (Itagaki, 1993).

Even though the secretary general is still considered to be the second most powerful position in the LDP, the character of the position has changed since the inauguration of Prime minister Takeo Miki in 1974. Until the Tanaka administration (1972-1974), the secretary general had customarily come from the same faction as the president. In addition, the financial accounts bureau chief, who is regarded as one of the key persons in party finance, came from the same faction as the secretary general. These

customs were abolished with the Miki Administration (1974-1976). During the Tanaka Administration (1972-1974), Tanaka controlled the party budget as well as the party and government posts. After the Lockheed Scandal was unveiled, many LDP Diet persons and citizens began to criticize the power concentrated in one faction. Therefore, party leaders started to select the president, the secretary general, and the finance account bureau chief from different factions.

III: Informal Leaders' Meetings

As mentioned above, members of the executive council often leave their decision making power to the president or to informal leaders' meetings. Generally, there are three kinds of informal leaders' meetings. They are: the Three Leaders' meetings, the Six Leaders' meetings and the party officials' meeting.

The Three Leaders' meeting is attended by the secretary general, the chairman of the PARC, and the chairman of the executive council. Sometimes the vice president takes part in the meeting to form the Four Leaders' meeting. The Six Leaders' meeting is attended by the same persons as the Four Leaders' meeting plus the prime minister and the chief cabinet secretary (Thayer, 1973). These meetings are not mentioned in the Party Law. However, they play a significant role when controversial issues are discussed in the party. Particularly, final decisions are often made on controversial issues in the Three Leaders' meeting (Itagaki, 1993).

Another decision making organ is the party officials' meetings which is composed of the same members as the Four Leaders' meeting plus the chairman of national organization committee, the chairman of the public relation committee, and the chairman of the Diet policy committee (Thayer, 1973). (The national organization committee and the public relations committee were combined to create the national organization and public relation committee in 1995.) In 1995, this organ changed its name to the party officials' conference for changing information (*yakuin renrakukai*). This organ, however, has the same function as the old one: enhancing cooperation among the various party organs and promoting the efficient management of the party concerns (Party Law, Art. 23). Figure 4 shows the makeup of the three informal meetings of the LDP top leders.

In 1995, the LDP party officials' conference was newly established. The party Law stipulates that this is the official decision making organ (Party Law, Art. 22). Secretary General Mori stated "We are going to discuss the issues for which the discussions of politicians are required (in the party officials' conference)" (Jiminshintaisei, 1995). There are, however, no clear descriptions in the Party Law concerning what kinds of issues are to be discussed in this conference. Moreover, the position of this conference within other official decision making organs is not also clear.

The party officials' conference is composed of the president, the vice president, the secretary general, the chairman of the PARC, the chairman of the executive council, the of the House of Councilors, the representative of the LDP members of the House of Councilors, and the chairman of the national organization and public relation committee

(Party Law, Art). Until 1995, leaders in the upper house had little opportunity to take

part in the decision making process. This conference, however, has two leaders belonging

to the upper house. This may be a manifestation of the movement of the LDP to make

the decision making process more democratic and open.

The Three Leaders' Meetings
    o The secretary general
        o The chairman of the PARC
            o The chairman of the executive council

The Six Leaders' Meetings
    o Members of the Three Leaders' Meetings +
        o The vice president
            o The prime minister
                o The chief cabinet secretary

The Party Officials' Meetings (The Party Officials' Conference for Changing Information)
    o Members of the Three Leaders' Meetings +
        o The chairman of national organization committee
            o The chairman of the public relation committee
                o The chairman of the Diet policy committee

Figure 4. Informal Meetings of the LDP Top Leaders.

Conclusion

The decision making process of the LDP is unclear. The discussion in this chapter

identified three reasons for this. First, most of the decisions are made before issues are

brought to official decision making organs. The function of these organs are ceremonial.

Second, members of the official decision making organs sometimes leave their decision

making powers to the president or to informal meetings of the party leaders. Third, the

roles of the two top leaders, the president and the secretary general, are not clear. There are no specific descriptions concerning their responsibilities in the Party Law.

These characteristics are the reflections of one principle which permeates the LDP, that is, the concept of harmony. Official decision making organs are ceremonial because consensus has already been achieved before the discussion take place in these organs. It is impossible for LDP Diet persons to express objections at the party conference because this disturbs harmony in the party. There are sometimes heated debates in the executive council. However, this is a part of the process in reaching unanimous agreement. Furthermore, without party consensus, the president and the secretary general can not wield power.

CHAPTER IV

THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND THE LDP

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the relationships between the business community and the LDP. These relationships are some of the most significant factors that contributed to maintaining the LDP as the most powerful and stable party for 40 years. The close ties that exist between business communities and political parties are not uncommon in other countries. However, an examination of those relationships in this chapter will clarify the unique characteristics of the issues concerning money and LDP politics. This examination will also clarify the close relationships between the LDP and the opposition parties which have been discussed in the previous chapter.

Farmers and business owners including big business leaders have been the main supporters of the LDP. Table 1 presents the results of an opinion pole concerning the relationships between occupation and public support for the LDP and the SDPJ. As would be expected, the LDP is more popular among business owners and people working in primary sectors e.g., farming, fishery, and forestry, than is the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ).

However, as the number of farmers has decreased, their influence has also declined. In 1955, the farmers provided 43% of the total support of the LDP, but their

support dropped to 15% in 1980 (Ramseyer & Rosenbluth, 1993). Furthermore, Curtis (1988) points out that there are only 22 rural districts in the lower house's 130 election districts. Then decrease in the number of farmers was brought about by industrialization and population movements from the countryside to the city.

Table 1

Party Support by Occupation, 1989

Percentage Within Each Social Group		
	LDP	SDPJ
White collar workers and managers	21	24
Blue collar workers in manufacturing	19	27
Blue collar workers in retail	22	23
Small or medium size business owners	36	16
Farming, fishery and forestry	41	17

Source: Hachijukyunen saninsenkyo to seito saihen.   By I. Miyake, 1992, LEVIATHAN: The Japanese Journal of Political Science, 10, p. 36.

On the other hand, the number of small business owners has not changed so much since 1955. In 1955, small business owners provided 25% of the total support of the LDP, and in 1980, they provided 23% (Ramseyer & Rosenbluth, 1993). There is no doubt that the business community, including various kinds of interest groups representing industrial groups, is the most important supporter of the LDP. The business community

supplies not only votes but also money. "The main party funding comes from industry and business associations" (Rothacher, 1993).

The Business Community

Before examining the relationships between the business community and the LDP, it is necessary to explain what the business community is. Thayer (1973) categorized it into four groups. The first group includes the leaders of the basic industries such as steel, gas, the electric power, and banks. These industries have led the Japanese economy since the pre-World War II era. The second group includes the representatives of the four major economic organizations. Those are Keidanren (the Federation of Economic Organizations), Nikkeiren (the Japan Federation of Employers' Organizations), Doyukai (the Japan Committee for Economic Development), and Nissho (the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry). Many of the companies or leaders of those companies in the first group belong to one of these four organizations.

Keidanren is the representative of big business in Japan. The members of Keidanren include 916 of Japan's largest corporations and 119 industry-wide groups representing major industries such as mining, manufacturing, trade, finance, and transportation. The functions of this group are adjusting and mediating different opinions among its various companies, and submitting proposals concerning economic policy to the government (Campbell & Noble, 1993). Nikkeiren is a nationwide organization of managers of business organizations, and includes a membership of 102 industrial groups

(Ohmiya, 1994). The function of this organization is to promote healthy labor-management relations. It has determined management policy in labor disputes and provided guidance to member organizations for solving them (Campbell & Noble, 1993). Nikkeiren also submits proposals to the government on labor policies. Doyukai, which consists of 1583 business leaders, was formed to give young executives an organizational base to consider economic recovery and development. It is, however, substantially an organization to give Keidanren members opportunities to discuss economic issues (Curtis, 1975). There is a considerable overlap of membership between Doyukai and Keidanren. Nissho has a membership of 1.5 million companies (Ohmiya, 1994). The function of this organization is to formulate and promote the opinions of small and medium size companies as well as large companies (Thayer, 1973).

The third group is composed of the owners of the relatively new companies which developed after the Second World War such as Matsushita Electronic Industries, Idemitsu Oil Company, Honda Motor Company, and Bridgstone Tire Company. The fourth group is made up of the representatives of small and medium-sized companies. The representatives of industrial federations are also included in the fourth group. Those includes the Sake (rice wine) Brewers' Federation, Life Insurance Federation and Taxi Association (Thayer, 1973).

Thayer (1973) asserts that the members in the first two groups, that is, major companies or companies belonging to economic organizations, are the most important for the LDP because they are the main financial contributors. However, smaller and

medium sized companies are also important to the LDP. Iwai (1990) argues that as the amount of donations to the LDP has increased, the ratio of the donation from big business in the total amount of the donation has decreased, and as a result, it accelerated the decline of the power of the big business to propose changes in LDP economic policy. Iwai points out that from 1976 to 1986, the political fund of the LDP increased three times. On the other hand, the donation for the LDP collected by the big business increased only 1.7 times. Obviously, the donation of the small and medium size companies increased more rapidly than that of big business.

Curtis (1975) states that the influence of big business on the LDP started to decline during the Eisaku Sato Administration (1964-1972). Sato's predecessor, Hayato Ikeda, established close personal relationships with small numbers of top business leaders. Sato, however, made efforts to expand the connections with business leaders beyond a group of industrial leaders that shared links with Ikeda. When Sato was inaugurated as a prime minister, the strains caused by economic policy made by the Ikeda Administration became apparent. In the 1975 official publication of the LDP, *Jiyuuminshuytou nijunen no ayumi* [The history of the LDP of 20 years], the LDP argues that Sato recognized that the economic policy made by the LDP in the early 1960s caused an overemphasis on the development of heavy and chemical industries. As a result, small companies were excluded from this policy, and as such they did not receive benefits as many as big companies. Furthermore, anti-pollution measures and social welfare programs were ignored in the rapid development of Japanese economy.

Sato intended to reduce the influence of big business in order to implement policies to solve these problems. Sato's successor, Kakuei Tanaka accelerated this tendency. Tanaka did not rely heavily on Japan's leading businessmen, but relied instead on "newly wealthy businessmen" (Curtis, 1975). As will be discussed later, small and medium sized businesses and the LDP are in a reciprocal relationship and have come even closer together since the 1970s.

The Communications Between the Business Community and the LDP

The next point to be examined is what kinds of communication exist between the business community and the LDP. The four economic organizations mentioned above have committees to research various kinds of issues and submit a paper to the government. For example, Keidanren has a committee of economic policy, a committee for encouraging development of the universe, a committee for defense industry. Also, it has been studying diplomacy, education and the environment (Iga, 1993). The influence of big business on economic policies through these official channels is not as significant as it has been in the past. For official announcements made by Keidanren, one top ranking bureaucrat of the Ministry of International Trade and Industries (MITI) said, "There was nothing to serve as a reference. . . . Keidanren announced only his demands" (Keidanren, 1995).

Business leaders also officially influence the decision making of the government as members of advisory committees (*Shingikai*) (Curtis, 1975). *Shingikai* is a collegial

or advisory body attached to a central government administrative organ that investigates issues related to each organ. However, the power of *Shingikai* is limited for two reasons. First, the selection of the members is largely influenced by the intention of the government agencies. So, the result of the research conducted by a *Shingikai* is often in line with the governmental policies (Amano, 1994). Second, a *Shingikai* is not empowered to determine public policies or act as an enforcement agency but only to collect information and advise the government.

Informal relationships between business leaders and the LDP Diet persons have been more significant than formal relationships between them. As mentioned before, some prime ministers have been assisted by business leaders through personal connections. Ichiro Hatoyama became the first LDP prime minister with the support of big business. Keidanren played a significant role in uniting two conservative parties to form the LDP with Hatoyama as prime minister (Hanamura, 1990). Furthermore, the vice chairman of Keidanren established a fund raising system for the LDP. Ironically, Hatoyama had to resign two months after the chairman of Keidanren visited Hatoyama to press him to resign. The business community was strongly opposed to Hatoyama's policy of reestablishing diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union (Hanamura, 1990). There is no evidence that Hatoyama's resignation was due to the request from the business community. However, this is one of the episodes indicating a close relationship between the LDP and the business community. Hatoyama's successor, Hayato Ikeda, was also supported by the "four emperors" in the business world. Those were the presidents of a

bank, a newspaper company, a textile company, and a steel company. They established an informal club to back up Ikeda, more precisely, to make Ikeda a prime minister in 1957, one year before his inauguration (Uchida, 1989).

As mentioned, after the Sato Administration, the extreme influence of the business leaders on the LDP gradually decreased. However, close relationships between the LDP and the business community based on informal clubs has not disappeared. Sato made use of clubs to maintain business-government communication.

The meeting of the clubs is held in an informal setting such as a geisha restaurant (Trezise, 1976). Traditionally, a first class Japanese restaurant or geisha house is often used as the place where important political and economic issues are discussed. The decisions made in such an informal meeting become formal decisions. Curtis (1975) writes, "Geisha houses in Akasaka and Shinbashi become the power centers where an elite meets over sake to determine Japan's future" (p.46).

On the negative side of these informal ties, the relationship among the participants can easily become corrupt. A retired LDP Diet person, Koichi Hamada (1994) describes the corruptive relationship between former prime minister Yasuhiro Nakasone and one of his advisors, Ryuzo Sejima, who was also a counselor for the Itochu Corporation, one of Japan's major general trading companies. Hamada argues that although Nakasone's predecessor, Zenko Suzuki, rejected a request of 6 billion dollars for economic assistance from South Korea, Nakasone offered 4 billion dollars of economic assistance with 3 billion dollars coming from private companies. Itochu Corporation was the company

which benefited most by this project, becoming the top trading company in dealings with South Korea.

Marriage and family ties between the LDP Diet persons and business leaders are also one of the manifestations of close relationships between them. Examples of them abound. A son of former prime minister Noboru Takeshita married a daughter of the president of the largest construction company in Niigata Prefecture. A wife of Yohei Kono, who is the president of the LDP, is a daughter of the chairman of a large textile company (Ohmiya, 1994). Nakasone's daughter married a son of the chairman of one of the biggest construction companies in Japan (Hamada, 1994).

It is not clear to what extent these informal ties between the business community and the LDP have affected Japanese politics. However, it is necessary to take these informalities into consideration in analyzing Japanese politics. Curtis (1975) asserts that informal communication between LDP Diet persons and business leaders are particularly important in Japan.

The next question to be examined is what are the benefits that the business community receives through a close relationship with the LDP. There is little doubt that during the Cold War Era, the top priority for the business community in supporting the LDP was to ensure that the LDP developed the capitalist system (Fukushima, 1989, and Thayer, 1973). This ideological reason has little importance under the current domestic and international situations. Domestically, there is little possibility for the Japan

Communist Party (JCP) to come into power. Internationally, there is also little possibility that Russia or China might invade Japan.

The demands of the business community are practical and diverse. The economic organizations mentioned above have announced various demands for the government. Those include amendment of the laws related to economic deconcentration, lenient taxation, price control by the government, the development of atomic power and defense industries, international economic co-operation (Fukui, 1970). In fact, it is a well-known fact that the Japanese government, along with MITI, has protected key industries through preferential treatment such as giving large subsidies, infant industry protection, export promotion, and buy-Japanese programs (Okimoto, 1989).

The LDP has protected small and medium-sized businesses as well as big businesses. Small business is sensitive to particular economic issues (Patrick & Rholen, 1987). Because the interests of small business are often local, small businesses tend to support whoever responds to their demands. In fact, at the beginning of the 1970s, some small business leaders, who felt that they were alienated from rapid economic development policy of the government, started to support the JCP (Okimoto, 1989). Therefore, the LDP has to offer more benefits to small businesses.

Small businesses are also important in terms of their numbers. Although the population of Japan is about half of that of the United States, the number of small-scale enterprises in Japan and the United States are almost same (Inoguchi, 1990). Almost one-third of the laborers in Japan work in small-scale family enterprises (Patrick & Rohlen,

1987). These facts show that small business can provide the LDP not only with funding but also with significant numbers of votes.

The LDP's lenient taxation policy toward small business has been a notable example of its support for the small business (Inoguchi, 1990, and Okimoto, 1989). Moreover, it has been an open secret that the tax evasion by the small business has been largely ignored (Patrick & Rohlen, 1987). The LDP sometimes provided benefits for small business while sacrificing benefits for big business. In 1974, in order to protect small local retailers, legislation was passed to regulate the establishment of large supermarkets. It became more difficult for big retailers to open new stores.

Zoku Diet Persons

In the discussion of the relationships between the LDP and the business community, it is necessary to explain the role of the powerful LDP *zoku* (informal policy support groups). The *zoku* play the role of a lobbyist in the Diet and ministries not only for the industrial federations of both big and small business, but also for various interest groups such as those of farmers, fishermen, and medical professions. The *zoku* Diet persons are "Diet members who have a considerable amount of expertise and practical experience about a particular area of government policy and enough seniority in the party to have influence on a continuing basis with the ministry responsible for that policy area" (Curtis, 1988, p. 114). Since the U.S. standing committee system was introduced to the Japanese parliamentary system after World War II, lobbyists might be expected to have

become important in Japan, too. However, "It is the parties themselves that act as lobbyists in Japan" (Yamato, 1983).

In order to examine the role of the lobbyist-like *zoku*, it is necessary to explain the Diet strategies of the LDP. The Diet Law stipulates that "the standing committees shall examine the bills (including draft resolutions), petitions, and other matters which may come under their respective spheres of work" (Chapter 5, Article, 41). There are 20 standing committees as of 1995. Those are the Cabinet, Local Administration, Judicial Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Finance, Education, Social and Labor Affairs, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Commerce and Industry, Transportation, Communications, Transport, Construction, Budget, Audit, House Management, Discipline, Science and Technology, and Environment Committees. In the House of Councilors, there are the same committees except for the Science and Technology and Environment Committees.

All of these committees except the budget, audit, house management, and discipline committees correspond to the ministries of the cabinet. Committee members are apportioned according to each party's representation in the House (The Diet Law, Chapter 5, Article 46). In the LDP, the committees are allocated by the faction leaders in most cases. The LDP Diet person, Seiko Noda, said in an interview conducted by this author that "Members of committees are decided by faction leaders. I was told by my faction leader to belong to the Environment and Commerce and the Industry Committees" (Personal communication, December, 26, 1994).

Regardless of the importance of the standing committee in the legislative process, the Diet persons do not think it is so important. Baerwald (1974) states that "(Service on a committee) is considered a duty or obligation (*gimu*) rather than an opportunity. Most LDPers view committee deliberations as a waste of time " (p.94). Three reasons account for this. First, if a controversial bill is brought to the committee, it is not a discussion of the committee but an informal negotiation between the LDP and the opposition parties that takes place. Diet persons decide whether or not a bill should be passed, or how a bill should be amended. This informal negotiation will be discussed later in this chapter.

Second, most of the bills brought to a committee are prepared by bureaucrats, and the discussion at a committee is mostly ritualistic (Nakano, 1993). In an interview conducted by this author, Diet person Takashi Kawamura said:

> When the date was fixed for my asking questions at a Communication Committee for the first time, one bureaucrat came to me and said, 'Shall I prepare for your question?' I answered, 'No, thank you. I will do it by myself because this is the long awaited opportunity.' The bureaucrat said in surprise, 'It is a rare example!' (Personal communication, December, 19, 1994).

Because the information is dominated by the bureaucrats, most of the Diet persons can not help asking for clarification about the questions they ask of the bureaucrats at the standing committee. "The great power of the bureaucrats is their control of information" (Thayer, 1973, p.228). Furthermore, even if a Diet person prepares questions for a committee by him/herself, he/she has to show them to the government officials who are going to answer those questions. Diet person Kawamura also said, "It is conventionally

required to submit a questionnaire to the bureaucrats before asking questions of them" (Personal communication, December, 19, 1994).

Third, every bill has to be discussed at the policy affairs research council (PARC) of the LDP before being submitted to the Diet. In other words, without going through the PARC, no bills can be discussed at standing committees. "If there is anything comparable to the American Congressional Committee in the Japanese decision-making system, it is the division of the PARC and not the Diet's committees" (Curtis, 1988, p. 111).

In the PARC, discussions between government officials and relevant LDP *zoku* Diet persons, who are related to particular interest groups or industries, are held. In the 1950s and 1960s, it was argued that in the PARC, the LDP Diet persons were too dependent on the bureaucracy because their major source of expertise was the bureaucracy (Curtis, 1975, and Thayer, 1973). Still, the influence of party leadership over policy making in the PARC has grown stronger since the 1970s (See, Inoguchi & Iwai, 1994, Nakano, 1993, Sato & Matsuzaki, 1986, and Yamato, 1983). This is exactly the result of the increase of the number of the *zoku* Diet persons: the more *zoku* Diet persons, the more influence the LDP has on the policy making process.

As mentioned, divisions of the PARC are the places where *zoku* Diet persons work for interest groups or industries they are related to. By working for particular interest groups or industries, the *Zoku* Diet persons can strengthen their relationships with

those groups. As a result, Diet persons can get political resources such as political funds, information, and votes from the business community or interest groups.

In addition, the activities of Diet persons in the division are important for the promotion of them in the party. In order to negotiate and mediate with other Diet persons and bureaucrats, Diet persons have to become specialists in the areas with which they are associated to. If their ability concerning their specialty are recognized by party executives, it becomes a significant factor in becoming *zoku* Diet persons (Inoguchi & Iwai, 1994).

It should be noted that the status of *zoku* Diet persons is informal in the party and in the government. Moreover, it is difficult to tell who are the *zoku* Diet persons and to which *zoku* he/she belongs. Some membership lists of *zoku* Diet persons exist, but there are differences among these lists. For example, Diet person Kabun Mutou is classified as a commerce and industry *zoku* Diet person by Sato and Mochizuki (1986). On the other hand, he is classified as a commerce and industry *zoku* Diet person and a agriculture and forestry *zoku* Diet person by Inoguchi and Iwai (1994).

In an interview with this author, Diet person Mutou said, "I have served as the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (during the Ohira Administration in 1979), so I may be considered as an agriculture and forestry *zoku* Diet person" (Personal communication, December 18, 1994). From this interview it was determined that he had little interest in agriculture or in benefits for farmers. In fact, his constituency is not in the rural areas, but in the urban areas. Although none of the four scholars, who classified

the *zoku* Diet persons mentioned above, regarded Mutou as a social and welfare *zoku* Diet person, he thinks of himself as a social and welfare *zoku* Diet person as well as a commerce and industry *zoku* Diet person. Diet person Mutou said,

> I am one of the leading specialists on social and welfare policies in the LDP, and have close relationships with groups of disabled persons and pensioners. In this area, I am at the same level as Diet person Ryuichi Hashimoto. (He is known as a leading social and welfare *zoku* Diet person.) (Personal communication, December 18, 1994).

Also ambiguous is what the requirements to become *zoku* Diet person are. Not every Diet person can become a *zoku* Diet person. It takes time to get enough expertise in formulating policies, and it also takes time to establish close relationships with the leaders of business community or various interest groups. More importantly, it takes time for Diet persons to influence the policy making process in a seniority system.

In aspiring to become a *zoku* Diet person an individual needs to determine which positions have the capacity to influence the policy making process. According to the membership lists of *zoku* Diet persons made by Sato and Matsuzaki (1986), most of the *zoku* Diet persons had served as vice-chairmen of divisions or chairmen of divisions related to their specialties. In an interview with this author, Diet person Yasuoki Urano said:

> The parliamentary vice-chairman does not have a powerful voice within the party. . . . When I was the chairman of the commerce and industry division, the increase of the car sales tax was a problem pending between our division and the Finance Ministry. . . . I and several bureaucrats had heated arguments about what rate of tax is appropriate. . . . In the end, we compromised and decreased the tax from 6% to 4.5% (Personal communication, December 28, 1994).

Judging by this statement, a chairman of a division has a responsibility to negotiate with bureaucrats and reach an agreement. Sato and Matsuzaki (1986) also argue that decisions of important issues are often made in informal meetings among a chairman of a division, other *zoku* Diet persons, and related bureaucrats. It can be concluded that holding or having held as chairman of a division is one of the conditions to becoming a *zoku* Diet person.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the number of times one is elected is a crucial element in the promotion of Diet persons. Therefore, the next question to be considered is how many terms in the Diet is necessary to become a chairman of a division, namely, a *zoku* Diet person. In order to answer this question, the steps of promotion of Diet persons have to be examined.

No freshman Diet persons have official posts. In the second term, they can be a director of a standing committee that works as a negotiator between bureaucrats and Diet persons who ask questions at a committee meeting. In the third term, they can become a vice-chairman of a division or a parliamentary vice-minister, and some of them, who are highly valued by party executives, can become a chairman of a division (Jin, 1994). Thus, it is clear that at least three terms in the Diet are necessary for the LDP Diet person to become a *zoku* Diet person.

The seniority system is one of the crucial elements which characterizes Japanese society. The LDP is not an exception. Nevertheless, promotions in the LDP are based on merit to some extent judging by the fact that only some of the Diet persons in their

third term become members of the *zoku*. Undoubtedly, this gives the LDP organizational strength. Competition among the LDP Diet persons must be beneficial for the party.

The business community and various interest groups obtain benefits through *zoku* Diet persons. The benefits they receive vary in each industry or interest group. One of the most active industries is the construction industry. Conversely, the most popular *zoku* among the LDP Diet persons is a construction *zoku*. According to the Membership List of the PARC published in 1994, the largest division is the construction division with membership of 124. As would be expected, the environment division, the interests of which are often against the interests of the business community, is not as popular having a membership of only 32.

As an example of the way the economic community receives benefits from the LDP, the relationships between the LDP *zoku* Diet persons and the construction industry will be examined.

Public work is an important source of revenue for about 520,000 construction companies in Japan. About 700 billion yen (approximately $7 billion at an exchange rate of ¥100 to the dollar) out of about 2400 billion yen ($24 billion) of the total ordered construction come from public work (Ryuen, 1994). The close relationships between the construction *zoku* Diet person and the construction industry are established in public works.

Although prearranged bidding is illegal, it is common in Japan. Prearranged bidding is called *dango* in Japanese. Prior to the submitting of bids, it has already been

decided which company should be the low bidder on a particular contract based upon an ongoing series of negotiations and established relationships (Campbell & Noble, 1993).

As for bidding on public works projects, government officials of the Construction Ministry can decide which company should bid. However, the LDP *zoku* Diet persons select the company which should bid by putting pressure on the bureaucrats in many cases (See, Inoguchi & Iwai, 1993, Nakano, 1993, and Ryuen, 1994).

Dango (prearranged bidding) existed in the Meiji era (1868-1913). Until the Second World War, *dango* was done under the control of the bureaucrats (Kasumi, 1993). The first Diet person who took the leadership of *dango* from the bureaucrats was Ichiro Kono (1898-1965), who was an influential faction leader. When Kono became the Construction Minister in 1962, he forcibly obtained the leadership of *dango* by imposing a demotion on the bureaucrats who opposed him on taking decision making power pertaining to which company can be bid away from the bureaucrats (Kasumi, 1993). Kakuei Tanaka, who served as prime minister from 1972 to 1974, was the person who established the *dango* system which was led by the politicians.

Since then, it has been difficult for construction companies to receive an order for public projects without giving contributions to the construction *zoku* Diet persons. One executive of a large construction company said:

> If my company did not belong to the Kenshinkai, [Kenshinkai was a group of construction companies which consisted of 540 companies which were organized to support former top ranking senior construction *zoku* Diet person, Shin Kanemaru.] it would be impossible to receive an order for public projects. So, we ordinarily contributed to him. In the winter and summer, we have contributed money which ranges from 5 million yen

summer, we have contributed money which ranges from 5 million yen (about $50,000) to 50,000 yen (about $500) (Hirose, 1994, p. 100).

Spending Practices of the LDP

One of the most important benefits for LDP Diet persons to become members of *zoku* is to collect political contributions. Therefore, the next questions to be examined is why the LDP politicians and the party need a large amount of money or how they spend money. A consideration of these issues will help to explain the characteristics of the LDP politics. In other words, it will clarify the strengths and weakness of the LDP.

It is impossible to know the exact amount of annual political funding. The political fund control law stipulates that donation over 50,000 yen (about $500) have to be reported to the Ministry of Home Affairs, but it has been an open secret that parties and politicians have not reported all of the money they collected. Since the 1980s, the amount of annual political funding collected by both the LDP and opposition parties has been about 300 billion yen (about $3 billion) judged from an official report (Kyujusannen, 1994). However, if other revenues such as secret contributions, bribes, and stock revenues are included, annual political funds of all the Japanese parties exceed one trillion yen (approximately $10 billion) (Iwai, 1990)

Judging by the officially reported political funding, the JCP collected the largest amount of money. In 1993, the incomes of the JCP, the LDP, the SDPJ, and the Komei Party were about 31 billion yen, 15 billion yen, 6.8 billion yen, and 3.1 billion yen

respectively (Kakutou, 1995). However, it should not be concluded that the JCP is the most affluent party in Japan.

Comparing the sources of income of the JCP and the LDP will illustrate that the source of income of the LDP is more ambiguous than that of the JCP. About 90% of the party revenue of the JCP is earned by operating businesses, and only 1% come from contribution (Iwai, 1990). The largest business run by the JCP is a newspaper publishing company. On the other hand, about 60% of the revenue of the LDP comes from contributions, and the amount of the revenue from operating businesses is only about 10% (Iwai, 1990).

The LDP can be characterized as the party which is most heavily dependent on contribution. As will be explained later, illegal contributions have been common in Japan. That makes the political funding of the LDP unclear. In fact, Fukui and Fukai (1991) argue that at the end of the 1980s, it was not unusual that one company donated secretly one billion yen (about $10 million) annually to the executives of the LDP. These contributions are supplied not only for the party and factions, but also individual politicians. However, informal contributions are mainly made for individual politicians.

The average annual expenditure of one LDP Diet person in a non election year is estimated to be about 100 million yen or 150 million yen (about $1 or $1.5 million) (See, Iwai, 1990, Hirose, 1994, and Sone & Kanazashi, 1989). In addition, in an election year, the LDP politicians usually spend twice as much money as in an ordinary year.

Of the expenditure of 100 or 150 million yen, approximately 40 million yen are spent for salaries of secretaries and staff members, and for the maintenance of offices (Iwai, 1990, and Hirose, 1994). Because of the other expenditures, the LDP politicians need a lot of money. Those are disbursements for elections and for maintaining *koenkai*. Those are related to each other.

An election campaign in Japan is extraordinarily expensive. According to the survey conducted by the Asahi Newspaper, in the 1986 lower house election, each LDP candidate spent on the average about 100 million yen (about $1 million) (Fukui & Fukai, 1991) This expenditure is very high compared with that in the United States. In the 1988 election in the United States, candidates for the House of Representative spent about $ 280,000 on the average (Magleby & Nelson, 1990).

Unlike campaigns in the United States, candidates spend no money for a media campaign in Japan. The main reason for the high cost of the campaign of the LDP politicians is that most of the LDP politicians have to spend money to maintain and mobilize their own *koenkai* (See, Curtis, 1988, Iwai, 1990, Fukui & Fukai, 1991, and Hirose, 1994). *Koenkai* is significant for the LDP politicians in the sense that *koenkai* members work as a political machine not only for collecting votes, but also for raising funds. Ironically, the cost to maintain *koenkai* and mobilize it in election campaigns is very high. The details of *koenkai* will be discussed in the next chapter.

The expenditures to maintain *koenkai* are related to Japanese custom. As discussed in the previous chapter, it is a Japanese custom to give presents in winter and

in summer and is also to bring money to weddings and funerals. In addition, the Japanese people give presents or money in token of gratitude. "Japan is a society in which gift-giving (and money-giving) is commonplace upon introductions or requests for assistance from other more senior or prestigious people" (Hrebenar, 1986).

It is important for the Diet persons to attend weddings and funerals because by attending these ceremonies, politicians can strengthen their ties with *koenkai* members and their families. Former Director General of the Environment Agency, Masahisa Aoki (1994) writes in his reminiscences:

> To attend funerals is the best way to collect votes. It has been commonly said that constructing bridges or school buildings in the constituency creates votes, but that is an old story. . . . If top ranking *koenkai* members die, I will attend their funerals by absenting myself from the Diet session (pp. 88-89).

Failing to attend funerals sometimes creates disaster for politicians. Aoki (1994) writes that one influential *koenkai* member withdrew from his *koenkai* because Aoki did not attend a funeral of that member's father. Aoki writes that he or his secretaries attend about 350 or 400 funerals of his supporters or their family members every year. This situation is not unique. According to the survey conducted by Asahi Newspaper, the average number of funerals that a politician attends a month is 26.5 times, and the average number of weddings he/she attends is 9.6 a month (Hirose, 1994).

The average annual expenditure for wedding ceremonies and funerals by the LDP Diet persons is estimated at about 16 million yen, roughly $160.000 at an exchange rate of 100 yen to the dollar (Iwai, 1990 and Hirose, 1994). The opposition Diet persons spend much less for these ceremonies than the LDP politicians do. The opposition Diet

persons spend about 2 million yen (about $20,000) annually for wedding ceremonies and funerals (Iwai, 1990).

These facts show that personal relationships between the LDP Diet persons and supporters are closer than those between the opposition politicians and their supporters. As mentioned in the previous chapter, *koenkai* for the LDP politicians are more numerous and more active than those for the opposition Diet persons. Viewed in this light, it is natural that the LDP politicians put a great deal of effort into maintaining good relationships with their supporters, and as a result, they spend a lot of money on their supporters.

The next expenditures to be discussed are deeply related to the Diet strategy of the LDP. In the previous chapter, the extraordinary dependent relationships among the LDP and the opposition parties were examined. In the consensus reaching procedure to pass a bill, the *kokutai* (Diet Strategy Committee) members of the LDP give money to the opposition parties. The successful functioning of the *kokutai* is one of the important elements for the LDP to maintain a one-party dominant administration in Japan. Still, the activities of the *kokutai* is costly.

Within the House of Representatives, there is a Management Committee. During meetings of this committee, official discussions take place among the parties to make the legislative process smooth and quick. However, substantial discussions are not held in this committee. Ohi (1990) argues that meetings of Management Committee are in many cases ritualistic because agreement among the LDP and the opposition parties is made

before this meeting. The main duty of the Management Committee is to arrange a procedure related to the vote or schedule of the discussion of standing committee, not to resolve the fundamental differences of opinions among the LDP and the opposition parties (Nakano, 1992).

Although the *kokutai* is an informal organization only affiliated with the party, the function of it is significant in the sense that it supplements the task of the official organization. The *kokutai* was established during the second Diet session in 1947 under the Katayama Administration (Ohi, 1990). Former LDP Diet person Koichi Hamada (1994) argues that the Katayama Administration was a coalition government under the chaotic situation after the World War II. As a result, cooperation between the conservatives and opposition parties was essential to implementing a significant plan like the promulgation of the constitution and the first election by the new election law.

The function of *kokutai* was enhanced during the Tanaka Administration (1972-1974) (The department of politics of the Asahi Newspaper, 1992). During this era, the "*kokutai* strategy" was applied to all of the opposition parties except the JCP. The most probable reason for this is that at the end of the Tanaka Administration, the number of the Diet persons of the LDP and the total number of the Diet persons of the opposition parties became almost equal. Therefore, it became necessary for the LDP to establish amicable relationships with all of the opposition parties except the JCP in order to make its "*kokutai* strategy" successful. The opposition parties also welcomed this appeasement policy. As discussed in the previous chapter, this is considered a manifestation of *amae*,

which is a deep-seated desire for dependent and interdependent relationships typically

institutionalized into the social structure of Japan. It is impossible to determine how much

money the LDP spent for its *kokutai* strategy because the LDP did not officially admit

to the fact of giving money to the opposition parties. The statements of politicians are

the only way to verify that this happened and to calculate how much the LDP spend,

realizing that the money they mention is less than the amount of money the LDP spent for

its *kokutai* strategy.

The former vice chairman of the *kokutai* of SDPJ, Tsunehiro Kobayashi, writes

as follows:

> After I became a vice chairman of *kokutai*, the opportunity to be invited
> to dinner at a first class Japanese restaurant by the *kokutai* members of the
> LDP increased. Every time we were invited, the LDP Diet persons gave
> us presents of fruits, with a gift certificate worth a 300,000 yen (about
> $3,000) (Minehisa, 1995).

Furthermore, retired LDP Diet person Hamada (1994) wrote as follows:

> Every time the opposition Diet persons (except Communists) traveled
> abroad, 1 or 2 million yen (about $10,000 or 20,000) were given by the
> LDP. Moreover, when the LDP and the opposition parties get into an
> imbroglio over a significant bill at the committee, over 100 million yen,
> (about $1 million) were given to the opposition parties (p. 185).

There is no doubt that the LDP has spent a lot of money in order to pass

important bills. Sato and Kanazashi (1989) estimate that about 340 million yen ($3.4

million) were used for *kokutai* strategy in 1987. This was the year when the Nakasone

Administration abortively tried to pass the bill on a sales tax. Iwai (1990) estimates that

in 1988, when the LDP tried to pass the bill on the sales tax again, roughly 700 million

yen ($7 million) were given to the opposition parties. The increase in the amount of money used for *kokutai* can be accounted for as a strong effort to pass the bill submitted by the LDP.

Funding Sources of the LDP Diet Persons

The last question concerning the relationships between the LDP and the business community is how the LDP politicians obtain political funds. Sources of funds can be classified into four categories. Few politicians can depend only upon their own financial resources for their political activities. Traditionally, financial support from the faction has been the most important source of funds of the LDP Diet persons (Iyasu, 1993). However, direct business contributions to individual Diet persons are increasing. Particularly, after 1995, when the revised political fund control law was in effect, this tendency has become accelerated for reasons that are explained below.

Government support for Diet persons is only for the payment for three secretaries and for communications, transportation, and hotels. As of 1994, the average amount of annual government support for a Diet person is about 26 million yen ($260,000) excluding salaries (Ohmiya, 1994). Party support does not also become a substantial portion of the funds of the LDP Diet person. Every Diet person, except those who are in a minister's post, receives about 2.5 million yen ($25,000) twice a year from the party (Hirose, 1994, and Sone & Kanazashi, 1989). Besides this, the party gives each Diet person about 10 million yen ($100,000) in an election year (Hirose, 1994).

Financial support varies in each faction. Usually, the amount of money that a Diet person receives from a faction leader per year ranges from 2 million yen ($ 20,000) to 5 million yen ($50,000) (Sone & Kanazashi, 1989). Besides the support from faction leaders, Diet persons receive money from other senior faction members.

It needs to be recognized that these revenues mentioned above are not enough to provide for all of the political funding that a Diet person requires acknowledging that these are essential revenue sources for the LDP politicians. The LDP Diet persons depend more on individual efforts to collect money than on the assistance from the government, party, and other senior members of the party. Hirose (1994) argues that funds which are individually raised account for about 60% of their total revenues.

The business community is the main source not only for individual fund raising, but also fund raising of the party and factions. Among these three ways of fund raising, contributions from the business community to the party is the most "clear and clean" one. The most orthodox route of this type of contribution is through the National Political Association (NPA) (*Kokumin Seiji Kyokai*), which consists of 1,177 large companies. The original association was formed in 1955 in an attempt to avoid corruption between the LDP and individual companies.

The political donation to the LDP through the NPA has been about 12 billion yen (about $120 million) a year since the end of the 1980s (Hirose, 1994, and Iwai, 1990). During the years of the high-growth of the economy in the 1960s, the major contributors to the LDP were the steel industry, the electric power industry, and the banks (Curtis,

1988). These three industries remain high on the list of the contributors to the LDP.
However, the banks are the top contributors to the LDP, accounting for 28% of the total
donation through the NPA as of 1992 (Ohmiya, 1994).

As mentioned, the funds collected by individual Diet persons including faction
leaders are greater than the assistance from the party regardless of the legal restrictions
on donations. Until 1994, political contributions from the companies to one Diet person
was limited to under 1.5 million yen (about $15,000) a year. Furthermore, a donation of
over 1 million yen (about $ 10,000) had to be reported to the Home Ministry (Murakami,
1994).

Still, the following two loopholes made this restriction meaningless. First, because
there were no restrictions concerning the number of organizations that one politician can
establish, politicians could establish as many political organizations as needed to collect
as much money as possible. Second, companies could donate more than 1.5 million yen
by dividing the money into a small sums of less than 1 million yen

The most probable reason for these illegal donations is that it is an effective way
for companies to establish close relationships with politicians by these direct donations
rather than by an indirect donation through the party. Newly developed companies which
do not belong to industrial associations have a strong motivation to donate in this way
because their relationships with the LDP Diet persons are less intimate than companies
of basic industries which have long histories. Curtis (1988) states:

> That it is large and that a major source of funds are small, wealthy, and
> unincorporated provincial companies, particularly in the real estate and

construction industries, is not in doubt. . . . Speculation about the underground political economy is rife precisely because there is little information available about it--and because scandals erupt frequently enough to indicate that it really does exists (p. 185).

There are two ways for individual politicians to collect money informally. First, politicians collect money through political organizations. Those organizations are often called "*koenkai* for raising fund" (*Shikin koenkai*) and consist of business owners. Second, fund-raising parties are becoming increasingly popular method for collecting money (See, Curtis, 1988, Fukui & Fukai, 1991, Hirose, 1994, Hrebenar, 1986, and Kikuchi, 1987).

Most of the LDP Diet persons have their own political organizations which are used for fund raising. Membership fees of these organizations are usually about only 10,000 yen (about $100) a month. However, a large amount of money can be gathered by many small contributions. Senior politicians, especially, have a strong ties with the business community, so they have many members who belong to their political organizations. For example, former prime minister Noboru Takeshita had nine political organizations and collected money which ranges from 300 million yen (about $3 million) to 500 million yen (about $5 million) a year in each organization (Kikuchi, 1987). Former prime minister Kiichi Miyazawa had eleven organizations and collected money ranging from 400 million yen ($4 million) to 1 billion yen (about $10 million) a year in each organization (Kikuchi, 1987).

This method of collecting funds was very popular until 1994. However, the revised political fund control law, which was in effect in January 1995, may suppress this

corrupt way of raising funds in the future. The revised law set a sealing on cooperate contributions at 500,000 yen (approximately $5,000) a year, and it stipulates that donations over 50,000 yen (about $500) have to be reported to the Home Ministry. Moreover, the law says that cooperate contributions to individual politicians will be abolished in five years, and politicians can establish only one political organization .

Another individual way of collecting money is through fund raising parties. Politicians will depend more and more on this method in the future because there is no restriction on party revenue in the current law. Fund raising parties are an imitation of the American fund raising dinners which became known in the mid-1970s in Japan. This is a technique mainly used by LDP politicians (Hrebenar, 1986). This is one of the manifestations of the close ties between the LDP and the business community.

Faction leaders also have heavily relied on the raising revenue through fundraising parties. In 1987, then Takeshita faction had a fund raising party to collect about 1.1 billion yen (about $11 million) which accounted for almost half of the annual income of the Takeshita faction in 1987 (Sone & Kanazashi, 1989).

It has been the responsibility of faction leaders to assist their followers in selling tickets for their fund raising parties (Hirose, 1994). In 1986, when the elections of two houses were held, the number of fund raising parties held by both faction leaders and other politicians was 139 and the total revenue was about 8.7 billion yen (about $87 million) (Sone & Kanazashi, 1989). Considering the fact that the price of one ticket was only 20,000 yen (about $200) or 30,000 yen (about $300), there was a large number of

people participating in the parties. Hence, the assistance of faction leaders for selling party tickets must enhance close *oyabun-kobun* (boss-subordinate) relationships among faction leaders and their followers.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the enigma of the power of the LDP lies in its relationships with the business community and with opposition parties. By establishing close reciprocal relationships with the business community, the LDP obtains ample funds and stable popular votes. By establishing close reciprocal relationships with opposition parties, the LDP makes the legislative process smooth and makes its administration stable.

It should be noted that informal ties are the basis of these relationships. Informal meetings of LDP politicians and business leaders at Japanese restaurants provide opportunities where formal decisions can be made. The LDP *zoku* (informal policy support groups) play the role of lobbyists. Furthermore, at the informal organization, *kokutai* (Diet strategy committee), the LDP and opposition parties reach agreements as to how to amend bills.

Because of maintaining these informal relationships, the LDP and LDP Diet persons need a lot of money. Most of the money comes from the business community. A large amount of this money is spent for Diet strategy and maintaining *koenkai* (personal support organizations).

The LDP could maintain a stable one party dominant administration, having adequate funding and efficient Diet sessions. However, there are two problems with this. First, the relationships between the LDP and the business community tend to lead to corruption as can be seen from their frequent scandals. Second, opposition parties are silenced rather than encouraged to carry out their original responsibilities in criticizing and evaluating government policy.

CHAPTER V

THE FACTIONS AND THE *KOENKAI*

Introduction

The organizational bases of the LDP were the factions and the *Koenkai* (personal support groups). In a private document of the LDP, *Nihon no seitou,* (1979) (The political parties in Japan), which was compiled for the purpose of educating party members, the LDP was characterized as follows:

> In each region and community, reliable leaders were elected by *Koenkai* members. These leaders, then, formed the factions according to various human relationships. A loose coalition among these factions resulted in the LDP (p. 162).

In the previous chapters, the functions of the factions and the *koenkai* (personal support groups) were discussed. It was concluded that the factions and the *koenkai* were in harmony with traditional Japanese culture in Chapter II. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an explanation of these two organizations.

The Factions

The factions of the LDP were officially dissolved in 1995. As mentioned in the second chapter, it is naive to assume that the factions will never again become active. First, all of the former five faction leaders expressed their desire to maintain relationships

among faction members. Second, the LDP officially dissolved the factions twice, in 1957 and in 1976, in an attempt to strengthen the power of the president of the LDP. However, the factions came to life again about one year after they were dissolved.

<center>The Structural Changes of the Factions</center>

The LDP factions were groups that assembled around particular individuals. There were few ideological differences among the factions. The LDP factions were institutionalized immediately after the emergence of the LDP in 1955 (Beller & Belloni, 1978, and Fukui, 1978). They had their own treasuries, offices, and meeting places. The factions were composed of Diet persons belonging to both the lower and upper houses. Most of the LDP Diet persons belonged to the factions. As of 1994, 163 out of the 200 LDP members of the lower house belonged to the factions, and 85 out of the 95 LDP members of the upper house belonged to factions.

When the factions were officially dissolved in 1995, five factions existed: the Miyazawa faction, the Obuchi faction, the Mitsuzuka faction, the Watanabe faction, and the Komoto faction. The name of each factions was the same as the name of each of the faction leaders. All of these five factions originated in 1955 when the LDP was formed. Figure 5 indicates a relatively strong continuity and stability of the factions even though they split frequently in the 1960s. Those splits were caused by the death or retirement of major faction leaders.

```
            1960              1970              1980
------------------------------------------------------------------------
Yoshida ——Ikeda      ———————    Ohira    ———————   Suzuki —— Miyazawa ——
        \ Sato       ———————————  Tanaka  ———————————  Takeshita ——Obuchi—
                                                        Nikaido

Ohno ————————————Murakami ————————— Mizuta ————————➤
                \ Funada      ———————————————
                                                    Nakagawa
Kishi————————— Fukuda ——————————————————————————————— Abe—— Mitsuzuka ——
      \ \ Kawashima ————————————— Shiina —
       \ \ Fujiyama —————————————
Hatoyama —— Kono ————————— Mori/Sonoda
Ishibashi              \ Nakasone ————————————————————————— Watanabe ———
Miki    ———————————————————————————————————— Komoto ———————————
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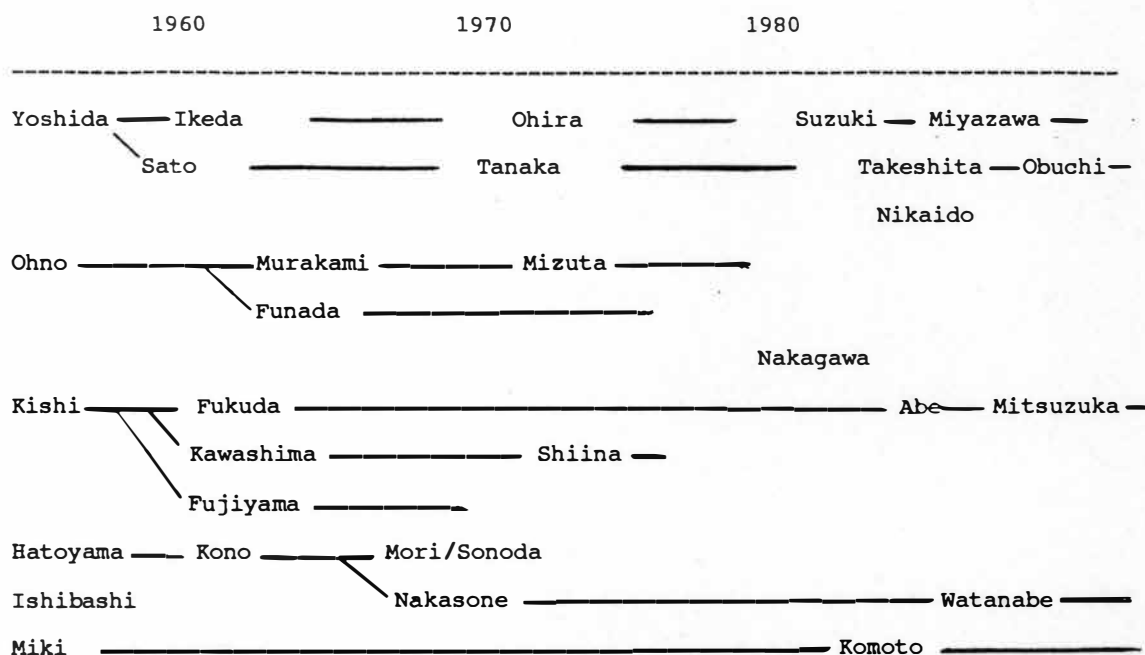
Figure 5. Development of the Factions, 1955-95.

In addition to changes in the number of factions, the characteristics of the factions also changed. Curtis (1988) said that factional organizations had become less leader-dominated and more collegial structured. This shift was brought about by the generational change of the faction leaders (Curtis, 1988). No original faction leaders were left as of 1995. By then all faction leaders had inherited their factions. The faction which experienced the least number of leadership changes was the Komoto faction. Toshio Komoto, who is nearly 90 years old, inherited the faction from Takeo Miki who was a founder of the Miki faction. By contrast, the leadership of the other factions has changed several times.

If an influential and outstanding successor was not found in the faction, a collegial structure of leadership was formed. For example, when Zenko Suzuki retired as a faction

leader in 1983, the senior member of the Suzuki faction, Jun Shiozaki, was to inherit the faction. However, the relatively young members of the faction were not satisfied with his leadership. Finally, Kiichi Miyazawa became a faction leader because his leadership was well evaluated by other members (Iseri, 1988).

The shift from a leader-dominated relationship to a collegial one was also brought about by the financial independence of faction members. The more members the faction had, the more funds the faction leaders had to raise. Fukui (1970) wrote that a faction with more than fifty members imposes an unbearable financial burden on its leader. In 1965, there were an average of 39 members in each faction. This average increased to about 73 in 1985. As discussed in the previous chapter, the fund raising of an individual Diet person has become important. Within the factions since the 1980s, the faction leader and other senior faction members raised funds for the maintenance of the faction (Nakano, 1993).

The ability to raise funds is an important characteristic for a successor to the faction leadership. Rothacher (1993) said, "The influence of a faction leader declines when his revenues, which reflect his estimated power, begin to shrink" (p. 22). A member who could raise more money than a faction leader often succeeded to the leadership of the faction. The emergence of the Nakasone faction in 1965, and the Tanaka and the Ohira faction in 1971 were examples of this (Kitaoka, 1985). A more recent example is the emergence of the Takeshita faction in 1986. Noboru Takeshita, who was in the second position in the Tanaka faction, secretly formed his own faction by providing money to most of the

members of the Tanaka faction. When first generation faction leaders were alive, this type of leadership succession did not occur.

The Functions of the Factions

The factions existed for 40 years because they were essential not only for the LDP organization but also for LDP Diet persons themselves. Thayer (1973) pointed out five functions of the factions. First, the leaders of the LDP were chosen through the factions. Second, money was collected and distributed through the factions. Third, governmental posts and party posts were determined by and through the factions. Fourth, in the election, candidates were assisted by the factions. Fifth, the LDP Diet persons received psychological satisfaction by belonging to the factions. Besides these, dealing with various kinds of petitions from supporters was an important function of the factions (See, Iseri, 1988, Itakura, 1992, Kikuchi, 1987, and Nakano, 1992). In the following part, these six functions will be explained

The first function of the factions was to influence the selection of the party presidents. When the presidential election was held, faction members voted for their leader. When the president was selected through negotiation and consultation, the informal meeting of faction leaders was the place where the decision was made.

The leader who obtained the majority support of the Diet persons became the president of the party. The number of the faction members in one faction was not big enough to establish the majority control within the party. Therefore, it was necessary for

the faction leaders to join with another faction to maintain control of the party. In the process of forming an alliance, severe power struggles often occurred. Money was often given to Diet persons to buy votes (Sone & Kanazashi, 1989). The former Director General of the Environment Agency, Masahisa Aoki described the situation that existed before a presidential election in his reminiscences (1994). Aoki wrote that because there is no law to prohibit giving money to buy votes in the presidential election, faction leaders used to give money to the Diet persons who did not belong to their factions openly. He said that in one election, he received 3 million yen (approximately $30,000) from three faction leaders.

Severe power struggles in the presidential elections among faction leaders disappeared since the Nakasone administration (1982-1987) (Sone & Kanazashi, 1989). After Kakuei Tanaka resigned as a prime minister in 1974, because of the Lockheed Scandal, he started to expand his faction, and as a result, he wielded power as a "king maker". The number of members of the Tanaka faction expanded to 140 in the beginning of the 1980s. By 1982, the average number of members in each faction except the Tanaka faction was about 60. The dominant power of the Tanaka faction meant that no leader could become the president without the support of the Tanaka faction. Until 1993, Kakuei Tanaka and Noboru Takeshita, who took over the Tanaka faction in 1987, played a significant role in the selection of the presidents. Three presidents, Sousuke Uno (June, 1989-August, 1989), Toshiki Kaifu (August, 1989-November, 1991), and Kiichi Miyazawa

(November, 1991-August, 1993) were virtually selected by the Takeshita faction (Iseri, 1988).

Kakuei Tanaka could greatly expand his faction because he could raise enough funds to take care of his followers. Tanaka was one of the first persons to become a *zoku* Diet person (Iseri, 1988). While he served as the Finance Minister, the Minister of International Trade and Industry, the chairman of the PARC and the secretary general before becoming the prime minister, he established close relationships with various kinds of companies. Therefore, he could collect formal and informal donations from industries.

The second function of the factions was to raise funds and distribute them to faction members. As discussed in the previous chapter, the LDP Diet persons spend significant sums of money not only for election campaigns, but also for maintaining the *koenkai*. A faction leader assists his followers not only by giving them money directly but also by introducing them to influential members of the business community (Thayer, 1973).

However, in the 1980s, when the number of the factions decreased to only five, it became difficult for faction leaders to provide money to their followers. The decrease in the number of factions resulted in the increase in the number of the faction members in one faction. As a result, senior faction members also got involved in the fund raising for the maintenance of the faction. Nakano (1993) said that it was common for executives of the faction and members who served as ministers to raise funds by themselves without relying on a faction leader. Even Tanaka had to rely on other senior faction members financially after his faction expanded to 104 members.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the political fund control law was revised in 1995 to prohibit the creation of more than one political organization to raise funds. As a result, it became difficult for faction leaders to raise fund from the business community. This may have also accelerated the decline in the influence of faction leaders among their followers.

The third function of the factions was to provide government posts and party posts to faction members. The assignment of cabinet posts has been the issue to which LDP Diet persons have paid particular attention. Cabinet posts have been allocated through consultations and negotiations among faction leaders. It should be noted that, although the factions were dissolved on January 1995, cabinet posts were allocated according to the factional balance in a cabinet reshuffle on August 1995. Cabinet posts were allocated by a consideration of the size of the factions. "For the LDP, the virtual monopoly of appointive government jobs has served as a massive stimulus to factionalism " (Fukui, 1978, p. 50).

As the process of the selection of the president changed in the 1980s, the way to distribute government posts also changed in the 1980s. In other words, the hegemony of the Tanaka and the Takeshita factions brought a change in the selection process of cabinet posts. Until the 1960s, the mainstream factions, which comprised the party's ruling coalition, dominated the cabinet and party executives' posts (See, Curtis, 1988, Iseri, 1988, and Sone & Kanazashi, 1989). Conversely, members of the anti mainstream factions at least could be allocated less important posts.

All factions have been in the ruling coalition since the 1980s (Curtis, 1988). Under the existence of a dominant faction such as the Tanaka and the Takeshita faction, it was necessary for small factions to join the mainstream factions in order to receive government and party posts for their members. The Komoto faction, which was the smallest faction since the 1980s, is an illustration. When Yasuhiro Nakasone formed a new government in 1986, Toshio Komoto asked Nakasone to appoint two members of the Komoto faction as cabinet ministers. However, Nakasone allocated only one ministerial post to the Komoto faction by eliminating one previous post because the Komoto faction did not support Nakasone's inauguration as the prime minister. In other words, the Komoto faction lost one cabinet post because it was an anti mainstream faction.

In the meeting of the Komoto faction, many criticisms of Komoto were expressed by his followers, arguing that it was a weakness of Komoto as a faction leader to have failed to assist his followers in becoming ministers (Kikuchi, 1987). In the Takeshita administration (1987-1989), the Komoto faction became a mainstream faction by supporting Noboru Takeshita. As a result, Komoto could make two of his followers ministers. This was the only way for Komoto to appease the frustration of his followers and maintain his faction (Kikuchi, 1987).

Because anti-mainstream factions disappeared, power struggles among factions were reduced in the selection of the the president. On the positive side, it contributed to establishing friendly relationships among the factions. On the negative side, it reduced the competitive relationships among the factions. Before the 1980s, when anti-mainstream

factions existed, they could criticize party policies and could recommend other policies. However, those active interrelationships disappeared in the 1980s (Iseri, 1988, and Sone & Kanazashi, 1989). Simply put, "check and balance" relationships among the factions were minimized. In an interview with this author, Diet person Yasuoki Urano said, "All of the factions became conservative, and they lost vitality" (Personal communication, December 28, 1994).

The fourth function of the factions was to support candidates for the lower house under the multi-member electoral system. This was one of the most important reasons for the growth and survival of the LDP factions (See, Baerwald, 1986, Fukui, 1970, Iseri, 1988, Rothacher, 1993, and Sone & Kanazashi, 1989). Until 1995, the 511 members of the lower house were elected from 130 districts which were multi-member constituencies with only one exception. In each constituency, three, four, or five representatives were elected.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the House of Representatives has the final voice to elect the prime minister. If a party has a majority of members in the lower house, a leader of that party becomes the prime minister automatically. Therefore, it was necessary for the LDP to win at least 256 seats out of 511 seats of the House of Representatives. In order to capture 256 seats, the LDP had to win an average two seats in each district because there were only 130 districts. It follows that the LDP candidates had to compete not only with opposition candidates but also with other LDP candidates. Moreover, the party supports only one candidate in a district, usually a candidate belonging to the

dominant faction in a district. Therefore, for other candidates, the factions were the only organizations on which they could rely in the election.

Besides financial assistance in the election, two other types of assistance were provided by the factions. The first type of assistance was that the faction helped candidates to obtain an endorsement from the party (Iseri, 1988, and Thayer, 1973). Not all the candidates can get an official party nomination. New candidates had particular difficulty in obtaining endorsements without assistance from the faction. Thus, it was important for a new candidate to find the faction which allowed him/her to become a member if he/she wanted to obtain the party endorsement. In an interview with this author, Diet person Seiko Noda said, "[Before running for the election] I asked Toshio Komoto, a leader of the Komoto faction, to join his faction, because there were no LDP Diet persons who belonged to this faction in my district" (Personal communication, December 26, 1994). As can be seen in her case, the selection of the faction was not based on ideology or policy affiliation, but on whether or not there is a candidate belonging to that particular faction in that district.

The second type of assistance in the election is to provide help for a candidate's campaign. A faction leader teaches candidates in campaign strategies such as how to establish the *koenkai* and how to make speeches (Kikuchi, 1987). In addition, a faction leader makes speeches for candidates or their followers. More importantly, a faction leader mobilizes his own *koenkai* to collect votes for his candidates or followers (Inoue, 1992).

The election law was revised in 1995. As a result, the election system of the lower house changed from a multi-member constituency system to a system of single-seat

constituencies coupled with proportional representation. In this system, an LDP candidate does not have to compete with other LDP candidates. Therefore, LDP candidates do not have to rely heavily on the factions in the election. Considering the fact that the multi-seat constituency system was one of the conditions that enabled the LDP factions to survive, LDP Diet persons may become more independent than they were.

The fifth function of the factions was to satisfy the psychological and communication needs of faction members (See, Fukui, 1978, Rothacher, 1993, and Thayer, 1973). In an interview with this author, Diet person Yasuoki Urano said, "It is natural for Diet persons who are congenial to each other to form a group" (Personal communication, December 28, 1994). Diet person Akira Ohno also said, "If human beings get together, the factions are formed naturally" (Personal communication, December 24, 1994). Furthermore, Diet person Seiko Noda said, "The LDP is a huge party. So, it was easy for the party to convey information to each Diet person. The factions conveyed information instead of the party headquarters" (Personal communication, December 26, 1994). The first two Diet persons emphasized the psychological aspects of the function of the factions. Noda maintained that factions provided for effective communication within the party.

The last function of the factions is to deal with petitions from supporters of Diet persons. Supporters of Diet persons, especially the *koenkai* members, made various kinds of requests to a Diet person. Those include obtaining funds for public construction, entering children into high schools or colleges, finding jobs for supporters and their family members, and canceling traffic tickets for supporters (Curtis, 1971, and Itakura, 1992). No

Diet person is able to satisfy all of these requests from supporters. Therefore, Diet persons asked their faction leaders to deal with these issues.

Zoku Diet persons (special interest Diet persons) in each faction play a significant role in dealing with petitions from supporters (Kikuchi, 1987, and Nakano, 1993). For example, when a Diet person receives a petition to construct a bridge in his district, he/she consults his/her faction leader and the construction *zoku* Diet persons in his/her faction. Then, they put pressure on an appropriate government office and asked other senior Diet persons to allocate a budget for that project.

The existence of the factions was criticized from within and without the party. The criticism is that the control of Diet persons by the party headquarters was weakened because the behavior of the Diet persons were largely influenced by the factions. Related to this, the leadership of the president, that is the prime minister, was also weakened (Nakano, 1992, and Thayer, 1973). Faction members worked for their leader in order to make him the president. Conversely, members expected to be appointed to governmental and party posts. This is the reason the LDP factions were called "parties in the party".

Existence of the factions, however, had positive aspects. One positive aspect is that their existence prevented the emergence of a dictator (Kitaoka, 1990). A faction leader could not wield power if he was not supported by other factions because one faction was not enough to obtain a majority vote of Diet persons. This "check and balance" relationship functioned well until the 1970s. As mentioned earlier, once the Tanaka faction expanded

its membership to 140 in the 1980s, the relationships among the factions became unbalanced.

Another positive aspect of factions was that they contributed to the reduction of conflict among Diet persons (Nakano, 1993). As mentioned, a principle of LDP decision making is to reach an unanimous decision. In the event that controversial issues were discussed in the LDP, each faction leader could persuade his followers who adamantly opposed party policies to follow the party policies. The close relationships between leaders and followers, which could be characterized as patron-client relationships, made this possible.

Diet person Yasuoki Urano pointed out another positive aspect of the factions. In an interview with this author, he said, "The factions competed with each other to formulate better policies than other factions" (Personal communication, December 28, 1994). He stated that if the factions develop the function of policy making, they should continue to exist.

Considering the functions of the factions and positive aspects of the factions, it is possible that the LDP factions will be reactivated. As long as the behavior of LDP Diet persons is influenced by the Japanese culture, the factions are most likely to become active again. Baerwald (1986) stated:

> To anticipate or wish that factionalism could or should be eliminated from the LDP, as its critics so ardently desire, is to expect this political party to become something other than a Japanese organization (p. 17).

The *Koenkai* and Its Origin

In the lower house election of 1976, Kakuei Tanaka, who was a defendant in the Lockheed Scandal Case, became a successful candidate by obtaining the largest number of votes in the district. This otherwise unlikely event was the result of the activities of his *koenkai*. Regardless of the nation-wide criticism caused by the scandal, the *koenkai* continued to support Tanaka. This was one manifestation of the close relationship between the *koenkai* members and a Diet person supported by them. The reasons why *koenkai* members are very consistent supporters reqires historical examination.

The *koenkai* appeared for the first time in 1958, three years after the LDP was created (Kawato, 1994, and Kitaoka, 1985). As mentioned in the previous chapter, most Diet persons at present have their *koenkai*. However, the *koenkai* of LDP Diet persons are more active than those for the politicians of the other parties for the following reasons.

Traditionally, the conservative politicians relied on local notables, usually landowners, to mobilize the voters. On the other hand, the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ) counted on the votes of organized labor while the Komeito (the Clean Government Party) and the Japan Communist Party (JCP) relied mainly on urban dwellers whose religious and ideological affiliations were identical with the Komeito and JCP respectively. When there was an election, the only campaign objective of the conservative politicians was to win the support of the local notables (Kitaoka, 1990, and Thayer, 1973). All of the voters who lived in the same village voted for the same candidate. Moreover,

many of the conservative politicians were members of the wealthy families of those local

notables. Thayer (1973) wrote:

> Since many of the politicians were sons of one of the leading families in the
> district, and since these leading families were intertwined through marriage
> and otherwise, the prewar politician could rely on his family to gather the
> votes. He needed no other organizations (p. 83).

The postwar land reform that expropriated the land and tenancy destroyed the

traditional support base of the conservative politicians. The leadership of the local notables

in the community was transferred to the public officials in the local government. In

addition, people who lived in the rural areas moved to the cities as the result of the rapid

industrialization after World War II. This population move resulted in the decline of the

number of supporters of the conservative politicians. Conservative politicians could no

longer rely on local notables to gather enough votes to be elected as a Diet person.

Under these circumstances, the *koenkai* appeared. The *koenkai* appeared because

LDP politicians had to compensate the local notables for collecting votes. Local politicians,

who were leaders of the *koenkai*, were those who collected the votes for the Diet persons.

One of the basic characteristics of the *koenkai* was the hierarchically structured networks

among LDP Diet persons and local politicians (Curtis, 1971, and Kawato, 1994).

A characteristic that differentiated the *koenkai* from the traditional supporters'

groups was that the *koenkai* were based on direct relationships between candidate and

individual voters (Curtis, 1971, and Kawato, 1994). Curtis (1971) wrote that the *koenkai*

were modern because of "the use of a mass-memberships organization with the function of

organizing large numbers of the general electorate on behalf of a particular Diet candidate"

(p. 128). When local notables were powerful enough to collect votes for a Diet person, a Diet person did not have to make an effort to establish personal relationships with voters.

Structure of the *Koenkai*

The *koenkai* were divided into several federations which were located at the top of the hierarchical organization of the *koenkai*. Each federation had a chief. Usually, he/she was a prefectural assembly person (Aiba, 1993, and Inoue, 1992). Each federation was divided into several sections. Each section also had a chief who was usually a local assembly person (Aiba, 1993, and Inoue, 1992). Each section was divided into several sub-sections. A sub-section chief was usually an influential person in the community. Aiba (1993) wrote that usually there were about five prefectural assembly persons as federation chiefs, about 50 municipal, town , or village assembly persons as section chiefs, and about 500 to 1000 local influential persons as sub-section chiefs in one *koenkai*.

The *koenkai* were composed of tens of thousands members (Kawato, 1994). Members were linked through friendships, neighbors, workplaces, professions, school relationships, families and marriages (Curtis, 1988, and Fukui & Fukai, 1991). Not all of the *koenkai* members were active. In an interview with this author, one *koenkai* member of Diet person Iwao Matsuda said, "I became a *koenkai* member because my friend asked me to join that *koenkai*. . . . To tell the truth, I have voted for socialist candidates" (Personal communication, December 25, 1994). Kawato (1994) stated that about 40% of

the koenkai members became members simply because they were solicited to join by their friends, neighbors, or colleagues.

Besides the hierarchical structure of the *koenkai*, there were some horizontal organizations in the *koenkai*. According to the reminiscences of the former Director General of the Environment Agency, Masahisa Aoki (1994), his *koenkai* consisted of 60 organizations such as the elder persons' groups, the young peoples' groups, and the women's groups. Thayer (1973) wrote that the *koenkai* of Yasuhiro Nakasone, one of the oldest and most highly structured, consisted of several parallel organizations such as the married women's group, the men's group, the group of young men the under thirty, and the group of young unmarried women.

Koenkai Activities

As mentioned, the ultimate purpose of the *koenkai* was to mobilize votes. In order to attain this goal, Diet persons needed to strengthen relationships with *koenkai* members not only in the election years but also non-election years. There are three kinds of activities which are utilized to maintain and expand the *koenkai*. Those are: (1) obtaining funds from the government for public works, (2) providing community activities for entertainment and recreation, and (3) providing personal assistance (Kawato, 1994, and Thayer, 1973).

First, the *koenkai* members including local politicians ask a LDP Diet person they are supporting to obtain funds from the government for public works such as the construction of new facilities, road repairs, and constructing train stations. These political

activities were considered to be the primary obligation of a Diet person to the *koenkai* members (Kawato, 1994, Inoue, 1992). As mentioned, it was essential for LDP Diet persons to belong to factions because faction leaders or senior members of the factions assisted Diet persons in applying pressure on appropriate government offices to allocate funds for local public works.

This is a benefit for Diet persons. At the same time it is also a benefit for local politicians who served as federation chiefs, section chiefs, or sub-section chiefs in the *koenkai*. Those local politicians could expand their own *koenkai* through the networks of the *koenkai* of the Diet person they supported. Therefore local politicians worked hard for the *koenkai* in order to become chiefs in the *koenkai*. Inoue (1992) pointed out that it took about ten years for local politicians to become chiefs in the *koenkai*.

It should be noted that since the 1980s, two factions, the Tanaka, and the Takeshita factions, became dominant. These two factions had every type of *zoku* Diet persons. Diet persons belonging to these factions had an advantage in applying pressure on the government offices to allocate funds for public works in their own districts.

Second, providing *koenkai* members with recreation and entertainment were also important activities. There were various kinds of activities. Those included: general membership meetings in which food and drink were served; tennis, volleyball, and quilting clubs; a chess tournament; and a cooking class. The *koenkai* also organized tours. Former LDP Diet person Masahisa Aoki (1994) wrote that his *koenkai* made trips about 20 times a year each of which was attended by about 500 members. Aoki wrote that a large amount

of money was spent for those trips even though he did not pay all of the expenses of the participants. On the surface of it, these non-political activities seemed to be meaningless for Diet persons because these activities are not related to political activities involving the formulation of policy and studying their own special policy areas. However, these activities were essential to mobilize *koenkai* members in the elections. One LDP renegade, who currently belongs to a new party, said, "While my *koenkai* members did not work if I did not give them entertainment or recreation, members of *the Soka Gakkai* (the Buddhist organization which supports the Komeito) worked very hard for me although I offered nothing to them" (Seisaku, 1995). Viewed in this light, relationships between LDP Diet persons and their supporters are quite reciprocal.

Third, LDP Diet persons offered personal assistance to the *koenkai* members. Kawato (1994) described the various kinds of assistance:

> a child's admission to college or the search for a job, gifts for weddings and condolence money for funerals, good offices in obtaining a business loan, resolution of traffic accidents or mediation of a quarrel between two individuals or groups (pp. 177-179).

Curtis (1971), observing a election campaign of one LDP Diet person, stated that the *koenkai* office was like a "combination employment agency, school placement service, counseling center and a kind of social club where people may drop in, have a cup of tea, and talk of elections and politics" (pp. 146-147).

Why do LDP Diet persons spend a lot of time and energy for such activities ? The following episode involving Kakuei Tanaka addresses this question. Shigezo Hayasaka (1994), who was a secretary of Tanaka, wrote:

One day, a strange old lady visited our office in Tokyo. No sooner had she seen Tanaka when she bluntly said, "Kaku (Tanaka's nickname), please call the highest police officer in Japan to find my son. He [her son] was easily deceived by an ill-natured woman and [be] ran away with her, leaving his wife and children." . . . Then, Tanaka called the Commissioner General and asked him to find the lady's son. . . . When the lady was leaving, Tanaka went to the entrance with her and found her shoes and helped her to put them on. After she left the office, I asked him, "Why were you so kind to such a strange old lady ?" He said, "You are stupid. . . . When she returns to the constituency, she will tell everyone she meets that Tanaka was so kind that he helped her to put on her shoes. This is good public relations which costs no money (pp. 117-118).

Tanaka's actions were in harmony with the leadership ideal in Japanese society as described by Chie Nakane (1971). As discussed in Chapter II, Nakane stated that the vertical relationships between two individuals are the bases of the structural principle of a group in Japan, and direct personal relationships between an upper and a lower status individual strengthens the morale of a group. Thus, Nakane claimed that one of the most important qualifications of a leader in Japanese society depends on his/her ability to understand and attract his/her followers.

Koenkai activities include both political and non-political activities. Political activities have been described above. Through non-political activities, LDP Diet persons expend a great deal of money and energy. Those expenditures, however, were necessary for LDP Diet persons to maintain and expand the *koenkai*. While the relationships between the Diet person and his/her supporters were direct and personal ones, they were in harmony with Japanese culture, and those relationships also were reciprocal.

Conclusion

The factions and the *koenkai* were related to each other. An LDP Diet person relies mainly on the *koenkai* during the elections. An LDP Diet person also relied on a faction to establish and maintain the *koenkai* not only by receiving financial assistance but also by asking the leader to help him/her in providing benefits to his/her constituency.

The factions and the *koenkai* were subject to criticism. The most serious problem involving the faction was that the emergence of dominant factions in the 1980s reduced the vitality of the LDP. The Tanaka faction and the Takeshita faction, which took over the Tanaka faction, acquired special privileges in choosing persons for government and party posts. The competitive relationships among the factions until the 1970s gave the LDP organizational strength based on a "check and balance" system. The problem involving the *koenkai* was that LDP Diet persons had to invest a lot of time with the *koenkai*. This was the reason LDP Diet persons did not enthusiastically engage in policy-making themselves. In an interview with this author, Diet person Yasuoki Urano said, "It has been said that Diet persons have to develop the ability to create policies. . . . However, because elections occupy our minds, we are always too busy to make policies" (Personal communication, December 28, 1994).

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Summary

The basic theme of this thesis centered on describing the organizations of the LDP and especially the behavior of LDP Diet persons. In addition, the thesis explored characteristics of the LDP decision making process and demonstrates that the behaviors of LDP Diet persons harmonized with traditional Japanese culture. This latter element clarified the success of the LDP in amassing significant organizational strength.

In Chapter II, Japanese culture or the psycho characteristics of the Japanese people were discussed by introducing the works of three scholars. They were Benedict, R. (1946), Nakane, C. (1970), and Doi, T. (1973). Both Benedict and Nakane argued that groups in Japanese society could be characterized by its hierarchical structure. In hierarchical relationships among members in a group, and consequently among LDP politicians, the relationships between superiors and subordinates were reciprocal and their behaviors were often regulated by the psychological Japanese norms *on* and *giri*. *On* is the social and psychological debt one incurs upon receiving a favor of major proportions. *Giri* is a norm that obliges one to help those who have helped another, or to do favors for those from whom one has received favors.

Because of the existence of those norms, LDP Diet persons were closely connected to each other. Nakane (1970) argued that the higher the degree of the functioning of vertical relationships, the stronger the degree of the functioning group. Moreover, she argued that the most stable group consists of two levels of persons, with each subordinate member at the lower level linked directly to the leader at the upper level. This study showed that in a hierarchical relationship between a faction leader and followers, personal and direct relationships tie them to one another. Thus a faction leader gave money to members of his faction and provided them with government posts and party posts. In Japanese tradition this is known as *on*. In return for *on*, members kept making their leaders the president of the party. This act of reciprocity is known as *giri*.

In addition, hierarchical relationships outside the factions existed between a LDP Diet person and *koenkai* members including local politicians. Those relationships were also personal and direct. *Koenkai* members collect votes and raise funds for a Diet person. A Diet person assists his followers among the local politicians in the election by giving them money and by collecting votes for them. A Diet person also works for other *koenkai* members to receive government funding for local projects. Moreover, a Diet person provides *koenkai* members with various kinds of personal assistance such as helping their children gain admission to high school or colleges, finding jobs for them, and helping them to resolve personal and legal problems.

It is concluded that the interpersonal relationships among LDP Diet persons and between LDP Diet persons and their followers are the ideal ones in Japanese society.

Those relationships fulfill the characteristics of ideal relationships among members in a group portrayed by Nakane. Thus, the interpersonal relationships within the LDP serve to strengthen the morale of the LDP politicians and to stabilize the organization of the LDP.

Another useful concept which explains the characteristics of the Japanese was *amae* (mutual dependency). Doi (1973) stated that *amae* was a key concept in understanding the psychological characteristics of the Japanese. Thus, this concept was useful in explaining behavior patterns of not only the Japanese but also LDP politicians. Mutual dependent relationships among the LDP and opposition parties were explained by *amae*.

In Chapter III, characteristics of the LDP Diet persons and decision making organizations were explained. Moreover, it was determined that decision making organizations of the LDP functioned by keeping harmony among LDP Diet persons. The meetings of the three official decision making organs of the LDP, that is, the party conference, the assembly of the members of both houses of the Diet, and the executive council, were all ceremonial. A lot of time was consumed in reaching consensus through negotiation and consultation before issues were brought to official decision making organs. Only when there were politically controversial issues, were substantial discussions held in the executive council. The executive council has a significant role in the decision making process of the LDP because it gives final approval for the decisions made by the Political Affairs Research Council (PARC). However, discussions in the

executive council were often a part of a process to reach unanimous agreement; members of the executive council often transferred their decision making powers to the president, or to informal meetings of party leaders. These examples clarify the fact that the decision making process of the LDP was consistent with Japanese culture and the psychological traits of the Japanese people which center on harmony.

The LDP presidents who exercised significant leadership were exceptional in the history of the party. Although the Party Law stipulated that the president must be elected, the president was often selected through consultation among faction leaders. Maintaining harmony within the party was the first priority in the selection of the president. This tradition continued even after LDP rule ended. Thus, even before the presidential election was held in 1995, Yohei Kono, who was the incumbent president, announced he would not run for reelection. His reason for dropping out was to prevent a split in the party (Japanese, 1995).

The faction leader supported by the majority of Diet persons became the LDP president. If a leadership struggle between the two principal contenders ensued, a third person, who had not intended to become LDP president, would be selected president in order to sustain harmony among Diet persons. This was just one more example of the functioning of Japanese political culture.

In Chapter IV, it was explained how the LDP Diet persons collected money and how it was spent. Close relationships between the business community and the LDP were clarified. Although the informal fund raising activities of the Diet persons had been made

more difficult by the revision of the political fund control law, the business community is still the most important source of money for LDP Diet persons. Individual fund raising methods, such as fund raising parties, however, have become popular among current LDP Diet persons.

Generally speaking, LDP Diet persons spent money for two major purposes. First they expended funds for *kokutai* (Diet strategy committee) to create a smooth legislative process. The LDP even gave money to the opposition parties when the LDP tried to pass controversial bills. Second, money was spent to maintain and expand the *koenkai* (personal support groups) of LDP Diet persons. This expenditure included not only money for election campaigns but also money for daily activities such as attending wedding ceremonies and funerals.

In Chapter V, the organizations of the factions and the *koenkai* were explained. Those two organizations were seen to be the bases of the LDP. The *koenkai* were essential for LDP politicians to be elected as Diet persons. Relationships between Diet persons and their followers were personal and direct. Therefore, as mentioned in Chapter II, the *koenkai* and thus too the LDP enjoyed considerable stability.

The close relationship between LDP politicians and *koenkai* members was maintained because each group received significant benefits. In other words, relationships always were reciprocal. *Koenkai* members collected votes and raised funds for Diet persons. And Diet persons provided *koenkai* members with various kinds of personal assistance. In addition, in order to maintain the coherency of the *koenkai*, a Diet person

plans trips, parties, and other entertaining activities for the members. Although the *koenkai* were constructed as informal organizations, they became vitally important in assuring LDP control of the government for 38 years.

Although it plays an important role in the Japanese political process, there has been little criticism of the *koenkai*. However, there is one problem that needs to be mentioned. LDP Diet persons are always busy with mundane affairs because of the demands of *koenkai* activities. LDP Diet persons take part in tours with *koenkai* members. They also attend many funerals and weddings. Therefore, LDP Diet persons have little time to study and formulate policies. It should also be noted that those activities were only for *koenkai* members. LDP Diet persons spend so much of their time with their *koenkai* members that they leave little time for their larger electral constituency. This may become a serious problem in the future.

The factions were another organizational basis of the LDP. Six functions of the factions were pointed out. First, the LDP leaders were chosen through the factions. Second, political funds were collected and distributed through the factions. Third, governmental and party posts were determined by and through the factions. Fourth, in the election, candidates were assisted by the faction leaders. Fifth, LDP Diet persons received a certain degree of psychological satisfaction by belonging to the faction. Sixth, LDP Diet persons relied on the factions in dealing with various kinds of petitions from their supporters.

Although, the factions had important functions, the existence of the factions has been criticized within and outside the LDP. The most significant reason was that the factions reduced the extent of the party control over Diet persons. Most important, the party could not control fund raising and distribution of money. The party also could not control the allocation of government and party posts.

It has been argued that these characteristics increased incidents of corruption within the LDP. The faction leaders needed a large amount of money to assist faction members to both maintain their *koenkai* and to be elected. The ability to raise funds was the most important condition in becoming a faction leader. But, political contributions often are not enough for faction leaders to maintain their factions, therefore, LDP Diet persons often relied on illegal donations.

Until the 1970s, the factions competed with each other to promote their leaders for the presidency. Consequently, the LDP was dependent on factional balances. But as a result of the expansion of the Tanaka faction in the 1980s, competition among the factions was eliminated. Confronted by a new order of power, faction leaders were compelled to support the "mainstream" faction. The result was an imbalance among the factions which reduced the overall organizational strength of the LDP.

In addition, all of the major bribery cases since 1970s, including the Lockheed Scandal Case, the Recruit Scandal Case, and the Sagawa Express Case, were related to three leaders of the mainstream factions, i.e., Kakuei Tanaka, Noboru Takeshita, and Shin Kanemaru. Although not all of the faction leaders and senior Diet persons were involved

in these bribery cases, the frequency of scandals generated a public belief that the factions were hotbeds of corruption.

The Current Situation and the Future of the LDP

When LDP rule collapsed on July 1993, no one had anticipated that Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa would be driven from office after only eight months, or that his successor, Tsutomu Hata, would survive for only two more months. Even less expected was that a year later the LDP would be back in power as a partner of the Social Democratic Party of Japan with Tomiichi Murayama as prime minister. In total, Japan had four prime ministers from 1993 to 1995. Those were the three prime ministers mentioned above, Hosokawa (August 1993-April 1994), Hata (April 1994-June 1994), and Murayama (June 1994-) and Kiichi Miyazawa (November 1991-July 1993), a predecessor of Hosokawa. Japanese politics has been in an unstable condition since 1993. Additional splits in the party and new alliances of splinter groups may emerge in the future.

Under these circumstances, it is unlikely that the LDP will reestablish its one party rule. However, by examining current political and social conditions within Japan, it is possible to explore the potential for a revival of single party LDP government.

In order to do this, it is necessary to consider whether or not the LDP politicians still have the support of the *koenkai* (personal support groups), and to what extent, in 1995, the Japanese people encourage further political experimentation and realignment.

The Realignment of 1993

It is generally believed that the public criticism of the LDP which ensued from a number of bribery cases was the major reason for the collapse of LDP rule in 1993. If this is true, it can be argued that the LDP lost a majority of the seats in the lower house because the LDP lost the support of the *koenkai* members. In order to analyze this argument, it is necessary to review the political situation in 1992 and 1993.

In 1992 and 1993, three conservative politicians, Morihiro Hosokawa, Masayoshi Takemura, and Ichiro Ozawa, formed the Japan New Party, the Sakigake Party, and the Shinsei Party respectively. All of them had belonged to the LDP. These personalities were the key actors who put an end to the 38 year old LDP regime in 1993.

The Japan New Party was formed in 1992 by Morihiro Hosokawa. When this party was formed, the Tokyo Sagawa Express Company Scandal involving a faction leader of the Takeshita faction, Shin Kanemaru, generated public attention. In 1992, it was discovered that Shin Kanemaru, who was the vice president of the LDP, had received more than $4 million from the Tokyo Sagawa Express Company. This donation was illegal and violated the Political Funds Control Law. Therefore, he was forced to resign his party posts and parliamentary membership. Under these circumstances, Hosokawa formed a new party. He criticized political corruption and the opaque decision making process of the LDP.

His criticism against LDP politics followed the voices of the times. However, it should be noted that most of the Diet persons of the Japan New Party were laymen

politically. Diet persons of the Japan New Party were categorized into two types. First, they were people who could not run as LDP candidates because their career experiences were not screened or evaluated by the LDP (The Department of Politics of the Asahi Newspaper, 1993). Second, they were people who longed to be politicians but for no reason beyond the amassing of personal prestige (The Department of Politics of the Asahi Newspaper, 1993). In point of fact they were all rank amateurs. All of the 35 successful candidates belonged to the Japan New Party in the 1993 election and were in their first terms.

The Sakigake Party was formed by 10 LDP renegades led by Masayoshi Takemura, former Governor of the Shiga prefecture. They also criticized the corruption within the government and claimed that the election law should be amended. Their demands were the same as those of the Japan New Party. In fact, Hosokawa and Takemura consulted each other before they formed new parties. The major difference between these two parties was that the Japan New Party consisted of amateurs, and the Sakigake Party consisted of highly professional, former LDP Diet persons. Three of 10 original members of the Sakigake Party were in their first term and the others were in their second term.

The Shinsei Party was the largest new party and played a decisive role in the realignment in 1993. The origin of the Shinsei Party grew out of a conflict within the Takeshita faction, the largest faction in the LDP at that time. After faction leader Kanemaru resigned as a Diet person because of a scandal, a conflict occurred over who

should become the leader of the Takeshita faction. Members of the Takeshita faction were divided into two groups. One was a group led by Ichiro Ozawa, and another one was a group led by Keizo Obuchi. The latter group, which was larger than the former one, was also supported by former faction leader, Noboru Takeshita. In this sense, Ozawa was at a disadvantage in attempting to be a successor of Kanemaru.

It was a group led by Ozawa that vigorously advocated the necessity of political reform. However, it should be noted that Ozawa was in a close relationship with Kanemaru. In reality, it was an open secret that Ozawa was also involved in the Tokyo Sagawa Express Company Scandal. Kawato (1994) stated,

> Although they (a group led by Ozawa) were closely connected with Kanemaru and thus somewhat tainted by his scandal, they claimed to be intent upon political reform and the realignment of corrupt political practices (p. 122).

It is commonly argued by LDP Diet persons that the Shinsei Party was formed by Ozawa as a result of a power struggle within the Takeshita faction. In an interview with this author, Diet person Akira Ohno said that "Ozawa withdrew from the LDP because it became apparent that he could not become a faction leader" (Personal communication, December 24, 1994). Diet person Kabun Mutou said, "the emergence of the Shinsei Party was the result of a power struggle within the Takeshita faction" (Personal communication, December 18, 1994). Diet person Seiko Noda said, "Politicians are good at justifying their behavior. . . . No one thinks that the LDP was broken up. It was the Takeshita faction that was disunited because of the power struggle" (Personal communication, December 26, 1994). Diet person Yasuoki Urano said,

It should be noted that it was not until the schism of the Takeshita faction became clear when Ozawa started to express the necessity of political reform openly. Until then, he was not so enthusiastic about political reform. . . . If an election had been held while he (Ozawa) belonged to the LDP, he and his followers might have been severely damaged. They were the Diet persons that were in the closest relationships with Kanemaru (Personal communication, December 28, 1994).

When Ozawa formed the Shinsei Party, 43 LDP Diet persons, 27 of whom were in their first or second terms, became members of that party. However, not all of them became members by their own will. Ozawa persuaded young LDP Diet persons to follow him by suggesting that he would give them support in the election or give them party posts (Kuroda, 1994). In an interview with this author, Diet person Yasuoki Urano said,

Ozawa coercively brought some Diet persons into his party. Diet person Eijiro Hata, who is my close friend, said to me, "I was driven into a corner. Ozawa told me to join his party by telling me that I should repay *on* to him. I was supported by Ozawa in the previous election" (Personal communication, December 26, 1994).

In order to repay *on* to Ozawa, Eijiro Hata joined the Shinsei Party. Although not all of the members of the Shinsei Party were forced to became members, it appears Ozawa aggressively gathered his followers.

As a result of the emergence of three new parties, the number of LDP Diet persons decreased from 275 to 222. Fifty-three Diet persons left the LDP to join new parties, and the LDP lost a majority of the seats in the lower house for the first time in 38 years. Immediately after this party split occurred, a no-confidence resolution against the LDP government was passed. This was followed in July 1993 by the lower house election. In this election, the LDP failed to obtain a majority of the seats in the lower

house. Indeed, it controlled only 223 seats. Table 2 indicates that the opposition and splinter parties which had formed a seven party coalition, not including the Japan Communist Party (JCP) and the Independent Diet persons, obtained 261 seats. The coalition consisted of the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ), the Shinsei Party, the Komei Party, the Japan New Party (JNP), the Sakigake Party, the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), and the United Democratic Party (UDP).

Table 2

Distribution of Seats by Party in the Lower House

Date	LDP	Coalition Parties	Other Parties
July 1993	LDP 223	SDPJ 70	JCP 15
		Shinsei 55	*IND 12
		Komei 51	
		Japan New Party 35	
		Sakigake 13	
		DSP and USP 19	
		*IND 18	
	Total 223	Total 261	Total 27

*Note: IND unaffiliated to any parties

Ozawa played a decisive role in forming the coalition by persuading Hosokawa to align with him. Hosokawa, however, did not decide whether to align with the LDP or with the Shinsei Party until the last moment. In an interview with this author, Takashi Kawamura, who is a follower of Hosokawa said,

I thought that it was only natural that our party allied with the Shinsei Party. However, I was very surprised by the fact that not only Hosokawa but also many of my colleagues had not decided yet. So, I told Hosokawa and my colleagues that we should not ally with the LDP because that was our primal policy (Personal communication, December 19, 1994).

In an interview with this author, Kabun Mutou, who is one of the top party leaders of the LDP, said,

I tried to persuade Hosokawa and Takemura to form a coalition party with the LDP. . . . In reality, there was a possibility of forming a coalition government of the LDP, the Sakigake Party, and the JNP headed by Masaharu Gotouda, an influential Diet person who is in a neutral position. I persuaded Hosokawa to align with the LDP by offering him one of the top government posts. However, Ozawa persuaded Hosokawa to align with the Shinsei Party by offering the post of prime minister to him. As a result, Hosokawa decided to cooperate with Ozawa (Personal communication, December 18, 1994).

The process of forming a coalition government was not without obstacles. The 1993 realignment of the party was a result of close consultation among conservative politicians. Kawato (1994) wrote, "It was not the electorate which brought about the realignment and change of government of 1993 so much as it was the politicians, especially those who formed the Shinsei Party (p. 123).

Undoubtedly, public criticism against the corruption of LDP Diet persons was the driving force for the realignment in 1993. Those criticisms provided incentives for reform-minded politicians to join the new parties. However, it can be concluded that the power struggles among conservative politicians accelerated the formation of the new government.

It should be noted that the LDP, despite its loss, managed to gain one additional seat in the lower house election in 1993. No matter how many scandals of LDP Diet persons were made public, voters continued to favor their LDP Diet persons. It can be said: the close relationship between the LDP Diet persons and *koenkai* members was the key element in this display of solidarity and that the *koenkai* prevail to this day.

Political Expectations of the People

While splits within the party, and leadership rivalries weakened the LDP, the collapse of LDP rule can also be attributed to greater popular awareness among the voting public. Ryuen (1994) wrote that according to the survey conducted by the Asahi Newspaper in 1993, 70% of the people wanted a change in the government mainly because they no longer trusted the LDP. However, it should be noted that public opinion changed between 1993 and 1995. The number of people who desire political stability, and hence a more conservative approach, is on the increase. According to the survey conducted by the Asahi Newspaper on June 1995, 47.5% of the people want political stability first and foremost, while only 39% of them gave it such priority in 1993 (Henka, 1995).

Two major reasons can account for this change in public opinion. First, the people became tired of the frequent changes in government. It is very rare in developed countries, and certainly in Japan, for there to be four heads of government in three years. These frequent realignments alienated the general population, notably because they were

the result of power struggles among the parties, each of whom endeavored to win a majority of the seats in the lower house. Improving the economy of the country and the life of the people were neglected in these political maneuvers.

Second, Japan experienced both natural disasters as well as violent social unrest during this period. In 1995 the nation was shocked, first by the Great Hanshin Earthquake, and then, just months later, by the terrorist actions of Aum Shinrikyo, a cultist, religious organization. The first tragedy resulted in the death of several thousand people. The second was even more disturbing, even though the loss of life was far less, because it was the act of Japanese citizens determined to destroy not only the government but also the Japanese nation. Moreover, the image of peaceful harmony, which lies at the core of Japanese society, was seriously altered by the anarchic actions of the terrorists.

There is little doubt that these factors affected the state of mind of the Japanese people. The people learned that strong leadership of the central government was necessary for the country to recover from the damage of the earthquake and more important to prevent future terrorist activities.

The Future of the LDP

This study explained the durability of the LDP. As discussed, the interpersonal relationships among LDP politicians and the direct, personal relationships between LDP politicians and their supporters, gave the LDP overwhelming strength. Moreover, these relationships and the decision making process developed by the LDP were consistent with

Japanese culture as well as the psychological traits of the Japanese people. Because the Japanese value harmony within the group, they are willing to compromise and seek consensus in their decision making process. The LDP used these cultural traits to build a stable political party. In addition, the fact that *koenkai* support for LDP politicians still exists is another positive factor that may enable the LDP to regain its power. The fact that the number of people who want political stability is increasing may also be a positive factor for the LDP.

The following three conditions are considered essential if the LDP is to regain a majority of seats in the lower house. The first condition is that the LDP must adapt its policies to the changing social and economic situations as it did in the 1960s and 1970s. Among the current major concerns of the Japanese people are economic dislocation and social malaise. From 1992 to 1994, Japan experienced a near-zero growth in its economy. Furthermore, Japanese banks currently hold bad debts estimated at about $1 trillion, making the state wide financial situation most unstable. Under these conditions, many Japanese companies including the largest corporations can no longer guarantee the Japanese practice of lifetime employment. Lifetime employment is peculiarly Japanese. Up until the present economic crisis companies recruited workers immediately upon graduation from high school or college, and these workers continued to work in the same company until their retirement. Since 1992, about 39% of the Japan's manufacturing companies have practiced a policy of employment adjustment (Chuma, 1994). Employment adjustment involves laying off workers, reducing or stopping new hiring and

cutting working hours. If the government fails to develop an adequate economic policy to boost the sluggish economy, the LDP will not regain the popular support of the people. Japan's 1995 economic depression is the most critical issue for the business community, and certainly for ordinary Japanese citizens.

The second condition is that the LDP needs to find strong candidates and to assist them in establishing their *koenkai*. This was the role of the factions until they were officially dissolved in 1994. The factions competed with each other in order to enable their members to become successful candidates. This competition provided the LDP with many skilled and popular Diet persons. Although previous members of the factions are still maintaining unity as a group, the activities of the factions are restricted. Therefore, an important function of the faction, which involves the recruiting and supporting of candidates, has to be done by the party. If the party can not do this, LDP Diet persons will be motivated to activate the factions again.

The third condition is the most important of the three. It is necessary for the LDP to maintain the interpersonal relationships that were formed among politicians and between politicians and their supporters in the 1960s and 1970s. The renewal of such interpersonal relationships, however, must avoid the corrupt practices of the past. A large amount money was spent to maintain *koenkai* by LDP politicians. Hirose (1994) estimated that from the average expenditure of 100 million yen (about $1 million) spent by freshman LDP Diet persons, about 44 million yen (about $440,000) were spent for maintaining the *koenkai*. Those expenditures included the money that was given at

funerals and weddings, the money for taking trips, and the money for organizing various kinds of social activities. As mentioned, those expenditures were essential for LDP Diet persons in maintaining their *koenkai*. Although it is impossible to determine the amount of money that was spent by all LDP politicians to maintain their *koenkai*, judging by Hirose's figures, it can be assumed that over 40% of funds were used for that purpose.

It is important to note, however, that the criticism directed toward LDP politicians for *koenkai* spending practices has been less intense than that directed against the fund raising activities and spending practices of the factions. Nevertheless, public criticism of corruption is too intense to be ignored. Public criticism for the spending practices of LDP politicians for their *koenkai*, therefore, can be expected to become more intense in the future. If so, it will be difficult for LDP politicians to collect votes from non-*koenkai* members. Therefore, LDP politicians must reconsider their methods of fund raising and spending practices.

To lessen their dependency on *koenkai* contributions, LDP politicians must seek ways to encourage donations from individuals in their larger constituencies. Also, LDP politicians must expand their spending practices beyond the limits of maintaining the *koenkai*. While the *koenkai* are an indispensable base for winning elections, no politician can win a seat in the Diet based on their support alone. The establishment of harmony between the *koenkai* members and the broader public is essential for LDP politicians expecting to regain control of the Japanese government.

GLOSSARY

amae	fundamental human need to be dependent
chosakai	investigative commissions
dango	prearranged bidding
gimu	duty
giri	social obligation
ie	household
iinkai	committees
keiretsu	loose corporate groupings
koenkai	personal support groups
Kokumin seiji kyokai	National Political Association
kokutai	Diet strategy committee
nemawashi	a technique used in Japan to avoid conflicts and obtain a consensus in decision making
oyabun-kobun	boss-subordinate relationships
on	indebtedness
ringi system	a process of decision making by the use of circular letters
shingikai	advisory committees attached to a central government administrative organ
tokubetsu iinkai	special committees
yakuinkai	the party officials' council

yakuin renrakukai   the party officials' conference for changing information

zaibatsu   the great family-dominated holding companies

zoku   informal policy support groups

Appendix A

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board Approval

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Date: September 10, 1995

To: Hiroyuki Ikeba

From: Richard Wright, Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number 95-09-04

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled "The Liberal Democratic Party in Japan: its organization and decision making processes" has been **approved** under the **exempt** category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note that you must seek specific approval for any changes in this design. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date. In addition if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: September 10, 1996

xc: Lawrence Ziring, Poli.Sci.

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