

POSTWAR PARTIES AND POLITICS IN JAPAN

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I. POSTWAR PARTIES IN JAPAN

POSTWAR PARTIES IN JAPAN may be divided roughly into three types. The first type existed during the period of conservative leadership under two independent conservative parties, the Liberal Party and the Democratic Party,¹ and lasted from the defeat in 1945 until the unification of the Socialist Party's right and left wings in 1955 at which time the two parties merged to form the Liberal Democratic Party (Jiyūminshutō). Although the progressive forces were well on the way toward winning a third of the seats in both Houses, they did not yet have sufficient strength, and the conservatives, therefore, were able to secure the leadership in spite of the split in their ranks.

The second type of party system, the so-called two-party system, came into existence when the two conservative parties, faced with the Socialists' united front, were forced to unite, and Japanese politics came to be dominated by two parties, the Liberal Democratic Party and the Japan Socialist Party (Shakaitō). The Liberal Democratic Party declined gradually, and, as a result, the progressive forces including the Japan Communist Party (Kyōsantō) and the Democratic Socialist Party (Minshushakaitō)² were able to prolong their influence for a short while until the middle of the 1960's. However, the Liberal Democratic Party, in spite of its decline, didn't loosen its grip on the leadership, and political power changed hands only inside LDP factions. For this reason, Japan's two-party system has often been referred to as a 1½-party system. When compared with the period from 1945 to 1955, this period stands out in that, in the election campaigns, the alternatives presented to the nation were clearly stated and unambiguous. The two-party system gradually became fixed in the nation's political consciousness at this time. In the mid-1960's, however, three smaller parties

¹ The Liberal Party (Jiyūtō) was formed from the prewar Seiyūkai, and the Democratic or Progressive Party (Minshutō or Kaishintō) was a continuation of the other major prewar party, the Minseitō.

² In 1959, the Nishio faction split off from the Japan Socialist Party and in 1960 formed the Democratic Socialist Party.

gradually increased their influence. These were the Democratic Socialist Party, the Japan Communist Party, and the Clean Government Party (Komeito). However, according to a 1964 public opinion poll,³ the position of the three smaller parties appeared very uncertain as against the relative stability of the Liberal Democratic and the Japan Socialist parties. Many people regarded these parties negatively: the Democratic Socialist Party was "non-committal," Komeito was "fanatical," and the JCP was "destructive."

About 1965, the political tide began to turn, and signs of a general change became apparent. Then, after the 1967 Lower House and the 1968 Upper House elections, people began to speak of a multi-party system. The multi-party system came about because of the decline of the influence of the two major parties and because of the rise of the three smaller parties just mentioned. But, because the Liberal Democratic Party didn't relinquish control of the leadership, this third type of party system has been regarded by some as a mere proliferation of opposition parties or as a simple "multi-headed" system. However, in the suburban areas of our large cities, which are in the vanguard of the development of Japanese society, remarkably few differences are found between the different parties. If we look closely at the five parties which coexist side-by-side, it becomes clear that we cannot regard this phenomenon as the simple flourishing of opposition parties, and there is one thing we must bear in mind—the present multi-party system does not necessarily represent real differences of opinion among the people. If we look at a survey of which parties students and young workers support, about 50% of those questioned supported none of the parties, a result quite different from that obtained a few years ago in a similar survey.⁴ In other words, none of the present political parties are able to appeal to those who will shoulder the political burdens of the future. We may suppose, then, that the multi-party system appeared, not as the representative of diverse political opinions, but rather as a response to the people's dissatisfaction with the existing two-party system. If the two-party system which emerged in 1955 collapsed because of internal contradictions, it can be seen that the recently developed multi-party system must also contain contradictions which threaten its existence.

In postwar Japan, party politics took firm root as the only acceptable political system. This can be seen if we look at a public opinion survey administered several times since 1953 by the Institute of Statistical Mathematics (Ministry of Education) in which the following question was asked:

³ Nippon terebi (Nippon Television Network Corp.), *Terepōru-5* (Television Poll-5), Tokyo, 1964, pp. 71, 81 a, 82.

⁴ *Gakushū no hiroba*, July, 1967, p. 14; *Sandē mainichi*, February 20, 1969, p. 84.

Some people think that in order to make Japan a better country, if an outstanding politician came forth, it would be best to entrust the nation's affairs to him rather than having to choose between many different points of view which only divides the people and sets them against each other. Do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

In 1953, 43% of those questioned agreed, in 1958, 35% agreed, and in 1963, 29% agreed. By way of contrast, those that disagreed increased from 38% in 1953, to 44% in 1958, and 47% in 1963. From the above results it can be seen that the basis for an authoritarianism which denies the possibility of party politics is gradually becoming narrower. Even among those who are dissatisfied with the present political parties, those who would deny the principle behind party politics are few. This may be ascertained from the results of numerous surveys. For example, one poll asked this question:⁵

Do you think we can improve politics through elections such as they are held at present?

Most people questioned thought politics would improve. Democratization of the national political consciousness has progressed to this extent in the 20 years since the defeat.

Before the war, political parties stood between the Emperor and his subjects. This was interpreted as a sign of discord. That is, the parties had to contend not only with the Emperor and the government bureaucracy backed up by the powerful influence of the militarists, but in terms of the governmental power structure, there was a great distance between the parties and the people. In the world of politics, parties were uninvited guests. These attributes produced distortions even in the behavior of the parties themselves. For example, when opposition parties attacked the Government party, the ultimate sanction they invoked was the Emperor's Will and the prerogative of supreme command, all of which is fundamentally opposed to the concept of party politics. Moreover, the Government Party when seeking the support of the people didn't merely rely on patronage to solicit votes but also made fullest use of its status as the Emperor's party to win. Needless to say, the tragedy of prewar party politics in Japan lies here. A proper image of the opposition party, then, was never formed. This may be seen from the results of a 1931 examination for conscripts in which the following question was asked:⁶

⁵ See, for example, *Kōmei senkyo renmei* (Clean Election League), *Kōmei senkyo no jittai* (Report on the Campaign for Clean Elections), 1962, p. 43ff.

⁶ *Tōkei sūri kenkyūsho* (Institute of Statistical Mathematics), *Seinen no jōshiki oyobi shokugyō no shakaiteki hyōka* (Adult Common Sense and Social Evaluation of Occupations), 1964, p. 10. The characters used to write opposition party are 野 (i. e. field—hence “farm” in (1); wild—hence “barbarian” in (2); outside the center of power

Which one of the following are opposition parties?

(1) Farm Groups; (2) Group of Barbarians; (3) Government Party; (4) Parties Other Than the Government Party.

Only 54% gave the right answer. Thus, the role of opposition parties was not clear and party politics was unstable. In the end, prewar Japan couldn't help but go the way of totalitarianism.

Looking at the stability of postwar party politics as compared with prewar politics, it is noteworthy that the image of political parties has become fixed and stable in a short time. However, within this large framework of apparent stability, present political parties, whether in the two-party system or the multi-party system, display many contradictions if one looks at them in detail. This is not to say that in reality both the multi-party system and the two-party system haven't conformed to the actual meaning of the words, nor does this mean that under the two-party system there was no transfer of political power, nor that under the multi-party system, no party except the LDP is able to gain political power. The question rather is what are the contradictions of these systems in relation to the national political consciousness.

II. THE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM AND ITS CONTRADICTIONS

Let's begin by considering the contradictions carried over in the two-party system which developed around 1955. To summarize the results of several public opinion surveys, we cannot necessarily place support groups of the Liberal Democratic Party and the Japan Socialist Party in the same category in regard to political opinions. Although it is said that political affiliation in general is not determined by differences in political opinion, in reality, according to these surveys, among those that actively supported a political party political inclinations could be seen clearly in regard to foreign and domestic policy. Among supporters of the Japan Socialist Party, about 70% may be considered reform-minded, and among Liberal Democratic Party supporters, about 70% have conservative ideas. This distribution of political opinions, then, is reflected in the two-party system. However, during the two-party era, a tendency for supporters of the Liberal Democratic and Japan Socialist parties to be distinguished from supporters of other parties could be seen in regard to basic social outlook and moral views. In the future, of course, what direct effect such social and moral views will

—hence the correct answer (4) and 党 (party). This question, then, was designed to see if conscripts could recognize the correct meaning of opposition party without confusing the different possible meanings of the characters.

have on the distribution of political opinions is unknown; at the level of one's personal world view or outlook on life, however, such differentiation is worthy of attention.

In a 1964 television poll, the following questions were asked in order to determine the social outlook of those interviewed:

Four people are talking together and one of them asks: "If you compared human relations to animals, what would you say?" Which of the four responses would you choose?

As shown in Table 1, many supporters of the Liberal Democratic Party, the Japan Socialist Party, and the Democratic Socialist Party expressed an ideal of mutual aid:

The alligator has small birds which stay near its head, catch insects in the alligator's mouth, and feed themselves. Human beings, likewise, "scratch each other's backs," and help each other out.

There was not a large difference between supporters of the three major parties who answered in the following way, except in the case of the Socialist Party where a comparatively larger number answered distrustfully:

Human beings, like the fox and the badger, deceive each other, and if people are not always on their guard, they will have a rough time of it.

The percentage of supporters who chose the "law of the jungle" was almost the same in these three parties:

Human beings, like weak animals who are preyed upon by wolves and lions, are always oppressed by those stronger than themselves.

In the case of the Komeito and the Japan Communist Party, there is a large decrease in the number of supporters expressing an ideal of mutual aid; on the contrary, mutual distrust is great. Furthermore, the percentage of supporters choosing the "law of the jungle" is higher in the Komeito and the JCP than in the other three parties. If the Komeito and JCP supporters who chose the "law of the jungle" and the "foxes and badgers" (mutual distrust) are taken together, they represent about the same percentage of supporters who chose the "alligator and the bird" (mutual aid) in the LDP, JSP, and DSP. In the case of Komeito, very few supporters took a view of service based on self-sacrifice, and very few answered:

Like ants and bees who give of themselves for their friends and who work hard, human beings work hard for the sake of society.

In this sense, Komeito supporters are even nihilistic. However, if one thinks in these terms, then a measure must be devised other than one that uses conservative and progressive as a scale. People with an alienated view of the world tend toward the Japan Communist Party and Komeito

rather than the three well-established parties. One of the characteristics of these two parties is that their supporters share the same psychological traits. Both parties also compete fiercely with each other to gain supporters.

Table 1.

	(Percentage)				
	LDP	JSP	DSP	JCP	Komeito
1. Foxes and Badgers	15.3	21.0	17.3	31.6	28.6
2. "Law of the Jungle"	11.3	14.0	12.7	15.8	17.9
3. Ants and Bees	14.0	11.9	16.4	26.3	7.1
4. Alligator	47.2	46.0	48.2	21.0	35.7
5. Don't know	12.2	7.0	5.4	5.3	10.7

Source: Television Poll-6, 1964, p. 37.

Table 2. A. "Never Trust a Stranger"
B. "A Companion in Travel, Sympathy in the World"

	(Percentage)				
	LDP	JSP	DSP	JCP	Komeito
1. Prefer A	18.0	19.2	15.4	26.3	35.7
2. Prefer B	73.6	75.2	79.1	68.4	60.7
3. Don't know	8.4	5.6	5.5	5.3	3.6

Source: Television Poll-6, 1964, p. 124.

Or the same thing may be seen in the responses of supporters of the various parties to proverbs. From the following proverbs, those interviewed were asked to select the one they preferred (see Table 2):

A. "Never trust a stranger."

B. "A companion in travel, sympathy in the world."

If we look at a breakdown of the results according to parties, it will be seen that the percentage of backers of the Liberal Democratic Party, the Japan Socialist Party, and the Democratic Socialist Party that chose B is about the same. By way of contrast, there is a notable difference among the supporters of the Japan Communist Party and Komeito, many of whom chose A. In Komeito's case, however, this difference is striking, and it is for this reason that the atmosphere surrounding Komeito and JCP supporters is often thought to be cold.

Concerning basic social outlooks, in contrast to supporters of the largest opposition party, the JSP, who live within the standard norms of society, supporters of the Komeito and JCP live on the outskirts of society and are thereby forced to lead a marginal existence. Under the two-party system, the Liberal Democratic Party and the Japan Socialist Party made no effort to appeal to those people existing on the margin of society, and

inevitably, the lot of these two parties has been to gradually fall behind.

Social outlook is not the only means of indicating the differences between supporters of the LDP, the Democratic Socialist Party, and the JSP on one hand, and Komeito, and JCP supporters on the other; this may also be gauged by finding the level of individual wants. For example, in response to the question "What is the one thing that you want most," in all, 29.2% replied "higher income," 18.5% wanted "a home," 16.7% wanted "time," and 9.1% replied "good health."⁷ Between supporters of the LDP, the Democratic Socialist Party, and the JSP there are no outstanding differences. In contrast to this, however, the answers of JCP and Komeito supporters show several interesting peculiarities.

In the case of Japan Communist Party supporters, a relatively large 45% asked for higher incomes. However, did so many ask for a pay raise because in reality the incomes of JCP backers are low? Certainly JCP supporters with low incomes are not rare, especially among party members. But, if we consider supporters of the JCP as a whole, we can see that this is not necessarily so. According to the same survey, among supporters of the JCP, those with a yearly income of less than ¥500,000 (about \$1,400) are few (20%). Other surveys also indicate that JCP supporters are not poor compared to supporters of other parties. If this is so, then why did so many JCP supporters ask for higher wages? According to the results of a survey made by the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK)⁸ in February, 1967, the wants of JCP supporters were indeed large. The following question was asked:

How much annual income would you need to be satisfied?

According to a breakdown of parties (see Table 3), most people felt that they would need at least ¥1,000,000 (about \$2,800), but many supporters of the JCP replied they would need at least ¥2,000,000 (about \$5,600) or more. Perhaps it is because their bellies are large that members of the JCP ask often for higher salaries in such surveys, and it is because they want much that they become conscious of their poverty. It is in this way, no doubt, that social criticism arises.

In this context, although many Komeito supporters receive an annual income of less than ¥500,000, curiously enough, few wish for higher wages. In spite of the fact that among Komeito supporters there are poor people, then, few are actually conscious of being poor. This is confirmed by the

⁷ Munesuke Mita, *Gendai no seinenzō* (Young Men of Today), Tokyo, Kōdansha, 1968, p. 40.

⁸ Hajime Shinohara, *Nihon no seijifūdo* (Japanese Political Culture), Tokyo, Iwanami-shoten, 1968, p. 131.

Table 3. Annual Income Wished for According to Party Supported
(Percentage)

Annual Income Wished for (yen)	National Average	Party Supported				
		LDP	JSP	DSP	JCP	Komeito
less than 300,000	3	3	2	0	0	7
310,000- 500,000	15	14	12	17	12	21
510,000- 700,000	19	19	21	13	18	17
710,000-1,000,000	28	28	35	24	27	31
1,010,000-1,500,000	19	20	19	26	15	17
1,510,000-2,000,000	5	6	5	10	15	2
more than 2,010,000	4	5	2	3	12	3
no response	—	—	—	—	—	—

Note: Dark figures represent percentages larger than the national average.

Source: Hajime Shinohara, *Nihon no seijifudo* (Japanese Political Culture), Tokyo, Iwanami-shoten, 1968, p. 131.

results of a survey on desirable annual income in which the number of supporters who said they would be satisfied with less than ¥500,000 was larger in the Komeito than in the other parties. The number of Komeito supporters wanting homes (42.3%), however, was more than the average for the other parties. Another item wished for was a happy family life. Here, the number of Komeito supporters "yearning for a home" is conspicuous. Real poverty has been transformed socially into "yearning for a home." In a society which has been rapidly urbanized, Komeito is able to get support from the unstable class of low income earners who seek spiritual stability through religion and material support.

Thus we can see that outside of the LDP, Democratic Socialist Party, and JSP supporters who are average in terms of wants are found the JCP supporters who are conscious of being poor and Komeito supporters who are really poor. There are large differences in the objectives of both parties, but the position that each occupies in Japanese society is remarkably similar. Between the three well-established parties and the JCP and Komeito, there are several important differences. To see these differences, it is necessary to focus on two aspects of the contradictions inherent in Japan's two-party system. With the resolution of the antagonisms in the two-party system as a political phenomenon, the antagonisms stemming from the two-party system as a social phenomenon have quietly increased. This is one reason that the two-party system is collapsing.

III. THE MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM AND ITS CONTRADICTIONS

Before looking at the contradictions in the present multi-party system,

let's survey the election results of the decade since 1955. Since then the structure of Japanese society has undergone radical changes. Urbanization has accompanied the high growth-rate of the Japanese economy, and the resulting under-population of some areas and high density of population in others is evident. Thus, there has been a startling population shift from the rural sector to the urban sector. At this point, let's look at how the composition of the voting population has shifted and how the percentage of votes obtained by the various parties has changed. The first general election of this period was held in 1958. If 1958 is taken as a base year of 100, the index of the voting population in 1967 was 121, and electoral districts having an index of more than 125 form a special group A (see Table 4). The two groups, B and C, below A have indices of less than 121. In absolute terms, the loss of voters in backward areas of C and especially in D in terms of the 1958 average is notable.⁹ A, then, represents crowded urban areas with a large population increase influenced by rapid economic growth. D, on the contrary, represents sparsely populated rural areas where the population has diminished drastically. In the remaining areas represented by B and C minus D, the population growth has not yet leveled off, but they are becoming intermediate areas between A and D. Let's turn to Table 4, then, and look at the percentage of votes obtained in the different areas by the various parties. For the LDP, going from D to A, not only does the percentage of votes decrease, but LDP votes decrease in almost any area with time. As the underlined figures indicate, (read obliquely) LDP votes decrease at a fixed rate with time. The lower underlined figures show a rate of decrease of 1 or 2%, the next group of figures shows a rate of decrease of 6-7%, and the upper figure shows a 10% rate of decrease. With time, this large decrease extends from cities to the rural areas, and, this rate of decrease will continue. The symptoms of the Liberal Democratic Party's decline are clear from 1955 on.

In the case of the Japan Socialist Party, it is not possible to make a direct comparison based on election results from 1958 on because the Democratic Socialist Party split off in the elections of 1960. However, looking at the tendencies in each district, until 1963 the JSP was strong going from D to A. In contrast to this, in 1967, district A obtained less votes than districts B and C. That is, the JSP lost its urban supporters and gained many supporters from rural areas. In this sense it lost its urban party status and took on the coloring of a rural party. This change came about because

⁹ The districts with an index of less than 121 are distributed evenly between B and C according to their respective indices. Group D represents that part of C whose index decreased since 1958.

Table 4. Electoral Districts and Percentage of Votes Received by the Various Parties Due to Shifts in the Voting Population

		(Percentage)			
Party		1958	1960	1963	1967
Liberal Democratic Party	A	51.38	50.26	44.86	34.96
	B	58.01	58.65	56.18	48.52
	C	63.48	62.74	62.29	59.50
	D	65.39	66.25	62.59	66.75
Japan Socialist Party	A	38.51	30.91	31.02	27.19
	B	32.01	27.36	28.03	28.51
	C	28.88	24.52	26.12	27.76
	D	23.22	19.47	23.08	25.17
Democratic Socialist Party	A	—	12.00	11.79	6.19
	B	—	7.67	6.04	13.00
	C	—	7.02	3.62	2.16
	D	—	5.61	2.87	1.44
Japan Communist Party	A	4.41	4.88	6.37	7.44
	B	1.90	2.08	1.82	2.67
	C	1.39	1.86	2.39	2.74
	D	1.33	1.33	1.47	1.78
Clean Government Party	A	—	—	—	12.30
	B	—	—	—	0.96
	C	—	—	—	1.77
	D	—	—	—	—

Source: Survey conducted by the author.

districts D, C, and B showed an upward trend, in that order, and there was a rapid decline in district A in 1967. The breaking up of the urban base of support was fatal for the JSP which had an urban character. If one imagines a party whose base of support is growing along with the economic growth and progress of district A, then it can be seen how this tendency proved fatal for the Japan Socialist Party. That is, the Socialists' optimistic expectation that they would be able to absorb those who were dissatisfied with and fell away from the LDP did not come true, and signs of a multi-party system began to appear.

Let's take a look at the three parties outside the two-party system.

The position of the Democratic Socialist Party is not really promising if viewed diachronically; however, it has one of its strong supports in the urban sector. The urban character of the DSP becomes apparent in an analysis of voting districts according to industrial population rather than according to shifts in the voting population.

The Japan Communist Party has made strong advances in the urban sector, but because this tempo is moderate and the absolute number of votes

obtained is small, there is no guarantee of its becoming a large party in the near future.

Because Komeito entered the Lower House for the first time in the 1967 general elections, it is not possible to make a diachronic analysis. That it was able recently to enter politics, however, shows it has potential power. Komeito is overwhelmingly strong in the urban sector. The three parties outside the two-party system, then, have increased their seats in the Diet and their percentage of votes, and we may now speak of a multi-party system.

However, as already mentioned, these three parties contain various contradictions. The Democratic Socialist Party formed after it split off from the Japan Socialist Party in 1960. At first it seemed it would founder under pressure from the JSP, but as votes slackened off in both the Liberal Democratic and Socialist parties, its position became more stable.

The reasons for the decline of JSP and LDP support may be explained as follows: Supporters of the Liberal Democratic Party are losing their conservative outlook or being modernized as a result of social progress due to rapid economic growth. By way of contrast, however, the leadership and policies of the LDP are more conservative than the outlook of its supporters. Although the rise of the conservative left-wing in the LDP has caused much comment, the influence of the right-wing, as always, is strong. The situation is such that if a crisis develops, the right-wing "spring" still goes into action. At any rate, the high percentage of voters in the rural sector and the remarkable decline of the Liberal Democratic Party in the urban areas speaks vividly of this gap between left and right wing groups. The LDP, in its present form, seems unable to appeal to the urban working class. However, even though those that fell away from the LDP have anti-LDP feelings, they will not go over to the JSP. This floating particle, thus, becomes a large intermediate group between the LDP and the JSP. On the other hand, the Socialist Party, while calling for party reform and an image change, has not been able to attract more than 50,000 party members, and since the party leadership cannot abandon its ideology-centered attitude, they tend to be left behind by social progress. Of course, because there are many contradictions in Japanese society and politics, many who are critical of society support the JSP. Among these supporters, the number of those anticipating Socialism's rise to power are very few. Yet, in spite of the fact that those expecting the JSP to come into power in the near future are not many, party support continues nonetheless. However, the fact that the JSP is left-wing in preachment and moderate in practice is a source of dissatisfaction to many. Those that support the JSP for ideological reasons lament this lack of action, while those who want policies more in line with

the times, on the contrary, are apprehensive of theoretical radicalism. It is difficult to evaluate the Japan Socialist Party without looking at the gap between the theory and practice of the party leadership and its members. However, the disillusioned group that is estranged from other JSP supporters is never small. One part of this group, therefore, gravitates toward the Democratic Socialist Party, and the other part sympathizes with the extreme left, including the JCP.

Therefore, objectively, the existence of these dissatisfied groups is advantageous for the Democratic Socialist Party. However, this is not to say that supporters who are alienated from one party go immediately and join another. A strong image and policy are needed to attract these alienated people; the Democratic Socialist Party, however, lacks such a policy and image.

If we look at the voting patterns for Tokyo, there are important differences between the heart of the city, the outskirts, and the suburbs. The strength of the Liberal Democratic Party declines going from the center of town to the suburbs while the Japan Socialist Party and Japan Communist Party, on the contrary, are weaker moving from the suburbs into the heart of the city. Since the Democratic Socialist Party has the same tendency as the LDP, even if the DSP succeeded in diminishing the base of LDP support, there is not much possibility of increasing DSP strength greatly in the area where the JSP and JCP are strongest. A peculiar feature of Komeito is that it is strongest in the outskirts of Tokyo.

The Komeito is a completely new force in Japanese politics. They increase their number of Diet seats and votes with each new election. As is well known, behind the Komeito lies a rigidly disciplined religious group led by Daisaku Ikeda called Sōkagakkai. Sōkagakkai is a large organization which through forceful persuasion and intensive indoctrination tightly enmeshes 6,600,000 households. Recently, the Women's League, a federation of labor unions, and a university, have been included in this tightly controlled organization. Members who are otherwise unable to find a place in normal society are able to create a niche for themselves by becoming active in Sōkagakkai. This is one type of sub-culture in Japan's homogeneous society that has been unknown up until now. For this reason, their political movement is very animated. In public opinion polls, usually only about 4% of Komeito supporters declare themselves, but for an election in which their candidates are running, a large number of votes are cast for the Party. This indicates the fervor with which this religious group commits itself to politics. However, among the people in general, Komeito is still a "rejected" party; it is isolated from society, and people often say

of it: "This much is for sure, it's a party that doesn't like to vote." In order to get out of this dilemma, Komeito has adopted a middle course in politics, and this middle course had gradually moved left. For a newly arising political party, aligning itself with public opinion and adopting a posture of moderation is advantageous, but at the same time, such attitudes may be considered opportunistic and compromising as is evident in the case of Komeito. In the National Diet, Komeito is a minority opposition party and is therefore able to make the most of its status, but like the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly, if it gets hold of a casting vote, its opportunism becomes apparent. For example, Komeito strongly opposed a rise in the price of water and even went so far as to initiate a petition movement, yet within less than half a year's time, they changed their position and agreed to the price rise. In another instance, they were strongly opposed to the personal affairs of the Commissioner of Public Safety and made some very serious accusations, but a month later they were in full agreement with this same person. The strong conformity of the Sōkagakkai organization, as a leader himself admitted, does not recognize the existence of an inner-party policy making group. In this unique situation, no one is able to predict in which direction the whole organization is going to move. Up until now, the Komeito has been successful to a certain degree in organizing those elements that have not committed themselves to any party. However, to what extent Komeito will be able to appeal to those who have fallen away from the accepted two major parties and who are unattached is a problem.

If we look at the number of votes cast for the Japan Communist Party during the decade since 1955, it can be seen that the JCP is slowly becoming stronger. However, as already mentioned, their growth-rate is very slack, and even in the 1967 general election, the percentage of votes received didn't exceed 4.8% of the total. If the JCP intends to effect a quantitative change in this trend and rid itself of its image as a destructive political party, it must adopt a more moderate posture. As may be seen from the activities of the JCP's regional organizations, the "frightening" image of the Party must be replaced by a "friendly" image. The results of this effort are especially apparent in the large cities, and the JCP is moving a little away from its previous condition of political alienation. Socially, to be a member of the JCP means to be alienated, but where politics are concerned, this is no longer true. Party members are earning their political citizenship. However, since the JCP's more moderate attitude has left those who are critical of Japan's stable society unsatisfied, such people have gathered to form more radical organizations such as left-wing student groups. In Japanese politics, the JCP and Komeito are both unusually well organized

parties. The JCP is said to have about 300,000 members. Even here, a huge organization forms a kind of "nation," and by expelling critical elements, there has been a general decline in the quality of the Party. However, the JCP is different from Komeito, in that, fundamentally, its backbone members in the executive section have the ability and freedom to express their opinions, but the mechanism for preserving one's position and the philosophy of success inherent in a very large organization tend to impede the adequate functioning of the organization. These critical elements and other dissatisfied groups have become a new left-wing force to the left of the JCP. The three smaller parties haven't really succeeded in adapting themselves to the times while carrying out their own programs, and it is from this discrepancy that much recent political criticism has arisen.

In the 1968 Lower House elections, several candidates who ran on a "talent" ticket received many votes which were critical of Japan's political parties. The LDP's three "talent candidates"¹⁰ received a number of votes which helped prevent the setback of the LDP. It is worthy of note, however, that by criticizing their own party, the LDP "talent candidates" were able to receive a number of "redemptive" votes. The world was amazed that two other non-partisan candidates from the entertainment world were able to get a large number of votes. As is common knowledge, these two candidates also succeeded because they criticized the accepted political parties. These five candidates, taken together, accounted for 14% of the total election returns and accomplished in a single stroke what it took Sōkagakkai ten or more years to do. The number of votes received by Shintarō Ishihara alone exceeded the total number of votes received by the Democratic Socialist Party and far exceeded the Japan Communist Party. Many people feel that discontent in modern society is widespread, but no one could have predicted that these "talent candidates" would receive so many votes. Those who have given up voting because of dissatisfaction with the present political parties, or who, while going to the polls, cannot think of a suitable party or a worthy candidate and for whom voting is a bitter experience are numerous. A large number of dissatisfied and apathetic people cannot find any satisfaction in Japan's present political system. What patterns, then, can we find for discontented groups in modern society?

If we make a bold schematization of five prominent patterns of dissatisfied elements in Japanese society, we have first the pattern of right-wing discontent. As already mentioned the Liberal Democratic Party, in reality,

¹⁰ Talent candidates—individuals who have been successful in the literary, entertainment, or sports world and who have used their popularity to become candidates in the Upper House elections.

is essentially conservative. Therefore, in times of crisis, the right-wing "spring" reacts. However, in order to maintain the support of the majority, such items as nuclear armament, rearmament, or revision of the constitution are more or less considered taboo. However, such criticism is made. Ishihara spoke of "reform from inside the system" which calls to mind memories of the young officers' and intellectuals' "Shōwa Restoration"¹¹ at the beginning of Shōwa (1936). As we know, if we evaluate his election campaign, his criticism of the LDP came from the far right. The "talent candidates" running for the LDP took this same right-wing stance, and all of these candidates received a large number of votes. Ishihara himself favors nuclear armament.

The second pattern might be called the "floating" pattern. A large, rootless, floating class of people has been created by Japan's high rate of industrialization and rapid social change plus the recent influx of population into urban areas. On one hand, this resulted in a decline of ballots cast in the 1968 Upper House elections. On the other hand, many of these votes were absorbed by the "talent candidates." This pattern is especially noticeable among the younger generation. According to a survey of political support,¹² if we add all those together who answered "I don't know," or "I don't support any political party because I don't know anything about politics," more than 20% of boys and 30% of girls in their early twenties are included in this group. In the 18-19 year age-group, more than 40% of the boys and 60% of the girls are included. Of course, these people cannot be counted among the critical or dissenting votes, but it is certain that they do form a group for which political parties have no meaning.

The third pattern is the avoidance of political parties. This group is not satisfied with any of the parties and can be counted among the dissenting votes. According to the above survey, of those questioned, 14% answered they are dissatisfied with political parties. In the same survey, of those who answered "I don't support any political party," 61% answered "I don't, because I am disillusioned with them." A large number of this group are radical dissenters. These dissenting votes differ from the second pattern in that they tend to be radical.

The fourth pattern in our schematization is the conspicuous civic movements which have appeared in Japanese society in recent years. Such movements as the anti-war peace movements, movements to prevent public

¹¹ An extreme political and economic idea seized upon by junior officers of the army advocating state socialism administered by a military dictatorship. The concept owed much to a book written by Ikki Kita, often referred to as the founder of Japanese Fascism.

¹² Mita, p. 169ff.

nuisances, and movements for the restoration of local autonomy have been created. The civic movements are more or less allergic to political parties. In order to make up for the deficiencies of party politics, they have chosen direct political participation. The civic movements are not attempting to overthrow the system, but rather are trying to realize "reform from inside the system" in the real sense of the words. They know nothing of daily transactions inside the Diet nor do they know anything of the technique of political bargaining between the various parties. They start only with an awareness of their own rights and a desire to protect the security of their everyday lives, and they are very critical of the existing political parties. We may think of the ideological spectrum of such movements as covering the territory from the left of the Japan Communist Party to the left-wing faction of the Liberal Democratic Party. In the civic movements are many who sympathize with the fifth pattern, the very radical student movement, because the civic movement is also an inevitable challenge to the social system which has been long established and become stagnant. Though many of them vote for the progressive parties in elections, they are never satisfied with the present reality of those progressive parties. They only accept the progressive parties as a second best alternative.

The fifth pattern is the anti-establishment pattern. This pattern is represented by the Zengakuren (the National Federation of Students' Self-Government Associations) who occupy the extreme left end of Japan's political spectrum. This group, dissatisfied with progressive parties that want to transform the system from inside the system itself, tries to challenge directly the system which encloses modern Japanese society. Using helmets and *kakuzai* (wooden staffs) they try to resist the blue helmets of the mobile police units which represent for them the power of the State. This is only one aspect of their activism which aims at challenging the total power structure of the State. We cannot say exactly what concrete social structure will emerge after the challenge, but the fact that they reject the established power structure places them on the extreme left of Japanese society. About 20% of young workers and students support the activities of this group, which, for an ultra-left group, is rather strong support. However, examples of this group leading itself to its own destruction by using the exercise of power for its own ends are not rare.

Thus, in modern Japanese society, from right to left, social groups who are dissatisfied with the existing multi-party framework are trying to find outlets for their pent-up fury. Elections cannot provide an outlet for groups that are indifferent or discontented. However, in the 1968 Upper House elections, where 50 out of 125 seats are based on the national constituency,

this was the case, and as an outlet for widespread dissatisfaction, the "talent candidates" received a large number of votes. It is not necessary to point out that civic movements and the student movement provide outlets for discontent which, if dissatisfied people believed in the parties, would normally be reflected in elections.

To summarize the result of various surveys,¹⁸ those who expressed an inclination to support political parties were about 60%, of which about 70% were rather stable supporters; hence, about 40% of the electorate may be regarded as strongly committed to the existing parties. We must say of the remaining 60% (including "political vacuum" groups) that they are very fluid. Not only are these groups fluid, but as already mentioned, in Japanese politics it is best to think of supporters of political parties and discontented groups as belonging to separate dimensions. Thus, behind the superficial proliferation of parties lie many contradictions.

It must not be forgotten that behind these contradictions there is the people's "sensitive" mistrust of the apparent stability and complexity of the social system. The contradictions of this stable society are felt, however, not by the professional party members, but rather by numerous sensitive "amateurs." The words, "a sensitive grasp of the total situation," that student activists like to recite so often, are suggestive. Here it is not that one first has an ideology after which follows experience, but rather that first one has experience after which comes ideology. In the reaction that swept the country upon the entrance of the nuclear aircraft carrier USS Enterprise into Sasebo harbor, or among the opponents of the war in Vietnam, women's groups are strongest. Again, among those who oppose urban and public nuisances or fight for local autonomy through civic movements, women are most numerous. Women's groups are sensitive, and their criticisms of political parties are sharp. However, our present political parties, in regard to contradictions in society, are moving away from the people's previous unsophisticated views. If the parties cannot absorb these unsophisticated views and systematize these feelings in party policies, it will probably be impossible for the multi-party system to overcome its contradictions.

¹⁸ See, for example, Yoron kagaku kyōkai (Public Opinion Association), *Shakai genshō no ryūdōkatei kenkyū* (Studies on Social Mobility), Vol. 1, 1957-58, p. 60ff; Waseda daigaku shakaikagaku kenkyūsho (Waseda University Institute of Social Science), "Tōhyō kōdō no kenkyū" (Studies on Voting Behavior), *Shakai kagaku tōkyū*, IX-X, 1959, p. 94ff; Heiwa keizai keikaku kaigi (Committee on Peaceful Economic Planning), *Seitō shiji to seiji ishiki no dōkō ni tsuite no chōsa hōkoku* (Survey of Political Support and Political Consciousness), 1964, p. 111.