

## CHAPTER 6

# Anatomy of the 1996 Lower House Election

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THIS CHAPTER ANALYZES a survey conducted with the cooperation of the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, one of Japan's largest daily newspapers, to obtain as comprehensive an understanding as possible of the true nature of the election campaigns of each party and candidate that ran in the forty-first general election of the House of Representatives (Lower House) on October 18, 1996. The main purpose of the survey was to assess, in the manner of a case study, the effects of the political reform package bill passed in 1994. This Lower House election was the first under the new law, and we wanted to learn whether changes predicted at the time of promulgation—the formation of new political parties, the fostering of an opposition strong enough to assume power in its turn, and so on—actually occurred at the single-seat-constituency level. Accordingly, we focused our attention on how candidates, parties, and *koenkai* (a candidate's personal support group) amassed votes. A true case study, however, can focus only on specific districts with a limited number of individuals, and we felt the need to collect aggregate data. The difficulty here is that all candidates do not permit the same degree of access. Our solution was to enlist the cooperation of the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, directing our questions to bureau editors who covered the election.

Questionnaires were sent to the newspaper's 48 regional bureaus (one in 46 of the 47 prefectures and two in Tokyo, the only prefecture

to be divided into two sectors), covering all 300 districts. We received back 48 completed questionnaires for a total of 291 districts (the responses from Hyogo Prefecture are from the First, Second, and Third districts only). The survey covers the period from the end of December 1996 to January 31, 1997. The questionnaire is reproduced at the end of this chapter.

The survey is exclusively concerned with single-seat constituencies, referring only incidentally to proportional representation districts. Respondents were urged to answer freely, in their own words; consequently, there is some difficulty about presenting their responses in simple quantitative terms. Nevertheless, this report offers comprehensive data concerning the October 1996 Lower House election. Though insufficient in many ways, it represents an unprecedented attempt to amass comprehensive election data on a nationwide scale.

### ISSUES AND PARTY LEADER IMAGE

One major goal of the reform of the electoral system is the phasing out of consensus democracy in favor of democracy based on majority rule.<sup>1</sup> This means basically that each party presents voters with a different campaign platform and that voters in turn vote not so much for an individual candidate as for the party whose platform seems most appealing.

To assess the extent to which that actually occurred, we asked how much importance was given to issues by the voters in choosing a candidate in each electoral district (Q2). Not a single prefecture reported that issues were "very important." Six prefectures—Aomori, Akita, Chiba, Kyoto, Hyogo, and Shimane—said they were "important." The remaining prefectures indicated that issues were either "not so important" or "irrelevant."

In prefectures where issues were regarded as important, what issues in particular were raised (Q2-1)? Apart from the rise in the consumption tax rate, they included a new Shinkansen, or "bullet" train (Aomori), the illegitimate use of public funds (Akita), reconstruction since the January 1995 earthquake in Kobe (Hyogo), and land reclamation in the Naka Sea (Shimane First District)—all matters of a predominantly local character. Issues-oriented candidates were found to come mainly from the Japan Communist Party (JCP) and the New

Frontier Party (NFP). Otherwise, candidates who emphasized issues in their campaigns were for the most part either those who took a strong stand on a particular issue, or those considered at the outset to have a strong chance of winning. The more hotly contested a given district was, the less stress the candidates laid on national issues, emphasizing instead their ability at pork-barreling. From these results, we conclude that the issues-oriented campaign that was supposed to result from the new electoral system went almost entirely unrealized.

Because party leaders, no less than issues, can serve as symbols of their respective parties, we asked how important the party leaders' images were to the voters (Q3). Here, too, only a few bureaus replied that they were important. On a scale ranging from +2 to -2, only Kan Naoto, co-leader of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), was accorded a plus rating (+0.49). All other party leaders were given negative scores.<sup>2</sup> Beginning with the highest, the scores were as follows: Hatoyama Yukio, co-leader of the DPJ, -0.18; Hashimoto Ryutaro, president of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), -0.30; Ozawa Ichiro, president of the NFP, -0.57; Doi Takako, chairperson of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), -0.97; and Fuwa Tetsuzo, president of the JCP, -1.02. The two leaders of the DPJ, a party formed just before the election that cashed in on the new party boom, scored relatively high, but in general there was little feeling that the charisma or popularity of a party leader had much to do with election results. The switch in the leadership of the SDP shortly before the election from former Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi to Doi Takako apparently had no more than a negligible effect on the party's electoral fortunes.

## PARTY ORGANIZATIONS

It had been expected that with the introduction of single-seat electoral districts party-oriented campaigning would replace the candidate-oriented electioneering common under the old system. And so it was in some prefectures, at least on the surface: Even conservative party candidates who in past campaigns had relied heavily on *koenkai* made a show of putting party to the fore.

## Liberal Democratic Party

The LDP's most pressing need was to select for each new single-seat district a single candidate from among the several who would have run against one another in the multiseat districts of the old system. The hope was that in electoral districts across the country the LDP would set up a local organization and *koenkai* would be reorganized or integrated into the organization to promote party-based campaigning. We wanted to gauge the degree of cooperation, so our question, then, was, In how many electoral districts did this cooperation materialize? To what extent did *koenkai* organized in the former multiseat districts cooperate in the new single-seat districts? Did *koenkai* exchange rosters of their members? Did candidates conduct joint campaigns, or set up joint campaign headquarters? Did veteran candidates introduce new candidates to their own *koenkai* (Q4)?

Of the 300 single-seat electoral districts we surveyed, an exchange of membership rosters among *koenkai* occurred in 83; joint election campaigns were conducted in 49; joint policy headquarters set up in 13; and *koenkai* members introduced to new candidates in 66. According to the survey data, 215 districts showed some form of campaign cooperation.

On the other hand, there were districts in which there was no cooperation at all among candidates. Apart from cases where the candidates in question were on bad personal terms or had a long-standing adversarial relationship, this noncooperation had two main causes: Either the previous candidate had retired and been replaced by a newcomer, or the LDP decided to support a candidate from one of the other two parties in the three-party ruling coalition, the SDP and the New Party Sakigake. Also, in 26 electoral districts, candidates failed to forge a cooperative relationship due to lingering personal incompatibility (Q5). In 11 districts, the personal unpleasantness was the result of old electoral rivalry. Other causes include frictions arising from the selection of candidates for single-seat districts and proportional representation districts (7 electoral districts) and an unwillingness or inability on the part of candidates to abandon their old thinking based on the discarded multiseat districts (2 electoral districts).

As we have said, one purpose of the survey was to identify whether campaigning was party-based or *koenkai*-based. For this election, the LDP established district-based local organizations, but to discern

whether these functioned as party organizations as opposed to *koenkai*, we tailored our question concerning these electoral district level campaign headquarters to the prefectural level (Q6). "The only difference between a *koenkai* office and a party campaign headquarters was a new sign," came the reply from 21 prefectures. Eleven prefectures, on the other hand, answered that "the supporters of *koenkai* of former LDP rivals were able to join forces," while 15 more prefectures reported "some degree" of collaboration.

Overall, the results show that although it was impossible to entirely sweep away deep-rooted habits among voters backing individual candidates rather than parties, the local organizations did succeed to some extent in redirecting support to the party level. To be sure, even while on the surface supporters were drawn to the party as a whole, there were many parallel campaigns being waged in support of individual candidates. The degree of cooperation among party candidates and *koenkai* varied from prefecture to prefecture and from district to district.

Question 7 was designed to determine whether electoral reform affected election campaign involvement of prefectural party organizations on behalf of Lower House candidates. The prefectural party organizations were in this election "more active than before," reported 94 electoral districts. On the other hand, 30 electoral districts said they were "less active than before," while 77 districts saw no change. Among reasons cited explaining why prefectural party organizations were more active than before, one was that a rival party candidate was either incumbent or notably popular. Another was that the prefectural party organization was playing an independent role in supporting the candidate. A third was that the prefectural party organization intended for the candidate to be subservient to the organization even after he was elected and a sitting Diet member.

Prefectural party organizations were less active than before in cases where the LDP candidate had either little chance or else an overwhelming chance of winning. A party organization tended to keep a similarly low profile if it felt endorsing one candidate over others would cause internal dissension—or if the internal selection process sent a hopeful candidate to a proportional representation district (particularly in cases where the LDP was cooperating with the SDP and Sakigake). Similar conditions prevailed in districts where no change was perceived in the party organizations' activity. Of course, there were

also candidates who from the beginning essentially ignored the party organization, basing their campaign entirely on their own *koenkai*. On the whole, however, it would appear that as a result of the electoral reform the LDP regional party organizations were more actively engaged in this election campaign than they had been in the past.

To our question (Q10-6) concerning the effect of electoral reform on the relationship between party regional organizations and the central party organization, the response from several prefectures concerning the LDP was that "the central organization's influence has increased." This was mainly attributed to an inability on the part of the regional organizations to cope with the selection of candidates or the assignment of candidates to proportional representation districts. In these important decisions, therefore, leadership from the central party headquarters was conspicuous.

### New Frontier Party

The NFP emerged in this election campaign as a hybrid organization, its membership drawn from the Komeito (Clean Government Party) and various LDP splinter groups—the Japan Renewal Party, the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), and the Japan New Party. These parties had formed the coalition governments in 1993 and 1994. Within the NFP, the election campaign was in fact run by three groups: the candidates' *koenkai*, the lay Buddhist organization *Sokagakkai*, which had backed the former Komeito, and the *Yuai-kai*, a political organization composed of unions formerly affiliated with the now defunct Domei (Japan Confederation of Labor), which had supported the former DSP. The level of cooperation among these three groups varied considerably, depending on the circumstances in each district. Through the survey, we attempted to discern the nature of the cooperative relationship among the three groups (Q12 1a–d). What we found was that 91 electoral districts were organized around *koenkai*, 29 around the *Sokagakkai*; and 18 around the *Yuai-kai*. In 21 electoral districts, the three groups enjoyed nearly equal standing. Many of the districts in which this equal relationship pertained were districts in prefectural capitals.

Among these groups, the largest as well as the most powerful is considered to be the *Sokagakkai*. A survey of the *Sokagakkai*'s work in

this election shows it was active on the NFP's behalf in a total of 68 electoral districts (Q11-1), many of them prefectural capitals. The Sokagakkai was especially active in cases where the candidate came from within the organization, or where the NFP candidate had a fairly good chance of winning a tight race. However, the Sokagakkai did not always support the NFP. In 19 electoral districts, it supported candidates from parties other than the NFP (Q11-2). This was either because in a given district no NFP candidate was running or the NFP candidate was weak. For the most part, in the absence of a suitable NFP candidate, the Sokagakkai threw its weight behind the LDP. Though the Sokagakkai insists its members are free to vote as they wish, it appears that in many cases where there was no suitable NFP candidate a large majority of members voted LDP. Moreover, the Sokagakkai displayed a tendency to withhold its support from NFP candidates considered likely to one day leave the party. To summarize, the Sokagakkai seems to have been at considerable pains to maintain its political influence, extending its support to the NFP or to other parties only with various conditions attached.

The Sokagakkai and other NFP support groups developed a smooth cooperative relationship in 79 electoral districts (Q12-1b). But cooperation was reported as difficult in 45 districts. When we asked (Q12-1d) how smooth the cooperation between the Sokagakkai and other groups was in proportional representation districts, we found that while in 19 prefectures a working relationship did develop, in 17 prefectures it did not. There are still apparently many districts in which the Sokagakkai and other organizations failed to reach a sufficient level of cooperation.

The cooperative relationships among these different groups are not, however, under the integrated control of the NFP's regional organizations. From answers to questions concerning the functions of the NFP's regional organizations (Q12-1e), it would appear that in general these suffer from organizational weakness, almost all prefectures responding that during the 1996 Lower House election the regional organizations played almost no role as information centers or a unified command and control network. On the contrary, it appears that in most cases the three support organizations mentioned above take independent charge of election campaigns within each electoral district. Where the answers do show the party organization as a whole to be relatively well coordinated—as in Aomori, Iwate, and Mie, for

example—it is generally in prefectures with an NFP governor, so that the governor, the candidate's koenkai, the Sokagakkai, and the Yuukai are able to cooperate harmoniously and the election campaign unfolds comparatively smoothly.

## Democratic Party of Japan

The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) is a new party, formed shortly before the 1996 Lower House election as a splinter of the Social Democratic Party (SDP). Its support came partly from labor unions that had previously backed the SDP and partly from candidates' koenkai. Were these able to forge an effective cooperative relationship (Q13-1)? Only five prefectures sent back positive responses, all others reporting that no such cooperative relationship had been possible. In the prefectures where cooperation proved impossible, respondents pointed out that other than supporters of the SDP, no important support networks were to be found. Because the DPJ was formed just before the election, the party organizational base in many regions was, apart from such organizational support as could be transferred from the SDP and the individual candidates' koenkai, extremely unstable.

Furthermore, apart from those exceptional cases (Miyagi, Mie, Shimane) where candidates transferring from the SDP to the DPJ were abandoned by their support organizations, in general candidates making that switch retained the support of their organizations (Q13-2). In cases where labor unions' central organizations decided to support the DPJ, the decision was accepted in 23 prefectures—though in as many as 17 prefectures dissenters either exercised the right to vote their individual preferences or broke away from the central organization altogether (Q13-3). However, in many cases where there was no DPJ candidate in a particular prefecture or electoral district, unions actively supported the SDP, as they had before. Among cases where the rank and file declined to support the DPJ in defiance of a decision taken by the central organization of the labor union, breakaway factions supported the SDP in six prefectures and voted their individual choices in nine. Thus it can be concluded that, when candidates switched from the SDP to the DPJ, for the most part the accompanying transfer of support organizations went smoothly.



## CANDIDATES' SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

### Transformation of Koenkai

Electoral reform has had a considerable impact on the *koenkai* linked to LDP and some NFP candidates (Q8, Q10-3). First of all, the fact that with the introduction of single-seat electoral districts each party can field only one candidate has tended to encourage more integration among *koenkai* working on behalf of the party rather than the individual candidate. The shift in focus from campaigning for an individual candidate to party-based campaigning as a whole is suggested by the facts that in five prefectures the party organization had outstripped the *koenkai* in importance, and in 15 prefectures the *koenkai* showed a tendency to put aside the old rivalries born through the years of backing different candidates and reorganize themselves as one *koenkai* in support of one candidate. From several answers, it appears that this election was marked by a decreasing reluctance to support candidates who in previous elections had been opponents from the same party. Moreover, the *koenkai* of candidates who either moved to proportional representation districts or else transferred outside their original electoral districts were weakened. Along with organizational integration, it was observed that the personal ties between *koenkai* members and candidates were less strong than they had been.

The introduction of single-seat districts, which were smaller than the districts of the old electoral system, and the consequent intensifying of competition among candidates tended to cause the *koenkai* to downsize to smaller community units than had formerly been the case. The strengthening of such *koenkai* was reported in three prefectures. From these answers, it would appear that the *koenkai* themselves were responding to different competitive environments by adapting to the new single-seat system—but not the way the authors of the system had expected. Not only did the merger between *koenkai* and party organizations that the single-seat system had been designed to produce occur, but the *koenkai* also seemed to grow tighter and more neighborhood-oriented. The ways in which *koenkai* are adapting to the new electoral system vary considerably from region to region. Some, seeing the new system as merely provisional, are intent on keeping their old organizations as intact as possible. It is reported that some *koenkai*, for example, operated at the single-seat district level during

the election, but returned to their old frameworks once the election was over. According to responses to this question (Q8), there was no change in 13 prefectures, while seven prefectures either reported the situation unclear or returned no answer.

## Municipal Elected Officials and Local Politicians

Not only *koenkai* but also municipal elected officials such as prefectural governors, mayors, and town managers as well as local politicians from the candidate's own party have important roles to play in a candidate's election campaign. Answers to Question 9 and Question 10 1–2 showed that the participation of these various players differed according to the situation in individual districts, some being active participants in national election campaigns, others holding aloof. Generally speaking, with only one party candidate running in each district, prefectural governors and local politicians are under pressure to come out in unequivocal support of their party's candidate. Governors in many cases tend to take a neutral stance, although where the candidate's election seems assured, or when a certain party is particularly strong in a given prefecture, there is a tendency to jump on the candidate's bandwagon. On the other hand, in prefectural capitals and large cities, where the downsizing of electoral districts has had a particularly marked effect, local elected officials influenced the Lower House election more than before.

Electoral reform has also had a considerable—though not uniform—effect on the relationship between prefectural assembly members and Lower House candidates. Generally speaking, the downsizing of electoral districts has lent greater importance to local politicians, who act as campaign strategists and vote-getting machines. The result is a closer relationship between candidate and prefectural assembly members.

Another major change has been the clarification of the relationship between the prefectural assembly members and the Lower House candidate. In the large cities, the smaller electoral districts make it easy for prefectural assembly members to run for national office, which in turn makes national election results a powerful factor in regional elections. Realizing that, local politicians are all the more likely to be supportive of their parties' national candidates. How, then, has the influence of Lower House members on local politicians changed? It

has increased, according to responses from Akita, and decreased, according to responses from Ibaragi, Kanagawa, and Ehime. There would seem to be a connection between the electoral role of local politicians and how powerful candidates for the Lower House are in each district.

## Interest Groups

Though electoral reform seems to have brought little change to the relationship between Diet members and local interest groups (Q 10-5), the consolidation of electoral districts does seem to have encouraged approaches to interest groups from Diet members or candidates. The response of interest groups has varied from district to district. Some groups supported candidates they were not wholly satisfied with if the candidates seemed poised to win or belonged to a party that was strong locally. Other groups were neutral or else hedged their bets by supporting more than one candidate. On the whole, however, interest groups were inclined to hold aloof (Q17). Considering the question sector by sector, it appears that in two prefectures (Iwate and Saga) the Construction Industry Association has responded more eagerly to overtures since the reform, while in 11 prefectures it responded less eagerly. Local Nokyo (Japanese Agricultural Cooperation Association) chapters showed themselves more responsive in Hokkaido and Fukushima, less so in five prefectures. Whether the responsiveness of interest groups rose or fell, the cause seems in most cases to be circumstances in the individual electoral districts.

Several of our questions dealt with the relationship between labor unions and political parties (Q13 2-3; Q14 1-7). Unions affiliated with the Yuai-kai almost invariably supported the NFP, but how unions associated with the former General Council of Trade Unions of Japan (Sohyo) voted depended on circumstances in individual districts—particularly on whether a DPJ or SDP candidate was running. Another factor, among several, was the three-party coalition government in place at the time of the election formed by the LDP, the SDP, and Sakigake. In 18 electoral districts in which no SDP or DPJ candidates were running, the Sohyo-affiliated unions transferred their support to LDP candidates. A striking fact in this connection concerns attitudes to the privatization of the Post and Telecommunication Ministry's postal savings and life insurance, the Postal Workers' Union and the

NTT Labor Union backing LDP candidates opposed to privatization and private transport unions supporting LDP candidates favoring privatization. In only four electoral districts did the Yuai-kai and the former Sohyo unions agree to back the same candidate. Only a very few unaffiliated unions and individual activists supported the New Socialist Party, a splinter of the former Japan Socialist Party. The National Confederation of Trade Unions loyally backed the Japan Communist Party.

Citizens' groups and networks of local political groups received some media attention, but nationwide, these movements were mentioned in answers from only seven prefectures (Q15). Most of them backed DPJ and Sakigake candidates. A few candidates from these groups were successful in their own right, but in general local party candidates were unable to draw sufficient votes, largely because victory in the smaller single-seat districts created by the reform required more votes than before.

### ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

The single-seat districts created by the electoral reform having eliminated the electoral battles among candidates from the same party in the same district, it had been supposed that parties would take to launching fierce negative campaigns against one another. On the whole, however, negative campaigning does not appear to have materialized in any particularly virulent form (Q16 1-3). There was the LDP's anti-Sokagakkai campaign, which was a major factor in 24 electoral districts, but from a nationwide perspective the negativeness appears muted indeed. Coming down too hard on the Sokagakkai at the electoral district level would not have made much sense from the LDP point of view, since in some districts Sokagakkai members freely voted their personal choices even when an NFP candidate was in the running. In some cases, the Sokagakkai even lent behind-the-scenes support to the LDP. The Sokagakkai aside, negative campaigning arose in no more than a few prefectures. Incidents of individual candidates criticizing and slandering one another increased in 12 prefectures, declined in four, and was seen as unchanged in the remaining 31.

One of the main purposes behind electoral reform was to make campaigns less expensive. It is difficult for a survey of this nature to

make accurate observations concerning this point (Q18), but in 15 prefectures it was reported that this election campaign was apparently more costly than previous campaigns had been, whereas only nine prefectures reported an apparent decrease in campaign costs. Because the anticorruption provision of the new election law holds candidates accountable for actions of their staff, the question of campaign expenses has become for each party a sensitive issue. In some electoral districts, the fact that LDP candidates were no longer battling one another meant that there were no strong opponents to worry about, so that even in districts where vote buying in the form of a candidate entertaining his supporters had in previous elections been described as "rampant," this time around such parties were "almost never observed."

Overall, however, one gets the impression that the necessity for the reorganization of support organizations occasioned by the introduction of single-seat districts, the downsizing of electoral districts, and the resulting intensified competition among candidates, among other factors, combined to force campaign expenses upward.

## CONCLUSION

Taken as a whole, the results of this survey suggest that with regard to several points at least, election campaigns have begun to change in the ways envisioned by the framers of electoral reform. Regional party organizations and *koenkai* may in many instances have evidenced only cosmetic changes, but there has been an observable tendency to bring together party supporters within an electoral district and, thanks to the anticorruption measures of the new law, flagrant violations of campaign laws have declined sharply.

However, neither policy debate as the core of party-based electioneering nor campaigning in which a party leader's image played an important role—both of which the reformers had hoped to encourage—in fact materialized scarcely at all. Rather, door-to-door campaigning was popular in competitive districts where the effects of the downsizing were keenly felt. That, and the short-term cost involved in the reorganization of *koenkai*, made the goal of less costly elections difficult to accomplish.

The introduction of single-seat electoral districts narrowed the breach between candidates and local politicians. The smaller election districts

encouraged the candidates to take local politicians more seriously as people who could raise votes. Conversely, local politicians, in particular prefectural governors and influential assembly members in large cities, discovered that national candidates could be used as springboards to their own entry into national politics. Thus, the reform of national elections has had its effect on regional politics as well. Potentially this could, over the long term, effect a rapprochement between national and regional politics and influence the way in which national candidates are selected.

Electoral reform has had different effects on different electoral districts. Candidates and other actors in the political process—local politicians, labor unions, interest groups, and so on—responded in different ways to the challenges posed by the new electoral system depending on varying local circumstances. The question we must consider in the future is, Which combination of conditions generate what effects?<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of that analysis, it will be important to define the variables that might account for phenomena such as the progressive party orientation of regional electoral politics. The best way to achieve that goal, we believe, is the combination of nationwide aggregate data with case-study analysis attempted in this research project. In the future, as adaptation to the new system advances—as, for example, relationships among individuals at different levels of a party organization change—new situations are sure to emerge. Whatever course future changes take, discussion of them will prove sterile unless cause-and-effect relationships are accorded sufficient analysis. This project aims to be a first step in that direction.

## NOTES

1. For a direct exposition of this point, see Horie Fukashi. "The New Electoral System: Plan and Result." 1997. Prepared for the Japan Electoral Study Association 1997 annual meeting at Sugiyama Jogakuen University. Panel G: "An Inspection of Single-seat Electoral Districts and Proportional Representation."

2. Scoring procedures: very important (+2), important (+1), not so important (-1), irrelevant (-2).

3. For this type of analysis, the Boolean methods of data reduction seem very promising. For an introduction to the methods, see Charles C. Ragin. 1987. *The Comparative Method*. University of California Press.

## QUESTIONS

- Q1. Let's first consider your election coverage system. What kind of electoral districts were you charged with covering, and how did you assign staff to them?
- Q2. In the electoral districts you covered, were issues an important factor in the victor's election? (Issues need not necessarily be national in scope; please consider local issues as well.)
- (a) very important                      (c) not so important  
(b) important                              (d) irrelevant
1. If issues were very important, please list three.  
2. Did candidates take issues seriously? If so, please identify the electoral district and the candidates.
- Q3. On the whole, in the electoral districts you covered, were the party leaders' images important?
1. Hashimoto Ryutaro (Liberal Democratic Party)  
(a) very important                      (b) important  
(c) not so important                      (d) irrelevant
2. Ozawa Ichiro (New Frontier Party)  
(a) very important                      (b) important  
(c) not so important                      (d) irrelevant
3. Hatoyama Yukio (Democratic Party of Japan)  
(a) very important                      (b) important  
(c) not so important                      (d) irrelevant
4. Kan Naoto (Democratic Party of Japan)  
(a) very important                      (b) important  
(c) not so important                      (d) irrelevant
5. Doi Takako (Social Democratic Party)  
(a) very important                      (b) important  
(c) not so important                      (d) irrelevant
6. Fuwa Tetsuzo (Japan Communist Party)  
(a) very important                      (b) important  
(c) not so important                      (d) irrelevant
- Q4. Liberal Democratic Party  
To what extent did LDP candidates who in previous elections would have run against one another cooperate in the single-seat electoral districts? Please respond by filling in the district names as applicable:
1. Electoral districts in which candidates' koenkai exchanged rosters of supporters (accuracy of lists aside).  
2. Electoral districts in which a former candidate from that district returned to support the current candidate, such as by campaigning for or openly endorsing the current candidate.  
3. Electoral districts in which candidates showed mutual support by dispatching staff to each other's campaign headquarters.

4. Electoral districts in which a candidate who had transferred to another district introduced his old koenkai to the incoming candidate.
  5. Electoral districts in which no mutual cooperation was apparent.
- Q5. The changes in the electoral system sometimes required LDP candidates whose support organizations had in the past been mutually antagonistic to campaign together. Were there any electoral districts in which, due to lingering hostility, this cooperation did not occur? If so, what kind of problems arose among which support organizations in which electoral districts?
- Q6. The LDP organized chapters in every district. Were these the same as koenkai? Or, were there any chapters formed through the reorganization of the koenkai of former LDP rivals?
- Q7. Did changes in the electoral system bring about changes in the way LDP prefectural organizations conducted Lower House election campaigns?
1. Names of electoral districts in which campaigns were more vigorous than previously.
  2. Names of electoral districts in which campaigns were less vigorous than previously.
  3. Names of electoral districts in which no change was observed.
- Q8. Conservative candidates in general.  
Do you feel electoral reform changed the nature of the koenkai? If so, how?
- Q9. Conservative candidates in general  
Did you observe any changes attributable to electoral reform in the Lower House campaign efforts of regional politicians such as prefectural governors and regional assembly members? If so, what kind of changes?
- Q10. Do you feel electoral reform changed the relationship among political actors?
1. Between Lower House members (candidates) and prefectural governors.
  2. Between Lower House members (candidates) and prefectural assembly members.
  3. Between Lower House members (candidates) and koenkai.
  4. Between Lower House members (candidates) and other influential local politicians.
  5. Between Lower House members (candidates) and local interest groups.
  6. Between local and central party organizations.
- Q11. Sokagakkai campaign activities
1. In which electoral districts was the Sokagakkai particularly active? Please refer to electoral districts by name and describe the Sokagakkai's activities using concrete examples.



2. Were there any electoral districts in which the Sokagakkai vote went to parties other than the New Frontier Party? Please refer to electoral districts by name and describe the Sokagakkai's activities using concrete examples.

Q12. New Frontier Party

1. This party consists of various political groups.
  - (a) Were there any electoral districts in which koenkai played a central role in the local chapter?
  - (b) Were there any electoral districts in which Sokagakkai played a central role in the local chapter?
  - (c) Were there any electoral districts in which Yuai-kai played a central role in the local chapter?
  - (d) Were there any electoral districts in which koenkai, Sokagakkai, and Yuai-kai played almost equal roles in the local chapter?
  - (e) Were there any other notable characteristics of NFP's local chapters?
2. Did the Sokagakkai organizations, the former Japan Renewal Party, and the Yuai-kai organizations function smoothly and harmoniously together?
  - (a) Electoral districts in which they functioned smoothly together.
  - (b) Electoral districts in which they did not function smoothly together.

Q13. Democratic Party of Japan

1. This party was created by the efforts of labor unions that had supported the former Social Democratic Party, together with other groups. The question of electoral victory or defeat aside, did these two separate groupings function harmoniously together?
2. In cases where candidates of the former Social Democratic Party switched over to the Democratic Party of Japan, did they retain the support of their original support organizations? If any support organizations withdrew their support because the candidate switched parties, please name the organizations.
3. In cases where a union's central committee came out in support of the Democratic Party of Japan, did the electoral district's grass-roots organizations go along?
  - (a) All went along.
  - (b) Some unions left the decision up to the union members (please name the unions).
  - (c) Some unions clearly opposed the central committee decision (please name the unions).
4. Were there any Democratic Party of Japan candidates who waged their campaigns with the aid of volunteers instead of relying substantially on existing groups? If so, please name the candidates.

Q14. Labor unions

1. Were there any labor unions that supported the LDP? If so, which unions, in which electoral districts?

2. Were there any labor unions that supported the New Frontier Party? If so, which unions, in which electoral districts?
3. Were there any labor unions that supported the Democratic Party of Japan? If so, which unions, in which electoral districts?
4. Were there any labor unions that supported the Social Democratic Party? If so, which unions, in which electoral districts?
5. Were there any labor unions that supported the New Socialist Party? If so, which unions, in which electoral districts?
6. Were there any labor unions that supported the Japan Communist Party? If so, which unions, in which electoral districts?
7. This might be somewhat repetitious, but let's consider the situation in which unions affiliated with the Yuai-kai backed the New Frontier Party. Please list concrete examples pertaining to the following points:
  - (a) Unions that gave exclusive support to the New Frontier Party.
  - (b) Unions that expressed support for parties other than the New Frontier Party.
  - (c) Unions that, instead of producing a united policy, allowed their membership to freely vote their individual choices.
8. Were there any labor unions that employed unique strategies for single-seat districts and proportional blocks?

Q15. Citizens' groups

Were there any citizens' groups that were particularly active in this Lower House election? If so, please name the groups and specify which candidates they supported in which electoral districts.

Q16. Negative campaigning

1. Do you feel negative campaigning among candidates—scandals, personal attacks, and the like—was more pronounced than in previous elections?
2. Was there more negative campaigning against parties and organizations than in the past? If so, who were the most notable targets of attack?

Q17. Interest groups

1. Were any local interest groups and organizations conspicuously active in this campaign? If so, please name them.
2. Conversely, were any organizations conspicuously apathetic in this campaign? If so, please name them.

Q18. One of the goals of electoral reform was to encourage less costly elections. To what extent was this goal realized at the electoral district level? If regarding this point you feel there were any electoral districts that displayed any distinctive features, please incorporate them in your answer.