

**Japan's New Extrovert Leaders:
How Institutions Change Incentives and Capabilities**

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Introduction: The Argument in Brief

Japanese political leaders have become “extrovert” in two ways. First, they have become extrovert in terms of seeking media exposure. They have become much enamored of cameras and sound bites. Although the former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi (in office from April 26, 2001 to September 26, 2006) did not create this trend, he definitely turned the new trend into a routine by making twice-daily appearances in front of the TV camera—a practice his successors Prime Ministers Shinzo Abe (from September 26, 2006 to September 26, 2007) and Yasuo Fukuda (from September 26, 2007 to present) have inherited. Second, Japanese political leaders have become more assertive and vocal on security and foreign policy issues. Recent developments in Japanese defense policy, including sending Self Defense Forces to Iraq, would not have happened if it were not for the leadership of Prime Minister Koizumi. More politicians actively debate foreign policy in the media, and try to draw appeal with their foreign policy expertise. Why is this change occurring? What is the source of the increasingly “extrovert” behavior among Japanese political leaders?

To summarize, we argue that two different sets of institutional reforms have been crucial in explaining the emergence of what we call “extrovert” leaders in Japan. The first set of institutions concerns electoral rules, while the second concerns legislative rules that affect the relative political capacity of Prime Minister. In Japan, both sets of institutions have gone through major reforms since the mid-1990s, significantly altering the parameters of politics. We attribute the recent increase in the “extroversion” of Japanese political leaders to the new institutional context that emerged. This is not to deny the importance of the end of the Cold War or the North Korean threat. Our claim is

that we miss an important dimension of Japanese foreign and defense policy unless we also take into consideration the institutional context of domestic politics.

The institutional reforms that occurred in the 1990s had a critical impact on changing politicians' incentives. Ambitious politicians—those who aspire to ascend to the leadership positions in their respective parties and to become Prime Minister—now see security and foreign policy issues differently from how their forerunners under the old institutional context had. The rank-and-file LDP politicians no longer face penalty against specializing in foreign and security issues that they used to face under the old MMD/SNTV system. It is true that the end of the Cold War and the first Gulf War, issues of defense/national security and foreign affairs have become among the most important issues in Japan. Nonetheless, we agree with Robert Pekkanen and Ellis S. Krauss (2005) that shifts in public opinion, changes in geopolitical environments—what they call “realist calculations”—do not explain recent policy developments in Japan. As they succinctly demonstrate, regardless of what public opinion supports, the government has not always followed public opinion in its foreign policy. Japan sent Self-Defense Forces to Iraq in 2004 against public opinion! The change in the geopolitical environment does not explain new policy developments either. Japan did not simply adjust its policy to the new environment that emerged after the end of the Cold War. Again, as Pekkanen and Krauss (2005) note, Japan did not send any troops to Iraq in 1991 but it did in 2004.

The electoral reform in 1994 and a series of political reforms introduced in the late-1990s concurrently changed the parameters of Japanese leaders' political capabilities. The introduction of single-member districts and proportional representation in the Lower

House made it possible for the LDP leaders to control the party nomination process in ways that were impossible under the old system. The political reforms introduced in the 1990s were equally important. In 1999, the government implemented legislative rule changes with an aim to strengthen politicians' positions in the legislative process vis-à-vis the bureaucratic branch. Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto introduced a major administrative reform bill implemented in 2001. As of 2001, Japan's government structure was reorganized in ways that strengthened the role of the Prime Minister and his Cabinet.

In short, by the early 2000s, Japan's leaders found themselves in a very different institutional context. Not only were there new incentives that favored "extrovert" leaders, but there were new institutional resources at their disposal. We emphasize the importance of domestic determinants of Japan's foreign and security policy as Pekkanen and Krauss (2005) do. We differ from their approach in our focus of systematic changes in politicians' incentives.¹

The rest of the paper proceeds in five sections. Section I briefly discusses what politics looked like under the old electoral rules. Section II describes the new electoral rules. Section III explains how the new rules favor "extrovert" behaviors on the part of politicians, and provides evidence to support this argument. Section IV turns to the issue of new political capabilities made possible by a series of political reforms in the late-1990s. We will show how the reforms, which strengthened both the statutory authority and the organizational capacity of the Cabinet Secretariat and its staff, made possible a

¹ Pekkanen and Krauss (2005) focus on two sets of domestic factors. One set of factors concerns the dynamics between political parties—particularly the demise of the Japan Socialist Party. The second concerns the political reforms that enhanced the power of the Prime Minister. Our paper also looks at this second set of institutional changes, but not the first.

drastic reversal in the legislative process. Section V concludes by discussing implications for Japanese foreign policy and the U.S.-Japan alliance in particular.

I. Politics Under the Old Electoral Reform

Kent Calder observed in his classic book on Japanese politics published almost twenty years ago that Japan's old electoral system was not conducive to politicians' involvement in security and/or foreign policy issues.² His chapter on foreign policy, appropriately named "The Residual: Defense," discusses how it was not in the interest of Japanese politicians to invest their time and influence on defense policy matters. The old electoral system combined medium-sized multi-member districts with single non-transferable votes (MMD/SNTV hereafter). Under this system, typically more than one LDP candidate ran from the same district. Because voters cast their single vote for a specific individual candidate rather than a party, this system generated fierce intra-party competition. In such an electoral context, individual LDP politicians were pressed to distinguish themselves from their fellow LDP candidates in the same district. Failure to do so meant defeat. In this context, talking about security issues during election times made little sense. Either all the LDP candidates had to agree on the same position, which prevented them from emphasizing differences, or they each adhered to different foreign and security policies, consequently causing the party to sound less coherent. Staking a distinctive position on foreign affairs and security policies, however, did not bring about any advantages to one's campaign in an MMD/SNTV system, which was biased in favor of distribution of private goods rather than provision of collective good. The rest of this

² Kent Calder, *Crisis and Compensation* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press). Chapter 10, pp.411.

section elaborates why MMD/SNTV and foreign/security policies did not go well together.

Medium-Sized Multi-Member Districts and Single Non-Transferable Vote (MMD/SNTV)

Electorally speaking, the winning strategy under the MMD/SNTV involved organizing loyal political machines based on personal networks. At the level of individual LDP candidates, this meant that they had to oil the wheels of their machines by delivering benefits to their constituents. At the level of the LDP as a whole, it was crucial that individual LDP members specialized in “divisible” policy areas to maximize the overall LDP’s seat share. Specialization could potentially happen in two ways as suggested by Tatebayashi (2004): either by geographical or by sectoral specialization. Those LDP Diet members in the same electoral district could develop their own political machines in different geographical areas within the same district, such as centering in their home towns. Public work projects of any kind are compatible with geographical division of labor, because such projects can be “divided” and “allocated” to very specific locations. LDP Diet members can also specialize in some sectoral policy areas such as agriculture, construction or commerce to divide up the conservative constituencies within the same district. For instance, one LDP politician can specialize in agricultural policy to capture the agricultural votes in the district, while his (rarely her) fellow party members in the same district can do the same with other sectors such as construction or

commerce.³ These two different specialization strategies permitted multiple LDP Diet members within the same electoral district to co-exist.

Under the MMD/SNTV, the rank and file LDP politicians had very little incentive to specialize on foreign and/or security policies. Security and foreign policies, by nature, are oriented towards the provision of public goods. Because public goods are not “divisible” as public works projects are, they offer LDP politicians little electoral advantage in their MMD/SNTV race.⁴ The rank-and-file politicians had little luxury to expend their precious time and resources on becoming experts on foreign and security policies.

The old electoral system also weakened the role of the party president of the ruling party, who was also the Prime Minister. Under the MMD/SNTV system, where the LDP fielded more than one official candidate in most districts, the party leader did not control the party nomination. In order to be successfully elected, LDP candidates needed more than a mere party nomination. Often, backing from a *habatsu* leader was sufficient to enter an electoral race against the LDP incumbents. *Habatsu* not only aided individual candidates in electoral campaigns, but also helped them in fund-raising and in the allocation of positions within the LDP and the Cabinet. *Habatsu* leaders, in their turn, possessed strong incentives to expand the membership base of their *habatsu* in the Diet in an attempt to increase their influence within the party. Ultimately, *habatsu* leaders

³ Tatebayashi (2004) provides empirical evidence to show that this kind of “dividing” votes has indeed occurred. Also see Cox, Rosenbluth and Thies (1999) on factions.

⁴ In the US, foreign and defense policy do generate important opportunities for pork. Siting of military bases and any budgetary increases for them have important political implications. Foreign policy, too, generates intense hostility and support from different ethnic groups within the US. Moreover, any decisions over military procurement also provides politicians with opportunities to solicit money from lobbyists etc. In Japan, outside of Okinawa, defense and foreign policy generated little pork for domestic interest groups. Journalists have been long aware of conservative politicians’ pork barrel activities in Okinawa (see, for instance, *Sunday Mainichi*, December 11 issue, 2005).

wanted to become the party president (synonymous with the Prime Minister as far as the LDP remained the ruling party). *Habatsu* factions essentially functioned as mini-parties within the LDP. *Habatsu* membership rarely reflected any ideological calculations. *Habatsu* was a vehicle for LDP politicians to control resource allocation.

Despite their usefulness under the MMD/SNTV system, *habatsu* came at a price. They weakened the LDP party leadership and thus, by extension, the Prime Minister and its Cabinet. The absence of the party leader's control over the party label resulted in his inability to sanction against the rank-and-file. *Habatsu* leaders, not the party leadership, were the ones who directly controlled the rank-and-file. This meant that no decision could be reached without the consent of the *habatsu* leaders. *Habatsu* leaders, in turn, made sure that their influence was institutionalized in three ways. First, they institutionalized unanimity rules for the most important policy decisions within the LDP. Second, they ensured that all post allocations—within the party and the Cabinet—were jointly determined. Third, they imposed selection rules for the party president, which magnified the influence of *habatsu*.

II. The Rule Changes: The 1994 Electoral Reform

The new electoral rules that were introduced in 1994 and implemented in 1996 changed the institutional parameters of how one became a Diet member, LDP party president and/or Prime Minister. Before discussing the expected effects of the new rules, it is necessary to first describe them.

The reform of these electoral rules eliminated SNTV from the Lower House. Instead, the Lower House adopted a mixed system, whereby voters were given two

votes—one for the single member district (SMD) and the other for the proportional representation (PR) district. Of the 500 Lower House Diet members, 300 and 200 are elected in the SMD-tier and the PR-tier, respectively. The 200 PR seats are allocated to 11 regional PR districts (district magnitudes range from 6 to 29). The Lower House PR system only permits voters to cast their vote for a specific party rather than an individual candidate. The most important feature of the new Lower House electoral rules is that it completely eliminated intra-party electoral competition that used to be the trademark of the old MMD/SNTV system.

When the Lower House adopted a mixed system of SMD and PR in the 1996 elections, the Upper House had already been using a similar mixed system. As in the Lower House elections, voters cast two votes: one in their local MMD/SNTV districts; and another one in the nation-wide PR district. Smallest of the MMD/SNTV districts consist of two seats. Because only half of the Upper House is up for reelection every three years, these two-seat districts *de facto* become single member districts. As a result, roughly one-fifth of the Upper House is elected in SMD, two-fifths is elected in MMD/SNTV districts while the remaining two-fifths is elected in the nation-wide PR district. Since its creation in 1983, the PR district has used a closed party list until the it switched to an open list system in 2003.⁵

In spite of some similarities, there are important differences between the Lower House and Upper House elections. One unique feature of the electoral rules for the Lower House is that political parties can dual list candidates in the SMD-tier and the PR-

⁵ The PR was introduced to the large nation-wide district since the 1983 elections. Prior to this change, SNTV applied.

tier.⁶ The Democratic Party of Japan always chose to list their SMD-tier candidates in their respective regional PR lists as well. The LDP has also increased the number of their SMD candidates dual-listed in the PR-tier. Dual candidacy permits political parties to rescue their SMD candidates who lost in their SMD contest. Parties decide the order in which candidates are ranked in the party's PR lists. They are allowed to adopt a flexible list whereby dual candidates in the PR lists get elected on the basis of their performance in the respective SMD districts. This means that the candidate who fought the closest race against her SMD winner gets elected first, then the candidate who fought the second closest race, and so on. (Those dual candidates who actually win their SMD seats are removed from the PR list.) The greater the party's vote share in the PR-tier, the greater the number of dual-listed SMD candidates who can be resuscitated via the PR-list. In other words, the two tiers are interlinked in the Lower House in ways that they are not in the Upper House. The direct consequence of this linkage is that the electoral fortune of a specific individual candidate and that of the party become highly entangled. Steven Reed and Michael Thies (2001: 400-401) indicate that this arrangement makes the party vote even more important.

The elimination of intra-party competition at the polls —completely from the Lower House and by three-fifths in the Upper House—affected intra-party dynamics. It removed an institutional obstacle that had previously weakened the LDP party leadership vis-à-vis the rank-and-file and, more importantly, *habatsu* leaders. After the introduction of the new mixed system, the LDP leadership began developing basic rules about candidate nomination. The LDP restricted the candidacy of those who had lost their SMD seats for two consecutive elections by excluding them from the PR list in the

⁶ McKean and Scheiner xxxx

following electoral cycle. The LDP also introduced strict age restrictions in the PR-tier. Unlike under the medium-sized multi-member districts, where individual LDP politicians “owned” their home grounds, the party began to assert its “property right” over SMD. Nothing demonstrated the full impact of the institutional change more than what happened in the 2005 elections. Junichiro Koizumi, the LDP president at the time, refused to nominate the LDP incumbents who had opposed his policy in their capacity as LDP official candidates.⁷ This decision reflects the new institutional context at least as much as the unique personality of Koizumi as a leader if not more important than personal leadership.⁸ *Habatsu*’s role in candidate nomination therefore drastically declined.

The 1994 reform of the Electoral Campaign Law—accompanying the Electoral Reform—was also very important. This reform introduced state subsidies for political parties—the monetary amount was to be set according to the number of their Diet members.⁹ This provision strengthened the financial role of the central party organization vis-à-vis its members at the expense of *habatsu*. *Habatsu* lost their role in fund-raising.¹⁰

III. New Incentives: the Rank-and-File and the “Ambitious”

Since the 1996 elections, the majority of politicians run as the single official party in SMD or purely on the party ticket. (The Upper House changed its rules in 2003 to

⁷ For more details on the 2005 election, see Estevez-Abe (2006).

⁸ For view that emphasizes the role of political leadership, see Samuels (2003).

⁹ This reform also increased the penalty on politicians for violating the campaign regulations.

¹⁰ Harukata Takenaka shows that the financial role of *habatsu* almost immediately dropped as a result. Takenaka (2006), 155. This reform made little change for highly concentrated parties such as the Japan Communist Party (JCP) and the Clean Government Party (*Komeito*). The JCP, in particular, has always had a sound financial foundation based on its revenue from subscriptions to its party paper, The Red Flag (*Akahata*). In fact, the JCP was very critical of the new subsidy scheme and, to this day, refuses to receive its share of the subsidies. Also see Otake (2003).

reintroduce SNTV in the 50-member seat nation-wide district. We will come back to this point later.) Three important changes occurred. One, the rank-and-file developed a strong preference for a popular party president and popular policy platform. The change in the incentives of the rank-and-file eventually led to changes in the election methods of the LDP party president. Two, the new SMD and the closed party list PR removed the old constraints on individual politicians making it electorally viable to specialize in non-divisible policy issues such as security, defense and foreign policy. Three, and most importantly, the new rules also affected the most “ambitious” within the party. As we shall detail later in this section, the new institutional context has also changed the calculations of LDP Diet members who are aspiring to become party president (i.e. Prime Minister).

Preferences for a Popular Party Leader: New Ways of Choosing the LDP President

The new electoral system has increased the electoral importance of the party leader. Voters no longer cast their votes for one of the multiple LDP candidates as in the old MMN/SNTV system. Instead they cast their vote for a specific party in the PR-district. Their decision relies on the party leader’s statements and any formal/informal party platform that a specific party puts out. Although voters cast their vote in the SMD district for a specific individual candidate, their calculations are different from those under the old MMN/SNTV system. Under the new SMD-tier, even a popular and well-known individual candidate has to run as an official party candidate if she were to be effective at all as a Diet member. As for less well-known candidates, the reputation of their party becomes a crucial factor in determining their electoral chances. A popular

policy platform and a popular face of the leader thus become important assets at the polls. In many ways, casting a vote for a specific party in the PR-tier and casting a vote for a particular candidate in the SMD-tier mean voting for the respective party leader to become Prime Minister.

The rank-and-file politicians, for totally selfish reasons, now developed an incentive to choose a popular party leader capable of appealing to the electorate and convincing them that he would make a good Prime Minister. The surge of the importance of the party president for the electoral fortunes of the rank-and-file also brought about a further weakening of *habatsu* as a mechanism to select party leader. In 1995, for the first LDP Party President selection that took place after the 1994 Electoral Reform, the rank-and-file strongly opposed the usual behind-the-scenes negotiations among *habatsu* leaders to select the new Party President. Elections were thus called for and candidates such as Junichiro Koizumi ran without *habatsu* backing. *Habatsu*'s role declined more visibly in 1998, as Hideo Otake (2003) points out. In the 1998 round of the Party Leader selection, Seiroku Kajiyama left his faction, the Obuchi faction, to run for Party President against this former faction leader, Keizo Obuchi (Reed and Thies 2001:393). The new cohort of politicians elected in 1996—under the new rules—agitated and rallied behind Kajiyama.¹¹ The fact that Kajiyama gathered more than hundred votes from his fellow LDP Diet members attests to the fact that the intra-party dynamics had begun to change significantly under the new electoral rules.

A close look at the changes in the LDP rules concerning the selection of its party president helps illustrate the new intra-party dynamics that emerged as a consequence of

¹¹ One of such politicians, Taro Kono, almost daily posted in his blog very vivid details of what was happening in the LDP during this period. See www.taro.org.

the new SMD-dominant electoral rules in the Upper House. Let us first describe the way in which the LDP used to select its leader under the MMD/SNTV system, and demonstrate how it has changed in ways that are compatible with the new incentives of the rank-and-files.

The Old Rules for Selecting the LDP Party President

Under the MMD/SNTV system, *habatsu* leaders determined who was to become the party leader (and Prime Minister). It was not uncommon for the LDP to appoint its leader by means of back-stage negotiations among *habatsu* leaders without calling for any form of votes. Of the thirty-seven elections of its party president, the LDP reported to “non-votes” fourteen times. In some cases, this happened because no one contested the incumbent leader. In other cases, however, the LDP averted any election by choosing to settle on the sole candidate by means of backstage negotiations or, in one instance, just extending the term of a sitting president. Even when votes were called for, the LDP always adopted rules that favored *habatsu* leaders.

Intriguingly, the LDP has frequently changed the rules for selecting its party leader.¹² Since its creation in 1955, the party changed the rules more than ten times—excluding those instances when they averted an election all together by resorting to backstage negotiations.¹³ Two aspects of the rules are particularly important in understanding the influence of *habatsu* leaders. The first aspect concerns candidacy requirements. In 1972, the LDP opened ways for the self-declaration of candidacy. Ever

¹² The reasons why the LDP frequently changed its rules raise very interesting questions. Later in this paper, we will discuss the motivations behind some of the rule changes that occurred in the mid-1990s. Unfortunately, in this paper, we cannot delve into all rule changes that occurred under the LDP rule and explain them.

¹³ I have benefited greatly from Kazuhi Goto’s unpublished MA thesis.

since, the party has frequently changed the rules concerning how one qualifies as a candidate. Initially in 1972, the party required that each candidate get endorsements from at least ten of his (so far never *her*) fellow LDP Diet members. Needless to say, the smaller the number of endorsements, easier it is for a candidate to enter the race. The bar was raised to twenty LDP Diet members in 1978 and to fifty in 1982. The bar was lowered to twenty in 1989 and back up to thirty in 1991. Since then, it alternated between thirty and twenty for almost every LDP presidential election. The restrictive candidacy requirement benefited *habatsu* leaders, who could rely on the endorsements by their *habatsu* members. In other words, unless someone was either a *habatsu* leader or had the blessing by his *habatsu* leader, there was no chance for him to enter the party presidential race.

The second aspect of the rules for the LDP presidential race concerns the rules over how to reflect the voice of LDP members that are not Diet members (i.e. local LDP politicians and regular party members who pay the party dues). Needless to say, *habatsu* leaders' power would magnify when regular party members' voice was minimized. Hence *habatsu* leaders had to walk a fine line between maintaining their grip in the process and appearing democratic. A major bribery scandal involving Kakuei Tanaka, a sitting LDP Prime Minister and fierce back stage confrontations among various *habatsu* over a few presidential races had caused a wide-spread disenchantment in the 1970s. As a way of dissipating the growing discontent among LDP supporters, in 1978, the LDP introduced primaries to permit those regular party members who had paid their party dues for the past two consecutive years to cast their votes. This rule was to be applied when

there were more than one candidate. The primaries would select the two finalists, who then would proceed to the second round of votes cast by LDP Diet members.

Although the 1978 reform marked a significant departure in permitting regular party members to have a voice, it was ultimately the LDP Diet members' votes that determined the winner. In 1989, the LDP changed the rules to give regular LDP members a more direct say in picking the final winner by letting them cast their votes in the same round of votes as the LDP Diet members instead of in the primaries. These rule changes notwithstanding, the actual role of popular vote was limited in two ways. First, regular LDP members' votes were counted different from the LDP Diet members' votes. Rather than counting each of regular party members' votes as one, the LDP adopted a point system, whereby each of its prefectural branches received 4 votes. These 4 votes were allocated to candidates in a winner-take-all manner: whoever was the winner of the primaries in a specific prefecture carried all 4 votes allocated to that prefecturer. Second, the LDP often avoided votes. Of the nine presidential selections that took place during this period, only two held primaries. Similarly, although the 1989 reform permitted regular party members to vote in the same round as the LDP Diet members, votes were seldom called for as the LDP managed to narrow candidacy to one person to avoid votes.

In short, as far as the MMD/SNTV continued, the rules of the presidential race did not disrupt *habatsu* politics. The restrictive requirement for candidacy and voting methods that magnified LDP Diet members' votes over regular party members' votes ensured the influence of *habatsu*. As far as *habatsu* leaders controlled their members' votes, they gained a disproportionate power in making of the next LDP president—and therefore the Prime Minister. The *habatsu*-centric rules of the game shaped the incentive

structure of the “very ambitious” political leaders angling to become Prime Minister accordingly. It was not a photogenic face, policy expertise or communication skills that mattered for one to become a prime minister. Amassing political capital within the party inside the confines of *habatsu* factions increased one’s chance of making it to the top. To reiterate, the importance of *habatsu* under the MMD/SNTV system was the necessary condition that sustained the *habatsu*-centric power structure within the LDP. All this was to change once the electoral reform in 1994 rid the Lower House of the MMD/SNTV system. This is what we turn to next.

The New Rules for the LDP Presidential Race

As far as the MMD/SNTV system continued, *habatsu* leaders controlled who would become the party leader—and Prime Minister. Its influence, however, began to wane once the electoral rules for the Lower House changed. Now the rank-and-file had strong stakes in who their party leader was in ways that they had never cared before. The new SMD-dominant electoral system made it crucial that the LDP president connected directly with voters—both loyal LDP supporters and swing voters. The first presidential race after the 1994 Electoral Reform took place in September 25, 1995. In its efforts to energize its base for the upcoming Lower House election, the LDP adopted a new method of counting regular members’ votes. In 1995 and 1998, the party treated 10,000 votes by regular members the same as one vote by a LDP Diet member.¹⁴ The LDP presidential race in 1998 was particularly important. Seiroku Kajima left his *habatsu* to run against

¹⁴ In other races, the LDP adopted a different method, whereby it assigned 300 votes to all prefectural party branches. 141 votes were allocated evenly to all 47 prefectures (3 votes each). The remaining 159 votes were to be allocated to prefectures on the bases of their regular party members’ votes. Sometimes, winner-take-all rules were adopted in determining how the prefectural votes were to be cast, while other times proportionality was applied..

the *habatsu* leader, Keizo Obuchi (Reed and Thies 2001). Although he lost, he fought a respectable fight.

While the method of how to count regular party members' votes changed frequently, a very important shift occurred before and after the 1994 Electoral Reform. In a stark contrast to the MMD/SNTV period, contested presidential races became the norm. And importantly, these races were fought by candidates not only courting their fellow Diet members' support but also grassroots regular party members. Since the 1994 Electoral Reform, the LDP has experienced 10 presidential selections. All but three of them called for votes. Of the three uncontested races, two involved the election of the popular incumbent Prime Ministers as party presidents.¹⁵ The third case is the notorious case, whereby a small group of LDP leaders privately chose Yoshiro Mori as Keizo Obuchi's successor (to be the LDP president and Prime Minister) in the hospital where Obuchi—the sitting LDP President and Prime Minister—died.

Clearly, the LDP was adjusting its leadership selection process to the new electoral rules in the Lower House. The SMD-dominant system basically turns the election into a selection of the next Prime Minister. This change makes it important for the LDP to ensure its regular members actually support its new leader. Not doing so could lead to lower turnouts by the disgruntled LDP supporters. Given the volatility of seat shares in SMD, the party cannot run this risk. The same concerns are behind another significant transformation. Ever since 1995, the LDP's presidential races have become highly publicized public events often televised as if they were national elections.

¹⁵ The presidential race in 1995 elected Ryutaro Hashimoto. When Hashimoto's two-year term was up in 1997, no one contested the incumbent. There was no

In the process of selecting the Party President, policy debates also surged as an important new feature. Again this is consistent with the fact that the rank-and-file need either a popular leader or a popular policy platform to advance their own electoral chances. Table 1 shows that public debates among candidates for the LDP Party Presidency became a new norm since 1995.

[Insert Table 1 around here]

Removal of Penalty against Non-Pork-Related Policy Expertise

Policy areas such as defense, security and foreign policies used to be very unpopular among LDP Diet members, because all of these policies addressed collective goods for the whole nation that were “non-divisible.” As already pointed out, any efforts devoted to non-divisible policy issues returned zero electoral returns under the MMD/SNTV, which required oiling one’s personal political machine by distributing pork. Any time and effort spent to cultivate expertise in these issue areas were thus time and effort wasted under the old electoral rules. The 1994 Electoral Reform removed such penalties against efforts to cultivate expertise in non-divisible issue areas. Since the Lower House elections in 1996, Japanese politicians became generally freer to pursue their interests in security, defense and foreign policy issues.

Furthermore, the demise of *habatsu* and the new political reforms to strengthen the position of politicians vis-à-vis the bureaucratic system also increased the political value of gaining policy expertise. Recall that under the old MMD/SNTV system, its electoral needs necessitated the presence of *habatsu*. As already argued, now that the main institutional infra-structure was eliminated as a result of the reforms in 1994,

habatsu continues to weaken. This means that *habatsu* was also beginning to lose control over the allocation of positions within the LDP and the Cabinet. Under the *habatsu*-based allocation of positions, one's policy expertise used to matter little. As *habatsu*'s political fortunes were waning, a few more important political reforms were implemented, all of which further weakened *habatsu*-based politics in the late-1990s. To put it simply, these reforms increased Prime Minister's political capital as well as possible political return on policy expertise.

One of the reforms involved abolishing of government commissioner (*seifu-iin*) system (this reform was legislated in 1999 and implemented in 2001). This system was used to appoint bureaucrats as special commissioners granting them a special status so that they could take part in parliamentary discussions. During Diet sessions, these commissioners would often answer questions directed at ministers on their behalf. This system had allowed *habatsu* to appoint their members for various ministerial positions with very little regard to their capabilities or policy expertise. The abolishing of this reform thus specifically aimed at shifting power to elected officials rather from bureaucrats. Another reform involved the reorganization of the government and the revision of the Cabinet Law and. The overall government structure was streamlined to reduce the number of ministers and to concentrate more power in the hands of the Cabinet and Prime Minister. The Cabinet was significantly expanded to appoint more Diet members as Cabinet members. In addition to ministers, new positions such as senior vice ministers (*fuku daijin*) and parliamentary secretaries (*seimukan*) were created. The new emphasis of the importance of policy expertise was highly compatible with the removal of the penalty against policy expertise unrelated to pork distribution.

Furthermore, in the context of a new power struggle between *habatsu* leaders and the party president, the party president, in his capacity as Prime Minister, began to use policy expertise as a requirement for the Cabinet ministers and Prime Ministerial advisors (*shusho hosakan*)—newly created positions as a result of the political reforms of the late-1990s—that he appointed.

Security, defense and foreign policy issues are among the issue areas that have benefited from the recent institutional changes. In other words, Japanese politicians today face fewer penalties for engaging in policy debates in these areas. The upgrading of ministerial positions related to defense/security and foreign policies that took place since the institutional reforms also support the view presented here (Table 2 and Table 3).

[Insert Table 2 and Table 3 around here]

IV. New Incentives for the “Ambitious” and the New Institutional Resources for Prime Minister

The changes discussed so far also affected the most ambitious of the Diet members—the party leader, Prime Minister and those who are next in line. The new demands from the rank-and-file for a popular leader changed the terms of competition for the premiership. A successful contender had to clear the hurdle of a series of publicly televised debates, where one’s fellow party members stood to evaluate how one would be accepted by the public. A new aspiring leader thus had to be a photogenic, skilled communicator instead of a faction leader like in the old days. Once elected Party President and Prime Minister, he had to continue to maintain his popularity to secure his

own reelection as premier and, more immediately, to help his party win the election. The position of Cabinet Secretary emerged as a highly attractive one for the ambitious.

Cabinet Secretary appears on TV daily as whoever holds this position has to give daily press conferences. Doing well in this position—becoming popular—has become a good way of surging as a contender to party leadership. Both Shinzo Abe and Yasuo Fukuda are recent politicians who rose to Prime Ministership on the basis of serving as successful Cabinet Secretaries while not having served any major cabinet position.¹⁶

The need to attract media attention both in terms of leadership style and policy content has made certain security and foreign policy issues a highly desirable tool for the ambitious to demonstrate their leadership qualities. It is important to note here that the top-down nature of these policy issue areas served as attractive policy areas for the leader to fall back on. Former Prime Minister Koizumi's and now current Prime Minister Abe's attention to the issue of the kidnapping of Japanese nationals by the North Korean authorities provides a good example of new extroversion in response to the new demands placed upon political leaders.

In this context, the greater concentration of power in the Prime Minister and his Cabinet, brought by the political reforms in the late-1990s, means that political leaders not only possess a new incentive to be extrovert in security/foreign policy issues, but also have more capabilities to exercise leadership. The greater concentration of power in the Cabinet also transformed the role of Cabinet Secretary particular

Let us now turn to the content of the political reforms in the late-1990s and their implications for security, defense and foreign policies.

¹⁶ Shinzo Abe had never held a cabinet-level position. Yasuo Fukuda had only served as the head of an agency but never a minister.

The New Institutional Resources and Prime Minister's Capabilities

John Campbell once called the characteristics of Japanese defense policy “the politics of indecision”¹⁷. The Gulf War was one example of this indecisiveness, when Japan's contribution was criticized as being “too little, too late.” Lack of prime ministerial leadership and inattention from rank and file politicians, along with bureaucratic turf battles, were identified as the primary reasons for the inability of the Japanese government to respond.

The response after 9/11 was in stark contrast with the case of the Gulf War. Within a week, Prime Minister Koizumi announced the Seven Basic Measures of the Japanese government, which included sending the Self Defense Forces in support of U.S. and coalition forces. Within two months, the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law passed the Diet, which enabled the Seven Basic Measures to be implemented.

Why did such major change occur? New incentives of Japanese politicians to be more “extrovert”, together with the enhanced capabilities to exercise leadership are the key factors that brought about this change. Let us first talk about how the political reforms in the late 1990s concentrated power in the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and the changes in the legislative process that they brought about.

Enhanced Statutory Authority of the Cabinet and its Secretariat

First, the revisions of the Cabinet Law in 2000 strengthened the institutional authority of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Secretary by giving them the authority to

¹⁷ Campbell (1983)

“propose (*hatsugi ken*)” important basic policies at cabinet meetings¹⁸ and to “plan and draft (*kikaku ritsuan*)”¹⁹ policy. These changes gave the Cabinet Secretariat legal authority to initiate policy independently from ministries, and to preside over the policy making and coordination process.

Since then, important legislations have been initiated and administered by the Cabinet Secretariat²⁰. Before 2000, only two laws were administered (*shokan*) by the Cabinet Secretariat, the Cabinet Law and the Law on the Security Council of Japan. More than ten laws have since been initiated and administered by the Cabinet Secretariat, including the Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law that we will refer to later.

From the point of view of the individual ministries, giving up authority to “initiate” laws is not a small matter. This is because “initiating” laws means that the ministry in charge will be able to write the draft of the bill itself, which eventually will define the bureaucratic turf. Therefore, the ministry would generally prefer to keep matters related to what they see as their “turf” in their own hands. Not surprisingly, therefore, bureaucrats strongly resisted this change during the deliberation of Hashimoto’s administrative reform²¹.

The authority to “administer” laws, on the other hand, were important not only for the ministries but for the politicians. Giving the Cabinet Secretariat the authority to administer laws meant that the old legislative process could be changed. Traditionally, when the government initiated a bill, the relevant ministry will negotiate with the ruling

¹⁸ Revised Article 4 of Cabinet Law

¹⁹ Revised Article 12 of Cabinet Law

²⁰ The 1992 International Peace Cooperation Law was initiated by the Cabinet Secretariat, but was not administered by them.

²¹ Shinoda (2005)

party prior to the cabinet approval. This meant that the different “*zoku*” politicians had a chance to influence the content of the bill before it was introduced to the Diet.

In contrast, under the new rules, the Prime Minister’s leadership in the legislative process is enhanced while the old “*zoku*” influence is diminished. The Cabinet Secretariat, with its new statutory authority and with the blessing of the Prime Minister, could (1) gain informal cabinet approval before negotiation with the party, (2) deal with multiple “*zoku*” at once and diminish one “*zoku*”’s leverage, and (3) represent the Cabinet and the Prime Minister in negotiations with coalition partners and opposition parties, prior to introduction of the bill to the Diet and even prior to negotiation with the LDP. While not all bills would be or should be introduced in this fashion, it is important that the Prime Minister gain this capacity to use when he wishes to do so.

Enhanced Organizational Capacity of the Cabinet Secretariat

Strengthened statutory authority does not guarantee enhanced cabinet leadership unless those who support the cabinet—politicians and bureaucrats—have the capacity to fulfill their role. Initiating and administering a law is not an easy task, since it requires enough expertise to draft a bill and to be able to deal with the Diet deliberations. The increased attention to the Chief Cabinet Secretary (*kanbo chokan*) and Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary (*Kanbo fukuchokan, seimu*) positions is a sign of this realization. When the Cabinet Secretariat administers a law, the Chief Cabinet Secretary must respond to questions at the Diet. In addition, he must also serve as the spokesperson for the cabinet, giving twice daily press conferences. In reflection of its increased importance, the Chief Cabinet Secretary is now officially listed on the top of the five

cabinet members in the order of succession to the prime minister, and in effect has become the deputy prime minister.²²

The role of the administrative Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary (*Kanbo Fukuchokan, Jimu*) has also increased along with the expanded role of the Chief Cabinet Secretary. Administrative Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretaries are usually selected from the pre-war Ministry of Home Affairs, and have a much longer tenure than prime ministers. Therefore, their institutional memory has been crucial to Prime Ministers, especially at the beginning of their administrations.

However, it is obvious that these three people cannot do the job of supporting the Prime Minister by themselves, especially given the enhanced statutory authority of the Cabinet Secretariat. The staff members working for the Cabinet Secretariat, mostly bureaucrats seconded from ministries, were generally considered to be fighting their home ministry's bureaucratic turf in the secretariat, and the organizational arrangements were not conducive to overcoming the turf battles to work for the Prime Minister and his cabinet. What measures were taken to overcome this problem?

First is the introduction of more politically appointed positions. With an executive order, the Prime Minister could now appoint as many personal assistants to the Prime Minister²³. In addition, the Prime Minister can also appoint up to five special advisors instead of three. The appointment of Yukio Okamoto, a former MOFA official, to be in charge of Iraq Reconstruction during the Koizumi administration is one example. A possibly more significant change, which has not been in effect, is that the three new

²² Shinoda (2003), pp.803

²³ Formerly, the upper limit was five.

positions of Assistant Chief Cabinet Secretaries, which I will explain below, have become political appointment positions.

Secondly, organizational reshuffling has taken place. The three offices of Internal Affairs (headed by a Ministry of Finance official), External Affairs (Foreign Affairs), and National Security Affairs (Japan Defense Agency) were abolished, replaced by three Assistant Chief Cabinet Secretary (*Naikaku Kanbo Fukuchokan Ho*) positions. There are about 100 staffers working for them. Although some division of labor between the three does still exist and only former bureaucrats have been appointed as Assistant Chief Cabinet Secretaries, it has been argued that the possibility that they could be politically hired and fired has heightened the sense of loyalty to the Prime Minister. Furthermore, ad hoc policy groups were established for issues involving more than one ministry. These groups are formed and dissolved by necessity, and their legal standings vary (either by laws, government orders, or without any legal basis.) For example, in the case of Iraq policy, the “Supporting Iraqi Reconstruction” room was established. The establishment of the ad hoc groups contributed to the increase in the size of the Secretariat.

Thirdly, an old institution, long considered ineffective and inconsequential, gained a new life. The Security Council of Japan, which was established in 1956 as The Defense Council, was long considered a rubber-stamping, inconsequential institution. The role of the Security Council, as written in law, was “when asked by the Prime Minister, to deliberate on important matters related to the security of Japan and to present a plan to the Prime Minister,” as well as to “voluntarily offer advice to the Prime Minister on matters related to national defense.” “Responding to national emergencies” was added

to its role when Prime Minister Nakasone tried to revamp the Defense Council and renamed it the Security Council.

However, the Security Council did little of that. Defense Council (later Security Council) meetings were not held in times when important security policy decisions were made, such as the revision of the US-Japan Security Treaty, or critical emergency situations, such as the landing of the Soviet fighter plane in 1976. Instead, the Council meetings were held twice or three times per year, and primarily discussed matters concerning the defense budget. Furthermore, due to its institutional legacies of having been established in order to restrain the power of Prime Minister Yoshida and the pre-war military, it was not considered as a means to enhance the power of the Prime Minister or to utilize the Self Defense Forces, but instead to keep a watchful eye.

The 2001 central government reform opened a new possibility for the Security Council. The statutory authority and organizational capacity of the Cabinet Secretariat, which had long been in charge of administrating Security Council meetings, was enhanced. More importantly, Prime Minister Koizumi and his staff considered the Security Council as an important mechanism not only to build consensus among its members but to create a momentum for the government to come up with a concrete plan and to announce its intentions to the public.

Furthermore, although relatively unnoticed, the Law on the Security Council of Japan was revised alongside the passing of the Emergency Law in 2003. It is now written in law that the Security Council is in charge of identifying an emergency situation and coming up with the Basic Guidelines (*Taisho Kihon Hoshin*) to deal with the situation. In order to effectively fulfill this role, the Contingency Response Committee (*Jitai Taisho*

Senmon Iinkai)²⁴, a committee consisting of bureau chief-level officials of relevant ministries and the Joint Chief of Staff of the SDF, was established. Although (fortunately) this committee has not yet been held in an emergency situation, the committee members have met on a regular basis (once a month), and its members say that the meetings were successful, contributing to inter-agency coordination²⁵.

In sum, the capacity of the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and the Cabinet Secretariat has been strengthened, both in terms of institutional (statutory) authority and in organizational capacity. This has made possible major changes in the legislative process. The Cabinet Secretariat is now in charge from the beginning to the end, giving the Prime Minister more capacity to exercise top-down leadership. It is important to point out that these institutional changes would not have happened without the desire of the political leaders to become more “extrovert” and to lead. Conversely, these institutional changes will not matter if the political leaders do not utilize new capacities now at their disposal. In the next section, we will examine how extrovert leaders actually utilized the new set of institutions in responding to the attacks on September 11, 2001.

²⁴ Jitai Taisho Senmon Iinkai consists of Deputy Cabinet Secretary (political), Deputy Cabinet Secretary (administrative), Naikaku Kiki Kanri Kan, Naikaku Kanbo Fukuchokan Ho, Naikaku Joho Kan, plus bureau-chief (kyokuchō) level bureaucrats from Ministry of Defense, National Police Agency, Coast Guard, Ministry of Land and Transportation, Resource and Energy Agency, Ministry of Economics and Industry, Ministry of Finance (Director of Customs Bureau and Zaimukan), MOFA, Ministry of Justice, Shobocho, and the Chief of the General Staff Office. There is also a subcommittee (director level), called the Renraku Chosei Kaigi.

²⁵ The recent proposal by the Prime Minister Abe’s expert study group to establish a “National” Security Council” is not so much a radical departure from the past, as often reported, but rather a continuation of the recent changes discussed above. The main difference are: (1) fewer official members of the Security Council (Prime Minister, Cabinet Secretary, Foreign Minister, Defense Minister, plus more ministers as deemed necessary 16); (2) politicians as National Security Advisors (instead of politically appointed Assistant Chief Cabinet Secretaries with former defense bureaucrats currently playing that role); (3) meetings on a regular basis (twice a month); (4) a secretariat of about 10 to 20, including private sector experts and SDF officers (possibly smaller than the current staff size.)

V. Case Study: Anti-Terrorism Legislation

The Japanese government responded to the attacks on September 11 in ways unthinkable in the past, in terms of its speed, content, performance, and most importantly, in terms of “who took charge.” This was possible due to more “extrovert” orientation of politicians as well as the institutional reforms that made possible a top-down legislative process. This top-down legislative procedure was almost the reverse of the traditional legislative procedure. Let us revisit the process, by looking at it in two stages, (1) immediate response and pre-Diet negotiation, and (2) Diet session and policy implementation²⁶.

Stage I: Immediate response and pre-Diet negotiation

Three aspects are worth noting in the initial stage of policy making:

(1) The Cabinet Secretariat (Furukawa Study Group and staff) drafted initial response plan, not individual ministries; (2) The Security Council was effectively used by the Prime Minister in speeding up the legislative procedure; (3) The influence of LDP politicians were intentionally minimized.

First, the staff of the Cabinet Secretariat responded swiftly and effectively immediately after the news of the attack came in. This was made possible by the enhanced organizational capabilities. Teijiro Furukawa, who was the Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary (administrative), initiated what was later called the Furukawa Study Group, bringing together two bureau chiefs from MOFA, the Defense Agency Administrative vice minister and Defense Policy Bureau chief, the Vice Minister of the Cabinet Legislative Office, and the two Assistant Chief Cabinet Secretaries (one from

²⁶ Shinoda (2006), Ina (2003).

MOFA, one from JDA.) The inclusion of the CLO official was especially crucial, in that it prevented the CLO from intervening in later stage, dodging a political nightmare²⁷. This group was especially instrumental in drafting the six point responses plan (Sept 12) and the seven measures (Sept 19).

Secondly, in the evening of the 11th, Shinzo Abe, then the Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary, proposed to hold a Security Council meeting the next day, on the 13th. Rather surprisingly, it was the first time that the Security Council was convened for an international emergency situation. According to the author's interview with one of the Assistant Chief Cabinet Secretaries, Abe was eager to revamp the Security Council since before the 9/11 attacks. Another official mentioned that Koizumi was also thinking about utilizing the Security Council, especially in lieu of a full Cabinet Meeting, in order to speed up decision making. He also suggested that this process of holding the Security Council immediately after a crisis → drafting guidelines for response → full cabinet approval of government measures and the establishment of Response Headquarters in the Cabinet Secretariat → coordination and implementation by the Headquarters became the de facto response scenario for later contingencies.

Third, the LDP politicians were intentionally excluded from the initial response process. In fact, the Cabinet Secretariat staff went to explain the government plans to the two coalition partners and the opposition before presenting the plan to the *Bukai* within the LDP. In addition, since everyone agreed that speed was important, a joint council meeting (including Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Cabinet committees) was held, effectively minimizing the opposition from committee members. This was Koizumi's strategy, given that he was well aware of the public support that he had. However, this

²⁷ Interview to Furukawa in Shinoda(2006), pp.88-89

strategy was possible because the initial response was quick, and the government plan was effectively drafted within the Cabinet Secretariat, not in separate ministries.

Stage II: Diet deliberation and policy implementation

In the second stage, the following two aspects are worth noting: (1) The Cabinet secretary and the Prime Minister responded to the most important questions in the policy debate, (2) Speed was valued more than consensus.

First, within the Diet, the Cabinet Secretary and the Prime Minister dealt with the most difficult questions, while the Defense Agency and MOFA officials provided information on the details. This happened because, as discussed earlier, the Cabinet Secretariat sponsored the bill (as initiator and administrator of the bill), but had the added effect of giving the impression to the public that the Prime Minister and his cabinet were fully in charge.

Secondly, speed was valued more than consensus. Once again, Koizumi and his staff did not try harder than they needed to in order to gain support from unsatisfied LDP party members, or to come up with a compromise with the DPJ. In the end, public opinion polls show that this strategy did not hurt the Prime Minister much. In both Stage I and II, Prime Minister Koizumi took every opportunity to speak directly to the public, giving speeches at every turn of event. This must have helped in gaining public support for his top-down leadership style, in a way that former Prime Ministers must have been reluctant to do.

V. Conclusion

In this paper, we have argued that political leaders, especially the prime minister, have recently gained their capacity to be actively involved in foreign policy decision making. This is not to say that the prime minister will lead in all foreign policy decisions. Whether or not they will use all the instruments of power at their disposal depends on the preferences of the individual leaders. Furthermore, the prime minister can accentuate certain issues over others (as Prime Minister Abe emphasizes the North Korean abduction issue, or the relative inattention of former Prime Minister Koizumi to U.S. military realignment issues, compared to his desire to lead in the case of Iraq), or to determine policy direction if he wishes.

The increased capacity to be “extrovert,” in turn, has given politicians further incentive to be more “extrovert”, both in terms of policy style and policy preference. This will accelerate the process of politicization of the defense policy-making process in Japan. What does this mean for Japan’s alliance with the United States?

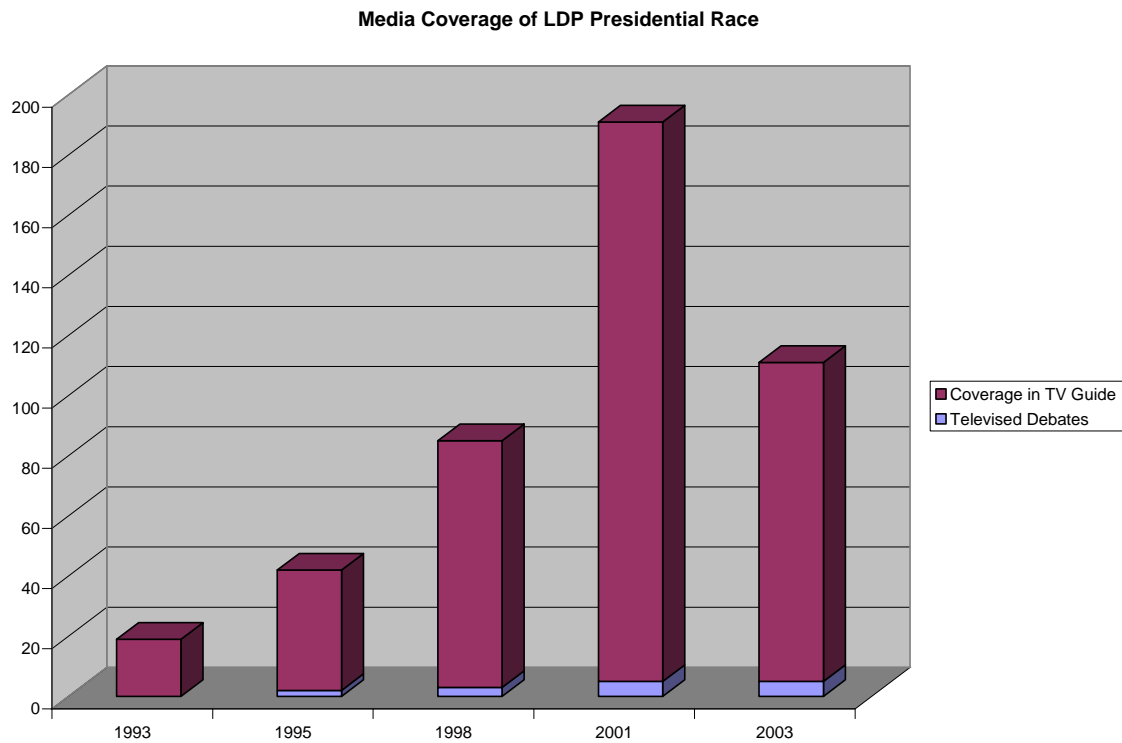
First, the shift from bureaucratic to political leadership in defense and foreign policy means that more actors will be interested in getting involved in defense matters. Although more attention should generally mean more appreciation of the alliance, there is a risk that Japan’s actions will be less predictable, and possibly more volatile. When bureaucrats ran the show, for better or worse, continuity was the rule not the exception²⁸. From now on, when there is political will, foreign policy decisions will be made more

²⁸ Masahiro Akiyama, then Director of Defense Policy Bureau of JDA, calls this shift “from administrative alliance to political alliance.” He reflects that he wrote a letter to Joseph Nye in 1995 during the SACO negotiations mentioning that it may be the last time that bureaucrats have the “silent leadership” over defense policy, given the increasing tendency of politicians to take the lead in defense policy. It is interesting in retrospect that he had predicted what is likely to happen next. See Akiyama (2002) pp.82.

quickly and more decisively (as in the case of sending SDF troops to Iraq). The downside may be that the volatility is undesirable in a stable alliance partnership.

Second, public opinion matters more. As we have argued, political leaders have become more sensitive to what the public wants, which could be a concern for the U.S.-Japan alliance. According to the Cabinet Administrative Office Poll and the civilian elite/SDF officer survey conducted by the author, while the general public is mostly supportive of the U.S.-Japan alliance relationship, their support is not as strong as that of the civilian elite or the SDF officers who were the guarantors of the “administrative alliance.” Therefore, as public opinion matters more, officials in both countries must be aware of its political consequences.

Table 1. Media Coverage of LDP Presidential Race



Source: *TV Guide*.

Note: The blue bar represents the number of times televised debates among candidates for the LDP presidential race. The crimson bar represents the overall TV coverage of the presidential race. Only those years when the LDP held elections to select their leader are included in the figure.

Table 2: The Comparison of experience of the posts related to the policy of which Minister takes charge

	JDA	MOFA	MOF	METI
1981-1996	30.0%	36.4%	60.0%	33.3%
Post-Electoral Reform 1997-1999	33.3%	66.7%	66.7%	66.7%
Post-Abolishing of Government Commissioner System 2000-	75.0%	60.0%	75.0%	20%

Source: *Kokkai Binran*

Note: The first period is from the Suzuki Zenko's cabinet to the first Hashimoto Ryutaro's cabinet. The second period is from the second Hashimoto Ryutaro's cabinet to the first Obuchi Keizo's cabinet. The third period is from the first Obuchi Keizo's cabinet (reshuffled) to the Abe Shinzo's cabinet.

Table 3: The four indicators of the JDA Ministers in the four period

	The Number of Terms Elected	Experience of Minister	Experience of Sanyaku	Defense- related posts
1981-1996	6.05	20.0%	0%	30.0%
Post-Electoral Reform 1997-1999	5.33	33.3%	0%	33.3%
Post-Abolishing of Government Commissioner System 2000-	6.38	37.5%	25.0%	75.0%

Source: *Kokkai Binran*

Note: The first period is from the Suzuki Zenko's cabinet to the first Hashimoto Ryutaro's cabinet. The second period is from the second Hashimoto Ryutaro's cabinet to the first Obuchi Keizo's cabinet. The third period is from the first Obuchi Keizo's cabinet (reshuffled) to the Abe Shinzo's cabinet.

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