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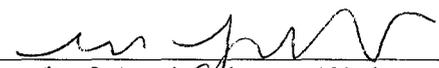
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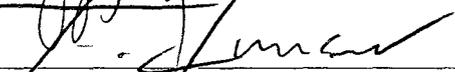
**“Politicians and Foreign Policy: The Rise of
National Security Debate in Election Campaigns
in Japan”**

presented by **Amy Louise Catalinac**

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Politicians and Foreign Policy:
The Rise of National Security Debate in Election Campaigns
in Japan

A dissertation presented by

Amy Louise Catalinac

to

The Department of Government

in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the subject of Political Science

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Politicians and Foreign Policy: The Rise of National Security Debate in Election Campaigns in Japan

Abstract

This dissertation seeks to explain the dramatic turnaround in attention to foreign and national security policy by conservative Japanese politicians in the mid-1990's. Why conservative politicians chose this point in time to pay attention to issues they had kept at arm's length for decades, as Japan experienced momentous changes in its security environment and international standing, is a question that existing theories in international relations cannot answer.

Applying the topic model Latent Dirichlet Allocation to a new corpus of 7,497 candidate election manifestos, which contains the universe of manifestos produced by serious candidates running in the eight elections held between 1986 and 2009, I show that this turnaround can be explained by a shift in their electoral strategies. Prior to 1994, Japan used an electoral system that pitted conservative politicians against each other. Elections were about using private goods to enlarge one's army of supporters and prevent them from being poached by the armies of supporters attached to other conservative politicians in the district. The same electoral system gave politicians from the four major opposition parties, who were not running against each other, the incentive to construct and run on party labels that were comprised of extreme positions on public goods. These conflicting incentives created an electoral equilibrium in which opposition politicians owned foreign and national security policy and conservative candidates left them to it. At every election, conservative candidates painted themselves as the providers of pork and opposition candidates painted themselves as the providers of peace.

In 1994, Japan adopted a mixed member electoral system that eliminated intra-party competition and gave conservative politicians new incentives to carve out electoral platforms comprised of public goods. I argue that foreign and national security policy is an attractive issue for politicians competing in a single member district because of its property of non-targetability. I provide clinching evidence that conservative politicians have switched from promising private goods for a subset of voters in their districts prior to 1994 to promising public goods for the national-level median voter after 1994. Within the subset of public goods, foreign and national security policy is up front and center.

Contents

List of Tables	x
List of Figures	xi
1 Japan: Faceless, Until Recently	1
1.1 The Puzzle	7
1.2 Why Existing Theories Cannot Explain This Puzzle	24
1.3 The Argument	28
1.4 The Evidence	30
1.5 The Findings	32
1.6 Outline of Dissertation	37
2 A Theory of Electoral Incentives and Foreign and National Security Policy	39
2.1 Electoral Strategies under SNTV-MMD: Private Goods for a Subset of Voters in the District	40
2.1.1 Medium-Sized District Magnitudes	41
2.1.2 Intra-Party Competition	43
2.2 Evidence for these Electoral Strategies, 1955-1993	47
2.2.1 Electoral Strategies of LDP Candidates	48
2.2.2 Electoral Strategies of Opposition Candidates	54
2.3 Why Foreign and National Security Policy was a Losing Strategy for Conservative Candidates Under SNTV-MMD	62
2.3.1 The Winning Strategy: Private Goods	63
2.3.2 The Losing Strategy: Public Goods	63
2.3.3 Foreign and National Security Policy: The Kiss of Death	64
2.3.4 Could Conservative Politicians Have Made Foreign and National Security Policy Targetable?	66
2.3.5 Did Conservative Politicians Aspiring to Leadership Positions Gain From Paying Attention to Foreign and National Security Policy?	67
2.4 Electoral Strategies Under MMM: Public Goods for the National-Level Median Voter	71

2.4.1	Two Kinds of Candidates: District Specialists and List Specialists	72
2.4.2	Two Kinds of Electoral Strategies?	75
2.5	Evidence for Change in Candidate Electoral Strategy, 1996-2009	84
2.5.1	Politicians Still Appear to Build Kōenkai	85
2.5.2	Politicians Still Appear to Make Policy	89
2.5.3	Why Candidate Electoral Strategy Remains Relevant under MMM	93
2.6	Why Foreign and National Security Policy is a Winning Strategy under MMM	94
2.7	Hypotheses Tested in the Dissertation	97
2.7.1	My Hypotheses	100
2.7.2	Alternative Hypotheses	101
3	Why Japan Reformed its Electoral System	103
3.1	Why Electoral Reform?	104
3.1.1	Proximate Cause: Public Anger Over Corruption	106
3.1.2	The LDP's Split and Loss of Power	108
3.2	Reverse Causality?	111
3.2.1	The Motives of Reformers	112
3.2.2	Policy Goals of Ozawa Ichiro?	115
3.2.3	Evidence These Goals Were Not Shared	118
3.2.4	Evidence from the Historical Record	122
4	Testing the Theory: Data and Methods	125
4.1	Testing the Theory: Candidate Election Manifestos	127
4.1.1	Why Existing Indicators Fail to Capture my Quantity of Interest	129
4.1.2	Properties of a Valid Indicator of my Quantity of Interest	133
4.1.3	Why Candidate Election Manifestos are a Valid Indicator	134
4.2	Addressing Possible Threats to the Validity of the Manifesto as an Indicator of Candidate Strategy	138
4.2.1	Are Candidates Being Disciplined by their Parties under MMM?	143
4.3	Choosing Which Candidates and Which Elections to Examine	151
4.4	What the Manifestos Look Like	152
4.5	Testing the Theory: Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA)	156
4.6	Preparing the Corpus of Manifestos for LDA	161
4.6.1	Parsing out Japanese Script and Selecting Content Words	162
4.6.2	Correcting for Cross-Scriptive Flexibility	163
4.6.3	Removal of High and Low Frequency Terms	166

5	Topic Selection, Classification, and Validation	169
5.1	Choosing the Number of Topics	171
5.2	Interpreting and Assigning Labels to the Topics	177
5.2.1	Validation of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (Topic 52)	184
5.2.2	Validation of Building a Society Kind to Women (Topic 8)	186
5.2.3	Validation of Worry about Earthquakes and Nuclear Power (Topic 62)	188
5.2.4	Validation of Liberal Democracy is Best! (Topic 63)	191
5.2.5	Validation of Primary Industries and Tourism (Topic 9)	194
5.2.6	Validation of Benefits for Organized Groups (Topic 58)	197
5.3	Classifying Each Topic as a Private or Public Good	199
5.3.1	Collecting the Targets of Each Topic	201
5.3.2	Calculating the Percentage of Each Target in Japan's Population	207
5.4	Validation of the Aggregated Private and Public Goods Topics	216
6	Campaigning Under SNTV-MMD: Conservative Politicians Ignore Foreign and National Security Policy	219
6.1	Observable Implications of the Theory: Electoral Strategies Under SNTV-MMD	223
6.2	Electoral Strategies of Conservative Candidates under SNTV-MMD	225
6.2.1	Foreign and National Security Policy (Topic 6)	226
6.2.2	Why Topic 6 Offers an Excellent Test of My Hypothesis	228
6.2.3	Conservative Candidates Ignored Foreign and National Security Policy under SNTV-MMD	233
6.2.4	What Private Goods Did Conservative Candidates Promise to Provide?	236
6.2.5	Conservative Politicians Used Private-Goods-Heavy Manifestos under SNTV-MMD	244
6.2.6	Discussion of Private Goods Increases as Level of Intra-Party Competition Increases	247
6.2.7	Conservative Candidates in Urban Districts Used Public Goods	253
6.2.8	What Kind of Public Goods Did Conservative Candidates Promise to Provide?	256
6.3	Electoral Strategies of Opposition Candidates Under SNTV-MMD	270
6.3.1	Foreign and National Security Policy in the Platforms of JCP and JSP Candidates in 1986	272
6.3.2	Foreign and National Security Policy in the Platforms of JCP and JSP Candidates in 1990	276
6.3.3	Foreign and National Security Policy in the Platforms of JCP Candidates in 1993	279

6.3.4	Electoral Strategies in Words	284
6.4	Conclusion	290
7	Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested	292
7.1	Observable Implications of the Theory: Electoral Strategies Under MMM	299
7.2	Conservative Candidates Have Switched to Discussing Foreign and National Security Policy	301
7.3	Conservative Candidates Have Switched to Using Public-Goods-Heavy Manifestos	304
7.3.1	Quietening the Voices of Scattered Conservative Camps: Why Conservative Candidates Use Private Goods in a SMD	306
7.3.2	LDP Candidates in 1996	313
7.3.3	LDP Candidates in 2000	319
7.3.4	LDP Candidates in 2003	324
7.3.5	LDP Candidates in 2005	328
7.3.6	LDP Candidates in 2009	333
7.4	Electoral Strategies of DPJ Candidates: The Bashing Strategy	335
7.4.1	DPJ Candidates in 1996	336
7.4.2	DPJ Candidates in 2003	339
7.4.3	DPJ Candidates in 2005	340
7.4.4	DPJ Candidates in 2009	342
7.5	Electoral Strategies of SDP and JCP Candidates: Equally-Extreme	346
7.5.1	SDP Candidates in All Elections	346
7.5.2	JCP Candidates in 1996	347
7.5.3	JCP Candidates in 2000	353
7.5.4	JCP Candidates in 2003	354
7.5.5	JCP Candidates in 2005	361
7.5.6	JCP Candidates in 2009	363
7.6	Conclusion	365
8	Explaining the Variation in Level of Discussion After 1996	368
8.1	Could the Variation in Level of Discussion be Explained by External Events?371	
8.1.1	The Content of Discussion Is Unconnected to the Threats	374
8.1.2	The Level of Discussion Varies not by External Event but by Party	379
8.2	Explaining Variation in Level of Discussion Across Elections, Parties, and Candidates	382
8.2.1	Pleasing the Pockets Means Less Time for the Median Voter	382
8.2.2	Continued Presence of Radical Opponents	390
8.2.3	Continued Presence of Culpable Co-partisans	395
8.2.4	These Three Legacies Can Explain The Shifts	400

8.3	Could the Shift be a Product of New Candidates Entering the Race?	404
8.4	Where Have All the Doves Gone?	406
8.4.1	Hawks Didn't Discuss These Issues Until After the Electoral Reform	409
8.4.2	Conservative Candidates Are Not Becoming Hawkish, They Are Becoming Centrist	410
9	Conclusion	414
9.1	The Contributions	422
9.1.1	Faceless Japan and Peace Mania	422
9.1.2	Why International Relations Ought to Pay Attention to Electoral Systems	428
9.1.3	Electoral Institutions Leave Powerful Legacies	432
A	Qualitative Interpretations of Remaining Topics	438
	Bibliography	460

List of Tables

1.1	Treaties, Legislation, Diet Resolutions, and Other Policies Concerning National Security, 1947-2009	15
4.1	Performance of All Means of Communication from Candidate to Voter During Election Campaigns for Japan's House of Representatives According to my Five Criteria	138
5.1	Topics in the Manifestos and Stems Identifying Each Topic, 1986-2009 (Topics 1-18)	180
5.2	Topics in the Manifestos and Stems Identifying Each Topic, 1986-2009 (Topics 19-35)	181
5.3	Topics in the Manifestos and Stems Identifying Each Topic, 1986-2009 (Topics 36-52)	182
5.4	Topics in the Manifestos and Stems Identifying Each Topic, 1986-2009 (Topics 53-69)	183
5.5	The Targets of Each Topic, 1986-2009 (Topics 1-25)	204
5.6	The Targets of Each Topic, 1986-2009 (Topics 26-47)	205
5.7	The Targets of Each Topic, 1986-2009 (Topics 48-69)	206
5.8	Percentage of Each Target in Japan's Total Population, 1985-2005	211
5.9	Classification of Each Topic as a Public or Private Good (Topics 1-69)	212

List of Figures

2.1	Voter Preferences on National Security Were Relatively Stable From 1981 Onwards	98
2.2	Large Percentages of Voters Found the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance Effective in the Period	99
4.1	Reported Levels of Exposure to Print Media During Election Campaigns, 1972-2005	140
4.2	Reported Levels of Exposure to Spoken Media During Election Campaigns, 1972-2005	141
4.3	Reported Levels of Exposure to Formal and Informal Campaign, 1972-2005	142
4.4	When Voters Report Making Their Minds Up About Who To Vote For, 1972-2005	144
4.5	Reported Levels of Exposure to Media Generated by Party During Election Campaigns, 1972-2005	146
4.6	Factors Voters Report Considering When Choosing Their Candidate, 1972-2005	147
4.7	Sample Election Manifesto, Muraoka Kanezō, LDP nominee for Akita 2nd District, 1986.	154
4.8	Sample Election Manifesto, Muraoka Kanezō, LDP nominee for Akita 2nd District, 2003.	155
4.9	Sample Election Manifesto, Norota Hōsei, LDP nominee for Akita 1st District, 1986.	155
4.10	Sample Election Manifesto, Norota Hōsei, LDP nominee for Akita 1st District, 2003.	155
5.1	Candidates in rural areas talk more about agriculture	185
5.2	Female candidates talk more about women’s issues	187
5.3	Candidates in prefectures with nuclear power plants worry more about earthquakes and nuclear power	189
5.4	Candidates worried about earthquakes and nuclear power more in the 1996 election than in other elections	191

5.5	Candidates sang the praises of liberal democracy in the 1990 election . . .	193
5.6	Conservative candidates sang the praises of liberal democracy more than socialist and communist candidates	194
5.7	Candidates in rural areas talk more about stimulating primary industries and developing tourist opportunities in their district	196
5.8	Ruling party candidates promise more benefits for organized groups	198
5.9	Classification of Topics as Public or Private Goods based on the Percentage of Japan's Population it is Targeted Toward	215
5.10	Female LDP candidates promise fewer private goods than male LDP candidates	217
6.1	Conservative candidates ignored foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD	234
6.2	Conservative candidates talked more about private goods than about public goods under SNTV-MMD, with the exception of the unusual 1993 election	245
6.3	Opposition party candidates talked more about public goods than about private goods under SNTV-MMD	247
6.4	Discussion of private goods increases as the level of intra-party competition increases under SNTV-MMD, and discussion of public goods decreases as the level of intra-party competition increases under SNTV-MMD for all candidates	250
6.5	Discussion of private goods increases as the level of intra-party competition increases under SNTV-MMD, and discussion of public goods decreases as the level of intra-party competition increases under SNTV-MMD for LDP candidates	252
6.6	Conservative candidates running in urban districts used more public goods than conservative candidates running in districts that were less urban under SNTV-MMD	255
6.7	JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of Opposition to Military Spending in 1986	274
6.8	JSP candidates campaigned on a platform of Not a Strong Military, But a Kind Society in 1986	276
6.9	JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of Consumption Tax is to Fund the Military in 1990	278
6.10	JSP candidates campaigned on a platform of No More Unfair Taxes, Peace Constitution, in 1990	280
6.11	JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of Political Reform, Protect the Constitution in 1993	282
6.12	Words Owned By the Japan Socialist Party Relative to the LDP, 1986-1993	287
6.13	Words Owned By the Japan Communist Party Relative to the LDP, 1986-1993	288

6.14	Words Owned By the LDP Relative to the Japan Socialist Party, 1986-1993	289
7.1	Conservative candidates started discussing foreign and national security policy immediately after the introduction of MMM	302
7.2	LDP candidates switched to discussing more public goods than private goods in 1993, and have continued to adopt public-goods-heavy manifestos under MMM	305
7.3	LDP candidates campaigned on a platform of Postal Privatization in 2005	329
7.4	DPJ candidates campaigned on a platform of Politics for the Civilian, Not for Bureaucrats in 1996	338
7.5	DPJ candidates campaigned on a platform of From Roads to Pension in 2003	340
7.6	DPJ candidates campaigned on a platform of From Concrete to People in 2005	342
7.7	DPJ candidates campaigned on a platform of Pensions and Cutting Waste in 2009	344
7.8	SDP candidates campaigned on a platform of Stubbornly for Peace and Human Rights after 1996	348
7.9	JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No Tax Increases, no U.S.-Japan Alliance in 1996	350
7.10	JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No Reform of Medical Care in 1996	351
7.11	JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No More Iron Triangle in 1996	353
7.12	JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No More LDP, No More Public Works in 2000	355
7.13	JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No More Big Business-Favoritism in 2003	357
7.14	JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No Consumption Tax, No Constitutional Revision in 2003	359
7.15	JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No Other Party Can Be Trusted in 1996 and 2003 elections	360
7.16	JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No Tax Increase, No Constitutional Revision in 2005	363
7.17	JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No Postal Privatization in 2005	364
7.18	JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of Free Medical Care, No Military Spending in 2009	366
8.1	Discussion of Foreign and National Security in 2003 Was Not Focused on External Events	377
8.2	Not all candidates are shifting to discuss foreign and national security policy at the same time	381

8.3	Conservative candidates facing a higher probability of sabotage by conservative pockets discussed foreign and national security policy less than candidates who faced a lower probability of sabotage	390
8.4	Candidates from the New Socialist Party campaigned on a platform of No American Bases in 1996	394
8.5	LDP candidates with no experience of the old electoral system outnumbered LDP candidates who had for the first time in 2003, when we observe a shift in level of discussion	398
8.6	The Decline in Numbers Of Culpable Co-partisans	400
8.7	Ideological Positions Adopted by Candidates of Major Parties, 1996-2009 .	412
8.8	Conservative Candidates Are Not Becoming More Hawkish Over Time . .	413

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Cambridge, Massachusetts
July, 2011

For my parents, Beth and Steve, and for Taisei

Chapter 1

Japan: Faceless, Until Recently

For the half-century between 1945 and 2001, Japan was nearly absent from the world stage. When Japan appeared, it was at meetings of international trade and resource management organizations, where it would be represented by scores of identically-dressed male bureaucrats, who would huddle together, listening through headphones to simultaneous English-Japanese interpretation with largely expressionless faces. These bureaucrats would fight for the interests of Japanese farmers, fishermen, whalers, automobile producers and the owners of small shops, and then leave, uninterested in setting or contributing to a broader agenda. Meetings with Japan's ally, the United States, were either photograph opportunities for a new Prime Minister or meetings in which similarly-suited male diplomats hammered out compromises with representatives from U.S. interest groups and large corporations eager to gain entry into the enormous Japanese market. Managing the U.S.-Japan alliance was, for these bureaucrats, a task of crisis management. However, the crises they worked strenuously to manage and avoid were not those that ordinarily occur among allies, when one has a different opinion about how to deal with the threat or feels that the

other's behavior is dangerous or provocative, but over the ballooning trade deficit. The role of those in charge of foreign policy in Japan was saying no, and minimizing the fallout.

If Japan's interests were being realized, there may be nothing wrong with this picture. Is not getting one's way the goal of foreign policy? The first problem with this picture is that from the early 1980's, Japan was an economic superpower. Japanese people are fond of saying that at the height of Japan's economic prowess, a 10,000 yen bill (about \$100) dropped on the ground in the Ginza district of Tokyo wouldn't have paid for the ground under it. Japan had the second-largest economy in the world and was the world's largest creditor nation. If history is any guide, Japan should have been throwing its weight around, asserting itself, designing new international organizations and adjusting the rules of existing ones, rather than haggling over which contracts to allow U.S. construction companies to bid for, or how many and what kind of oranges to let in. This may be the first case in history in which an economic superpower demonstrated absolutely no interest in becoming a military superpower and knocking the front-runner off its pedestal, nor did it show any interest in enlarging its freedom of movement relative to its ally. The second problem with this picture is that no matter what arguments the farmers, fishermen, whalers, small shop-owners, construction company workers, and automobile producers might have marshalled, their interests were not necessarily those of the Japanese people. What getting Japan's way really meant was pleasing a small proportion of the Japanese population.

Japan's absence from the world stage for upwards of fifty years has been the subject of much scholarly research. Within the field of international relations, Japan helped spearhead the development of the constructivist research agenda, which is an attempt to explain why states like Japan do not always behave the way history and existing theory lead us to expect. Japan is difficult to study because it is a state unlike any other. A late-modernizer, Japan is

the only non-Western country to have achieved such a high level of economic, social, and political development, and it has done so while firmly tucked under the arm of its former enemy and now-erstwhile ally, the United States. As this dissertation makes clear, it also had a political system unlike any other. These factors make it unusual on all accounts. Nevertheless, the reality is that Japan presents a model for many developing countries in the world today. Its prolonged absence from the world stage ought to provoke a serious re-examination of existing theories for why and on what scale states choose to become involved in the world in the first place.

In this dissertation, I argue that what lay behind faceless Japan was an absence of politicians and political leadership. Japan's foreign policy was formulated and carried out by elite bureaucrats, who operated on a tight political leash. These bureaucrats were free to pursue their own organizational preferences, as long as these were aligned with the preferences of conservative politicians, which were to spend as little time on these matters as possible and make sure nothing got in the way of other, more pressing interests. The actors ordinarily charged with making foreign policy in parliamentary democracies, the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, were nothing but figureheads. They were unable to take independent action on foreign policy matters, besides publicly ratify decisions reached elsewhere, because they had little power over their fellow party members. Until 2001, the Japanese Prime Minister did not even possess the right to initiate legislation in a meeting of her very own Cabinet. Hundreds of what Margarita Estevez-Abe (2008) calls "intra-parliamentary veto players" meant that Japan was a democracy with a power structure decentralized to an extreme. Power was held firmly at the level of the politician, the backbencher in the Liberal Democratic Party, and not at the level of the party leadership. Through an elaborate array of monitoring mechanisms, backbenchers kept an eye on their

bureaucrats and their party leaders. While the history of postwar Japan is replete with examples of Prime Ministers chafing at these restrictions, their dependence on the support of fellow party members to stay at the helm, and the long line of party members waiting to take over, meant that they could do nothing but accept them.

I arrive at this explanation of faceless Japan and the message of this dissertation, which is that the absence of politicians and political leadership will mean the absence of the state on the world stage, by examining the causes of a recent and abrupt change to this picture. In the mid 1990's, conservative Japanese politicians suddenly became interested in foreign and national security policy. They went from avoiding these issues like the plague to creating leagues to tackle specific foreign policy problems, seeking out opportunities to make statements about foreign and national security policy on television, and flocking to meetings of the Liberal Democratic Party's foreign and national security policy subcommittees. Within the span of a few short years, the equilibrium shifted from one of sustained indifference to these issues, a lot of hand-waving, and a wish that they would just disappear, to one of sustained attention to and enthusiastic engagement with these issues. This turnaround in political attention to foreign and national security policy is the dependent variable of this dissertation.

I argue that this turnaround in political attention is not well explained by existing theories in international relations. While it is tempting to point to the myriad changes that have occurred in East Asia since the end of the Cold War as the drivers of this shift (Hughes 2004, 2009a), Japan faced changes in the balance of power before and either didn't react or reacted in precisely the opposite way theories of international relations would lead us to expect (Berger 1993; Green 2001; Katzenstein 1996; Hook 1996; Tadokoro 2011). Japan may in fact be the only country in history with a pattern of responding to external security

threats by tying its hands even further and rendering itself even more incapable of dealing with them than it had been prior to their emergence. How many other countries would react to the acquisition of a nuclear weapon by a giant former adversary living next door by formulating a series of “non-nuclear principles” and committing themselves to never possessing, developing, or introducing nuclear weapons? This was how Japan responded to China’s acquisition of a nuclear weapon in 1964.

While the changes in the external environment that Japan faces now are occurring against a very different background, of a weakened U.S. security guarantee, I have argued elsewhere that Japan reacted to the very first event of the post-Cold War period, Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait in August of 1990, in exactly the same way it had reacted to the emergence of new threats during the Cold War: with statements by the Prime Minister, little substantive change in policy, and several new policy constraints (Catalinac 2007). Japan reacted to the first North Korean nuclear crisis in 1994 with a flat-out refusal to support U.S. forces if a crisis was to occur on the peninsula, or even allow the use of Japanese hospitals for wounded troops (Funabashi 1999). If a weakened U.S. security guarantee in the wake of the disappearance of the Soviet threat is what is driving this burst of attention, why didn’t it occur in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, when the U.S. looked to Japan to provide boots on the ground in the Gulf War and support on the Korean peninsula?

No matter which period one examines, Japan’s national security policy lies far from the predictions of neo-realist scholars. While the turnaround in political attention I document in this dissertation has resulted in the untying of some of the knots that have restricted Japan’s freedom of movement in the security realm, many of the largest knots remain large and firmly tied. Despite a lot of debate, Japan has still not revised the pacifist clause of its Constitution, Article Nine, to permit the maintenance of a military force, even for defensive

purposes, or to allow its pseudo-military, the Self Defense Forces (SDF), to exercise collective self defense. A clause imposed on Japan by the Allied Occupation in 1947, Article Nine commits Japan to “forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes”. It states that “land, sea and air forces, as well as other war potential, shall never be maintained” and “the right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized” (Dower 1979). While modifying Article Nine requires a two-thirds majority in the Diet and a majority in a national referendum, undoing the restriction on collective self defense only requires the government to change its “interpretation” of Article Nine (Hughes 2006*b*). This limitation prohibits Japan from using military force to defend the troops of other nations, an increasingly unrealistic limitation now that the SDF are being dispatched abroad to provide rear-area, logistic support for U.S. forces engaged in military action, as well as recovery assistance in post-conflict zones, disaster relief, and peacekeeping activities (Okazaki 2009).

What this limitation means is that should an attack occur on a fellow peacekeeper while on a mission, or on a U.S. warship while together on a drill, SDF officers are *constitutionally prohibited* from offering any protection (Samuels and Boyd 2005). Should North Korea launch a missile aimed at the United States today, Japan would not be permitted to use its shiny new ballistic missile defense system to block the attack. Instead of revising this extraordinary limitation, the Japanese government selects its missions carefully, weighing up their political importance with the likelihood that the SDF will have to use force. Japanese political parties send their own teams of inspectors to scout out the proposed areas of activity and assess their danger level. Once decided upon, the entire government waits on tenterhooks until the mission returns safely. If the turnaround in political attention documented in this dissertation was motivated by a desire to adjust to the uncertainties of the

post-Cold War world, shore up the U.S. security commitment, or balance the rise of China, we would have observed a much hastier removal of these restrictions. We would have observed Japan trying harder to maintain its status as ally in good standing. We would have observed Japan forging better relations with its natural partner in all three endeavors, South Korea. We would have observed a number of outcomes that we have simply not observed. The result is that Japan's foreign and national security policy is as perplexing today as it was during the Cold War.

1.1 The Puzzle

On August 27, 2002, Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi Junichirō made a sudden announcement: he would be visiting Pyongyang in September. This was to be no ordinary visit. Koizumi's goals were threefold: to advance the agenda for normalization with the DPRK, which had been on hold since the early 1990's, receive assurances from the DPRK that there would be no repeat of the missile tests of 1994 and 1998, and make progress on an issue that had been elbowing its way up the political agenda since 1997: the alleged kidnapping of Japanese citizens for espionage training (Schoff 2006). From a diplomatic standpoint, Koizumi's visit was an enormous success. He returned with a blueprint for normalization and a promise that the DPRK would conduct no more missile tests. He also returned with a political bombshell. Premier Kim Jong Il had admitted that "freelancers within the government" had kidnapped thirteen Japanese citizens between 1977 and 1983. Of the thirteen, only five were still alive. Kim produced the names of the thirteen, apologized to Koizumi, and agreed that the surviving five would be allowed to visit their families in Japan.

Shock and rage greeted Koizumi's return. The 'abduction issue' (rachi mondai), as it came to be called, gripped the nation. The families of the victims, their supporters, and conservative politicians jumped into the fray, enlisting the support of the mass media, which began to saturate the Japanese public with images of the former victims, interviews with their families, and depictions of the sinister and clandestine DPRK regime (Abe 2009). Media taboos against references to the DPRK as "North Korea" were discarded and Japanese politicians made sure that rachi was translated as "abduction" and not "kidnapping". The media frenzy reached a crescendo when the five victims returned to Japan a month later. The scene of the victims disembarking from the chartered airplane and reuniting with their families had the nation glued to the television screen.

By the end of that year, the death certificates Kim had given Koizumi for the remaining eight abductees were charged to be fake. This revelation seemed to confirm DPRK deception and compelled politicians in the newly-formed, cross-partisan Parliamentary League for the Early Repatriation of Japanese Abducted by North Korea (Rachi Giren) to push for a change in policy towards the DPRK. Normalization was replaced with "resolution of the abductee issue", which the government defined as "the safe return of all eight abductees". In a radical departure from how foreign policy was ordinarily made, in which officials in the North American Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), the Prime Minister, and the other Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) faction leaders played the key roles, LDP politicians took over.¹

The MOFA official who had laid the groundwork for the 2002 Koizumi visit was cast aside by politicians with their own pipes to North Korea, who quickly decided that the five former abductees would not be returned (Schoff 2006). Politicians created leagues, task

¹Interview, Hitoshi Tanaka, September 2008 (Tanaka was the MOFA official who set up the first visit mentioned here).

forces, and headquarters and competed over which measures Japan should use to harm the North. Koizumi lost control of the policy as his co-partisans considered a range of economic sanctions he deemed in violation of the blueprint for normalization he had signed with Kim (Hughes 2006a). Carrots, which had been the mainstay of LDP foreign policy towards the North for years, were replaced with sticks as LDP politicians wrote legislation to ban the sending of remittances from Japan to North Korea, prohibit visits of DPRK vessels to Japanese ports, and restrict the ability of Korean residents of Japan to visit North Korea (Kang 2005; Arrington 2010; Samuels 2009). Achieving the safe return of all abductees, which had by that stage jumped to seventeen, quickly overwhelmed all other items on the government's foreign policy agenda, including the problems of the nuclear and missile threats posed by the DPRK (Hughes 2006a). It appeared to observers that Japan's entire foreign policy agenda had been "captured" by politicians in their quest to resolve the abduction issue (Kang 2005; Samuels 2009).

The question of why politicians chose to pay so much attention to the abduction issue is not puzzling, but the timing is. What took them so long? The abductions took place between 1977 and 1983. They were the subject of a front-page spread in one of Japan's largest national newspapers, the *Sankei Shimbun*, on January 7, 1980. This spread included descriptions and photos of three young couples who had disappeared from beaches in Fukui, Niigata, and Kagoshima prefectures in 1978. It featured an account from a couple who had narrowly escaped capture on a beach in Toyama prefecture by men who had spoken in accented Japanese and who had possessed guns the police later determined were not available in Japan at the time. The beaches where the incidents occurred were ones in which locals had reported hearing short-wave radio transmissions and seeing strange lights from unidentified ships for years (Johnston 2004). While the *Sankei* did not come right

out and link the disappearances of these individuals to North Korea, it did suggest that the abductions had probably been carried out by “foreign agents who had infiltrated Japan by boat”.

Throughout the 1980’s more evidence pointed to North Korean involvement in the abductions. In 1985 a North Korean agent was arrested for trying to enter Japan with a false passport. Police traced the name on the passport to a man who had disappeared from a beach in Miyazaki prefecture in 1980. In early 1988 a Korean agent was arrested for blowing up a Korean Airlines jet in 1987. Her description of her “Japanese teacher” resembled a woman who had vanished off the same beach in Miyazaki prefecture in 1978. While these revelations led the government to investigate the issue, which culminated in LDP faction leader Kajiyama Seiroku admitting in the Diet that “North Korea was probably responsible”, neither Kajiyama nor any other conservative politician chose to pursue the issue further at that time (Johnston 2004). Despite the array of evidence, the abduction issue was *completely ignored* by conservative politicians until April of 1997, when a group of politicians from the ruling Liberal Democratic Party formed a League to press the DPRK to return those they believed it had kidnapped.

Another issue which, like the abduction issue, had been given short shrift by politicians for years was Japan’s efforts to overturn the moratorium on commercial whaling, passed by the International Whaling Commission in 1982. At this time, Japan’s policy on whaling was the preserve of sixteen LDP politicians, all of whom were from coastal regions and drew electoral support from the fishing industry. These politicians, together with bureaucrats from the Fisheries Agency of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) issued an objection to the moratorium, a right afforded member states under the organization’s founding Convention (Catalinac and Chan 2005). The U.S. responded to

Japan's objection by reducing the fishing quota granted to Japanese fisherman within the U.S. exclusive economic zone and announcing that if Japan did not withdraw its objection it would be 'certified' under the Packwood-Magnuson Amendment (1974), a move that would revoke all fishing rights for Japanese fishing companies (Tamazawa 2008, 10). This was a shrewd move: the whaling industry was owned by the fishing industry and was worth less than 1% of its value (Miyaoka 2004, 33-4). After a period of negotiations in which Japan was granted an additional two seasons of whaling, the sixteen politicians withdrew Japan's objection and complied with the moratorium in 1986 (Liberal Democratic Party 2008).

In 1988 Japanese politicians responded to the moratorium by launching a small-scale program of research whaling (*chosa hoge*) to ensure that the skills required to conduct industrial whaling would not be lost and a campaign to convince IWC member states of the cultural value of Japanese whaling (Government of Japan 1997). A decade later, this campaign became suddenly much louder. Between 1999 and 2002 over one hundred and fifty LDP politicians joined their Party's League for the Resumption of Commercial Whaling.² Politicians from other political parties formed their own pro-whaling leagues and adopted the same position: Japan's national interest depended on achieving international recognition of Japan's right to conduct commercial whaling.³ Most of these new members had no ties with either the fishing industry or the tradition of whaling (McNeil 2007). They proceeded to inject a much greater degree of assertiveness into Japan's whaling policy.

Within a few years, Japan had doubled the catches it allowed itself under its two pro-

²Interview, Wada Ichiro, Former Head of the Research Bureau for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in the Secretariat of the House of Representatives (1970-2002) and now Counsellor to the Japan Whaling Association, December 2, 2008.

³Interview, Morishita Joji, Senior Negotiator for International Affairs (Japan's Negotiator at the IWC), Fisheries Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, November 27, 2008

grams of research whaling and started taking species recognized as endangered under CITES (ICR 2005). Whale meat began to be served in school lunches as part of a new government-sponsored campaign to stimulate domestic consumption. Japanese embassies abroad began distributing pamphlets entitled “The Ethics of Whaling”, likening whaling to the eating of meat pies in Australia and New Zealand. Japan adopted a more assertive negotiating strategy at the IWC and in 2002 built a coalition to block the granting of a quota to U.S. and Russian aborigines (Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries 2002). Politicians travelled to developing countries to convince them of the merits of supporting Japan’s position at the IWC (Yamagiwa 2009), most likely sweetening the deal with overseas loan programs paid for a new organization established under the auspices of the MAFF. In 2007, these politicians formed a permanent LDP “Project Team for the Resumption of Commercial Whaling” to strategize, which went on to publicly float the idea of leaving the organization if ‘a favorable outcome could not be achieved’.⁴

What makes the increase in attention to whaling so puzzling is that none of the factors one would ordinarily associate with warranting an increase occurred. Nothing happened in the IWC that had not happened in previous years. Member states continued to adopt resolutions calling on Japan to put a stop to research whaling, but at lower rates of consensus than in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s (Miyaoka 2004). The Japanese media were still writing sporadically about the issue, but at nowhere near the same rate as they had done in the 1980’s. The demand for whale meat among the Japanese people had declined to the point that the government was no longer earning enough revenue from selling whale meat, which was leading to reports of stockpiles of uneaten whale meat and heavy government subsidies (Taniguchi 2009). In stark contrast to the abduction issue, but similar to other

⁴Interview, Hayashi Yoshimasa, Chairman of the LDP’s ‘Project Team on the IWC’ and Member of the House of Councillors, November 21, 2008.

foreign and national security issues taken up in this period, the Japanese public were not particularly interested in the issue. When asked if they believed Japan's position was correct, surveys showed that most Japanese respondents would say yes. But politicians and MAFF bureaucrats told me privately that it would be stretch to say that a groundswell of public opinion had driven their interest in the issue.

These two episodes, which continue to have deep ramifications for Japan's foreign policy today, are illustrative of the broader phenomenon this dissertation seeks to explain: the recent and dramatic turnaround in attention to foreign and national security policy by conservative Japanese politicians. Bilateral relations with North Korea and overturning the moratorium on commercial whaling were not the only policy areas to which conservative politicians started paying attention in the mid-1990's. A second was the scope and kind of security cooperation Japan permitted itself to participate in, within the confines of Article Nine, with its ally. A third was legislation specifying what the SDF could and could not do in the event of a national emergency. A fourth was whether or not Japan should revise Article Nine. A fifth was how Japan could get a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. With the important exception of overseas development assistance (for reasons which will become clearer below), conservative politicians developed a sudden and across-the-board interest in all facets of policy that touched upon Japan's foreign and national security policy and international role. Their interest spanned Japan's bilateral relations, its activities in international organizations, the red tape within which its national security policy was made, and even extended down to the societal-level inputs of national security policy, such as how to educate Japanese children about their country and how to remember the Second World War.

Between the mid-1990's and the early 2000s, conservative politicians established a

vast array of leagues, headquarters, task forces, and study groups to tackle, think about, improve, revitalize, and strengthen Japan's "foreign policy power" (*gaikō ryoku kyōka*). They brought new words and new phrases into the Japanese lexicon, such as *kokueki* ("the national interest") and *kaiken* ("constitutional revision"). They were behind new legislation specifying what Japan's SDF could and could not do in an national emergency, which bureaucrats had been forced to bury in 1978 after failing to muster the political capital to move it past the very first stage in the LDP's bottom-up policy making process (Samuels 2007).⁵ They began to take the unprecedented steps of expressing their opinions on foreign and national security policy on television and in the newspaper. In November of 2008, for example, a cross-partisan league generated much publicity when it petitioned Prime Minister Aso Taro to make the swift dispatch of the SDF to fight pirates in the Gulf of Aden a top priority (MOFA 2008). In June of 2009 one of the new councils established under the LDP's National Security Sub-committee released a much-publicized statement that the government's white paper on defense ought to include the build-up of an offensive military capability to enable Japan to attack DPRK military installations.

My claim that conservative politicians paid little attention to foreign and national security policy before the mid-1990's is uncontroversial and is the same claim made by other scholars (Hughes 2004; Samuels and Boyd 2005; Samuels 2007; Pyle 2007; Hagstrom and Williamsson 2009; Hughes and Fukushima 2004; Tadokoro 2011). An objective means of highlighting the shift in political attention is to examine policy change. Because conservative politicians formed the government for the entire period between 1955 and 2009, more policy means more attention. If we observe more policies being made after 1995, then this is evidence that more attention is being paid to this policy area. As Chapter 2 makes clear, the decentralized policymaking process used by Japan's ruling party means that policy is

⁵Interview with Hamada Yasukazu, Member of the House of Representatives, September 14, 2009.

made by conservative politicians and not by the Prime Minister or by bureaucrats. The multi-tiered structure of the policymaking process, and the adoption of “unanimous consent” (zenkai icchi) in each tier, means that policy has to receive the assent of upwards of one hundred (and often several hundred) conservative politicians before it can be enacted.

Table 1.1 provides a list of all treaties, legislation, resolutions, plans, and policy innovations concerning national security that were signed, adopted, passed, resolved, or made between 1951 and 2009. This list was compiled from the Defense Chronology section of the Defense White Papers published annually by the Japanese Government since 1978 (Ministry of Defense 2007, 2009). This Table reveals that in the 44-year period between 1951 and 1995, thirty-seven policies were adopted. In the fourteen-year period between 1995 and 2009, one hundred and fifty two policies were adopted. In the former period, one policy per 1.19 years (or every 434 days) was the norm, in the latter period, one policy is being adopted every 0.09 years (or every 33 days).

Table 1.1: Treaties, Legislation, Diet Resolutions, and Other Policies Concerning National Security, 1947-2009

Treaty, Legislation, Resolution, Policy Statement	Year of Passage
Signing of U.S.-Japan Security Treaty	1951
Establishment of National Safety Agency	1952
Holding of Ikeda-Robertson Talks about Japan's Defense Capability	1953
Establishment of SDF	1954
Establishment of Japan Defense Agency	1954
Signing of MDA Agreement	1954
Passage of HOC Resolution Banning Overseas Dispatch of SDF	1954

Continued on next page

Table 1.1 – continued from previous page

Treaty, Legislation, Resolution, Policy Statement	Year of Passage
Establishment of National Defense Council	1956
Passage of Basic Guidelines for National Defense	1957
Adoption of First Defense Build-up Plan	1957
Signing of U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security	1960
Adoption of Second Defense Build-up Plan	1961
Adoption of Third Defense Build-up Plan	1966
Adoption of Ban On Arms Exports	1967
Adoption of Three Non-Nuclear Principles	1967
Adoption of Sato-Nixon Joint Statement	1969
Adoption of Fourth Defense Build-up Plan	1972
Passage of National Defense Program Outline	1976
Adoption of One Percent of GNP Ceiling on Defense Spending	1976
Adoption of Medium-Term Defense Build-up Program	1976
Commencement of Japan-U.S. Joint Training Exercises	1978
Adoption of Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation	1978
Approval of Mid-Term Defense Estimate	1981
Decision to Relax Ban on Transfers of Military Technology	1983
Passage of Mid-Term Defense Program	1985
Repeal of One Percent of GNP Ceiling on Defense Spending	1986
Adoption of Agreement on Cost-Sharing of U.S. Forces in Japan	1987
Passage of Law Concerning Dispatch of Disaster Relief Teams	1987
Approval of Mid-Term Defense Estimate	1990
Modification of Mid-Term Defense Program	1990
Adoption of New Agreement on Cost-Sharing of U.S. Forces in Japan	1991
Cabinet Order on Provisional Measures for Transportation of Refugees	1991

Continued on next page

Table 1.1 – continued from previous page

Treaty, Legislation, Resolution, Policy Statement	Year of Passage
Passage of the International Peace Cooperation Law (IPCL)	1992
Revision of Law Concerning Dispatch of International Disaster Relief Teams	1992
Dispatch of SDF to Cambodia	1992
Dispatch of SDF to Mozambique	1993
Dispatch of SDF to Rwanda	1994
Establishment of Security Council Meetings on Defense Capabilities	1995
Adoption of New Agreement on Cost-Sharing of U.S. Forces in Japan	1995
Establishment of Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO)	1995
Adoption of Revised National Defense Program Outline	1995
Revision of Disaster Countermeasures Basic Act	1995
Revision of SDF Law	1995
Adoption of Mid-Term Defense Program	1995
Signing of Japan-U.S. Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement	1996
Signing of Japan-U.S. Joint Declaration on Security	1996
Approval of Response to Foreign Submarines in Japanese Waters	1996
Dispatch of SDF to Golan Heights	1996
Revision of Defense Agency Establishment Law	1996
Release of Final Report of SACO	1996
Establishment of Defense Intelligence Headquarters	1997
Adoption of Revised Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation	1997
Establishment of Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee	1997
Review of Mid-Term Defense Program	1997

Continued on next page

Table 1.1 – continued from previous page

Treaty, Legislation, Resolution, Policy Statement	Year of Passage
Amending of the Japan-U.S. Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement	1998
Revision of IPCL	1998
Dispatch of SDF to Honduras	1998
Decision to Introduce Information-Gathering Satellite	1998
Adoption of Sanctions on North Korea for Missile Launch	1998
Approval of U.S.-Japan Cooperative Research on BMD Technology	1998
Adoption of Measures for Defense Procurement Reform	1999
Revision of SDF Law	1999
Signing of Memorandum of Understanding Regarding BMD Research	1999
Passage of Situations in Areas Surrounding Japan Legislation	1999
Revision of the Japan-U.S. Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement	1999
Dispatch of SDF to Turkey	1999
Dispatch of SDF to Indonesia	1999
Passage of Legislation Establishing Constitutional Councils	1999
Passage of Special Law for Nuclear Emergency Preparedness	2000
Adoption of New Agreement on Cost-Sharing of U.S. Forces in Japan	2000
Publication of JDA Report on Review and Reinforcement of Security System	2000
Passage of Ship Inspection Operations Law	2000
Passage of Mid-Term Defense Program	2000
Dispatch of SDF to India	2001
Dispatch of SDF to Afghanistan	2001
Establishment of Committee to Consider Modality of Defense	2001

Continued on next page

Table 1.1 – continued from previous page

Treaty, Legislation, Resolution, Policy Statement	Year of Passage
Passage of Anti-Terror Special Measures Law	2001
Revision of SDF Law	2001
Dispatch of MSDF to Indian Ocean	2001
Dispatch of ASDF to Kuwait	2001
Cabinet Adoption of a Basic Plan for the Anti-Terrorism Law	2001
Repealing of Restrictions on SDF Participation in UNPKO	2001
Security Council Approves In-flight Refueling Aircraft	2001
Suspicious Boat Incident	2001
Passage of Legislation Upgrading the Japan Coast Guard	2001
Dispatch of SDF to East Timor	2002
Revision of Defense Agency Establishment Law	2002
Revision of SDF Law	2002
Establishment of Consultative Body for Futenma	2002
Holding of Japan-North Korea Summit	2002
Extension of Anti-Terror Special Measures Law	2003
Passage of Three Armed Attack Situation Response Laws	2003
Decision to Jointly Develop BMD with the U.S.	2003
Passage of the Iraq Special Measures Law	2003
Establishment of Council for Security and Defense Capabilities	2004
Holding of Japan-North Korea Summit	2004
Revisions of Japan-U.S. Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement	2004
PSI Exercise for Maritime Interdiction	2004
Passage of National Defense Program Guidelines	2004
Passage of Mid-Term Defense Program	2004
Dispatch of SDF to Thailand	2004
Defense Policy Review Initiative	2004
Revision of SDF Law	2004
Passage of U.S. Military Actions Related Measures Law	2004
Dispatch of SDF to Indonesia	2005

Continued on next page

Table 1.1 – continued from previous page

Treaty, Legislation, Resolution, Policy Statement	Year of Passage
Dispatch of SDF to Pakistan	2005
Extension of Anti-Terror Special Measures Law	2005
Decision to Enhance U.S.-Japan Alliance	2005
Adoption of Agreement on Transformation of Alliance by U.S.-Japan SCC	2005
Adoption of Common Strategic Objectives by U.S.-Japan SCC	2005
Adoption of New Agreement on Cost-Sharing of U.S. Forces in Japan	2006
Joint Training Between SDF and Japan Coast Guard	2006
Testing of Sea-based Interceptor Missile	2006
Japan-North Korea Negotiations Over Abductions	2006
Signing of Agreement Concerning Realignment of U.S. Forces Japan	2006
Revision of Defense Agency Establishment Law	2006
Creation of a Joint Operations Posture for SDF	2006
Agreement on Sharing of Expenses of Relocation of U.S. Marine Corps to Guam	2006
Adoption of Roadmap For Realignment by U.S.-Japan SCC	2006
Ministerial-Level Talks Between Japan and U.S.	2006
Ministerial-Level Talks Between Japan and India	2006
Transfer of Weapons and Technology to U.S. for BMD Development	2006
Dispatch of SDF to Indonesia	2006
Revision of Defense Agency Establishment Law	2006
Establishment of Council on Measures for Relocation of Futenma	2006
Third Information-Gathering Satellite is Launched	2006
Passage of Financial Sanctions Against North Korea	2006
Extension of Anti-Terror Special Measures Law	2006
Ministerial-Level Talks Between Japan and Indonesia	2006

Continued on next page

Table 1.1 – continued from previous page

Treaty, Legislation, Resolution, Policy Statement	Year of Passage
Ministerial-Level Talks Between Japan and Mongolia	2006
Ministerial-Level Talks Between Japan and New Zealand	2006
Ministerial-Level Talks Between Japan and China	2006
Partial Revision of Defense Agency Establishment Law	2007
Ministerial-Level Talks Between Japan and Thailand	2007
Ministerial-Level Talks Between Japan and ROK	2007
Ministerial-Level Talks Between Japan and Malaysia	2007
Ministerial-Level Talks Between Japan and France	2007
Fourth Information-Gathering Satellite is Launched	2007
Publication of Report on Strengthening National Security Function of PMO	2007
Signing of Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Co-operation	2007
Preparation of Emergency Response Procedures to Destroy Ballistic Missiles	2007
Revision of Defense Agency Establishment Law	2007
Deployment of Patriot PAC-3 System	2007
Dispatch of SDF to Nepal	2007
Ministerial-Level Talks Between Japan and India	2007
Japan-U.S.-India Naval Drill	2007
Ministerial-Level Talks Between Japan and Germany	2007
Decision to Amend Security Council Establishment Law	2007
Establishment of Council on Reconstruction of a Legal Basis for Security	2007
Passage of the Special Measures Law Concerning Realignment	2007
Adoption of Alliance Transformation by U.S.-Japan SCC	2007
Ministerial-Level Talks Between Japan and Italy	2007
Ministerial-Level Talks Between Japan and Belgium	2007
Revision of the Ministry of Defense Establishment Law	2007
Revision of the SDF Law	2007

Continued on next page

Table 1.1 – continued from previous page

Treaty, Legislation, Resolution, Policy Statement	Year of Passage
Japan-U.S.-Australia Talks on Defense	2007
Japan-Australia Joint Foreign and Defense Ministerial Consultation	2007
Japan-U.S.-Australia Joint Exercises	2007
Enactment of the Basic Act on Ocean Policy	2007
Signing of General Security of Military Information Agreement	2007
Enactment of the Special Measures Law on Realignment	2007
Council for Reforming Ministry of Defense Hold Meetings	2007
Headquarters of U.S. 1st Corps Established at Camp Zama	2007
Cabinet Decisions on Defense Capability Buildup	2008
Passage of Basic Law for Space Activities	2008
Enactment of the Replenishment Support Special Measures Law	2008
Adoption of New Agreement on Cost-Sharing of U.S. Forces in Japan	2008
MSDF Conduct Replenishment in Indian Ocean	2008
Revision of the Defense Ministry Establishment Law	2008
Adoption by Cabinet of Basic Plan on Ocean Policy	2008
Council for Reforming the Ministry of Defense Publishes Report	2008
Establishment of Ministry of Defense Reform Headquarters	2008
Establishment of Defense Posture Review Board	2008
Adoption of Japan-India Joint Statement and Declaration	2008
Extension of Replenishment Support Special Measures Law	2008
JapanAustralia Defense Ministers' Meeting	2008
Review of the Mid-Term Defense Program	2008
Adoption of Basic Policy Relating to the Development and Use of Space	2009
Mobilization of SDF for Anti-Piracy Measures in Gulf of Aden	2009

Continued on next page

Table 1.1 – continued from previous page

Treaty, Legislation, Resolution, Policy Statement	Year of Passage
Japan-China Talks on Defense	2009
Mobilization of SDF for Destruction of Ballistic Missiles and Weapons	2009
Adoption of Agreement Concerning the Relocation of Marine Corps Personnel	2009
Commencement of Warning Flights in the Gulf of Aden by P-3Cs	2009
Enactment of Anti-Piracy Measures Law	2009
Dispatch of SDF to Indonesia	2009
Japan-India Talks on Defense	2009
Japan-China Talks on Defense	2009
Japan-R.O.K Talks on Defense	2009

While this list is by no means exhaustive, and fails to capture flurries of attention that result in the creation of parliamentary leagues, the publication of statements, and discussion on television but not policy change, the fact that the shift in attention is observable in Japan's foreign and national security policy is clear evidence that it happened.

Almost all of the policy areas conservative politicians turned their attention to in the mid-1990's have an important variable in common, they were not new. With the exception of legislation authorizing the dispatch of the SDF to the Indian Ocean and Iraq, to carry out refueling and postwar recovery assistance, respectively, none of these policies suddenly appeared on the agenda in the mid-1990's, demanding the attention of conservative politicians. Like the abduction issue and the whaling issue, most of them had been there before. Some of them had been there for decades before. This is why the shift in political atten-

tion we observe is so puzzling. Why conservative politicians chose the mid-1990's to start paying attention to issues they had avoided like the plague up until then is the question this dissertation seeks to answer.

1.2 Why Existing Theories Cannot Explain This Puzzle

Scholars have mounted two kinds of explanations for Japan's absence from the world stage and for the straitjacket in which it put itself with Article 9 and other policy constraints. While both can be adapted to offer alternative explanations for the recent turnaround in attention by conservative politicians, both are inadequate. The first is that conservative Japanese politicians did not pay attention to foreign and national security policy prior to the mid 1990's because they did not need to. While they may certainly have wanted to, being conservative, after all, and members of a party dedicated to repealing the "U.S.-imposed Constitution", a simple means-end calculation informed them that playing up the military allergy of the Japanese people was the more prudent strategy. This would enable Japan to tie its hands in the face of U.S. pressure for Japan to share more of the defense burden, which, they calculated, would rise as Japan's economic and technological power grew (Lind 2004; Heginbotham and Samuels 2002*b,a*).

Using the insistence of the socialist and communist opposition parties on restrictions on military spending and constraints on the assumption of new roles and missions for Japan's SDF was an irresistible card for conservative politicians to play. It enabled them to claim that while they really did want to support their ally, and do much, much more, their hands were tied. The presence of this opposition enabled them to claim that they had been forced into the most recent policy constraint, whether it be a commitment not to raise the defense

budget or not to export technology that could be used for military purposes abroad, by the untiring opposition, which could play on the desire of the Japanese people to avoid another war. Overriding this opposition would threaten the legitimacy of Japan's fledgling postwar democracy, and spark riots and demonstrations, politicians could claim. In sum, this was *calculated abstention*, designed to enable Japan to rely completely and utterly on the U.S. security guarantee, which would save Japan both money and sweat. Viewed through this angle, Japan's prolonged absence from the world is a story of free-riding and buck-passing.

The second explanation is that conservative Japanese politicians would have dearly loved to pay more attention to these issues, but they were hemmed in by a public that exhibited strong support for Article Nine, which stated in black and white that Japan was not allowed to acquire war potential and had renounced the use of military force to settle international disputes; an opposition prepared to start fistfights in the Diet and block other items on the government's legislative agenda; and former victims of Japan's aggressive intentions in the East Asian region, all three of whom would have kicked up a large fuss had the government shown any indication of veering away from its pacifist path (Berger 1993; Katzenstein 1996; Midford 2002).

This confluence of opposition to anything military prevented Japan from playing a role in international security affairs, and forced the government to walk the difficult tightrope of pretending to be an ally so that it could receive U.S. protection while never actually acknowledging that the alliance was an alliance (Hughes and Fukushima 2004). The strength of this opposition was such that the Japanese government had to find ways to respond to U.S. requests for burden-sharing in ways that would be deemed acceptable to all parties. The path of least resistance was a financial contribution to the U.S. Japan alliance, which the Japanese government pursued via the establishment of a large budget for overseas de-

velopment assistance (and the targeting of loans to countries strategically important to the U.S.), and the establishment of a large budget for covering the costs of hosting U.S. troops, termed the “sympathy budget” (Mulgan 1988; Keddel 1993). This nickname is one indication of how the Japanese government sold Japan’s financial contributions under the alliance to the Japanese people. In sum, this was *forced abstention*. ODA and the sympathy budget were the best Japan could do amidst such opposition. Viewed through this angle, Japan’s prolonged absence from the world is a story of the influence wielded by one or more of these three actors.

The first explanation suggests that any burst in attention to foreign and national security policy by conservative Japanese politicians can best be explained by a change in external circumstances, and specifically, in the willingness of the United States to protect Japan. Conservative politicians started paying attention to this policy area in the mid to late 1990’s because they had to. They calculated that the conditions facilitating the free ride no longer pertained to the post-Cold War security environment, and Japan would have to do more than before to prove itself as an ally worth defending. Their attention was motivated by concern about the strength of the U.S. security guarantee and a desire to peel back the policy constraints they had judiciously stuck to in previous decades. The second explanation suggests that any burst in political attention by conservative politicians should come after a sizeable shift in the views of the Japanese population, the views of the opposition, or the views of Japan’s Asian neighbors.

Neither of these explanations are satisfactory. They both present far more compelling explanations of Japan’s prolonged absence from the world stage than they do for the burst of political attention in the mid to late 1990’s. If calculated abstention is correct, we should have observed smaller bursts of political attention every time the Japan’s security environ-

ment worsened, or every time the U.S. commitment to Japan's security appeared shaky. We should also observe the political attention itself leading to concrete measures designed to address the precariousness of Japan's situation, whether by shoring up Japan's dependability as an ally or increasing Japan's own military capability to guard against the possibility of alliance rupture. Because many things can happen to disrupt the reflection of political preferences in policy outcomes, we should at least observe political attention being *aimed at this end*.

There were several periods in which the continued commitment of the U.S. to the defense of Japan appeared shakier than it had been previously. The first was in the ten-year period after the normalization of Sino-American relations in 1972 (Cha 1999; Berger 1993), and the second was after the end of the Cold War. In the former period, the Japanese government was faced not only with the withdrawal of massive numbers of U.S. troops from East Asia and unprecedented pressure on Japan to look after itself, but also with a dramatic increase in physical threat with the addition of ballistic missile submarines and surface ships to the Soviet's Pacific Fleet, the stationing of attack aircraft and Backfire bombers in Siberia, the deployment of amphibious capabilities to the Kurile Islands, and the conducting of large-scale military exercises several miles from Hokkaido (Lind 2004). In neither of these periods did indications of a waning U.S. commitment translate into anything like the burst of political attention we observe in the mid-1990's.

If forced absention is correct, we should observe change only when Japan's culture of anti-militarism weakens, die hard pacifists have faded from the political scene, or when Japan's neighbors decide Japan has paid its dues for its wartime actions and can be trusted again. Strangely enough, as Miyashita (2007) cleverly points out, the only period in which the Japanese public were not attached to anti-militarism was in the decade immediately

after the Second World War, the period in which one would expect that public disgust at the abuse of force as an instrument of state policy and anger toward the Japanese military would have been at its most intense. There is very little indication that the views of the Japanese public about the unattractiveness of military force have undergone any change in recent decades. As the next chapter shows, the preferred means of securing Japan for between 76% and 85% of Japanese citizens remains “maintaining security through the SDF and the U.S.-Japan alliance” (Hagstrom and Williamsson 2009, 259). The persistence of the norm of anti-militarism is evident in the government’s unwillingness to modify the existing ban on the use of military force abroad. Japanese people would rather their countrymen were attacked by pirates in the Gulf of Aden than overturn this norm.

1.3 The Argument

In this dissertation, I argue that the turnaround in attention to foreign and national security policy by conservative Japanese politicians is best explained by a shift in their electoral strategies. The introduction of a new electoral system in 1994 forced conservative politicians to abandon their strategies of catering to the preferences of organized groups and adopt new strategies to appeal to the median voter. Whereas appealing to the median voter was a losing strategy under the old electoral system, in which voters had a single, non-transferable vote for a candidate in a multi-member district, it is a winning strategy under the new electoral system, in which voters have two votes, one for a candidate in their single member district and another for a party in their proportional representation bloc. As the next chapter explains, the electoral reform reduced the physical size of districts but increased the size of the appeals politicians needed to make. Whereas the old electoral

system demanded narrow appeals and the targeting of benefits to select groups of voters, which ranged from subsidies and income protection for rice farmers to pensions for former war veterans, the new electoral system demands broad, national-level appeals and the steering of policy toward mothers, fathers, white-collar workers, and above all, Japanese citizens

Within the menu of national-level appeals available to politicians in a single member district, I argue that foreign and national security policy represents an alluring choice. This is because of its inability to be targeted to select groups of voters. Talking about the nation's role in the world and the nation's foreign and national security policy benefits everyone and no one at the same time. It is the widest possible appeal a politician can make. It is wider than all other appeals we ordinarily associate with being non-targetable, such as promises to reform the nation's education system or promises to improve national health insurance. Appealing to a concern that affects all voters equally, regardless of their financial means, occupation, age or place of residence, enables politicians to garner support from the widest possible strata of society. Statements about the nation's foreign and national security policy are statements that the politician will not play favorites while in office and is concerned about all voters, equally. I argue that the attraction of this policy area lies in its non-targetability rather than in its ability to strike emotional chords with voters or appeal to their psychological desire to identify with their nation, both of which may also be true. The property of non-targetability is what makes this policy an irresistible issue for candidates competing in a single member district.

1.4 The Evidence

To test my hypothesis that the turnaround in attention to foreign and national security policy by conservative politicians was due to a shift in their electoral strategies, I needed to select a valid indicator of electoral strategy. I needed to show that conservative candidates adopted the electoral strategies expected of them under the old electoral system, and changed their strategies under the new system. I needed to show that conservative politicians ignored foreign and national security policy under Japan's old electoral system, and started paying attention to it only after the introduction of the new system. To further bolster my argument, I needed to show that it was having to provide private goods to select groups of voters under the old electoral system that prevented conservative candidates from paying attention to national-level issues such as foreign and national security policy.

In Chapter 4 of this dissertation I argue that what candidates say to their constituents during the election campaign is a valid indicator of their electoral strategy. In Japan, near-draconian campaign regulations give candidates recourse to only six different means through which they can communicate their ideas, views, and other sentiments to voters during campaigns to Japan's House of Representatives (HOR), which are only twelve days long. Only one of these means has enough space to be conducive to the enunciation of policy views. This is the *senkyo kōhō*, or candidate election manifesto. Candidates paste their typed or handwritten words onto a piece of paper the size of a quarter of a newspaper page and submit this to their local election administration commissions by 5pm of the first day of the campaign. Two days before the election, the *kōhō* are distributed to all registered voters in the district. Close to forty percent of Japanese voters report seeing the *kōhō* of candidates running in their district in those two days.

I show that the rules governing the production and dissemination of the *kōhō* have undergone no changes across the postwar period. The *kōhō* are published in exactly the same format and under the exact same rules today as they were in 1955. There is no emailing of the *kōhō*. Candidates are still required to paste their words onto the piece of paper given to them by their local election commission, and submit this by hand. While one would expect that the development of new media, such as television and the internet, might have reduced the degree to which voters rely on the views expressed by candidates in their *kōhō*, candidates running for public office in Japan are prohibited from using any means not expressly provided for in the Public Offices Election Law. This law, oddly-enough, is written in the same style as the law governing the Self Defense Forces. It presents a “positive list”, a list of things candidates are allowed to do and media they are allowed to use during the campaign. If something is not on the list, candidates are not allowed to do or use it.

This means that in Japan today, candidates are forced to shut down their homepages during election campaigns. With the important exception of party manifestos, which were introduced in 1994, no new means have been introduced. After addressing the possibility that the party manifesto has usurped the importance of the candidate manifesto and muddies any inferences I am able to draw about candidate strategy after 1996, I conclude that the *kōhō* carry similar weight in a candidate’s campaign today as they did during the first few decades of democracy in postwar Japan. I discuss how I selected my corpus of 7,497 candidate elections manifestos, which contains the universe of manifestos produced by all serious candidates running in the eight elections between 1986 and 2009.

I use a method for the statistical analysis of text that has only recently been developed by computational linguists and has not yet been applied in political science. To the author’s

knowledge, this dissertation is the first to apply this method to a social science problem using Japanese text. The method, Latent Dirichlet Allocation, allows researchers to uncover the topics in a corpus, which are treated as latent variables. The only piece of information required to use LDA is that the researcher have some idea about the total number of topics.

Chapter 5 describes the process through which I selected my sixty nine topics. I use qualitative interpretation to generate a label for each topic and demonstrate that the topics cohere well with well-established facts about elections in Japan and other countries. I describe how I classified each topic as a public or private good based on the identity of the topic's targets, namely, *who* the topic was aimed at. Using data from ministries and agencies of the Japanese government, I generate measures of the proportions of each of the forty unique targets found in the topics in Japan's total population. Using the average percentage of each target in Japan's population from 1985 to 2005, I show that some topics are aimed at large percentages of the Japanese population and others are aimed at very small percentages. I classify the former as public goods and the latter as private goods. I then use a well-established fact about elections in countries that place a premium on the provision of private goods to constituents demonstrate that the combined public/private goods proportions can be used to test theories of the behavior of politicians such as the one offered in this dissertation. While my description of the steps that made up this process might seem unnecessary, the theory I am testing is so contentious that it *is* necessary.

1.5 The Findings

My findings lend strong support for the theory. Conservative candidates adopted electoral strategies that were comprised primarily of private goods under Japan's old electoral

system, and changed their strategies to focus on public goods under the new electoral system. My results confirm that foreign and national security policy was completely ignored by conservative candidates prior to the introduction of the new electoral system. My results also suggest that foreign and national security policy was the casualty of having to constantly demonstrate one's credentials as a provider for one's constituents. I confirm the findings of research on campaigning in another personal-vote system, the U.S., that this need was never alleviated, even for senior politicians who one might imagine had a slim chance of losing (Jacobsen 1987).

I provide the first evidence to date that candidates facing higher levels of intra-party competition, as measured by the number of co-partisan competitors relative to district magnitude, relied more on private goods. I also confirm the findings of qualitative studies of Japanese politics that elections in the cities were very different from elections in rural areas. In cities, conservative candidates injected their private-goods-manifestos with a small dose of public goods. I hypothesize that this is because the social networks in cities are less viscous and more transient, making it difficult for conservative candidates to distribute goodies. I argue that it is not that voters in cities have different preferences, because as I explain in Chapter 2, voters will always prefer private goods over public goods if they can get them, it is because it is more difficult to reach voters with private goods.

Under the new electoral system, I show that conservative candidates have switched to using foreign and national security policy alongside other public goods such as community safety, pensions, health care, and education to get votes. The percentage of their electoral strategy comprised of private goods dropped from approximately 60% under the old electoral system to 30% under the new. The percentage of their electoral strategy made up of foreign and national security policy shifted from a mere 0.1% under the old elec-

toral system to 6.7% percent under the new. Foreign and national security policy was the third-highest topic discussed in the average manifesto produced by a conservative candidate running in the 2003 and 2009 elections. While this is a 660 percent shift, I also find that the level of discussion varies significantly across election, party, and candidate. I argue that this variation cannot be explained by the alternative hypothesis, external events, and is instead the product of three legacies bequeathed the new electoral system by the old, and their weakening in some districts and in some elections, but not in others. I argue that these three legacies, which can be summarized here as scattered pockets of conservative support, radical opponents, and culpable co-partisans, can explain the variation in level of discussion of foreign and national security policy we observe after 1996.

The biggest legacy bequeathed the new system is the continued presence of radical opponents. While conservative candidates shied away from discussing foreign and national security policy under the old electoral system out of fear this would send a signal to their constituents that they were less committed to bringing home the bacon than another conservative candidate was, candidates from the opposition parties had the opposite incentives. Three out of the four major opposition parties did not run more than one candidate in each district under the old electoral system. This meant that candidates from these parties were not running against each other. These candidates had every incentive to build a strong party label and have everyone in the party run on this label. While opposition candidates were not running against each other, they were still running in a multi-member district. Running in a multi-member district meant that the winning strategy was still to target their appeals at a small subset of voters in the district rather than take the position of the median voter. Qualitative research has shown that the biggest planks of the electoral platforms offered by two of the opposition parties were radically leftwing positions on foreign and national

security policy. My results confirm the centrality of these planks in every campaign fought under the old electoral system. In each of the three elections I examine, Japanese voters were fed a diet of how dangerous the U.S.-Japan alliance was, how dangerous the SDF were, and how the ruling Liberal Democratic Party was secretly planning a program of remilitarization that would take the country back to “that dark period...” of the Second World War.

The result of these diametrically-opposed incentives, I argue, was that opposition candidates came to own foreign and national security policy, and public goods more broadly. By having all their candidates calling for unarmed neutrality and attacking the government for spending hard-earned taxpayer’s money on “the military” instead of on welfare, the opposition parties created an even larger disincentive for conservative candidates to use these issues under the old electoral system. Had this legacy not existed, we might have observed conservative candidates in cities, for example, throwing foreign and national security policy into the mix of public goods they offered voters. What we do observe is conservative candidates in cities making the occasional mention of public goods, but either staying right away from foreign and national security policy or articulating the exact same vague statements of peace as the opposition parties. I argue that the united front conservative candidates were presented with at each election, and their own disincentives to mount a united challenge to this front, meant that elections were about the two sides not talking to one another. Conservative candidates painted themselves as the providers of pork and opposition candidates painted themselves as the providers of peace.

In this way, I argue that the extremity of positions adopted by opposition party candidates were themselves a product of the old electoral system. This is because while *small* opposition parties can tout policies and adopt positions that appeal to a small minority of

the population, major opposition parties cannot. In most other systems, opposition parties that ran as many candidates as opposition parties did in Japan would have found it prudent to develop policy positions that were supported by larger majorities of voters. While these positions are likely to be off-center if the opposition is campaigning in a country with proportional representation, they will not be as extreme as the positions adopted by the two major opposition parties in Japan. Given that the majority of Japanese voters supported both the U.S.-Japan alliance and the SDF, the positions of the two opposition parties on foreign policy can be classified as extreme. Thus, if Japan had adopted a different electoral system, the opposition would likely have modified its position or adopted a different one.

Chapter 7 shows that the frame presented by opposition party candidates is a legacy of the old electoral system that has been carried into the new by the addition of the proportional representation tier. Being mixed member majoritarian (MMM) rather than mixed member proportional (MMP), Japan's electoral system adds seats won in the single member district tier to seats won in the PR tier. Because parties who run candidates in the single member district tier tend to win more seats in the PR tier, the system encourages all parties to run candidates in single member districts. In each of the elections under the new electoral system, candidates running from the opposition parties have used very similar appeals to the ones they used under the old electoral system. I find that conservative candidates running in single member districts without a candidate from one of these opposition parties discussed foreign and national security policy more than their counterparts who faced a candidate from one of these parties. My results also suggest, however, that the legacy of the radical opposition may be diminishing. Surprisingly, this is not because candidates from these parties are modifying their positions on these issues, but because they appear to be running fewer candidates in the single member district tier over time. As a result, I suggest

that we are likely to observe more discussion of foreign and national security policy by conservative candidates in the future.

1.6 Outline of Dissertation

The dissertation proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 introduces the theory of electoral incentives, which was developed to explain the behavior of politicians in other realms, but which can be adapted and extended to provide a compelling explanation for the turnaround in political attention we observe in mid-1990's Japan. This chapter also lists the hypotheses tested in the dissertation. Chapter 3 answers the question of why Japan chose to reform its electoral system in 1994, and assembles evidence to rule out the possibility that electoral reform was chosen to enable Japanese politicians to pay more attention to these issues. Chapter 4 describes the 7,497 candidate election manifestos collected to test my hypotheses and the topic model, Latent Dirichlet Allocation, used to model their content. After addressing concerns about the validity of the manifestos as an indicator of candidate electoral strategy and concerns about the method, Chapter 5 introduces the topics discovered in the manifestos and describe how I classified each topic as a public or private good, necessary to provide a full test of the theory.

Chapter 6 provides powerful evidence that the electoral strategies adopted by conservative politicians under SNTV-MMD were exactly as the theory predicted, with foreign and national security policy being studiously ignored by conservative candidates and monopolized by opposition candidates. Foreign and national security policy was a feature of almost every single topic discussed by opposition party candidates under SNTV-MMD. Chapter 7 demonstrates that the 1994 electoral reform was associated with a dramatic shift in the

electoral strategies of conservative candidates, in the direction predicted by the theory. I provide the first evidence to date that conservative candidates have shifted from discussing private goods to discussing public goods, one of which is foreign and national security policy. The result is that foreign and national security policy is now an electoral issue in contemporary Japan, with contested frames being presented at each election. While the addition of the proportional representation tier allows small parties to exist, which has perpetuated the use of this frame by the opposition, I show that ownership of the issue is slowly moving away from the opposition and toward the two largest parties.

Chapter 8 addresses the possibility that the variation in level of discussion of foreign and national security that we observe across elections, parties, and candidates can be explained by variables outside of the analysis, such as external events, new candidates entering the race, or a change in politicians' preferences. I rule these out, and instead argue that they can be explained by three institutional legacies of the old electoral system, and their weakening in some areas, but not in others. Chapter 9 is the conclusion, and offers my contributions to international relations, comparative politics, and previous explanations of Japan's foreign and national security policy. It also poses a series of research questions that stem from the research presented here.

Chapter 2

A Theory of Electoral Incentives and Foreign and National Security Policy

“If a monkey falls out of a tree, he’s still a monkey. If a Dietman falls, he is no longer a Dietman”.¹

This chapter presents a theory of the electoral origins of foreign and national security policy in contemporary Japan. The theory draws on a long line of research in comparative politics on why politicians adopt the electoral strategies they do. It joins a more recent body of scholarship that extends these insights to explain the behavior and policy choices of politicians after they reach office (Bernhard and Leblang 1999; Persson and Tabellini 2000; Rosenbluth and Thies 2001; Lizzeri and Persico 2001; Golden 2003; Rosenbluth and Schaap 2003; Iversen and Soskice 2006; Persson, Roland and Tabellini 2007; Estevez-Abe 2008; Rosenbluth and Thies 2010). I show that insights from this research can be extended to provide the most compelling explanation for why conservative Japanese politi-

¹This is a well-known quote by a former Vice President of the Liberal Democratic Party, Ono Bamboku Curtis (1971, 170).

cians ignored foreign and national security policy for four decades, and why they began to pay attention only after the mid-1990's.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First, I explain why the optimal electoral strategy for conservative politicians under Japan's old electoral system was private goods for a subset of voters in the district. Second, I provide qualitative evidence from the historical record that confirms that this was exactly the strategy adopted. Third, I explain why foreign and national security policy was a losing strategy for conservative politicians under this system.² Fourth, I show that the optimal strategy for conservative politicians under Japan's new electoral system, which was adopted in 1994, is public goods for the national-level median voter. Fifth, I show that research to date has not found evidence that politicians exhibit these strategies, or have even changed their electoral strategies since the electoral reform. Sixth, I explain why foreign and national security policy is a winning strategy under the new electoral system. I conclude with a list of hypotheses tested in the dissertation, including alternative hypotheses.

2.1 Electoral Strategies under SNTV-MMD: Private Goods for a Subset of Voters in the District

From 1947 to 1993 Japan's House of Representatives used an electoral system classified as "single-non-transferable-vote in multi-member districts" or "SNTV-MMD" to elect between 467 and 512 members in between 118 and 131 districts (Reed and Thies 2001). In this system voters cast a single vote for a candidate in a district that elected between two

²Throughout the dissertation, I use "LDP" and "conservative" interchangeably. They mean the same thing.

and six representatives.³ The top n -vote getters in each district would win a seat, where n refers to the district magnitude (Reed 1990). Unlike systems where voters rank candidates and votes are transferred to lower-ranked candidates should the first-ranked candidate reach the threshold and be elected (referred to as the “single-transferable vote”), votes in Japan could not be transferred between candidates. Candidates competing under this configuration of rules have powerful incentives to develop electoral strategies that are targeted to select groups of voters within the district rather than strategies aimed at the unorganized, median voter (Cox 1990; Myerson 1993; Carey and Shugart 1995). This section explains why.

2.1.1 Medium-Sized District Magnitudes

Targeted electoral strategies are optimal under SNTV-MMD for two reasons. The first reason is because candidates were competing in multi-member districts (MMDs) with a medium-sized district magnitude.⁴ Downs (1957) was the first to draw attention to the importance of district magnitude as a variable shaping candidates’ electoral strategies. He showed that candidates competing in single-member districts (SMDs) with first-past-the-post had incentives to target the concerns of and develop policies for the median voter, whereas candidates competing in MMDs using first- n th-past-the-post would target the concerns of and develop policies for organized groups. District magnitude has this effect because it influences the number of candidates running. When district magnitude is high, more candidates enter the race, which lowers the relative vote share candidates need to

³Most districts elected between three and five representatives. One of these districts was a single-member district, which was abolished in 1990.

⁴The Japanese called their electoral system “medium-sized district system” or *chūsenkyoku seido*.

win. Lower vote shares encourage candidates to pursue the votes of organized groups. When district magnitude is low (or equals 1, as in a single member district), fewer candidates enter the race, which increases the relative vote share candidates need to win. Higher vote shares encourage candidates to pursue the votes of the unorganized, median voter.

In a sophisticated extension of this theory, Cox (1990) classifies all electoral systems into two categories: those encouraging *centripetal* electoral competition, with candidates and parties advocating centrist policies and converging on a centrally-located position, and those encouraging *centrifugal* competition, with candidates and parties advocating extreme policy stances and extreme ideological positions. He shows that electoral systems that combine plurality rule with a single vote per voter and a district magnitude of one will produce centrist electoral competition, whereas systems that combine plurality rule with a single vote per voter and a larger district magnitude will produce centrifugal electoral competition. Because there were always more than two candidates competing for a single vote in each district under SNTV-MMD, “there is never a median voter or central clustering result predicted for Japan” (Cox 1990, 915). Instead, candidates will be dispersed across the ideological spectrum, with some adopting extreme positions.

In a further extension, Myerson (1993) used a formal model in which candidates can promise goods to voters to show that candidates competing in MMDs had incentives to promise more goods to narrower sub-constituencies as the threshold for winning a seat declined. He showed that candidates who appealed to a broad cross-section of the electorate would leave themselves open to challengers who would concentrate their efforts on the small share of voters in the district whose votes were necessary to win. Articulating the converse of Down’s prediction that voter preferences might become more homogeneous in countries using SMDs, Myerson (1993, 857) argued that candidates in countries using

MMDs have incentives to “incite candidates to use narrow campaign strategies that create favored minorities, even in situations where all voters are initially the same.” He concluded that electoral rules “designed to give representation to minority groups may also have the effect of encouraging candidates to create special interest groups and minority conflict even when they do not exist” (Myerson 1993, 868).

2.1.2 Intra-Party Competition

Whereas medium-sized district magnitudes affect the electoral strategies of all candidates competing under SNTV-MMD, the electoral strategies of candidates from parties seeking to capture a majority of seats in the Diet were affected by a second variable: intra-party competition. Intra-party competition arises under SNTV-MMD because the structure of Japan’s government is British parliamentary, which means that candidates capturing a majority of seats in the Diet are collectively responsible for electing the executive and overseeing the implementation of policy. This requirement is one reason why candidates in parliamentary systems form political parties. Intra-party competition arises between candidates of majority-seeking parties under SNTV-MMD because majority-seeking parties had to run more than one candidate in each district. Running more than one candidate meant that candidates from the same party had to compete against their co-partisans and voters had to find a way of choosing between them.

As soon as voters are given a say over the allocation of seats to candidates within parties, candidates cannot rely exclusively on the party label and must find an alternative means of differentiation. One might counter that if party leaders could identify party loyalists, they could instruct party loyalists in one region to vote for candidate A and those in another

region to vote for candidate B. This was apparently a tactic adopted by the Kuomintang Party in Taiwan (Li 1999; Curtis 1999, 142). But this requires parties to identify party loyalists. It is extremely unlikely that parties will be able to do so under SNTV-MMD because *voters* will have few incentives to commit to being a party loyalist and supporting one party when they could be playing party candidates off against one another in exchange for private goods.

The literature suggests that factors extraneous to the electoral system will affect the differentiation strategies available to candidates. Competing over policy is not a credible strategy when candidates challenging each other at the ballot box have to simultaneously be able to commit to cooperating with one another after the election as members of the governing party in the Diet. Clashing over policy also risks muddying whatever reputation the party has managed to cultivate in the eyes of voters with its past legislative record and performance in office. Candidates running under a party label in postwar Japan were thus faced with the difficult task of differentiating themselves from their co-partisans in ways that maximized their own chances of getting past the post *and also* the chances of their co-partisan(s). One effective differentiation strategy that leaves the Party label intact is to rely on personalism, or the cultivation of a ‘personal vote’ (Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1993; McCubbins and Rosenbluth 1995).

The first major work on the personal vote defined it as “that portion of a candidate’s electoral support which originates in his or her personal qualities, qualifications, activities, and record” (Cain, Ferejohn and Fiorina 1987, 9). Based on case studies of the kinds of constituency service provided by politicians in the United States and the United Kingdom, the authors argued that developing a personalized base of electoral support was a rational response by politicians seeking to protect themselves from partisan and issue-based elec-

toral swings. By creating and nurturing a loyal group of voters, politicians could insulate themselves from challenges on the basis of policy issues. Instead of contesting elections by taking positions on public goods, as Downs had assumed, politicians could use “private goods” to carve out a loyal group of voters.

Building on these insights, Carey and Shugart (1995) presented a method for estimating the degree to which politicians benefited from developing a personal reputation distinct from the reputation of their party. The method is based on four variables common to all electoral systems: the degree of control party leaders exercise over access to the party label and the ranking of party lists; whether votes are pooled across candidates from the same party after they are cast; the number and kind of votes voters possess; and district magnitude. The authors find that as district magnitude increased, the value of a candidate’s personal reputation declined, but only in systems in which there is no intra-party competition.⁵ When there *is* intra-Party competition (that is, when party leaders do not control access to the party label or the rankings on the party list), the model works the opposite way: as district magnitude increases, the value of a candidate’s personal reputation also increases.

In their construction of a typology of combinations of these four variables, the authors conclude that “out of all systems in which parties control nominations, [Japan’s] is clearly the most personalistic. The direct competition among members of the same party poses great difficulty to parties attempting to ensure cooperation within the party to ensure that votes are allocated efficiently” (Carey and Shugart 1995, 429). The difficulty facing parties alluded to by the authors is the flip side to the dilemma facing candidates described above. In order to govern in a parliamentary system, a party needs to win a majority of seats.

⁵The authors define these systems as those in which party leaders control access to the party label and the ordering of candidates on the list. For example, closed-list PR systems.

Presuming that a party's support base is relatively evenly spread out across districts, a party running candidates in SNTV-MMD had to win, on average, at least two seats per district. To do this, parties had to decide how many candidates to run in each district and how to allocate the votes of party loyalists (should they even exist) in a way that would maximize the chances of all nominated candidates being elected.

Choosing how many candidates to nominate in each district and how to allocate votes are difficult if not impossible tasks for parties under SNTV-MMD. Nomination errors occur when the party runs too few candidates and misses out on a seat it could have otherwise won, or runs too many candidates and fails to elect all of them (Cox and Rosenbluth 1994). Errors in vote allocation occur when, for example, the party runs a candidate who is so popular she siphons off most of the support for the party in the district, resulting in a failure to elect all candidates the party nominated. Scholars have argued that the best way for a party to solve these problems is to provide a means by which its candidates can get elected in ways that do not detract from the party's overall appeal in the eyes of voters. Encouraging candidates to cultivate and rely on a personal vote is perhaps the best solution (Rosenbluth and Thies 2010, 55). In this way, cultivation of a personal vote is rational not only from the perspective of the candidate, but also from the perspective of the party (McCubbins and Rosenbluth 1995). Creating an even playing field and giving candidates the resources to battle it out amongst themselves was a rational response for parties competing under this system.

Election campaigns that rely on one's personal characteristics involve high levels of constituency service and the securing of benefits for select constituents. They require a much greater financial outlay than campaigns based on a party platform or based on one's positions on the issues of the day. For majority-seeking parties, the presence of intra-

party competition thus has the effect of *exacerbating* the effects of a medium-sized district magnitude. The presence of both variables gave candidates from majority-seeking parties incentives to carve out even-narrower sub-constituencies within their districts and expend even more capital to ensure that benefits continued to flow their way (Carey and Shugart 1995, 418). The electoral strategies of these candidates are likely to involve the targeting of organized groups not only because organized groups make sense under a medium-sized district magnitude, but because they also provide much-needed campaign funds.

Candidates from smaller parties that do not run more than one candidate in each district have the same incentives to target their appeals at a small subsection of voters in the district. However, these candidates do not enjoy the same access to government resources that candidates of the ruling party do, which rules out the possibility of using government resources to carve out their personal bailiwicks.⁶ Because these candidates do not face intra-party competition, however, they are likely to find cultivation of a strong party label, which every candidate can use in her campaign, the optimal strategy. The fact that these candidates still have to be elected in an multi-member district, however, makes the content of this label likely to be ideologically extreme or aimed at groups of voters.

2.2 Evidence for these Electoral Strategies, 1955-1993

Numerous ethnographic studies of election campaigns and research on the voting trends of the Japanese electorate lend support for the theory outlined above. Candidates got elected with small fractions of the vote. In the 1993 election, for example, a third of

⁶Unless they can find a way to claim credit for the pork provided by the ruling party politician in their district.

the winners garnered less than ten percent of the total number of votes in their district. In urban areas, 95 percent of candidates won with less than fifteen percent (Bouissou 1999, 97). Candidates running under the banner of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) relied on strategies that were personal and targeted toward a select group of voters in their districts. Candidates from opposition parties who were not facing intra-party competition relied on strategies that were a combination of targeted and ideologically extreme. This section describes what these strategies looked like.

2.2.1 Electoral Strategies of LDP Candidates

Ethnographic studies of campaigns under SNTV-MMD agree that LDP candidates, who won seat majorities in every House of Representatives election between 1958 and 1993, relied on a combination of personalized constituency service and government transfers to carve out groups of loyal voters within their districts (Curtis 1971; Thayer 1969; Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1993; Fukui and Fukai 1999; Iwai 1990). By the early 1960's, LDP politicians had perfected the development of a vehicle that became the gold standard in delivery of these services: the *kōenkai*, or personal political machine (Masumi 1988).⁷ Best conceptualized not as a monolithic, coordinated machine but as a vast network of dozens and often hundreds of support groups, with different organizing principles and permanent and overlapping memberships, *kōenkai* were formed in support of an individual politician's campaign for the Diet. Instead of establishing and relying on local party branches, LDP politicians spent their careers building, maintaining, and expanding their *kōenkai*. This meant strengthening bonds between group members and fostering loyalty to the politician

⁷*Kōenkai* literally means “cheering organization” and is most often translated as “personal support organization”. It is now common parlance in the comparative politics literature on Japan to refer to it as *kōenkai*.

by subsidizing all manner of social activities, ranging from golf tournaments to tea ceremony lessons, and performing personal favors such as helping members find jobs, secure loans, navigate parking tickets, mediate disputes, or get their children into good schools (Flanagan 1991). In return, *kōenkai* members voted for the politician on election day and implored their friends, families, and colleagues to do the same.

The creation of a *kōenkai* invariably began with a core group of voters the politician had gone to high school with, usually located in a politician's hometown. From this vantage point, politicians would expand outward in concentric circles, forming branches of their *kōenkai* in each of the neighboring cities, towns, and villages (Krauss and Pekkanen 2010). While some branches would be dedicated to a particular geographic area, embracing the theme of "love of thy neighborhood", others would be organized around hobbies of interest to members. A ubiquitous feature of most *kōenkai* were groups devoted to youth and women. Politicians would appoint constituents with whom they were particularly close to positions of authority within each branch, calling them "persons in charge" (*sewanin*), "organizers" (*kanji*), "liaison-agents" (*renrakuin*), or "officers" (*yakuin*). These leaders, who could number up to 1,000 in a well-established *kōenkai*, were charged with scouting their territory and keeping in touch with the 10,000-30,000 ordinary *kōenkai* members. All going well, it was these members who formed the human waves (*jinkai*) of volunteers who canvassed the district in a door-to-door, "roller strategy" (*rora senraku*) in support of the politician during the campaign (Bouissou 1999, 103-112).

Maintaining this vast network was time-consuming and expensive. Being formed in support of a politician and not a party or an ideology meant that the message used to foster identification in a party-centered campaign was replaced with "physical proximity to the politician" (Bouissou 1999, 117). It was not enough to create groups with common interests

and subsidize their social activities, politicians had to actually attend these activities themselves. It was *the politician* who was expected to play the role as go-between in a marriage, and *the politician* who was expected to listen to and respond to voter requests. Being there at important “life moments”, such as birthdays, funerals, or marriages, was particularly effective as it helped to cement the emotional connections between politicians and their supporters (Krauss and Pekkanen 2010, 35-36). Surveys conducted in 1989 revealed that the *average* LDP politician attended over thirty of such ceremonies each month, with one politician claiming he attended three hundred each month (Hrebenar 2000b, 67). The first thing former Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei reportedly did each day was read the obituary column in his local newspaper (Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1993, 24). For these reasons, politicians preferred small gatherings over sake and beer, where they could kneel before members to convey their dedication face to face, over large meetings. Being physically present in the district was central to politician’s cultivation of a personal vote.

Besides time, enormous sums of money were required to subsidize the year-round activities of the *kōenkai*. In 1989, a survey of ten LDP freshmen revealed that each spent 120 million yen on average each year supporting their activities (Iwai 1990, 127). A portion of this went toward paying the salaries of the full-time staff politicians maintained (only two of whose were paid by the government), another portion to the subsidizing of social activities for *kōenkai* members (trips to the hot springs and study trips to the Diet were the more popular excursions), and yet another to the obligatory donations collected at weddings and funerals.⁸ Amounts spent by senior politicians were even more extravagant. Former Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei once took 11,000 members of his 98,000-strong *kōenkai* to Nukumi hot springs in Yamagata prefecture for a cool \$1.4 million (Richardson 1998,

⁸Japanese custom dictates hefty monetary contributions at weddings and funerals, in the range of \$100-\$400 apiece. The survey revealed that 16% of the 120 million yen had been spent on “obligatory gift giving”, which was a separate category in the survey.

28). During an election year, amounts would increase dramatically as politicians sent more greeting cards, held more parties, and sponsored more activities.⁹ One estimate put campaign spending by each LDP politician during the 1993 House of Representatives election at between \$3 and \$12 million (McCubbins and Rosenbluth 1995, 43).

The gap between what politicians earned and what they had to spend to keep their *kōenkai* happy was a major reason why they gravitated toward corporate groups, which would bankroll their campaigns in exchange for preferential regulation, budgetary allocations, and tax policy (Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1993).¹⁰ Politicians would accept campaign contributions from corporations, banks, and entities such as Keidanren (Federation of Economic Organizations) in exchange for promising to press for policies that benefited these groups. A second source of income came from politician's membership in a faction. One of the major reasons factions within the LDP took on the organized and rigid character they did between 1955 and 1993 was because of politician's need for campaign funds (Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1993; Krauss and Pekkanen 2004; Cox, Rosenbluth and Thies 1999). Faction leaders sold money and influence to younger politicians in exchange for votes in the LDP's presidential election, of which the winner would automatically become Prime Minister during the period of LDP dominance (Masumi 1995, 238-9).

Aside from affiliating with a faction, politicians had another means of delivering on their promises. Since the Party was formed in 1955, politicians have kept the locus of policymaking firmly at the level of the policy sub-committees (*bukai*) that comprise the Party's Policy Affairs Research Council (PARC) (Krauss and Pekkanen 2010, 162). Through participation in the seventeen policy sub-committees, which correspond almost exactly to the

⁹While the government did attempt to reduce the cost of campaigns by prohibiting certain activities and setting a maximum limit on how much candidates could spend, candidates could easily falsify their reports to the Home Ministry (Hrebener 2000*b*, 66).

¹⁰Politicians in the Diet receive around \$180,000 each year in salary and bonuses.

government ministries and Diet standing committees, politicians were able to press for policies and budget allocations that benefited their constituents, corporations which were contributing campaign funds, and other interest groups who provided blocs of votes at election time. LDP politicians were allowed to join four committees, two of which they could choose themselves and two of which were chosen by the Party leadership. The requirement that all bills submitted to the Diet on behalf of the Cabinet first clear the relevant PARC division, stipulated in the Party's Constitution, kept policy in the hands of backbenchers and not in the hands of the party leader (Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1993, 31). Evidence that politicians used participation in these committees to meet their electoral needs is found in the fact that the most popular policy sub-committees were those that "offered the most budgetary and regulatory largesse to distribute": agriculture and forestry, construction, and commerce and industry (Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1993, 33).

In this way, scholars found evidence for the electoral strategies of incumbent LDP politicians in the organization of the party. The elaborate system of policy sub-committees decentralized the policymaking process and relegated the Prime Minister to the role of rubber-stamping policies decided upon by politicians below. The power to make policy lay in the hands of individual politicians, who could choose which policy areas to "specialize in" (Mulgan 2000*b*; Estevez-Abe 2006). The result was policies and budgetary allocations which benefited the corporate world and other organized groups that made up the personal vote coalitions of LDP politicians (McCubbins and Rosenbluth 1995). Politicians strove to secure high rice prices for Japanese farmers, more public works contracts for construction companies in their districts, and policies benefiting special postmasters, medical doctors, dentists, and owners of small and medium businesses, who could be relied on to deliver everything from salaried campaign workers to blocs of votes at election time (Mul-

gan 2000a; Woodall 1996; Norgren 1998; MacLachlan 2004). Evidence that politicians used government transfers to build their “personal vote coalitions” is found in McCubbins and Rosenbluth (1995), who show that government spending on particularistic programs increased when more LDP politicians were elected to the House of Representatives.

In sum, there is overwhelming evidence that LDP politicians competing under SNTV-MMD relied on electoral strategies that were both personal and targeted toward a select group of voters in their districts. LDP politicians did exactly what Myerson predicted: they provided a lot of goodies to select groups of voters in their districts who could be relied upon to get out the vote on election day. Whereas *kōenkai* members received the politician’s time, subsidies for social activities, and other personal favors, corporate and interest groups received policies and budgetary allocations that benefited them. Together, their support was enough in a system where candidates only had to capture between ten and fifteen percent of the total vote to win.

It is difficult to imagine an electoral strategy more at odds from one in which candidates compete as representatives of a party and voters contemplate the party platform when casting their vote. Under SNTV-MMD, the party was of little use to LDP politicians because the real battle was against their same-district co-partisan. Their ability to choose what kind of goodies they would provide, and to whom, guaranteed by a decentralized policymaking system, provided a means by which candidates could compete against their co-partisans in ways that did not challenge what the party stood for. As further evidence of this, the party machinery was conspicuously absent from the campaigns of LDP politicians. A common saying in Japanese politics is “The Liberal Democratic Party is like a ghost. It has no feet” (Thayer 1969, 85). The degree to which the electoral fates of individual LDP candidates were affected by swings to or away from the LDP in any given election was found

to be much lower than candidates competing in the United Kingdom and the United States (Bawn, Cox and Rosenbluth 1999). LDP vote shares were also much lower in the Upper House, where the party label was more important (Bouissou 1999, 89).

A consequence of the weakness of the party under SNTV-MMD was that the LDP was unable to prevent independent candidates from running. Because candidates relied on their *kōenkai* to get elected, any candidate with enough personal appeal to create a *kōenkai* could technically be elected. If a candidate wanted to run but failed to gain the party nomination, she would run anyway, often with the sponsorship of a faction seeking to expand its numbers within the party. Faction leaders were always trying to expand their numbers because more members meant more votes in the election for the LDP President. Over time, instead of pick and choose between candidates, the LDP simply adopted a policy of nominating winners and de-selecting losers, what Steven R. Reed calls “if you win, you’re LDP” (Reed 2009*b*). By leaving the decision about who was best up to the electorate, the LDP “transformed itself into an arena in which candidates could compete virtually free of ideological, organizational or strategic constraints” (Reed 2009*b*, 297).

2.2.2 Electoral Strategies of Opposition Candidates

The electoral strategies adopted by candidates of the four major opposition parties under SNTV-MMD have received much less scholarly attention than those employed by candidates from the ruling party. Studies of the opposition tend to focus on the party leadership, the policies hammered out at party conventions, the organization and structure of the party, the party membership, and the sources of income of the party. There is surprisingly little about the actual campaigns fought by their candidates. This may be because no

opposition party came close to challenging the LDP's majority in the House of Representatives during this period, although the LDP was deprived of its majority in the 1989 House of Councillors election for the first time. The research that does exist lends support for the proposition that opposition candidates relied on strategies that were similarly targeted. Where their strategies differed from those of LDP candidates was in their concomitant reliance on ideology and their respective party labels. This is understandable because most of these candidates were not facing intra-party competition.

Non-LDP candidates competing in House of Representatives elections between 1955 and 1993 ran from one of four major opposition parties.¹¹ The party that fielded the most candidates was the Japan Socialist Party (JSP). Formed from a merger between the right and left-wing socialists in 1955, the JSP went from winning one-third of the seats in the Diet in 1958 to suffering rapid decline in the 1960's and gradual decline thereafter. By 1993 its seat share had dropped to just 15 percent of the total. In 1960, the right-wing of the JSP split to form the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP), whose electoral fortunes fluctuated from between 3 and 7 percent of seats thereafter. In 1964, the Kōmeitō ("Clean Government Party") was formed as the political arm of the lay Buddhist religious organization, the Soka Gakkai. Like the DSP, the Kōmeitō's electoral fortunes fluctuated between 3 and 7 percent between 1964 and 1993. Finally, the Japan Communist Party (JCP), which was resurrected in 1945 with the release of many former activists by the Allied Occupation, experienced electoral insignificance in the 1950's but then a resurgence in electoral support throughout the 1970's and 1980's. It captured between 2.9 and 8 percent of seats from 1972 to 1993 (Stockwin 1999, 151-161).

¹¹Other smaller parties existed, but they need not concern us here. The two larger ones were the New Liberal Club, which split from the LDP, and the Shaminren, which split from the JSP.

Strategies of JCP Candidates

What distinguishes the electoral strategies of candidates from the four opposition parties from the electoral strategies of LDP candidates was their ability to rely on some form of local party organization. The party with the strongest organizational base under SNTV-MMD was the JCP. At the local level, the JCP was comprised of cells, branches, and district and prefectural committees in all forty seven prefectures, which collectively sent 26,000 delegates to a Party Congress in Tokyo, over which presided the 187-member Central Committee, 57-member Standing Committee of the Central Committee, and Secretariat (Berton 2000, 267). This powerful, centralized, hierarchical organization enabled JCP candidates running in elections at all levels of government to rely almost exclusively on the vote mobilization efforts of loyal party members, who could be relied upon to go to the polls on election day (Lam 1996, 366).

Whereas profits from a lucrative publishing business, which included a daily newspaper (the Akahata), enabled the JCP to remain relatively independent of interest groups, its reliance on an ideological platform that became out of touch with an affluent electorate meant that its electoral strategies were invariably targeted at a small proportion of sympathetic voters, most of whom were fellow ideologues (Berton 2000, 271).¹² While the JCP did modify its position on how to achieve communism, from a “violent revolution” to a “peaceful, democratic revolution”, the rest of its platform stayed more or less the same. It continued to espouse abrogation of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, the dismantlement of U.S. military bases in Japan, the dissolution of the Self Defense Forces, the overthrowing of the postwar Constitution and the abolishing of the emperor system. None of these issues

¹²Interestingly, the JCP proved capable of attracting protest votes by voters who were upset with the LDP.

were supported by anywhere near a majority of Japanese citizens, yet were never modified. In the absence of research on their electoral strategies, it is unclear which issues in their platform were emphasized by JCP candidates in elections, or whether the platform itself took second place to more pragmatic position-taking in the realm of anti-pollution or social welfare as they appeared on the agenda in the 1970's.

Strategies of Kōmeitō Candidates

Like candidates from the JCP, candidates from the Kōmeitō benefited from a hardworking, well-organized, and intensely loyal team of party activists, who were also members of the party's parent organization, a religious group affiliated with the Nichiren Shōshu sect of Buddhism, the Soka Gakkai.¹³ Formed in the 1930's, the Soka Gakkai grew exponentially after the war. By the late 1960's it boasted the membership of ten percent of the Japanese population (Curtis 1988, 25). Despite their party's formal departure from the Gakkai in 1970, Kōmeitō candidates continued to rely on the vote-mobilization efforts of sect volunteers, who were expected to turn out and vote for their designated Kōmeitō candidate on election day. An important characteristic of Gakkai members was the intensity of their commitment. A 1965 study revealed that between 10,000 - 20,000 members of the sect moved to Fukuoka prefecture from neighboring Kumamoto and Saga prefectures to ensure the election of the Kōmeitō candidate there (Hrebenar 2000a, 180).

Between elections, the Kōmeitō concentrated on cultivating an image similar to that of the JCP, as a kind of private ombudsman, dedicated to helping citizens in their dealings with the central government. Kōmeitō politicians specialized in case work, and encouraged constituents to consult them with all manner of problems, ranging from education and wel-

¹³The name means "value-creating society".

fare to issues of sanitation and housing (Hrebenar 2000a, 180). Like the JCP, the Kōmeitō had its own daily newspaper (the Kōmei Shimbun), and its candidates collected the bulk of their electoral support from the lower-middle and middle classes in cities, particularly the non-unionized workforce (Masumi 1995, 399).

While JCP candidates proved capable of attracting protest votes in spite of ideological convictions not shared by the rest of the electorate, Kōmeitō candidates failed to expand their support base beyond Gakkai members. As evidence of this, Kōmeitō candidates tended to do poorly when turnout was high and better when turnout was low, as the vote-mobilization capacity of the Gakkai did not extend to the floating voter (Hrebenar 2000a, 187). One reason is because their connection to organized religion put many voters off. Soon after its formation the Kōmeitō acquired a reputation for being the party voters disliked the most (Curtis 1988, 27). Survey respondents used the word “fanatical” to describe the sect. The inability of the party to shake this negative reputation and develop policy platforms attractive to the median voter meant that the electoral strategies of Kōmeitō candidates were inevitably targeted toward the concerns and needs of sect members, who were, on average, less well-educated and less-wealthy than the median voter (Hrebenar 2000a, 170-172).

Strategies of JSP Candidates

Unlike candidates from the JCP and Kōmeitō, candidates from the JSP did not have a well-organized, grass-roots party organization. Despite its identity as a left-leaning labor party, the JSP had a party organization much like that of the LDP's: loosely-organized, non-centralized, non-hierarchical, and capable of accommodating different interests (Stockwin

2000, 211). It also had factions. The party organizations of the two largest parties mirrored each other because in the years immediately after its formation, the JSP was a majority-seeking party. JSP candidates were pitted against each other in 79% of multi-member districts in 1958 (Stockwin 2000, 230). Even if a robust party organization had existed, it would not have been able to assist respective candidates in their campaigns against one another. In place of a party organization, intra-party factions assisted JSP candidates in much the same way they assisted LDP candidates: by providing financial and organizational support at election time. In exchange, JSP candidates lent their support in their faction leader's struggle to become party leader.¹⁴

In place of a party organization, JSP candidates relied on the labor movement and specifically, Japan's largest public sector labor union: Sōhyō. The reliance on Sōhyō grew more pronounced over time. Whereas JSP candidates in the immediate postwar period also drew electoral support from young, urban, and well-educated voters with their commitment to defend the new democratic order, they proved incapable of maintaining their support. Whereas opposing constitutional revision, rearmament, and revision of the democratic reforms implemented by the Allied Occupation was attractive to voters in the 1950's, interest in these issues waned as it became clearer that LDP governments were not planning to peel back any of the Occupation-era reforms. JSP candidates continued to espouse positions that were not only unattractive but also irrelevant to the median voter.

As their support waned in cities, JSP candidates became more dependent on Sōhyō, whose public sector unions were in a stronger position to support candidates in rural areas due to the density of social ties and the positions of members in the community (Curtis 1988, 118). The absence of a party organization meant that JSP candidates could not get

¹⁴JSP expert Arthur Stockwin argues that until the 1970s factions within the JSP were much more cohesive than they were in later years (Stockwin 2000, 236).

elected without the support of Sōhyō. Not only did Sōhyō provide financial and organizational backing for JSP candidates, it took over the recruitment process, nominating and vetting candidates. Candidates from one union in Sōhyō would be nominated, and then supported financially and organizationally by that union, which enabled Sōhyō to support more than one candidate in each district (Masumi 1995, 35). As the median voter moved to the cities, JSP support drifted to the countryside and stayed there.

Sōhyō's support became a double-edged sword. It is said that JSP candidates found themselves unable to modify their unpopular policies and articulate new ones that would appeal to the median voter. They were incapable of capitalizing on widespread public concerns about air and water pollution, which appeared in the 1960's, because Sōhyō sided with management rather than workers, which did not back the introduction of anti-pollution legislation or compensation for pollution victims. They also proved incapable of modifying their national security policy platform, despite the possibilities of a resurgence of militarism fading and the chances of Japan being entangled in a violent war of America's making appearing less likely. As a consequence, the JSP's share of the popular vote declined from 33% in 1958 to 21% in 1976 (Curtis 1988, 19-20). The JSP earned the reputation of being "poorly-organized, indifferently-led, narrowly-based, doctrinaire and irresponsible in policy" (Stockwin 2000, 210). The electoral strategies of JSP candidates ended up being targeted exclusively at the concerns of their increasingly-narrow support base and away from the median voter.

Strategies of DSP Candidates

Like JSP candidates, candidates from the DSP, which formed when the right wing split

from the JSP in 1960, relied on labor unions for their electoral support, and specifically on enterprise unions in the Dōmei Federation. Like Sōhyō, Dōmei provided the DSP with candidates as well as organizational and financial support for their campaigns. Despite much fanfare when it was created, the DSP became wedded to the interests of the various unions that were supporting candidates and provided incapable of expanding its support base away from these unions and toward the median voter (Johnson 2000, 11).

In sum, candidates from all four opposition parties adopted electoral strategies that were targeted, almost exclusively, at the various groups that made up their respective party bases and not at the median voter. Instead of modifying their platforms over time to make them more attractive to the median voter, who was an increasingly affluent and well-educated urban resident, candidates of all four opposition parties clung tenaciously to policies that pleased communist ideologues, Soka Gakkai members, lower-income voters in cities, and labor unions. Over time, candidates from all four opposition parties faced the same problem: their continued efforts to shore up their support base led them to formulate platforms that were unattractive from the point of view of the median voter. Furthermore, these separate organizational bases and ideological platforms prevented the opposition from combining to topple the LDP's majority in the House of Representatives, which fell to a precipitously thin margin during the 1970's (Krauss and Pekkanen 2010, 241).

2.3 Why Foreign and National Security Policy was a Losing Strategy for Conservative Candidates Under SNTV-MMD

The first section of this chapter provided theoretical rationales for why candidates of all parties should have adopted electoral strategies that were targeted at select groups of voters in the district rather than the median voter. The second section detailed the findings of existing research on candidate electoral strategies. While this research is focused entirely on the behavior of incumbent politicians, with very little evidence for the actual strategies adopted by candidates in campaigns, it does suggest that conservative candidates got elected by promising (or emphasizing track records of providing) personalized constituency service to specific geographic sub-regions in their districts and regulation, budgetary allocations, and tax policies for the farmers, special postmasters, physicians, dentists, war veterans, and other organized groups in their electoral coalitions. Candidates from the four opposition parties adopted strategies that were similarly targeted toward their respective electoral bases, personal, (some candidates had *kōenkai*), and radically ideological.

To guard against supporter defection (voting for another candidate from the same or a different party) and supporter desertion (not turning out to vote and not mobilizing friends and family to do the same), I argue that candidates would have used all available means at their disposal to demonstrate their commitment to the groups that made up their electoral coalitions. This would have entailed the sending of signals that the candidate was prepared to work for (and continue to work for) the interests of her supporters, and the *avoidance* of signals that would have conveyed the opposite: that the candidate would devote time and

attention to issues or problems that were not of direct concern to her supporters.

2.3.1 The Winning Strategy: Private Goods

In any political system, the best way to demonstrate one's commitment to one's supporters is to provide them with private goods. Private goods are excludable (people can be excluded from receiving the good) and rival (one person's consumption of the good means that there is less for other people). Private goods are an attractive means of winning the support of voters because they concentrate benefits on a select few while dispersing the costs of providing the benefit throughout the population. Under SNTV-MMD, Ramseyer and Rosenbluth (1993) have shown that the winning strategy for conservative candidates was to use private goods to carve out the loyal, personalized bailiwicks necessary to win. The costs of these policies, in the form of bank protection, the coddling of small businesses, and agricultural protection, were diffused throughout the population in the form of expensive prices and poor services for consumers and taxpayers.

2.3.2 The Losing Strategy: Public Goods

Of course, voters also have preferences for public goods, which are non-excludable (once provided, they are available to everyone) and non-rival (one person's consumption of the good does not reduce the availability of the good for consumption by others). Quintessential public goods are lighthouses and national security. If one ship is protected, all ships will be protected. One ship's enjoyment of protection will have no effect on the protection afforded other ships. Similarly, if one person is protected from attack by another

state, everyone will be protected, and one person's enjoyment of protection will have no effect on someone else's. While voters often have strong preferences for public goods (everyone would like clean air, for example), they are subject to collective action problems because once provided, there is no way to make people pay for them.

The quality of public goods in a society is thought to be affected by the incentives bequeathed political actors by the electoral system (Lizzeri and Persico 2001). In winner-take-all settings (an example being single member districts with first-past-the-post), promising collective goods is a rational strategy because candidates must build a large coalition of voters to win. They have incentives to cut off or smooth out the intense preferences of minority groups in order to pull more voters together. Their electoral strategies will be comprised of issues *most voters care about*, at least to some extent. This is a losing strategy under SNTV-MMD. As Myerson (1993) demonstrated formally, when capturing the votes of a minority group is sufficient to win re-election, politicians who do not adopt this strategy will lose out to someone who does. I join Estevez-Abe (2008) in arguing that conservative politicians would have avoided spending time on all non-targetable public goods issues for fear of sending a signal to their constituents that they were less committed to pursuing their interests than another candidate.

2.3.3 Foreign and National Security Policy: The Kiss of Death

Foreign and national security policy is a policy area that is difficult to target. National security is non-excludable and non-rival. All voters will benefit equally from military capabilities designed to deter the Soviet Union or a satellite program designed to provide information about the North Korean nuclear program. I argue that the need to capture (and

keep) the votes of a small group of voters under SNTV-MMD would have dissuaded all conservative candidates from paying attention to these issues. While one might imagine that adopting different positions on foreign and national security policy would have helped same-district co-partisans distinguish themselves from one another (although, such a strategy would always lose out to a strategy of private goods), this would risk the cohesiveness of the party, which needs to remain united in order to govern. The alternative, adopting the same position on these issues, would obviously not help conservative candidates in their blood feuds against one another. Foreign and national security policy was thus the kiss of death for conservative politicians under SNTV-MMD.

Unlike LDP candidates, however, qualitative research suggests that candidates from three of the four opposition parties made foreign and national security policy central planks in their electoral platforms. The positions these candidates adopted, however, were extreme and located far from the position of the median voter. Throughout the postwar period, candidates from the JCP and the JSP remained in favor of abolishing the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, removing all U.S. military bases from Japan, and dismantling the SDF, a platform supported by between 8 and 17% of Japanese voters between 1958 and 1981 (Calder 1988, 420). DSP candidates, on the other hand, reportedly adopted views that were slightly more hawkish than the majority of voters. Thus, while candidates who were not facing intra-party competition could make public goods a part of their respective party platforms, the positions they adopted were not the views of the median voter. The bias toward private goods under SNTV-MMD meant that *no candidate* had the incentive to champion the median voter position on foreign and national security policy.

2.3.4 Could Conservative Politicians Have Made Foreign and National Security Policy Targetable?

To make my argument about why conservative politicians had strong incentives to ignore foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD clearer, it is important to consider several alternative routes through which these politicians could have become interested in these issues. First, could foreign and national security policy have been used to generate rents for conservative politicians, in which case they may have had an incentive to pay attention to it? In a formidable book, Estevez-Abe (2008) shows how Japan managed to develop a decent-sized welfare state not through orthodox social spending programs but through what the author calls “functional equivalent programs” such as employment protection and subsidies to rural areas. These programs were chosen because they allowed for occupational and geographic targeting to groups in the electoral coalitions of conservative politicians in a way that universalistic programs such as unemployment protection and income support for working families would not. This research suggests that no policy area will be immune to targeting. If politicians have the incentive to cultivate votes from small subsets of voters in their districts, this is likely to affect the way they will approach and respond to all social problems. Could foreign and national security policy been made targetable in this way, which would have enabled conservative politicians to pay attention to it?

While studies on the military-industrial complex in the U.S. suggest that organized groups in the realm of national security can generate rents for politicians, they offered no such capacity in postwar Japan. The military was dismantled after World War Two. When it was reconstituted at the urgings of the U.S. government in 1954 under the name

of the Self Defense Force (SDF), it comprised only 152,110 officers across the three (Air, Maritime, and Ground) services. These numbers grew to 230,935 by 1959, 242,000 by 1970, and then halted. These numbers pale in comparison to the 2 million in the U.S. military in 1987. They also pale in comparison to the 28 million voters employed in small- and medium-sized businesses and the 10 million farmers in Japan (Calder 1988, 423). These low numbers limited the ability of conservative politicians to use the military itself for vote-mobilization. Whereas veterans groups were a source of support for conservative politicians, veteran groups were worried about increasing their the amount of their pension rather than about increasing military spending.

The structure of Japan's defense industry was also different. Unlike defense contractors in the U.S., few Japanese corporations relied exclusively or even heavily on military procurements. Japan's largest defense contractor, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, relied on defense procurements for only 10-20% of its total sales (Calder 1988, 421). Because only a fraction of the income of these employees came from military procurement per say, with most of it coming from commercial sales, these employees did not have the incentives to push the government to increase military spending. Overall, the small numbers involved meant fewer mobilizable votes, less patronage to distribute, and less campaign money to be had.

2.3.5 Did Conservative Politicians Aspiring to Leadership Positions Gain From Paying Attention to Foreign and National Security Policy?

A second route through which conservative politicians might have become interested in

foreign and national security policy is if this was an area over which the Prime Minister or the Foreign Minister had discretion. If the Prime Minister or Foreign Minister was in charge of foreign and national security policy, as they are in most parliamentary democracies, we might observe politicians aspiring to these positions seeking out ways to develop policy expertise in this area and show off this expertise to the relevant audience, whether this be voters or fellow politicians. This would give *ambitious* conservative politicians the incentive to pay attention to these issues. In Japan under SNTV-MMD, however, neither the Prime Minister nor the Foreign Minister had discretion over foreign and national security policy. Conservative politicians had designed the system to prevent even the Prime Minister or the Foreign Minister from paying attention to these issues. This section explains why.

Under SNTV-MMD, ceding power over policy to the party leader was dangerous. A party leader with such power could shift policy away from the preferences of subsets of voters upon whose support individual politicians depended, which would make it more difficult to win the next election. Knowing this, politicians deliberately designed institutions to ensure that all the powers we ordinarily associate with being exercised by the party leader, such as candidate nominations; the selection of cabinet positions and other posts; campaign funding; and power over policymaking, were kept firmly in their own hands (Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1993). Conservative politicians ran and were elected with the support of their own personal *kōenkai*, funding their campaigns by joining a faction. In exchange for these funds, they promised to support whoever the faction leader was supporting in the intra-party presidential election. Once elected, politicians joined up to four policy sub-committees within the Party, which enabled them to cultivate ties with bureaucrats and interest groups, signal their expertise to constituents, and above all, decide which policies would be passed and which would not. Politicians would stay in the same sub-committees

for the entirety of their careers in politics, which enabled them to build up the policy expertise necessary to scrutinize legislation prepared in the corresponding ministry or agency (Kahara 2007)

Possessing the chance to scrutinize government legislation, however, did not equal influence. Knowing this, conservative politicians passed a rule that *every piece of legislation* submitted by the government to the Diet had to first pass these sub-committees, and pass by unanimous consent (Krauss and Pekkanen 2010). Politicians also created two additional layers of committees above the sub-committee, the Seishin and the Sōmukai, which also operated by unanimous consent.¹⁵ Only after legislation had passed the three layers of intra-party committees, all of which operated by unanimous consent, could the legislation be submitted on behalf of the Cabinet to the Diet for passage as legislation. One would be hard-pressed to identify a policymaking process that suited the electoral needs of politicians better. While politicians in the sub-committees retained the most power over policy, the additional layers above ensured that whatever policies decided upon would not go against the interests of other politicians in the party (Estevez-Abe 2006).

This system rendered the Prime Minister powerless. The role of the Prime Minister and his Cabinet under SNTV-MMD was one of rubber-stamping policies that were hammered out below. Prime Ministers had no incentive to challenge any of the policies that bubbled up from below because their selection as party leader had little to do with their popular appeal and everything to do with how many faction members their faction had and how many members other factions had (Mulgan 2000a). There were always numerous other senior politicians ready and waiting to oust them should their actions prove intolerable in

¹⁵While Diet Law technically allows politicians to submit private member legislation provided that it have the signatures of twenty Dietmembers, in practice the Diet would not accept private member legislation unless it bore the seals of four senior LDP officials, which confirmed that it had passed all relevant committees (Estevez-Abe 2008).

some respect. Because decisions about cabinet posts and party posts were not decided by the party leader but by a similar process of intra-factional bargaining, with more senior politicians getting choicer posts, the only way for politicians to advance through the party was to continue to get elected and continue to remain a loyal faction member (Cox, Rosenbluth and Thies 1999). This may be one reason why Japan is not known for its charismatic leaders. Charisma had nothing to do with their reaching or retaining this position.

In sum, I argue that the absence of electoral incentives for conservative politicians to pay attention to foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD explains why they did not. Foreign and national security policy was, like other policy areas that were not amenable to targeting, delegated to the bureaucracy. Under SNTV-MMD, the bureaucracy had designed its policymaking process to look almost exactly like that of the LDP's. Legislation was prepared at the level of the Bureau (ka) of each ministry or agency. Bureaucrats worked tirelessly to produce legislation that met their own needs and aligned well with the electoral incentives of politicians in the corresponding LDP sub-committee. Because these sub-committees operated by unanimous consent, bureaucrats had to make sure that no one would oppose it. Much of this convincing went on behind the scenes, in politicians' offices or in expensive restaurants. If bureaucrats could convince sub-committee members that their solution was the right one, it was as good as decided. As the legislation moved upward through the LDP and received the approval of each LDP committee, it moved upward through the ministry. Only after receiving approval from the Chief of the LDP's Sōmukai and the highest position in each ministry, the Administrative-Vice Minister (jimu jikan), was it submitted to Cabinet. Meetings of the Cabinet would last about ten minutes. Only after passing all of these junctures would legislation be submitted to the Diet as government-sponsored legislation (Kaihara 2007).

Whereas in policy areas that were amenable to targeting, bureaucrats faced hundreds of politicians to convince, in foreign and national security policy, they faced the more onerous task of *recruiting politicians to pay attention to their cause*.¹⁶ In support of this, the LDP's Foreign and National Security sub-committees (*gaikō buhai* and *kokubō buhai*), were among the least popular of all policy sub-committees (Ramseyer and Rosenbluth 1993; Tatebayashi 2004). One means by which bureaucrats had at their disposal was to send their own to become politicians. While reluctant, it was usually these politicians who shepherded legislation, of which there was very little, through party channels.

2.4 Electoral Strategies Under MMM: Public Goods for the National-Level Median Voter

In 1994, Japan reformed its electoral system. Why it did so is described in the next chapter, when I consider the possibility that the story I am telling is backwards. Japan's mixed member electoral system consists of two tiers. In the first tier 300 politicians are elected from 300 single member districts (SMDs). In the second tier 180 politicians are elected from eleven regional blocs according to proportional representation. The number of politicians elected from each bloc ranges from 6 in the smallest bloc to 30 in the largest bloc. Each voter has two ballots. On the first ballot, voters write the name of a candidate for their SMD. On the second ballot, they write the name of a party running a ranked list of candidates in that bloc.¹⁷ The party list is closed, meaning that voters cannot express a

¹⁶Interview, Defense Analyst, Asahi Shimbun, March 24 2010.

¹⁷The Japanese government does not print ballots. Voters must write the name of the candidate and the name of the party down on the ballot paper. Whenever there is talk of reform, Japanese politicians emphasize

preference for one candidate over another. The candidate who wins the most votes (places first) in each SMD wins the seat. Parties win seats in accordance with their share of the vote in each bloc, above a threshold of 2%, which is meaningless as the proportion of votes required to win a seat in each of the blocs exceeds that (Curtis 1999, 162).

The allocation of seats in the SMD tier is independent of the allocation of seats in the PR tier, which makes the system mixed member majoritarian (MMM) and not mixed-member proportional (MMP) (Reilly 2007). In MMP systems, such as that used in Germany and in New Zealand since 1994, the total number of seats a party wins is determined by its overall vote share in PR. This means that it doesn't matter how many SMDs the party wins, what matters is the proportion of vote collected in the PR tier. In MMM systems, the seats a party wins in the SMD tier are *added* to the seats it wins in PR. The system does allow one connection between tiers: the possibility of dual candidacy (*chōfuku rikkoho*). Candidates running in SMDs are allowed to be dual-listed in PR, which means they can be given a spot on their party's list. If the candidate wins her SMD, her name is removed from the list and the candidates ranked beneath her move up. If the candidate loses her SMD, she can still win if she is ranked highly-enough on her party's list. In Japan, these candidates are referred to as "zombie candidates" (those who have risen from the dead) (Krauss and Pekkanen 2010, 24).

2.4.1 Two Kinds of Candidates: District Specialists and List Specialists

The presence of two tiers suggests that MMM may spawn the development of two

"how good it feels" to know that tens of thousands of voters wrote down their name (Reed 2005, 280).

kinds of candidates: those running in the SMD tier (“district specialists”) and those running in the PR tier (“list specialists”) (Bawn and Thies 2003). The variable that will affect whether a candidate is a district specialist or a list specialist under MMM is the candidate’s party. Research on the effects of electoral systems on party systems reveals that majoritarian electoral systems exert a powerful force in the direction of a two-party system, while proportional representation exert a powerful force in the direction of multiple parties (Duverger 1963). This suggests that in systems with MMM, electoral competition at the district level will be dominated by two large parties, and electoral competition in the PR tier will be dominated by the same two parties plus a number of others (Cox and Schoppa 2002). This is precisely the shape of Japan’s new, post-SNTV-MMD party system. District competition is dominated by candidates from two large parties (the LDP and the DPJ, which was formed in 1996 and became the largest opposition party in the 2000 election), and a raft of smaller parties compete for votes in PR. Three of the four smaller parties that competed under SNTV-MMD remain under MMM: the Social Democratic Party (or SDP); the Kōmeitō; and the JCP.¹⁸

The two largest parties have adapted to the new system in a way that ensures all of their candidates become district specialists. These parties have adopted the custom of listing all dual candidates at the same rank on the party list, and making these candidates’ chances of being resurrected in PR contingent on their SMD performance. Candidates who win their SMD are struck from the list, and the remaining candidates at the same rank receive seats in accordance with how closely they lost their SMD. This is calculated by the difference in percentage of the vote won by the losing candidate relative to the percentage won by the winning candidate (in Japanese, *sekihairitsu*). This is called the “best loser” provision,

¹⁸The Social Democratic Party (SDP) is a reinvented JSP. The name was changed in 1996. I refer to the party as the SDP.

and ensures that all their candidates, regardless of which tier the candidate ends up being elected in, become district specialists (Bawn and Thies 2003, 22).

Within a few years after the introduction of the new system the leaders of these parties adopted the rule that *all candidates* on the party's PR list should simultaneously run in an SMD, with their chances of being resurrected in PR dependent upon how closely they lost their SMD (Reed 2005, 282). While the LDP has had trouble implementing this rule, because it also faces incentives to use PR nominations to solve SMD nomination problems (to prevent, for example, candidates who were not selected as the SMD nominee from running in the SMD against the nominee, as Chapter 8 describes in more detail), the number of PR-only candidates has declined over time (Reed and Shimizu 2009). This means that all candidates from the two large parties will become district specialists, regardless of the tier from which they are elected. This strategy gives all candidates the incentive to campaign hard in their SMD, even if pitted against a strong incumbent in what might appear to be a hopeless race. While SMDs are often associated with producing hopeless races, where challengers have no chance against strong incumbents, this rule has the effect of encouraging challengers to work as hard as they can to unseat their opponent. If resurrected in PR, access to the perks of office should enable these challengers to mount a more effective campaign against the incumbent in the next election than had they not been in the Diet (Reed 1995, 1085). This increases the chance that there will be "meaningful competition" in the district (Curtis 1999, 169).

For candidates from smaller parties, the incentives are reversed. These candidates have a much higher chance of winning a seat in PR, where smaller parties tend to collect the bulk of their support, than in the SMD tier. Smaller parties do run candidates in SMDs, but scholars have assumed that this is not because they expect their candidates to win, but

because running candidates in SMDs has the effect of increasing the party's vote share in PR (Sakaiya 2002). Based on the first few elections under the new system, scholars found evidence that running a candidate in an SMD within the PR bloc in which the party was presenting a list of candidates increased the party's vote share in PR (Cox and Schoppa 2002, Mizusaki and Mori 1998, Sugawara 2002). While we have little evidence of their actual electoral strategies, we might expect that candidates from smaller parties running in SMDs will become list specialists, and concentrate primarily on increasing their party's share of the vote in PR (Tsutsumi 2002) ¹⁹

2.4.2 Two Kinds of Electoral Strategies?

The above section argued that Japan's mixed-member majoritarian system is likely to produce two kinds of candidates: those aiming to win an SMD ("district specialists") and those aiming to win in PR ("list specialists"). Candidates from the two large parties will likely become district specialists, whereas candidates from small parties will likely become list specialists. This assertion should hold for all candidates from each party, whether or not their party actually practices dual candidacy. This section considers what kind of electoral strategies each mandate should produce. The theory offered argues that candidates with the mandate of district specialist will rely on a strategy of public goods for the national-level median voter, while candidates with the mandate of list specialist may have incentives to develop appeals targeted to the national-level organized groups in their electoral coalitions.

¹⁹While it is possible that small parties run candidates in SMDs for another purpose, such as influencing the policy positions taken by candidates of the two major parties, this is a hypothesis that has not yet been evaluated in the case of Japan.

Electoral Strategies of District Specialists

District specialists are candidates from Japan's two large parties who compete in the SMD tier. Duverger's Law, that the "simple-majority single-ballot system favors the two-party system" gives us reason to expect that candidates competing in this setting will square off against just one other serious competitor in their district (Duverger 1963, 217). While the force toward a two-candidate equilibrium has been shown to act on candidates, parties, and voters respectively (Cox 1997), the most well-understood force is still the force acting on voters. Voters are presumed to vote strategically out of a psychological desire to affect the outcome of the election. While they may prefer a candidate with views which are closer to their own, they have the incentive to eschew their top choice in favor of one of the top two candidates, who have the highest chances of winning (Riker 1986).

To win, both candidates try to capture a majority of votes. To capture this majority, Downs (1957) shows that candidates have strong incentives to target the votes of unorganized voters rather than try to piece together the votes of organized groups. The reason why piecing together the votes of organized groups is sup-optimal is because small shifts in vote share in a single member district have a large impact on seat share (Rogowski and Kayser 2002). Disgruntled voters thus have considerable power to oust candidates who are perceived to favor certain groups at the expense of their interests. Candidates who try to piece together a majority of votes by catering to the preferences of organized groups, in spite of the money and votes these groups may provide, will leave themselves vulnerable to candidates who target unorganized voters. In this way, Japan's new electoral system *completely removes* the incentive for politicians to sell influence over policy for votes and

money.²⁰

What targeting unorganized voters means is that both candidates in the district will try to converge at the policy position of the median voter (Cox 1990). The original model developed by Downs was based on a single dimension of electoral competition: an ideology-based dimension concerning government intervention in the economy. It predicted that both candidates should adopt positions that are precisely at the center of the two extremes of extensive government intervention in the economy versus no intervention. This positioning is efficient not because all voters are positioned at the center, but because voters to the left of Candidate A and to the right of Candidate B, both of whom are snuggled together at the center, have no choice but to vote for the candidate closest to them in the policy space. This should lead to “tweedledum-tweedledee”-like electoral competition (Grofman 2004, 25).

In reality, electoral competition seldom takes place on one dimension and candidates often take positions on a raft of policy issues during a campaign. Scholars have shown that as soon as electoral competition is multi-dimensional, candidates may not compete by converging to the same position on any one issue but by emphasizing the importance of issues they perceive themselves to have an advantage on in the eyes of voters (Budge, Robertson and Hearl 1987, 391). Whether electoral competition revolves around one dimension or many, it follows that candidates should be offering bundles of policies that offend no one and please everyone. Candidates will ignore the extreme opinions held by different groups of voters in order to carve out a policy platform that all voters can agree on. Unlike SNTV-MMD, electoral competition will revolve around issues that all voters care about, rather than issues upon which organized groups hold intense preferences.

²⁰Unless, of course, turnout is very low. If turnout is very low, candidates may gain from pursuing a strategy targeted at organized goods. I do not consider this possibility in this dissertation.

This paints in broad strokes a picture of what the electoral strategies of district specialists, candidates competing in a single member district to win, should look like. It suggests that candidates are free agents who will adjust their electoral strategies however they see fit, tailoring them closely to the district-level median voter. In reality, however, this is not usually the case. It is not usually the case because candidates are also members of a political party, and in parliamentary systems such as Japan's, being a member of a political party usually exercises the most influence over candidate electoral strategy. Candidates for their part crave this influence. That is why they join political parties. It pays to briefly consider why parties are such large assets for candidates competing in parliamentary systems with single member districts, because this guides my expectations of the kind of electoral strategies district specialists should be pursuing.

To understand the value of the party label under MMM, it is helpful to compare Japan with another system that also uses single member districts but has a very-different constitutional structure: the U.S. In both a Japan-style parliamentary system and a U.S.-style presidential system, candidates have incentives to construct a party label because it allows them to overcome the information deficit they face during an election. It provides them with free (or cheap) information. Parties, if they hold seats in the legislature, will have been in the news and on voter's radar screens long before the election is held. Being in the news gives voters a chance to form opinions about these parties. By the time the election rolls around, candidates who are members of these parties will gain from using this information to advertise themselves. Relying on whatever issues the party stands for, and offering voters the issue positions the party is emphasizing in its platform, makes for a much cheaper and less strenuous campaign than the converse, making oneself known to voters individually and coming up with individual reasons why each voter should vote for

you. This is the original rationale for political parties offered by Downs (1957). They solve the large information problem faced by candidates.

If the party is competing in elections at the national level, it follows that the content of the party platform will reflect national-level issues and concerns. Parties organized at the national level will talk about issues that affect voters in all districts rather than issues that affect voters in a single district. If candidates are relying on their party label, they too will be talking about the national-level issues in the party's platform.

Despite the informational advantages of party affiliation, could candidates choose to defect from the party label and promise something entirely different? Defection is extremely unlikely in a parliamentary system because candidates have few means of implementing policies that are not those of their party. Legislation is passed and the budget is decided upon by the Prime Minister and her Cabinet. There is usually no way for candidates to put their stamp on either. Candidates can threaten to withdraw their support for an item on the government's agenda, but in return, the Prime Minister can threaten to dissolve the parliament and hold new elections. Politicians would lose their jobs and have to fight to get them back.

In presidential systems, the situation is very different. Legislators have a number of opportunities to put their stamp on the budget, insert favors for particular groups, and kick up a hue and cry over a piece of legislation they determine is not in the interests of their constituents. The ability of legislators to do this is what distinguishes a U.S.-style presidential system from a parliamentary system such as Japan's. Because voters will always choose a candidate from whom they can receive private goods over a candidate from whom they can receive public goods, it follows that legislators in U.S.-style presidential systems will have very strong incentives to defect from relying on their party label and scramble to provide

goodies for their constituents. In presidential systems, therefore, we are likely to observe district-level appeals in single member districts. In parliamentary systems, however, we are likely to observe national-level appeals in single-member districts. Candidates should be relying on the national-level appeals contained in their respective party platforms.

The core difference between the two systems is not that the former affords politicians room to influence policy and the latter does not. Political scientists have understood this difference as being a *consequence* of the Prime Minister's ability to dissolve the legislature in a parliamentary system and the President's inability to do so in a presidential system. Politicians in the former system have strong incentives to form parties that are united and cohesive in order to prevent the emergence of divergent preferences between politicians and the party leadership, whereas politicians in the latter system have fewer incentives to do so. Divergent preferences between politicians and the President cause no great calamity in a presidential system. Thus, while politicians in both systems will benefit from an overarching brand name in elections, it is only politicians competing in parliamentary systems who possess the incentives to create party structures that concentrate power in the hands of the party leadership. They do this, typically, by giving the party leadership the right to decide who to nominate, who to fund, and what policies the party will pursue.

In sum, Japan is a British-style parliamentary system. In this system, single member districts give candidates powerful incentives to construct a party label and weak incentives to defect from the party label. In presidential systems such as the U.S. system, single member districts give candidates strong incentives to construct a party label yet strong incentives to defect from the party label.

Despite the clear incentives for candidates running in single member districts in present-day Japan to use their party labels as resources in their own campaigns, we may only

observe this if candidates have managed to construct parties that are sufficiently centralized. If candidates have not managed to construct centralized parties, it is unclear what kind of electoral strategies we will observe. Research on the cultivation of a personal vote in the United Kingdom provides some evidence that even when candidates use their respective party labels, they may also find it prudent to promise and deliver some modicum of private goods for voters in their districts (Cain, Ferejohn and Fiorina 1987). I hypothesize that if district specialists in present-day Japan were found not to be relying on their party label, they are likely to be pursuing a hybrid strategy of relying on the aspects of the party label that suit them while also carving out a strategy of private goods for voters in their district. The very fact that parties are not centralized means, by definition, that candidates have some means of influencing policy. As long as candidates possess this means, they are forced to promise private goods. This is because if they don't, another candidate will. While the idea of promising private goods is antithetical to the very nature of electoral competition in a single member district, I expect that candidates will simply try to balance out their promises of private goods by injecting some measure of public goods into their strategy.

Given that Japan's political system is a British-style parliamentary system, however, I expect that regardless of how centralized or decentralized the parties appear to be, the electoral strategies of district specialists are likely to be comprised of the national-level public goods in their party platforms. For candidates running in MMM, the extra information provided by the party label should be useful regardless of how centralized or decentralized the party is. Thus, whereas candidates competing under the old electoral system (SNTV-MMD) relied on a strategy of private goods for a small subset of voters in their district, candidates competing under the new electoral system (MMM) should be relying on a strategy of public goods for the national-level median voter.

As the next chapter describes, the introduction of SMDs was the crowning achievement of electoral reform. They were supposed to make elections cheaper and reduce corruption by removing the incentive of politicians to exchange influence over policy for money and votes. As explained above, money and votes from organized groups do not help politicians in a single member district. Second, they were supposed to change the unit of electoral competition from candidates to political parties by removing the incentive for parties to run more than one candidate in each district. The absence of intra-party competition was supposed to transform elections into each parties' pursuit of the median voter via programmatic public policies, rather than the resource-grubbing and personalities of individual candidates. Should this occur, SMD votes would be transformed from votes for *a candidate* into votes for *a government* (Bawn and Thies 2003, 16). Finally, SMDs were supposed to move Japan toward a competitive, two-party system with the very real possibility of an alternation in power (Curtis 1999, 138).

Electoral Strategies of List Specialists

Finally, list specialists are candidates from Japan's smaller parties. There are three smaller parties that have retained some semblance of their old identities under the new system: the Kōmeitō; the SDP; and the JCP. Other small parties include parties that existed for a brief time in the 1990's, which either split or joined the LDP (for example, the Conservatives) or the DPJ (for example, the Liberals), and new parties that have splintered from the LDP and DPJ in recent years (for example, the People's New Party and Your Party). Because candidates from these smaller parties are almost always the third candidate in an SMD, I argue that their electoral strategies are likely to be targeted at increasing their

party's vote share in PR (Tsutsumi 2002). This is because the more votes their party gets in PR, the more likely their own chances are of winning a seat.

While reliance on the party label for candidates running from majority-seeking parties will lead to promises designed to win over the national-level median voter, the same may not be true for non-majority-seeking parties. If a party is not majority-seeking, and merely seeks to win a number of seats in the PR tier, it might be able to do better by representing the intense interests of nationally-organized groups.²¹ These groups may be minority groups with preferences held by a small proportion of the population, which would mean that the policy programs offered by candidates running from these parties may be some distance away from the ideal point of the median voter. Candidates from the SDP, the JCP, and Kōmeitō might find it prudent to continue championing a similar platform, aimed at their respective party bases, to the one they championed under SNTV-MMD.

A second possibility, while unlikely, is that opposition party candidates running in a single member district to increase their party's vote share in PR will modify their stance to be seen as a viable candidate in the eyes of voters. This is possible, but unlikely, because even though these candidates are running in a single member district, they might not expect SMD votes and only expect PR votes. This would enable them to comfortably represent the intense interests of their party's nationally-organized groups. Whatever distance these strategies are from the ideal point of the national-level median voter, the extra information provided by the candidate's membership in a political party will probably incline candidates to champion the party label, which will be aimed at voters at the national level.

²¹The regional nature of the PR blocs makes it necessary for these parties to claim support from all over the country, rather than just from a few areas.

2.5 Evidence for Change in Candidate Electoral Strategy, 1996-2009

Almost as soon as the electoral reform legislation had passed the Diet in January of 1994, politicians began organizing themselves to compete effectively under the new electoral system. The introduction of 300 single member districts removed the incentive for parties to run more than one candidate in each district, which meant that the LDP had to choose a single candidate from among the incumbents (and in many cases, the candidates who had been runners-up in the district in the 1993 election) it had in each district. This proved an onerous task for the decentralized LDP. Single member districts also required the creation of a competitive second party, which was capable of fielding candidates in all 300 districts. Both parties were suddenly under pressure to field candidates with a reasonable chance of winning, where winning meant placing *first*, and not second, third, fourth or fifth, all of which would have won the politician a seat under the old electoral system.

Research on the electoral strategies of conservative politicians since the reform have yielded results that are either inconclusive or downright pessimistic concerning whether or not candidates are exhibiting the strategies expected of them by the theory, or whether or not candidates have changed their electoral strategies at all. Some evidence suggests change, but other evidence does not. On the one hand, while it took three elections, Japan's party system has been transformed from a system in which one party won a majority of seats in every election to a competitive, two-bloc system that finally produced a alternation of power in 2009. Furthermore, in no election under the new electoral system has the LDP or the DPJ nominated more than one candidate in each district. Being the sole representative from the

party in each district, conservative candidates are thus free to run on their respective party labels. The likelihood that they would run on these labels was helped along by a revision of the Political Funds Control Law to prohibit donations from companies to candidates and factions and introduce a public subsidy for political parties (*seitō joseikin*), which would be distributed to the party's candidates by the party leader (Carlson 2006). It was also helped along by the LDP's enthusiastic establishment of local party branches (*seitō shibu*) in all 300 single member districts (Katayama and Yamada 1998) and the later adoption of new rules for selecting the party president, which were designed to produce a popular leader whose image candidates could use in their campaigns (Sasada 2010; Lin 2009).

On the other hand, a barrage of case studies conducted since the electoral reform suggests that conservative politicians have not switched to relying on the party branch and are mobilizing votes the exact same way they did under SNTV-MMD: by building and maintaining *kōenkai*. Within the LDP, politicians have made changes to the policymaking process, but absolutely nothing about these changes is indicative of a desire or willingness to cede power over policymaking to their party leader. Rather, they suggest that politicians are trying to increase their *own individual influence* over policy. Obviously, this is completely at odds with the centralized, cohesive parties we expect to see fighting elections in Westminster-style democracies. It is necessary to review the findings of existing research about candidate electoral strategy since the introduction of the new electoral system because this will guide the selection of data to test my hypothesis.

2.5.1 Politicians Still Appear to Build *Kōenkai*

Being a vehicle for the delivery of personal favors to subsets of voters in the district,

scholars reasoned that the *kōenkai* would be made obsolete by the introduction of MMM. The elimination of intra-party competition should free up the party label as a resource for candidates. This was to be facilitated by the establishment of local party branches, which did not exist under SNTV-MMD. Candidates who fought against one another under SNTV-MMD but had been assigned a different SMD would cooperate with one another by sharing their treasured “member lists” (*meibō*) and asking their supporters to support the SMD nominee.

Case studies of the campaigns of candidates in the 1996 and 2000 elections, however, came to the opposite conclusion: candidates continued to build and rely on *kōenkai* (Park 2000; Yamada 1998). They prepared for the first election under MMM by simply expanding their *kōenkai* into the new areas of the SMD (Krauss and Pekkanen 2010, 67). A survey conducted by the *Yomiuri Shimbun* in 1996 yielded the pessimistic conclusion that in 21 out of Japan’s 47 prefectures, editors felt that the only difference between the candidate’s *kōenkai* office and her local party branch was “a new sign” (Katayama and Yamada 1998, 157). Candidates appeared too worried about their own campaigns to devote energy to campaigning for the party, besides writing the name of their party on their election poster and asking their supporters to vote for the LDP in PR (Otake 1998; Sugawara 2002). Research conducted since then confirms that party branches are still poorly-equipped to offer any kind of organizational support to candidates during their campaigns. In most SMDs, they remain little more than a room inside the candidate’s *kōenkai* office, with no permanent staff members. Even in 2009, one staff member described the function of the party branch as a “wallet”, something to hold the candidate’s portion of the public subsidy for the party and nothing else.²²

²²Interview, Staff Member, LDP Headquarters, September 10 2009. The money is transferred three times a year from the LDP’s Tokyo headquarters into the bank account managed by the party branch (Carlson 2006).

Is a weak party branch evidence of the absence of the party? In the 1996 and 2000 elections, maybe. The formation, merging, and dissolution of numerous parties and the switching of partisan affiliations can probably explain why candidates found tried and true methods of vote mobilization more reliable. It would have been risky to rely on the party's platform in one election, only to find oneself the candidate of another party in the next. The fluctuating party system and the possibility of future partisan realignment might explain why candidates did not want to relinquish their personal bases of support for the first few elections under the new system (Katayama and Yamada 1998). Interviews with candidates conducted at the time also revealed that some were concerned that the system might be switched back to SNTV-MMD (Christensen 1998a). This confluence of factors might have given candidates reason to hang onto their *kōenkai* as insurance, which might explain why they made more trips home under the first ten years of MMM than the last ten years of SNTV-MMD, when candidate-centered campaigning was believed to be at its height (Nemoto and Hamamoto 2010).

As soon as the party system calmed down, however, parties began to issue fully-fledged "election manifestos", which received extensive media coverage (Reed 2005, 286). The subject of these party manifestos are programmatic policies targeted at the median voter, who care about taxes and prices (Estevez-Abe 2008; Kollner 2009). In the 2003 election, the first election in which these were allowed to be disseminated to voters, 53% of voters reported that they found had found them "useful" in deciding who to vote for (Kollner 2009, 136). In July of 2005, Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro exercised his prerogative to dissolve the House of Representatives after recalcitrant party members opposed legislation submitted by his Cabinet to privatize the postal service. In the ensuing campaign, Koizumi portrayed his "conflict" with fellow LDP politicians as a battle between the "forces of

reform” and the “forces of resistance”. In a stark illustration of the new powers available to the party leader, Koizumi made the unprecedented decision to not only de-select veteran incumbents who had voted against the bill but recruit and “parachute in” attractive new candidates to run against these veterans. Between the dissolution of the HOR and the onset of the campaign, Koizumi’s newly-established “communications team” fed stories about the candidates they had chosen to run against the forces of resistance to the media, which garnered much publicity for the party (Kollner 2009, 136-7). Koizumi’s visits to the districts of LDP candidates were later shown to be associated with a 2.4% increase in their vote share (McElwain 2009, 134). What these results showed is that *kōenkai* can no longer elect their candidate without the party nomination (Reed and Shimizu 2009, 19). Research conducted after the 2009 landslide election shows that the single largest determinant of candidate electoral fortunes in both the 2005 and 2009 elections was partisan affiliation (Maeda 2009, 2010).

I argue for a more nuanced story. Conservative politicians who built their political careers under SNTV-MMD are understandably proud of their ability to gather votes based solely on their personal reputation because individual strength was what decided elections under SNTV-MMD. They are *extremely* averse to being seen to “rely” on the party label because this implies weakness. Nevertheless, their own electoral fortunes are being shaped in undeniable ways by their party affiliation today. Thus, reliance on *kōenkai* does not mean that the party is absent from their campaign. Candidates find it useful to rely on a party not only because of the organizational support the party provides, but also because of the information it provides. Focusing exclusively on the organizational aspects of campaigns might have led to the erroneous conclusion that vote-gathering is still decentralized and the party is absent. To draw this conclusion, one needs to focus on what the candidate is

actually *talking about* with voters and *kōenkai* members. If ninety percent of the content of her speeches is discussion of her party platform and criticism of the platform being offered by the opposing candidate, then the candidate is relying on the party, even though she might be delivering her speech to an assiduously-cultivated *kōenkai*. In only one of the aforementioned case studies is the content of candidate speeches mentioned, and the content was found to be heavily party-oriented, even as early as 1996. Yamada (1998, 54) found that the content of speeches by the LDP candidate he studied consisted of “advocacy of LDP policies” and “active criticism” of the policy platform of the opposition party.

2.5.2 Politicians Still Appear to Make Policy

While a decentralized policymaking process suited politicians’ electoral needs perfectly under SNTV-MMD, scholars reasoned that it would prove a liability under MMM (Estevez-Abe 2008, 648). Having to win in an SMD was more difficult than placing second, third, fourth, or fifth in a multi-member district. Candidates had to reach more voters. Reaching more voters would be easier if the candidate could rely on the reputation of her party. Allowing policies to bubble up from negotiations between politicians and bureaucrats in channels that were invisible to outsiders would no longer do. Some actor, presumably the party leader, would have to delegated the task of coming up with the party platform and implementing it after the election. This actor would have to be insulated from the demands of individual politicians. Just as the interest in providing “policies” to constituents caused politicians to delegate more power to their party leader in Victorian England, which resulted in a concentration of power in the Cabinet (Cox 1987), scholars reasoned that single member districts would lead to a similar centralization of party functions in Japan

(Cox and Rosenbluth 1995b).

Despite these incentives, evidence for party centralization is spotty. Politicians made two changes to party organization after the introduction of the new electoral system, but both of these seem designed to increase their own *individual abilities* to fight elections rather than the party's *collective ability*, which was what strengthening the party leadership would have done. First, politicians changed the rules regarding membership in PARC sub-committees. Rather than applying for membership in two sub-committees after one is first elected and having one's faction leader negotiate on one's behalf, politicians were now allowed to attend a meeting of any sub-committee, whenever they liked, on a regular basis or not (Krauss and Pekkanen 2004). In addition, the party stopped printing the membership rosters of the sub-committees, which was the principal means for signalling policy expertise under the old system (Hamamoto 2007, 76).

The second change concerned the rules regarding the selection of the party leader. The introduction of MMM was supposed to weaken the real power-brokers of SNTV-MMD, the faction leaders. The elimination of intra-party competition, the introduction of public funding for parties, and the prohibition of donations from companies to factions were supposed to make factions atrophy, if not completely disappear. Candidates would need resources to fight their election that membership in a faction could not provide, such as a popular party leader and a popular party label.

On this score, scholars have proved correct. Record numbers of LDP candidates who were elected for the first time under MMM chose not to join a faction (Rosenbluth and Thies 2010, 109). The ability of faction chiefs to orchestrate the selection of the party president in behind-the-scenes negotiations, so that the formal election was largely a facade, declined. In the first election for party president in 1995, politicians defied the instructions

of their faction leaders to vote for the charismatic and popular Hashimoto Ryutaro (Park 2001) This was a harbinger for things to come politicians decided on a new selection procedure in 2001, in which the votes of local LDP chapters would be weighted more heavily and allowed to be counted first (Sasada 2010) Clearly, allowing factional bargaining to produce a party leader had lost its appeal for politicians Selecting a leader who could increase their own chances of re-election was more important ²³

In this sense, both changes are products of politicians' desire to maximize their own attractiveness as candidates rather than any desire to cede power to the party leader Ceding power to the party leader would have led to the dissolution of the multi-tiered policymaking system At no point since the electoral reform have conservative politicians shown any interest in abolishing the system Moreover, the DPJ, which was formed after the introduction of the new system, established a similar policymaking structure When it won the HOR election in 2009, Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio made a great show of abolishing the DPJ's version of the LDP's policy sub-committee, the "policy bureaus" (*bumon kaigi*) Hatoyama told voters that this was part of a plan to centralize policymaking in the Cabinet, which would be facilitated by the establishment of "Cabinet committees" modelled on the British system Curiously, the policy bureaus "sprang up" again a year later, suggesting that politicians still find a decentralized policymaking process useful for something under MMM ²⁴

Could politicians' unwillingness to cede control to the party leader be masking a lack of influence? It may be perfectly natural for politicians not to want to relinquish their

²³Without this new procedure, scholars argued that Koizumi Junichiro, who had lost two presidential elections prior to winning, would never have been chosen (Lin 2009) Since the selection of Koizumi, politicians relied on public opinion and the opinions of regional LDP chapters in their selection of Abe Shinzo, Fukuda Yasuo, and Aso Taro as leader, all of whom were the most popular politician at the time they were chosen

²⁴The Japanese word the media uses to describe the come-back of this institution is "revitalization" (*fukkatsu*), which adequately conveys their grass-roots origins

status as “rulers of their own fief” because this was a key asset in dissuading the rise of challengers under SNTV-MMD. Yet if candidate nominations, campaign funding, and post allocation are all resources controlled by the party leader, then any power politicians have over policy may be an illusion. It may be that their participation in PARC is merely a show for constituents or a venue to “let out steam” (*gasunuki*), and in reality, they are anticipating and acting on the wishes of their party leaders.²⁵

While research suggests that the LDP leader does enjoy two new prerogatives of withdrawing funding from recalcitrant candidates and choosing appointments to major posts (Krauss, Pekkanen and Nyblade 2006), she does not possess complete control over nominations. If a *kōenkai* favors a particular candidate, scholars have shown that they can make it very difficult for the party leader to endorse a different candidate (Otake 1998). The party leadership managed to pass some nomination rules, such as rules that no candidate who lost their SMD twice would be endorsed again and no candidates over a certain age would be endorsed (Rosenbluth and Thies 2010), but the 2005 election illustrated that not even Koizumi could prevent de-selected candidates from running against selected candidates.

More concrete evidence that politicians retain influence over policy lies in the successes politicians have had in blocking or sabotaging policies pursued by the party leadership. Sometimes, the policy they succeeded in sabotaging was a policy that the LDP fought and won an election on. One example is postal privatization in 2005 and another is the fixed budget for roads in 2007. This sabotaging is almost always accomplished with the help of bureaucrats, who had organized themselves to benefit spectacularly from the array of rules and regulations set up to protect special interests under SNTV-MMD, and thus

²⁵Firsthand experience at the LDP’s Tokyo headquarters across the period 2002-2009 revealed that a big sign is always placed outside the room in which the sub-committees is meeting. Politicians often raise their voices when speaking so that reporters with their ears up against the door can hear their speeches. Listening at the door (*kabemimi*) is common in Nagatachō (Japan’s Capitol Hill).

share the interests of veteran politicians who want to protect these interests.²⁶ The fact that politicians are able to realize their policy preferences in spite of opposition from the party leader suggests that the influence they retain over policy is real.

2.5.3 Why Candidate Electoral Strategy Remains Relevant under MMM

Whether the findings of this research should be understood as the growing pains of adjusting to a new system in which conservative politicians have no power (which, understandably, is very upsetting for veteran politicians who were very much in control of their own political fortunes under SNTV-MMD), or whether Japan will develop an electoral equilibrium of an entirely different kind, in which parties are decentralized and politicians retain power, is an important research question. What these findings mean for this dissertation is that I am unable to assume that candidate and party strategy are identical. While Japan's new electoral system exerts a powerful force in the *direction* of strong parties, which means that parties should eventually replace candidates as the unit of electoral competition, this equilibrium has not yet been reached. Nor is it entirely clear that it will be reached. This places me in the position of having to collect candidate-level data to test the hypothesis I offer in the next section.

²⁶In the past, bureaucrats have not hesitated to make statements that contradict official government policy. As of 2009, the new DPJ government announced that they will fire bureaucrats who issue such statements.

2.6 Why Foreign and National Security Policy is a Winning Strategy under MMM

The fourth section of this chapter explained why the extra information provided by the party label under MMM should encourage conservative candidates to develop electoral strategies comprised of the national-level public goods contained in their party platforms. After the introduction of MMM, candidates should have adjusted their electoral strategies from targeting a subset of voters in their multi-member district to targeting the national-level median voter. However, the evidence presented in the previous section suggested that campaigns are still decentralized, politicians still retain power over policy, and the preferences of the party leadership and politicians still diverge on important policy issues. This suggests that politicians may not be targeting the national-level median voter and may instead be pursuing a hybrid electoral strategy that is a combination of both, and neither completely private nor completely public. The hypothesis I am about to offer, however, applies whether the candidate is targeting the national-level median voter or adopting a hybrid strategy. It applies whether the candidate is relying on her party label or not.

Among the issues available to candidates competing in an SMD, I argue that foreign and national security policy represents an alluring choice. This is because of its inability to be targeted to select groups of voters. Talking about the nation's role in the world and the nation's foreign and national security policy benefits no one and everyone at the same time. It is the widest possible appeal a candidate can make. It is wider than all other appeals we ordinarily associate with being non-targetable, such as promises to reform the nation's education system, which may only appeal to voters with children, and promises to

improve national health insurance, which may only appeal to those who need health care. Appealing to a concern that affects all voters equally, regardless of their financial means, occupation, age, or place of residence, allows politicians to garner support from the widest possible strata in society. I argue that statements about the nation's foreign and national security policy are statements that the politician will not play favorites while in office and is concerned about *all voters, equally*. It is the property of non-targetability that makes this kind of appeal attractive to candidates competing in a single member district.

I argue that this hypothesis applies regardless of whether the candidate is targeting the national-level median voter via her party label or is adopting a hybrid strategy of public and private goods. To see this, we must remember that candidates who are adopting a hybrid strategy are adopting this strategy *because* they have some means of influencing policy. If candidates had no means of influencing policy, they would have no choice but to rely on their party label, because this would be the only vehicle through which they can influence policy. The fact that candidates pursuing a hybrid strategy have some means of influencing policy gives them *identical incentives as parties have*: to take stances on policy issues that are non-targetable, such as foreign and national security policy.

While the focus of this dissertation is on the electoral strategies of conservative politicians, the theory presented above suggests that list specialists, on the other hand, will discuss foreign and national security policy under MMM only if it appeals to the organized groups in its electoral base. Because the preferences of these groups is likely to be some distance away from the preferences of the median voter, if I do observe list specialists discussing these issues, the views expressed are likely to be extreme.

I am not the first to consider the impact of Japan's new electoral incentives on its foreign and national security policy. In a well-argued book chapter, Cowhey (1995) argued

that conservative politicians in Japan were so uninterested in national security policy under SNTV-MMD that they deliberately constructed policy shields to prevent them from spending any time on this policy area. I agree wholeheartedly with Cowhey that conservative politicians were uninterested in the subject, but focus more on the important role of the opposition in backing conservative politicians into a corner, in which they they had no choice but to adopt policy shields or risk everything else on their agenda. Whereas Cowhey uses the electoral incentives themselves and a smattering of policies as evidence for his claim, I examine the actual strategies adopted in campaigns.

More recently, Estevez-Abe and Hikotani (2008) have argued that the new electoral system gives Japanese politicians incentives to be “extrovert”. By this, they mean use foreign and national security issues as tools to demonstrate their credentials as leaders. In the author’s words, “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” (Estevez-Abe and Hikotani 2008, 21). The authors argue that politicians need more support to win in a single member district, thus revised the selection process for the party president to one that would produce a popular leader. The changing of the selection process for the party president, in other words, had the effect of giving ambitious politicians the incentive to use these issues. Whereas my hypothesis is that politicians will find foreign and national security policy a useful policy issue in a single member district, theirs is that politicians will find these issues useful to demonstrate leadership so as to be selected as Prime Minister.

2.7 Hypotheses Tested in the Dissertation

To reiterate, the empirical puzzle this dissertation seeks to explain is the turnaround in attention to foreign and national security policy by conservative politicians in the mid-1990's. This chapter has presented a theory that can explain why conservative politicians ignored these issues for four decades, and why they only started paying attention in the mid-1990's. The theory is about the incentives facing politicians and not a theory about voter preferences. I conceive of politicians as strategic actors, ready and waiting to capitalize on issues they sense voters could be primed to think or care about. While politicians will be unlikely to emphasize issues they sense voters care little about, they may emphasize issues voters do not seem overly concerned with due entirely to properties of the issue itself, such as its non-targetability.

Despite my focus on politicians, the theory has a lot to say about the preferences of voters and in particular, the preferences of the median voter. I will briefly explain the views of the median voter toward foreign and national security policy during this period. The Cabinet Office has conducted polls that target a random sample of 3,000 Japanese adults on a regular basis since the 1960's.²⁷ Figure 2.1 depicts answers to the question, "What do you feel is the best means of ensuring Japan's security?" It reveals that large percentages of the Japanese people supported "the current approach to securing Japan: support for the U.S.-Japan alliance and support for Japan's Self Defense Forces". The number of people taking this position have remained relatively stable since 1981. Very small percentages of the Japanese people supported "abrogation of the U.S.-Japan security alliance, strengthening of the SDF, and defending Japan with its own power" (the gold line) or "abrogation of the

²⁷The polls can be found here: <http://www8.cao.go.jp/survey/index.html>.

U.S.-Japan security alliance and dissolution or a reduction in size of the SDF” (the black line). The latter was the stance adopted by candidates from the JCP and the JSP.

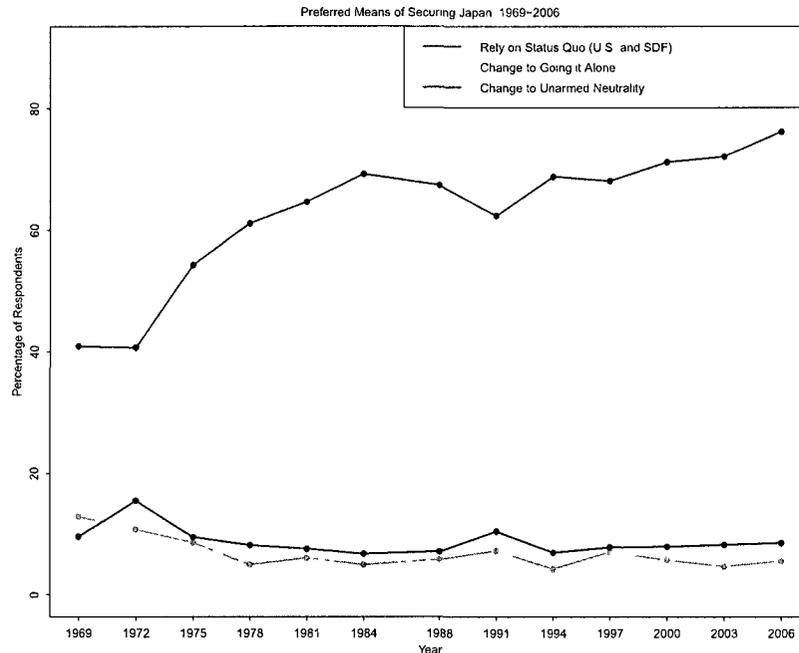


Figure 2.1: Voter Preferences on National Security Were Relatively Stable From 1981 Onwards. This figure reports the results of polls conducted by the Cabinet Office from 1969-2006. The question asked a random sample of 3,000 voters was, “What is the best means of ensuring Japan’s security?” The figure shows that the preferences of Japanese voters have been relatively constant over this period. Large percentages of people chose “support for the U.S.-Japan alliance and Japan’s Self Defense Forces” (the blue line), and much smaller percentages chose “abrogation of the U.S.-Japan security alliance, strengthen the SDF, and defend Japan with its own power” (the gold line), and “abrogation of the U.S.-Japan security alliance and dissolution or a reduction in size of the SDF” (the black line).

Figure 2.2 depicts the results of a question concerning the U.S.-Japan alliance. The question was, “Do you think the U.S.-Japan alliance is effective in ensuring Japan’s peace and security?” The figure shows that the preferences of Japanese voters have been relatively constant over this period. Large percentages of people chose “effective” (the blue line) and

small minorities of people chose “ineffective” (the gold line). Together, these two figures provide some indication of what the views of the median voter on foreign and national security policy were. In short, they were supportive of the U.S.-Japan alliance and the SDF. The numbers of voters who supported the positions of the opposition parties ranged from approximately 10%-18%. This also provides evidence that the second alternative explanation, forced abstention, can be dismissed from the outset. The preferences of Japanese voters on security have undergone little change during the period.

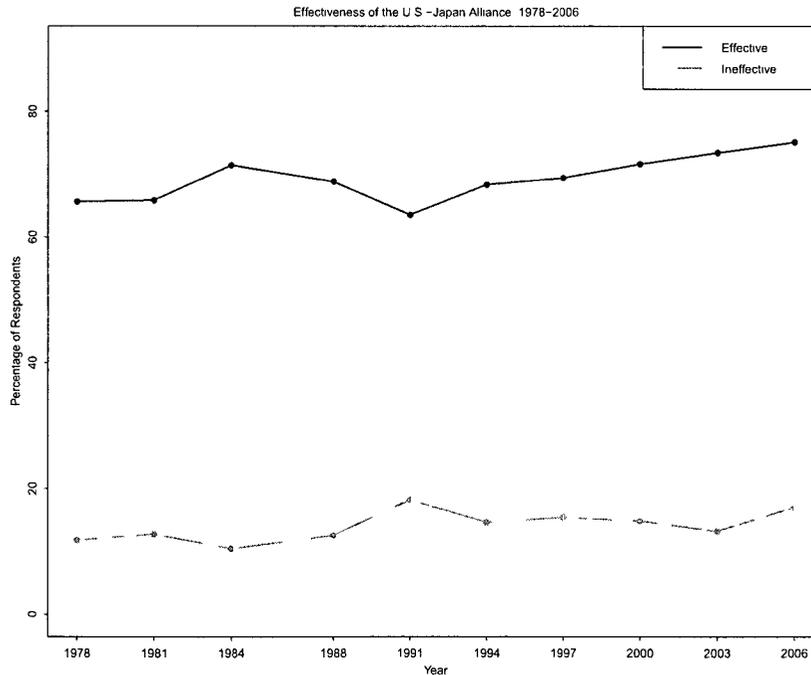


Figure 2.2: Large Percentages of Voters Found the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance Effective in the Period. This figure reports the results of polls conducted by the Cabinet Office from 1978-2006. The question asked a random sample of 3,000 voters was, “Do you think the U.S.-Japan alliance is effective in ensuring Japan’s peace and security?” Large percentages of people chose “effective” (the blue line) and small minorities of people chose “ineffective” (the gold line).

One assumption the theory makes is that much of what politicians do while in office

is designed to increase their chances of re-election. This is an uncontroversial assumption in political science. As Tufte eloquently put it, “the single most important fact about politicians is that they are elected. The second is that they usually seek re-election” (Tufte 1978). Several years of fieldwork in Japan, which included a year spent in the LDP Headquarters in Tokyo, scores of interviews with politicians, and firsthand observations of the campaigns fought by four candidates of different ages, stages in their careers, districts, regions, and party affiliations in the 2009 House of Representatives election suggests that Japanese politicians are no different.

In sum, my hypothesis is that the turnaround in attention to foreign and national security policy by conservative Japanese politicians in the mid-1990’s can be explained by a shift in their electoral strategies. The introduction of the new electoral system forced conservative politicians to abandon their strategies of catering to the preferences of subsets of voters in their district and adopt new strategies to appeal to the median voter. One of the public goods politicians will find most useful is foreign and national security policy. I also hypothesize that the presence of an opposite set of incentives for the opposition parties meant that they came to own these issues under SNTV-MMD. This leads to the following four hypotheses:

2.7.1 My Hypotheses

- 1 Before 1996 the electoral strategies of conservative politicians should have consisted of private goods aimed at a subset of voters in the district. I should observe foreign and national security policy playing no role in these strategies.
- 2 Before 1996 the electoral strategies of opposition politicians should have consisted of public goods. The electoral strategies of some of these politicians should have

involved foreign and national security policy, but the positions taken should have been ideologically extreme.

3 After 1996 the electoral strategies of conservative politicians should have shifted to consist of public goods for the national-level median voter. I should observe foreign and national security policy playing a central role in these new strategies.

4 After 1996 the electoral strategies of opposition politicians should consist of public goods. The electoral strategies of some of these politicians should still involve foreign and national security policy and still be ideologically-extreme.

2.7.2 Alternative Hypotheses

The previous chapter argued that the two dominant explanations for why conservative politicians ignored foreign and national security policy under the old electoral system, which I termed calculated abstention and forced abstention, respectively, do not yield satisfactory explanations for the turnaround in attention we observe in the mid-1990's. Calculated abstention cannot explain why conservative politicians did not pay attention to foreign and national security policy at other points in the postwar period, and why the attention they are paying now appears to be directed at old issues rather than new ones, and not directed toward ameliorating the rise in threats or shoring up the U.S.-Japan alliance. Forced abstention is ruled out because the Japanese public are no less committed to anti-militarism as they were in earlier time periods.

I turn to a soft neo-realist alternative hypothesis to pit the predictions of my theory against. It is no secret that the case of Japan has completely befuddled neo-realist scholars,

who have issued predictions that Japan was just around the corner from revising its defensive military posture and acquiring nuclear weapons from as early as 1970 (Kahn 1970) and as late as 1993 (Waltz 1993; Layne 1993). Nevertheless, in its simplest form, neo-realism tells us that states worry about changes to their external environments that could adversely affect their security. These changes could come in the form of the rise of a new threat (Walt 1987) or a new concern about the level of commitment of one's ally (Christensen and Snyder 1990; Barnett and Levy 1991; Morrow 1993; Snyder 1991). The softest version of neo-realism holds that if new attention was being paid to this subject area, it would be because the external environment had changed.

If the neo-realist alternative hypothesis is correct, we should observe the level of discussion of these issues increasing when an important change occurs in the international or regional balance of power. We should observe candidates of all parties shifting to discuss the ramifications of the change for Japan's foreign and national security policy. Being from different parties, we are likely to observe the taking of radically different positions on the change, but we would still expect the subject of the discussion to concern the change and its ramifications for Japan.

Chapter 3

Why Japan Reformed its Electoral System

Before examining the hypotheses articulated in the previous chapter, it is necessary to rule out the most obvious alternative hypothesis to the story being told here. This is the possibility that the proponents of electoral reform had policy goals in the realm of foreign and national security policy, and chose electoral reform as a means of engineering precisely the kind of a shift in attention to foreign and national security policy that I showed in Chapter 1 has occurred. While this might sound far-fetched, this chapter reveals that one of the key proponents of electoral reform, conservative politician Ozawa Ichiro, published a book six months prior to the reform, in which he made precisely this argument. Ozawa split from the LDP in the same month as the book came out and formed a new party, Shinseitō. His party went on to play a major role in the passage of the legislation in January, 1994. Thus, it is worth weighing up evidence for this hypothesis.

This chapter first describes when, why, and how Japan came to reform its electoral sys-

tem in 1994. It then describes the views of Ozawa Ichiro. To examine how prevalent these views were, I conduct content analysis of three kinds of material. The first is a collection of 4,517 newspaper articles about electoral reform, which appeared in the Asahi Shimbun in the years prior to the passage of the reform legislation. The second is 432 newspaper editorials that were published in the Asahi in the same period. The third is a collection of 30 statements, declarations, and reports that were identified by Japan's Citizens' Association for Building a New Japan (Atarashi Nippon wo Tsukuru Kokumin Kaigi, or 21st Century Rincho) as critical documents associated with the movement for political reform. I find very little evidence that conservative politicians were thinking about foreign and national security policy when they jumped on the reform bandwagon. This leads me to conclude that there is no problem of endogeneity, and I am able to push ahead with the theory articulated in Chapter 2.

3.1 Why Electoral Reform?

As the previous chapter showed, competing against one's co-partisans was expensive and time-consuming. It produced fiercely competitive elections that revolved around the funnelling of private goods to select groups rather than the staking out of positions on public goods that would appeal to a majority of voters. The need to provide private goods meant that candidates were constantly on the lookout for ways to make more money. Turning to corporate groups, or turning to their faction leaders who turned to corporate groups, for funds to fight their campaigns left politicians essentially beholden to their wishes. Policy ended up benefiting the interests of groups providing politicians with cash and votes and not the interests of the median voter, who was forced to contend with high consumer prices,

low interest rates on savings, tight regulation, and closed markets (Rosenbluth and Thies 2010). This was a sustainable equilibrium because the relatively low threshold needed to win under SNTV-MMD meant that if politicians could buy the support of a few median voters in their district with personalized service and subsidized social activities, they could get elected in spite of their unattractive public policies. This is exactly what happened. Organized groups got the policies they wanted, and the median voter, if she was lucky, got a subsidized class on flower arrangement.

In this way, the electoral campaigns of conservative candidates under SNTV-MMD were completely decentralized. The coalitions of voters supporting conservative candidates in one district were entirely separate from the coalitions of voters supporting candidates in other districts. While they might have had common elements (the members of construction companies and agricultural cooperatives, for example, were so well-organized that their support was likely sought by all conservative candidates), for the most part candidates relied on a group of supporters who were united by little else than support for the candidate. It is difficult to imagine a system more at odds with one in which candidates seek the endorsement of a political party and run on the party's platform. In Japan under SNTV-MMD, every candidate had her own political party, which was made up of the members of her *kōenkai* and organized groups, many of whose members would formally join the candidate's *kōenkai* (Krauss and Pekkanen 2010, 36). Election campaigns for Japan's House of Representatives were thus fought by hundreds of political parties, one for each candidate running in the election.

3.1.1 Proximate Cause: Public Anger Over Corruption

Like most cases of large-scale political reform, Japan's 1994 electoral reform was motivated by a confluence of factors (Reed and Thies 2001; Otake 1996; Curtis 1999, Chapter 4). The proximate cause was public disgust over a new wave of political corruption. The Recruit scandal, in which 159 people, including bureaucrats, university professors, and some of the country's most senior politicians, were caught making millions of yen via unlisted stocks, broke in June of 1988 and contributed to the LDP's first-ever loss in the 1989 House of Councilors election. Just a few years later, an even larger scandal involving illegal donations from the trucking company Sagawa Kyubin erupted in 1992. The scale of money that was found to have passed hands between the CEO of Sagawa Kyubin and senior politicians was larger than ever before. Prosecutors found hundreds of gold bars, millions' of dollars worth of stock certificates, and over 500 million yen (approximately \$4 million) in cash in the home and office of LDP Vice President, Kanemaru Shin (Farley 1996). For voters Kanemaru's punishment added insult to injury: he was found guilty of accepting large campaign contributions and fined a mere \$1,600 (Reed and Thies 2001, 165-166).

Public anger over Recruit and Sagawa was channelled by the mass media and other public figures into demands for a radical overhaul of Japan's political system. While proposals for reform initially included calls for reapportionment (to rectify the disproportionate weight accorded rural voters in elections to the House of Representatives), and the closing of loopholes in campaign finance legislation (to prevent donations from companies to individual politicians), a consensus quickly emerged among figures in the mass media, the business world, and those in charge of elections at the Ministry of Home Affairs that electoral reform was the solution (Curtis 1999, 142). SNTV-MMD was blamed for nearly

everything that was wrong with Japanese politics (Kobayashi 2008, 108). The inability of politicians to rely on the party label was viewed as the primary cause of the excessively personalistic and expensive election campaigns, which were seen to contribute to a whole variety of ills, including political corruption, the absence of policy debates, and factionalism. The low vote share required to win under SNTV-MMD was believed to perpetuate one-party dominance by depriving the opposition parties of the need to consolidate, which enabled the LDP to continue to win a majority of seats despite not having won a majority of the vote since 1963 (McElwain 2008a, 34). This confluence of factors meant that by 1993, it became impossible to be in favor of political reform without embracing the need to abolish SNTV-MMD (Reed and Thies 2001).

Corruption, public anger, and proposals to overhaul SNTV-MMD were not new. Political corruption had been a feature of Japanese politics since the 1950's and scandals were always followed by a wave of demands for reform fuelled by the mass media. Electoral reform had been a central part of the LDP's agenda when it was formed in 1955, and efforts to introduce a plurality-based MMM system much like that which was introduced in 1994 was pursued by Prime Ministers Hatoyama Ichiro in 1956, Tanaka Kakuei in 1972, and Kaifu Toshiki in 1991 (McElwain 2008a; Reed and Thies 2001).¹ While there is no doubt that each of these attempts was also designed to maximize the party's share of Diet seats, they were accompanied by the establishment of advisory councils that identified and explained the pathologies of SNTV-MMD to the public. Whereas the LDP ended up shelving electoral reform in favor of cosmetic changes to the Public Offices Election Law, which regulated campaigning, and the Political Funds Control Law, which regulated campaign finance on previous occasions, the events of 1988-1993 were of such a large scale that they

¹The media called these attempts the "Hatomander", "Kakumander", and "Kaimander", respectively, adapting the English word "gerrymander".

gave the impression that cleaning up the system would not be enough. The pathologies of SNTV-MMD and the solution (of a plurality-based electoral system), which had been argued for by past advisory councils, were accepted without question in 1993.

The primary factor distinguishing 1993 from the three prior attempts at reform was that a significant number of the LDP's rank and file supported electoral reform. As the previous chapter made clear, the center of power within the LDP was not at the top as in most parliamentary systems but at the bottom in the various policy divisions of PARC. While the introduction of a plurality-based electoral system would have substantially improved the electoral fortunes of the *party*, while having the ancillary benefits of reducing the cost of campaigning and paving the way for party-based, programmatic electoral competition, it was vigorously opposed by politicians, who did not want to pay the costs of moving to a new district and building a new base of electoral support (Bouissou 1999, 87). As the previous chapter showed, LDP politicians had poured their political capital into creating campaign organizations that were strong in different regions of the district (Hirano 2006). A plurality-based system raised the possibility that they might lose the party's nomination in a district where their support was the strongest, and have to move to another district and start afresh. Leaving your district meant, in the words of one LDP politician, "death" (McElwain 2008a, 36). Opposition from the rank and file goes a long way toward explaining why none of the previous attempts at reform, which were spearheaded by party leaders, were successful.

3.1.2 The LDP's Split and Loss of Power

In 1993, however, the situation was different. Public anger was more intense. Recruit

and Sagawa had involved more of the nation's leaders and more money than had any previous scandal. Drawn-out investigations had kept these scandals on television screens and front pages of newspapers since 1988. Against this background, two groups of LDP politicians emerged to campaign for electoral reform. The first was comprised of between ten to fifteen young, second-generation politicians, most of whom were elected for the first time in 1986. This group, led by Takemura Masayoshi, grabbed hold of the issue of electoral reform almost as soon as the Recruit scandal broke, and launched a nationwide campaign to rally public opinion to their cause. Scholars have argued that these members were motivated by a genuine disgust of money politics and a reluctance to devote the time, effort, and money to service their constituencies the way their fathers had done (Otake 1998, xi). The ardency with which these young politicians approached the issue of electoral reform earned them the label of "immature" by senior party members (Otake 1996, 271).

The second grouping emerged in 1992 when Ozawa Ichiro lost the battle for leadership of the LDP's largest faction, the Takeshita faction. Ozawa Ichiro was an old-style, machine-politics politician with a twist: he was an ardent proponent of electoral reform and shared the views of other political pundits that SNTV-MMD absolutely had to be replaced with a plurality-based system where voters could choose between two parties offering clear policy alternatives (Ozawa 1994). In December of 1992 the Takeshita faction lost their chairperson, Kanemaru Shin, when he was forced to resign due to his involvement in Recruit. Faction leaders chose Obuchi Keizo instead of the candidate Ozawa put forward, Hata Tsutomu. The next day, Ozawa took thirty six members loyal to him out of the faction and, with Hata, created his own faction. This act had the effect of enmeshing the issue of electoral reform into a struggle for control of the LDP, which meant by definition control the government. The leaders of the other factions became as committed to *not allowing* Ozawa

a victory on the issue of electoral reform as Ozawa himself was committed to the issue (Curtis 1999).

Both groups, a supra-factional group headed by Takemura and Ozawa's group, headed by Hata, continued to champion the need for electoral reform and publicize their respective stances throughout the first half of 1993. Attacks on the party leadership continued. The government of Miyazawa Kiichi was forced to walk a difficult tightrope between growing public demands for reform fuelled by the two groups, and the adamant opposition to reform of the members of the Takeshita faction, upon whose numbers the survival of his government rested. The Prime Minister responded by submitting legislation for electoral reform to the Diet that was so unacceptable to the opposition parties, who controlled a majority of seats in the House of Councillors, that everyone expected it to fail. Nevertheless, Miyazawa felt he had to be on record supporting electoral reform (Curtis 1999, 92-97). In response to Miyazawa's bill, which called for 500 single member districts, the opposition parties, eager to display their reformist credentials, submitted a bill of their own, for a mixed member proportional (MMP) system with 200 members elected in SMDs and 300 members elected according to proportional representation in twelve regional blocs (Reed and Thies 2001, 166).

In June of 1993, after both bills were submitted to the Diet with pundits expecting them to fail, the opposition parties submitted a no-confidence motion against the government for its failure to enact electoral reform, even though Prime Minister Miyazawa had promised on national television that he would do so before the end of the current Diet session (Altman 1996). Seeing a golden opportunity to put an end to the LDP's thirty-eight year reign, Ozawa instructed his group of thirty-six lieutenants to vote in support of the motion. The next day, Ozawa left the LDP and created the Shinseitō (Japan Renewal Party) with Hata

as leader. The same day, the group headed by Takemura also left, forming the Sakigake (New Party Harbinger). In total, 39 LDP politicians left. Miyazawa dissolved the Diet and elections were held. In the election held in July, the LDP was left with thirty three seats shy of a majority.² After the election, Shinseitō and Sakigake announced that electoral reform would have to be the mandate of any coalition government they would enter into (Otake 1996, 292). Inter-party negotiations soon produced a seven-party coalition government that excluded the LDP, but included the new conservative parties and the JSP (Curtis 1999, Chapter 3). Six months later, this government passed legislation that replaced Japan's 130 multi-member districts with a mixed member majoritarian (MMM) system, in which 300 members would be elected in single member districts and 200 via proportional representation in eleven regional blocs.³

3.2 Reverse Causality?

Unlike New Zealand and Italy, the Japanese government does not have the option of taking a public referendum (Sakamoto 1999). Thus, the debate about changing the institutions that govern the rules of the game was conducted primarily by politicians (Hamamoto 2009, 233). This section considers whether electoral reform was itself the product of politicians' desire to play a greater role in the making of foreign and national security policy. While the Japanese public may have been sickened by corruption and persuaded by influential figures

²The most notable feature of the July 18, 1993 election was that 85% of incumbents were re-elected. The LDP lost because voters tended to stick with their incumbents, whatever their party affiliation. Thus, voters simply did not elect enough of the new candidates the LDP ran to make up for the 45 candidates who ran against the LDP. The party that suffered a real defeat was the JSP (Curtis 1999, 101).

³After the 1996 election this was reduced to 180 seats.

in the media that electoral reform would right what was wrong with Japanese politics, why did a critical mass of politicians come to support it, and what explains their decision to adopt the system they did? Is there any evidence that their decisions about electoral reform were influenced by their views on foreign and national security policy?

3.2.1 The Motives of Reformers

The most obvious reason why electoral reform occurs in a political system is if the new system was expected to serve the interests of those in power better than the old. Scholars point out that the desire to maximize seat share can explain the positions on electoral reform adopted by each of Japan's political parties since the 1950's. From 1956, the LDP favored a plurality system, which was calculated to dramatically increase its share of Diet seats. The opposition parties all opposed plurality, which would have been tantamount to a death sentence for them, and instead favored either the maintenance of SNTV-MMD or the introduction of proportional representation, both of which would have enabled them to continue winning seats (Curtis 1999, 145). The power of the electoral incentive in determining the positions parties took on electoral reform is so strong that the position taken by politicians who left to form the Sakigake shifted as soon as they left the LDP. While in the LDP, these politicians had favored a plurality-based electoral system. After they left and formed a minority party, they switched to favoring proportional representation (Otake 1996, 275).

However, the chain of events described above reveals that politicians within the LDP were divided over the issue of electoral reform. Had they all been driven to maximize the LDP's seat share, they would have all supported the introduction of a plurality system.

But they did not. While party leaders have incentives to maximize their party's seat share because their survival as the government depends on their party maintaining its majority, individual politicians will worry more about their own re-election prospects (Mayhew 1974). Scholars have assumed that if politicians are not acting to maximize the share of seats won by their party, they must be acting to maximize their own chances of re-election, either by being seen to support an issue of interest to voters in their districts or by introducing a system under which their own chance of winning is higher. If electoral incentives did underpin preferences for electoral reform, politicians in districts where voters care more about electoral reform and politicians who are doing badly under the current system should be the ones most likely to support electoral reform.

Surprisingly, research on the motivations behind politicians' decisions to defect from the LDP in 1993 did not find evidence of the latter hypothesis, that electoral marginality mattered (Cox and Rosenbluth 1995*a*; Kato 1998). Weaker politicians, as measured by their performance in the previous election, were not more likely to leave the LDP. Tackling the same question, Reed and Scheiner (2003) finds that support for electoral reform, as measured by the presence or absence of the politician's signature on a petition to abolish SNTV-MMD, was the strongest predictor of whether or not a politician left the LDP. Probing the determinants of support for electoral reform, the authors find that electoral insecurity appeared to affect support for reform for some politicians but not others. Junior LDP politicians who did poorly in the last election were slightly more likely to support electoral reform. But electoral weakness had no impact on the calculations of senior politicians, or on members of the Takeshita faction, both young and old (Reed and Scheiner 2003, 483).

The authors conclude that "a policy preference for electoral reform", which they argue

was not influenced by calculations of electoral gain, influenced the decisions of most (but not all) LDP politicians. Members of the Takeshita faction who supported electoral reform were more likely to have been influenced by calculations of personal loyalty to Ozawa, who had assisted them in their first election.⁴ Recent research that uses politicians' responses to surveys conducted by national newspapers in 1995, 2003, and 2005 also finds little support for the notion that electoral marginality determines politicians' preferences for majoritarian or proportional electoral systems (Hamamoto 2009).

These findings leave the question of why some politicians supported electoral reform and others did not unanswered. Evidence that politicians were motivated by electoral gain was found for only a subset of politicians, and even then, it is impossible to untangle whether these politicians supported reform for the increase in votes it would bring or because it would lead to the introduction of a system under which they would perform better.⁵ Secondary evidence, based on interviews with the reformers, suggests that reformers were unhappy with SNTV-MMD for many of the same reasons voters were. Intra-party competition forced them to cater to the demands of their constituents, which was expensive, prevented them from discussing policy issues, and contributed to corruption (Otake 1996, 282). Second-generation reformers had inherited the *kōenkai* of their fathers and expressed dissatisfaction at the prospect of having to perform the same array of personalized services their father had performed. Pulled into politics by the *kōenkai* rather than climbing the ladder from prefectural government, these politicians resented being the agents of their support groups (Otake 1996, 276). In this way, politicians' dissatisfaction with SNTV-MMD revolved mostly around the kind of electoral strategies demanded of them by the

⁴Many of the reformers had been elected for the first time in 1986, while Ozawa was Secretary General of the Party.

⁵District-level surveys of voter concern do not exist.

system. While we cannot rule out the impact of unobserved policy preferences on their support for reform, the secondary research gives no indication that policy preferences mattered, let alone in an area where politicians already spent so little time: foreign and national security policy.

3.2.2 Policy Goals of Ozawa Ichiro?

There is strong evidence, on the other hand, that policy goals in the realm of foreign and national security policy were behind Ozawa Ichiro's support for electoral reform. In a book published in Japan in the June of 1993, which went on to sell over 700,000 copies, Ozawa argued that Japan's existing political system discouraged decisive political leadership and obfuscated political responsibility (Ozawa 1994).⁶ Ozawa argued that large-scale political reform was needed to create a center of power in the political system that would enable the Japanese government to exercise leadership in crisis situations. The crisis situation Ozawa had personally been exposed to, to which he alludes throughout the book, was the Gulf War of 1990-1991. Given the central role Ozawa played in the formation of the seven-party anti-LDP coalition government, and given that all 36 members of the Shinseitō, whose support was necessary to pass electoral reform, were said to be motivated by loyalty to Ozawa, his views deserve further examination.

Writing in 1993, Ozawa argued that Japan's political system was incapable of silencing special interests and developing policies that were in the best interest of the Japanese nation. The Japanese government was also, according to Ozawa, incapable of acting decisively during a crisis, either domestic (such as an earthquake) or international (such as the Gulf

⁶Nihon Kaizō Keikaku or "Blueprint for a New Japan" by Ozawa Ichiro became the third-largest selling book of 1995 (Desmond 1995, 121).

War). The reason for this is that Japan's leadership, in the form of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, did not have any real power. While the causal arrow is somewhat muddled, as he was clearly more interested in arguing the case for political reform than identifying causal mechanisms, Ozawa argues that Japan's democracy operated by the principle of *unanimous consent* rather than the principle of *majority rule*. While unanimous consent can sound democratic, especially when it is referred to as "grass-roots decision making", Ozawa argued that in reality, it leads to dispersion of power throughout the political system and the complete obfuscation of responsibility. The result is that "responsibility for a policy lies with everyone and with no one" (Ozawa 1994, 27).

Ozawa believed that unanimous consent was a natural inclination of Japanese people but was nurtured by various political institutions, all of which required reform. One of these institutions was SNTV-MMD. Ozawa argued that SNTV-MMD enabled the JSP to win a large number of seats by criticizing the government and doing very little else. He argued that the JSP had become uninterested in governing and interested only in negotiating with the LDP behind the scenes to earn its share of the spoils from Japan's economic growth. The JSP had a variety of tools at its disposal to extract these spoils. It could boycott Diet proceedings or find other ways to thwart the passage of legislation, both of which were effective tools given the shortness of Diet sessions and the rule that all legislation must be reintroduced at the start of a new session (Ozawa 1994, 73). It could also deride majority rule as the "abuse of political power". JSP weakness meant the LDP's rule was never seriously threatened. The absence of political competition meant that the LDP developed into an organization designed to fairly "apportion the dividends of Japan, Inc". Ozawa likened the two parties to being in a warm bath, each not wanting to get out and switch places with the other.

While the causal mechanisms are unclear, Ozawa argues that having to operate by unanimous consent deprived the Prime Minister and her Cabinet of any real power. While the Japanese Constitution concentrates power in the Cabinet, which is elected by and operates with the confidence of the Diet, in reality, the Cabinet has no such power. Power is held by the bureaucrats, whose authority was untouched by U.S. Occupation reforms and the new Constitution. Ozawa argues that policy arises from a long process of negotiation undertaken by bureaucrats in the various ministries and their politician counterparts in the various policy divisions in the LDP. Extensive coordination of policy occurs, with the highest bureaucrat from each Ministry, the Administrative Vice-Minister, signing off on all legislation in a meeting that occurs right before the Cabinet meeting. Cabinet meetings are so “empty” that they rarely last more than twenty minutes and the statement from the Cabinet meeting is released prior to the actual meeting. Ozawa argues that this process of coordination, what he terms the “politics of consensus”, makes the policymaking process opaque and the locus of responsibility ambiguous.

The connection to foreign and national security policy was made when Ozawa touched on the twin questions of why the “politics of consensus” flourished for such a long time, and why it had to be reformed. Ozawa argues that it was U.S. protection during the Cold War that provided the permissive conditions under which Japan’s “collective irresponsibility” could flourish. As long as the U.S. was making “the hard decisions” and the role of the Japanese government was limited to “listening to the views of the opposition and allocating the budget fairly”, the politics of consensus worked (Ozawa 1994, 63). Calculating a fair distribution of resources did not, after all, require strong leadership. In a post-Cold War world, Ozawa argued, Japan would not be so lucky. If Japan wanted to keep the alliance, which Ozawa viewed as vital to Japan’s security, it would have to work harder to please

its ally. The Prime Minister and Cabinet would have to be given the power to override the interests of narrow sub-constituencies to be able to define and act in accordance with Japan's national interest. This would mean reforms in a number of areas, including the electoral system; campaign finance legislation; the relationship between bureaucrats and politicians; the relationship between the ruling party and Cabinet; and Diet procedure.

Single member districts, Ozawa argued, would force candidates to abandon their service of narrow constituencies and "speak out on national issues" (Ozawa 1994, 127). Parties would run one candidate in each district, which would enable these candidates to run on policy differences instead of constituency service. Parties would be forced to "present their approaches to the problems of the day" (Ozawa 1994, 66). Ozawa argued that the introduction of SMDs would wipe out the JSP and split the conservative LDP into two camps, both of which he envisioned would agree about important policies (such as national security) and compete over programmatic policies. The possibility of a transfer of power between the two camps would inject greater competition into elections. Ozawa detailed a whole raft of other changes that would have to be made to ensure that campaigns would be run by *parties* and not candidates. Combined with reforms to the policymaking process, this would give the Japanese Prime Minister and her Cabinet the authority to govern.

3.2.3 Evidence These Goals Were Not Shared

This suggests that a desire to change the course of Japan's foreign and national security policy motivated Ozawa's support for electoral reform. He stated clearly that he wanted Japan to start sharing more of the burden of maintaining international peace and stability with the U.S. How widely were these views shared by his counterparts and the wider pub-

lic? While these views may have influenced Ozawa's attitude, is there any evidence they influenced anyone else's? To investigate this question, I examined all articles in which the words "electoral system" appeared in one of Japan's mainstream national dailies, the *Asahi Shimbun* between January of 1988 and January of 1994.⁷ I chose this six-year period because it encompassed the entirety of debate about reform (which started in 1988 and continued until legislation was passed in 1994), and because it enabled me to examine the impact of the two exogenous shocks Ozawa describes (the end of the Cold War in December of 1989 and the Gulf War from January to May 1991) as affecting his views on this discourse. I wanted to see whether similar rationales were articulated or criticized by the Japanese media.

Within this period of six years, in which debate over political reform was especially vigorous, 4,517 articles mentioned the electoral system. Within these 4,517 articles, 309 included mention of "foreign policy".⁸ Reading these articles revealed only *two articles* that included statements that electoral reform would influence the ability of Japanese politicians to pursue foreign and national security policy. Both of these articles were written in 1993. One argued that both the Japanese and Italian political systems were products of American protection during the Cold War and needed to be changed to meet the realities of the post-Cold War world. The author, who was a foreign journalist, argued that the major problem with Japan's political system was the lack of alternation in government and the lack of a trustworthy opposition (*Asahi Shimbun* 1993a). The second article was an interview with a member of Ozawa's newly-formed *Shinseitō*, a politician who had been elected twice from

⁷I experimented with several search terms before settling on this term *senkyo seido* ("electoral system") I chose this because it unearthed articles that pointed out the faults of SNTV-MMD and the merits of a combined system. This was a much better identifier than "election system reform" (*senkyoseido kaikaku*), which is not commonly used in Japanese

⁸"National security" (*anzen hoshō*) was mentioned in 162 articles and "defense" was mentioned in 141. I selected "foreign policy" because it implied policy and is more common than "national security" or "defense"

Tokyo 2nd District. When asked which policy views he shared with the leader of Ozawa's party, Hata Tsutomu, he replied:

“We need to break the current impasse in foreign policy and defense. For example, peacekeeping. When we tried to contribute to international peace through the United Nations, we weren't able to send anything but money ... Japan is not respected in the world” (*Asahi Shimbun* 1993b).

While these words are almost Ozawa verbatim, they convey only that this politician shared Ozawa's views on foreign policy, not that the politician believed that electoral reform was the solution to the “impasse” mentioned. In 4,517 articles, there were only two articles that linked electoral reform to foreign policy. While one could argue that the absence of this reasoning in the *Asahi* simply means that politicians chose to sell political reform on the basis of its other virtues (it would get rid of factions; make elections cheaper; and lead to a change of government), the *Asahi* is the nation's foremost left-leaning, anti-government newspaper (Akuto 1996). Its main role is one of government watchdog. Since the end of the Second World War, the *Asahi* has been quick to identify, jump on, and quash sentiment it identifies as conservative or revisionist. Its leftist views on national security and defense have continued into the post-Cold War period (Shinoda 2007). If the *Asahi* had suspected that such sentiment was behind electoral reform, it would have pointed this out to its readers. Did it?

Between January 1988 and January 1994 the *Asahi* published 432 editorials that touched on the topic of “political reform”. These editorials offered the *Asahi*'s opinion on everything from reform of the electoral system to Diet reform, the need for regional devolution, and campaign finance reform. None of the 432 editorials included any reference to *policies*, including foreign and national security policy, which were expected to change with

the introduction of the new electoral system. Neither was there any mention of policy motives underpinning the actions of Shinseitō members, or Ozawa Ichiro. The sheer absence of reporting about the rationales politicians were adopting and the absence of criticism of these rationales leads me to conclude that the nation's most anti-governmental newspaper did not believe that Ozawa's views on foreign policy were central drivers of Japan's 1994 electoral reform.

Was there any evidence that Ozawa's views that electoral reform would revitalize Japan's foreign policy were shared by other members of the reform movement, either within the LDP or in Japan's civil society? To examine this question, I analyzed a collection of thirty statements, declarations, and reports identified by Japan's Citizens' Association for Building a New Japan (*Atarashi Nippon wo Tsukuru Kokumin Kaigi*, or *21st Century Rincho*) as critical documents associated with the movement for political reform. I limited myself to documents published between January 1988 and January 1994. The collection included reports by a blue-ribbon panel appointed by Prime Minister Takeshita in 1988; reports by the Election System Deliberation Council appointed by Prime Minister Kaifu in 1990; declarations by the LDP leadership concerning electoral reform, campaign finance reform, and party management; statements by civil society groups; and statements by groups of politicians, such as the "Declaration to Abolish Multi-Member Districts", published in November, 1992. Out of the thirty documents, only one document expressed views similar to Ozawa's. Published in the same month as Ozawa's *Blueprint*, the Citizens' Association published a 39-page "Citizens' Outline for Political Reform" (*Minkan Seiji Kaikaku Taiko*). In this document, the association argues that the Cold War enabled allies of the Soviet Union and the U.S. to "devote themselves exclusively to the needs of their constituents" while leaving aside thorny questions of defense and foreign policy. The end of

the Cold War meant that these countries, Japan included, now had to fend for themselves” (*Citizens Association for a New Japan* 1993, 5). There was no mention of these views in any of the other documents.

3.2.4 Evidence from the Historical Record

Ozawa’s role as shadow leader of the Shinseitō and power broker of the negotiations that took place within the seven-party coalition government prior to the passage of the electoral reform legislation means that I cannot rule out the possibility that Ozawa’s desire to create political leadership capable of contributing to the new, post-Cold War world order played a role in the adoption of electoral reform. The presence of similar arguments in a statement by the Citizens’ Association for a New Japan, released at the same time, suggests that they might have been held by a small minority. However, other pieces of evidence suggest that this desire played nothing more than a marginal role at best. First, if electoral reform was designed to strengthen Japan’s foreign policymaking apparatus, Japan should have changed its electoral system each time Japan’s foreign policymaking apparatus was found to be wanting. Japan’s foreign policymaking apparatus was found to be wanting in the latter half of 1990, when the government found itself utterly incapable of responding with personnel to U.S. efforts to rid Kuwait of Iraqi forces. The next year, after Japan suffered a humiliating diplomatic defeat when Kuwait failed to express its gratitude to Japan despite Japan’s contribution of \$13 billion, a vacillating Kaifu chose to shelve the issue of electoral reform. This is precisely when he should have chosen to pursue it.

Second, if electoral reform was designed to make Japan into a stronger and more reliable ally, as Ozawa argued it would, we should see Japan changing its electoral system

whenever Japan needed to demonstrate its credentials as an ally. The flip side of this reasoning is that we should not see Japan changing its electoral system when Japan's commitment to the U.S. is unmistakably secure. As the previous section noted, arguments in favor of electoral reform for Japan were made as far back as 1956. While the Hatoyama government chose to shelve the issue at this time, Ozawa's logic suggests that debate should have been the least likely to occur in 1956.⁹ In 1956 Japan had barely started its postwar economic recovery and was completely and utterly dependent on the U.S. for its national security. The U.S. government had no reason to doubt Japan's commitment. If a desire to shore up Japan's commitment to the alliance was motivating electoral reform, we should have observed no effort to reform the electoral system at this time. However, it was at this time that preparations to introduce a new electoral system moved the furthest (to legislation coupled with an appendix with the precise geographic location of the new SMDs, and passage in the House of Representatives) (Reed and Thies 2001).

Third, if electoral reform was designed to enable Japan, as a rich country, to give back to the world and shoulder more of the international security burden, as Ozawa suggested, then why did we not observe discussion of this kind years ago, when Japan's economy first started to receive critical acclaim from international society? During the mid-1970's to late 1980's, when Japan's economy was growing at phenomenal rates and Japan was becoming the world's largest creditor nation, we see no discussion of electoral reform. While we observe plenty of overseas developmental assistance, we do not observe much special treatment for the U.S. Instead, we observe politicians adopting the anti-trade preferences of their supporters, which caused more than a decade of intense trade friction.

Even if a desire to change the course of Japan's foreign policy *was* found to play a role

⁹Hatoyama shelved electoral reform to make way for the passage of another piece of legislation dear to the conservative government: reversal of legislation passed by the Allied Occupation that established publicly-elected school boards. This is discussed in Curtis (1999, 146).

in Ozawa's thinking, and the thinking of his Shinseitō comrades, the mechanism through which this was supposed to occur is not well identified. While Ozawa devotes a considerable amount of his manuscript to arguing that strengthening Japan's leadership would insulate it from special interests and enable it to make foreign policy in the interests of the Japanese nation, he does not explain how electoral reform was supposed to strengthen political leadership. He posits an entirely different causal pathway between electoral reform and foreign policy: that which involves the disintegration of the dovish JSP as a political force. Ozawa argued that the introduction of single member districts would wipe out the JSP because it would not be able to win enough votes to survive (Desmond 1995). The disintegration of the JSP would be followed by the split of the LDP into two conservative camps, which Ozawa imagined would *have no differences on foreign policy*. Thus, Ozawa imagined that the reform would move foreign policy from a position issue to a valence issue. Thus, the pathway from electoral reform to foreign policy change was through the disintegration of the nation's most dovish political party and not through the strengthening of the leadership. The possibility that the two conservative parties might have differences on national security, defense, and foreign policy was a possibility that Ozawa did not mention. In this way, my focus on how conservative politicians use foreign and national security policy is something that was unimagined even by the architects of electoral reform.

Chapter 4

Testing the Theory: Data and Methods

“As the election nears, you should create one image and many policies. The best policies are the most concrete ones. Carefully consider what your voters want, what your supporters want, and what the other candidate is emphasizing. Tailor your policies to that. Make them as concrete as possible. A combination of hard policies and soft policies is good because you can appeal to your reliability and trustworthiness.”¹

One might imagine that political scientists have developed many good measures of candidate electoral strategy. After all, position-taking on issues is a central component of all our theories of voting and representation. Unfortunately, we have not. It is very difficult to find and collect data on candidate strategy that is comparable across time, space, and technology. Instead, we have been forced to rely on measures of party strategy, which is not always the same as candidate strategy, or we have had to design surveys to assess the attitudes of candidates on issues that, at the end of the day, are defined by our own research objectives.

¹From the section “Creation of the Candidate’s Image and Policies” in the LDP’s *Manual for Fighting an Election*, which is published by the party’s Tokyo headquarters and distributed to all candidates endorsed by the party (Liberal Democratic Party 2003, 22-25).

In this chapter I argue that measuring my quantity of interest, candidate electoral strategy, required the collection of new material that was actually produced *by* candidates for use during their campaigns. I show that the persistence of heavy legal restrictions on campaigning for elections to Japan's House of Representatives has meant that candidates have had recourse to only six different means through which they could advertise their policy views to voters during election campaigns since 1955. Among the six, I show that the *senkyo kōhō*, or candidate election manifesto, represent a rich and previously-untapped resource that can be used to measure my quantity of interest. Using survey data from Japan's Association for the Promotion of Clean Elections (Akarui Senkyo Suishin Kyokai, or ASSK), I address potential threats to the validity of the manifesto as an indicator of candidate strategy. The most serious threat is the possibility that the introduction of party manifestos in 1996 and their dissemination to voters in elections since 2003 muddies any inferences I am able to draw from the candidate manifesto. I address this with evidence that the party expects its candidates to have "policies" of their own and does not interfere at all in the manifesto-writing process, or the actual campaign.

After explaining my decision to analyze the election manifestos of all serious candidates competing in the eight elections between 1986 and 2009, I introduce the method used in this dissertation. I use a method for the statistical analysis of text that has only recently been developed by researchers in computational linguistics. The method, Latent Dirichlet Allocation, allows researchers to uncover the topics in a corpus of unstructured texts, which are treated as latent variables. To the author's knowledge, this dissertation is the first to apply this method to a social science problem using text written in the Japanese language. I describe the preprocessing steps taken to ready my collection of 7,497 manifestos from eight elections for statistical analysis. After these pre-processing steps, I was

left with a term-document matrix of 2,843 unique terms, 7,497 manifestos, and 21,246,98 term observations with which to run the model and test my hypotheses.

4.1 Testing the Theory: Candidate Election Manifestos

To reiterate, my goal was to test the hypothesis that a shift in the electoral strategies of conservative Japanese politicians can explain why they ignored foreign and national security policy for four decades, and why they only started paying attention in the mid to late 1990's. My quantity of interest is candidate electoral strategy. I focus on candidates rather than incumbent politicians because the theory offered in the previous chapter applies to both, and because research to date has focused exclusively on incumbent politicians. The result is that we know very little about the strategies that were adopted by non-incumbents. I needed to select an indicator that would allow me to measure the degree of attention paid to different issues by conservative candidates competing in campaigns under both SNTV-MMD and MMM. Ideally, this indicator would allow me to identify whether candidates were pursuing a strategy of private goods for a subset of voters in their districts under SNTV-MMD, and public goods for the national-level median voter under MMM.

I propose that the best indicator of my quantity of interest is the issues emphasized and policy appeals made by candidates during their election campaigns. Whatever strategy candidates are adopting, I reasoned that it should be observable in what candidates talk about during their campaigns. A potential criticism of this indicator is that the interest groups and *kōenkai* who back incumbent politicians are likely getting their information about the politicians' electoral strategy from somewhere else. Instead of paying attention to what the politician says during the campaign, they may be paying attention to which

policy sub-committees the politician is participating in. I counter this criticism with the expectation that incumbent politicians will use the formal election campaign to reiterate the electoral strategy they have pursued while in office. It is extremely unlikely that politicians will say one thing to supporters and another thing to voters, when they are relying on the former to mobilize the latter.

I therefore needed an unpolluted indicator of the issues emphasized and policy appeals made by candidates in campaigns for Japan's House of Representatives over time. This indicator needed to contain properties that made it comparable across candidate, comparable across time, and representative of the entire spectrum of issues candidates emphasized. Unfortunately, the costs of collecting campaign material are prohibitive. It is rare for politicians to keep old copies of any of their campaign material, and to ensure that my conclusions were based on the sum total of issues emphasized and not those aimed at a specific group, I would need to collect the entirety of campaign material used by a politician in every election. While it would be nearly impossible to collect this kind of information for a single politician, I would need to collect it for as many politicians as possible to ensure that my conclusions were not based on an unrepresentative sample.

While political scientists have developed tools to measure the policy positions of political actors, they have devoted less attention to measuring the issues emphasized and policy appeals made by candidates in their campaigns. In this section, I explain why existing tools are invalid as indicators of my quantity of interest. I outline five properties that an ideal indicator should exhibit. After systematically evaluating each and every means available to candidates to communicate their policy views to voters over the course of a campaign for a seat in Japan's House of Representatives, I show that only one medium fulfils all five criteria. This is the medium adopted and collected for this dissertation.

4.1.1 Why Existing Indicators Fail to Capture my Quantity of Interest

Measuring the electoral strategies of candidates and politicians is difficult. Two pioneering studies of campaigning for elections to Japan's House of Representatives (Curtis 1971) and the U.S. Congress (Fenno 1978) provide some indication of the costs involved. Curtis' book required over a year's intensive field research in Kyushu, Japan, for his study of a single candidate's campaign for a seat in the HOR. Fenno's book required 8 years of research and 36 trips to the constituencies of the 18 members of Congress he studied. While both books are outstanding portrayals of how these candidates ran their campaigns, and continue to be among the most cited works in American and Japanese politics today, the conclusions they reach are necessarily limited, being based on an unrepresentative and small sample of candidates.

Given the costs associated with studying campaigns, political scientists have developed a number of tools to proxy for what they call the 'policy positions' of politicians. A popular tool in American politics is to use a politician's roll-call voting record to estimate her positions on issues (Poole and Rosenthal 1997). Being a parliamentary system, however, the Japanese Diet only adopts the practice of recording how its Members vote on legislation for a tiny fraction of bills submitted (Nemoto, Krauss and Pekkanen 2008). A second tool, also pioneered in American politics, is the politician survey (Miller and Stokes 1963; Sullivan and Minns 1976; Erikson and Wright 2001; Ansolabehere, Snyder and Stewart 2001; Burden 2004*b,a*). This tool has a Japanese counterpart. The University of Tokyo and Japan's second-largest national newspaper, the Asahi Shimbun, have to date conducted five iterations of a survey designed to probe the policy views and ideological positions of candidates running in elections to the HOR (Taniguchi 2005, 2006). The Asahi-Todai

Politician Survey (ATS) is remarkable not only because it boasts an astonishingly-high response rate (of 95.3%, 91.4%, and 97.6% for candidates running in HOR elections in 2003, 2005, and 2009, respectively), but because it was conducted alongside a national survey of voters that utilized the same questions, which allows for direct comparison with the views of the wider electorate.² While surveys like the ATS have the advantage of yielding concrete estimates of where candidates are located relative to one another, their party median, their party leader, and the electorate on a wide range of national issues, they convey no information about the issues politicians choose to take positions on during their campaigns. They also offer no way of assessing whether the content of these issues changed after the introduction of the new electoral system.

An indicator that focuses attention on the campaign itself is offered by Petrocik (1996, 833), who collected and analyzed what he defines as candidate-generated newspaper stories, defined as ‘those that report speeches or position papers by the candidate or his surrogates ... which identify problems, issues, or policies.’ While this places the spotlight squarely on the campaign itself and the issues raised by the candidate, it relies on media perceptions of which speeches and position papers produced by the candidate are newsworthy. It may be that newspapers report only a fraction of the issues candidates are discussing in their campaigns (the fraction that interests their readers). This would result in a polluted measure of the issues candidates choose to emphasize. An indicator that adequately captures the element of candidate agency in the decision of which issues to emphasize when communicating with voters is offered by Grimmer (2010), who collected and analyzed the universe of press releases produced and disseminated by all U.S. Senators in the period 2005-7. Unfortunately, there is no such tradition in Japan, and the production of press releases is prohibited during the official election campaign.

²See <http://www.j.u-tokyo.ac.jp/masaki/ats/atsindex.html> for more information on the ATS.

An indicator that focuses on the campaign itself and the issues discussed therein is the party manifesto. While tendencies toward ambiguity (mentioning an issue without taking a stance) and differentiation (not all parties mention the same issues) make it difficult to directly compare the issue positions offered by parties in their manifestos, the relative emphasis placed on different issues can be measured. Launched in 1979, the goal of the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) has been to do just that (Budge, Robertson and Hearl 1987; Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006). Coders are trained to place each of the quasi-sentences contained in a party manifesto into one of fifty-four pre-defined policy categories, which generates clear measures of the relative weight accorded different issues. One of the early findings of the project confirmed that parties tended to compete with one another by ‘talking past one another’ (emphasizing different issues) rather than confronting each other on the same issue (Robertson 1976; Budge and Fairlie 1983).

Unfortunately, while Japan is included in the CMP, the data comes not from the manifestos of Japanese parties, which did not exist until after the electoral reform in 1994, but from public pledges (*kōyaku*) made by party leaders in pre-election interviews with the *Asahi Shimbun* (Inoguchi 1987).³ In these interviews, Party leaders were asked what their party’s stance was on Issue A and afforded two or three sentences to respond. While data gleaned from this exercise can be used to compare the positions of parties relative to one another, the choice of the issues upon which parties were asked to define their positions is again taken out of the hands of the party and placed into the hands of the newspaper. This makes the Japanese *kōyaku* utterly unlike the manifestos of parties from other countries. The researcher also cannot dismiss the possibility that party leaders adjusted their positions on certain issues to suit the left-of-center readers of the *Asahi*.

The absence of party manifestos in Japan is in fact a symptom of the much-larger prob-

³These pledges are reprinted in Murakawa (1998).

lem associated with using material produced by the party as an indicator of the issues emphasized by the candidate. When candidates face intra-party competition, statements of party policy by party leaders will not be a valid indicator of the issues emphasized and positions taken in their own campaigns. This is because of the divergence in interests that arise between candidate and party leaders in these systems. As explained in Chapter 2, the loyalty of the candidate in this system is to her supporters who elect her rather than to the Party or its leaders. Candidates in these systems will be reluctant to surrender authority to the party leader to decide party policy lest the leader decides to move resources away from the groups upon whose support the candidate depends. In contrast to political systems where unified parties fight elections on the basis of manifestos decided at party conferences, it is unlikely that parties in personal vote-oriented systems will be able to agree on a concrete statement of policy with which to present voters at election time. Even if they do manage to cobble something together, it is unlikely that this platform will gain the assent of all candidates, let alone be representative of the issues they discuss in their own campaigns.

Research on Japan confirms both the absence of the party in the campaigns of candidates who faced intra-party competition under Japan's old electoral system and the decentralization of internal Party decision making (Curtis 1971; Bouissou 1999; Fukui and Fukai 1999; Koellner 2009). Candidates fought their campaigns through their own *kōenkai* in the absence of local party branches, and paid for their campaigns with funding from their membership in a faction. Being endorsed by a faction not yet represented in the district in which they were running was far more important than being endorsed by the Party. Scholars have suggested that while the LDP may have been formed with concrete policy goals such as rearmament or constitutional revision, these issues soon fell off the agenda as candidates discovered that party policies were more of a liability than anything else. It

was much more efficient for candidates to maintain the freedom to adopt whatever issue positions they needed to adopt to get elected (Reed 2009c). Interviews with LDP staff members confirmed that the LDP was viewed by those working for it as nothing more than “an organization to advance the interests of winning candidates”.⁴

Under SNTV-MMD, material produced by the party is an invalid indicator of the issues the candidate chooses to make part of her campaign. New research confirms the uninformative nature of the party pledges. Proksch, Slapin and Thies (2011) found that the positions of the LDP and its major rival (the JSP) were statistically indistinguishable in ten out of the fourteen elections to the HOR held between 1960 to 2000. The application of the authors’ scaling algorithm produced similar results: the locations of the two parties on economic and social policy were statistically indistinguishable in five of the eight elections examined.

4.1.2 Properties of a Valid Indicator of my Quantity of Interest

The above section demonstrated that existing indicators of the issues emphasized and policy positions taken by politicians during electoral campaigns tend to rely on material either unconnected to the campaign itself or contaminated by the objectives of the researcher or newspaper editor. What would an ideal indicator of my quantity of interest look like?

An ideal indicator of the issues emphasized and policy appeals made by candidates in their electoral campaigns would contain the following five properties. First, it would be material produced by the candidate rather than by the candidate’s party, a newspaper reporter, or a researcher. Second, it would be material used by the candidate during her campaign

⁴Interview, Head of LDP’s International Bureau, 25 September 2008.

for the articulation of policy views. Third, it would be material that is comparable across candidates. In countries where candidates face few campaign restrictions, the material produced and the media used to get their message across is likely to vary enormously across candidates. An ideal measure would be one that was not only used by all candidates but carried equal weight in the campaigns of all candidates.

Fourth, it would be material that was comparable across time. In countries where the rules governing campaigning have changed over time or campaigns have been dramatically altered by the introduction of new media and technology, material used by candidates at time T is unlikely to be still used at time $T + 1$. Testing my hypothesis requires the selection of material that was used by candidates in campaigns under both sets of electoral rules. Fifth, it would be material aimed at the general audience (voters) rather than a specific audience (core supporters). Material aimed at any specific group, such as doctors, teachers, or nursing home residents, would be biased toward policies for those groups, muddying our ability to draw inferences about the sum total of issues emphasized and policy appeals made during the candidate's campaign.

4.1.3 Why Candidate Election Manifestos are a Valid Indicator

These five criteria guided my search for an indicator. First, I restricted my search to material produced by candidates for use during the actual campaign (criteria one). Identifying this material was relatively simple because candidates for public office in Japan are afforded an extraordinarily-limited number of means through which they can communicate with voters during the official campaign period (McElwain 2008*b*). Articles 142-172 of Japan's Public Office Election Law (POEL) (*Kōshoku Senkyo Hō*) specify only six printed

and four verbal means candidates can use to communicate with voters.⁵ Of these, only six are conducive to the articulation of policy views (criteria two).⁶ These are the election manifesto (*senkyo kōhō*), the newspaper advertisement (*shimbun kōkoku*), the campaign postcard (*hagaki*), the campaign flyer (*bira*), the radio and television policy broadcast (*seiken hōsō*), and campaign speeches.⁷

While the Election Law does not obligate candidates to use any of these six means, the fact that candidates are prohibited from printing any other material or making any other kind of speech not expressly provided for in the Law means that in practice, candidates make use of all six means in their campaigns (criteria three). Unlike the U.S. and other countries, candidates for office in Japan are not allowed to purchase time on the radio or the television, nor space in the newspaper. A medium of communication completely banned during electoral campaigns in Japan today is the internet. While many Japanese politicians maintain websites and blogs, they are prohibited from updating these during a campaign. Candidates cannot post copies of any of their election material online, nor can they impart election-related information to voters such as where a speech meeting will be held. The law also prohibits any form of correspondence from candidate to voter during the election period that could influence voter decisions, such as the sending of greeting cards. In 1971, Gerald Curtis wrote that the technological revolution was hardly touching electoral campaigns in Japan. The same thing could be said today, forty years later.

⁵The amended POEL can be found online: <http://law.e-gov.go.jp/htmlldata/S25/S25HO100.html>. This is the version amended on June 15, 2007.

⁶Material not conducive to the articulation of policy views include campaign posters, signs, banners, and billboards (*kanban*, *tatefuda*), candidate's televised biographical broadcasts (*keireki hōsō*), in which the candidate reads her CV out loud; and the custom of name chanting (*renkō*), in which candidates drive around the district in campaign cars chanting their name.

⁷For most of the period, candidates have been able to hold "joint speech meetings" (*tachiai enzetsukai*), "private speech meetings" (*kojin enzetsukai*), and "sidewalk speeches" (*gaitō enzetsu*).

For the researcher, the strait jacket within which candidates operate during electoral campaigns makes it easy to identify the principal means they have used to communicate their policy views to voters over time. Of these six means, only five were used under both Japan's old and new electoral system (criteria four).⁸ Examination of the regulations surrounding the newspaper advertisement, the postcard, the campaign flyer, and the speeches reveal that none of them performed well on the fifth criteria (representativeness). The Election Law provides for five newspaper advertisements of a size not larger than 9.6 cm by two columns to appear in up to five newspapers of the candidate's choice. This means that candidates can adjust the content of each advertisement to match the newspaper it is appearing in. The researcher would need to collect all five advertisements to ensure she was capturing the sum total of issues being emphasized in the campaign. Similarly, since 1994 candidates have been able to print and distribute two kinds of campaign flyers. The researcher would need to collect both of these. While the Election Law provides for the printing and sending of up to 35,000 postcards to households of the candidate's choice, it is safe to assume that these postcards, which tend to contain greetings and information about a candidate's speech meetings, will almost always be sent to the candidate's core supporters, whose names and addresses the candidate has on file, rather than the wider electorate. Finally, while the speeches a candidate makes over the course of her campaign may be the best indicator of the issues she is emphasizing, the researcher would need to collect every single one of these speeches to ensure she was capturing all the issues, an infeasible task even for one candidate.

Out of all media candidates are permitted to utilize during a campaign, only one fulfils all five criteria. This is the candidate election manifesto (*senkyo kōhō*), which is published

⁸The Public Offices Election Law was revised upon introduction of the new electoral system in 1994 and the right for candidates to make televised broadcasts of their policy views was given to political parties.

by Japan's local electoral commissions (Senkyo Kanri Iinkai, or Senkan for short) and distributed to all registered voters in the district two days before the election. In their manifesto, candidates are asked to include their name, biographical information, policy views, and a photo. There are no restrictions on content apart from banning false statements and the use of the manifesto for commercial or special interest purposes. Candidates are given a piece of paper the size of one-third to one quarter of a newspaper page, depending on the prefecture, into which they must paste their manifesto. They are required to submit it to their local election administration commissions by 5pm the day the official election campaign begins. The commission is required to print the manifesto exactly as the candidate wrote it, with no changes to font or character size, and deliver it to all voters in the district two days before voting is held.

Several features of the manifesto make it a close-to-ideal measure of my quantity of interest. First, the rules regarding the production and distribution of the manifestos have stayed the same for the past sixty years. In the absence of revisions to the Election Law that would have allowed candidates to make use of other media, and in the absence of alternative means to advertise their policy views, we can safely assume that the weight the manifesto carries in the campaign of an individual candidate is similar across time (criteria three and four). Second, the fact that the manifesto is distributed to all voters reduces the chance of it being targeted toward a specific group (criteria five). A third attractive feature is the restrictions on space. Unlike party manifestos, which have no restrictions in length and can end up stretching into the hundreds of pages, candidates cannot talk about everything they might want to talk about in their manifesto. One more sentence about welfare will necessarily mean one fewer sentence about something else. This reduces the possibility that candidates will use their manifesto to talk about anything and everything,

Table 4.1: Performance of All Means of Communication from Candidate to Voter During Election Campaigns for Japan's House of Representatives According to my Five Criteria

	Manifesto	Newspaper Ad	Postcard	Flyer	Policy Broadcast
Produced by the Candidate?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Used for the Articulation of Policy Views?	Y	N	N	Y	Y
Comparable Across Candidates?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Used under both Electoral Systems?	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Aimed at the General Audience?	Y	N	N	N	Y

and will instead reserve it for enunciation of their most pertinent policy views. Table 4.1 compares the performance of each of the aforementioned five printed media in terms of my five criteria.

4.2 Addressing Possible Threats to the Validity of the Manifesto as an Indicator of Candidate Strategy

Threats to the validity of the manifesto as an indicator of the issues emphasized by candidates in their campaigns come in several guises. First, if no one reads the manifestos, or if they are expected to exercise little impact on the vote, it is possible that candidates will not take them seriously. The restrictions on communication between candidate and voter may in fact be symptomatic of a political system in which the policy views of candidates are

irrelevant. In support of this, we have the myriad qualitative studies of campaigning for the Japanese Diet, none of which have paid any attention to the issues candidates emphasize in their campaigns.⁹ The focus of almost all research on campaigning for the HOR to date has been on what political scientists refer to as the “informal campaign” — the way candidates mobilize votes through social networks, organizational ties, and personal cheerleading teams (Richardson 1974, Flanagan 1991, Richardson 1991, Otake 1998, Christensen 1998*b*, Miyake 1999, Park 2000). Could it be that voters are making up their minds about who to vote for in the days, weeks, or even months before the election, when candidates are mobilizing votes the informal way?

Several pieces of evidence can be marshalled to reject this possibility. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 display the results of a question asked in post-election surveys conducted by Japan’s Association for the Promotion of Clean Elections (ASSK) in which voters were asked to name the media they “saw, listened to, or were persuaded by” over the course of the campaign.¹⁰ 4.1 displays the results for the printed media candidates are allowed to use, and 4.2 displays the results for the verbal media. 4.1 reveals that on average, 42% of voters reported being exposed to the manifestos of candidates running in their district across the years presented. Reported exposure to the manifestos was superseded only by reported exposure to the candidate’s policy broadcast, which was discontinued in 1994. While voter’s reported exposure to the manifestos has declined in recent years, this decline parallels a

⁹Research on elections in Japan dismissed the importance of issues as a determinant of the vote because no relationship was found between voter issue positions and the party they voted for (Kohei and Miyake 1991). I counter that this is unsurprising given that voters were not voting for ‘a party’ under the old electoral system, nor were these ‘parties’ capable of presenting voters with a unified policy platform. There has been no research to date that has examined the relationship between voter issue positions and the candidate they voted for. My own ethnographic research conducted in four electoral districts in four different regions of Japan in the 2009 HOR election provided anecdotal evidence that core supporters are highly cognizant of the views held by their candidate, and this was an important component of their support for the candidate.

¹⁰The ASSK conducts its surveys via interview and targets 3,000 voters. The average response rate for the surveys carried out in the years shown here (1972-2005) was 74%.

decline in exposure to all other electoral communication produced by the candidate. In 2005, levels of reported exposure to the manifestos were higher than all other media (both print and spoken) generated by the candidate.¹¹

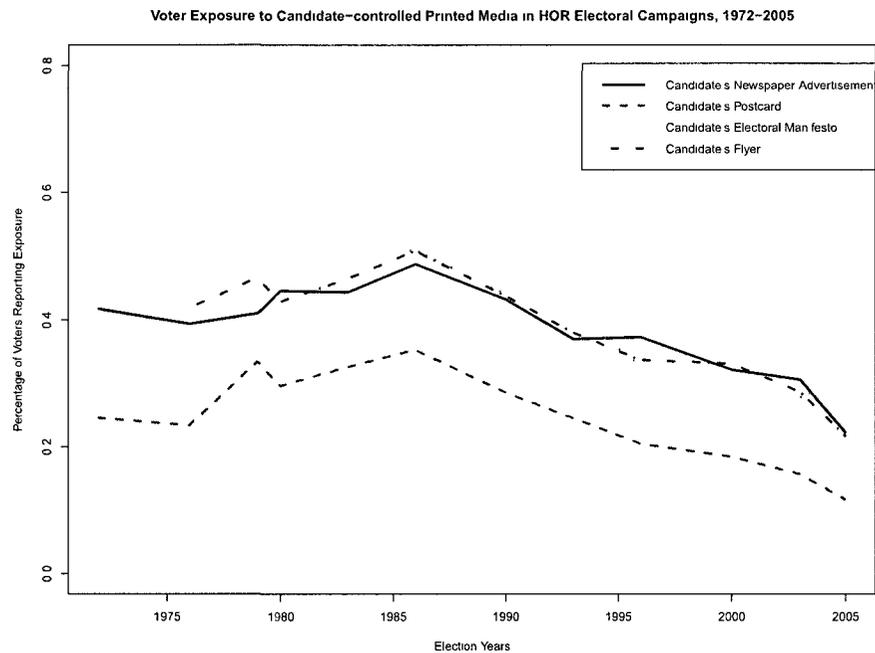


Figure 4.1: Reported Levels of Exposure to Print Media During Election Campaigns, 1972-2005. This displays the results of a question asked in a survey conducted by the ASSK after every House of Representatives election held between 1972 to 2005 in which voters were asked to name any and all media they ‘saw, listened to, or were persuaded by’ over the course of the campaign. The results for printed media controlled by the candidate are shown.

The same question asked voters to report the extent to which they were exposed to aspects of the informal campaign, what Flanagan (1991) calls “influence communications”. Items that fell into this category included interpersonal requests for votes, endorsements by one’s workplace or union, discussion within the family or neighbourhood, and recom-

¹¹This may be because many local electoral commissions adopted new practices of distributing the manifestos to convenience stores, doctor’s offices, nursing homes, and the like in order to increase voter exposure to the material.

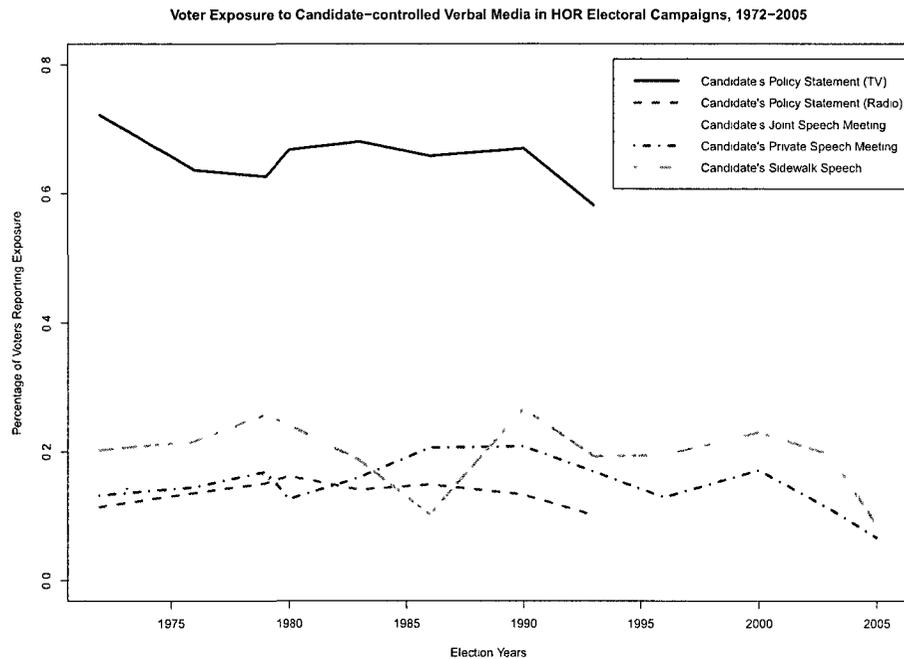


Figure 4.2: Reported Levels of Exposure to Spoken Media During Election Campaigns, 1972-2005. This displays the results of a question asked in a survey conducted by the ASSK after every House of Representatives election held between 1972 to 2005 in which voters were asked to name any and all media they 'saw, listened to, or were persuaded by' over the course of the campaign. The results for spoken media controlled by the candidate are shown.

recommendations from friends. Figure 4.3 compares the average percentages of voters reporting exposure to the *formal* (the printed and spoken media available to candidates and parties during the campaign) versus the *informal* campaigns for House of Representatives elections held between 1972 and 2005. These results suggest that an exclusive focus on the informal campaign is not warranted. In any given election, the percentage of voters reporting exposure to the formal campaign outnumbered the percentage of voters reporting exposed to the informal campaign by a ratio of approximately 3:1. The average percentage of voters reporting exposure to the formal campaign across the twelve elections is 30 percent, whereas

the average percentage reporting exposure to the informal campaign is 12 percent. While I am not concluding that the formal campaign mattered more than the informal campaign in these elections, there is little indication that scholars can ignore what is written and said by candidates during their campaigns because they are being influenced by the informal campaign.

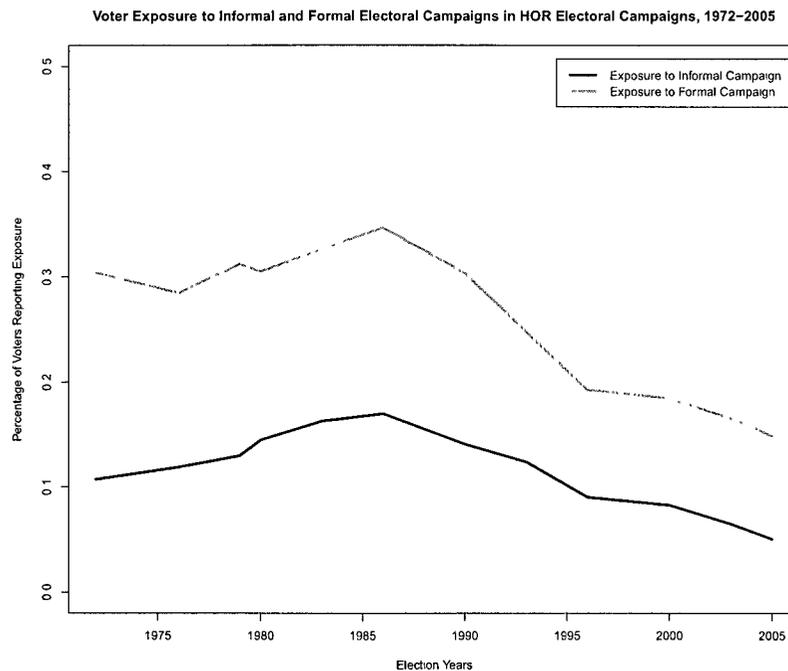


Figure 4.3: Reported Levels of Exposure to Formal and Informal Campaign, 1972-2005. This displays the average percentages of voters reporting exposure to the “formal campaign” (print and verbal media available to candidates and parties) and the “informal campaign” for each of the House of Representatives elections held between 1972 and 2005. Each year observation was created by summing the percentages of voters reporting exposure to all aspects of each campaign and creating an average for both.

While these figures confirm that sizeable proportions of the electorate report having seen the manifestos written by candidates running in their district in the two days before an election, and this group is approximately three times as large as the group reporting expo-

sure to influence communications, the possibility remains that voters are making up their minds about who to vote for well in advance of the publication of these manifestos. If this were true, candidates might not take the writing of their manifesto seriously. Fortunately, the ASSK survey includes a question in which voters are asked to report when they made their decision about who to vote for. Figure 4.4 reveals that on average, approximately two-thirds of voters report making their mind up about who to vote for in their district *after the campaign begins*. Given that the period of official election campaigning in Japan is extremely short (becoming a mere twelve days in 1994), voter decisions are being affected by what goes on in a very short amount of time (or at least, candidates have reason to think that they are). With these figures, it is difficult to conclude that scholars need not pay attention to what candidates are saying and doing during their campaign because voters have already made up their minds.

4.2.1 Are Candidates Being Disciplined by their Parties under MMM?

A second serious threat to the validity of the manifesto as an indicator of candidate electoral strategy is the possibility that the policy views of candidates are either irrelevant after 1994, because the unit of electoral competition has shifted to the party, or are being shaped by the candidate's party affiliation. The goal of electoral reform, after all, was to replace intra-party competition with inter-party competition. Eliminating intra-party competition was supposed to enable candidates to rely on the party label. "Reliance on the party label" could mean one of two things. First, it could mean that the policy views of candidates are irrelevant as the election is increasingly being fought over issues in the party manifesto. Second, it could mean that candidates are being told what to talk about

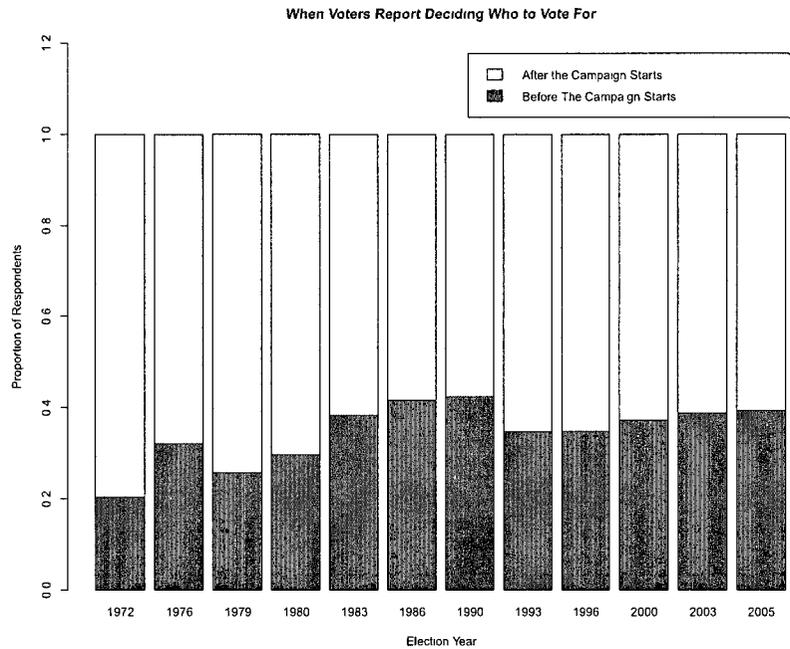


Figure 4.4: When Voters Report Making Their Minds Up About Who To Vote For, 1972-2005. This displays the results of a question in which voters were asked to recall when they had made up their mind about who to vote for in their district (MMD prior to 1994 and SMD after 1994) in that particular election.

by party leaders. This section weighs up evidence for both possibilities before concluding that the manifesto is still a valid indicator of candidate electoral strategy, even after party manifestos were introduced.

In support of the growing irrelevance of candidate views, we have the across-the-board decline in reported exposure to candidate-generated election material depicted in Figures 4.1 and 4.2. We also have the fact that the revision to the Election Law in 1994 stripped candidates of one of the major means of communication they had to convey their views to voters during a campaign (the “policy broadcast”) and introduced a new right for parties to make policy broadcasts (Kobayashi 2008). We also have the increased authority

afforded party leaders under the new electoral system, to nominate and fund candidates, which leaves open the possibility that may be controlling what candidates say and do. If electoral competition has shifted to the party level, and voters are getting their information from parties rather than candidates and/or parties are disciplining the issues candidates emphasize, the validity of the candidate manifesto as an indicator of the policy issues emphasized by candidates could be compromised.

The results of questions asked in post-election surveys conducted by the ASSK do not suggest that exposure to party-generated material is making up for the decline in exposure to candidate-generated material. Figure 4.5 reveals that the decline in reported exposure to candidate-generated election material matches a similar decline in reported exposure to party-generated material. The only material that rivals the candidate manifesto in reported levels of exposure is the party's televised policy statement, which was introduced in 1996. There is also no evidence that candidate policy views are irrelevant. The ASSK survey includes a question in which voters are asked to report the factors that influenced their decision to select a particular candidate for their district. Figure 4.6 reveals that 'a candidate who thinks about the nation's politics as a whole' was consistently chosen as more influential than 'a candidate who works on behalf of my region' or 'a candidate who works on behalf of my occupation' across the entire period of study, even under MMD. This provides evidence that scholars ought to pay attention to the policy views articulated by candidates in their manifesto. When 'the candidate's party' and 'the leader of a candidate's party' were introduced as choices in the 2003 survey, voters did select these, but not at rates that dwarfed candidate-level factors. 'A candidate who thinks about the nation's politics as a whole' and 'the candidate's own policy views' remain important influences on voter decisions.

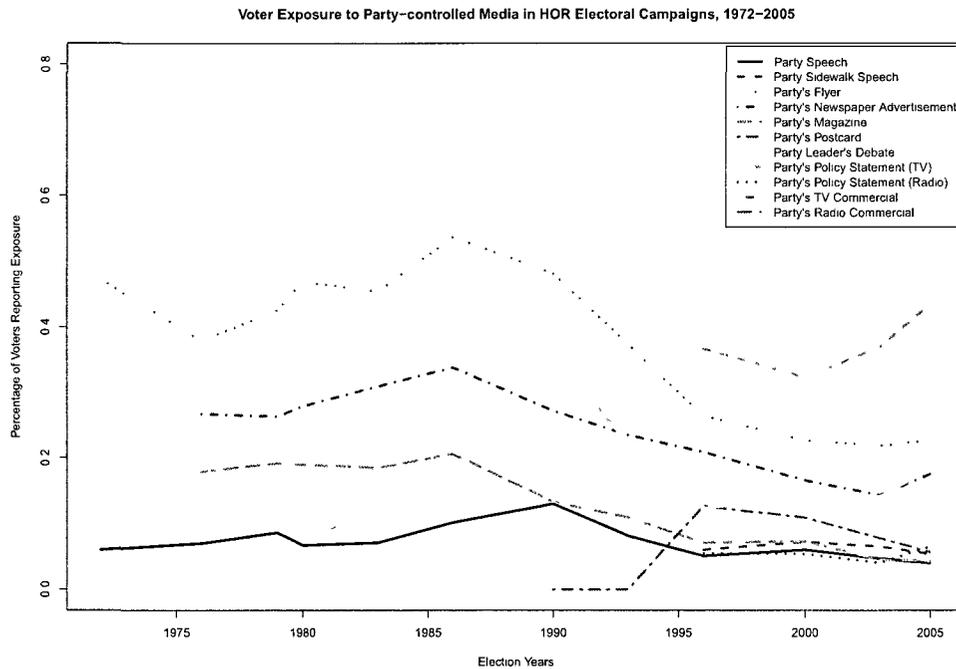


Figure 4.5: Reported Levels of Exposure to Media Generated by Party During Election Campaigns, 1972-2005. This displays the level of reported voter exposure to all printed and verbal media produced by the party across the period 1972-2005.

While these figures reveal that the views of candidates under MMM are certainly not irrelevant, the possibility remains that they are being controlled by party leaders. If candidates are being told what to talk about during campaigns, the issues chosen and views expressed therein will not reflect the issues and views they would choose if they were not being disciplined. If parties are meddling in the manifesto-writing process, then we cannot be sure that the divergence in policy preferences between the party leadership and politicians described in the previous chapter will even show up in the manifestos.

The Election Strategy Bureau of the LDP's Tokyo headquarters publishes a "Manual for Fighting The Election". Several copies of this manual are distributed to all candidates

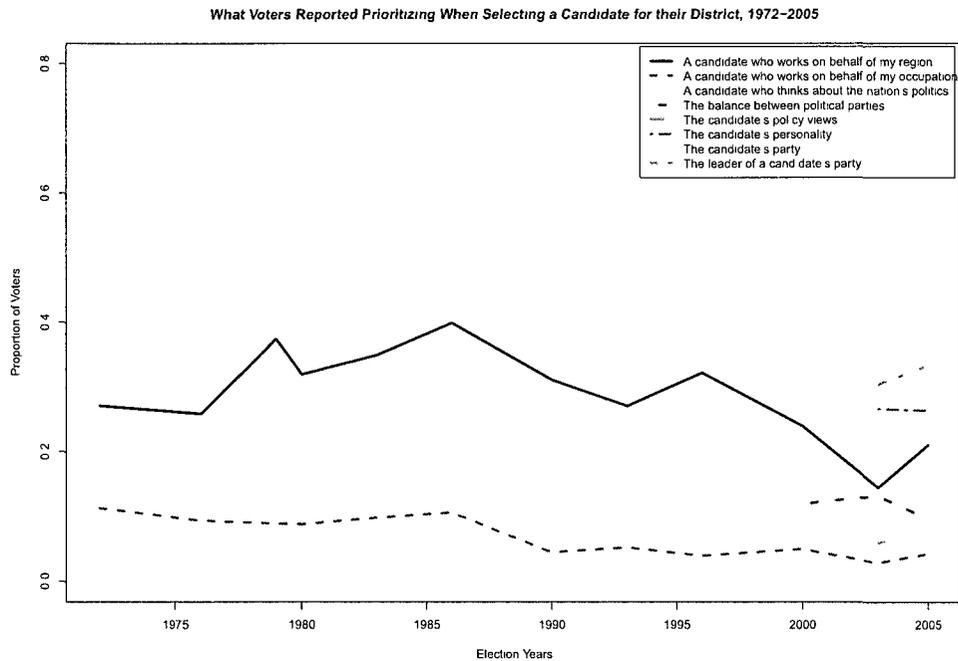


Figure 4.6: Factors Voters Report Considering When Choosing Their Candidate, 1972-2005. This displays the results of a question in the ASSK post-election surveys that asks voters to report the factors they considered when selecting a candidate for their MMD (prior to 1994) and their SMD (after 1994).

formally endorsed by the party, to be placed in their campaign offices and read by their staff (Liberal Democratic Party 2003). While the very publication of such a manual suggests that the party does offer some guidance to its candidates, the content of the manual reveals a decided lack of interference. Throughout the manual, the party refers to the candidates' "policies". On page 1, it advises those considering running for office to "hold meetings and conduct surveys in their district" to see "how many votes you can get and what kind of response your policies will invite from voters". On page 2, the Party recommends that candidates speak to people in the district to "work out how much support you can get, what policies are desirable, and what the weak points of your opponent are." It counsels

candidates to “form good relations with organizations”, describing the optimal form of contact as: “soliciting their requests, making sure those requests are reflected in policy outcomes, and reporting back” (Liberal Democratic Party 2003, 19). The manual has an entire section called “Creation of the Candidate’s Image and Policies”. In it, the party writes:

As the election nears, you should create one image and many policies. It is impossible to create an image that will please everyone. Focus on creating an image that suits your support base. The best policies are the most concrete ones. Carefully consider what your voters want, what your supporters want, and what the other candidate is emphasizing. Tailor your policies to that. Make them as concrete as possible. A combination of hard policies and soft policies is good because you can appeal to your reliability and trustworthiness. Choose a slogan that conveys your personality, your policies, and your political stance. This should go on everything. When creating your slogan, solicit everyone’s opinion, including your *kōenkai*’s Election Preparation Committee, Executive Board, Youth Group, and Women’s Group. This will imbue these groups with a greater awareness of and sense of responsibility for the development of your slogan. After creating your image and your policies, make sure to test them out in your visits to organizations and in your *kōenkai* activities. Don’t forget that your objective is the masses (Liberal Democratic Party 2003, 22-25).

These instructions reveal that the party assumes that the candidate has policies of her own and will tailor those policies to the district and to her opponent. Nowhere in the manual does the party express the expectation that the candidate campaign on the basis of the party’s policies or platform. In none of the sections concerning the media candidates are permitted to use during the campaign (the candidate manifesto, the newspaper advertisement, the campaign flyer, and speech meetings) does the party make any mention of what candidates should talk about.¹² In the entire 272-page book, the party makes two requests of candidates. The first request is: “Conduct an election campaign that considers the party.

¹²Most of the space in the manual is dedicated to explaining the various campaign restrictions, and spelling out examples of activities that are against the law and activities that are within the confines of the law. This is undoubtedly a product of the large number of restrictions candidates face.

For example, write “Vote for the LDP in PR” (Hirei Daihyō ha Jimintō) on your election poster like candidates for the House of Councillors do”. The second request is “Ensure that application forms for party membership and copies of the party’s monthly magazines Gekkan Jiyu Minshu and Riberu are left at the reception desk when you hold your speech meetings” (Liberal Democratic Party 2003, 85-9). The party does not ask candidates to mention the party in their election manifesto.

While the absence of formal instructions from the party leadership does not allow us to rule out the possibility that candidates are relying on the information voters have about the party in their campaigns, it does tell us that the party at least acts on the assumption that candidates will have their own policies, and will choose from among them. The weakness of party branches, it pays to remember, means that party officials are not present in the district during the campaign, which limits their ability to monitor what candidates say. While the organizations and people candidates are instructed to approach while preparing for the campaign are those the manual describes as “friendly to the party”, it is a well known fact that the people and organizations friendly to the party under SNTV-MMD were never party supporters but candidate supporters. My observations of the campaigns of four conservative candidates in the 2009 election revealed that their campaign staff were either very attached to the candidate (if the candidate was a veteran politician), or were people who had worked on the campaigns of former LDP politicians (if the candidate was younger). In the latter case, the candidate had usually inherited the kōenkai of a former politician. In neither case did the campaign staff possess the expectation that the candidate would run on the party label, because campaign staff are as averse to this idea as the candidate. They too take great pride in being able to elect the candidate on their own.

There is some evidence that candidates believe that they might be sanctioned should

they articulate a policy position that runs counter to the Party line. An interview with a secretary in charge of the campaign of a Member of Parliament for the 2009 election revealed that the matter of what to write in the candidate's manifesto was the responsibility of five secretaries, who met six times, each meeting lasting over an hour. The secretary recalled:

“He decided the policies himself in the end. He included the issues he thought were important. But at the end of the day, he's getting money from the party headquarters, so he can't stray too far from the party line. But he doesn't just parrot party policy. He has his own policies.”¹³

This evidence leads me to conclude that the electoral strategies of candidates probably are being shaped by their membership in a party. However, the continued publication of the manifesto after 1994 and the party's assumption that candidates possesses her own policies suggests that use of the party label is entirely the prerogative of the candidate. Being a choice, rather than a requirement, leaves open the possibility that some candidates are not relying on the party label. What proportion of their electoral strategy is made up of the party's stance on national-level issues, what proportion of their electoral strategy is made up of their own opinions on national-level issues, and what proportion of their electoral strategy is made up of opinions on local-level issues, are all empirical questions that can be examined rather than grounds for ruling out the validity of the manifesto as a measure of candidate strategy.

In sum, the manifestos are still a valid measure of the issues candidates emphasize in their election campaigns. They are written by the candidate for the explicit purpose of communicating her policy views to voters during this twelve-day period. They are distributed to all voters in the district two days before the election, and surveys show that sizeable pro-

¹³Interview, March 20, 2010.

portions of voters report “seeing” the manifestos of candidates in their district during this time. The manifesto has been used for elections to the House of Representatives over the entire history of Japanese democracy. In the absence of revisions to the POEL that would have allowed candidates to make use of other media, I conclude that the manifesto carries similar weight in election campaigns in 2009 as it does in earlier periods. These features make the manifesto a close-to-ideal measure of my quantity of interest.

4.3 Choosing Which Candidates and Which Elections to Examine

Choosing the election manifestos of the universe of candidates running in the universe of elections held under both electoral systems would allow me the most confidence in my findings. It would enable me to observe whether both conservative candidates and opposition candidates were adopting the strategies the theory expects, and whether or not they changed strategies after the election of the new system. However, difficulties associated with applying the method adopted to Japanese script, which are detailed in the next section, meant that I had to choose a sample of elections and a sample of candidates. I chose to analyze the election manifestos of all serious candidates running in the last three elections under SNTV-MMD (1986, 1990, 1993) and the first five elections under MMM (1996, 2000, 2003, 2005, and 2009)¹⁴. I defined a serious candidate as a candidate who was either running from one of the major parties fielding candidates in that election, or who had

¹⁴In Japan, a non-serious candidacy is called a *hōmatsu kohō*, which conveys that the candidate vanishes like a puff of air.

captured over 10,000 votes in that election.¹⁵ This is the standard definition of serious candidate in the literature on Japanese politics (Shinada 2006; Reed 2009a, 2010). This yielded a corpus of 2,520 election manifestos for SNTV-MMD, and 4,977 election manifestos for MMM. In total, I analyzed the election manifestos of 7,497 candidates running in eight elections in the period 1986-2009.

While I could have selected any time period to examine, because I collected the manifestos of candidates running in elections from as far back as 1955, I selected the last three elections under the old electoral system for an important reason: I wanted to examine the strategies adopted by the same candidate over time. If I observed the expected shift in strategy, I wanted a means of ruling out the possibility that this shift was caused by the entry of new candidates. One might imagine that the difference in electoral strategy demanded of candidates by the two very-different electoral systems might attract a different caliber of candidate, in which case any shift in strategy might be the product of new candidates entering the race rather than a product of the shift in rules. Examining the electoral strategies adopted by the same candidate over time is a good way to rule this alternative explanation out. My selection of these three elections yielded 563 candidates who competed in at least one election under the old electoral system and one under the new.

4.4 What the Manifestos Look Like

While there is variation, most of the manifestos followed a similar pattern. On the

¹⁵Under the old electoral system, the five major parties were the LDP, the JSP, the JCP, the DSP, and the Kōmeitō. Under the new electoral system, the major parties have changed slightly from election to election. I defined the major parties as the LDP, NFP, DPJ, Sakigake, SDP, JCP, Kōmeitō, Liberals, Conservatives, New Socialist Party, Your Party, Shinto Daiichi, Nippon New Party, and PNP.

far right, candidates wrote their names in large characters and placed this under a head shot of themselves. Occasionally, but not always, candidates wrote their party affiliation in smaller letters to the right of their name. Almost all manifestos were written to be read from right to left, top to bottom, in the Japanese style. Most of them were divided into sections. The first section was almost always a “greetings” (aisatsu) section, with or without the title. This would be followed, further along to the left, with a section entitled “Policies” (seisaku), which was sometimes called “Promises” (yakusoku) or “Public Pledges” (kōyaku). Following this section would be mix of either an “Accomplishments” (jisseki) section, a “Biography” or “Profile” (keireki, purofiiru or watashi no ayumi) section, or an “Endorsements” (suisen) section. Candidates also included slogans written in large letters at the top of their manifesto, which were always written the English way, from left to right.

Over time, the manifestos changed. They became about fifty words shorter. Whereas the average manifesto produced by candidates running in the three elections under SNTV-MMD was 286 words long, the average manifesto produced by candidates running in the five elections under MMM was only 238 words. Moreover, the number of unique words used by all candidates in each election also decreased. Below I discuss the method selected to test my hypothesis. After carrying out the preprocessing steps and constructing term-document matrices of the unique words used in each election-year, I found that the number of unique words in each year had declined from an average of 3,536 unique words in the three elections under SNTV-MMD to 3,044 unique words in the five elections under MMM. The fact that candidates are using fewer words to convey their policy views under MMM bodes well for my hypothesis that candidates are relying more on the party label in the latter period.

I chose to analyze only the sections of the manifesto in which the candidate offered

4.5 Testing the Theory: Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA)

After collecting the 7,497 manifestos, testing my hypothesis required devising a means of measuring the issues and policy appeals contained in my corpus of manifestos. If my hypothesis is correct, I should observe conservative candidates relying on a strategy of private goods for subsets of voters in their district prior to 1994 and a strategy of public goods for the national-level median voter after 1996. I should observe conservative candidates ignoring foreign and national security policy prior to 1994, and taking it up vigorously after 1996. I should observe opposition candidates using foreign and national security policy under both SNTV-MMD and MMM, but becoming less ideologically extreme in the latter period.

I used the statistical topic model Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) to measure the issues emphasized and policy appeals contained in the manifestos (Blei, Ng and Jordan 2003). LDA is a model for topic discovery that uses the frequencies with which words appear in a corpus to model relationships between words. Relationships between words are assumed to derive from an unobserved data-generating process comprised of latent variables, which the method conceives of as “topics”. LDA uses posterior inference to estimate the underlying distribution of topics in the corpus of documents from the words that are observed. When applied to a corpus, LDA can estimate both the topics contained across the entire corpus and the proportions of individual documents that are devoted to each topic. It estimates the categories and categorizes the documents simultaneously. Assuming that the election manifestos have something vaguely resembling topics contained within them, and each topic can be classified in a way that would enable me to test my hypotheses, LDA is a close-to-perfect method.

I chose LDA because it offered clear advantages over the alternatives methods that were available to me. The traditional method for text analysis in political science is “hand coding” (Budge, Robertson and Hearl 1987). Coders are trained to place “units” of documents (the “quasi-sentences” of party manifestos in the Comparative Manifesto Project, for example) into one of a finite number of researcher-imposed categories. This method has high start-up costs, high per-document costs, and offers no guarantee that different coders will assign the same unit to the same category. It often requires the writing of lengthy coding manuals (such as the one written by the CMP, which is 40 pages long), and it requires the finding and training of reliable coders (Klingemann et al. 2006). More recently, a method was developed that uses statistical techniques to automate this process of hand coding. Called “supervised learning”, the method proceeds as follows. A sample of documents are hand-coded according to a categorization scheme that is chosen by the researcher. A machine-learning algorithm is then applied, which uses statistical inference to categorize the rest of the documents. Once a training set is coded, supervised learning can classify a very large number of documents into these categories relatively quickly (Hopkins and King 2010; Grimmer and King 2011).

A key assumption shared by both approaches is that both the topics contained in the corpus and the words that identify each topic are knowable in advance. Both approaches require the researcher to know, in other words, exactly which topics she expects to appear and how she would recognize each topic. This is an assumption that LDA, which is an “unsupervised learning” technique, relaxes. Unsupervised learning techniques treat the topics themselves as objects of inference. The method does not require any taxonomy of topics as input. As output, LDA produces a list of word stems that score highly as identifiers of each topic in the corpus, and estimates of the proportions of each document

that are devoted to each topic. The validity of this output is evaluated by reading the lists of word stems that score highly as identifiers for each topic; reading the documents that have large proportions of their content devoted to each topic; generating a label for each topic; and validating the topics uncovered.

Unsupervised learning techniques have been used by political scientists to measure the balance of topics contained in Senatorial press releases in the period 2004 to 2007 (Grimmer 2010, 2009), and the balance of topics discussed in Senatorial speeches in the period 1997 to 2004 (Quinn et al. 2010). As the goal of both of these projects was to estimate the proportion of documents devoted to a particular topic across Senator and across time, the topic models developed and used by these authors were designed to assign each document to *a single topic*. Because I am dealing with candidate election manifestos, however, which obviously contain a whole mixture of topics, I needed a model that assumed all documents were made up of *a number of topics*. LDA is the most appropriate model for my purpose.¹⁶

LDA's ability to uncover the content of political texts with virtually no input from the researcher has led to the criticism that it is ill-suited to hypothesis testing and is a tool for topic discovery only. I argue that it is precisely this property that makes LDA so suitable for the testing of contentious hypotheses such as the one offered in this dissertation. LDA uncovers the topics in the texts and there is absolutely nothing the researcher can do but interpret the output. There is no way to stack the deck in favor of one's hypothesis or against an alternative hypothesis. Because LDA does not require a researcher-imposed classification scheme, I was able to avoid tricky and contentious decisions such as deciding what words would indicate foreign and national security policy and which words would

¹⁶In his dissertation, Justin Grimmer used LDA to measure the subjects of research published in political science journals on "home style" (Grimmer 2010).

not, and which words would constitute private goods and which would constitute public goods. One glance at the manifestos revealed how difficult these decisions would have been. Candidates regularly include sentences such as “I promise to realize the true extent of our beautiful nature with a new public works project”, or “I will make our city into a truly internationalized city by building a new airport”. Rather than having to decide which word would indicate what, LDA simply takes all the words in each document and compares them with all the words used in other documents. As my results, which are discussed below and in the next two chapters, demonstrate, it did a very good job of uncovering meaningful topics.

Another benefit of LDA is that it classifies the entire document. While the theory presented in Chapter Two is primarily about the attention paid to foreign and national security policy by conservative politicians, it depends on broader assumptions about the kinds of electoral strategies they and opposition politicians should have been pursuing. Using LDA allows me to measure not only the attention paid to these issues, but the attention paid to all issues. This will enable me to estimate the degree to which *each candidate* is relying on an electoral strategy of private goods or public goods. If I find that candidates switched from ignoring foreign and national security policy under the old system to discussing it under the new, and that this switch mirrored a switch in their overall electoral strategy from private goods to public goods, this would be powerful evidence that the new attention to foreign and national security policy was a product of the shift in strategy and not a product of external events. Classifying the entire document also helps me to rule out alternative hypotheses.

A second criticism of LDA is that it does not measure policy positions. Unless different words are used, LDA might classify a statement that the candidate would pay attention to

foreign and national security policy after reaching office in the same topic as a statement by another candidate that she would not. This is a valid criticism. Whereas it would not matter for my hypothesis if candidates adopted different positions on the same issue, because what mattered is that they had chosen to talk about it in the first place, one candidate promising not to spend time on the issue while another promising to spend time on the issue should be separated. Unfortunately, there is no good solution to this dilemma. However, my reading of the manifestos suggests that candidates for political office hardly ever mention issues that they plan *not* to spend time on, or that they do not believe are important. The reason is probably because candidates know that voters are busy and often skim their manifesto, picking out key words and phrases. Knowing this, candidates are probably selective with what they write. My second response to this criticism is that candidates are likely to use different words when expressing opposition, which lowers the chance they would be classified as the same topic.

A third criticism of LDA is that it does not allow the researcher to assign extra weight to areas of the manifesto that the candidate is choosing to emphasize. While the manifesto is restricted in space and is printed in black and white, candidates are free to use the font and size of text to emphasize words and phrases. Reducing the manifesto to a text document will have the effect of removing this extra emphasis and making those words and those phrases appear like any other in the text. I argue that LDA can deal with this problem provided that the manifesto is not simply the phrase and little else. Candidates who include large headings signalling their dedication to a particular policy stance almost always devote a similarly large proportion of their manifesto to discussing their stance. While LDA will treat the enlarged heading as having identical emphasis to the rest of the sentences in the manifesto, it will be able to capture the emphasis the candidate is placing on this policy

area due to the extra text devoted to it in the rest of the manifesto.

4.6 Preparing the Corpus of Manifestos for LDA

As input, LDA takes a term-document matrix constructed from all documents in the corpus. The term-document matrix is a common format in which to represent textual corpora for quantitative analysis. It is a matrix with the documents in the rows, the word stems in the columns, and the frequency with which word stems appear in the documents in the cells. Converting the manifestos, which were collected in Japan in microfilm format, as one term-document matrix required the following pre-processing steps, all of which are well established in the field of natural language processing (Manning, Raghavan and Schütze 2008). All documents are converted to plain text. Punctuation and capitalization are removed and the words are all stemmed (suffixes erased to obtain the root of the word). The total number of stems in the entire corpus is counted, and those stems occurring both too infrequently to convey useful information about the content of what is being discussed or too frequently to distinguish one topic from another are discarded. Each document is then represented as an unordered vector of the frequencies of all unique word stems. The term-document matrix is formed by stacking the vectors together (Quinn et al. 2010; Grimmer and King 2011; Hopkins and King 2010; Grimmer 2009).¹⁷

While a plethora of open-source text mining tool kits, most of which have built-in preprocessing applications, can make these steps relatively straightforward for texts written

¹⁷While these preprocessing steps do strip out information that could be gained from the choice of fonts, the size and color of the letters, the organization of the document, and the order in which the words appear, experience in the field of statistical text analysis suggests that the reduction in complexity makes the gains well worth it, especially for scholars interested in content (Hopkins and King 2010, 232).

in English and other romance languages, the absence of similar software for the Japanese language and the complexities of scriptive representations of Japanese meant that several additional steps were required. In this section, I describe two steps that are particular to texts written in Japanese and the decision rules that guided my reduction of the size of the matrix.

4.6.1 Parsing out Japanese Script and Selecting Content Words

After representing the manifestos as plain text documents, the second task was to parse out the text. I used the tokenizer MeCab, which was developed by researchers at the Computational Linguistics Laboratory of the Nara Institute of Science and Technology (NAIST) and is implemented in the R programming language (Ishida 2010).¹⁸ MeCab is a morphological language analysis tool that divides Japanese into words according to the international phonetic alphabet (IPA) part of speech dictionary (IPADIC), which was developed by the Information Technology Promotion Agency (IPA) of the Japanese government. It can be programmed to perform a wide range of tasks, including parsing Japanese text (*wakachigaki*), classifying each word according to its part of speech (*hinshi bunrui*), and conducting the Japanese equivalent of stemming, which is reducing words to their root form (*genkei*).

There were several advantages of using a morphological language analysis tool to preprocess the manifestos after converting them to plain text. After parsing out the text and returning all words to their root form, MeCab classifies each word stem in one of thirteen

¹⁸Other tokenizers I experimented with are ChaSen, TinySegmenter, Kakashi, Juman, and CaboCha. All have their own strengths. MeCab claims to perform the parsing and classifying of the text in the least amount of time. For MeCab, see <http://mecab.sourceforge.net/>. For RMeCab, see <http://rmeCab.jp/wiki/index.php?RMeCab>.

categories, including nouns, prefixes, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, adnominals, conjunctions, particles, auxiliary verbs, interjections, symbols, fillers, and other.¹⁹ The advantage of this function is that it gave me the opportunity to exclude a priori the parts of speech that serve a purely grammatical function.

Japanese linguists divide words into ‘content words’ and ‘functional words’. The former conveys information about the nature of the topics contained within the texts, while the latter performs grammatical functions such as connecting sentences (Ishida 2010). After consultation with researchers in computational linguistics at Tokushima University and examining the kinds of words removed from web-based Japanese search engines, I defined my content words to be nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs. I removed prefixes, adnominals, conjunctions, particles, auxiliary verbs, interjections, symbols, fillers, other, as well as pronouns, noun-affixes, numbers. Functional words amounted to approximately 5% of all the words in each manifesto.

4.6.2 Correcting for Cross-Scriptive Flexibility

The precision with which MeCab analyses Japanese text has a hidden disadvantage for the researcher interested in content. Modern-day Japanese is comprised of three scripts: hiragana, katakana, and kanji. Hiragana and katakana are syllable scripts, which means that they can be used to write all Japanese words. Hiragana is used for native Japanese words while katakana is reserved for phonetic translations of Western words. The third script, kanji, is the script in which the several thousand Chinese characters used in Japanese are

¹⁹Each of these thirteen categories acts as an umbrella label for a number of other tags. MeCab recognizes, for example, thirty one different nouns and thirty four different kinds of verbs. MeCab can classify a Japanese person’s last name, for example, as not only a ‘noun’ but also ‘a pronoun’; ‘a person’s name’; and ‘a last name’. Punctuation is tagged as a ‘symbol’, whereas numbers are classified as ‘nouns’ and then ‘numbers’.

written.

While the majority of Japanese words are written in one script, and a researcher with substantive knowledge of the Japanese language is familiar with which one, in practice authors have flexibility over the choice of script in which to write each word. A close reading of a sample of manifestos from each of my eight election-years revealed several hundred words that appeared throughout the manifestos in different scripts, sometimes in all three scripts. An example is illustrative. *Muda*, for example, which means “waste” and was frequently employed by DPJ candidates in their criticism of the government’s budget, appeared throughout the corpus in all three scripts, as did the word *ijime* (“bullying”), which formed part of a JCP slogan: “LDP policies bully ordinary Japanese citizens”. Unfortunately, cross-scriptive flexibility extends to the combinations of different scripts used *within a single word*. The word *furusato* (which has an extremely nostalgic connotation and means one’s “old home”), is made up of four syllables, “fu-ru-sa-to”. This word appeared in four different ways throughout my corpus. Some politicians wrote the entire word in kanji while others wrote the entire word in hiragana. Still others wrote the first two syllables in kanji and the latter two in hiragana, while others chose the opposite.

It is extraordinarily difficult to attribute any substantive meaning to the choice of a particular script for a certain word. A candidate reading her manifesto aloud to a roomful of constituents has no way of imparting information about the script in which she wrote each word because the words are pronounced exactly the same regardless of script. While there were several discernible patterns (words with difficult or rare kanji tended to be written in hiragana, presumably to remove any ambiguity about how to read them, and native Japanese words were occasionally written in katakana, presumably to draw attention to the word), it was not uncommon for politicians to *use different scripts to write the same word*

within the same manifesto In other words, they might write furusato in hiragana in one part of their manifesto and in kanji in another part For me, this observation confirmed the triviality of the decision of which script to use and underpinned my decision to unify the scripts ensure that all scriptive representations of the same word were recognized by MeCab as the same word ²⁰

To complicate matters further, from the perspective of a computer, the Japanese language is actually composed of four scripts and two English scripts An example is illustrative A third pattern, which became more common over time, was for politicians to use English in place of words ordinarily written in katakana It became more common over time for headlines and slogans containing words that ordinarily would have been written in katakana to be written in English (for example, “Reform”, “Change!”, “Shape up Japan!” and “Reuse, reduce and recycle!”) However, unlike hiragana and kanji, which are represented on the computer in a single script, Japanese uses two made-for-computer scripts to represent katakana and English characters These are referred to as zenkaku (“full-width script”) and hankaku (“half-width script”) While the closest analogy in English would be variation in the size of the letters or in the combination of capital and lower case letters, full and half-width scripts are recognized by the computer as different scripts Surprisingly, word processing applications developed for the Japanese language are unable to recognize the same word written in katakana-half-width and katakana-full width as the same word The same applies to English letters, which are called romaji in Japanese For this project, the fact that English is being used to write words that are traditionally written in katakana

²⁰While most contemporary word processing applications developed for the English language (such as Microsoft Word, Notepad, etc) have the capacity to recognize two words that are exactly the same yet written in a different font as the same word, neither MeCab nor any other natural language processing software available for the Japanese language has the capacity to recognize two words written in different scripts as the same word Online search engines work by having someone manually input each scriptive representation of the same word and telling the computer they are the same word

meant that the same word (with identical phonetic pronunciation and identical meaning) could appear in the corpus in four different scripts: katakana-full width, katakana-half width, English-full width, and English-half width).

Reducing words that are identical but written in different scripts to the same word stem so they could be recognized and counted accordingly was difficult. While the obvious solution was to convert all words to one script, for example, their hiragana syllabary, and proceed with the parsing and classification of this script, doing this would have created a problem at the interpretation end.²¹ Many Japanese words have exactly the same pronunciation but mean something completely different. Their meaning is conveyed not by their pronunciation but by different kanji. *Kokusai*, for example, could mean “international” or “government bonds” depending on its kanji. *Hoshō* could mean “security”, “guarantee”, or “compensation” depending on its kanji. Reducing all of these words to the same hiragana syllabary would render them indistinguishable from one another, making it impossible to interpret the results. My solution was to construct a dictionary of words that appeared throughout the texts in different scripts, select one representation of each word, and manually unify the scripts.²²

4.6.3 Removal of High and Low Frequency Terms

It is customary in the field of natural language processing to remove both common terms

²¹*Kakashi* is an open-source software that can reduce all words to their hiragana syllabary and parse the text

²²I created vectors of the frequencies of all unique word used in the manifestos of each election-year, read through each list, and compiled a master list of words that appeared in different scripts. Many of these words appeared in at least two or three different ways (either in different scripts or different combinations of scripts). Occasionally, the same word appeared in six or seven different ways.

that do little to help classify texts and terms that occur infrequently (Manning, Raghavan and Schutze 2008, 27). Whether it is placing texts in a particular category, assigning labels to texts, or measuring the distance from one text to another, words that fulfil a purely grammatical function or appear too often to convey information about the content contained within are discarded. Political scientists use two strategies to remove common terms. The first is to use a pre-defined list of “stop words”, which are removed from the corpus prior to analysis (Grimmer 2009; Spirling 2010), and the second is to sort words by their frequencies and remove words over a certain frequency (Quinn et al. 2010; Hopkins and King 2010).

I employed two strategies for the removal of stop words. First, I used the morphological language analysis tool described above to identify and remove terms that performed a purely grammatical function. Examination of the list of English stop words contained in conventional text mining tool kits (such as the Snowball stemmer) showed that deletion of terms in these twelve categories removed all but a small number of their Japanese equivalents. Second, I removed words that appeared in over 99% of the manifestos, a common threshold used by political scientists (Hopkins and King 2010; Quinn et al. 2010; Grimmer 2009). While these words may impart meaning, they occur too often to be helpful in classifying texts into topics. I adopted the definition of sparseness in Hopkins and King (2010) and removed words appearing in less than 0.5% of my texts.

After deletion of both high- and low-frequency words, I was left with a term-document matrix of 2,843 unique terms, 7,497 manifestos, and 21,246,98 term observations with which to test my hypotheses. The next chapter describes one more step that was required before I could use my indicator of candidate strategy to measure the attention paid to foreign and national security policy and the kind of electoral strategies that were being

adopted: selection of the number of topics. It demonstrates how I classify each topic discovered in the texts as a private or a public good.

Chapter 5

Topic Selection, Classification, and Validation

The puzzle this dissertation sets out to explain is the turnaround in attention to foreign and national security policy by conservative Japanese politicians in the mid to late 1990's. Chapter 2 argues that the turnaround can best be explained by a shift in their electoral strategies. Whereas the electoral system used for the House of Representatives until 1994 forced conservative politicians to develop electoral strategies that were comprised of private goods for subsets of voters in their districts, the electoral system introduced in 1994 demands electoral strategies comprised of public goods for the national-level median voter. Chapter 2 uses the property of targetability to explain why foreign and national security policy was the least attractive policy area for conservative politicians competing under SNTV-MMD, and should be the most attractive policy area for conservative politicians competing under MMM. It argues that the presence of opposing incentives for politicians from the opposition parties explains why they came to own foreign and national security policy in postwar

Japan.

The previous chapter argued that the best indicator of electoral strategy is the issues emphasized and policy appeals made by candidates over the course of their campaigns. To measure the degree of attention paid to different issues under both electoral systems, I needed material that was actually produced by candidates for use during their campaigns. I described and validated the indicator selected and collected for this project: 7,497 candidate election manifestos, which represent the universe of manifestos produced by serious candidates running in the eight House of Representatives elections between 1986 to 2009. I argued that Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) is the most appropriate method to analyze the topics contained within the manifestos. After readying the corpus for quantitative statistical analysis, I was left with a term-document matrix of 2,843 unique terms, 7,497 manifestos, and 21,246,98 observations with which to run the model.

The only piece of information required to use LDA to discover the topics in a corpus of documents is that the researcher have some idea of the total number of topics. In this chapter, I first describe how I selected the number of topics. I use an in-depth qualitative interpretation of each topic to generate labels, and present these labels next to the word stems that identify each topic. I show that LDA discovered two kinds of topics in the manifestos: *party-election-year topics* and *issue topics*. I present a detailed qualitative interpretation of six of the issue topics to demonstrate how the labels were generated. Using information about the identity of the candidates discussing each topic, I show that they cohere well with well-established facts about elections in Japan. Qualitative interpretations of the rest of the topics discovered in the manifestos are presented in subsequent chapters of the dissertation.

To assess whether or not conservative candidates were pursuing a strategy of private

goods for a subset of voters in their districts prior to 1994 and a strategy of public goods for the national-level median voter after 1994, it was necessary to classify each topic as a private or a national-level public good. I chose to classify each topic based on the identity of the topic's targets, namely, *who* the topic was aimed at. Using data from ministries and agencies in the Japanese government, I generated measures of the percentages of each of the forty unique targets found in the topics in Japan's overall population. Using the mean percentage of each target in Japan's population from 1985 to 2005, I show that some topics were aimed at much smaller percentages of the Japanese public than other topics. I classify the former as private goods topics, and the latter as national-level public goods.

Finally, I combine all topics classified as private goods and all topics classified as public goods to create an aggregate measure of the percentage of each manifesto devoted to public and private goods across all candidates and all elections. I demonstrate that these percentages cohere with one well-established fact about elections in another personal-vote-oriented system, namely, that female candidates will be less likely to discuss private goods than male candidates. I conclude by arguing that both the individual topics and the aggregated private/public percentages can be used to test theories about the electoral strategies adopted by politicians such as the one offered in this dissertation.

5.1 Choosing the Number of Topics

How can one choose the right number of topics in a corpus of texts? While one might reason that elections are only ever about a handful of hot-button issues (tax, consumer prices, housing, the performance of the current administration, etc.), it is not uncommon for parties to publish manifestos that run into the tens and sometimes hundreds of pages. They

are writing these, political scientists have assumed, for representatives from the media, who report their contents to voters as news during election campaigns. One indication of the diversity of subjects discussed in party manifestos is found in the classification procedure adopted by the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP), which has to date analyzed 3,350 party manifestos from seventy-eight elections in fifty-five democracies between 1920 and 2010. The CMP instructs its coders to classify each unit of analysis (the “quasi-sentence”) into one of fifty-four predetermined categories, which make up seven broad policy domains (Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006). Their most recent data show that the average party manifesto contains discussion of twenty three different categories, with one being the smallest number found in a single manifesto and fifty-one being the largest. Parties competing in elections to Japan’s HOR have been allowed to publish policy statements, which the media now dubs “manifestos”, since the electoral reform was passed in 1994. The average length of manifestos published by the major parties between 1996 and 2009 was 23 single-spaced pages, with manifestos getting longer over time.

While parties might discuss many different issues, is there any reason to believe that candidates will? A party is usually made up of numerous candidates, who bring a variety of experiences, backgrounds, former careers, and expertise to the table. It might be easier for a group of candidates to claim expertise and know-how over a broad range of policy areas than it is for a single candidate to do so, who in the case of Japan is likely to have experienced just one occupation prior to running for office. Is it possible for the individual candidate to claim expertise over a variety of policy areas? A second factor that might incline candidates to choose their battles, and select only a small number of topics to discuss, are the restrictions on physical space. Candidates for the HOR are allotted an extremely small space in which they are required to paste their manifesto: a quarter of a newspaper-

sized page. How much can they really fit into that space? Would it be more prudent to use the space to write one's name in large letters or to advertise the times and dates of speech meetings?

This dissertation is one of the first to examine material produced by candidates for dissemination to voters during election campaigns. While candidates are not parties, and have a more limited menu of experiences and expertise from which to draw, the theory presented in Chapter 2 and the restrictions on campaigning described in Chapter 3 lead me to expect great variation in the subjects candidates choose to emphasize. First, I expect that the absence of an alternative means of communicating one's policy views to voters during an election campaign gives candidates every reason to cram in as much discussion as they can into the white space on the piece of paper they pick up from the Election Administration Committee prior to the start of the campaign. Voters have to choose a candidate, yet are afforded only twelve days of official campaigning within which to become informed about what each candidate running in their district stands for. While voters can use the extra information provided by the candidate's party affiliation when casting their vote, voters who are conservatively-inclined have had to search for additional heuristics to distinguish between the two, three, four, or even five conservative candidates running in their district. Thus, while candidates from the opposition can free-ride on the information provided by their respective party labels, conservative candidates have to go above and beyond their party label, which, as Chapter 2 described, we are not sure even existed under SNTV-MMD. The chances that these candidates will use their own, personal manifesto to communicate the extra information voters need to cast their vote is high.

The second reason we should expect great variation in subject matter is because the theory presented in Chapter 2 suggests that conservative candidates will not only steer

clear of relying on their party label (because it gives them no advantages relative to their same-district co-partisans), but they will *purposefully* seek to differentiate themselves from these co-partisans. Conservative candidates under SNTV-MMD had such strong incentives to differentiate their campaigns from one another that they may have been constantly on the lookout for subjects upon which their opponent had thus far not staked a claim.

There is also no reason to expect that these candidates will use positions on policy to conduct this differentiation. While Japan is a parliamentary system, the incentive for parties to balkanize during elections yet stay united after the election is said to have made campaigns under SNTV-MMD extremely personalistic, much like campaigns for the U.S. Congress. A seminal work on the U.S. Congress finds that politicians regularly engage in three kinds of electioneering activities: self-advertising, credit-claiming, and position-taking (Mayhew 1974, 47). More recently, Justin Grimmer and Gary King added a new category to the mix, partisan taunting, which they define as candidates denigrating opposition candidates in order to self-advertise, claim credit, or take positions (Grimmer and King 2011). These studies raise a whole new set of differentiation possibilities. Instead of finding topics that pertain to specific policy areas, I may find topics devoted to advertising oneself (whether one's personal ideology or political beliefs), credit-claiming at the national level or in the district, and/or slandering the opposition. All these scenarios are possible, and suggest that hundreds of topics may be necessary to capture the content of discussion under SNTV-MMD alone.

On the other hand, I may find that conservative candidates under SNTV-MMD find the information provided by their party label as irresistible in the information-unfriendly electoral environment as candidates from the opposition did. Voters are, after all, exposed to a constant stream of information about the major parties as they go about the daily business

of lawmaking and governance. While we might expect that the manifestos of opposition party candidates will be very similar (if not identical), with each candidate emphasizing the party's positions on the issues of the day or the issues the party believes it "owns", will the manifestos of conservative candidates resemble each other in the same way? Or might conservative candidates choose subsets of the party's issue positions or subsets of the issues the party believes it "owns" in order to use the extra information provided by the party label yet also differentiate themselves from one another? Exactly how conservative candidates used the information provided by their party label under SNTV-MMD is unclear. The autonomy candidates enjoy over the writing of their manifesto provides the researcher with an excellent opportunity to uncover whether or not, to what extent, and how conservative candidates use the party label during their election campaigns. If candidates are relying on their respective party labels, we may need to begin the process of model specification by estimating the number of topics that corresponds to the number of political parties and the number of elections. In the 1986 and 1990 elections there were five major parties,¹ in the 1993 election there were seven,² in the 1996 election there were eight,³ in the 2000 election there were a slightly different eight,⁴ in the 2003 election there were six,⁵ in the 2005 election there were seven,⁶ and in the 2009 election there were eight.⁷ If candidates

¹The LDP, the JSP, the Komeito, the DSP, and the JCP

²Added to these five were the newly-formed Shinseitō and Sakigake parties

³The LDP, the newly-formed DPJ, the newly-formed NFP, the Komeitō, the JCP, the Sakigake, the SDP and the New Socialist Party

⁴The NFP and Sakigake disappeared and the Liberals and Conservatives formed

⁵The Liberals and New Socialist Party disappeared

⁶The Conservatives disappeared and the People's New Party and Nippon New Party were formed

⁷Your Party was added to the previous seven

are relying on their respective party labels, which differ across elections, there should be at least fifty four topics.

The coding scheme devised by Yutaka Shinada to analyze a similar collection of the same manifestos that are the subject of this study suggests that a even larger number of topics may be needed. Shinada, who has been hand coding the manifestos used in elections to the House of Representatives for the past *seventeen* years, has developed a classification procedure that is even more elaborate than that developed by the CMP. Shinada places every quasi-sentence into one of 203 different policy categories (*seisaku bunrui*), assigns it one of 33 policy targets (*seisaku taishō*), and assigns it a “for or against” code (a *sanpi* code), indicating whether the politician supports continuation of the policy, reform of the policy, is vague regarding either, or is claiming credit for the policy (Shinada 1998, 2006, 2009). A similar strategy of hand coding was developed by Kobayashi Yoshiaki to code the same manifestos (Kobayashi 1997, 2008). The absence of codes for self-advertising or partisan taunting in these respective classification schemes, which are based on the same material, suggests that we can rest assured that positions on policy issues are what made up campaigns under SNTV-MMD.

Given what little information we have about the content of election manifestos produced by individual candidates under either electoral system, the process of choosing the number of topics took some time. After experimenting with model specifications of between 20 and 200 topics, I settled on a model specification of 69 topics. Like other scholars (Grimmer 2009; Quinn et al. 2010), I found that too few topics produced clusters of word stems that appeared to indicate substantively different topics and too many topics resulted in similar clusters of stems appearing more than once. While this is substantively interesting, and is an indication of the kind of topics that tended to be discussed together in the same manifesto,

testing my hypothesis required me to generate an estimate of the percentage of discussion devoted to private goods and the percentage devoted to public goods for each of my eight elections. While I knew that self-advertising, credit-claiming, and partisan taunting might appear alongside position-taking as topics of their own, I wanted a model specification in which topics I could identify as private goods and topics I could define as private goods were, when they appeared, in distinct clusters. This was the decision rule that guided my selection of the number of topics. I ran numerous model specifications and read the groups of word stems that were outputted. While doing this, I asked myself, does this topic appear to indicate a national-level public good or a private good?

Allowing one's hypothesis to guide the specification of the number of topics is a valid approach to modelling the topics in a corpus of documents. Choosing a topic specification in which topics about education (what appears to be a public good) are separate from topics about roads (what appears to be a private good) does not in any way stack the deck in favor of my hypothesis. It merely provides me with a means of testing it. As I demonstrate later in the dissertation, I found that looks can be deceiving. Topics that at first glance appeared to be about public goods were sometimes about private goods, and vice versa.

5.2 Interpreting and Assigning Labels to the Topics

Interpreting and assigning labels to topics generated by LDA is not as straightforward as interpreting and assigning labels to topics generated by topic models that also estimate the topics contained in a corpus of documents but make the very-different assumption that each document is made up of *a single topic*. In this case, researchers can interpret and assign labels by reading documents that have a high probability of belonging to each topic

and assigning labels that way (Grimmer 2009; Quinn et al. 2010; Hopkins and King 2010). While LDA also estimates the topics contained in the corpus, it assumes that each document is comprised of a number of topics. Thus, even if a large proportion of the content of Document A comes from Topic 1, it will contain other topics, also.

I proceeded as follows. For each topic (1 through 69), I first read the 15 word stems that identified the topic. I then read the 10 manifestos whose proportion of content devoted to that topic was the highest. While reading these ten manifestos, I focused exclusively on how each of the 15 word stems was used within each document, lest I end up describing part of the document that pertained to a different topic

The word stems associated with each of the 69 topics and the topic labels I generated from the qualitative interpretation are presented in Tables 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4. I chose the English word that I thought most closely captured its Japanese counterpart.⁸ While I expected to see topics that captured distinct policy areas, such as agriculture, public works, or education, two different kinds of topics emerged. The first were *party-election-year topics*. The word stems for these topics indicated that a number of distinct policy categories had been captured in the same topic. Opposing the consumption tax, protecting agriculture, and protecting the constitution, for example, appeared as the same topic. Qualitative interpretation of the topics revealed that candidates discussing this topic were espousing the issues in their party's platform for that particular election (and occasionally, their party's platform

⁸The words presented in Tables 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4 may not appear to be word stems, but they are. In Japanese, it is possible to string kanji together to make words. An example is *nōson*, which is created from simply stringing the word for "agriculture" (*nō*) and "forestry" (*son*) together. In English, there is no shorthand, thus I have translated it simply as "agriculture and forestry." Given the centrality of words and their meaning to this project, I intend to include an Appendix in future work that will list the most important words, or words that can have several different meanings in Japanese, and how I translated them into English. For now, I will include a list of the most important words. I translated *kyōdō* as "hometown", *furusato* as "old home", *jūmō* as "my local", *suishin* as "move forward", *shinkō* as "stimulate", *sokushin* as "encourage", *jūjitsu* as "enrich", *seibi* as "provide", *fuhai* as "decay", *anshin* as "reassure", *keizai* as "economy", *keiki* as "economy", *ikasu* as "live", and *jikkō* as "execute"

in more than one election). This explains why LDA identified what appeared to be distinct policy categories as being one topic. Unsurprisingly, there were no party-election-year topics for conservative candidates under SNTV-MMD, whereas there were party-election-year topics for opposition party candidates. This fact alone gave me confidence that LDA was picking up reasonable topics from the manifestos.

The second kind of topic the method discovered was the *issue topic*. Issue topics were topics about distinct policy issues. Some were issues we know have been regular features of elections in postwar and contemporary Japan, such as protecting agriculture, forestry, and fisheries and regional devolution. Others were about issues that up until now we did not know were features of elections in Japan, such as saving the environment, building a society kind to women, and foreign and national security policy.

In order to use these topics to test the hypotheses presented in Chapter 2, it is important to validate the topics. Have I discovered meaningful topics from the texts? This section presents a qualitative interpretation of six of the issue topics to demonstrate how I generated the labels shown in Tables 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4. Qualitative interpretations of the rest of the topics are presented in subsequent chapters of the dissertation, and in Appendix A. After describing each topic based on my reading of the ten manifestos with the highest proportion of content devoted to the topic, I use information about the candidates who were discussing each topic and the districts and elections in which these candidates were running to demonstrate that they cohere very well with well-established facts about elections in Japan and other countries.

Table 5 1: Topics in the Manifestos and Stems Identifying Each Topic, 1986-2009 (Topics 1-18)

Topic Number	Topic Label	Stems Identifying Topic
1	postal privatization	reform,postal,privatize,koizumi,structure,the government,bureaucracy,move forward, private,ldp,japan,system,private sector,pension,realize
2	from concrete to people	pension,yen,abolish,reform,tillion,realize,waste,japan,tax increase,reduce, unify,government,child,community.person
3	appropriator for the district	move forward,provide,carry out,work at,society,measure,stimulate, enrich,encourage, stable,establish,business,realize,small-medium,nurture
4	fixer-upper for the district	ward policy,community,town,kagoshima all my force,election national government,building, yokohama,measure,small-medium,electricity-generation,move forward,energy
5	political reform, protect the constitution	politic,reform,citizen,business,ldp,japan,jcp,donation,money politics,party, election,prohibit constitution,decay
6	foreign and national security policy	japan,country,foreign policy,nation,society,citizen,secure,safe,community,abduction, econom,protect,problem,north korea,education
7	no more unfair taxes, peace constitution	politic,consumption,tax,abolish,ldp,citizen,election,tax system,government,recruit, realize,japan,agriculture,reform,party
8	building a society kind to women	society,women,environment,building,child,politic,make,aim for,education,community, reassure, person, welfare, realize, men-women
9	primary industries and tourism	stimulate,street,provide,industry,tourism,road,car,quickly,prefecture,airport, highway,farming-forestry,fishing,construction,community
10	transportation	provide,tracks,road,construction,quickly,encourage,realize,city,station,works, highway,national highway,transportation,move forward,complete
11	no tax increases, no U S -Japan alliance	japan,citizen,jcp,politics,tax increase,tax,consumption,oppose,protect,business, democracy,ism,stick to,ldp main character
12	economic recovery	economy,recover measure,healthful,japan,all my force,voice,saga,genuine policy, politic,try hard,reassure,century,national government,trust
13	vision for Japan	society,politic,econom,japan,lifestyle,citizen,country,rich,make,world, tax,justice,tax system,fair,feel keenly
14	politics for the civilian, not for bureaucrats	civilian,politic,society,bureaucrat,realize,dpj,center,aim for,lifestyle,leading role, new,participate,sovereign,information,establish
15	political and administrative reform	politic,reform,bureaucrat,japan,rural area,collusion,country,structure,change,realize, bureaucracy,special interest politician,econom citizen,central
16	no more big business-favoritism	japan,tax,consumption,ldp,business,politics,america,pension,peace,oppose, political party,donation,iraq,constitution,opposition party
17	regional devolution	rural area,devolve,system,reform education,country,authority,fiscal revenue, administration,business,society,push for the government,establish,small-medium
18	building a spiritually-rich community	building,rich,politic,community,provide,society,realize,aim for,industry,education, old home,hometown,lifestyle,culture,heart

Table 5.2: Topics in the Manifestos and Stems Identifying Each Topic, 1986-2009 (Topics 19-35)

Topic Number	Topic Label	Stems Identifying Topic
19	political reform	politic, reform, election, citizen, ldp, japan, political party, new, policy, person, change, responsibility, have, politician, behavior
20	consumption tax is to fund the military	tax, politic, consumption, abolish, ldp, citizen, liberal, japan, protect, rice, business, import, realize, donation, block
21	no more LDP, no more public works	politic japan, society, citizen, secure, livelihood, protect, ldp, budget, jcp, constitution, works, reform, country, public
22	doing away with decayed LDP politics	politic, reform, decay, realize, government, ldp, election, new, citizen, system, lifestyle, money politics, party, international, prevent
23	credit-claiming lawmaking	politician, diet, bill, legislation, establish, person, submit, law, problem, activity, hor, revision, member, question, plan
24	welfare and medical care	tax, consumption, reform, welfare, tax system, citizen, society, education, system, elderly, revise, medical, politic, administration, correct
25	statesperson and appropriator	problem, prefecture, tackle, necessary, effort, economy, issue, election, miyazaki, our country, policy, country, society, measure, push for
26	no American bases	base, okinawa, america, military, tax, consumption, peace, reduction, oppose, residents of prefecture, u s -japan alliance, reversion, jsp, withdrawal, treaty
27	investing in young people	person, politic, child, japan, have, society, work, make, self, future, dream, necessary, generation, force, heart
28	protecting people	rate, self sufficiency, agriculture, protect, pension, food, food supply, system, secure, reassure, burden, employment, lifestyle, income, improve
29	opposition to military spending	jcp, ldp, japan, spending, yen, politic, protect, citizen, military, oppose, livelihood, peace, education, welfare, cut
30	social security and child support	system, support, medical, pension, enrich, employment, realize, nursing care, burden, strengthen, education, secure, society, measure, move forward
31	no reform of medical care	jcp, japan, politic, citizen, party, tax, consumption, oppose, tax increase, stick to, election, protect, stop, flow, ldp
32	hometown development	politic, hometown, society reform, japan, international, era, stable, my country, development, rich, move forward, century, support, peace
33	revitalizing the local community	society, community, reform, economy, environment, building, move forward, industry, education, realize, reassure, nurture, system, construct, policy
34	no tax increase, no constitutional revision	tax increase, yen, constitution, tax, ldp, japan, article, deduction, dpj, privatize, protect, war, consumption, postal
35	tax cuts for everyone	tax cut, yen, education, tax, enlarge, internal demand, business, large-scale, society, income, small-medium, measure, carry out, move forward, indirect

Table 5.3: Topics in the Manifestos and Stems Identifying Each Topic, 1986-2009 (Topics 36-52)

Topic Number	Topic Label	Stems Identifying Topic
36	no postal privatization	tax increase,protect,oppose,constitution,ordinary people,japan,citizen,ldp,evil revision,opposition party,politic,privatize,reliable,jcp,postal
37	stubbornly for peace and human rights	peace,society,constitution,human rights,realize,welfare,education,politic,protect,basic,aim for,environment,discrimination,men-women,push for
38	local facilities and infrastructure	city,tokyo,city,politic,region,problem,district,politician,my local,home,town,necessary,prefecture,zone,money,policy
39	saving the natural environment	environment,earth conserve,water,green,warming,destroy,pollute,east,prevent,nature,develop,forestry,clear,air
40	better education and child-care facilities	education,move forward,provide,enrich,information,city,realize,nursing care,medical,technology,school,child,japan,facility,day care
41	reforming japan	japan,new,reform,society,politic,era,rural area,world,make,building,century,aim for,econom,administration,country
42	pensions and child allowance	pension,yen,system,medical,community,abolish,allowance,monthly,business,child,money,waste,lifestyle,supply,realize
43	security and reassurance	measure,safe,reassure,japan,society econom,education,business,small-medium,economy,employment,support,system,pension,recover
44	post offices	privatize,postal,post,office,reform,citizen,private sector,works,public corporation,funds,rural areas,service,corporation,society,country
45	no consumption tax, no constitutional revision	tax,constitution,consumption,tax increase,japan,politic,livelihood,evil revision,society,protect,america,peace,secure,ldp
46	credit-claiming district	heisei year,kumamoto,challenge,elect,minister,showa budget age prime minister,young,money,hor,since,generation
47	building a safe, reassuring community	community,reassure medical care,revitalize,support,healthful,safe,business,building,protect,employment,agriculture,small-medium,child-rearing,food
48	love of thy hometown	politic,hometown,support,say,citizen,heart,prefecture,effort,realize,reform trust,development,national government,all my force,protect
49	no more iron triangle	citizen,japan,business,politic,push for,tax,consumption,tax increase,jcp,election,protect,peace,political party,small-medium,pr
50	catching up with the rest of japan	prefecture,community,industry,aomori,necessary,north,era,new,force,politic,city-town-village,econom,information,old home,shunkansen
51	problems facing Japan	problem,tackle,politic,technology,force,issue,science,international,policy,resolve,society,environment,father,japan,heart
52	agriculture forestry, fisheries	agriculture,industry,manufacture provide,carry out,fishing,akita,develop,push for,prefecture,merchant,yamagata,community,development,technology

Table 5.4: Topics in the Manifestos and Stems Identifying Each Topic, 1986-2009 (Topics 53-69)

Topic Number	Topic Label	Stems Identifying Topic
53	small government	reform,tax,administration,consumption,politic,regulation,citizen,realize,nursing,rural area, ministries and agencies,reduce,ease,force through,administrative reform
54	economic stimulus	citizen,politic,election,yen,recession,ldp,measure,policy,econom,kita-kyushu, dissolution,nakasone,all my force,tax cut,reform
55	fiscal reconstruction	fiscal policy,politic citizen,election,administration,prime minister,reform,necessary, reconstruct,responsibility,deficit,future country,loan,vote
56	health and leisure infrastructure	welfare,education,building,society,person,culture,tokushima,international,health,enrich, sports,aim for,elderly,transportation,medical
57	credit-claiming posts	member,chief,diet,agriculture and forestry,party,ldp,budget,hor,committee chair,politician, fishery,force,wakayama executive,try hard
58	benefits for organized groups	business education,small-medium,enrich carry out welfare.push for,better,stable household, stimulate,measure,benefits,building,pension
59	alternation of government	government,alternation,tax,politic,citizen,waste,change,japan,dpj,pension, reassue,make,society,policy,lifestyle
60	no other party can be trusted	tax,consumption,japan,jcp,business,tax increase,politic,party,oppose,america, peace,true,extend,election,collusion
61	housing and tax policy	tax,housing,lifestyle,politic,tax cut,realize,property,land,consumption,rent, inheritance,pension,fixed,tax-exempt,yen
62	worry about earthquakes and nuclear power	fukui,shizuoka,recovery,coalition,kobe,gifu,econom,ruling party,prefecture,disaster victim, airport,industry,government,disaster,person
63	liberal democracy is best!	politic,ism,liberal,society democracy,osaka,peace,realize,japan human, aim for,rich,welfare,protect person
64	free medical care, no military spending	yen,citizen,politic,japan,medical,government,spending,tax,trillion,consumption, ldp-komeito,elderly,business.constitution
65	not a strong military but a kind society	politic,peace,nakasone,education,protect,citizen,welfare,yen,realize,tax cut, oppose,lifestyle,spending,tax,large-scale
66	social security	yen,trillion,pension person,tax,burden,spending,works,insurance,annual, fiscal revenue,consumption,public,waste,medical
67	nursing care	protect,nursing care,society,employment,insurance,child,medical,livelihood, push for,environment,uncertain,pension,make,public,life
68	from roads to pension	road,pension,money realize,person,abolish,highway,politician,cost-free,government, reduce,subsidy,works,politics,public
69	Japan in the global economy	japan,world,econom,country,peace,education,international,person,nation,century, have,necessary,era,problem,culture

5.2.1 Validation of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (Topic 52)

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic told voters that the agriculture industry was facing a crisis, with problems ranging from abandoned rice fields (*kosaku hoki chi*) to a rapidly diminishing number of successors to take over the family rice field. Candidates emphasized the contributions of the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industries to the region's food supply, as well as to the cultivation of water resources, the conservation of land, and the preservation of the natural environment in the prefecture. Candidates declared their staunch opposition (*zettai hantai*) to liberalization of the rice market, which they argued would “deal a death blow” (*kaimetsuteki dageki*) to Japan's rice crops. They pledged to provide and maintain basic infrastructure for this industry “at no cost to the farmer”. They pledged to create a more effective management system, which would be more appealing to young people in rice-producing areas. They pledged to expand the support of the central and local governments for the agricultural industry. One candidate pledged to unify the manufacturing, processing, and distribution industries of the forestry industry. Another pledged to promote the consumption of native products at home, as well as expand internal demand around Japan for these products. Another candidate pledged to “realize a new era of domestically-produced timber” (*kokusanzai*). Another candidate pledged to “guarantee stable management of the fishing industry by adjusting the structure of agricultural production and introducing fish farming”.

I reasoned that discussion of this topic would depend on the degree of urbanness of the district. Candidates running in urban areas should be much less likely to discuss a topic of little concern to their constituents. As expected, candidates running in rural districts discussed the topic more than candidates running in urban districts. Figure 5.1 plots the

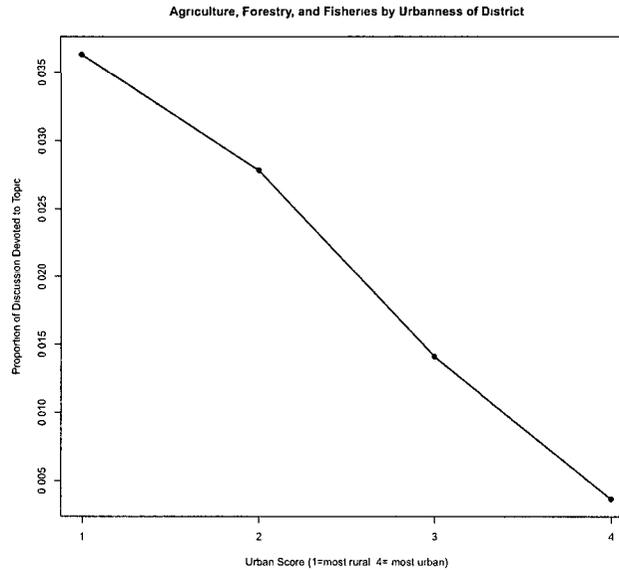


Figure 5.1: Candidates in rural areas talk more about agriculture. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries in the manifestos of candidates by degree of urbanness of the district in which the candidate is running for the three elections held under SNTV-MMD. An urban-rural code of 1 (the far left) indicates that the district was very rural, whereas an urban-rural code of 4 (the far right) indicates that the district was very urban.

mean proportion devoted to Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries in the manifestos of all candidates by degree of urbanness of the district in which the candidate is running.⁹ I used a measure for urbanness that is standard in research on elections in Japan. It classifies all districts on a four-point scale, with 1 indicating the most rural districts and 4 indicating the most urban districts.¹⁰ A difference in means test showed that the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of candidates running in very-rural districts (urban = 1) under SNTV-MMD was 3.5% and the mean proportion of total

⁹Because this topic was discussed primarily in the 1986, 1990, and 1993 elections, as I show later, this figure was made with data from those three elections only.

¹⁰Unless otherwise noted, data on candidates, districts, and elections was taken from Reed (2009a) and Reed (2010). I am very grateful to Steven R. Reed for use of his election data for this dissertation.

discussion for all other candidates (urban = 2, 3, 4) was 1.6%. The p-value for the difference in means test was <0.001 .

5.2.2 Validation of Building a Society Kind to Women (Topic 8)

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic promised to build a society in which women were supported in the workplace and at home. Candidates lamented the slow disappearance of families with three generations living under one roof, a situation in which “parents could borrow the wisdom of their parents to raise their own children”. “I understand the pain of young mothers and fathers who are thinking about starting a family, and the pain of those who have children”, one candidate told voters. “I promise to realize a society in which you can feel reassured raising and educating your children”. Candidates discussed problems encountered by working women, such as anxiety in the workplace and “not having people to consult about your problems”. They promised to realize “a society in which women can feel reassured in the workplace”. Candidates emphasized that making it easier for women to work was important not only for women themselves but also “for the future of Japan”.

Candidates who were woman themselves reminded voters that “the more women in politics the more policies will reflect our concerns”. Other candidates pledged to realize a “gender-equal society” (*danjo kyōdō sankā shakai*), which one candidate defined as “a society in which men and women can live equally”, and another defined as “a society in which women had the freedom of choice” (*josei ni sentaku no jiyū wo*). Other candidates promised to create a system in which men and women could participate in society on an equal basis, and women could balance their commitments in the home with their commit-

ments at work (katei shokugyō seikatsu no ryōritsu wo shien suru). Another candidate offered his understanding of what a gender-equal society meant: “A society that guarantees both men and women the same freedom of choice when deciding their path in life”. Candidates also promised to create a society in which “the elderly could shine” and “pass on their wisdom and experience to younger generations”, and a society in which “children could lead rich, vibrant lives”. Other candidates pledged to reform the education system to encourage “human creativity” and “lifelong learning”.

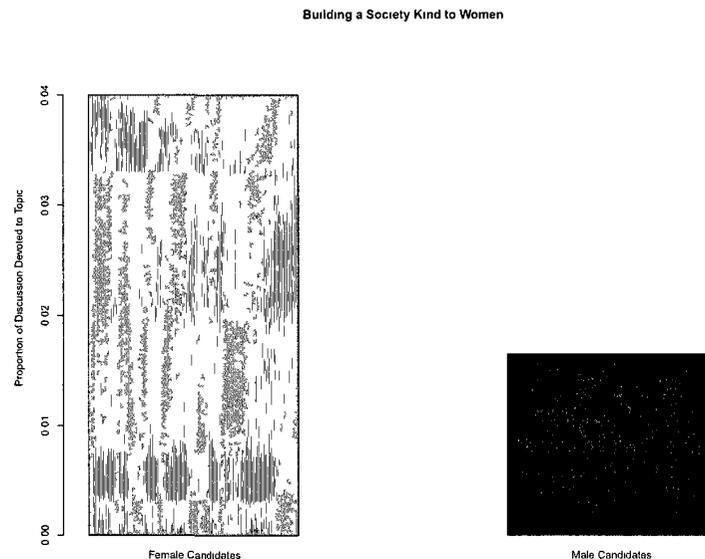


Figure 5.2: Female candidates talk more about women’s issues. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to Building a Society Kind to Women in the manifestos of all candidates running in each of the eight elections by gender.

I reasoned that discussion of this topic would be more common among female candidates than male candidates because female candidates would perceive themselves to have an advantage in this policy area by virtue of their gender, whereas male candidates would not. This intuition was correct. Figure 5.2 plots the mean proportion of total discussion

devoted to this topic in the manifestos all candidates running in each of the eight elections by gender. A difference in means test showed that the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of female candidates was 4%, whereas the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of male candidates was 1.6%. The p-value for the difference in means test was <0.001 .

5.2.3 Validation of Worry about Earthquakes and Nuclear Power (Topic 62)

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic promised to devise measures to protect people's lives and property in the event of a major earthquake in their prefecture. The presence of "Fukui" and "Shizuoka" in the list of word stems suggests that candidates in these prefectures exhibited the most concern. Candidates told voters that the Great Hanshin Earthquake of 1995 in Kobe and the accident at the Monju nuclear power plant the same year "has given us cause to worry greatly about the stability of nuclear power". In spite of this, one candidate lamented, "plans for building the Number Five Reactor at Hamaoka Nuclear Power Plant is still going ahead, with no modification to take into account local concerns". The candidate lamented the fact that there were still no plans to get rid of the old first and second reactors at the plant, which had deteriorated, nor had decommissioning technology been developed to remove radioactivity. This candidate promised to call off plans for the Number Five Reactor and devote the budget to developing new decommissioning technology, wind power, and alternative sources of energy for Japan. Other candidates told voters point blank that nuclear power would never be completely safe, especially in a country prone to natural disasters like Japan. "Even if we build nuclear reactors

on what may appear to be a strong foundation”, one candidate argued, “they would still be unable to withstand an earthquake as great as the Great Hanshin Earthquake” As an earthquake-prone country, many candidates argued, nuclear energy was just not suited to Japan By utilizing other forms of energy more efficiently, such as geothermal energy, hydroelectric power, and forms of natural gas that do not emit carbon dioxide, and by investing in the development of energy-saving technology, Japan could get by without nuclear power and without suffering from energy shortages, candidates told voters.

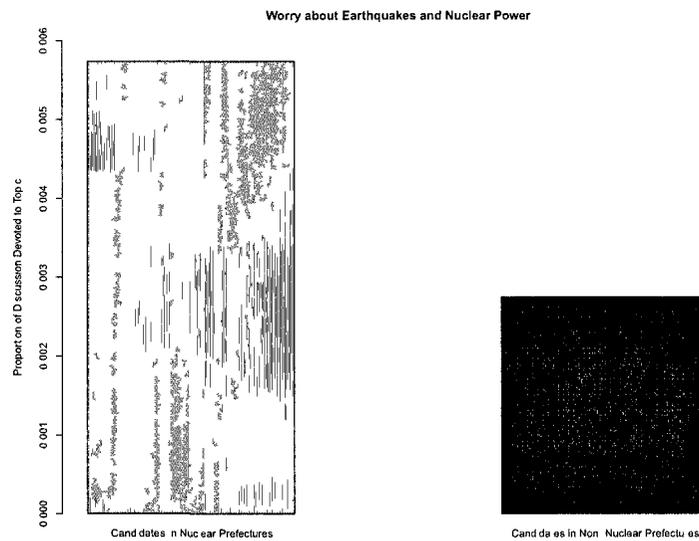


Figure 5.3 Candidates in prefectures with nuclear power plants worry more about earthquakes and nuclear power. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to Worry about Earthquakes and Nuclear Power in the manifestos of candidates running in prefectures with nuclear power plants next to the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of candidates running in prefectures without nuclear power plants for all eight elections. There are 13 Japanese prefectures with nuclear power plants.

I reasoned that candidates running in prefectures with nuclear power plants would be more likely to discuss this topic than candidates running in prefectures without nuclear

power plants. While concerns about the safety of nuclear power in the event of a major earthquake were likely to be held by residents of all 47 Japanese prefectures, I reasoned that candidates running in prefectures that actually had nuclear power plants would be more likely to perceive themselves as having an advantage on this issue. There are 13 Japanese prefectures that host nuclear power plants: Aomori, Ehime, Fukui, Fukushima, Hokkaido, Ibaragi, Ishikawa, Kagoshima, Miyagi, Niigata, Saga, Shimane, and Shizuoka prefectures. Figure 5.3 plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of candidates running in prefectures with nuclear power plants next to the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of candidates running in prefectures without nuclear power plants for all eight elections. A difference in means test showed that the mean discussion of this topic for candidates in nuclear prefectures in all elections was 0.6%, whereas the mean discussion for candidates running in other non-nuclear prefectures for all eight elections was 0.3%. The p-value for the difference in means test was <0.001 .

I also reasoned that Worry about Earthquakes and Nuclear Power would be discussed more in the 1996 election and perhaps, in subsequent elections, than in earlier elections. Candidates running in these elections had one serious earthquake and one serious accident upon which to draw for material to use in their election campaigns. Both disasters were mentioned in the qualitative interpretation. The Great Hanshin Earthquake occurred on January 17, 1995, and claimed the lives of 6,434 people, most of whom lived in the city of Kobe in Hyogo prefecture. Twelve months later, in December of 1995, Japanese people watched an accident unfold at Monju Nuclear Power Plant in Fukui prefecture, which received a lot of media coverage when it was discovered that the semi-governmental agency in charge of the reactor had tried to cover up the accident and had falsified reports about

it. Figure 5.4 showed that the topic was talked about the most by candidates running in the 1996 election, and then in the 2000 election, but not in other elections.

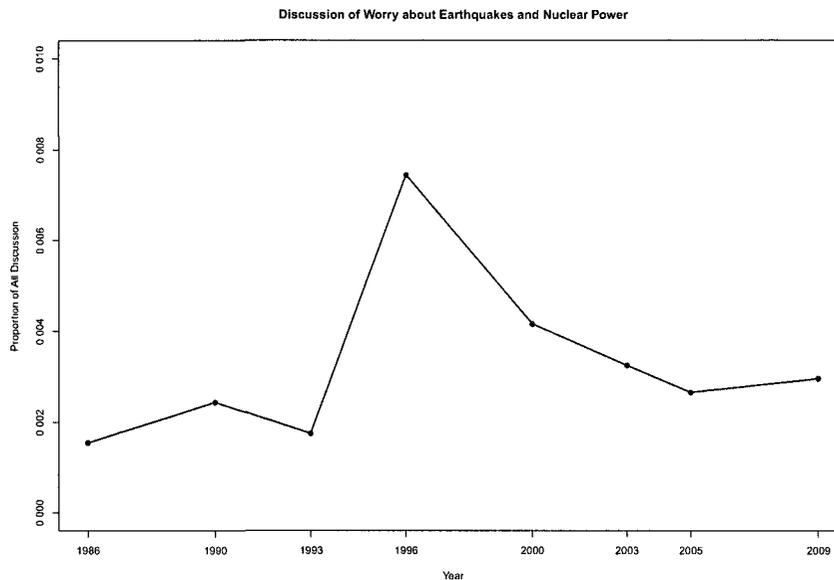


Figure 5.4: Candidates worried about earthquakes and nuclear power more in the 1996 election than in other elections. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to Worry about Earthquakes and Nuclear Power in the manifestos of all candidates by election year.

5.2.4 Validation of Liberal Democracy is Best! (Topic 63)

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic told voters that the revolutions occurring in Eastern Europe were proof that liberal democracy had won and socialism had lost. “The proof is in the pudding. Socialist countries are bankrupt and offer limited political freedoms”, one candidate told voters. “The Berlin wall should have come down, and it did. I will continue protecting freedom and democracy for the happiness of Japanese citizens”. Another candidate explained that “socialism just couldn’t keep up with the changing

times”, and was “blown away by a wave of democratization and liberalism”. Another candidate promised to “protect Japan’s liberal society” so that a peaceful society could be passed on to those living in the 21st century. “The people who really understand the essence of liberal Japan”, the candidate went on, “are you”.

Another candidate promised to aim for the realization of a “neo-conservative liberal democracy”, which would be based on the pursuit of personal profit and power (*kojinteki rieki ya kenryoku*). “The peace and prosperity that Japan has built up over the last fifty years“, one candidate told voters, “is due to the hard work of Japanese citizens”. “But what made this hard work possible was a liberal society with a market economy and the basic democratic principle of respecting other people’s points of view”. Many candidates issued not-so-veiled critiques of the socialist and communist opposition parties, reminding voters that the battle they were seeing between liberal democracy and communism and socialism on the world stage was no more. “Parties without their own ideas and their own principles are emasculating politics!” (*seiji wo muryokuka*), one candidate declared. Candidates argued that they would face Japan’s problems, be they the burden of providing welfare in an aging society or the effective management of the U.S.-Japan relationship by establishing “a neo-conservative, liberal political system that emphasized tradition, public interest, and individual responsibility”.

As this topic focused on advertising the benefits of liberal democracy, I reasoned that it should have been talked about the most in the period immediately following the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War. As the candidates cited above say, the fact that communism and socialism was seen to suffer such a dramatic and sudden demise in many countries around the world but remained alive and well on the Japanese political scene would have made it a decidedly attractive issue for conservative candidates to use

to advertise themselves and their beliefs, while simultaneously criticizing their communist and socialist opponents. I reasoned that it should have been talked about most in the 1990 election, which was held on February 10, and by conservative candidates.

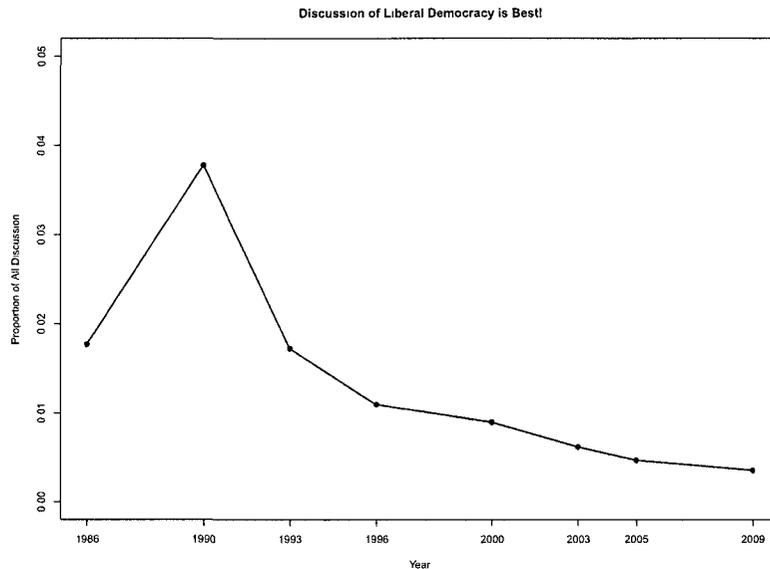


Figure 5.5: Candidates sang the praises of liberal democracy in the 1990 election. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to Liberal Democracy is Best! in the manifestos of all candidates by election year.

Figure 5.5 plots the mean proportion of each manifesto devoted to Liberal Democracy is Best! for all eight elections. It shows that the topic was talked about by candidates running in the 1990 election more than candidates running in any other election. Figure 5.6 plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of conservative candidates running in the 1990 election next to the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of socialist and communist candidates. A difference in means test showed that the mean proportion of total discussion of this topic in the manifestos of conservative candidates was 4.3%, versus 0.3% for socialist and

communist candidates. The p-value for the difference in means test was <0.001 .

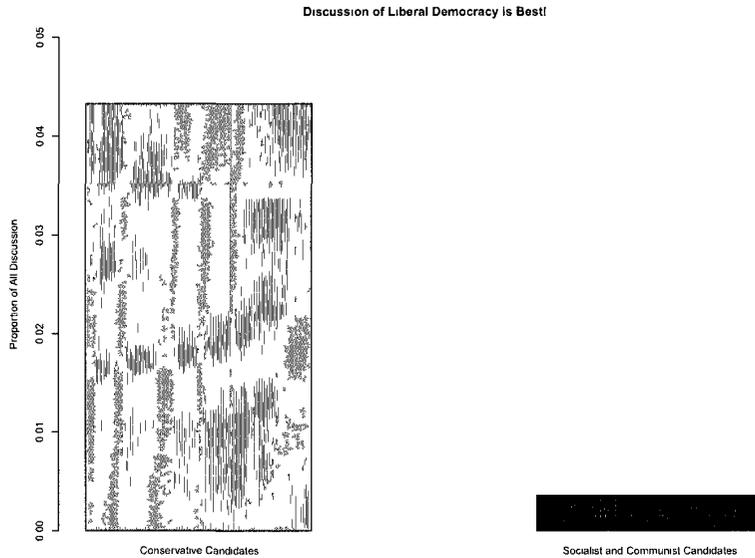


Figure 5.6: Conservative candidates sang the praises of liberal democracy more than socialist and communist candidates. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to Liberal Democracy is Best! in the manifestos of conservative candidates in the 1990 election next to the mean proportion of total discussion in the manifestos for socialist and communist candidates.

5.2.5 Validation of Primary Industries and Tourism (Topic 9)

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic often began with slogans such as “My Love for the Hometown is Endless” (aikyōmugen) or declared that they subscribed to “an ideology of hometown development as number one!” (furusato hatten daiichi shugi). One candidate lamented the fact that his district was still heavily-dependent on the central government for subsidies, despite ten years having passed since “the era of the hometown!” had begun. He explained unabashedly that it was still necessary for the district to “borrow

the strength of the central government” to construct a sounder industrial base and improve the comfort of the living environment. After this was achieved, the candidate told voters, “we’ll be able to look after ourselves”.

Candidates used a matter-of-fact tone to emphasize the importance of primary industries and public works to the economic vitality of their hometown. To “stimulate” these industries, candidates proposed a variety of measures, including taking better care of farm land, managing water resources more efficiently, developing better fishing techniques, encouraging coastal fishing, and “stimulating tourism of the hometown”. Candidates promised to expand opportunities for tourism and sightseeing of areas of the district that were naturally beautiful, which they reminded voters would require conscientious upkeep of the appropriate infrastructure and transportation routes. Several candidates labelled specific areas of their prefectures as “outliers”, which would require additional support from the central government. Candidates from Hokkaido, for example, frequently contrasted the under-developed and backward nature of their prefecture with the developed “mainland”. Candidates from Kagoshima discussed several “outlying islands” (*ritō*) as their target for development.

Like Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, I reasoned that discussion of this topic would depend on the degree of urbanness of the district. Urban areas have fewer residents employed in primary industries and have less of a need to try to entice visitors to come and spend money in their region. The flip side of this, of course, is that urban areas also have fewer naturally-beautiful areas they could develop for the purpose of tourism and sightseeing. I reasoned that candidates running in urban areas would be unlikely to discuss a topic of little concern to their constituents.

As expected, candidates running in rural districts discussed this topic more than candi-

dates running in urban districts. Figure 5.7 plots the mean proportion devoted to Primary Industries and Tourism in the manifestos of all candidates by degree of urbanness of the district in which the candidate is running.¹¹ A difference in means test showed that the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of candidates running in very-rural districts (urban = 1) under SNTV-MMD was 3.1% and the mean proportion of total discussion for all other candidates (urban = 2, 3, 4) was 1.7%. The p-value for the difference in means test was <0.001.

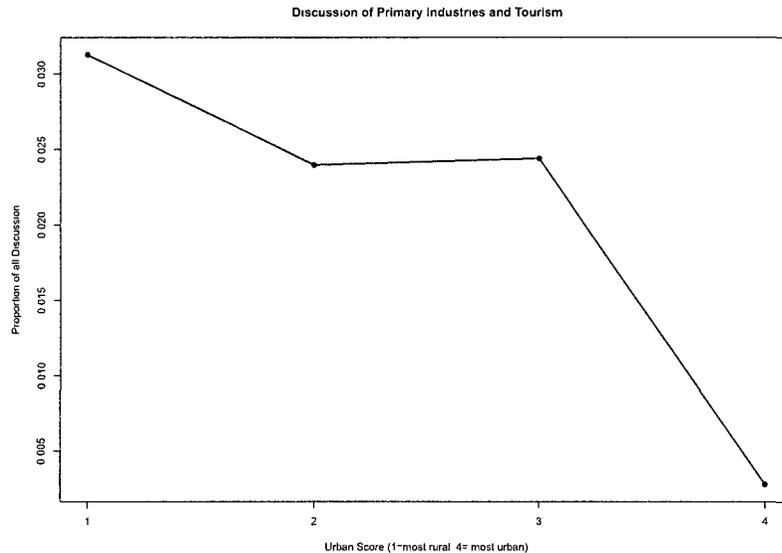


Figure 5.7: Candidates in rural areas talk more about stimulating primary industries and developing tourist opportunities in their district. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to Primary Industries and Tourism in the manifestos of candidates by degree of urbanness of the district in which the candidate is running for the three elections held under SNTV-MMD. An urban-rural code of 1 (the far left) indicates that the district was very rural, whereas an urban-rural code of 4 (the far right) indicates that the district was very urban.

¹¹Like Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, this topic was discussed primarily in the 1986, 1990, and 1993 elections and declined afterwards. Figure 5.7 was plotted with data from these three elections. I used the same measure for urbanness as above.

5.2.6 Validation of Benefits for Organized Groups (Topic 58)

Under headings such as “Improving Welfare” and “Taking Life Seriously”, candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic promised to increase the amount and kind of benefits being provided to certain groups and introduce new benefits for new groups. While some candidates promised to introduce preferential tax treatment and low-interest loans for the small- and medium-sized enterprises in their districts, other candidates promised to keep interest rates low to stimulate domestic consumption, which they told voters would also assist these enterprises and owners of small shops in the district. Several candidates promised to “expand public works projects”. Other candidates promised to “protect farmers from trade liberalization” and adopt measures to stabilize the prices of agricultural products. Yet other candidates promised to “nurture native industries at home by adjusting finance and tax policy”. Under headings such as “Protecting Peace”, other candidates promised to increase the amount of pension available to military veterans, their war-bereaved family members, former wounded soldiers, civilian hibakusha, and former detainees.¹² If you are not currently eligible for these benefits, candidates told voters, this is not problem! A common promise was to expand the range of citizens who were eligible for them.

Candidates promised to increase the amount of benefits available to the elderly, the disabled, households headed by single mothers (*boshi katei*), and children orphaned in traffic accidents (*kōtsu iji*). They promised to introduce benefits for factory workers. Others pledged to provide better assistance for working women, such as raising the portion of one’s total income that was exempt from taxation. “Education” appears as a word stem for

¹²Hibakusha are victims of the nuclear weapons that were dropped on Japan in August, 1945.

this topic because many candidates promised to “improve education” by renovating school buildings, introducing security cameras into schools (to prevent crime), and introducing doctoral courses to universities in their prefecture. One candidate running in Gunma prefecture introduced a plan to “make Ohta City into an education town” (gakuen toshi kōsō).

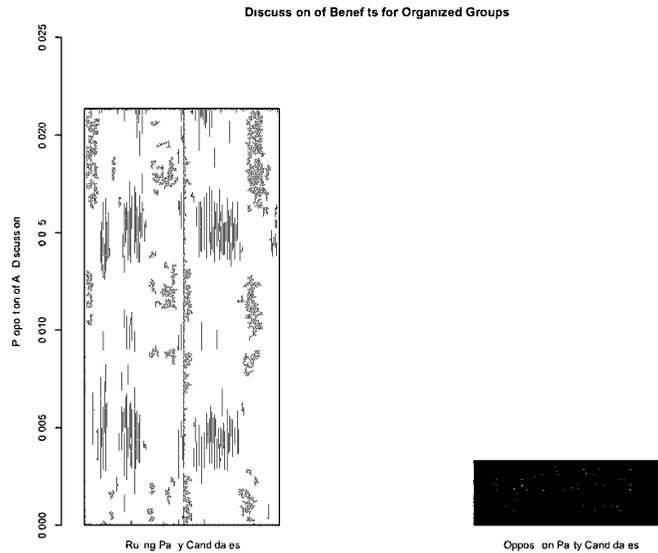


Figure 5.8 Ruling party candidates promise more benefits for organized groups. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to Benefits For Organized Groups in the manifestos produced by ruling party candidates next to the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to the topic in the manifestos produced by opposition party candidates for all eight elections.

Being a topic concerning the provision of benefits for organized groups, I reasoned that this should be discussed more by candidates who were either in government or who would be in government after the election than candidates who were not in (or going to be in) government. Figure 5.8 plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of candidates from the ruling party next to the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of candidates from the opposition party.

for all eight elections. A difference in means test showed that the mean proportion of total discussion of this topic for ruling party candidates in all eight elections was 2%, whereas the mean discussion of total discussion of this topic for opposition party candidates in all eight elections was 0.3%. The p-value for the difference in means test was <0.001 .

5.3 Classifying Each Topic as a Private or Public Good

It is difficult to know a public good when one sees one. Many public goods have hidden (or not-so-hidden) beneficiaries. Most goods are a mix of both. While appearing to fall neatly into the category of public or private good was the criterion I adopted when selecting the number of topics, the process of interpreting and labelling each topic showed me that looks can be deceiving. As the above topic interpretations and topic interpretations presented later in the dissertation show, topics that appeared to be about public goods were, upon closer examination, about private goods, and vice versa. Candidates would use words such as “welfare”, “education”, and even “the environment”, to advertise their commitment to pursuing projects that would bring enormous benefits to construction companies. A common way to advertise the need for a new airport was to appeal to the need “to become internationalized” or “adjust to the new era of internationalization”. Perhaps the best example is the way candidates used the word “peace” to advertise their commitment to extending the system of benefits for former war veterans and their families. In many cases, relying on the word stem alone would have resulted in a mistaken classification of the topic. Thus, the process of reading the 690 manifestos whose proportion of content devoted to each of the 69 topics was the largest was unavoidable.

Testing the hypotheses articulated in Chapter 2 required a measure of the balance of

discussion devoted to public goods relative to private goods across each of the eight elections. If my theory is correct, I should observe elections being made up of a mix of public and private goods prior to 1996, because of the differing incentives facing conservative and opposition candidates, and being predominantly about public goods after 1996. I should also observe a shift in ownership of public goods. Opposition parties should have owned public goods prior to 1996, with the LDP joining the fray only after 1996.

In order to test my hypotheses, I needed to classify each topic as a bundle of public or a bundle of private goods. In order to do this, I sought to identify the *target of each topic*. To whom were each of the topics directed? Was the candidate speaking to Japanese citizens, local constituents, venture capitalists, rice farmers, white-collar workers, single mothers, or working women? Even though the candidate's manifesto was written for voters in her own district to read and not in anyone else's, I assumed that the target of the topic, *who* the candidate was speaking to while making her promises, could have been anybody.

After identifying the targets of each topic, I used data compiled from ministries and agencies in the Japanese government and other semi-public corporations to calculate the proportion of the Japanese population comprised of each target. While this is not foolproof, and will not identify all possible beneficiaries of a topic, I reasoned that basic population data would enable me to distinguish topics aimed at larger portions of the Japanese population from topics aimed at smaller portions of the population. Because I am not interested in defining what constitutes a purely public or a purely private good (as there is probably no such thing), I simply decided to define topics aimed at larger proportions of the population as national-level public goods and topics aimed at much-smaller proportions of the population as private goods.

5.3.1 Collecting the Targets of Each Topic

To collect the targets of each topic, I read through the manifestos whose proportion of content devoted to each of the 69 topics was the highest, making sure to focus only on how the word stems that identified that topic were used in the manifesto. I collected all targets mentioned in the topic-relevant areas of each manifesto. Tables 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7 display the targets associated with each of the 69 topics.

It is of course possible that there will be targets that were not mentioned in the manifesto but who the topic was also aimed at. For example, promises to improve the nation's education system or introduce a child allowance will benefit current parents directly, but may also interest future parents. Because there can be no end to speculation about hidden beneficiaries, I concentrated on identifying targets whose identities were explicitly mentioned in the manifestos. Extracting these targets was not difficult, as even if a candidate dressed up her plans for public works with fancy words like "lifestyle-related", "environmental" or "international", she almost always mentioned "construction companies" or "public works" at some point in her manifesto.¹³ Or, because LDA had identified the topic as being one about public works (albeit dressed up with an ideology of "community revitalization" or "hometown development"), I reasoned that even the target was not mentioned in one manifesto, it would be mentioned in another manifesto whose proportion of content devoted to that topic was high.

I made a distinction between targets that were national and targets that were local. Topics whose targets were citizens, women, young people, elderly persons, or disabled persons were almost always aimed at the citizens, women, young people, elderly persons, and dis-

¹³When a candidate mentioned "public works", I coded the target as being construction company workers.

abled persons of Japan. Topics whose targets were workers in transportation or workers in factories were invariably aimed at the workers of both industries who resided in the candidate's district. But when the target was workers in small- and medium-sized enterprises, workers in agriculture, forestry, and fishing, and workers in construction, the target was sometimes the industry itself (for example, when candidates promised to create a "Japan brand of agriculture" or "secure a budget for emergency loans to small- and medium-sized enterprises") and sometimes the workers of the industry who resided in the candidate's district. Because promising to fight for the industry as a whole is very different than promising to fight for workers in the industry who reside in the candidate's district (as this would mean less of the government's pie for workers in the industry who resided in other districts), it was necessary to distinguish the two. In Tables 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7, "agriculture, forestry, and fisheries workers", "construction company workers", and "workers in SMEs" refer to workers in those industries who resided in the candidate's district, whereas "the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industry", "the construction industry", and "SMEs" refer to the total number of workers in that particular industry across the entire country.¹⁴

I made the following adjustments to enable cross-target comparison. In topics Foreign and National Security Policy; Economic Recovery; Problems Facing Japan; Japan in the Global Economy; and Vision for Japan the topic target was "Japan". In Saving the Natural Environment it was "the natural environment". In From Concrete to People and Alternation of Government it was "people", and in Politics for the Civilian, Not For Bureaucrats it was "the civilian". I coded all of these targets to be "citizens". When a manifesto emphasized tax policy without a more specific target, such as "consumers" or "white-collar workers", I coded the target as being taxpayers.

¹⁴Approximately half of all the agriculture, forestry, and fishing targets were national and the other half were local. This was the same with small- and medium-sized enterprise targets. Only one construction target was national, Economic Stimulus, while the rest were local.

While one might assume that the target of Regional Devolution is residents of rural areas, I do not code it this way because the benefits of regional devolution will also apply to urban areas, whose fiscal autonomy is also controlled by the central government. Similarly, I do not code the target of promises to abolish highway tolls (in *From Concrete to People*; *Pensions and Child Allowance*; and *From Roads to Pension*) as residents of rural areas because the same policy will benefit residents of urban areas, who rely on food and other goods being supplied by rural areas. However, if the topic explicitly states the need to look after residents of rural areas, I code the target as such. I left out the three credit-claiming topics: *Credit-claiming: Lawmaking*; *Credit-claiming: District*; and *Credit-claiming: Posts*.

Table 5.5: The Targets of Each Topic, 1986-2009 (Topics 1-25)

Topic Number	Topic Label	Target(s) of Topic
1	postal privatization	citizens, white-collar workers, private-sector employees
2	from concrete to people	citizens, white-collar workers, parents, private-sector employees
3	appropriator for the district	workers in SMEs, construction company workers, agriculture, forestry, and fisheries workers, transportation workers, former military veterans, district residents
4	fixer-upper for the district	district residents, workers in SMEs, construction company workers
5	political reform, protect the constitution	citizens, consumers, women, elderly, farmers
6	foreign and national security policy	citizens, parents
7	no more unfair taxes, peace constitution	citizens, consumers, farmers
8	building a society kind to women	women, parents, elderly
9	primary industries and tourism	agriculture, forestry, fisheries workers, construction company workers, transportation workers, district residents
10	transportation	transportation workers, construction company workers, district residents
11	no tax increases, no U S -Japan alliance	citizens, consumers, farmers
12	economic recovery	SMEs, private-sector employees
13	vision for Japan	citizens, parents, women, elderly
14	politics for the civilian, not for bureaucrats	citizens
15	political and administrative reform	citizens, private-sector employees, taxpayers, NPOs
16	no more big business-favoritism	citizens, consumers, private-sector employees
17	regional devolution	citizens, private-sector employees, parents, SMEs
18	building a spiritually-rich community	district residents, construction company workers, workers in SMEs, workers in native industries, transportation workers
19	political reform	citizens
20	consumption tax is to fund the military	citizens, consumers, farmers, elderly,
21	no more LDP, no more public works	citizens
22	doing away with decayed LDP politics	citizens
24	welfare and medical care	citizens, consumers, elderly, parents
25	statesperson and appropriator	citizens, district residents, construction company workers, workers in SMEs, the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industry

Table 5.6 The Targets of Each Topic, 1986-2009 (Topics 26-47)

Topic Number	Topic Label	Target(s) of Topic
26	no American bases	residents of prefectures with U S bases, women, consumers
27	investing in young people	young people, parents
28	protecting people	citizens, unemployed, farmers, elderly, mid-career workers, white-collar workers, low-income earners, SMEs, workers in sub-contractors
29	opposition to military spending	citizens, elderly, parents, low-income earners
30	social security and child support	citizens, elderly, parents, unemployed, non-permanent workers
31	no reform of medical care	citizens, elderly, farmers
32	hometown development	district residents, workers in SMEs, construction company workers, agriculture forestry, and fisheries workers
33	revitalizing the local community	district residents, construction company workers, workers in native industries, agriculture, forestry and fisheries workers, workers in SMEs, transportation workers
34	no tax increase, no constitutional revision	citizens, consumers
35	tax cuts for everyone	consumers, white-collar workers, self-employed, SMEs, construction company workers, workers in native industries
36	no postal privatization	citizens, residents of rural areas, private-sector employees
37	stubbornly for peace and human rights	citizens, parents, women
38	local facilities and infrastructure	district residents, construction company workers, elderly, workers in SMEs workers in native industries transportation workers farmers
39	saving the natural environment	citizens
40	better education and child-care facilities	parents, citizens, women, private-sector employees, white-collar workers, non-home owners, venture capitalists, SMEs, NPOs, residents of urban areas
41	reforming Japan	citizens, parents
42	pensions and child allowance	citizens, parents, elderly, farmers, the unemployed
43	security and reassurance	citizens, parents, private-sector employees, SMEs, residents of rural areas
44	post offices	citizens
45	no consumption tax, no constitutional revision	citizens, consumers
47	building a safe, reassuring community	district residents, workers in SMEs, construction company workers, agriculture forestry, and fisheries workers transportation workers, workers in native industries the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industry

Table 5.7. The Targets of Each Topic, 1986-2009 (Topics 48-69)

Topic Number	Topic Label	Target(s) of Topic
48	love of thy hometown	district residents, workers in SMEs, construction company workers, agriculture, forestry, and fisheries workers
49	no more iron triangle	workers in native industries
50	catching up with the rest of Japan	citizens, the agriculture forestry, and fishing industry district residents, workers in SMEs, construction company workers, agriculture, forestry, and fisheries workers, workers in native industries, transportation workers
51	problems facing Japan	citizens
52	agriculture, forestry, fisheries	agriculture, forestry and fisheries workers
53	small government	citizens, elderly, taxpayers
54	economic stimulus	citizens, SMEs, the construction industry
55	fiscal reconstruction	citizens
56	health and leisure infrastructure	district residents, construction company workers, workers in SMEs, agriculture, forestry, and fisheries workers
58	benefits for organized groups	workers in SMEs, owners of small shops construction company workers, agriculture, forestry, and fishing industry, workers in native industries former military veterans, elderly, disabled, single mothers, working women, factory workers, orphans from traffic accident
59	alternation of government	citizens
60	no other party can be trusted	citizens, taxpayers
61	housing and tax policy	citizens, low-income earners, non-home owners, part-time workers
62	worry about earthquakes and nuclear accidents	citizens
63	liberal democracy is best!	citizens
64	free medical care, no military spending	citizens, elderly, parents, non-permanent workers, private-sector employees
65	not a strong military but a kind society	citizens, parents, agriculture, forestry, and fishing industry, elderly
66	social security	citizens, white-collar workers, disabled, unemployed, non-permanent workers, taxpayers
67	nursing care	citizens, elderly, workers, women, disabled, sick
68	from roads to pension	citizens, parents
69	Japan in global economy	citizens

5.3.2 Calculating the Percentage of Each Target in Japan's Population

This procedure identified forty unique targets. To calculate the percentage of each target in Japan's total population, I compiled data from a number of different sources. Data on the number of citizens, women, young people, elderly, parents, single parents, non-home owners, self-employed, white-collar workers, unemployed, working women, mid-career workers, farmers, and workers in the construction, transportation, and agriculture, forestry, and fishing industries came from the Final Report of the 2005 Population Census (Director General for Policy Planning 2006) and previous census reports. The census is taken every five years, so I present results from the five years between 1985 and 2005, which correspond approximately to my time frame, which is 1986 to 2009.¹⁵

To calculate the number of private sector employees, I subtracted the number of national and local government employees from the total number of employees in Japan's population. Data on local government employees from 1985 to 2005 was taken from the Survey on Wages of Local Government Employees (Local Public Service Personnel Department 2011), and data on national government employees was taken from the Survey on Recruitment of National Government Employees of General Class (Bureau of Human Resources

¹⁵Because citizens are taxed on both their income and their consumption, I calculated taxpayers and consumers as "citizens" I calculated the number of "parents" and the number of "single parents" myself from data on the number of parent-child households; the number of father-child households; and the number of mother-child households I calculated the number of "self-employed" by combining the number of people who owned a business and employed others with the number of people who owned a business and did not employ others. I defined "white collar workers" as employees working in the tertiary sector, "young people" as the proportion of the population under 35, and "mid-career workers" as employees between the ages of 30 and 50 The data on workers in the transportation industry includes workers in the communications industry in 1985, 1990, and 1995, but not after that Some of the tables from which this data was compiled can be found on the Japanese government's statistics portal <http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/kokusei/2005/nihon/index.htm>

2011)¹⁶ Data on the number of employees with non-permanent contracts, the number of employees who were part-time, and the number of employees who were “dispatch workers” was taken from the The Special Survey of the Labour Force (Director General for Policy Planning 2011*b*) and Labour Force Survey (Detailed Tabulation) (Director General for Policy Planning 2011*a*)¹⁷ Following usage of the term in the Japanese press, I defined low-income earners as those who earn less than 3,000,000 yen per year, which corresponds to approximately \$30,000 USD (in 2011) I compiled data from 1985 to 2005 from the Tax Statistics Division of Japan’s National Tax Agency¹⁸

I adopt the government’s definition of a small- and medium-sized enterprise, which is taken from the Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises Basic Law The definition differs across industry For an enterprise to be considered an SME, it must have fewer than 300 employees working for it For enterprises in the wholesale and service industries to be considered, they must have fewer than 100 employees, and for enterprises in the food and retail sector to be considered, they must have fewer than 50 employees The data were compiled from the Japan Small Business Association, and include every person involved in SMEs from 1985 to 2005, including owners, workers with permanent and non-permanent contracts, and part-time workers¹⁹ Data on the number of factory workers from 1985 to

¹⁶The data in table form can be found in the Japan Statistical Yearbook, 2011
<http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/nenkan/index.htm>

¹⁷The data in table form can be found on <http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/roudou/1ngindex.htm> I could only find data on dispatch workers from as early as 2000

¹⁸At present, the data contains those who were in full time employment and earned less than 3,000,000 yen per year A better measure would include those who were not in full-time employment but who earned less than 3,000,000 yen per year The tables from which this data was compiled can be found on the NTA’s website <http://www.nta.go.jp/tokei/kokuzeicho/jikeiretsu/01-02.htm>

¹⁹The data was compiled from surveys carried out by the Economic Structure Statistics Division of the Statistical Survey Department, the Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications The tables from which this data was compiled can be found on the JSBA’s website <http://www.jsbri.or.jp/new->

2005 was compiled from the Manufacturing Industry's Statistics Archive at the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry²⁰

There are thirteen Japanese prefectures that house a U S military base²¹ The bases stayed put across the twenty years, only the population of the prefectures changed The figures from 1985 to 2005 represent the proportion of Japanese citizens who lived with a base in their prefecture Data on the number of residents who live in urban areas and those who live in rural areas for each of the five years was taken from Historical Statistics of Japan (Statistical Survey Department 2011) The Japanese government defines rural areas as gun (district) and urban areas as shi (city), and calculates the numbers of citizens residing in both I followed this classification²² The number of district residents was calculated from the total number of eligible voters at the time of the 1986, 1990, 1996, 2000, and 2005 HOR elections, divided by the total number of districts used in each election²³

Data on the number of people receiving the government's pension for former war veterans was compiled from the Social Security Statistics Yearbook, various years (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2003) Data on the number of people suffering from a disability was compiled from the Welfare Statistics Division of the Min-
[hp/statistics/s1.html#1-1](http://statistics/s1.html#1-1)

²⁰The tables from which this data was compiled can be found on <http://www.meti.go.jp/statistics/tyo/kougyo/archives/index.html>

²¹I am grateful to Matsuo Akitaka for supplying me with data on U S military bases at the level of the municipality, which was collected for Matsumoto and Matsuo (2011) I aggregated this up to the level of prefecture

²²Table 2.7, from which I compiled this data, can be found on <http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/chouki/02.htm>

²³The figure for 1985 comes from the 1986 election, and the figure for 1995 comes from the 1996 election The average number of district residents changes in 1995 because of the introduction of single member districts From 2000 onwards I took the total number of eligible voters in the single-member district portion of the mixed system, rather than the total number of eligible voters in the PR portion This figure does not include residents of the population who were non-citizens or those under the voting age

istry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, which certifies citizens if they suffer from a mental or physical disability. I combined the number of citizens with a physical disability (Welfare Statistics Division 2009b) with the number of citizens with a mental disability (Welfare Statistics Division 2009a) to generate a total number of people living with a disability. For the number of sick people, I used the Comprehensive Survey of Living Condition of the People on Health and Welfare (Statistics and Information Department 2007), which lists the number of people with “a disease or illness of concern”²⁴. I was unable to find good data on the number of children orphaned by traffic accidents. However, I collected the number of annual fatalities by traffic accident, which is compiled by the Traffic Planning Division of the Traffic Bureau of the National Police Agency²⁵.

As discussed above, I needed to calculate district-level measures for the numbers of workers involved in transportation, construction, agriculture, forestry, and fishing, and small- and medium-sized enterprises. I used the total number of employees in each industry divided by the number of electoral districts in the entire country. While this is a rough estimate, it is sufficient for my purpose, which is to illustrate the difference between topics aimed at large groups of people and topics aimed at smaller groups of people, which is my criteria for classifying topics as public or private goods²⁶. The results are in Table 5.8.

From the list of targets associated with each topic (Tables 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7) and the

²⁴I only have data for one year, 2007.

²⁵I could not find data on the number of workers in sub-contracting, the number of workers in ‘native industries’ (the definition of which differs across prefecture and electoral district), the number of small shopkeepers, the number of venture capitalists, or the number of people working in NPOs. I have left these out of the analysis.

²⁶There were 131 electoral districts in 1985 and 1990, and 300 electoral districts in 1995, 2000, and 2005. Thus, the figures presented for 1985 and 1990 are the total number of employees in the industry at the national-level, divided by 130. The figures presented for 1995, 2000, and 2005 are the total number of employees in the industry at the national-level, divided by 300.

Chapter 5. Topic Selection, Classification, and Validation

Table 5.8: Percentage of Each Target in Japan's Total Population, 1985-2005

Topic Target	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	Mean %
Orphans From Traffic Accidents	0.008	0.009	0.009	0.007	0.005	0.007
Transportation Workers	0.022	0.023	0.010	0.008	0.008	0.014
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries Workers	0.034	0.027	0.010	0.008	0.008	0.018
Construction Workers	0.033	0.036	0.018	0.017	0.014	0.024
Factory Workers	0.073	0.073	0.029	0.026	0.021	0.044
Workers in SMEs	0.265	0.284	0.126	0.135	0.129	0.188
District Residents	0.545	0.558	0.259	0.264	0.269	0.379
Single Mothers	0.453	0.447	0.422	0.493	0.586	0.480
Dispatch Workers				0.260	0.830	0.545
Former Military Veterans	1.716	1.516	1.314	1.109	0.893	1.310
Unemployed	1.289	1.084	2.291	2.458	3.048	2.034
Farmers	3.615	3.103	2.111	1.841	1.536	2.441
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing Industry	4.471	3.553	3.042	2.500	2.321	3.177
Disabled	2.735	3.099	3.443	3.831	4.300	3.482
Construction Industry	4.351	4.726	5.280	4.956	4.220	4.707
The Self-Employed	7.410	6.719	6.224	5.662	5.279	6.259
Part-time Workers	4.122	5.744	6.570	8.493	8.766	6.739
Non-permanent Workers	5.411	7.127	7.972	10.03	12.78	8.664
Low-Income Earners	15.48	12.21	11.85	11.87	13.24	12.93
Elderly	10.30	12.05	14.54	17.34	20.09	14.86
Working Women	18.73	19.77	20.40	20.27	20.17	19.87
Residents of Rural Areas	23.26	22.63	21.95	21.32	13.70	20.57
Mid-Career Workers	23.67	23.17	22.12	20.35	20.29	21.92
Parents	27.08	26.77	26.42	26.33	26.14	26.55
Non-home Owners	29.92	29.98	30.56	29.62	28.69	29.75
The Sick					30.51	30.51
White-collar Workers	27.63	29.46	31.57	31.90	32.35	30.58
SMEs	34.75	37.16	37.86	40.40	38.80	37.79
Young People	49.64	23.55	44.10	41.72	38.72	39.55
Residents of Prefectures with U.S. Bases	44.48	44.89	45.04	45.29	45.76	45.09
Private-sector Employees	44.86	46.63	47.82	46.47	45.26	46.21
Women	50.85	50.90	50.96	51.07	51.20	51.00
Residents of Urban Areas	76.74	77.37	78.05	78.68	86.30	79.43
Citizens	99.30	99.13	98.92	98.67	98.43	98.89

This table presents a list of all the unique targets discovered in the topics, and the percentage of Japan's population comprised of each target. The targets are listed from the smallest percentage of the population (children orphaned in traffic accidents) to the largest (Japanese citizens). This table reveals that topics whose targets are "district residents" are aimed at only 0.4% of Japan's total population, whereas topics whose targets are "citizens" are aimed at 99%.

data on the percentage of each target in Japan’s total population (Table 5.8), I calculated the percentage of the population each topic was aimed at. The results are in Table 5.9 and are visually-depicted in Figure 5.9. Given that the number of targets per topic ranged from one target to twelve, I presented the target with the highest percentage for each topic. Thus, if the targets were “citizens”, “parents”, and “women”, I presented the percentage for citizens. If the targets were “district residents”, “workers in SMEs”, “and construction company workers”, I presented the percentage for district residents, which was higher than the latter two.

Altogether, this procedure identified 14 private goods-topics and 52 public goods-topics in the 69 topics.²⁷ Figure 5.9 demonstrates the vast difference between topics aimed at large groups of people (citizens, women, private-sector employees, and young people) and topics aimed at very small groups (district residents, the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industry, and construction company workers). In the figure, the dark bars are topics the procedure classified as public goods, and the lighter bars are the topics I classified as private goods. Topic 58 was classified as a private good because only two out of its twelve targets had percentages over 4%. These were elderly (14.86%) and working women (19.87%). Also, my qualitative interpretation indicated that this was clearly a private good.

Table 5.9: Classification of Each Topic as a Public or Private Good (Topics 1-69)

Number	Topic Title	%	Public/Private
1	postal privatization	98.89	pub
2	from concrete to people	98.89	pub
3	appropriator for the district	0.379	priv

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²⁷The remaining three topics were the credit-claiming topics, which I did not code either way

Table 5.9 – continued from previous page

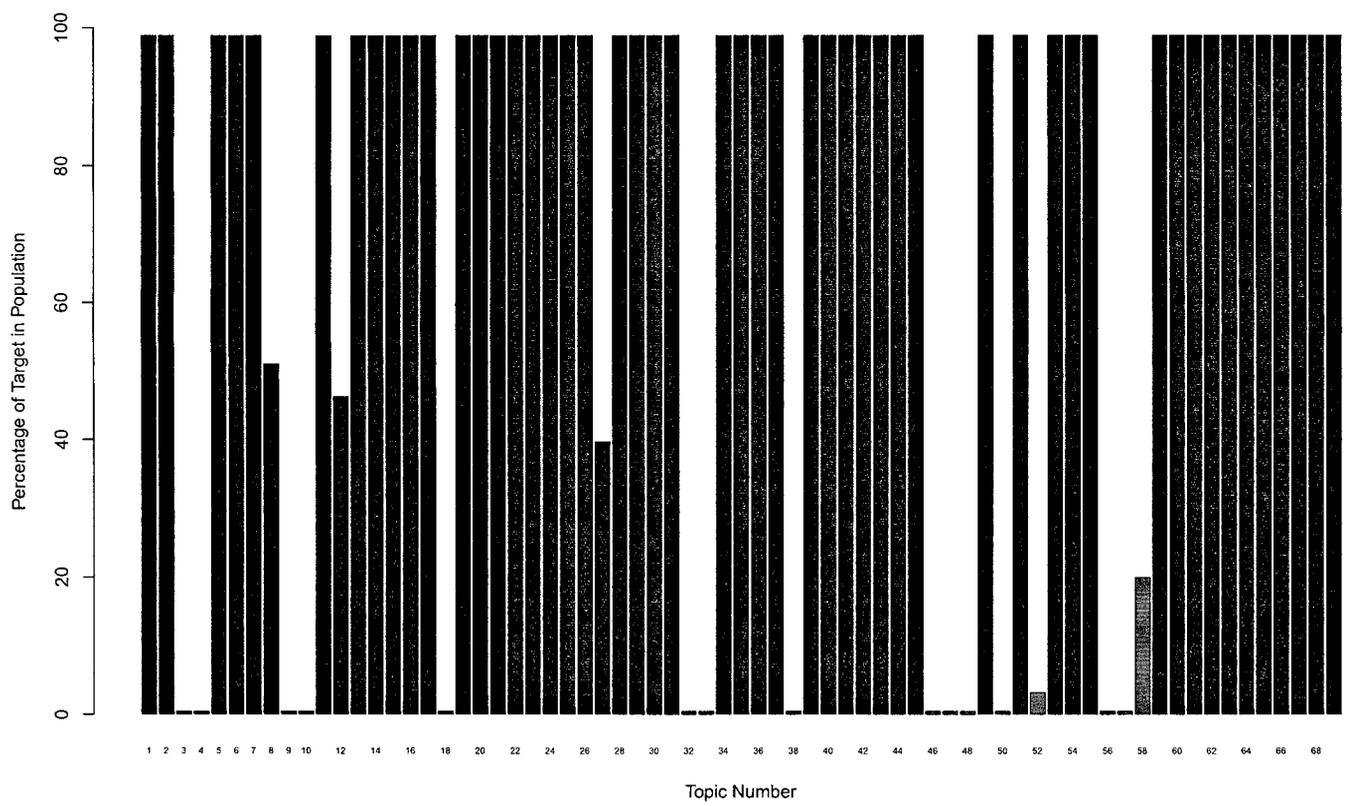
Number	Topic Title	%	Public/Private
4	fixer-upper for the district	0.379	priv
5	political reform, protect the constitution	98.89	pub
6	foreign and national security policy	98.89	pub
7	no more unfair taxes, peace constitution	98.89	pub
8	building a society kind to women	51.00	pub
9	primary industries and tourism	0.379	priv
10	transportation	0.379	priv
11	no tax increases, no U.S.-Japan alliance	98.89	pub
12	economic recovery	46.21	pub
13	vision for Japan	98.89	pub
14	politics for the civilian, not for bureaucrats	98.89	pub
15	political and administrative reform	98.89	pub
16	no more big business-favoritism	98.89	pub
17	regional devolution	98.89	pub
18	building a spiritually-rich community	0.379	priv
19	political reform	98.89	pub
20	consumption tax is to fund the military	98.89	pub
21	no more LDP, no more public works	98.89	pub
22	doing away with decayed LDP politics	98.89	pub
23	credit-claiming: lawmaking	98.89	pub
24	welfare and medical care	98.89	pub
25	statesperson and appropriator	98.89	pub
26	no American bases	98.89	pub
27	investing in young people	39.55	pub
28	protecting people	98.89	pub
29	opposition to military spending	98.89	pub
30	social security and child support	98.89	pub
31	no reform of medical care	98.89	pub
32	hometown development	0.379	priv
33	revitalizing the local community	0.379	priv
34	no tax increase, no constitutional revision	98.89	pub
35	tax cuts for everyone	98.89	pub
36	no postal privatization	98.89	pub
37	stubbornly for peace and human rights	98.89	pub
38	local facilities and infrastructure	0.379	priv
39	saving the natural environment	98.89	pub

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Table 5.9 – continued from previous page

Number	Topic Title	%	Public/Private
40	better education and child-care facilities	98.89	pub
41	reforming japan	98.89	pub
42	pensions and child allowance	98.89	pub
43	security and reassurance	98.89	pub
44	post offices	98.89	pub
45	no consumption tax, no constitutional revision	98.89	pub
46	credit-claiming: district	0.379	priv
47	building a safe, reassuring community	0.379	priv
48	love of thy hometown	0.379	priv
49	no more iron triangle	98.89	pub
50	catching up with the rest of Japan	0.379	priv
51	problems facing Japan	98.89	pub
52	agriculture, forestry, fisheries	3.177	priv
53	small government	98.89	pub
54	economic stimulus	98.89	pub
55	fiscal reconstruction	98.89	pub
56	health and leisure infrastructure	0.379	priv
57	credit-claiming: posts	0.379	priv
58	benefits for organized groups	19.87	priv
59	alternation of government	98.89	pub
60	no other party can be trusted	98.89	pub
61	housing and tax policy	98.89	pub
62	earthquakes and nuclear accidents	98.89	pub
63	liberal democracy is best!	98.89	pub
64	free medical care, no military spending	98.89	pub
65	not a strong military but a kind society	98.89	pub
66	social security	98.89	pub
67	nursing care	98.89	pub
68	from roads to pension	98.89	pub
69	Japan in global economy	98.89	pub

Figure 5.9: Classification of Topics as Public or Private Goods based on the Percentage of Japan's Population it is Targeted Toward. This figure illustrates the vast difference between topics aimed at larger proportions of the Japanese population (the dark bars) and topics aimed at smaller proportions (the lighter bars). The dark bars are topics I classified as public goods, whereas the lighter bars are topics I classified as private goods.



5.4 Validation of the Aggregated Private and Public Goods Topics

While there are many ways to validate these aggregated topics, which were created by combining all private goods topics and all public goods topics, I conclude this chapter by using the aggregated private goods topic to show that a recently-made argument about elections in the U.S. also seems to be true for Japan. Tackling the empirical puzzle of the striking under-representation of female legislators in the U.S. (and in other countries), Iversen and Rosenbluth (2010) argue that electoral systems that require close and long-standing ties to constituents place women at a disadvantage relative to men. Politicians are only able to deliver goodies to their constituents if they are members of the right committees and if they possess bargaining power relative to other politicians, both of which require long, continuous political careers. The authors suggest that men are more able to commit to long and continuous careers than their female counterparts. This is an intuitive hypothesis. I examined the validity of my aggregated private goods topic by assessing whether this also seems to be true in Japan, a system that I have already argued was more personal-vote oriented than the U.S. political system.

Understanding that they faced this disadvantage, I reasoned that female candidates should be less likely to promise private goods than male candidates. For all candidates competing in all elections, I found that the mean proportion of each manifesto devoted to private goods for female candidates was 8.7%, compared to a whopping 24% of all discussion for male candidates. This difference in means test had a p-value of <0.001 . However, it may be that opposition parties have comparatively more women than ruling party candi-

dates. Restricting the analysis to LDP candidates only, I found a smaller but nevertheless still significant difference in level of discussion between male and female candidates. The mean proportion of each manifesto devoted to private goods for female LDP candidates was 31%, whereas the mean proportion of each manifesto devoted to private goods for male LDP candidates was 44%. This difference in means test had a p-value of <0.001 . Figure 5.10 plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to private goods in the manifestos of female LDP candidates running in all elections next to the mean proportion of discussion in the manifestos of male LDP candidates.

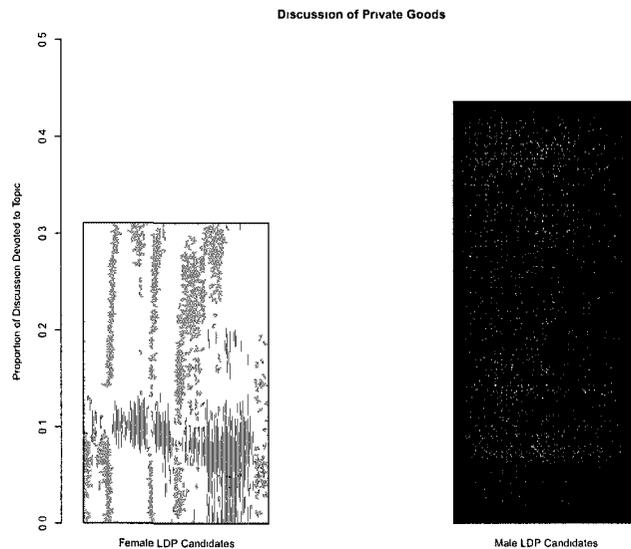


Figure 5.10: Female LDP candidates promise fewer private goods than male LDP candidates. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to private goods in the manifestos of female LDP candidates running in all elections next to the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to public goods in the manifestos of male LDP candidates running in all elections.

This process of validation has revealed that both the individual topics and the aggregated private and public goods topics can be used to test theories about the electoral strate-

Chapter 5. Topic Selection, Classification, and Validation

gies adopted by politicians such as the one offered in this dissertation. It is this testing to which I now turn.

Chapter 6

Campaigning Under SNTV-MMD: Conservative Politicians Ignore Foreign and National Security Policy

“Organizing the campaign of Arima sensei was so difficult. Honestly, I spent most of my time trying to convince constituents that while he cared about foreign policy, he wouldn’t forget about them. I would have to screen his notes every time he gave a speech, just to make sure there wasn’t anything in them that would give them the wrong impression. They had that impression, anyway, and there wasn’t much I could do about it. I’m telling you, every election was a battle.”¹

“We couldn’t really talk about these issues under the old electoral system because we didn’t benefit from talking about them. So no one talked about them. No one did anything. It was very irresponsible of us.”²

¹Interview with the former longtime secretary of an LDP politician who was also Defense Agency Chief, August 2009. Sensei means “teacher”, and it is how people refer to politicians in Japan.

²Interview, Member of the House of Representatives since 1986, September 10, 2009.

The empirical puzzle this dissertation seeks to explain is the turnaround in attention to foreign and national security policy by conservative Japanese politicians in the mid-1990's. Why conservative politicians ignored foreign and national security policy for four decades and why they suddenly started paying attention in the mid 1990's is not well-explained by existing theories in international relations. The theory presented in Chapter 2 argued that this turnaround can best be explained by a shift in the electoral strategies of conservative politicians. Whereas promising private goods for a subset of voters in one's district was the strategy demanded of conservative politicians by SNTV-MMD, which was used in elections to the House of Representatives until 1994, public goods for the national-level median voter is the winning strategy under MMM, which has been used since 1994. This chapter explained that foreign and national security policy, by virtue of its non-targetability, should have been avoided at all costs by conservative politicians competing in elections prior to 1994, and taken up enthusiastically by conservative politicians in elections since 1994.

A second reason conservative politicians found foreign and national security policy unappetizing under SNTV-MMD was because it was owned by the opposition. As Chapter 2 explained, politicians from the major opposition parties operated under a completely different set of incentives prior to 1994. Because most of these politicians were not facing a same-district co-partisan challenger, they could build and rely on a party label. Being aimed at voters across the nation, party labels are usually comprised of stances on national-level public goods. The need to get elected in a multi-member district, however, pushed these politicians away from articulating the median voter position on these goods, and toward articulating ideologically-extreme positions. While they had strong incentives to use public goods, in other words, they had equally-strong incentives to adopt extreme positions on these goods. Chapter 2 provided qualitative evidence from the historical record that

Chapter 6. Campaigning Under SNTV-MMD: Conservative Politicians Ignore Foreign and National Security Policy

suggests that foreign and national security policy played a central role in the strategies of two of these four opposition parties. I argue that the product of these diametrically-opposed incentives was that opposition parties came to own foreign and national security policy in postwar Japan, and conservative politicians, their hands tied, let them.

The previous two chapters detailed the steps undertaken to collect and prepare data with which I could test these hypotheses. Chapter 4 demonstrated that the statistical topic model LDA discovered meaningful topics in my corpus of 7,497 candidate election manifestos, which contain the manifestos produced by all serious candidates competing in the eight elections between 1986 and 2009. In this chapter, I use the topics discovered in the 2,520 manifestos produced by all serious candidates running in the 1986, 1990, and 1993 elections, the last three elections under SNTV-MMD, to test the first half of my theory.

I test two claims. The first is that conservative politicians paid no attention to foreign and national security policy prior to the mid-1990's because they were so busy promising and providing private goods to subsets of voters in their districts, all of whom could have easily shifted their support to another candidate from the same party in the event they decided their first-choice candidate was less committed to pursuing their interests as she should have been. Indirect evidence for how readily voters switched their support under SNTV-MMD is found in Reed (1994), who describes the modal electoral competition under SNTV-MMD as resembling a game of musical chairs between the incumbents of a district and a single challenger. Who would remain the incumbent and who would end up the challenger in any particular election was anybody's guess. The second claim tested in this chapter is that candidates from the opposition parties used these issues with the gusto that the secondary literature leads us to expect.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section describes what I should

observe in the data if my theory were correct, and what I should observe in the data if my theory were incorrect. It also describes what I should observe in the data if the major alternative explanation, that the degree of attention paid to these issues by conservative politicians was determined by changes in the external environment, was correct. The second section focuses on the electoral strategies of conservative candidates. I present strong evidence that they ignored foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD and adopted the strategies the theory predicts. I provide evidence that supports the contention that it was the need to constantly demonstrate one's credentials as a provider that prevented even the most senior politicians from paying attention to foreign and national security policy. I also show that as expected, foreign and national security policy expertise was not something to flaunt under SNTV-MMD, it was something to hide.

The third section focuses on the electoral strategies of opposition party candidates. I present strong evidence that candidates from the Japan Socialist Party and Japan Communist Party used these issues with the gusto the secondary literature has led us to expect. I show that the positions adopted by these candidates were ideologically-extreme. I show that the absence of intra-party competition for most candidates from the opposition parties allowed them to carve out and rely on their respective party labels during campaigns. I present evidence that suggests that the opposition parties did in fact own foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD. Throughout the chapter, I use qualitative interpretations of topics to present a picture of what campaigning looked like under SNTV-MMD. I demonstrate that many other aspects of the electoral strategies adopted by conservative and opposition party candidates are in line with what the theory predicts, such as how they talk to their constituents, how they sell themselves as candidates, and how they criticize the government, politics, and policy in general.

6.1 Observable Implications of the Theory: Electoral Strategies Under SNTV-MMD

If the theory presented in Chapter 2 is correct, we should observe conservative candidates adopting electoral strategies comprised of private goods for a subset of voters in their district under SNTV-MMD. We should observe these candidates using topics the previous chapter classified as private-goods topics more than topics the previous chapter classified as public-goods topics. We should observe discussion of private goods increasing as the level of intra-party competition increases. If we do observe discussion of public goods by conservative candidates, this discussion should be restricted to candidates who face lower levels of intra-party competition and candidates who are running in urban districts, as voters in urban areas are notoriously more difficult to ply with private goods. We should not observe any party-election-year topics for conservative candidates, as their incentives are to balkanize rather than compete on a coherent party label. We should observe candidates staying right away from discussion of foreign and national security policy. Findings that would cast doubt on the explanatory power of the theory presented would be the converse of each of these five items, and especially if we observed conservative candidates relying more on public-goods topics than on private-goods topics and discussing foreign and national security policy.

If the theory presented in Chapter 2 is correct, we should observe opposition party candidates adopting electoral strategies comprised of national-level public goods. We should observe these candidates using topics the previous chapter classified as public-goods topics more than topics the previous chapter classified as private-goods topics. We should observe

the stances being adopted on these topics as extreme and not anywhere near the position of the median voter. We should observe foreign and national security policy playing a central role in the electoral strategies of candidates from the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) and the Japan Communist Party (JCP). We should observe party-election-year topics for these candidates, as candidates from the opposition parties have the incentive to carve out and rely on a party label. Findings that would cast doubt on the explanatory power of the theory presented would be the converse of each of these four items, and especially if we observed opposition candidates relying more on private-goods topics than on public-goods topics and if we did not observe opposition party candidates discussing foreign and national security policy.

If the alternative hypothesis, that the degree of attention paid to these issues by conservative politicians is determined primarily by changes in the external environment, is correct, we should observe the level of discussion of these issues increasing when an important change occurs in the international or regional balance of power. We should observe candidates of all parties shifting to discuss the ramifications of the change for Japan's foreign and national security policy. Being from different parties, we are likely to observe the taking of radically different positions on the change, but we would still expect the subject of the discussion to concern the change and its ramifications for Japan.

There were one minor and two major incidents that occurred between 1986 and 1993 that a neo-realist would expect Japanese politicians to pay attention to. The minor incident was the blowing up of a South Korean airliner by a North Korean spy in 1987. This should have been clear evidence that the intentions of Japan's northern neighbor were belligerent and not peaceful, and should have provided further evidence of the culpability of North Korea in the abductions that had happened earlier that decade (Hagstrom and Soderberg

2006). The second was the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the collapse of communist regimes in eastern Europe after that, and the eventual disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991. Given that the U.S.-Japan alliance had been formed to meet this threat, and the location and force structure of Japan's SDF had been calibrated over time to protect the Japanese homeland from it, its sudden disappearance should have caused Japanese politicians some concern. The third was Saddam's invasion of Kuwait in August of 1990, and the U.S.-led, U.N.-authorized effort mounted to oust Saddam, which resulted in the Gulf War in January of the 1991. The expectations thrust on Japan by the U.S. and the international community at this time should have given Japanese politicians at least some food for thought about how to approach incidents that may become more common in the post-Cold War world.

6.2 Electoral Strategies of Conservative Candidates under SNTV-MMD

My hypothesis is that we should observe conservative candidates ignoring foreign and national security policy completely and candidates from the JSP and the JCP using them with great gusto. Do we observe this? The topic labels presented in the previous chapter showed that there were several topics that appeared to touch upon foreign and national security policy, and two topics that appeared to be exhaustively about these issues. Of these two, Topic 6 ("Foreign and National Security Policy"), was an issue topic and Topic 26 ("No American Bases") was a party-election year topic. What this means is that the former was talked about by candidates of more than one party in more than one election, and the

latter was talked about primarily by candidates of a single party in one election, in this case, candidates running from the New-Socialist Party (Shin-Shakaitō) in the 1996 election. As I discuss below, most of the other topics that touched upon foreign and national security policy were also party-election year topics. They were party-election year topics adopted by opposition candidates, which is exactly what the theory predicts. First, however, it is necessary to validate my selection of Topic 6. Can this topic be used to test my hypothesis?

6.2.1 Foreign and National Security Policy (Topic 6)

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic described the kind of foreign and national security policy they would seek for Japan. While some candidates promised to realize a “self-interested foreign and national security policy”, others promised to realize an “independent foreign policy” or an “independent national security policy” (jishu jiritsu). Other candidates stated their unalterable commitment to realizing “a foreign policy centered on the Asia-Pacific region”. Others promised to “build better relationships with Asian countries”. Others promised to work towards an improvement in relations with countries surrounding Japan, such as China, Russia, South Korea, and Taiwan, including the strengthening of economic and cultural ties with these countries. Several candidates promised to secure a permanent seat for Japan on the United Nations Security Council. Another candidate promised to “pursue a 360-degrees foreign policy to suit the 21st century”.

Many candidates discussed Japan’s relationship with the U.S. Several candidates promised to “realize an alliance in which Japan and the U.S. are equal partners”. One candidate declared that he would “improve trust in the U.S.-Japan alliance”. “While Japan ought to base

all of its foreign policy on the U.S.-Japan alliance”, another candidate explained, “Japan ought to continue formulating its own, independent opinion and state this clearly to the international community”. Other candidates simply promised to realize “a peaceful foreign policy based on international cooperation and the U.S.-Japan relationship”. Alongside articulations of what many candidates saw as the “guiding principles” of Japan’s foreign and national security policy were more specific promises, such as strengthening Japan’s defense capabilities so that it could “adequately respond to threats” and “deal with emergency crisis situations”. One candidate simply promised to create a “defense force capable of protecting Japan’s peace and prosperity”. Another promised to “respect the principles of peace and the three non-nuclear principles”. Another candidate told voters that he would create “a people’s army” and “a Japan that can defend its nation, its land, and its people”.

Alongside more explicit statements of the kind of foreign and national security policy candidates would pursue, candidates included promises to create “an independent constitution for Japan”. One candidate told voters that he would retain the renunciation of offensive war in the Constitution but revise the clause to permit Japan to “maintain a military for defensive purposes”. The new constitution, one candidate explained, “should clarify Japan’s national identity”. Another candidate promised to revise the Constitution “to clarify the constitutional status of the Self Defense Forces”. Several LDP candidates were more specific, promising to “complete the LDP’s draft proposal for constitutional revision by November 15.” Candidates referred to more specific problems, such as North Korea, promising to “rescue Japanese citizens abducted by North Korea”. Others told their constituents that they would consider applying economic sanctions on the North. Others candidates promised to resolve “the dual problems of the North Korean nuclear threat and the North’s abduction of Japanese citizens”. With regard to specific issues, one candidate

promised to “use ODA to help solve the problem of terrorism” and others promised to “withdraw the SDF from Iraq by December and conduct recovery assistance that is more appropriate to Japan”. Others promised to “study Japan’s capacity to exercise collective self-defense”. Yet others mentioned the need to resolve the dispute over ownership of the Takeshima Islands.

“Education” appeared as a word stem in this topic because many candidates included in their manifestos a promise to revise Japan’s Fundamental Law on Education to “correct the defects of Japan’s postwar education”, “imbue children with the creativity and independence necessary to function in international society”, and “promote moral education in schools”. One candidate expressed concern that Japanese people were “losing confidence in their nation”. He promised to build a Japan in which “you can feel proud of”. Aspects of Japan this candidate believed should make Japanese people proud were its “traditional culture and the strong work ethic and sincerity of Japanese people”. Another candidate told voters, “This election offers you the chance to elect a government capable of creating a nation you, the Japanese people, will feel proud of”. Still others sought to impress upon voters the importance of creating “a truly-independent nation, with Japan’s traditions, culture, and history up front and center”. Because revision of the Fundamental Law on Education is considered an integral part of the revisionist’s agenda for a tougher Japanese nation (Hagstrom and Williamsson 2009; Lebowitz and McNeill 2007), the inclusion of this word does not detract from the substantive meaning of the topic.

6.2.2 Why Topic 6 Offers an Excellent Test of My Hypothesis

As this interpretation illustrates, this topic is most definitely about foreign and national

security policy. I reasoned that it would not offer a good test of my hypothesis, however, if either of the following two conditions were true. First, if the issues comprising this topic were so particular to the MMM period that they could not have been spoken about by candidates in the SNTV-MMD period (because they simply didn't exist), Topic 6 would be biased in favor of my hypothesis. Second, if the words candidates used to discuss this topic differed substantially across the two time periods (which could occur if candidates adopted different positions across the two periods), then Topic 6 is likely to reflect discussion of the topic in one time period only. It is important to address both possibilities.

Addressing the first condition is tricky because the argument I am making in this dissertation *predicts* the popping up of seemingly-new issues on the agenda after the introduction of MMM. As I explained in the first chapter, while these issues might appear to be new, they are not. All of the issues politicians grabbed hold of under MMM existed for them to grab hold of under SNTV-MMD. This was borne out in the qualitative interpretation presented above. Almost all of the statements LDA classified as belonging to this topic (statements about the importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance; the need to resolve the abduction issue; the need for a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council; the need to establish emergency legislation; the need for Japan to write its own constitution; the need for Japan to revise the Fundamental Law on Education, etc.), could just as easily have been talked about by candidates competing in the 1986 election than by candidates competing in the 2009 election. We should observe their "popping up" on the agenda under MMM not because they are unique to this period but because conservative politicians understand the electoral benefits they bring and have chosen to make them part of their electoral campaigns.

Addressing the first condition is possible if I examine discussion about incidents that happened under MMM that were completely exogenous to Japan. Two such incidents

are the war on terror and the Iraq War, which appeared on the agenda in 2001 and 2003, respectively. I reasoned that if most of the statements LDA classified as being part of this topic concerned how Japan ought to respond to *these events*, as opposed to more general statements about Japan's foreign and national security policy, this would suggest not only that the topic was biased toward MMM, but that the discussion was being driven by these events and not by the electoral reform.

While the interpretation presented above was based on a close reading of only ten manifestos, it indicates that statements about the Iraq war and the war on terror were much less frequent than general statements about the principles guiding Japan's foreign policy and the importance of its relations with the U.S. and Asian countries. The dwarfing of concrete statements with more-general statements suggests that the topic is not biased in favor of my hypothesis. Could these more-general statements have been connected to a desire to respond to the situation presented by the Iraq War, in which case, the topic could still be biased? Certainly. But one of these two incidents, the Iraq War, has an SNTV-MMD counterpart: the Gulf War of 1990. As I have argued elsewhere, the issues raised by both incidents for the Japanese government were almost identical (Catalinac 2007). How should Japan support its ally? Should Japan provide boots on the ground? In what form? For how long? Both incidents happened in the exact same region of the world (the Middle East), involved the exact same actors (Saddam Hussein, Iraq, the U.S., and the U.N.), and occurred against the exact same backdrop of a weakened U.S. security guarantee. These similarities mean that even if the more-general statements I observe in this topic *were* connected to readying Japan to respond to exogenous events, I should observe a similar level of discussion in the wake of the Gulf War as I do in the wake of the War in Iraq.

If events in the international system were pushing Japanese politicians to pay atten-

tion to foreign and national security policy in 2003, then there is no good reason why an almost-identical incident in the early 1990's would not have done the same. While the 1993 election was one and a half years after the Gulf War, the impact of the Gulf War is said to have been so large in Japan that it is still talked about regularly today.³ Japan's inability to respond to the expectations of the international community, and the sting of its absence from the thank-you note published in the *Washington Post* by Kuwait after the war was over led to legislation allowing the SDF to be dispatched overseas to participate in international peacekeeping activities, albeit with a number of crippling restrictions. This means that there were just as many issues to talk about in 1993 as there were in 2003. One might imagine discussion of the need to make an international contribution, the need to adjust the U.S.-Japan alliance to meet the realities of the post-Cold War era, the need for Japan to ready itself for more active support of its ally in overseas contingencies, or the need to peel back the new restrictions so that Japan's SDF could participate in real PKO activities.

The second condition under which this topic would perform poorly as a test of my hypothesis is if the words used to discuss foreign and national security policy differed across the time periods studied. This would occur if candidates simply used different words to describe the same thing under the two periods, or if candidates changed their position on the issue over time. In the Japanese context, words such as "peace" (*heiwa*), "protecting the constitution" (*gōken*), "disarmament" (*gunshuku*), and "non-nuclear" (*hikaku*) are associated with being dovish, whereas "national interest" (*kokueki*), "alliance" (*dōmei*), and "nation" (*kokka*) are words that are associated with being hawkish. If candidates changed their stance on an issue or if new candidates with different stances had entered the race, this topic might not capture discussion of the issue in both time periods.

³Firsthand observations showed that statements about not repeating the mistakes of the Gulf War still featured in speeches made by candidates for the LDP's presidential election in September of 2008.

Addressing the second condition is as tricky as assessing the first condition because as I argue in a later section, the strategies demanded by a particular electoral system can create their own words and phrases. When the system changes, therefore, the words and phrases used by actors will also change. This is why, for example, we do not observe the word “national interest” entering the Japanese lexicon until after the introduction of MMM. However, the above qualitative interpretation allows me to rule out the possibility that the second condition holds because Topic 6 appeared to contain statements that were both dovish and hawkish. It would appear, then, that doves and hawks had enough words in common to facilitate their classification as the same topic. What Topic 6 does not contain, however, is the radically-dovish positions articulated by opposition party candidates. That is because these are in other topics, as I demonstrate later in this chapter.

A conclusive piece of evidence that the topic applies equally to both time periods is the simple fact that there were manifestos that scored highly on it all eight elections. In earlier elections, candidates whose manifestos scored highly on the topic called for “military disarmament” and “world peace”, and promised to try and “put a stop to arms build-ups” and “contribute to world peace with an active international contribution”. Others told voters that “a lively world economy is central to Japan’s peace and prosperity”, but “Japan was facing trade friction and international tension”. Other candidates told voters that they would “travel overseas to deepen other countries’ understanding of Japan”, and “treat Japan’s relations with China as the top priority”. Other candidates told voters that Japan’s high levels of peace and prosperity had enabled Japan to assume a “top position in the world”.

6.2.3 Conservative Candidates Ignored Foreign and National Security Policy under SNTV-MMD

Given that I can use this topic to test my hypothesis, I calculated the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to foreign and national security policy in the 941 manifestos produced by LDP candidates running in the 1986, 1990, and 1993 elections, respectively. These means represent the proportion of the average LDP candidate manifesto that was devoted to this topic each year. The mean proportion was 0.2% in 1986 (n = 323), 0.2% in 1990 (n = 334), and 0.1% in 1993 (n = 284). This provides powerful evidence that conservative candidates ignored foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD. Figure 6.1 illustrates the strikingly-low level of discussion of foreign and national security policy in all three elections under SNTV-MMD. The straightness of the line shows how little discussion of this topic was affected by any of the incidents occurring in the world at the time. It also gives me confidence that the first half of the electoral equilibrium I described in Chapter 2, the ignoring of foreign and national security policy in favor of an electoral strategy that focused on private goods, was operating under SNTV-MMD. These results suggest that conservative candidates were studiously avoiding these issues.

The theory offered in Chapter 2 argued that conservative candidates with experience in foreign and national security policy would not flaunt this and would instead try to hide it. To test this hypothesis, I collected data on all the conservative politicians who had been appointed to positions of authority, whether it be Chair, Vice-Chair, Consultant, or Executive, in any committee or agency tasked with making foreign and national security policy between 1986 and 1993. The first was the LDP's Foreign Policy Sub-Committee (*gaikō bukai*); the second was its National Defense Sub-Committee (*kokubō bukai*); the third was

Chapter 6. Campaigning Under SNTV-MMD: Conservative Politicians Ignore Foreign and National Security Policy

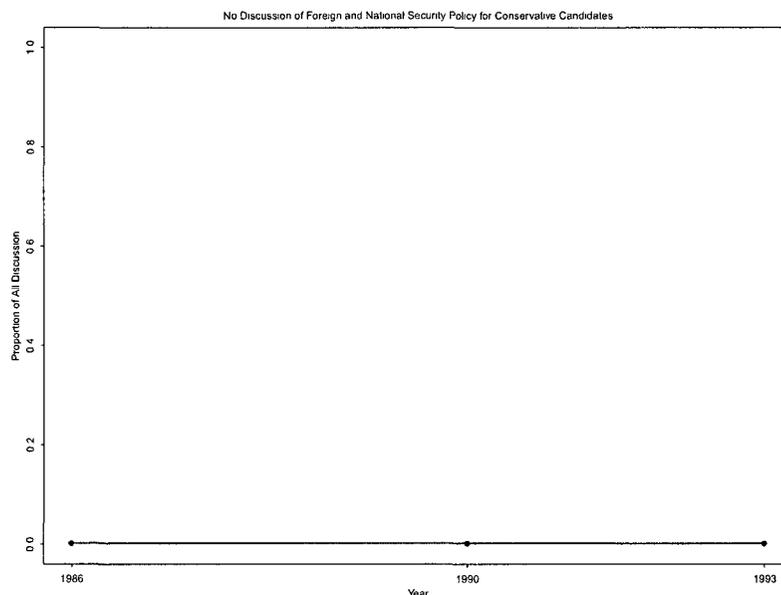


Figure 6.1: Conservative candidates ignored foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to foreign and national security policy in the 941 manifestos produced by the LDP candidates who ran in each of these elections. The straight blue line is best interpreted as representing how much discussion was in the average LDP candidate manifesto each year. The mean level of discussion for conservative candidates was extremely low at 0.2% in 1986, 0.2% in 1990, and 0.1% in 1993.

its Research Commission on Foreign Policy (*gaikō chōsa kai*); the fourth was the Committee on National Security in the House of Representatives (*anzen hoshō iinkai*); and the fifth was the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the House of Representatives (*gaimu iinkai*). I also collected data on all the LDP politicians who had served as Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Defense (*bōei seimu jikan*) Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs (*gaimu seimu jikan*); Minister of Foreign Affairs; Director General of the Defence Agency; and politicians who had been Chief of the LDP's International Bureau (Shinada 2007). I found that there was no statistically-distinguishable difference between their level of discussion of foreign and national security policy in this period and LDP candidates who had

not served in positions of authority in any of these committees. This held when I relaxed my definition of expert. This provides strong support for my claim that expertise in foreign and national security policy was not something to advertise, but something to keep hidden.

If conservative candidates were not talking about foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD, who was? As the next section shows, candidates from two of the opposition parties were, but in what I call party-election year topics, which are best understood as bundles of policies discussed by same-party candidates in each election. As I demonstrate, the positions adopted in these party-election-topics were extreme. My qualitative interpretation of Topic 6, on the other hand, showed that it appeared to approximate the position of the median voter on foreign and national security policy, or be slightly to the right of the median voter. Who had the incentive to articulate the median voter position on foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD? Chapter 2 argued that no candidate had the incentive. The only candidates who had the incentive to talk about public goods were candidates who were not competing against their co-partisans, but these candidates were still charged with the task of winning in a multi-member district, which requires that appeals be targeted toward a select group of voters in one's district. Thus, the theory predicts that discussion of the median voter position on foreign and national security policy should be zero.

The level of discussion of Topic 6 by all candidates competing in the three elections under SNTV-MMD was 0.1% of total discussion in 1986 ($n = 800$), 0.1% of total discussion in 1990 ($n = 854$), and 0.1% of total discussion in 1993 ($n = 866$). This confirms my hypothesis that no candidate had the incentive to articulate the median voter's position on foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD. It also confirms that the level of discussion was completely unmoved by external events not only for conservative candidates

but for all candidates. Examining the mean discussion of candidates by party affiliation revealed that the topic comprised 1% of the manifestos of candidates from the Progressive Party in 1990 and 2% of the manifestos of candidates from the Social Democratic League in 1993. The former ran seven candidates in 1990 and failed to elect six of them, while the latter, a splinter from the JSP, ran four candidates and elected all of them.

6.2.4 What Private Goods Did Conservative Candidates Promise to Provide?

The above section provided powerful evidence for the first claim made in Chapter 2, that conservative candidates held these issues at arm's length under SNTV-MMD. It also confirmed that no candidate adopted the median voter position on foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD. After describing the content of a selection of the private goods topics, this section uses the proportions of total discussion devoted to private and public goods in the manifestos of LDP candidates to weigh up evidence for the second claim made in Chapter 2, that it was the constant need to demonstrate one's credentials as a provider for the district that prevented conservative candidates from paying attention to foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD. I present evidence that suggests that it was not only the need to provide private goods, but also the monopolization of the issue by opposition party candidates that meant conservative candidates steered clear of these issues.

The theory presented in Chapter 2 suggests that I should observe conservative candidates adopting electoral strategies comprised of private goods for a subset of voters in their respective districts. I expected to see appeals that were targeted to the residents of a partic-

ular sub-region (cities, wards, towns, or villages in the district) and appeals that were targeted to groups organized by occupation or other function. Existing research, while based on the behavior of conservative incumbents and on the election campaigns of an unrepresentative sample of candidates, suggests that we should observe promises in the areas of regional revitalization (which candidates can use to appeal to voters in specific sub-regions and the workers of construction companies); agriculture, forestry and fisheries (which candidates can use to appeal to farmers and fishermen); local economy (which candidates can use to appeal to the owners of small and medium-sized businesses); and medicine (which candidates can use to appeal to physicians, dentists, and nurses), among others.

There were fourteen topics I classified as private goods. Topics 52 (Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries), 9 (Primary Industries and Tourism) and 58 (Benefits for Organized Groups) were interpreted and validated in the previous chapter. All three were subjects of discussion by conservative candidates under SNTV-MMD. This section provides a qualitative interpretation of five of the remaining eleven private goods topics. I present simple statistics showing the proportion of total discussion devoted to each topic in the manifestos of conservative candidates competing in these three elections. Qualitative interpretations of the rest of the private goods topics are provided in Appendix A. I classified private goods topics as issue topics. Unlike party-election-year topics, issue topics are spoken about by the candidates of more than one party in more than one election, and usually pertain to a single policy area that is identifiable from the list of word stems.

Appropriator for the District (Topic 3)

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic promised to “stimulate lo-

cal commerce” by “increasing the subsidies and financial support available to small- and medium-sized enterprises by the central government”. They promised to push for “measures to stimulate the local economy” such as “expanding public works” and “establishing an Emergency Fund for Management Support in the government’s supplementary budget” from which the small- and medium-sized enterprises in their district could secure loans. They promised to introduce “measures to stimulate the farming, forestry, and fishing industries” in their districts, which ranged from “establishing a sounder foundation for agriculture” to “stabilizing management of the fishing industry” and “promoting agricultural products unique to our district”. They promised to maintain the existing highway system in the district (*kōsoku kōtsū taikai no seibi*) and promote the building of new roads, new train lines, and new airports. Promises were often very specific, with candidates naming the specific harbors, waterfronts, parks, highways, bypasses, industries, land reclamation projects, and areas of the district they would “develop” if elected.

One candidate spoke about how important it was to improve the nation’s education system and nurture the development of children with “a sense of responsibility and an internationalized mind”. He proposed to do this by building and maintaining better school facilities and better sports facilities. Another candidate told voters that Japan ought to become a “lifestyle superpower”, which should be achieved by heavy investment in district infrastructure, which would make people’s lives more comfortable. Many candidates emphasized their willingness to fix the streets, sewers, and parks in voters’ neighborhoods, as well as adopt measures to prevent erosion and landslides. Appropriating for the district extended to promises to “push for an improvement of the existing system of pensions for war veterans and their families”.

As expected, Appropriator for the District was a favorite topic of conservative candi-

dates under SNTV-MMD. The mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of LDP candidates in the 1986 election was 9%, in the 1990 election it was 10%, and in the 1993 election it was 9%. In none of these manifestos did candidates present themselves as a member of a party. The election was very much about them and their ability to provide for residents of the district. The tone was matter-of-fact and not emotional, but candidates did make some effort to dress up what were essentially grubby promises for construction companies with discussion of grander themes such as education. Candidates were not shy about naming the groups and sub-regions of the district they would work for. I expect that if same-district co-partisans were found to be talking about this topic, we would observe product differentiation based on sub-region, with candidates carefully targeting their promises to different areas of the district.

Transportation (Topic 10)

Candidates whose manifesto scored highly on this topic presented voters with long laundry lists of the roads, highways, bypasses, new train lines, and “new transportation systems” they had built or were planning to build for their district. They included timetables indicating when each of these had or would be completed, often listing the amount of money the candidate had managed to secure for the project from the central government. The overall theme of the topic was the importance of building new transportation systems for “community development” and “community building”. Many candidates dressed up their promises to build more roads with vague statements such as “I will build a lively community appropriate for the new era”. Candidates emphasized their connections to the national government. One candidate told voters “I will become a fat pipe connecting my

beloved hometown, Shizuoka, with the national government”.

The mean proportion of total discussion devoted to Transportation in the manifestos of LDP candidates in the 1986 election was 5%, in the 1990 election it was 3%, and in the 1993 election it was 3%. Like Appropriator for the District, the tone was extremely matter-of-fact and candidates were not shy about naming the areas of the district that they would focus on. But candidates devoted much less space to dressing up their appeals.

Building A Spiritually-Rich Community (Topic 18)

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic promised to “revitalize our old home” (yomigaerare furusato!) and “realize a 21st Century Hometown Renaissance!” They constructed mental images for voters of the kind of community life and relationships between residents they would build for the district, such as “a community in which everyone has breathing space” (yutori), a community that is “neither too crowded nor too quiet”, and a community in which “people can pursue spiritual and cultural richness”. Candidates promised to “create attractive towns using new ideas” (idea wo ikashita miriyoku aru machi zukuri), and work towards “the harmonious development of our local community” (chōwa no aru hatten). By establishing “centers for international cultural exchange”, one candidate promised to “nurture young people”, who he described as the “human capital of the 21st century”. Only then could these young people be entrusted to “build a bright future”. “Instead of a strong country”, candidates declared, “I will build a kind society”.

These mental images were underpinned by concrete promises to support businesses and provide better transportation systems in the district. Candidates singled out particular areas of the district for their natural beauty, and pledged to make these areas more accessible

to residents in other parts of the district via the construction of new roads and new train lines. In order to keep young people at home, candidates promised to dedicate themselves to nurturing native industries, and promised voters “Your children will grow up to love our hometown”.

Building A Spiritually-Rich Community was also a favorite topic of conservative candidates. The mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos produced by LDP candidates in the 1986 election was 9%, in the 1990 election it was 11%, and in the 1993 election it was 6%. Unlike Appropriator for the District and Transportation, candidates devoted more effort to dressing up their promises of private goods with appeals to the desire of residents for a sense of community and social fulfilment.

Hometown Development (Topic 32)

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic told voters that even though Japan was viewed by the world as an economic superpower and was expected to contribute to the world as “an international nation” (*kokusai kokka*), “in terms of lifestyle, Japan is still a minor power” (*seikatsu shōkoku*). There is no way, candidates pointed out, that Japan could be described as having a high standard of living or enjoying a top-notch living environment. The solution, candidates told voters, was “rapid development of the hometown to suit the new era” and “hometown development for the twenty-first century!” “Politics”, candidates declared, should be focused entirely on the hometown. Candidates promised to create “a politics that loved the hometown”. “Japan will never become truly prosperous”, candidates told voters, unless our hometowns become wealthy and prosperous. Candidates promised to “adopt the stance of the people” (*kokuminteki shiya*) and “achieve a bright and

rich hometown”, and “a harmonious society”. They promised to pursue “a new era of development for the hometown”. In terms of concrete promises, candidates offered “support for small- and medium-sized enterprises” and the “stabilization of employment, welfare, and the local economy”. They used the word “international” almost as a keyword, promising to “rebuild the farming, forestry, and fishing industry to match an internationalized society”.

Hometown Development was also a favorite topic of conservative candidates competing in these elections. The mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of LDP candidates in the 1986 election was 11%, in the 1990 election it was 10%, and in the 1993 election it was 9%. As this description has revealed, candidates who spoke about this topic tried to make their appeals as large as possible, connecting them to grand themes such as how Japan was viewed by other countries. One gets the impression that candidates are prepared to use any issue in any way they can to justify their focus on providing goodies for their district. Rather than actually caring about or devoting the resources to improve Japan’s international image, candidates are simply using whatever concerns voters may have about it to rationalize their desire to spend more money on and pay more attention to their hometown. The effusive gratitude with which many candidates concluded their manifesto is testimony to the degree to which their connections with voters was personal. Candidates would spend time telling voters that they “felt their sense of mission strongly” (*shimei wo tsūkan*) and “would push vigorously to this end”.

Love of Thy Hometown (Topic 48)

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic concentrated on outlining what they defined as their “political faith” (*seiji shinjyō*) for voters. “As a person with

an unbreakable political faith, who is trustworthy, doesn't lie, and has the power to execute his promises, I will work for the development of our beloved hometown and prefecture", one candidate declared. "I will use all the resources at my disposal to build a Japan and a home we can pass onto future generations" (funkotsu saishin). Coupled with their "political faiths", candidates constructed images for voters of the kind of politics they would pursue if elected, which included "a politics that is easy to understand"; "a politics that is free from lies, bluffs, and deception"; "a politics that is clean and sincere"; "a politics that protects the peace, independence, and freedom of our fatherland, Japan"; "a politics in which honest people are not made fun of" (shōjishisha wo baka ni minai seiji); "a politics in which people who are dedicated to their jobs and work hard are rewarded"; "a politics that makes people happy and gives them a reason for living" (hito ga shiawase to ikigai wo jikkan dekiru seiji wo); and "a politics that enriches our hometown, socially, culturally, and economically".

The political faiths and visions of politics presented by candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic were supplemented with plans for the development of their hometown, which consisted mostly of non-specific pledges to support "construction", "agriculture", "native industries", and "small- and medium-sized enterprises". "By providing a sound agricultural base, nurturing native industries, and supporting local small- and medium-sized enterprises", one candidate declared, "I will build a lively hometown in which the dreams of young people can be realized". Like Hometown Development, candidates invariably dedicated a large portion of their manifesto to thanking their constituents for their support. A typical expression was "From the very bottom of my heart I thank you all for your kind, warm support".

Love of Thy Hometown was also a favorite topic of conservative candidates competing in these elections. The mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the

manifestos of LDP candidates in the 1986 election was 7%, in the 1990 election it was 10%, and in the 1993 election it was 9%. This description confirms that while some candidates dressed up promises targeted to specific groups with larger-than-life appeals, other candidates carved out personal ideologies of devotion to the district that resembled the political ideologies adopted by political parties. In many of these manifestos, the name of the candidate's party would appear just once, next to the candidate's name. The fact that candidates were coming up with their own ideologies was a stark illustration of the absence of the party from their campaign. Politicians were forced to become their own political party with their own ideology.

6.2.5 Conservative Politicians Used Private-Goods-Heavy Manifestos under SNTV-MMD

The theory predicts that elections under SNTV-MMD should have been comprised of a mixture of private and public goods, with conservative candidates promising private goods and opposition party candidates promising public goods. Were they? Figure 6.2 plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to public and private goods in the 941 manifestos produced by LDP candidates running in the 1986, 1990, and 1993 elections, respectively. These means represent the proportion of the average LDP candidate manifesto that was devoted to this topic in each election. In 1986 ($n = 323$), the average LDP manifesto was 36% public and 61% private. In 1990 ($n = 334$), it was 37% public and 60% private. In 1993 ($n = 284$), it was 50% public, and 47% private.

While the positions of the two points in 1986 and 1990 are almost-identical, which is one indication of the electoral equilibrium I expected to see, the level of discussion of

Chapter 6. Campaigning Under SNTV-MMD: Conservative Politicians Ignore Foreign and National Security Policy

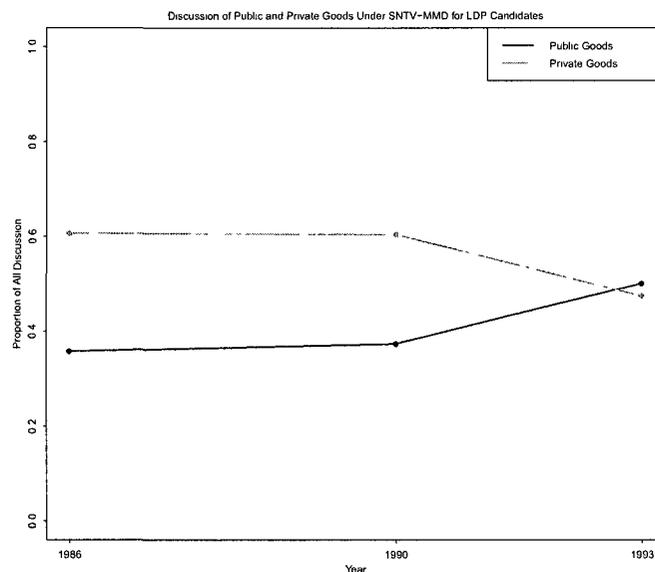


Figure 6.2: Conservative candidates talked more about private goods than about public goods under SNTV-MMD, with the exception of the unusual 1993 election. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to private goods and the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to public goods in the 941 manifestos produced by LDP candidates who ran in each of these three elections.

public goods exceeded the level of discussion of private goods for LDP candidates in the 1993 election. Why did LDP candidates dilute what were private-goods-heavy manifestos in 1986 and 1990 with a larger dose of public goods in 1993? I expect that this can be explained by the emergence of an issue in the 1993 election that even LDP politicians could not avoid: political reform (*seiji kaikaku*). In Chapter 3 I provided some indication of how salient an issue this had become by the 1993 election, which was held because two groups of LDP politicians threatened to vote with the opposition parties on a non-confidence motion submitted because the Prime Minister had broken his promise to implement political reform before the end of the existing Diet session. As a result, every man and his dog talked about political reform in the 1993 election (Kobayashi 1997, 2008). But if relying

on private goods was the winning strategy under SNTV-MMD, it pays to consider why conservative candidates would have chosen to discuss public goods at all.

While there are several possible answers, one answer is that while LDP candidates have the incentive to avoid taking stances on policy issues (Cox and Rosenbluth (1995a) call this “position-ducking”) and concentrate on flexing their muscles as providers, the mass media and candidates from the opposition parties have the incentive to make the election about a set of issues. Issues give the media a subject to structure its election coverage around, the opposition parties an opportunity to carve out a nice electoral platform that illustrates their party’s stance on the issue, and both actors the chance to harass conservative candidates for being vague and not offering voters a clear stance on the issue. As Ramseyer and Rosenbluth (1993, 125) note, “the electoral system only minimizes but does not obliterate entirely the salience of broadly-based issues”. I argue that it is possible for an issue to be talked about so much by the opposition parties and the media that it becomes big enough to permeate the candidate’s *kōenkai*, demanding a response from conservative candidates. Because conservative candidates depend on their *kōenkai* members to get out the vote, they will pay attention to public goods issues if they are of concern to their *kōenkai* members. However, they are likely to pay this only fleeting concern, because the candidate will also want to avoid sending a signal that she would actually spend time on this issue after getting elected. This can explain why the lines in Figure 6.2 cross over prior to 1993.

As predicted, the electoral strategies adopted by opposition party candidates look quite different. As the qualitative interpretations presented later in this chapter reveal, opposition party candidates talked primarily about public goods. Figure 6.3 plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to public and private goods in the 1,121 manifestos produced by candidates from the four major opposition parties (JSP, DSP, JCP, and *Kōmeitō*) in the three

elections held under SNTV-MMD. In 1986 (n = 384), the average opposition candidate manifesto was 84% public and 15% private. In 1990 (n = 384), it was 86% public and 12% private. In 1993 (n = 353), it was 90% public, and 9% private.

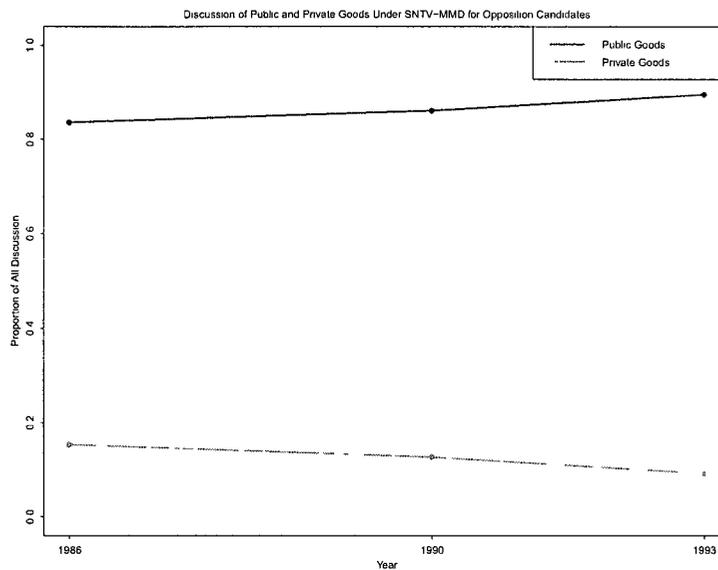


Figure 6.3: Opposition party candidates talked more about public goods than about private goods under SNTV-MMD. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to private goods and the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to public goods in the 1,121 manifestos produced by the JCP, JSP, DSP, and Kōmeitō candidates who ran in each of these three elections.

6.2.6 Discussion of Private Goods Increases as Level of Intra-Party Competition Increases

These results show that the electoral strategies of conservative and opposition party candidates differed in precisely the way the theory expects. Conservative candidates used more private goods than public goods, and opposition party candidates used more public

goods than private goods. The claim presented in Chapter 2, however, was that it was the constant need to demonstrate one's credentials as a provider for the district that prevented conservative candidates from paying attention to foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD. To test this hypothesis, I reasoned that conservative candidates facing higher levels of intra-party competition would have been the ones under the most pressure to demonstrate these credentials. The more conservative candidates running in a district, the more opportunities for the supporters of one candidate to be poached by another. Qualitative studies of elections in Japan confirm that conservative candidates (and their campaign workers) did not try and break into the spheres of the opposition parties and instead concentrated solely on targeting the fiefs of candidates from the same party. The result was "election blood feuds":

"The most trouble for us is the blood feuds ... Because of them, we don't fight the Socialists. We are always too busy fighting among ourselves. Look at the men from the same electoral districts ... They can't even talk pleasantly to each other in the Diet. That's because there is usually a serious war between them."⁴

I reasoned that the more same-district co-partisans a candidate faced, the more she would have used every opportunity at her disposal to demonstrate her commitment to her supporters with promises of private goods, and the more she would have avoided mentioning public goods for fear of sending them the wrong signal. To test this, I examined the relationship between discussion of public and private goods and the level of intra-party competition in a district. I calculated two measures of the level of intra-party competition faced by candidates under SNTV-MMD (Crisp, Jensen and Shomer 2007). The first index, *cands.m*, is a candidate-level measure of the number of same-district co-partisans running in the district, relative to *M*, the district magnitude. The second index, *cands.p*, is

⁴This quote is by LDP politician, Kobayashi Takeji, and is quoted in Thayer (1969, 119).

a candidate-level measure of the number of same-district co-partisans running in a district relative to both M and the party's performance in that district in the previous election⁵

I found a strong positive correlation between the proportion of discussion devoted to private goods in a candidate's manifesto and the level of intra-party competition she faced as measured by both indexes. For *cands m*, the correlation was positive and significant (Pearson's $r = .65$, $n = 2520$), and it was the same for *cands p* (Pearson's $r = .57$, $n = 2520$). At higher levels of intra-party competition, candidates used more private goods. I also found a strong negative correlation between the proportion of manifesto devoted to public goods and the level of intra-party competition as measured by both indexes. For *cands m*, the correlation was negative and significant (Pearson's $r = -.65$, $n = 2520$), and was the same for *cands p* (Pearson's $r = -.58$, $n = 2520$). The average manifesto produced by a candidate competing at a higher level of intra-party competition (a *cands m* value of 0.4 or above, which is a district in which three co-partisans were competing for five seats) was 61% private and 36% public. The average manifesto produced by a candidate competing at a lower level of intra-party competition (a *cands m* value of below 0.4) was only 22% private and 76% public. The p-values for the difference in means test for both public and private were significant.⁶ Figure 6.4 depicts the relationships between discussion of private and public goods and level of intra-party competition using *cands m*.

While the correlations between proportion of discussion devoted to public and private goods and level of intra-party competition were significant and in the same directions when the sample was restricted to conservative candidates only, the strength of the correlation was slightly weaker. For *cands m*, the correlation between discussion of private goods and

⁵The party's performance in the district in the previous election was calculated by the proportion of the total vote captured by candidates from that party in the previous election, divided by the Droop Quota ($1/(M+1)$) (the minimum number of votes a candidate needs to be elected)

⁶The p-value was 0 for both tests. I got similar results when I chose different values of *cands m*.

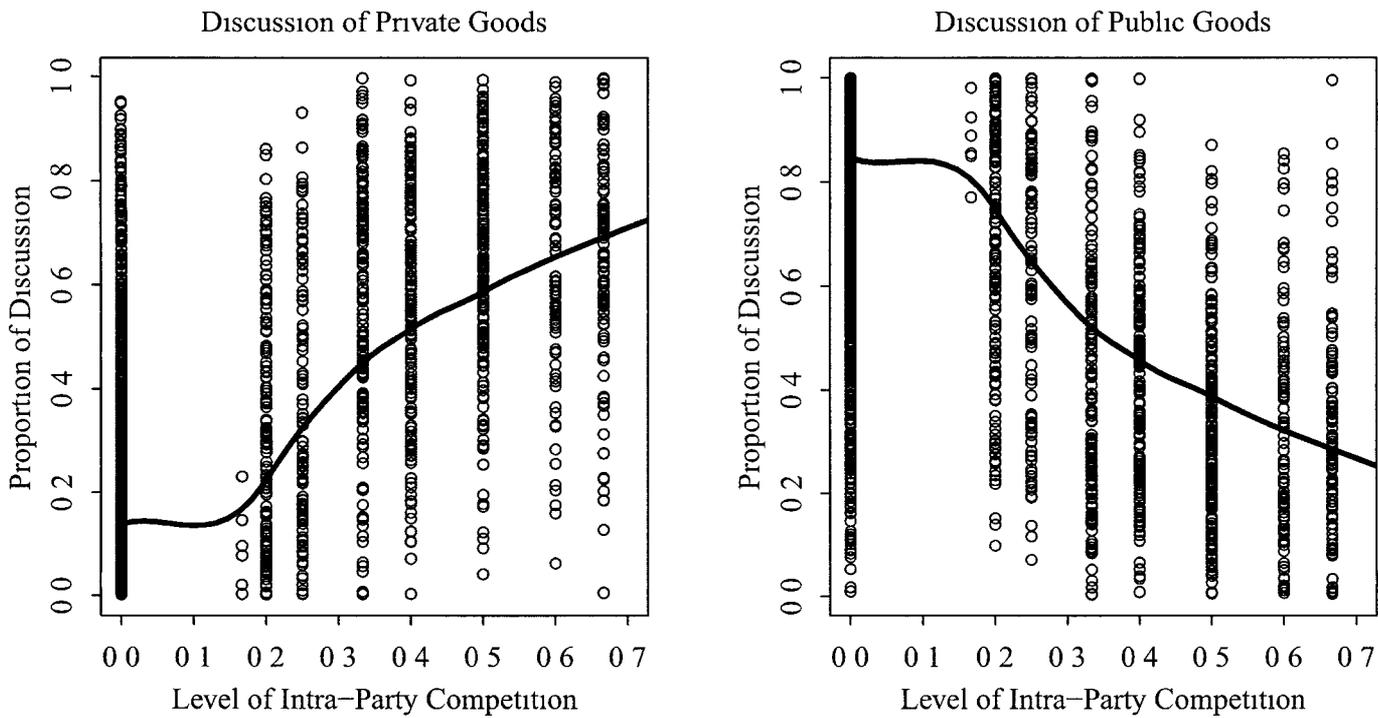


Figure 6.4 Discussion of private goods increases as the level of intra-party competition increases under SNTV-MMD, and discussion of public goods decreases as the level of intra-party competition increases under SNTV-MMD for all candidates, as the theory predicts. Each dot in the left figure represents the proportion of discussion devoted to private goods in each of the 2,520 manifestos produced by candidates for the three elections under SNTV-MMD. The level of discussion of private goods is higher at higher levels of intra-party competition. Pearson's r was 0.65. Each dot in the right figure represents the proportion of discussion devoted to *public goods* in each of the 2,520 manifestos produced by candidates for the three elections under SNTV-MMD. The level of discussion of public goods is lower at higher levels of intra-party competition. Pearson's r was -0.65.

intra-party competition was positive and significant (Pearson's $r = .28$, $n = 941$), and for *cands.p*, it was positive but not significant (Pearson's $r = .19$, $n = 941$). For *cands.m*, the correlation between discussion of public goods and intra-party competition was negative and significant (Pearson's $r = -.29$, $n = 941$), and for *cands.p*, it was negative but not significant (Pearson's $r = -.19$, $n = 941$). The average manifesto produced an LDP candidate competing at a higher level of intra-party competition (a *cands.m* value of 0.4 or above) was 61% private and 36% public. The average manifesto of a candidate competing at a lower level of intra-party competition (a *cands.m* value of below 0.4) was 48% private and 49% public. The p-values for a difference in means test for both public and private were <0.001 . I got similar results when I chose different values of *cands.m*. Figure 6.5 depicts this relationship using *cands.m*.

The finding that higher levels of intra-party competition are associated with less discussion of public goods and more discussion of private goods is evidence that supports my contention that it was the need to demonstrate one's credentials as a provider for the district that prevented conservative candidates from paying attention to public goods issues under SNTV-MMD. A second conclusion we can draw from these findings is that the incentive to use private goods to distinguish oneself from a same-district co-partisan extended even to candidates from the opposition parties under SNTV-MMD who were facing intra-party competition.⁷ While examining how opposition party candidates used private goods when they were not in government is outside of the scope of this dissertation, my reading of the manifestos suggest that they employed a number of tricks designed to give voters the

⁷In the 1986 election, intra-party competition was faced by 95% of LDP candidates; 24 % of JSP candidates; 1.5% of JCP candidates; 0% of Komeitō candidates; and 0% of DSP candidates. In the 1990 election, intra-party competition was faced by 96% of LDP candidates; 33 % of JSP candidates; 1.5% of JCP candidates; 0% of Komeitō candidates; and 0% of DSP candidates. In the 1993 election, intra-party competition was faced by 92% of LDP candidates; 28% of JSP candidates; 0% of JCP candidates; 0% of Komeitō candidates; and 0% of DSP candidates.

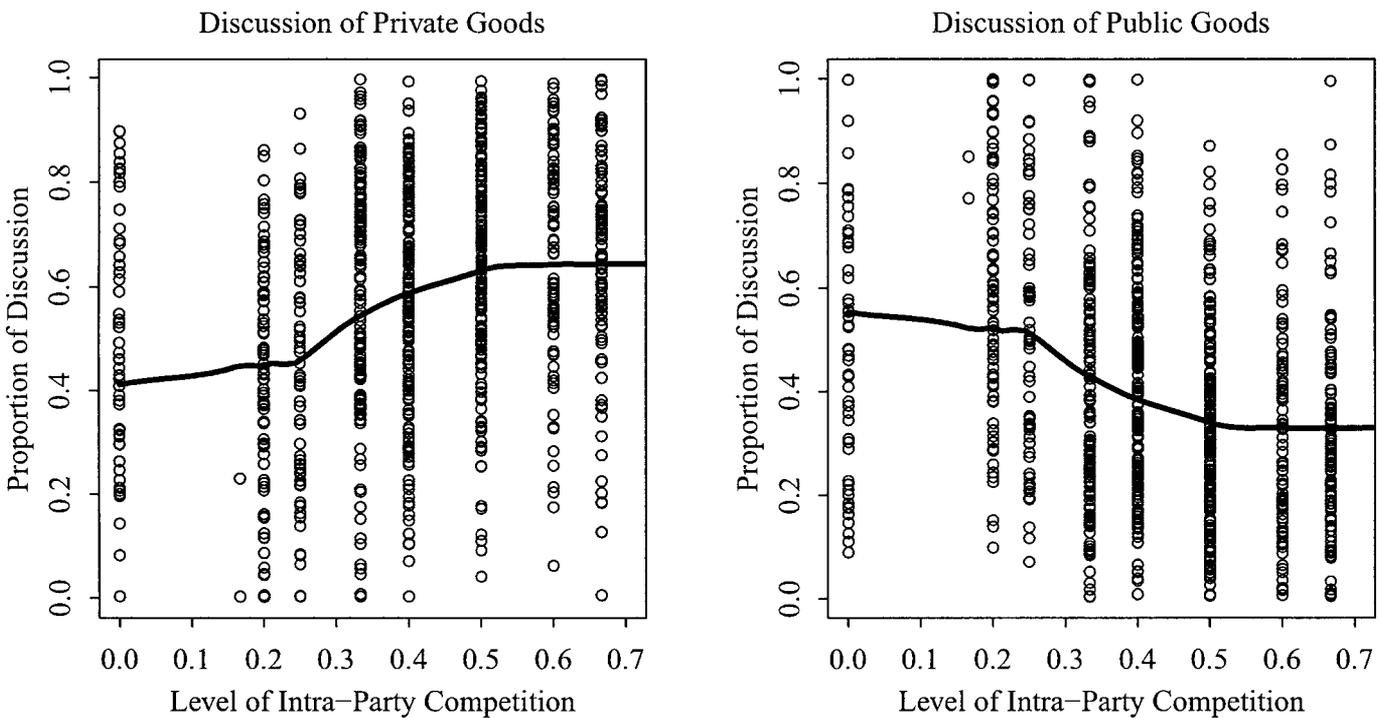


Figure 6.5: Discussion of private goods increases as the level of intra-party competition increases under SNTV-MMD, and discussion of public goods decreases as the level of intra-party competition increases under SNTV-MMD for LDP candidates, as the theory predicts. Each dot in the left figure represents the proportion of discussion devoted to private goods in each of the 941 manifestos produced by LDP candidates in the three elections under SNTV-MMD. The level of discussion of private goods is higher at higher levels of intra-party competition. Pearson's r was 0.28. Each dot in the right figure represents the proportion of discussion devoted to public goods in each of the 941 manifestos produced by LDP candidates in the three elections under SNTV-MMD. The level of discussion of public goods is lower at higher levels of intra-party competition. Pearson's r was -0.29.

impression that their actions had been crucial in securing a particular airport, highway, or community center for the district.

6.2.7 Conservative Candidates in Urban Districts Used Public Goods

The results presented in the previous section revealed that while discussion of private goods exceeded discussion of public goods in the manifestos of LDP candidates in two out of three elections examined, between 36% to 50% of the average manifesto produced by these candidates was still about public goods. If providing private goods to a subset of voters in one's district was such an effective strategy under SNTV-MMD, why do we observe so much discussion of public goods? The previous section provided one answer to this question. The finding that conservative candidates facing lower levels of intra-party competition used fewer private goods and more public goods suggests that as soon as the chance one's supporters were about to be poached by another candidate disappeared or is reduced, politicians might perceive themselves to be free to carve out electoral strategies that are focused on public goods. After all, such strategies are cheaper and less strenuous.

My second answer to this question is that some candidates, for reasons related to their age, gender, positions they have held, or the district in which they are running, might find it difficult to rely solely on private goods. In urban Japan, networks between residents are either non-existent or much less dense than they are in rural areas. Indeed, before the *kōenkai* became such a ubiquitous feature of electioneering in Japan, it had started as a vehicle to provide personal favors to constituents by candidates competing in urban districts, who found they had few of the traditional networks available to candidates competing in rural districts (Curtis 1971). Shallower social networks make it more difficult to create teams

of loyal supporters, more difficult to rely on these supporters to spread the word of one's achievements, and more difficult to solicit requests from constituents. The kind of private goods voters in urban areas want are probably quite different to the kind of private goods voters in rural areas want. If the party's policymaking machinery was established when large proportions of the Japanese population lived in rural areas, as it was in the case of the LDP, candidates from urban districts may also face a party machinery designed primarily to provide the kind of goods rural voters want, but not the kind of goods urban voters desire. It follows that candidates from urban districts have to work doubly hard to provide private goods, both in the district and in the party. They may calculate that carving out an electoral strategy comprised of the kind of public goods their supporters care about would be a nice supplement to the favors provided through their *kōenkai* (Scheiner 1999).

I found a large difference in the level of discussion of public and private goods between manifestos produced by conservative candidates competing in urban areas and those produced by conservative candidates competing in less urban areas. This difference is not explained by candidates in urban areas having lower levels of intra-party competition. I found the same differences in level of discussion between candidates from urban and rural districts at both high and low levels of intra-party competition. Figure 6.6 plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to public goods in the 941 manifestos produced by LDP candidates for the three elections under SNTV-MMD by degree of urbanness of the district. As in the previous chapter, I used a measure that classifies each district on a four-point scale, with 1 indicating a very-rural district and 4 indicating a very-urban district. The mean proportion of total discussion devoted to public goods by LDP candidates competing in very-urban districts (urban = 4) was 62%, whereas it was only 36% for LDP candidates competing in districts that were less urban (urban = 1, 2, and 3). The p-value for a

difference in means test was <0.001 . The mean proportion of total discussion devoted to private goods by LDP candidates competing in very-urban areas (urban = 4) was only 35%, whereas it was 61% for LDP candidates competing in areas that were less urban (urban = 1, 2, and 3). The p-value for a difference in means test was <0.001 .

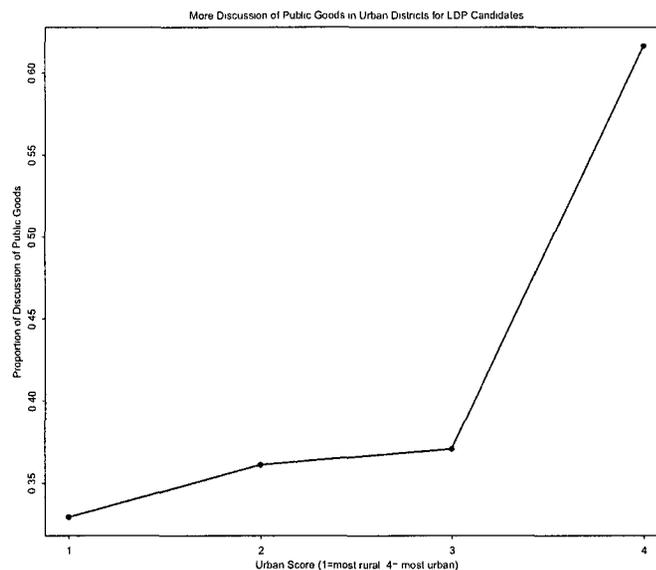


Figure 6.6: Conservative candidates running in urban districts used more public goods than conservative candidates running in districts that were less urban under SNTV-MMD. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to public goods in the 941 manifestos of LDP candidates for the three elections under SNTV-MMD by degree of urban-ness of the district. An urban-rural code of 1 (the far left) indicates that the district was very rural, whereas an urban-rural code of 4 (the far right) indicates that the district was very urban.

I did not find a significant difference between level of discussion of either good by conservative candidates who were more junior and conservative candidates who were more senior. This can be explained, however, by the way in which conservative politicians had structured the policymaking process within the party. As Chapter 2 explained, they had structured it so that *all politicians*, no matter how junior, could claim (if not actually possess) influence over policy. Unlike politicians in other British-style parliamentary democ-

racies, what this decentralized system meant was that conservative politicians at any level could credibly promise to realize a particular policy for their constituents. This explains why the notion of the “backbencher” is completely foreign to Japanese politics, and there is no Japanese word to explain the concept. I argue that the idea that politicians would not possess influence over policy is an idea that, it is safe to say, would not have crossed voter’s minds. This was borne out by the absence of a difference in the level of discussion between junior and senior politicians.

6.2.8 What Kind of Public Goods Did Conservative Candidates Promise to Provide?

The previous sections demonstrated that between 36% to 50% of the average manifesto produced by the conservative candidates running in these three elections contained discussion of public goods, and conservative candidates competing in urban districts tended to use more public goods than conservative candidates competing in less-urban areas. I hypothesized that this difference could be explained by a combination of the difficulty of channelling private goods to voters in urban areas and the difficulty of procuring the kind of private goods urban voters want in a party whose policymaking process was set up to privilege rural voters. While conservative candidates running in urban districts appear to have calculated that they would gain from using public goods, how they came up with their platform is a mystery. Running from a balkanized party with no overarching policy agenda and an extremely weak leadership, it should have been extraordinarily difficult to have even come up with a platform comprised of public goods, let alone win the election on this platform.

This section takes a closer look at the kind of public goods conservative candidates offered voters under SNTV-MMD. I show that there were two kinds of public goods being offered voters. The first were the non-ideological public goods offered in the platforms of opposition party candidates. In two of the three elections, conservative candidates running in urban districts coopted the platforms offered by candidates running from the opposition parties. In the other election, they found an issue that ruffled none of the feathers of their co-partisans who were competing in rural districts, Liberal Democracy is Best! The second kind of public good offered voters by conservative candidates were vague promises to consider problems facing “the nation”. Given that some of these problems touched upon Japan’s role in the world, it pays to consider whether or not they should be counted as discussion of foreign and national security policy. A qualitative interpretation of each of these topics reveals that conservative candidates used public goods in much the same way they used private goods, to cultivate a personal image and reputation. There were few concrete issues discussed, no solutions mentioned, and a lot of position-ducking. Actual policy promises were absent.

Conservative Candidates in Urban Areas Coopted the Public Goods Offered by Opposition Candidates

In the 1986 election, 20% of the average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate running in an urban district (urban = 4, n = 62) was devoted to Tax Cuts for Everyone (Topic 35), compared to 10% of the average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate running in a non-urban district (urban = 1, 2, 3, n = 262). The p-value for a difference in means test between the two was <0.001. However, this topic was the joint platform offered

by candidates running from the Kōmeitō and the DSP, who were running unopposed and had engaged in electoral cooperation for over a decade (Johnson 2000). A full 24% of the average manifesto produced by Kōmeitō candidates and 23% of the average manifesto produced by DSP candidates was devoted to this topic.

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on Tax Cuts for Everyone bemoaned the serious economic recession Japan had fallen into as a result of the high value of the yen. In the long run, they said, the structure of Japan's economy would have to be changed from export-oriented to an economy driven solely by "internal demand", or an economy in which "technology is created" (*gijutsu zunō gata keizai*). But in the short term, serious economic stimulus measures were needed. Candidates proposed across-the-board tax cuts to reinvigorate the economy. They promised to vigorously oppose (*danko hantai*) the introduction of a broad-based, indirect tax on consumption and commodities, which they argued would lead to skyrocketing prices. They promised to "reduce the unfairness of the tax system", and particularly the tax burden on white-collar workers and the self-employed, which, they argued, would stimulate internal demand. They promised to realize tax cuts in "income, education, and welfare", which would reduce taxes by 2.3 trillion yen. Other candidates promised to pass a large-scale supplementary budget to alleviate the pain being felt by the owners of and workers in export-oriented industries, which included small- and medium-sized businesses. Other candidates proposed to "increase domestic demand" via new, "lifestyle-related public works projects" (*seikatsu kanren kokyō jigyō*) and stabilize industries native to their prefecture (such as the textile and apparel industry in Gifu) by introducing grants for the development of new materials and stabilizing the yen market. More than one candidate promised to turn Japan into "a lifestyle superpower".

In the 1990 election, 11% of the average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate

running in an urban district (urban = 4, n = 62) was devoted to Liberal Democracy is Best! (Topic 63), which was interpreted and validated in the previous chapter, compared to 5% of the average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate running in a non-urban district (urban = 1, 2, 3, n = 272). The p-value for a difference in means test was 0.002. In this election, conservative candidates running in urban districts probably selected this public good over the public goods offered by opposition party candidates because it did not mount such a direct attack on the platforms of their co-partisans competing in rural districts. While choosing an issue that threatened the interests of their rural co-partisans was usually unavoidable, in 1990 the world presented conservative candidates in urban areas with the perfect issue.

In the 1993 election, 18% of the average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate running in an urban district (urban = 4, n = 59) was devoted to Doing Away with Decayed LDP Politics (Topic 22), compared to 10% of the average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate running in a non-urban district (urban = 1, 2, 3, n = 225). The p-value for a difference in means test was <0.001. However, this topic was the joint platform offered by candidates running from the Kōmeitō, the JSP, and the DSP. While candidates of three major opposition parties had clearly calculated that they could benefit from devoting most of their platform to telling voters how nasty the LDP was, conservative candidates running in urban areas decided to jump on the bandwagon. This is not puzzling when one remembers that conservative candidates were essentially competing *against their party* under SNTV-MMD. It was in their interests to blame “the party” and “the government” for nearly every outcome their supporters did not like, and this was prevalent throughout the manifestos, particularly in the manifestos of conservative candidates running in urban districts. A full 45% of the average manifesto produced by Kōmeitō candidates, 40% of the average man-

ifesto produced by JSP candidates, and 31% of the average manifesto produced by DSP candidates was devoted to this issue.

Because candidates who discussed this topic were from different parties, the degree of virulence with which they attacked the government varied. Some candidates celebrated the fact that “the days of single-party dominance are over!” “This is our chance to spring-clean LDP politics”, one candidate told voters. This candidate described Japanese politics in much the same way as I did in Chapter 2, as “operating by the “if-I’m-elected-its-enough” principle” (*jibun sae tosen sureba ii*). Playing on the similar sounds of the words in Japanese, this candidate told voters that “The Liberal Democratic Party (*jimintō*) was nothing more than the “Me-Party” (*jibuntō*). As evidence of this, he explained, no former Prime Minister has been able to enact reform. “Prime Ministers Kaifu Toshiki and Miyazawa Kiichi both promised voters that they would pass important political reform legislation, but they failed”, having been thwarted by opposition from within their party. “They have betrayed the Japanese people!”, this candidate cried. Many candidates told voters that this election presented them with a chance to build a new Japanese politics. One candidate stated that “the cozy, back-scratching relationships that existed between the Liberal Democrats, smeared in money politics, betraying Japanese citizens left right and center, and the Socialists, who permitted all of this corruption in exchange for personal favors for themselves, (*jisha nareai no 55 nen taisei*) had ruined Japan. The *Kōmeitō*, this candidate explained, had finally been able to “blast a hole” in Japan’s “utterly corrupt” (*kusari kitta*) politics and had brought about the end of single-party dominance.

Candidates promised that their party would be at the center of negotiations to build a new, stable government. They would implement a “new politics” with “the citizens” and “ordinary people” as the main characters. The “root of all evil” (*shoaku no kongen*), one

candidate explained, was the collusion between politicians, bureaucrats, and large corporations. It was this structure of vested interests that had produced the Lockheed, Recruit, Sagawa, and Kanemaru scandals. “The reason we, as Japanese people, do not feel any wealth in our everyday lives”, candidates cried, “is because of this structure!” LDP candidates were less virulent, but used the same words to describe LDP politics. They promised to enact legislation to make transfers of money in politics more transparent and to “get rid of decay in politics”. They also promised to get rid of factions, and to “devote their utmost” to realizing a political reform package that had the support of the people.

In the 1993 election, 15% of the average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate running in an urban district (urban = 4, n = 59) was devoted to Political Reform (Topic 19), compared to just 6% of the average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate running in a non-urban district (urban = 1, 2, 3, n = 225). The p-value for a difference in means test was <0.001. However, Political Reform was the platform offered by candidates running from the three new parties that competed in the 1993 election. 35% of the average manifesto produced by Sakigake candidates, 20% of the average manifesto produced by Japan New Party candidates, and 20% of the average manifesto produced by Shinseitō candidates was devoted to Political Reform.

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic told voters that the election was “a choice between old and new politics” and “a chance for Japanese politics to be reborn”. “In order to create a new Japan that can face the twenty-first century”, one candidate declared, “I will start by speaking politics with ordinary words, offering my own ideas, and debating with others”. Another candidate offered his views on the role of the politician: “I believe that the role of the politician is to take in the feelings of people and realize those feelings. The essence of democracy is working out how to implement concrete

policies that reflect the peoples' feelings". Other candidates simply asked voters to "send new blood to the Diet!" Several candidates spoke of the changes happening in the world and the position of responsibility slowly being thrust onto Japan: "In an age where the world is taking on a fundamentally new shape with the end of the Cold War, Japanese politics is mired in corruption, with worryingly-low levels of trust in politics". Given this situation, this candidate asked voters, "it is doubtful that politicians will be able to carve out a new path for Japan, and obtain the understanding of citizens for this task."

Candidates argued that political reform would revitalize the national government and create a government capable of exercising leadership. Other candidates promised to introduce term limits for politicians and "force through fundamental political reforms" (*bap-ponteki seiji kaikaku no danko suishin*). Candidates told voters that their desire to realize political reform was the reason they left the LDP. They told voters that they had the courage to face Japan's problems and implement the necessary reforms. Candidates told voters that this election was their chance to give birth to a new Japan. "If you change politics" they promised, "Japan will change." One candidate made his manifesto a question-and-answer session, in which he anticipated voter questions about why he had left the LDP and answered them. "Realizing elections based on policy", he argued, "is the key to recovering trust in politics".

In sum, my results suggest that conservative candidates running in urban districts had a tough time under SNTV-MMD. While the electoral strategy demanded of all conservative candidates was one of providing private goods for a subset of voters in their district, urban voters are difficult to provide with anything. Knowing this, conservative candidates running in urban districts calculated that carving out a message and relying on the power of the message to attract voters was a viable strategy. Curiously, this is the strategy of a

candidate competing in a single member district. While candidates in urban districts did face lower levels of intra-party competition compared to candidates in rural districts, this relationship holds when I restrict the sample to candidates facing high or low levels of intra-party competition. The difficulty for these candidates arises because while they may need a message, they are still competing against their same-district co-partisan and they are still running from a balkanized party with no overarching policy agenda and an weak leadership. Not only would it have been difficult to have come up with a platform comprised of public goods, it would have been virtually impossible not to ruffle the feathers of their co-partisans competing in rural districts with this platform. This explains why conservative candidates in urban districts found it easier to borrow from the public goods platforms offered by candidates from other parties.

While the topic model does not allow me to rule out the possibility that it was opposition party candidates borrowing from the platforms of conservative candidates, and not the other way around, this is extremely unlikely when one considers the ways the parties were organized. Opposition party candidates were the only candidates with the incentive to build a party platform under SNTV-MMD, and the only party with an organizational structure that facilitated that. Given how balkanized the LDP was, and the absence of a physical room or space within the party for politicians to dream up electoral strategies together, it is very likely that conservative candidates in the cities borrowed from the opposition, and not the other way around.

Conservative Candidates Talked Vaguely about Problems Facing Japan, But Not Foreign and National Security Policy

The second kind of public good offered voters by conservative candidates was promises to consider problems facing Japan. Because some of these problems touched upon Japan's international role, it pays to consider whether or not they should be counted as discussion of foreign and national security policy. One of these topics was Statesperson and Appropriator (Topic 25). The mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of LDP candidates in the 1986 election was 3.5%, in the 1990 election it was 2.5%, and in the 1993 election it was 3.5%. Unlike any of the public goods topics mentioned above, it was discussed more by politicians running in rural districts. It was also a topic discussed more by senior politicians. Across the three elections, 2% of the average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate running in an urban district (urban = 4, n = 179) was devoted to this topic, compared to 3.4% of the average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate running in a non-urban district (urban = 1, 2, 3, n = 752). The p-value for a difference in means test was 0.004. The mean proportion of discussion in the manifestos of politicians who had won five elections or more was 4% (n = 290) across the three years, whereas the mean proportion of discussion in the manifestos of politicians who had won less than five elections (or no elections) was 2.7% (n = 651). The p-value for a difference in means test was 0.004.

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic combined discussion of problems facing the nation, which one candidate described as "the fatherland, Japan" (*sōkoku nippon*), and problems facing their home prefecture. This dualism is epitomized in one candidates' phrase: "Japan, lets be more energetic! Miyazaki, lets try hard!" Candidates spent

a sizeable portion of their manifesto expressing gratitude to constituents for continuing to elect them, and asking humbly and politely for their continued support. They presented lists of the numerous “problems” and “issues” (*kadai ga sanseki*) plaguing the nation, such as economic (the high yen; the trade imbalance; the economic recession); political (money politics, which one candidate argued was a “problem of the attitudes of politicians”); bureaucratic (the budget formation process lacked national direction, with government agencies merely seeking the same amount of money they got last year) (*zennen jisseki shugi*); international (the dramatic changes occurring in the world with the end of the Cold War, which candidates argued that Japan, as an “economic superpower”, should find a way to participate in); and agricultural (with international pressure on Japan to open up its rice market). Candidates mentioned these problems and promised to find ways to assist in their resolution. Many candidates advertised their credentials as problem-solvers. “As Director of the LDP’s Special Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries Trade Policy”, one candidate declared, “I have opposed liberalization of the rice market”. “I will deal with the problem of agriculture, which the Uruguay Round is set on destroying”, promised another. “We have to break away from the economic recession. I will solve these problems”, another candidate declared.

After discussing problems facing the nation, candidates launched into a description of the problems facing their prefecture and “our beloved hometown” (*waga ai suru kyodo*). Many candidates told voters that their prefecture was “behind”. They promised to realize “balanced development between urban and rural areas” (*kinko aru kokudo no hatten*), which was a slogan in many of their manifestos. Only if more money was spent on rural areas, candidates told voters, will Japan once again become “bright”. Candidates declared that “The 21st century will be a century of development of rural areas!” The two problems

candidates talked about most were how to prevent young people from moving away to more populous areas and how to make their prefecture more accessible to the rest of the country. In contrast to their discussion of national-level problems, in which candidates tended to mention problems without proposing any solutions, candidates presented more concrete solutions when discussing local problems. Enriching social capital in the prefecture was the solution proposed by one candidate. He would do that by “nurturing local businesses” to ensure that young people had opportunities for employment in the prefecture. More high-speed transportation was the solution proposed by another candidate, who promised to “continue improving the transportation system in our prefecture”. Candidates constantly emphasized that they were working hard and doing their best. A tactic used by several candidates to demonstrate their interest in solving local problems was to emphasize their relationships with local politicians. One candidate told his voters that he had “solicited a list of demands from our prefecture to the state” (*kuni ni taisuru yōbō jiko*) from the governor and members of the prefectural assembly. He promised to do his best to realize all demands on the list and update politicians at the city, town, and village level about his progress along the way.⁸

A second public goods topic discussed by conservative candidates at lower proportions but in each of the three elections was Problems Facing Japan (Topic 51). The mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of LDP candidates in the 1986 election was 2%, in the 1990 election it was 2%, and in the 1993 election it was 1.6%. There were no significant differences between candidates in urban areas and candidates in non-urban areas, or between senior and junior candidates.

⁸In Chapter 4 I code Statesperson and Appropriator as a public good. This may seem like an odd choice, given the degree of discussion about candidates’ home prefectures. I reasoned that the fact that candidates spent such a large portion of space discussing problems faced by “the nation” would have sent voters a clear signal that they were prepared to devote attention to this topic while in office.

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic told voters that Japan faced many “problems” and “issues”, which they would tackle if elected. They expressed awareness of the problems to be addressed (using vague statements such as “the environmental problem”, “the economic problem”, and “the aging-society-and-declining-birthrate problem”), and shied away from offering solutions, other than promising to “tackle it”. One candidate told voters that Japan had become an economic superpower not only by dint of the hard work and wisdom of Japanese citizens, but also by receiving help from the international community. Thus, he continued, “Japan should contribute back to the international community”. To facilitate this contribution, the candidate would “promote international cultural exchange” and “increase the number of exchange students”.

Another candidate (who happened to be a former Prime Minister) promised to pursue a policy of “coexistence with the earth”, telling voters “The stars in the sky and the earth under our feet is part of a hometown shared by all humans, a hometown money cannot buy. It is our responsibility to protect our beautiful natural environment so that it can be transferred on and on to future generations”. Other candidates pledged to realize “harmonious development for all three generations: those in their later years, those in their adult years, and those who are still young”. Other candidates promised to “build a tough, resilient Japan”, and “apply cutting-edge technology to tackle problems that the entire world will face soon enough”, such as “the problems of the environment and the aging society”. It was not uncommon for candidates to use their years of service to the district to highlight their competence in dealing with these problems, making sure to include effusive gratitude to voters for “allowing me this precious experience”. Other candidates drew attention to the years of service their fathers (or fathers-in-law) had provided for the district before them, pledging that they would follow in their fathers’ footsteps but not “rest on the laurels of my

father's popularity" (chichi no na ni amaeteinai).

A third public goods topic discussed by conservative candidates at lower proportions but in each of the three elections was Japan in the Global Economy (Topic 69). The mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of LDP candidates in the 1986 election was 3%, in the 1990 election it was 3.6%, and in the 1993 election it was 3%. There were no significant difference in level of discussion between junior and senior politicians and politicians in urban and rural districts. "The world is heading into an era in which businesses will sell more products abroad than they will in their home country", one candidate whose manifesto scored highly told voters. "Economics and politics are heading into a period of global economic integration", another declared. "What global economic integration means is that what we do has resonance beyond our own shores". Japan is, another candidate told voters, "the second-largest economy in the world and the largest creditor nation. We must not forget Japan's economic strength". One candidate suggested that Japan ought to contribute to the process of economic integration by "making Tokyo an international financial hub akin to London or New York". Because Japan is not blessed with many natural resources, another candidate declared, "we need to devote everything to people-building (hitozukuri). The foundation of our country is education". Candidates called for the development of an education system that nurtures "public-mindedness" (kokyō no seishin), which one candidate defined as the ability to sympathize with the plight of others. If we can think of others, one candidate explained, we will naturally be able to sacrifice, even a little bit, for the good of society.

Other candidates told voters that having a deep awareness of Japan's culture and traditions and being able to teach foreigners about them with pride, was very important. "Japan is a Yamato country", this candidate declared. "The world is in need of our spiritual soil

of acting in harmony with others. We should transmit our culture with confidence around the world”. Candidates promised voters that they would think about how to make a Japan for the future, a Japan of which “our children and grandchildren will travel abroad and be able to say with pride, I’m Japanese!” Other candidates proposed practical solutions, such as expanding opportunities for international exchange. “I will think of ways to enable Japanese children to have more experiences abroad”. Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic also concentrated on advertising their “internationalist” credentials. In order to realize this new Japan, one candidate explained, “we need politicians who have policies, personality, and an international mind”. Another candidate claimed to have “international dynamism” (*kokusaiteki kōdōryoku*), “a rich vision”, and “deep knowledge of other countries”. “I am an internationalized person” (*kokusaiha ningen*), another candidate told voters, “I can speak six languages”.

In sum, what these qualitative interpretations reveal is that conservative candidates did talk about issues relating to Japan’s role in the world. However vague the discussion was, it showed that they were interested and managed to incorporate it alongside private goods into their manifestos. What they did not talk about was Japan’s foreign and national security policy. There was no mention of relations with a specific country, Japan’s beloved Article 9, the Self Defense Forces, the United Nations, the U.S.-Japan security alliance, or anything to do with national security. Apart from singing the praises of liberal democracy, there was no discussion that could be identified as being in response to the tremendous changes that were happening in the world. One former Prime Minister chose to respond to the coming-down of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War by telling voters how beautiful the earth’s natural environment was and how important it was to take care of it for future generations. In 1993, there was no discussion about the Gulf War or the peacekeeping legislation that

had just passed the Diet. The presence of these three topics in which problems facing Japan were discussed is a startling illustration of the degree to which conservative candidates avoided these issues under SNTV-MMD.

These qualitative interpretations also suggest that conservative candidates tended to use public goods in much the same way as they used private goods under SNTV-MMD, as a means to cultivate a personal reputation. Most of the discussion of these goods was designed to convey to voters the nature of the issues the candidate believed to be important. There were few concrete policy issues discussed, no solutions mentioned, and a lot of position-ducking. The discussion contained in the manifestos of conservative candidates fit what we know to be true based on qualitative studies of election campaigns under SNTV-MMD. Instead of selecting a policy or a government, voters selected a candidate, and entrusted policymaking and governance to her.

6.3 Electoral Strategies of Opposition Candidates Under SNTV-MMD

In this section, I answer the question of why conservative candidates stayed right away from foreign and national security policy, even though they found room in their manifestos for other public goods. The theory presented in Chapter 2 argued that the incentives for candidates from the Japan Socialist Party and the Japan Communist Party to cultivate and rely on a party label, and the centrality of foreign and national security policy in the party labels they created, resulted in a situation where candidates from these parties owned these issues. However unpalatable this situation was to conservative politicians (and their usage

of the word *sōkoku* (“fatherland”) in the manifestos suggests that it must have been very unpalatable, if not downright painful), they were utterly unable to mount a coordinated response to the framing of this issue. To respond to the unified message presented by candidates from these parties, conservative candidates would have had to create a unified message of their own. But their need for distinguish themselves from their same-district co-partisans rather than compete as a team gave them no incentives to come together to create such a label, and every incentive to defect from any label that was created. The optimal party organization was one that prevented a concentration of power, because only decentralized institutions could enable politicians to remain unfettered rulers of their own fief. What decentralized institutions meant is that no leader had the power to carve out a message, even if she had wanted to. Knowing that they simply couldn’t win on this issue, conservative candidates should have avoided it altogether.

An earlier section showed that candidates from the major opposition parties competed on the basis of public goods, as the theory expects. This section tests the second claim, that foreign and national security policy played a central role in the platforms of JCP and JSP candidates. I present strong evidence that it did. I show that JCP candidates privileged foreign and national security policy in their electoral platforms at each election. Candidates from the JSP adopted electoral platforms that had foreign and national security policy front and center for two elections. In 1993, they downplayed their positions on these issues slightly to concentrate on a more popular issue, political reform.

6.3.1 Foreign and National Security Policy in the Platforms of JCP and JSP Candidates in 1986

Topic 29, Opposition to Military Spending, was the platform offered by candidates running from the JCP in 1986. As Figure 6.7 reveals, the mean proportion of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JCP candidates was 78%. Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic bemoaned the high price of the yen, calling it an “artificial calamity” (*jinsai*) caused by the U.S. and the aggressive export policies of large corporations. Candidates pledged to “take a scalpel” (*mesu wo ire*) to the “evil government of the LDP” (*akusei*) and “protect the livelihoods of Japanese citizens”. To correct the “absurdly expensive yen”, candidates promised to cut military spending and increase spending on welfare and education. To expand internal demand, they pledged to reduce income tax for low-income households, reduce the interest rate on emergency loans for businesses, make medical care for the elderly free, and reduce the portion borne by the people relative to the government in the existing national health care system. They also pledged to get rid of bullying in schools and “protect Japanese children”.

Each of these promises were interspersed with statements of opposition to war, opposition to nuclear weapons, and opposition to military spending. Candidates reminded voters that the JCP “was the only voice that had opposed the aggressive war”, in which “many lives had been lost” and “for which members of the JCP had been persecuted”. Candidates told voters that it had been the JCP that had inserted the clause of popular sovereignty into the postwar constitution. It was the JCP, candidates told voters, that had continued to demand the return of Japanese land, the Kurile Islands, from the Soviet Union. “Whoever the superpower, whether it be the U.S. or the Soviet Union”, one candidate told voters,

“the Japan Communist Party doesn’t mince its words. We tell it like it is.” (subari mono iu tō). Candidates promised to “abolish the U.S.-Japan alliance”, which they argued would “drag Japan into a war” (sensō ni makikomareru). In its place, they would create “a neutral Japan with no military alliances”. They drew voter attention to Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro’s recent statement that he “respected Hitler as a leader”. As the “only truly progressive party in Japan”, candidates declared, “the Japan Communist Party would continue to oppose Japan-style fascism”. All the other parties in the Diet, candidates told voters, were “nothing but carbon copies of the Liberal Democrats”, and “lied, stole, bullied ordinary Japanese citizens, and were intent on destroying Japanese democracy”. “We have to put a stop to this evil government!”, candidates cried.

Topic 65, Not a Strong Military, But a Kind Society, was the platform offered by candidates running from the JSP in 1986. As Figure 6.8 reveals, the mean proportion of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JSP candidates was 40%. Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic asked voters to vote for “the party that will bring peace to Japan, the Japan Socialist Party”. They told voters that immediately after promising not to dissolve the Diet or convene an extraordinary session, the “evil LDP government” did a complete about-face and “forcefully dissolved the Diet”. “We cannot forgive politicians who abuse the seat of power and deceive Japanese citizens” (kenryoku no sa wo akuyō shite, kokumin wo azamuku), candidates implored. If the LDP wins this election after such a “deceitful dissolution” (damashiuchi kaisan), they will feel as if they have the power to do anything. “There will be no brake on the LDP!” (hadome no kikanai). If the LDP has its way, candidates warned, Japan would be in for a huge increase in military spending and the imposition of a new indirect tax”. “Social welfare, pensions, everything will be pushed aside. Farmers and the owners of small-, medium-, and tiny-sized enter-

Chapter 6. Campaigning Under SNTV-MMD: Conservative Politicians Ignore Foreign and National Security Policy

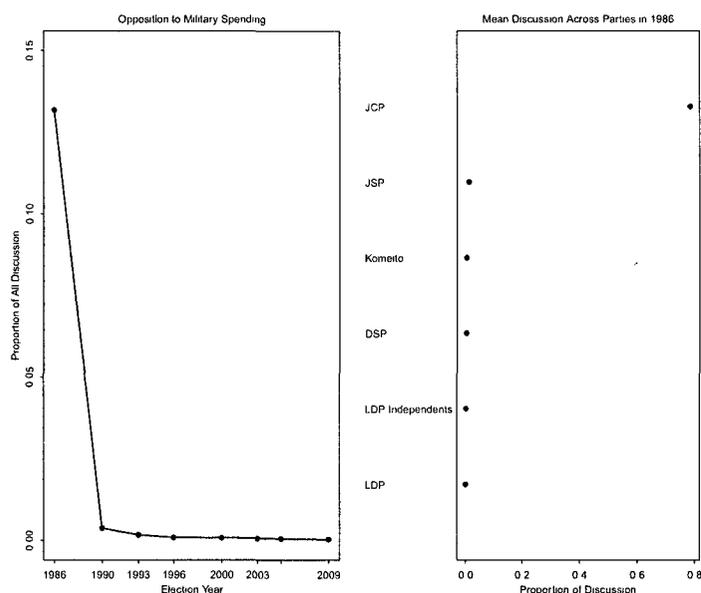


Figure 6.7: JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of Opposition to Military Spending in 1986. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all 7,497 manifestos devoted to Topic 29 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 29 was discussed in the 1986 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 29 in the manifestos of the 800 serious candidates competing in the 1986 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 29 was a JCP topic, and comprised 78% of the average manifesto produced by JCP candidates in this election.

prises will be backed into a corner. That is the true goal of power-hungry Nakasone!” (kenryoku shugisha nakasone no hara). “I will never forgive politics that bullies the weak. We have to do something to prevent an outright win by the LDP!”

Candidates told voters that the LDP was planning to lift the one-percent cap on defense spending, which “had acted as a brake on each successive conservative government”. “Lifting the one-percent cap on defense spending, proposing an anti-spy law, visiting Yasukuni Shrine ... all of these actions suggest that the government is completely ignoring the lessons of history and is intent on taking Japan back to where it was in the pre-war period”, one candidate told voters. “These are actions that betray the sincere wishes of the Japanese

people for peace”. “Our sincere wish”, the candidate continued, “is not for a strong country with a strong military but for a country with a kind society. A society that takes the wishes of working people seriously, and is kind to women, children, and the elderly”. “I promise to move forward, keeping the light of progress burning bright. I pledge to fight the decayed money politics of Nakasone (*kinken fuhai no nakasone seiji*) and the selfish actions of politicians today to bring peace to our children and grandchildren”. “Please entrust your vote to me, a vote for peace and life!”

In terms of concrete policies, candidates promised to prevent the imposition of an indirect tax, reduce income and residence tax, expand internal demand via “active fiscal policies” (*sekkyokuteki zaisei*), and pursue peaceful, anti-nuclear, disarmament diplomacy. One candidate promised to introduce “peace spending”, which Japan could use to “introduce Japan’s treasured Article 9 to the world”. Candidates promised to battle the LDP, which was dead set on “writing off welfare”, with their own plan for a better pension system and a better medical care system for the elderly. Candidates promised to oppose any enlargement of the kind of agricultural and livestock products that could be imported, and pledged to increase national self-sufficiency in “safe food”. They promised to develop new policies to break through the crisis in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. They told voters that the policy recommendations made by Prime Minister Nakasone’s Special Commission on Education would do nothing but raise rates of juvenile delinquency. Instead, they promised to reduce class sizes to 35 and develop an education system in which the personalities of children and sympathy for others were encouraged. Candidates promised to realize “clean, kind politics”.

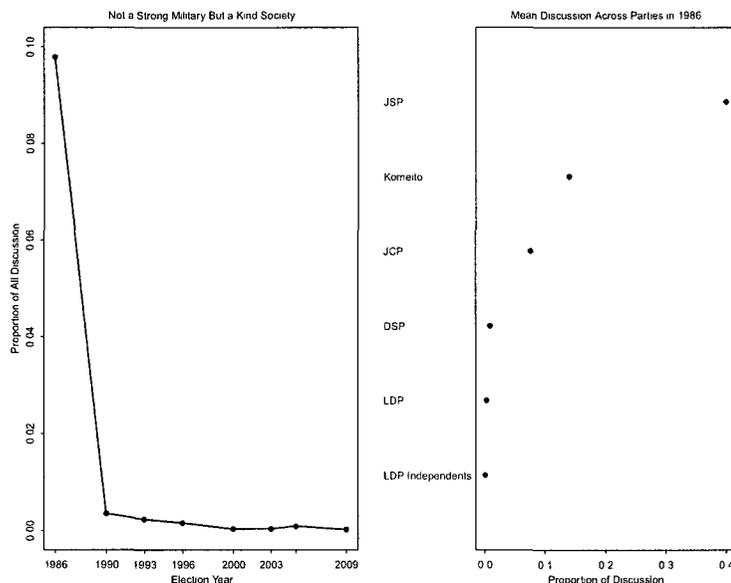


Figure 6.8: JSP candidates campaigned on a platform of Not a Strong Military, But a Kind Society in 1986. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all 7,497 manifestos devoted to Topic 65 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 65 was discussed in the 1986 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 65 in the manifestos of the 800 serious candidates competing in the 1986 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 65 was a JSP topic, and comprised 40% of the average manifesto produced by JSP candidates in this election.

6.3.2 Foreign and National Security Policy in the Platforms of JCP and JSP Candidates in 1990

Topic 20, Consumption Tax is to Fund the Military, was the platform offered by candidates running from the JCP in 1990. As Figure 6.9 reveals, the mean proportion of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JCP candidates was 73%. Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic pledged their “resolute” (kippari) and “unconditional” (mujoyōken) opposition to the imposition of a consumption tax. While the

LDP was claiming that the proceeds of the tax would be used to fund medical care for the elderly, candidates told voters, “this is a complete lie!” (*makka no uso*) The real motivation for the new tax was to secure a sound financial basis for large-scale military spending (*taigunshuku no tame no zaigen zukuri*). Candidates described emotional scenes they had experienced, in which “elderly people and mothers holding their babies grasped my hands, tears flowing from their eyes, pleading with me to abolish the consumption tax”.

Alongside the theme of opposition to the consumption tax were promises that fell into three other categories. The first was the prohibition of political donations from companies, which candidates told voters had contributed to the string of recent corruption scandals, which “by this stage has implicated politicians from every party except the Japan Communist Party”. Candidates promised to realize “clean politics” (*seiketsu na seiji*). The second was opposition to liberalization of the rice market, which candidates claimed would “destroy” Japanese agriculture. “Rice is our life”, declared one candidate. The third theme was a promise to implement “warm politics”, and provide free medical care for the elderly, the weak, and for babies, so that “you wouldn’t have to worry if you fell ill”. Candidates told voters that the JCP would pursue a “politics in which Japanese citizens are the main characters” (*kokumin koso shujinko no seiji wo mezashite*).

Topic 7, No More Unfair Taxes, Peace Constitution, was the platform offered by candidates running from the JSP in 1990. As Figure 6.10 reveals, the mean proportion of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JCP candidates was 47%. Candidates promised to abolish the consumption tax, which they argued was symbolic of an unfair tax system. Candidates told voters that their party, the JSP, had managed to get legislation abolishing this tax past the House of Councillors (HOC), where it held a majority of seats. While this had been knocked down by the LDP, which held a majority in the HOR, can-

Chapter 6. Campaigning Under SNTV-MMD: Conservative Politicians Ignore Foreign and National Security Policy

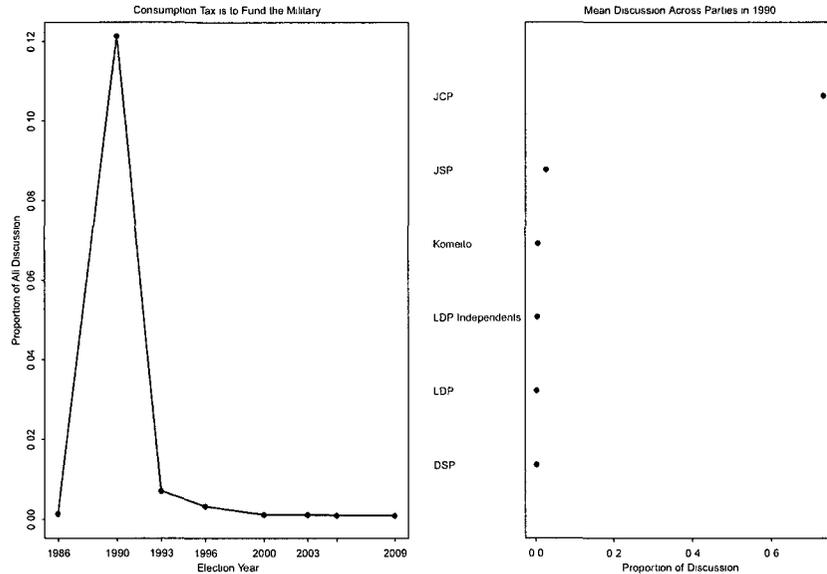


Figure 6.9: JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of Consumption Tax is to Fund the Military in 1990. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all 7,497 manifestos devoted to Topic 20 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 20 was discussed in the 1990 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 20 in the manifestos of the 854 serious candidates competing in the 1990 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 20 was a JCP topic, and comprised 73% of the average manifesto produced by JCP candidates in this election.

didates promised to “continue the battle after the election”. Candidates told voters not to be fooled by the LDP’s revised tax bill, which was nothing but an election-year ploy that foisted hidden costs onto consumers and manufacturers. Candidates denigrated the LDP for “demanding that large corporations give it 30 billion yen at election time”, which meant that “little has changed since the Recruit scandal”. What the wave of democratization in Eastern Europe is telling us, one candidate argued, is that one-party dominant regimes all over the world are coming to an end. While Japan was an economic superpower, another candidate argued, it did not contribute to the world. “If we win this election and take over the reigns of government, it will be the end. Not only of the consumption tax but also of

corrupt LDP politics!” The candidate continued, “I will build a Japan of which we will be so proud that we will puff up our chests out when we say we are Japanese. A Japan that has changed, with a brand new politics and a brand new government to match the transformation that is occurring on the world stage from tension and conflict to harmony and connection”.

These candidates promised to “protect peace, disarmament, and the earth’s natural environment”.⁹ They would “freeze the government’s military spending, and puts Japan’s peace constitution and strong economy to good use in the world”. They promised to realize a politics that “takes the lives of people seriously”, a principle that “is epitomized in our peace constitution”. One candidate promised to “draw up a plan for the construction of a Japan Sea Peace and Economic Zone”. Candidates also stated their opposition to liberalization of the rice market and to *gentan*.¹⁰ “While the LDP says nice things to farmers and fishermen at election time”, candidates declared, “what they really think is clear with their stance on liberalization of agricultural products and *gentan*”. Candidates promised to “do away with special interest politics” (*rieki yūdō gata seiji*) and construct a production, distribution, and consumption system that has the understanding of both producers and consumers in the agricultural sector.

6.3.3 Foreign and National Security Policy in the Platforms of JCP Candidates in 1993

Topic 5, Political Reform, Protect the Constitution, was the platform offered by can-

⁹If the English does not appear to make much sense, neither did the Japanese.

¹⁰*Gentan*, which means “reduction in crop size”, is the policy through which the Japanese government stabilizes the price of rice by effectively paying rice farmers to reduce the amount of crop they produce.

Chapter 6. Campaigning Under SNTV-MMD: Conservative Politicians Ignore Foreign and National Security Policy

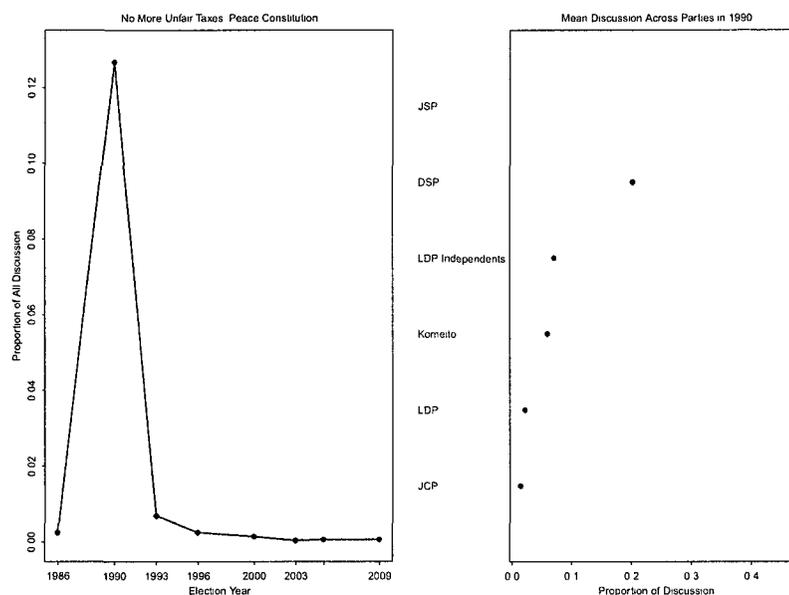


Figure 6.10: JSP candidates campaigned on a platform of No More Unfair Taxes, Peace Constitution, in 1990. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all 7,497 manifestos devoted to Topic 7 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 7 was discussed in the 1990 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 7 in the manifestos of the 854 serious candidates competing in the 1990 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 7 was a JSP topic, and comprised 47% of the average manifesto produced by JSP candidates in this election.

didates running from the JCP in 1993. As Figure 6.11 reveals, the mean proportion of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JCP candidates was 88%. Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic called for “true political reform” (*hontō no seiji kaikaku*), which they argued would be achieved by prohibiting political donations from corporations and not by the introduction of a single-member-district electoral system, which they decried as a “fake reform” (*nise kaikaku*) designed merely to distract voters from more pressing issues. Candidates declared their commitment to “living” Japan’s peace constitution and promised to vigorously oppose the “evil revision of the constitution”. They promised to “abolish the U.S.-Japan security treaty” and “stop the overseas

military dispatch of the SDF”. Candidates described the LDP as being “tethered to big business” (*daikigyō hoshi*) and condemned it for prioritising the “U.S.-Japan military alliance over the welfare of ordinary Japanese citizens”. They told voters that the JSP, the DSP, and the Kōmeitō were exactly the same.¹¹

Candidates told voters that the Japan Communist Party was “a party that has striven for peace and social development throughout its history”; “a party that has opposed war and fought for popular sovereignty and gender equality since the prewar period”; and “a party that does not accept any money from the Soviet Union or large corporations”. Most candidates addressed perceived voter concern that the collapse of the Soviet Union was an indication that the JCP was “behind the times”. Candidates told voters that the Soviet Union had collapsed because it had *lost* the fundamental spirit of communism, not because of any defect of communism. This was not in danger of happening to the JCP. “The Japan Communist Party”, candidates declared, “has fought the tyranny of the Soviet Union for three decades”. Ancillary promises that were also included in this topic were ridding the country of gender-based discrimination, raising the status of women, abolishing the consumption tax and other unfair taxes, introducing free medical care for the elderly, opposing the liberalization of the rice market, revising the Worker’s Law, and opposing the construction of nuclear power plants and resorts that “ruin the local environment”.

These qualitative interpretations reveal the centrality of positions on foreign and national security policy in the platforms of JSP and JCP candidates for these three elections under SNTV-MMD. Whereas candidates from other parties talked about issues we ordinarily associate with elections, such as housing, taxes, welfare, and consumer prices, candidates of these two parties stuck almost religiously to their positions on these issues,

¹¹The salience of criticism of other parties in this topic is evidenced by the fact that the word stem “LDP” is a stronger identifier of the topic than the word stem “JCP”, meaning that these candidates talked more about the LDP than they did about their own party

Chapter 6. Campaigning Under SNTV-MMD: Conservative Politicians Ignore Foreign and National Security Policy

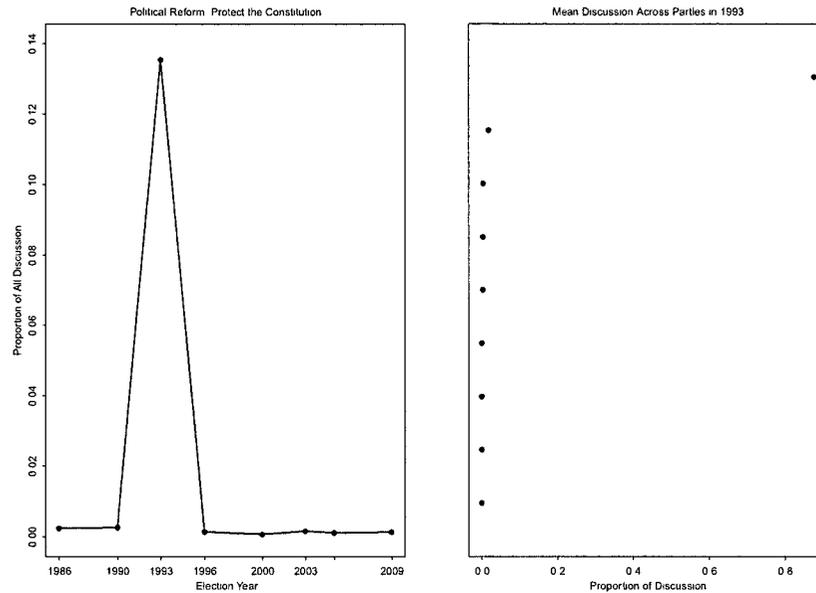


Figure 6.11: JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of Political Reform, Protect the Constitution in 1993. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all 7,497 manifestos devoted to Topic 5 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 5 was discussed in the 1993 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 5 in the manifestos of the 866 serious candidates competing in the 1993 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 5 was a JCP topic, and comprised 88% of the average manifesto produced by JCP candidates in this election.

attaching them to almost every other issue they could. While it is difficult to say with certainty that what I have observed is not specific to these three elections, two facts make this unlikely. The first is that while some of the issues discussed by opposition candidates were specific to that particular election, such as the ceiling on defense spending, which the government lifted in 1986, most of the issues mentioned (the U.S.- Japan alliance, U.S. bases in Japan, Japan's peace constitution, and Japan's role in the Second World War) were not specific to this time period. The fact that candidates from the opposition parties were still using these issues three (and sometimes four) decades after the issues were effectively a done deal (the war finished in 1945, the constitution was written in 1947, and the treaty was

signed in 1951), lends strong support that the discussion I have observed is in fact symptomatic of an electoral equilibrium in which candidates from the two opposition parties use these issues and conservative candidates ignore them.

The second fact that leads me to believe that the platforms produced by candidates in these three elections are not election-specific, and I can generalize from these findings to other elections under SNTV-MMD, is that my findings jibe so well with research in Japanese politics that has already noted the readiness of JCP and JSP politicians to label any policy the LDP is expressing an interest in pursuing as evidence that the LDP is intent on remilitarizing. One study revealed that this framing happened as early as 1956, when the LDP government under Prime Minister Hatoyama Ichiro expressed an interest in reforming the electoral system (Reed and Thies 2001, 159). The JSP immediately jumped on the plan, labelling it as clear evidence the LDP wanted to remilitarize. What the evidence presented here shows is that this labelling was used by candidates in their own electoral campaigns, as late as 1993.

Because discussion of foreign and national security policy is contained within party-election year topics that are also comprised of other issues, it is difficult to generate a proportion of the total amount of discussion devoted to these issues for candidates from these parties the way I could for conservative candidates using Foreign and National Security Policy (Topic 6). Interestingly, the qualitative interpretations presented above suggested that the importance of the issue in the platforms did vary slightly over time. Candidates appeared to discuss this issue with the most virulence and the most enthusiasm in the 1986 election. This election was held right before the LDP government decided to lift the cap on military spending. While lifting the cap had little substantive meaning (military spending exceeded 1% for two years, when it was 1.01% respectively, and then came back under

1%), the prominence of this issue in the platforms of opposition candidates running in 1986 indicates that they were much more likely to elevate this issue in response to something their own government was doing as opposed to something that was happening in the outside world. It is truly remarkable that the lifting of the 1% ban on military spending galvanized opposition candidates in a way that the end of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the Gulf War did not. If candidates from the opposition were truly worried about the hidden militaristic intentions of their government, why did they not get more upset at these events? These events thrust new expectations on Japan, such as the expectation it would send its military abroad and have it participate in joint operations with the militaries other countries. Certainly these candidates should have been worried about this? Why these issues received less attention in 1990 and 1993 is puzzling, and suggests that perhaps the opposition had other issues with which to battle the government, such as the corruption and political reform.

6.3.4 Electoral Strategies in Words

A powerful indicator of the degree to which a party owns an issue is whether or not its candidates have coined their own words and phrases to describe the issue and their position on it. If an issue or a position is absolutely central to a party's platform in one election, or its overall party label, its candidates may coin words and phrases that capture that issue. If they use these words in every election, the media may also adopt them and they may become known to and used by the rest of the public. While it is difficult to coin brand new words and phrases in English, in Japanese, it is easy. One just strings characters together.

Under SNTV-MMD, candidates from the JSP and the JCP coined words for foreign

and national security policy and conservative candidates coined words for private goods. Two of the most important words in the opposition's platform were *kaiaku* and *gōken*. The former means "evil revision", and is made by combining the character for "evil" with the character for "revision". This was designed to convey that the party was opposed to any and all revisions of Japan's constitution, all of which it derided as evil. The latter means "defend the constitution", and was used by these two opposition parties to advertise themselves and their respective parties as defenders of the constitution. Both words were entirely made up, and not used by conservative candidates.

Conservative candidates, on the other hand, coined words and phrases designed to convey their commitment to providing private goods in as few words as possible. They used *nōson* as shorthand for "agriculture and forestry"; *muriyōchi kaihatsu* as shorthand for "land that remains undeveloped"; and *yosanka suru* as shorthand for "securing some of the government's budget for an activity". Their scramble to create minority groups even led them to develop a word to describe the tragic state of children who were orphaned in traffic accidents, *kōtsū iji*, which means "traffic children".

I use a novel approach to visually depict the degree to which election campaigns conducted by conservative candidates and those conducted by candidates from the JCP and JSP targeted separate spheres. From the output of the topic model and my classifications of the topics as public or private goods, I gathered the fifty words that scored highly as identifiers of "public goods", and the fifty words that scored highly as identifiers of private goods. These words corresponded neatly with my intuition as to what public and private goods words should look like. The top three private goods words were "community", "provide", and "industry", and the top three public goods words were "Japan", "tax", and "citizens". I calculated the frequency with which each of these 100 words appeared in the manifestos

of LDP candidates, JCP candidates, and JSP candidates in each of the three elections under SNTV-MMD, making sure to standardize by total number of words used. I then created an average frequency for each party's use of each word under SNTV-MMD. From these frequencies, I compared the rates of usage of each word across party.

Figures 6.12, 6.13 and 6.14 are word clouds constructed from the words that were used more by JSP candidates relative to LDP candidates, the words used more by JCP candidates relative to LDP candidates, and the words used more by LDP candidates relative to JSP candidates. The clouds are a graphic illustration of the degree to which candidates of a particular party use the word without interference from candidates from the other party. The presence of the word in the cloud means that the word is already being used more by the candidates of one party relative to the other. The *size* of the words indicates the degree to which the word is being used *predominantly* by candidates of one party relative to the other. The larger the word, the more it is being used exclusively by the candidates of that party relative to the other.

The sizes of the words “stop”, “military”, “constitution”, and “forgive” in Figures 6.12 and 6.13 indicate the extent to which the LDP yielded issues of foreign and national security policy to the JSP and the JCP in these elections. Conservative candidates allowed the opposition parties to own these issues under SNTV-MMD. The sizes of the words “shinkansen”, “airport”, “highway”, “construction”, “hometown”, and “invite” indicate the extent to which candidates of these parties yielded private goods to conservative candidates. This provides evidence in support of my proposition that conservative candidates portrayed themselves as the providers of pork and opposition party candidates portrayed themselves as the providers of peace.



Figure 6.14: Words Owned By the LDP Relative to the Japan Socialist Party, 1986-1993. Each word in the cloud was said more by LDP candidates than by candidates from the JSP. The size of each word indicates the degree to which JCP candidates yielded the word to LDP candidates.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has provided strong evidence for the first part of my theory, my claim that conservative candidates ignored foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD. My results confirm that conservative candidates adopted electoral strategies that were comprised primarily of private goods for subsets of voters in their respective districts. While these private goods were supplemented with a dose of public goods, the difficulty of coming up with their own platforms meant that most of these issues were swiped from the non-ideological platforms of opposition party candidates. My findings suggest that conservative candidates ignored foreign and national security policy not only because they were focused on beating their co-partisan, but also because candidates from the opposition had a monopoly on these issues.

The presence of topics in which Japan's economic policy and Japan's role in the global economy were touched upon, albeit at extremely small levels, helps to reveal the extent to which they ignored foreign and national security policy. The fact that we do not observe any discussion of these issues in the public goods platforms candidates offered voters is powerful evidence of the electoral equilibrium I identified in Chapter 2. Descriptions of Japan as a "lifestyle superpower", a "sports superpower", and the use of the word *sōkoku* (fatherland), suggests that some conservative candidates probably were very interested in these issues, but were unable to discuss this. A second piece of evidence is the absence of discussion of foreign and national security policy by DSP politicians. Qualitative research has shown that DSP politicians adopted views on national security that were slightly to the right of conservative candidates. Despite this, their views were completely absent during the campaign. This is further evidence that no one had the incentive to articulate the median

voter position on these issues under SNTV-MMD.

My findings show that conservative candidates who had the toughest time under SNTV-MMD were those running in urban districts. Being denied an effective channel through which to ply voters with private goods, but facing the need to beat their co-partisans, these candidates used vague promises of public goods swiped from the platforms of the opposition. I argued that this vagueness was a product of needing to demonstrate that you cared about an issue, but not to the extent to which it might signal that you would actually spend time on it after getting elected. While outside the scope of this dissertation, an interesting research question would be to examine how these candidates used positions on public goods to distinguish themselves from one another.

The qualitative interpretations of the topics discussed by opposition party candidates presented in this chapter confirm the centrality of foreign and national security policy in their campaigns, and also indicate that the positions taken on these issues were extreme and not at the position of the median voter. Unlike conservative candidates, opposition party candidates offered voters bundles of policies concerning national-level public goods that were so similar that LDA classified them as being the same topic. The presence of these party-election-year topics is strong evidence that opposition party candidates were relying on their party labels and conservative candidates were relying on private goods. I presented reasons to believe that my findings are not limited to the three elections studied, and are indicative of the treatment of foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD.

Chapter 7

Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

“I’ve noticed one big difference in campaigning. There’s a lot more discussion of foreign policy. I think its because you have to choose issues that can attract people’s attention.”¹

“Campaigning in a single member district? Well, if you talk about pensions, someone will say that health care is more important, and if you talk about health care, someone will say that nursing care is more important. Talking about national security is easier because everyone agrees and no one disagrees. I don’t talk about national security, but I do talk about national identity. When I did this for the first time, I discovered that my constituents were starving for it.”²

¹Interview, Nakasone Yasuhiro, former Prime Minister (1982-87) and Member of the House of Representatives (1947-2003), September 17, 2009.

²Interview conducted on August 21, 2009 with a Member of the House of Representatives in his thirteenth term, first elected in 1972.

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

“Its tough to do foreign policy. People at home joke that my constituency is not them, its Africa.”³

This dissertation sets out to explain the puzzling turnaround in attention to foreign and national security policy by conservative Japanese politicians in the mid-1990’s. Why conservative politicians chose this particular time to pay attention to issues they had kept at arm’s length for decades is not well-explained by existing theories in international relations. The theory presented in Chapter 2 argued that the turnaround in political attention is best explained by a shift in the electoral strategies of conservative politicians. Whereas promising private goods for a subset of voters in one’s district was the strategy demanded of conservative politicians competing under SNTV-MMD, which was used in elections to the House of Representatives until 1994, public goods for the national-level median voter is the winning strategy for conservative politicians under MMM, Japan’s new electoral system, in use since 1994.

Chapter 2 argued that foreign and national security policy should have been avoided like the plague by conservative politicians under SNTV-MMD for two reasons. The first is because it sent their constituents the signal that if elected, the politician would devote time and attention to concerns that had nothing to do with them. This was an extremely risky signal to send in a system where winning elections depended on constant efforts to enlarge one’s army of supporters and prevent them from being poached by the well-organized armies of supporters attached to other conservative politicians. The second reason they should have avoided these issues under SNTV-MMD is because candidates running from the opposition parties faced incentives to use extreme positions on public goods to carve out a party label they could all use in their campaigns. The issue of choice for two of these

³Interview with Member of House of Representatives, July 2009.

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

opposition parties, the Japan Communist Party and the Japan Socialist Party, was foreign and national security policy. However unpalatable the stance being offered voters by these opposition parties was, conservative politicians were unable to mount a coordinated effort to challenge it, either during the election or when it came time to make policy. I argue that the presence of these opposing incentives should have created an electoral equilibrium in which opposition politicians owned the issues and conservative candidates ignored them.

Chapter 2 argued that the introduction of MMM in 1994 has reversed the incentives facing conservative politicians. The introduction of single member districts removed intra-party competition, which should have removed the appeal of using private goods to carve out loyal battalions of supporters. Winning in a single member district requires candidates to develop platforms comprised of public goods and target these platforms at the median voter. Whereas the party was an object to constrain and even to attack under SNTV-MMD, under MMM it has the potential to help conservative politicians amass the support they need to win. Being the quintessential public good, a policy that privileges no one and benefits everyone, I reasoned that the introduction of MMM should have given conservative politicians new incentives to try and reclaim foreign and national security policy from the opposition parties. I argued that the combination of single member districts and proportional representation will have less of an impact on the strategies of opposition party candidates, as even those running in single member districts will aim their appeals at the nationally-organized interest groups in the party's base. The result is that we should observe the emergence of a new electoral equilibrium, one in which all candidates rely on their party labels and foreign and national security is talked about by both sides, at every election.

The previous chapter used the topics discussed in the 2,520 manifestos produced by

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

serious candidates running in the 1986, 1990, and 1993 elections to test the theory's claims that pertain to SNTV-MMD. I presented powerful evidence that conservative candidates ignored foreign and national security policy in all three elections. While they found the time to discuss some public goods in their campaigns, albeit shying away from articulating concrete policy positions and using these goods more as a means of self-advertising, they stayed right away from foreign and national security policy. As expected, they adopted electoral strategies comprised of private goods for a subset of voters in the district. Qualitative interpretation of the private goods topics provided some indication of the energy conservative politicians put into dreaming up ways to justify the constant stream of private goods they were providing for constituents, dressing up grubby appeals to construction companies with buzzwords such as "internationalization", "lifestyle superpower", and "the environment", and even telling voters they subscribed to a political ideology of "loving thy hometown". I showed that discussion of private goods increased at higher levels of intra-party competition, which supports my claim that it was the need to fight against one's co-partisans that encouraged the adoption of this strategy in the first place, and in rural districts, where private goods are easier to distribute. I found strong evidence that candidates from the JCP and the JSP made these issues a central part of their campaigns, and that conservative politicians left them to it.

This chapter uses the topics discussed in the 5,247 manifestos produced by all serious candidates running in the 1996, 2000, 2003, 2005, and 2009 elections to test the theory's claims that pertain to MMM. The first claim I test is whether or not conservative politicians have switched to discussing foreign and national security policy under MMM, and whether this is indicative of the adoption of a new electoral strategy that privileges public goods over private goods. I weigh up the evidence for whether or not conservative politicians

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

have been able to come up with a party label, and whether or not they are using this label in their campaigns. I also examine whether or not candidates running from Japan's new second party, the Democratic Party of Japan, are adopting the same electoral strategies as conservative candidates. The second claim I test is whether candidates from the JCP and the JSP (now the Social Democratic Party, or SDP), who are running in single member districts to increase their party's vote share in PR, have modified the extremity of the views they present voters with in elections.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section describes what I should observe in the data if my theory were correct, and what I should observe in the data if my theory were incorrect. It also describes what I should observe in the data if any one of the three alternative explanations I consider are correct. These are dealt with at length in Chapter 8. The second section focuses on the electoral strategies of conservative candidates. I present evidence that they have switched to discussing foreign and national security policy, and that this discussion is indicative of a more general shift in electoral strategy from private goods for a subset of voters in their districts to public goods for the national-level median voter. I show that in the 2005 election, conservative candidates managed to create a party label comprised of national-level appeals that they could all rely on their campaigns. This was an outcome that would have been impossible under the old electoral system.

I also find undeniable evidence that two remnants of SNTV-MMD have persisted under MMM. Conservative candidates are still using promises of private goods to win elections and, stuck for ideas, they are still swiping promises of public goods from the platforms of other parties. While these two facts might appear to challenge the argument presented here, I argue that they can be explained by two institutional legacies of SNTV-MMD. The first is the pockets of conservative support that lie scattered around each single member district.

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

Under SNTV-MMD, these pockets formed part of a well-organized camp attached to any one of the conservative politicians who ran in that district. Being comprised of voters who might have worked together for their entire adult lives to elect their politician, and whose position in the community derived from their proximity to the politician and the goodies she secured from the central government, these groups did not just disband when their politician retired or was assigned to a different district. Nor do they always do what their former politician tells them. Instead, I argue that they retain a powerful weapon with which they can force the candidate running with the LDP's nomination to continue supplying them with the same private goods they received from their politician under SNTV-MMD. I describe this weapon and its power in a later section.

A second legacy bequeathed the new electoral system, and one very much connected to the first, is the decentralized policymaking process described in Chapter 2. Being wedded to the demands of these scattered pockets of support, politicians have not deemed it wise to cede power over policy to the party leader. Concentrating power in the party leader would threaten their own individual abilities to provide the private goods these groups want. However, possessing influence over policy reinforces the need to provide private goods. It is only *because* politicians possess this influence that the strategy of private goods is still a viable one. Whereas the ordinary voter might not possess enough information about the policymaking process to understand that her politician could provide her with private goods, and thus could be fobbed off with promises of public goods, the scattered pockets of support know exactly how the process works. It was through this process that they received their share of the spoils under the old electoral system. This forces conservative candidates to walk a difficult tightrope between pleasing these groups and pleasing the wider electorate. Given that the former requires targeted appeals and promises of private

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

goods and the latter requires non-targeted appeals and promises of public goods, it is not difficult to see why the LDP has done poorly in every election under MMM, with the exception of the 2005 election, and lost so badly in 2009.

The third section focuses on the electoral strategies of DPJ candidates. I show that DPJ candidates discussed foreign and national security policy for the first two elections under the new electoral system, then switched to relying on a carefully-cultivated party label, of which foreign and national security was an element. I show that the content of these party labels reflects an ingenious approach to the need to develop electoral strategies comprised of non-targetable appeals. DPJ candidates have judged that the best way to be *for* the people is to be *against* the groups who received benefits under the old electoral system. Given that to date their criticism has targeted national-government employees, large corporations, and workers in construction companies, and they have not yet touched doctors, dentists, fishermen, or the owners of small shops, DPJ candidates will probably continue to use such a platform for several more elections. I demonstrate that the one election under MMM in which the LDP adopted a similar strategy, the 2005 election, it produced a landslide victory for the party.

The fourth section focuses on candidates from the two traditional opposition parties. I find no evidence that the running of candidates in a single member district to increase the party's seat share in PR has modified the platforms of either the Social Democratic Party or the Japan Communist Party. Their positions on foreign and national security policy loom just as large as they did under SNTV-MMD. Instead it appears that the attention being paid to foreign and national security policy by conservative politicians after they reach office has kicked new life into the platforms of these parties, and has added concreteness to their appeals.

7.1 Observable Implications of the Theory: Electoral Strategies Under MMM

If the theory presented in Chapter 2 is correct, we should observe conservative candidates switching from an electoral strategy comprised of private goods for a subset of voters in their district to an electoral strategy comprised of public goods for the national-level median voter. We should observe them using topics classified in Chapter 4 as public goods more than topics classified as private goods. Unlike the vagueness that characterized their discussion of public goods under SNTV-MMD, which I argued was a product of needing to demonstrate that one cared about an issue of interest to voters but not in a way that might send the message to her supporters that she would spend too much time on it, we should observe discussion of concrete policy issues and the taking of identifiable positions. We should observe the emergence of party-election-year topics for conservative candidates, which the presence of intra-party competition made impossible under MMM. We should observe conservative candidates taking up foreign and national security policy with enthusiasm. We should observe virtually identical electoral strategies being pursued by candidates from the DPJ, which competed in the 1996 election in an earlier form, and became Japan's second-largest party in the 2000 election. Findings that would cast doubt on the explanatory power of the theory presented would be the converse of each of these five items, and especially if we observed conservative candidates relying more on private-goods topics than on public-goods topics and not discussing foreign and national security policy.

If the theory presented in Chapter 2 is correct, we should observe no major shift in

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

the electoral strategies of candidates from Japan's two traditional opposition parties, the SDP and the JCP. We should observe them adopting the same electoral strategies that they adopted under SNTV-MMD: that of appealing to national-level voters with public goods. Their running of candidates in single member districts with the goal of increasing their party's vote share in PR may produce modification of the extremity of their positions on foreign and national security policy, or a downgrading of their importance in the overall platform.

If the major alternative hypothesis, that the degree of attention paid to these issues by conservative politicians is determined by changes in the external environment, is correct, we should observe the level of discussion of these issues increasing when an important change occurs in the international or regional balance of power. We should observe candidates of all parties shifting to discuss the ramifications of the change for Japan's foreign and national security policy. Being from different parties, we are likely to observe the taking of radically different positions on the change, but we would still expect the subject of the discussion to concern the change and its ramifications for Japan.

The following chapter tests this and two other alternative hypotheses. The first is the possibility the shift we observe is not the product of politicians changing their electoral strategies, but the product of new politicians entering the race after 1994. I rule this possibility out by showing that old politicians have changed their strategies. The second is the nationalism hypothesis, loosely defined as the hypothesis that LDP politicians have shifted to the right since an unspecified point in time, usually the end of the Cold War. I argue that Japan's rightward shift is an illusion caused by a few loud conservative voices, none of whom paid any attention to foreign and national security policy before the electoral system was reformed. I argue and provide evidence for the exact opposite scenario: that conser-

vative politicians have moved closer to the center of the ideological spectrum since the introduction of MMM.

7.2 Conservative Candidates Have Switched to Discussing Foreign and National Security Policy

Using Foreign and National Security Policy (Topic 6), which was interpreted and shown to apply equally to all elections in both time periods in the previous chapter, I tested my claim that conservative candidates have started to use foreign and national security policy in their campaigns under MMM. I calculated the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to foreign and national security policy in the 2,356 manifestos produced by LDP candidates in all eight elections, three under SNTV-MMD (the 1986, 1990, and 1993 elections) and five under MMM (the 1996, 2000, 2003, 2005, and 2009 elections). These means represent the proportion of the average LDP candidate manifesto devoted to foreign and national security policy at each election. The mean percentage jumped from 0.1% of total discussion in 1993 ($n = 284$) to 0.4% in 1996 ($n = 288$), 1.5% in 2000 ($n = 271$), 6% in 2003 ($n = 277$), declined slightly to 4% in 2005 ($n = 290$), and rose back up again to 6.7% in 2009 ($n = 289$). A difference in means test between the mean percentage of discussion in the manifestos of LDP candidates in the 1993 election (0.15%) and the mean percentage of discussion in the manifestos of conservative candidates in the 1996 election (0.49%) showed that the difference in means was significant. The p-value was 0.02.

Figure 7.1 depicts the striking shift in level of discussion of this issue by conservative candidates after 1993. The straightness of the blue line between 1986 and 1993 illustrates

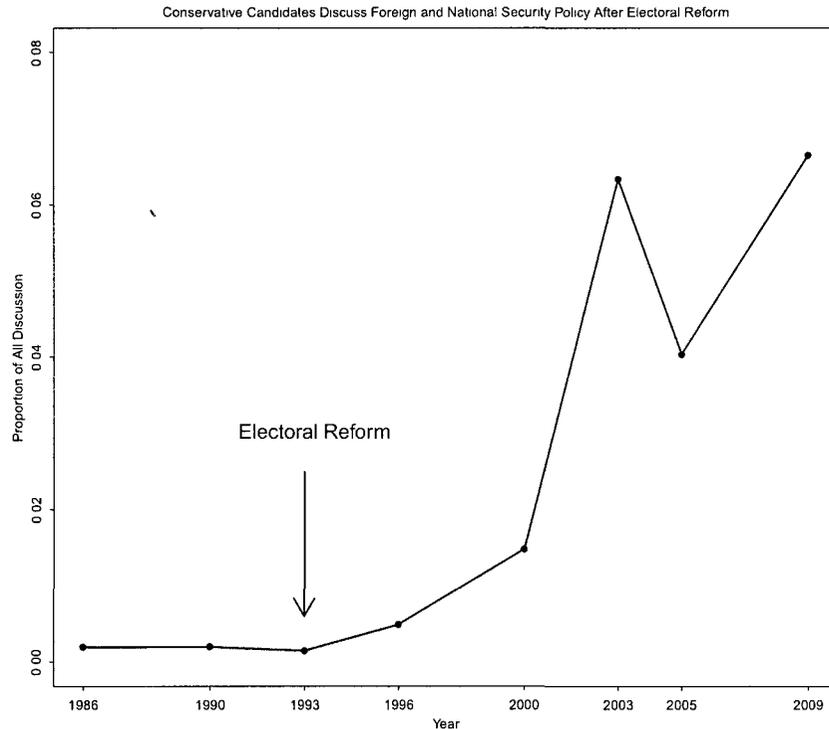


Figure 7.1: Conservative candidates started discussing foreign and national security policy immediately after the introduction of MMM. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to foreign and national security policy in the 2,356 manifestos produced by LDP candidates running in each of these eight elections. The blue line is best interpreted as representing the change in proportion of total discussion devoted to foreign and national security in the average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate each year.

the strikingly low and almost identical level of discussion by LDP candidates in the three elections under SNTV-MMD, which I argued in the previous chapter was powerful evidence of the electoral equilibrium I expected to observe. Conservative candidates let the two external shocks with the largest consequences for Japan's national security strategy, the end of the Cold War and the Gulf War, go by without blinking an eye. The increase of the blue line immediately after the introduction of MMM, and its larger increases in subsequent elections, particularly between 2000 and 2003, provides strong support for my

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

hypothesis that conservative politicians do find these issues attractive under MMM. While they studiously avoided these issues under SNTV-MMD, they started discussing them as soon as the electoral system was reformed. While these proportions may appear small relative to the total, Foreign and National Security Policy was the third-highest topic discussed in the manifestos of LDP candidates in the 2003 and 2009 elections.

The absence of a straight line after 1996, however, suggests that Japan has not yet reached the equilibrium I expected to observe under MMM, of sustained attention to these issues by conservative candidates at every election. Sustained attention would by definition imply a similar line to the one we observed under SNTV-MMD, albeit at a much higher level. While the increase in discussion that occurred between 1993 and 2009 was huge, and amounts to an increase of 660 percent, the level of discussion has increased at every subsequent election, with the exception of the 2005 election, when it fell from the 2003 level by 2%.

The absence of a straight line after 1996 could indicate one of two possibilities. The first possibility is that something is holding Japan back from reaching the new equilibrium of more discussion of these issues by conservative candidates. The second possibility is that there is no equilibrium *level* of discussion under MMM, only an equilibrium of discussion. The new electoral system might have acted to free up these issues, but the actual level of discussion will be determined by factors such as external events. In the next chapter, I tackle the question of why we do not observe conservative politicians settling on a new equilibrium. I argue that the same institutional legacies I describe in this chapter have prevented conservative candidates from pursuing what Chapter 2 identified as the optimal electoral strategy, and it is the weakening of these legacies and *not* external events that can explain the shifting level of discussion we observe between 1996 and 2009.

7.3 Conservative Candidates Have Switched to Using Public-Goods-Heavy Manifestos

What about the rest of their electoral strategy? Is this shift in discussion of foreign and national security policy part of a broader shift in their electoral strategy away from private goods for a subset of voters in their respective districts to public goods for the national-level median voter? To test this, I calculated the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to public and private goods in the 2,356 manifestos produced by LDP candidates in all eight elections, three under SNTV-MMD (the 1986, 1990, and 1993 elections) and five under MMM (the 1996, 2000, 2003, 2005, and 2009 elections). The mean percentage of total discussion devoted to public goods jumped from 50% of total discussion in 1993 (n = 284) to 57% in 1996 (n = 288), 55% in 2000 (n = 271), 69% in 2003 (n = 277), 72% in 2005 (n = 290), and declined slightly to 64% in 2009 (n = 289). The p-value for a difference in means test between the mean proportion of discussion of public goods by conservative candidates in the 1993 election and the mean proportion of discussion of public goods by conservative candidates in the 1996 election was 0.0002.

Figure 7.2 plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to public and private goods in the 2,356 manifestos produced by LDP candidates running in each of these eight elections. These means represent the proportion of the average LDP manifesto devoted to public and private goods each year. In 1986 (n = 323), the average LDP manifesto was 36% public goods and 61% private goods. In 1990 (n = 334), it was 37% public and 60% private. In 1993 (n = 284), it was 50% public, and 47% private. In 1996 (n = 288), it was 41% private and 57% public. In 2000, it was 55% public and 43% private. In 2003 (n =

277), it was 69% public and 29% private. In 2005 (n = 290), it was 72% public and 26% private. In 2009 (n = 289), it was 64% public and 33% private.

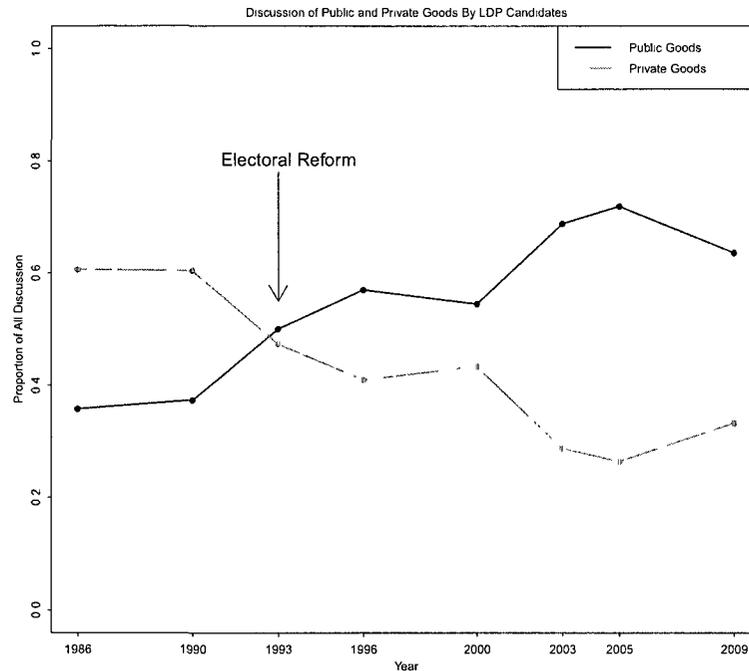


Figure 7.2: LDP candidates switched to discussing more public goods than private goods in 1993, and have continued to adopt public-goods-heavy manifestos under MMM. This figure plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to public and private goods in the 2,356 manifestos produced by LDP candidates who ran in each of the eight elections. The blue line is best interpreted as representing the change in proportion of total discussion devoted to public and private goods in the average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate each year.

Figure 7.2 provides powerful evidence that the introduction of MMM was associated with a shift in the electoral strategies of conservative candidates in the direction predicted by the theory. But the fact that up to 33% of total discussion in the manifestos of conservative candidates running in elections under MMM is still private goods and not public goods mounts a major challenge to the theory presented here. Why conservative candidates are relying on appeals that should lead directly to their defeat in a single member district is an

important question. The next section answers this question. After explaining why conservative candidates are still using private goods, I argue that the need to provide private goods is what is preventing conservative politicians from coordinating to come up with effective electoral platforms of their own, which is perpetuating their habit of swiping the public goods promises offered voters by other parties. However, the 2005 election provided powerful evidence that when politicians are given an electoral platform by their party leader, whose power relative to individual politicians has increased under MMM, they will use it and win. This outcome, which requires a leader who is popular *and* capable of exercising leadership, a rare commodity in a party that once produced a prime minister the media dubbed a cold pizza, would have been impossible under SNTV-MMD.

7.3.1 Quietening the Voices of Scattered Conservative Camps: Why Conservative Candidates Use Private Goods in a SMD

Between January 1994, when the legislation that enacted electoral reform passed the Diet, and the first election under the new electoral system, which was held in October of 1996, the LDP Headquarters was in turmoil. The task of selecting a single candidate to nominate in each district was a difficult one for a party that, it was often joked, was “neither liberal, democratic, nor a party” (Rosenbluth and Thies 2010, 108). While politicians eventually managed to agree on the principle that the party would “prioritize incumbents” for its nomination (*genshoku yusen*), there were districts in which more than one incumbent vied for the nomination, districts in which incumbents and prior incumbents who had lost the 1993 election vied for the nomination, districts in which incumbents were happy to retire but wanted their son, daughter, or other relative to be nominated as opposed to a can-

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

didate from the opposing conservative camp, and perhaps the worst-case scenario, districts in which the party had just one incumbent, but this incumbent was unlikely to place first (Reed 1995; Christensen 1998a).

As Chapter 2 explained, the absence of any modicum of party leadership under SNTV-MMD meant that the party, which was really only a conglomerate of conservative politicians with a fancy name, had never possessed the ability to stop candidates from running against a candidate the party had officially endorsed. Leaders of the five major intra-party factions instead concentrated on expanding their numbers within the party to increase their own chances of being elected party president. They would seek out viable candidates in districts where their faction was not represented, give them money and campaign support, and convince them to run. If they won, they provided another vote. While the electoral fortunes of the party as a whole might have been best served by running three candidates in a five-member district, for example, because any more candidates risked failing to elect all three, faction leaders had no incentive to think about the party's fortunes and every incentive to think only of their own. There was no stick to stop them from running whoever they could, provided they had enough money.

The possibility of a recalcitrant candidate running against a nominated candidate presents a much more serious problem in a single member district because it risks splitting the conservative vote. While the LDP had the obvious incentive to do everything it could to prevent a situation in which two conservative candidates ran against each other, it went into the new electoral system with virtually no sticks to use against incumbents, many of whom, as Chapter 2 described, had spent their political careers creating powerful *kōenkai* comprised of at-times hundreds of different groups. While a revision of the POEL in 1994 introduced a public subsidy for political parties, which was supposed to reduce politicians' reliance on

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

factions and induce them to rely on their party leader, who would possess the right to deny this funding, this was no match for the war chests incumbent politicians had built up by 1994.

In districts where two or more candidates went on record stating their “unalterable commitment” to running in the district prior to the first election under MMM, the party leadership adopted one of two strategies. First, it tried to convince one of the candidates to step out of the SMD race in exchange for a favorable spot on the PR list (Krauss and Pekkanen 2010, 97). Case studies suggest that this was often the option chosen by older politicians, who judged that it would be difficult to engage in the physical activities required to widen their base of support (Park 1998, 79). Second, the party created a system of “tag-teams”, in which Candidate A would be allowed to run in the SMD for one election while Candidate B got a spot on the PR list, and then the candidates would switch places for the next election, and so forth (Krauss and Pekkanen 2010, 66).

When they worked, these strategies ensured that there would not be more than one conservative candidate actually running in the district. But neither of these strategies dealt with the root of the problem, which was that in all three hundred single member districts, the candidate who received the LDP’s nomination (Politician A) faced teams of supporters who had been attached to any number of different conservative politicians (for example, Politicians B, C, D) under the old electoral system. Even if Politicians B, C, and D had all been assigned to different districts (Districts B, C, or D), they might each be interested in maintaining their team of supporters in District A in the interests of having their sons, daughters, or local politicians friendly to them run there in the future. Even if Politicians B, C and D were not interested in maintaining their team of supporters, and wished to use them as a bargaining chip in exchange for the team of supporters who had been attached to

Politician A but who now resided in their new districts (Districts B, C, and D), the team of supporters left behind often have their own ideas.

As I explained in Chapter 2, most of these supporters have devoted years (sometimes decades) in support of their politicians' political career. Teams of supporters attached to Politician A would have been the ones trying to poach supporters of Politicians B, C, and D. As the LDP's Handbook for Fighting an Election made clear, many of these supporters would have been given titles such as "Director-General" and "President" in the *kōenkai* of their politician, for which they would have printed business cards and distributed them throughout the district. The positions of these members in society was derived from their proximity to the politician and the goodies their politician could secure from the central government.

Up until now, scholars of Japanese politics have focused only on the fact that the long history of animosity between these teams of supporters makes it difficult for one team to transfer its support to a different politician (Krauss and Pekkanen 2004, 2010). But focusing on the difficulty of transferring support from one politician to another does not adequately answer the question of why politicians want this support in the first place. Shouldn't running in a single member district require politicians to wipe their hands of all form of organized groups, *kōenkai* included?

I argue that the real problem these groups pose for the candidate who receives the LDP nomination is their capacity to *run their own candidate*. These groups want to run their own candidate because that is the only way they will have a shot at retaining the kind of benefits they received from their previous benefactor. While the party was able to use the PR list to prevent two conservative candidates from running against each other, it was utterly incapable of forcing departing incumbents to cede any remaining teams of

supporters they had in a district to the new LDP nominee. Even if the party had possessed such sticks, the departing incumbents were *themselves incapable* of forcing their supporters to support another candidate. As I have just explained, these groups were made up of individuals whose positions in society depended on their ability to channel private goods to society through their politician. They were far more interested in finding a way to retain their array of benefits under the new electoral system.

The ability to run another candidate is a formidable bargaining chip under the new electoral system. To pose a threat to the incumbent in a single member district, these groups do not have to be capable of running a candidate who can win, only a candidate who is capable of mounting a campaign that could split the conservative vote. Flaunting their capacity to run their own candidate is, I argue, the only means available to these groups to get politicians to work for them under the new electoral system.

This explains why conservative candidates seemed to go into the 1996 election as if it was just any old SNTV-MMD election, as Chapter 2 described. Scholars have argued that the electoral strategies of conservative candidates appeared to be identical to the strategies they pursued prior to the electoral reform. The only difference was that they had to expand their *kōenkai* into the new regions of the district (Christensen 1998a, 67). But the expansion itself was undertaken the exact same way as before. It entailed the approaching of any politician, at any level of government, with any degree of support in the district, whether this be one's former nemesis or town and village council assemblymen, and asking for introductions to their supporters via their much-treasured "membership rosters" (*kōenkai meibō*) (Yamada 1998).

To date, scholars have interpreted this as evidence that the electoral strategies of conservative candidates remain unchanged under the new system. I argue that while the actions

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

appear the same, the goal is different. Besides winning the election, the most important goal for all candidates who receive the LDP's nomination is to stamp out the possibility of another viable candidate emerging from any one of the remaining conservative camps scattered about the district. Preparations for the 1996 election entailed attempts to scoop up all the pockets of support that remained in the district not because this was an effective electoral strategy, but because it was necessary groundwork to enable the candidate to compete as the sole representative of the conservative camp.

The presence of these teams in every single member district across the country means that conservative candidates go into elections under the new electoral system knowing full well that if they annoy any one of these groups, they could face competition in subsequent elections. This places LDP candidates in the tremendously-awkward position of having to demonstrate commitment to these groups, whose interests are not the same as the wider electorate, while also demonstrating their commitment to the concerns of the wider electorate, whose support they need to win. While one might imagine that the best insurance against being replaced at Time B is electoral strength at Time A, which could be achieved by ignoring the demands of these groups and instead using promises of public goods such as foreign and national security policy, these groups will always pretend that they have candidates in waiting. It is in their interest to appear extremely unsatisfied with the candidate's performance whatever she does because placing the candidate on tenterhooks is the only way to induce her to work for you. Flaunting their capacity for exit is the way groups can retain their privileges under Japan's new electoral system.

The need to guard against the possibility of one of these groups running its own candidate will force politicians to heed their concerns. Unless they can come up with arguments to justify why they cannot provide the goodies these groups want (blaming tight

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

economic conditions is a favorite), we should observe them providing some modicum of private goods. The best way for a conservative candidate to signal her commitment to groups she managed to secure the weak support of prior to the election, *and* scoop up any remaining pockets of conservative support that are left over, is to make the exact same promises as candidates before her have done. I hypothesize that we are likely to observe the exact same private goods topics discussed in the first few elections under the new electoral system, and the development of topics geared toward the district as a whole, but also have benefits for these groups.

Unlike SNTV-MMD, however, candidates also need the support of the wider electorate to win. This means that they must develop electoral platforms comprised of public goods. As the previous chapter demonstrated, conservative candidates were not good at coming up with platforms comprised of public goods. Instead, they were very good at swiping the platforms offered by their opponents, all of whom had the incentive to make the election about a set of issues. This is why we observed conservative candidates running in urban districts in 1993 riding the wave of criticism against the system marshalled by the candidates of the three new parties (Topic 19, Political Reform) and engaging in a spirited attack on their own party with the traditional opposition parties, the Kōmeitō, the JSP, and the DSP (Topic 22, Doing Away with Decayed LDP Politics). Because there have been no changes to the policymaking process that might suggest that conservative candidates have gotten better at developing platforms comprised of public goods, I hypothesize that we are likely to observe a similar strategy of coopting the opposition's agenda under the new electoral system.

7.3.2 LDP Candidates in 1996

The average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate running in 1996 was 41% private goods and 57% public goods. What was the nature of the private and public goods discussed? Given that all the candidates nominated were under pressure to demonstrate their ability to provide the same kind of private goods as candidates before them, I expected the content of the promises of private goods to be almost identical as those discussed in elections under SNTV-MMD. This is exactly what I found. Topic 18 (Building a Spiritually-Rich Community) claimed 6.7% of the average LDP manifesto; Topic 3 (Appropriator for the District) claimed 6%; Topic 32 (Hometown Development) claimed 3.8%; and Topic 10 (Transportation) claimed 3.3%. The perpetuation of these topics meant that the urban-rural divide observed under SNTV-MMD continued in the 1996 election, with candidates in urban districts being less likely to discuss any one of the private goods topics. Differences in means tests revealed significant differences between the level of discussion by candidates running in urban areas and those running in rural areas for the first four topics, with the exception of Transportation.

New Private Goods Topic: “Revitalizing the Local Community”

We also observe the emergence of a new private goods topic in 1996: Revitalizing the Local Community (Topic 33). Whereas this topic claimed just 5% of the average LDP manifesto in the 1996 election, it went on to claim 14% of the average LDP manifesto in the 2000 election. This topic is the perfect example of what conservative candidates who were aiming their appeals at the district-level median voter while also trying not to annoy any of

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

these groups should discuss. Because its target was district residents and not the national-level median voter, and because it included obvious benefits for construction companies and other groups, it was classified as a private good in Chapter 5. However, it differs from the aforementioned private goods in the way that it is geared toward residents of the district and not so obviously toward the interests of organized groups the way the previous private goods topics were. It also contains promises of private goods for residents of urban areas, who Chapter 5 demonstrated had been cut out of system of benefits politicians created under SNTV-MMD. As expected, there was no substantial difference between proportion of manifesto devoted to Revitalizing the Local Community by LDP candidates running in urban areas and those running in rural areas.

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on Revitalizing the Local Community pledged their commitment to “enlivening the community economy” (*chiiki keizai no kasseika*), with one making the bold statement, “Without revitalization of the community, the revitalization of Japan is impossible” (*chiiki saisei nakushite nihon saisei ha ariemasen*). Candidates advertised specific “community revitalization plans” they had been instrumental in developing for specific sub-regions in the district, such as “Community Revitalization Plan for the City of Kure and the Geinan Region” and “Development Plan for the Islands”. They summarized the contents of these plans for voters and promised to complete them in a timely fashion. These included promises to increase jobs (by inviting new businesses and industries to set up in the district and stimulating tourism); promises to improve the efficiency and transparency of public works projects (by enforcing the use of an electronic bidding system, which would reduce the costs of projects at no cost to quality, and by clarifying the length of time public works projects were expected to take); promises to support industries that produced arts and crafts native to the district; promises to support the farming,

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

forestry, and fishing industries; and promises to support small- and medium- enterprises. Candidates from urban districts promised to “turn the gaze of politics onto cities”. After all, he continued, this is “where we all people lived”. One candidate unveiled his plan to “build a waterfront where children can play by the river”. Another candidate promised to “build a town that made its greenery more visible to residents”. Between towns, the candidate continued, “I will provide a traffic network that makes the most of the beautiful greenery”.

Candidates added to these concrete plans mental images of the kind of society they would build for residents of the district: a society that “took care of its children and elderly”; a society “in which women could feel reassured while having and raising children”; a society in which “children could exercise their individuality properly”; a “rubbish-free society” (gomi zero shakai); and a society that “preserves its natural environment carefully so that it can be passed onto future generations”. One candidate declared that he subscribed to an “ideology of the living environment” (seikatsu kankyō shugi). Candidates promised to develop economic stimulus measures to alleviate the pain of the economic recession, and devote effort to creating “a community culture” (chiiki bunka).

Continued Swiping of the Public Goods Platforms Offered by Other Parties

Having used private goods to carve out loyal teams of supporters for the entirety of their political careers under SNTV-MMD, conservative candidates were stuck for ideas when it came to the first election under the new electoral system. The one public goods topic they hit on was “Reforming Japan” (Topic 41), which had been a platform adopted by candidates from the three new parties in 1993. The mean proportion of total discussion devoted to Reforming Japan in the manifestos of Shinseitō, Sakigake, and Japan New Party

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

candidates in the 1993 election had been 20%, 18%, and 8%, respectively. In 1996, LDP candidates took on this topic for themselves. The mean proportion of total discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of the 288 LDP candidates running in 1996 was 11%. This was the topic that claimed the highest proportion of discussion in the manifestos of LDP candidates in this election.

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on “Reforming Japan” promised to create a “new Japanese dream” and a “spiritually-rich Japan”. “I will build a Japan that is rich not only in numbers but also in lifestyle, not only in material goods but also in our hearts”, one candidate promised. Several candidates told voters that they had left the LDP and formed the Shinseitō “to realize political reform”. Candidates promised “fundamental political reform” (bapponteki seiji kaikaku), which one candidate defined as creating “a new democracy for a new era, based on better disclosure of information and popular participation”. Candidates also promised “structural reform of the economy”, which one candidate defined as relaxing the slew of regulations inhibiting economic activity, investing in research and development in the information and communications industries, and developing a “healthy market economy”. Only this, they argued, “would give Japan, a country that was not blessed with natural resources, the means of surviving in a competitive market”. Candidates also promised “administrative reform”. They promised to create a “slim, flexible administration based on a shift in the provision of services from the public to the private sectors, and from the central government to rural areas”. Finally, candidates promised to realize “educational reform”, pledging to do away with “education based on where students are on the curve” (hensachi kyoiku) and introduce a system that “nurtures the individual personalities of children and strengthens their will and ambition” (kokoroza-shi). “Education is the foundation of nation-building”, another candidate told voters, “I will

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

make a new Japan from the perspective of the ordinary person, in which people can lead fulfilling lives and will develop sympathy for others”. Candidates also pledged to create a Japan “respected by international society” and a Japan that “can actively contribute to the international community”.

Two new opposition parties emerged prior to the 1996 election, both of which were aiming to become the second party in what everyone envisioned would become a two-party system. The DPJ, which ran 142 candidates, ran on a public goods platform of “Politics for the Civilian” (Topic 14), while the NFP, which ran 235 candidates, ran on a public goods platform of “Small Government” (Topic 53). Interestingly, LDP candidates borrowed from the latter and ignored the former. 4.9% of the average LDP candidate manifesto was comprised of “Small Government”. Out of all the public goods topics discussed by the LDP in this election, this topic claimed the second-highest proportion of total discussion.

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on “Small Government” told voters that keeping one’s promises and taking responsibility for one’s statements was the solution to the current malaise of political distrust in Japan. “Use your vote to sign a contract with me”, candidates implored. Candidates offered a package of policies designed to “reconstruct people’s standards of living”. The first was a tax cut. Candidates promised to keep consumption tax at 3% and cut income and residence tax in half, which would result in a tax cut of 18 trillion yen altogether. Second, candidates promised to implement “administrative reform, regional devolution, and deregulation of the economy”, which they argued would cut the spending of central and local governments by 20 trillion yen. While some candidates promised to reduce the number of central government ministries (to ten), others promised to cut the number of central government employees by one-quarter. Still others promised to get rid of all semi-governmental corporations. Third, candidates pointed out

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

that user fees for government-administered electricity, gas, water, phone, postal, and transportation services were three times the rate of the same services in the U.S. and England. They promised to reduce these user fees by 20-50%. Fourth, they promised to establish a system of nursing care, protect pensions, and correct interest rates to reassure pensioners. Fifth, they would get rid of “dependence on bureaucrats” and “give politicians responsibility over the policymaking process”. They would also reduce the number of Dietmembers by 20%.

Alongside these promises, candidates from the Shinshintō advertised the accomplishments of their party in the Hosokawa and Hata governments. These included political reform, “some liberalization of the rice market” (bubun jiyuka), a freeze on hikes in fees for the above-mentioned government-administered services, and the enactment of a Product Liability Law and Administrative Procedures Act. Candidates contrasted their accomplishments with the (so-called) accomplishments of the LDP, JSP, and Sakigake coalition government (the jishasa seiken), which included the use of taxpayer’s money to bail out the housing loan corporations (jusenshori he no zeikin tonyu), the raising of the consumption tax to 5%, and the irresponsible response to the tragic Kobe earthquake. The slogan of many of these candidates was: “The Shinshintō: Changing Japan from its Foundations” (nihon wo shikumi kara kaeru shinshintō).

There is an important difference between these two public goods topics. Reforming Japan (Topic 41) is characterized by earnestness but extreme vagueness. Candidates shied away from articulating any kind of position on a policy issue, or even talking about a particular policy issue. This is in direct contrast to Small Government (Topic 53), in which promises were so specific that the percentage by which fees for government services would be reduced was stated. I reasoned that conservative candidates with no (or minimal) experi-

ence in discussing public goods would discuss the former but not the latter, and candidates with experience at discussing public goods would be more comfortable discussing the latter. As I expected, there was no difference in discussion between candidates from rural and urban districts for Topic 41, but there was a large difference for Topic 53. 5.3% of the average manifesto produced by candidates in urban areas was devoted to this topic, whereas only 2.1% of the manifesto from candidates in rural areas was. The p-value for a difference in means test was <0.001 .

7.3.3 LDP Candidates in 2000

The average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate running in 2000 was 43% private goods and 55% public goods. What was the content of the private and public goods discussed? We observe a high level of discussion of Revitalizing the Local Community (Topic 33, 14% of the average LDP candidate manifesto) and Building a Spiritually-Rich Community (Topic 18, 7.6% of the average LDP candidate manifesto). However, Appropriator for the District (Topic 3) and Hometown Development (Topic 32) decline to very small proportions of total discussion. We also observe no new private goods topic emerging in the 271 LDP candidate manifestos. Instead, we observe continued use of Reforming Japan (Topic 41, 6.6% of the average LDP candidate manifesto), and the rise of two new public goods topics: Better Education and Child-care Facilities (Topic 40) and Security and Reassurance (Topic 43). 5.9% of the average LDP candidate manifesto in the 2000 election was devoted to the former, while 5.1% was devoted to the latter.

Given that the former was the platform offered voters by candidates of the Kōmeitō (16.5% of the average manifesto produced by a Kōmeitō candidate was devoted to this

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

topic in 2000), and the latter was the platform offered voters by candidates of the Conservative Party and the Kōmeitō (15% of the average manifesto produced by a Conservative Party candidate and 11.6% of the average manifesto produced by a Kōmeitō candidate was devoted to this topic in 2000), it is safe to conclude that LDP candidates co-opted the platforms offered voters by these parties. In the absence of a party institution capable of coming up with a platform that everyone could use, LDP candidates were as stuck in 2000 as they were in 1996.

As the qualitative interpretation presented below reveals, what is significant about Better Education and Child-care Facilities is that it is a topic of urban LDP candidates. Unlike Reforming Japan and Security and Reassurance, which exhibit the LDP's characteristic vagueness, Better Education and Child-care Facilities contains a raft of specific policies. There was a large difference in level of discussion for candidates running in rural districts and candidates running in urban districts. 8.5% of the average manifesto produced by LDP candidates in urban areas was devoted to this topic, whereas only 2.8% of the manifesto from candidates in rural areas was. The p-value for a difference in means test was <0.001. There was no difference for the other two. What this means is that the 2000 election, which also saw the disappearance of the private goods topics that were spoken about primarily by candidates from rural areas, is the first election in which a topic devoted primarily to residents of the cities emerges.

More Swiping of the Public Goods Platforms Offered by Other Parties

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on Topic 40, Better Education and Child-care Facilities, promised to pass policies “for mothers and fathers”. They promised to

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

increase the level of government support for child-rearing by integrating day care with kindergarten and improving the quality of education at the pre-school level. They promised to establish twenty-four-hour day care centers for children under the age of 1, and improve access to these centers by locating them closer to train stations. They promised to unify junior and senior high schools and develop “emergency measures” to halt the bullying and breakdown in student discipline occurring in schools. They would “fundamentally revise” the school curricula to realize a “humanistic” and “spiritually-rich” curriculum. The overall goal of this new education system, one candidate told voters, would be “to construct a new and improved Japan that could function well in international society”. Other candidates promised to “rethink the system through which teachers are qualified”. Many candidates promised to revise the Juvenile Law to deter children from committing heinous crimes and “stop our children from becoming either victims or perpetrators of crime”. Several candidates promised to reduce class sizes to 30 students to bring teachers and children closer together. Other candidates promised to increase the number and kind of specialist-training schools and universities, with some teaching classes entirely in English.

Many candidates promised to pass measures to support women re-entering the workforce after having children. They would make it easier for both women and men to take maternity leave. They would introduce after-school activities for children in the local community. They would introduce a system of split-taxation for couples. One candidate pledged to “have the government pay for the costs of childbirth”. Many candidates pledged to support first-time home buyers by making home renovation exempt from taxation and increasing the amount of per-person space that was tax-exempt from 20 to 40 metres-squared. Other candidates pledged to implement measures to bring Japan’s economy back to life, including reducing income tax and taxes on corporations, deregulating the economy, and nurturing

venture capitalists. One candidate promised to stimulate small, medium, and tiny-sized enterprises by providing a fund for them to borrow against their potential for future earnings. Another candidate promised to lower income tax for households that were headed by white-collar workers. Many candidates promised to increase the number of jobs in “the industry of the 21st century: information communications”. Other candidates promised to encourage NPO activities by introducing a system in which personal and corporate donations to NPOs were tax-exempt. Other candidates promised to build a brand new, Japan-style welfare state, with a unified system of pensions, medical care, and nursing care. Yet another area candidates touched on was the environment. One candidate promised to “make Japan into an environmentally-advanced nation” (*kankyo senshin koku*). Others promised to construct a “recycling-oriented society” (*junkan gata shakai*) and pass measures to deal with dioxins, allergies, and asthma.

A common thread running through the manifestos scoring highly on this topic was a promise to shift the distributive bias of politics away from rural areas toward cities. “The LDP can change from a party that privileges rural areas into a party that loves the cities. Let me show you!”, one candidate declared. “I will implement policies for residents of cities!” Many candidates promised to realize “a politics in which the voices of people in the cities are heard” (*toshi seikatsusha no omoi ga kanau seiji*). Candidates talked about changing their country *from* their city. “From Osaka, lets change the our nation, Japan! Through dialogue and action, I will build a nation in which everyone can feel happy! That’s the kind of politics Japan needs”, another candidate said. By building a better life in the cities, another candidate said, “I will destroy the image of the Liberal Democratic Party as a party that only cares about farmers. Changing the LDP into a party attractive to urban residents is my mission (*toshi jūmin ni miryoku aru seito*). I promise to devote great effort to this

task!”

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on Topic 43, Security and Reassurance, promised a range of measures to “create a society in which everybody can live free from worry and uncertainty, reassured about your pension, your medical care, and your nursing care”. Using questions such as “Will my pension be safe?” and “Will my job be secure?”, candidates told voters that they understood and sympathized with the sources of their anxiety. Other candidates referenced problems of juvenile crime and “adults who quickly lose control and become violent” (*suguni kireru*). “Unfortunately”, one candidate said, “just doing what Japan has done up until now is no longer enough”. In order to create a society where everyone can feel reassured, the candidate continued, “Japan will need to be rebuilt”. “Rebuilding Japan is my mission!”, another candidate declared. “I will build a bright, strong Japan!”, another promised.

Specifically, candidates promised a range of measures designed to “bring reassurance” into voters’ lives. They promised to create “reassurance about Japan’s future” (*nihon no mirai no anshin zukuri*) by improving the nation’s social security system, reforming tax policy, introducing measures to address the problem of the extremely-low birthrate (namely, child allowances), and reforming Japan’s education system “to nurture youth who are healthy in mind and body” and “who possess an international awareness”. One candidate told voters that many of Japan’s problems stemmed “from an education system that does not teach children the difference between right and wrong”. Many candidates promised to realize an education system “with breathing space”. “I will build a country where the old are relieved and the young have dreams and hopes”, declared another candidate. Other candidates promised to realize “food reassurance”, via measures to increase the safety and stability of the nations’ food supply. Other candidates promised to push for regional devolution, but

would “promote tourism” to make sure residents of rural areas were looked after. Other candidates promised to create “economic reassurance” (*keizai no anshin zukuri*) via measures such as strengthening the structure of Japan’s small- and medium-sized enterprises and improving “social capital and infrastructure to deal with earthquakes and other natural disasters”. Candidates also promised to create “reassurance about environmental destruction and crime”, by developing a system for crisis management to protect people’s lives and property from emergency situations (*yūji*) and other natural disasters.

7.3.4 LDP Candidates in 2003

The average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate running in 2003 was 29% private goods and 69% public goods. What was the content of the private and public goods discussed? The public goods topic Security and Reassurance was the topic with the highest proportion of content devoted to it in the 277 LDP candidate manifestos. 17.6% of all LDP candidate manifestos were devoted to this topic, which leads me to crown it as the first-ever party-election year topic for LDP candidates. It is a party-election-year topic because it is aimed at the national-level median voter *and* is spoken about primarily by LDP candidates. Following close behind is the private goods topic, Revitalizing the Local Community, at 8.1% of the average LDP candidate manifesto, and two public goods topics, Foreign and National Security Policy (at 6.3% of the average LDP candidate manifesto) and Better Education and Child-care Facilities (at 4.3% of the average).

In this election, we observe the emergence of a new private goods topic, Building a Safe, Reassuring Community (Topic 47), which comprised 4% of the average LDP candidate manifesto. As the qualitative interpretation below suggests, this was a topic spoken

about by candidates in rural areas. It comprised 5.6% of the manifestos produced by candidates running in rural areas, compared to 2.9% of the manifestos produced by candidates running in urban areas. The p-value for a difference in means test was 0.006. We also observe a second public goods topic emerging, Regional Devolution (Topic 17), which comprised 3.6% of the average LDP manifesto. Regional Devolution had been discussed by candidates from a number of different parties since the 1996 election. In 2000, it was discussed by candidates from the Liberals (claiming 6.7% percent of total discussion for these candidates); Conservatives (claiming 4% of total discussion for these candidates), and the DPJ (claiming 3.9% of total discussion for these candidates). As with the other public goods topics, there was no difference between urban and rural candidates.

New Private Goods Topic: “Building a Safe, Reassuring Community”

Building a Safe, Reassuring Community (Topic 47) shared Topic 33’s emphasis on bringing energy to the local community and Topic 43’s emphasis on addressing peoples’ fears and concerns. Candidates directed their promises to district residents, often emphasizing the name of the region they were talking about and using words such as “old home” and “hometown”. The specific fears candidates promised to address lay in the realm of medical care, pensions, old-age nursing care, food safety, and disaster preparedness. Candidates promised to create a community where residents could live “free from worry and concern”. “Toward reassurance for the elderly and the disabled!”, one candidate declared. To do this, candidates would strengthen the system of medical care in the community, realize “safe, reassuring nursing care” (anzen anshin no kaigo), and develop a better pension system. They would build more public hospitals and facilities dedicated to the treatment

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

of illnesses suffered by their residents. They would increase the number of doctors in the region. They would take better care of, and increase the remuneration for, people working in nursing care facilities. They would make people's living environments more "secure" by constructing a food safety system and introducing measures to protect their residents in the event of a natural disaster. Other candidates promised to "reassure" residents by providing more support for families with children and implementing measures to make "the environment in which children grow up more secure". Other candidates promised to improve public safety, stating: "Let's recover public safety, and make Japan once again the safest country in the world!"

Alongside safety and reassurance, candidates offered their voters a number of ideas for creating a "vibrant" and "healthful" community. One candidate promised to increase the incomes of residents in their district by "making the resources that are the region's sea, mountains, and rice crop into a brand the region can sell". By realizing more permanent employment contracts for young people, the same candidate continued, "I will regain the kind of employment system in which people actually enjoy working!" Other candidates promised to develop a "Plan to Support Working Mothers", and a "Japan-style Work Sharing Plan", which would guarantee that more people had jobs. Other candidates promised to support what one candidate termed "the foundation of production" (*sangyo no dodai*), small- and medium-sized enterprises, by expanding the availability of "safety-net loans" and emergency credit guarantees. Other candidates promised to attract large corporations and new industries to come and set up in their district, pledging to nurture these industries by fostering linkages with local universities. Still others promised to build a new transportation system, so that different areas of the region would be better-connected. Other candidates promised to develop economic stimulus measures that would enliven native in-

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

dustries. Candidates also turned their attention to agriculture, arguing that better management of the industry in their district was the key to its revitalization. Candidates promised to introduce a system of income protection for farmers, and pledged to create a “Japan brand”. One candidate pledged to develop coastal areas in their district that were not yet developed (*rinkai muriyochi kaihatsu*) in his district by attracting new businesses, inviting “international tourism”, and “creating a town of dreams and entertainment, which will have the capacity of attracting a lot of people” (*shuukyakyoku ga aru*). In order to properly conserve local forests, one candidate would implement a “forestry conservation” tax.

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic presented themselves and their policy promises as targeted toward the residents of their local community, rather than Japanese citizens. One candidate told his voters that he would realize “resident-centered” (*jūmin honi*) politics. Candidates pledged to “develop an education plan that taught morals and love for the hometown”. Many candidates told their voters that they envisioned their role as that of a pipe: “I promise to take the voices and hearts of people at home seriously. I will deliver your voices to the national government”, one candidate pledged. Another candidate pledged to take the voices of women in the region seriously and deliver these voices to the national government, while another promised to create a “Project Team to Enliven Local Communities” in the national government. There are many people who desire a better system for food safety, one candidate remarked. “I promise to deliver these voices to the national government and strengthen our system for food safety”.

More Swiping of the Public Goods Platforms Offered by Other Parties

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on Regional Devolution (Topic 17) promised

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

to realize “a full transfer of authority from the central government to local governments” (chiho jichitai he no kengen jōto), including control over fiscal revenue, which several candidates dubbed “The Trinity Reforms” (sanmi ittai kaikaku). “Only with genuine regional devolution will rural areas be able to create their own tax systems that will enable them to respond to the voices and needs of their residents as they see fit”, candidates told voters. “Allowing central government bureaucrats in Kasumigaseki to control local governments, which are much closer to their residents, is a mistake”, said one candidate. In order to realize “fundamental political reform”, several candidates promised to “abolish subsidies for individual companies (kobetsu jigyo hojokin) and transfer the revenue and authority to grant these subsidies to local governments”. Other candidates couched their arguments for regional devolution as part of their commitment to realizing a small government, a “slimming down” (surimuka) of government administration, and a reduction of the government’s role in the economy. Other candidates promised to create a system of “robust local governments” (ashikoshi no tsuyoi jichitai zukuri) by merging Japan’s 3,000 or so local governments into 300 major cities. Other candidates pledged to “reduce the number of ministries and agencies in the government”, “relax the raft of regulations inhibiting economic activity”, and “make capital more available for businesses”. Other candidates promised to realize fiscal reconstruction.

7.3.5 LDP Candidates in 2005

The average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate running in 2005 was 26% private goods and 72% public goods. What was the content of the private and public goods discussed? In 2005, we witness the emergence of two party-election-year topics for LDP

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

candidates, which emphasized different angles of the same issue: postal privatization. A full 21% of the average manifesto produced by the 290 LDP candidates running in 2005 was devoted to Postal Privatization (Topic 1) and a further 9% of the average was devoted to Post Offices (Topic 44). Figure 7.3 illustrates discussion of Postal Privatization. The third-highest topic in the manifestos of LDP candidates in 2005 was Security and Reassurance (Topic 43). Foreign and National Security Policy declined since 2003, but was still the sixth largest topic discussed at 4% of the average manifesto.

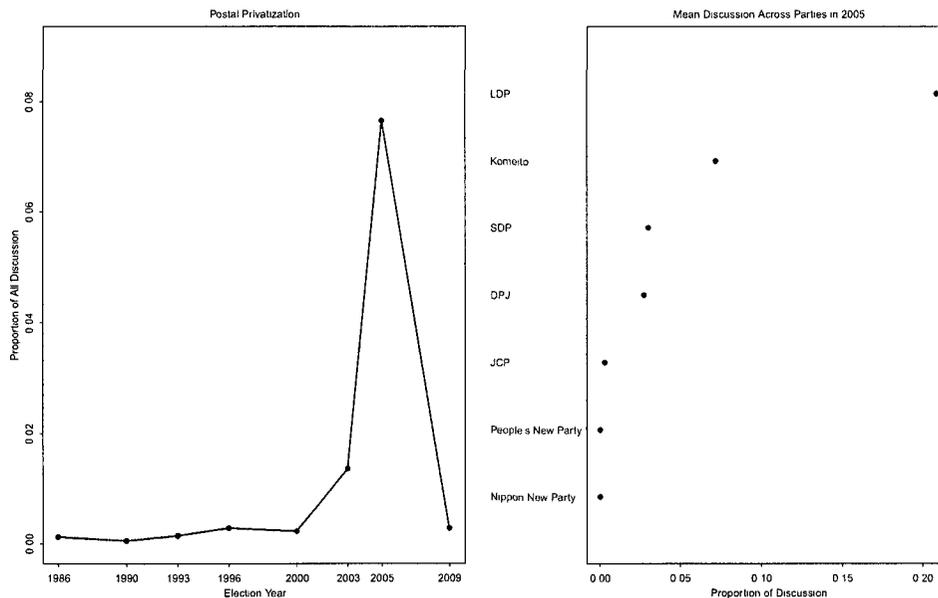


Figure 7.3: LDP candidates campaigned on a platform of Postal Privatization in 2005. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 1 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 1 was discussed in the 2005 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 1 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 2005 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 1 was a LDP topic, and comprised 21% of the average manifesto produced by LDP candidates in this election.

In this election, which had been called by Prime Minister Koizumi when his postal privatization bill had been struck down by recalcitrant LDP politicians in the House of

Councillors, the party was able to give LDP candidates something to talk about. For LDP candidates, Koizumi's actions in portraying the battle for privatization of the postal service as a battle between his reform team and the "forces of resistance" within the party had finally given them a party label they could actually rely on. Interestingly, the party label Koizumi constructed was almost-identical to the platform DPJ candidates had been running on since 1996. Postal Privatization was talked about more by candidates in urban districts, in which it comprised 25% of the average LDP candidate manifesto than by candidates in rural districts, in which it comprised 14% of the average LDP candidate manifesto. The p-value for a difference in means test was <0.001 . Post Offices, on the other hand, was discussed equally by all candidates.

LDP Candidates Relied On Their Party Label in 2005

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on Postal Privatization (Topic 1) told voters that they were "determined to move forward with reform of the government-owned postal service", which "would lead to structural reform of the bureaucracy, in fiscal policy, finance, and semi-government corporations". Many candidates referred to postal privatization as "the citadel of reform" (kaikaku no honmaru). Because privatizing the postal service would reduce the number of government employees, candidates explained to voters, it was "a step towards the realization of small government". Because it would remove the benefits accruing government employees, it was a step towards "structural reform". "Unless we take a scalpel" (mesu wo ire) to the entrenched interests of government employees (komuin no kitokuken), we will never be able to implement reform!", one candidate told voters. Other candidates adopted slogans such as, "Don't stop reform!" (kaikaku wo tomeru na), "Don't

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

switch off the light of reform”, and “Send this wind of reform to the Diet!” (kaikaku no kaze, kokkai he!).

Candidates assured voters that relocating these services from the bureaucracy to the private sector would have no effect on their ability to access the service. Instead, candidates explained that privatization would revitalize the economies of rural areas because it would reduce the amount of government regulation, which was causing the decline in economic performance of rural areas. “A small government”, one candidate explained, “will mitigate your fears about the problems of the low birthrate and aging society”. Candidates also told voters that postal privatization would “destroy the old LDP” (furui jiminto wo bukkowashi) and enable them to “create a new LDP”. Candidates identified postal privatization as a project of Koizumi Junichiro, calling it “Koizumi’s reform”. Many of them claimed to be members of Koizumi’s “reform team” (kaikaku oen tai). “This is the election where you have to say YES! or No! to postal privatization”, several candidates told voters. “You have to decide. Are you for reform of the public sector or are you against?” Several candidates identified postal privatization as the reason for their candidacy. A popular slogan was “Let the private sector do what the private sector can do!” (minkan ni dekiru koto ha minkan ni).

Many candidates concluded their manifestos with promises in keeping with the overall theme of removing the benefits accorded government employees. Candidates promised to “unify the pension system for government employees and white-collar workers in the private sector”, which they argued would “correct the disparity between the government and the private sector”. They promised to oppose the introduction of a new tax being considered by the Tax Commission, which was “aimed at white collar workers”. They would “fundamentally reform the tax system“. “I will create a society where the private

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

sector plays the leading role!” (minkan ga shuyaku no shakai), several candidates promised. Many candidates also told voters that they would work towards regional devolution as a step towards small government, with one candidate declaring “Lets live the wisdom and skills of rural areas!”

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on Post Offices (Topic 44) relied less on slogans connecting postal privatization to structural reform of the economy (as manifestos scoring highly on Postal Privatization did), and more on addressing voter concerns about the impact of the reform on service in their area. Manifestos scoring highly on topic 44 were longer and more verbose than those in the first topic. Far from affecting the quality of service in rural areas, candidates explained, postal privatization was necessary to ensure that the existing network of post offices could remain as it is. If the Postal Service was not privatized, candidates explained, the government might go bankrupt, which would cause citizens all kind of trouble.

Far from being negatively affected by privatization, candidates argued, the quality of service in rural areas would be improved by the infusion of skills and technology from the private sector. This meant that voters in these areas had “nothing to worry about!” (shim-pai muyō). Candidates explained that privatization of the Postal Service meant that almost one-third of the total number of government employees would become private sector employees, and the 340 trillion yen in the postal savings and life insurance accounts would stop being used to fund wasteful and unnecessary public works and inefficient public corporations. Furthermore, candidates explained, the semi-government postal corporations got away with paying none of the taxes ordinary non-government corporations were responsible for (hōjinzei, hōjin jigyōzei, and kotei shisanzei). Candidates explained to voters that if these corporations were privatized, they would be treated like any other private corporation

and would have to pay taxes, which would create a brand new source of fiscal revenue for localities. Moving 340 trillion yen from the public to the private sector would rejuvenate the Japanese economy and provide momentum for a large-scale fiscal reconstruction after the government sold off the shares it possessed.

7.3.6 LDP Candidates in 2009

The average manifesto produced by an LDP candidate running in 2009 was 33% private goods and 64% public goods. What was the content of the private and public goods discussed? In the absence of a strong party leader who could come up with a platform all LDP candidates could use in their campaigns, we observe LDP candidates in 2009 reverting back to swiping the platform offered by the Kōmeitō, its coalition partner. The average manifesto produced by the 289 LDP candidates had 16% of it devoted to Social Security and Child Support (Topic 30), whereas the average manifesto produced by candidates running from the Kōmeitō had 36% of it devoted to this topic. It comprised a much larger portion (18.6%) of the manifestos of candidates running in urban districts than the manifestos of candidates running in rural districts (12.8%). The p-value for a difference in means test was 0.007. The second-highest topic was Building a Safe, Reassuring Community (Topic 47), which claimed 13.7% of the average LDP candidate manifesto. It comprised a larger portion (19.6%) of the manifestos of candidates running in rural districts than the manifestos of candidates running in urban districts (10.0%). The p-value for a difference in means test was <0.001. The third-highest topic was Foreign and National Security Policy, which claimed 6.6%.

More Swiping of the Public Goods Platforms Offered by Other Parties

Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on Social Security and Child Support promised to improve the nation's pension system. Within two years, they would sort out the issue of the lost pension records. Within three years, they would solve the problem of some people having no pension or a very small pension. They would unify the Welfare and Mutual Aid pensions. They would revise and improve upon the existing system of medical care for the elderly, build more "group homes" for the elderly, and make outpatient care for the elderly free. Several candidates promised to improve "medical care infrastructure" (*iryō kiban seibi*) and do something about the lack of pediatricians and obstetricians. In the realm of support for child-rearing, candidates promised to make day care and kindergarten free for children between the ages of three and five, remove the problem of having to wait for an opening at the local day care, which many families faced, provide an allowance to single-parent families (*hitori oya katei*), make sure all schools had after-school activities, and establish a system of scholarships for students at the level of high school and university. Candidates pledged not to let "economic disparity lead to academic disparity" (*keizairyoku kakusa ga gakuryoku kakusa ni musubidukanai*).

In the realm of employment, candidates promised to increase the after-tax income of all families by 100,000 yen (approximately \$10,000) within ten years. They promised to find work for 20,000 people over the next three years, improve the remuneration earned by temporary workers, and prohibit day labouring. Other candidates promised to create an environment in which "nothing got in the way of technological innovation in growth industries in the medical, agricultural, and environmental fields". Other candidates promised to "increase the demand for eco-cars to 10,000 per year" and "realize a twenty-fold increase

in the use of solar power by the year 2020". Candidates emphasized that they possessed the "responsibility" (sekininkan) to protect, reconstruct, and rebuild Japan, which many candidates touted as their most-important "mission" (shimeikan). "For the Nation!", candidates said.

7.4 Electoral Strategies of DPJ Candidates: The Bashing Strategy

Chapter 2 argued that foreign and national security policy should be a useful issue to discuss in a single member district because of its property of non-targetability. It benefits everyone and no one at the same time. If I am correct that this property is important, I should observe it underpinning the electoral strategies of candidates running from the Democratic Party of Japan, which was formed prior to the 1996 election. After winning out over the New Frontier Party, which was also contending for this spot but broke up in 1997, the DPJ emerged as the second-largest party in the 2000 election. It won a landslide victory in the 2009 House of Representatives election.

I found clear party-election-year topics for DPJ candidates running in each of the elections under MMM, apart from the 2000 election. As I demonstrate in the next chapter, in the absence of having a party label to rely on in this election, DPJ candidates discussed foreign and national security policy. A qualitative interpretation of each of these four party-election-year topics reveals that DPJ candidates devised a means of demonstrating their commitment to the people that superseded even foreign and national security policy in its ingenuity. DPJ candidates demonstrated that they were *for* the people by demonstrat-

ing that they were *against* the privileges held by the organized groups that had formed the electoral coalitions of LDP candidates under the old electoral system. As the qualitative interpretations presented below reveal, DPJ candidates have been campaigning on promises to strip goodies from the groups who have them since 1996. Their strategy is a mix of promises to do things for the people and promises to strip benefits from a certain named group.

Being the politicians who constructed the elaborate system of benefits, and who needed to at least *pretend* to be interested in continuing to provide them to protect oneself from the emergence of another conservative candidate in one's district, we do not observe LDP candidates relying on this strategy. Bashing those with benefits is a DPJ strategy. However, the platform of postal privatization given LDP candidates by Koizumi in 2005 was similar to this strategy, and appeared to produce massive success. This section provides a qualitative interpretation of the bashing strategy adopted by candidates from the DPJ in each of these four elections.

7.4.1 DPJ Candidates in 1996

Topic 14, Politics for the Civilian, Not For Bureaucrats, was the platform offered by candidates running from the DPJ in 1996 ($n = 143$). As Figure 7.4 reveals, the mean percentage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of DPJ candidates was 32.6%. Candidates promised to build a new society based on “the civilian”, which would be accomplished by tearing the power and authority to make policy away from the bureaucracy. “The world is changing”, one candidate declared, “and Japan is at a turning point” (*ookina tenkanki*). “It is today that politics needs to offer us guidelines”, the candidate continued,

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

“but politics is controlled by bureaucrats and is far away from what the people want. Let’s bring politics back into our hands and build a new Japan for the twenty-first century!”

Candidates promised to “break away from special interest politics”, which they described as being “based on collusion between politicians, bureaucrats, and large corporations”, and create “a network based on the independence of the civilian”. Ever since the Meiji era, one candidate explained, “Japanese society has been centered on the nation state” (*kokka chushin gata shakai*), with bureaucrats taking the initiative to draft bills and make policies (*kanryo shugi*). The candidate promised to “fundamentally change” this situation and “build a new society centered on the civilian” (*shimin chushin shakai*). This new society, he continued, would be based on the principles of “fraternity (*yuai*), independence, and community”. “As we saw in the Ministry of Finance’s response to the Housing Loan Corporations problem and the Ministry of Health, Welfare, and Labor’s response to the problem of the HIV contamination by untreated blood products, bureaucrats don’t care about us”, another candidate declared. “We have to force through fundamental political reform and realize the dissolution (*kaitai*) and rebirth (*saisei*) of Kasumigaseki!”. Candidates promised to build “a politics with civilians playing the leading role” (*shimin ga shuyaku no seiji jitsugen*), and based their manifestos around slogans such as “From bureaucrats to civilians!”

Candidates issued a raft of promises under this major theme, most of which were repeated verbatim in the manifestos I read. Candidates promised to “imagine what shape Japan and the world ought to take in 2010”. After conducting this thought experiment, they would “set out to reach this goal”. Other candidates promised to “respect” the Constitution’s principles of pacifism, human rights, and popular sovereignty, and “actively develop these” (*sekkyokuteki tenkai wo hakaru*). Other candidates promised to “step up efforts” to

revise aspects of the Constitution so that Japan could “respond to the demands of the time”. Instead of pursuing economic growth at the expense of everything else, other candidates promised to pursue “coexistence with nature” (shizen to no kyosei). Candidates promised to “realize stable economic growth based on harmony with the world”. Other candidates promised to become a “trustworthy country” that, based on “a real perception of history” (tashika na rekishikan), will be able to send clear messages to the world and to other Asian countries. Candidates often concluded their manifestos with the statement: “The DPJ. We are You”.

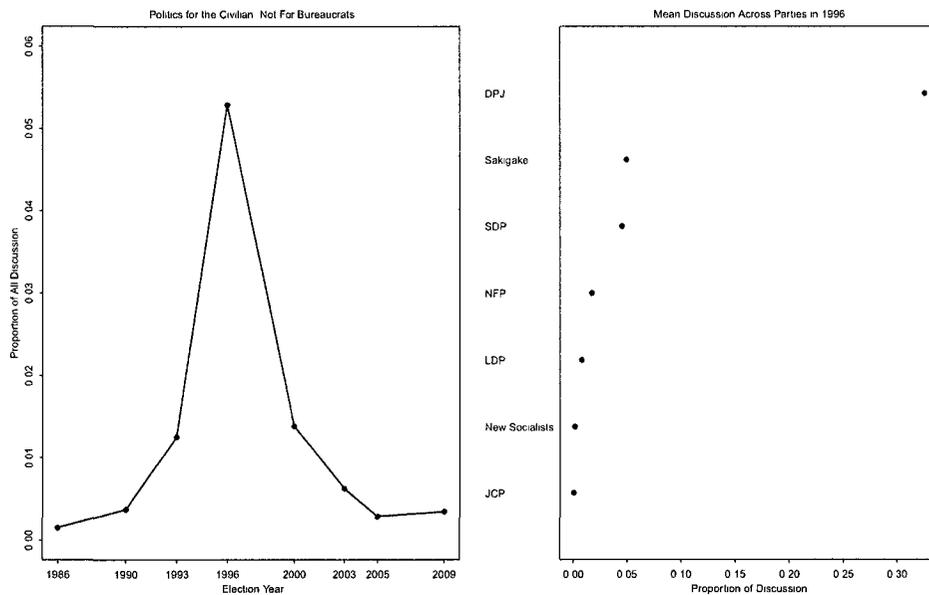


Figure 7.4: DPJ candidates campaigned on a platform of Politics for the Civilian, Not for Bureaucrats in 1996. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 14 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 14 was discussed in the 1996 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 14 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 1996 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 14 was a DPJ topic, and comprised 32.6% of the average manifesto produced by DPJ candidates in this election.

7.4.2 DPJ Candidates in 2003

Topic 68, From Roads to Pension, was the platform offered by candidates running from the DPJ in 2003. As Figure 7.5 reveals, the mean percentage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of DPJ candidates was 29% (n = 267). Within three years, candidates promised to abolish Japan Highway Public Corporation and make all highway tolls free, which they argued would “revitalize community economies” (*chiiki keizai kasseika*) by reducing the costs associated with the distribution of goods. They promised to build a fairer national pension system by making revenue garnered from the consumption tax the source of revenue for the new system. Within four years, they promised to cut the number of politicians and slash spending on personnel by national government employees by 10%. They would also abolish the practice of *amakudari* by high-level bureaucrats. They would cancel all wasteful public works projects currently being planned, including the Kawabe River dam, the Isahaya Bay land reclamation project, and the dam project at Yoshino River.⁴

Candidates also promised to “disclose all political donations”. By making them “open to scrutiny” (*gurasu bari*), candidates told voters that they would “get to the bottom of the politics of kickbacks” (*kuchikiki seiji*) and “the politics of special interests” (*riken seiji*). They promised to abolish the existing “subsidies-with-strings-attached” system (*himoduki hojokin*), through which Kasumigaseki (the bureaucracy) controlled how localities spent their money, and secure an independent source of fiscal revenue for all localities. Candidates also promised to reduce class sizes to 30 for elementary school and introduce a five-day school week. Candidates told voters that “an alternation of government would

⁴Candidates from all over Japan named the same projects.

lead to a refurbished Japan” (nihon isshin).

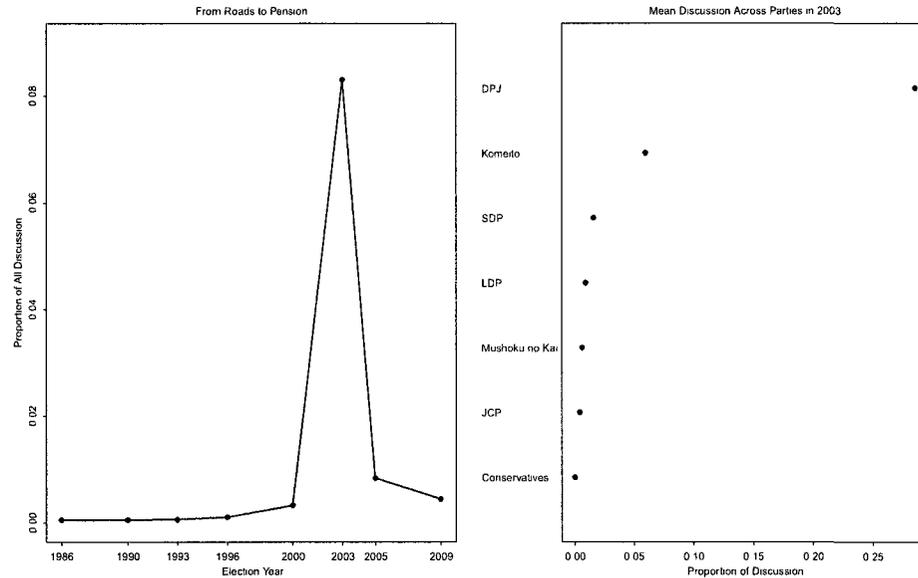


Figure 7.5: DPJ candidates campaigned on a platform of From Roads to Pension in 2003. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 68 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 68 was discussed in the 2003 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 68 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 2003 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 68 was a DPJ topic, and comprised 29% of the average manifesto produced by DPJ candidates in this election.

7.4.3 DPJ Candidates in 2005

Topic 2, From Concrete to People, was the platform offered by candidates running from the DPJ in 2005. As Figure 7.6 reveals, the mean percentage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of DPJ candidates was 25% ($n = 290$). Candidates promised to “clean up waste in the government’s budget” by reducing the number of politicians in the House of Representatives, abolishing politician pensions, and slashing personnel spending

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

for national government employees (jinkenhi) by 20%. Candidates explained that these cuts would free up 10 trillion yen in the government's budget, which they argued would mean that the government could avoid a tax increase that would burden white collar workers (sarariman neraiuchi zōzei nashi). Candidates promised to work towards the realization of a society with "no social and economic disparity". One step towards this goal was "abolishing the Social Insurance Agency" and "unifying the pensions of workers in the government and private sectors". In an innovative slogan, "From Concrete to People ... People ... People", candidates promised to reform the nation's system of public schools and introduce a monthly child allowance of 16,000 yen (or approximately \$160 USD) to support families with children.

Candidates also promised to abolish the existing "subsidies-with-strings-attached" system, which made rural areas dependent on the central government for their revenue. Candidates promised to give these areas the right to decide how to spend their own money. Candidates also promised to revitalize local communities by abolishing Japan Public Highway Corporation and making highway tolls free of charge. Under the heading of "Toward a free and transparent market economy", candidates promised to abolish the system of collusive bidding pursued by government agencies (kansei dango). Candidates promised to realize "an enlightened national interest for Japan in the world" (sekai totomo ni ikiru hirakareta kokueki). They promised to "withdraw the SDF from Iraq by September" (of 2005) and conduct "recovery assistance appropriate to Japan". Candidates invariably declared that their policy promises were part of the "the DPJ's Reform Manifesto". Many candidates sought to negate the importance of the postal privatization platform of their opponents with a simple phrase at the beginning of their manifesto: "There are more important things" (motto taisetsu na koto ga arimasu).

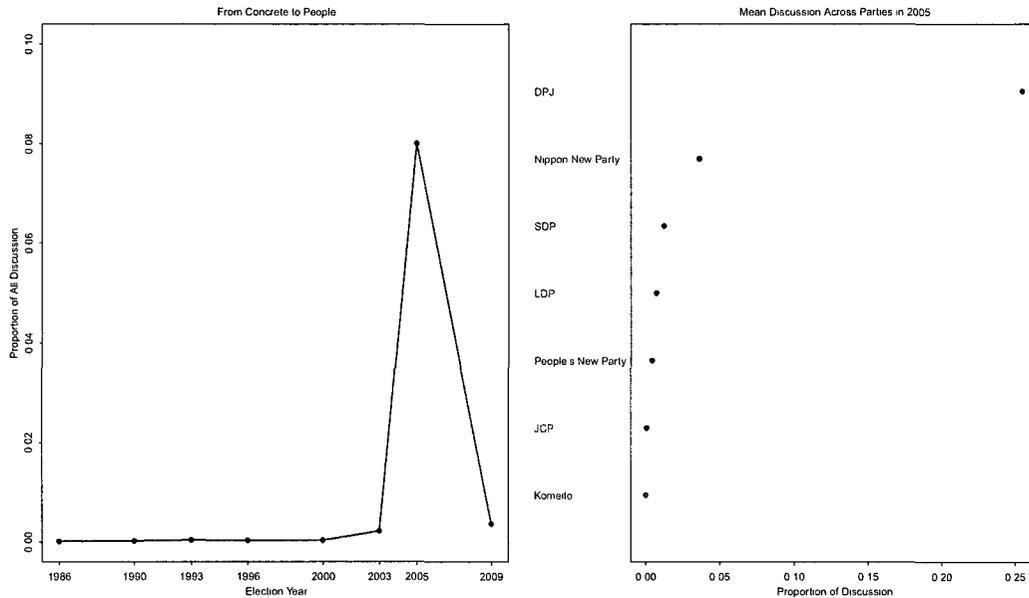


Figure 7.6: DPJ candidates campaigned on a platform of From Concrete to People in 2005. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 2 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 2 was discussed in the 2005 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 2 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 2003 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 2 was a DPJ topic, and comprised 25% of the average manifesto produced by DPJ candidates in this election.

7.4.4 DPJ Candidates in 2009

Topic 42, Pensions and Cutting Waste, was the platform offered by candidates running from the DPJ in 2009. As Figure 7.7 reveals, the mean percentage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of DPJ candidates was 45% (n = 271). Candidates promised to realize five policies in the “DPJ’s Manifesto”. The first was a promise to “completely rearrange” (zenmen kumikae) the government’s annual budget of 207 trillion yen. Candidates told voters that the DPJ had already picked apart the accounts of 87 corporations (out of a total of 2,767), whose funding in 2009 had come from the government’s budget. Whereas

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

the total amount spent on these companies by the government had been 709 billion yen, the DPJ had discovered, with the help of outside experts, that a full 25% of this (184 billion yen) could be cut. Candidates told voters that a DPJ government would review the accounts of all publicly-funded corporations, and in doing so would secure the 16.8 trillion yen (8% of the government's budget) needed to realize the policy promises in their manifesto. Alongside reviewing the accounts of public corporations, candidates would prohibit amakudari, hereditary succession of Diet seats, and political donations from corporations. They would also cut 80 seats from the House of Representatives as an additional means of "cutting waste".

Second, candidates promised to supply a child allowance for every child in a family from the time the child was born until he or she had graduated from junior high school, which would amount to an annual sum of 312,000 yen (approximately \$3,100 USD) per child. Candidates promised to make senior high school free and introduce a scholarship system at the university level. Third, candidates promised to create a system in which "pensions won't just disappear with the loss of pension records". They would unify the pension system and introduce a minimum pension (saitei hoshō nenkin) of 70,000 yen per month (approximately \$700). They would abolish the Latter-stage Elderly Medical Care System and would increase the number of doctors by 150%. Fourth, candidates would "work toward" "community sovereignty" (chiiki shuken), and as the first step toward that goal, would increase the amount of independent fiscal revenue controlled by localities. Candidates would also establish a system of income protection for farmers, abolish highway tolls, and revise the postal privatization plan. Fifth, candidates promised to reduce taxes on corporations (hojinzei) to 11% and support those seeking re-employment by establishing a job training system with a monthly allowance of 10,000 yen (approximately

\$100). Candidates also promised to push for measures to deal with global warming and to support new industries. “What will change”, many candidates declared, “is your lifestyle” (kawaru no ha anata no seikatsu desu!).

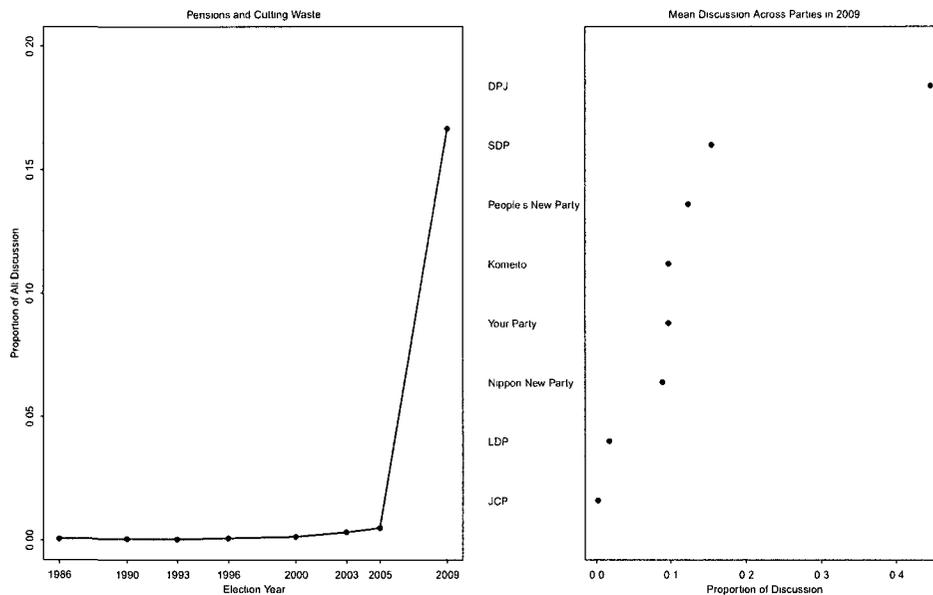


Figure 7.7: DPJ candidates campaigned on a platform of Pensions and Cutting Waste in 2009. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 42 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 42 was discussed in the 2009 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 42 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 2009 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 42 was a DPJ topic, and comprised 45% of the average manifesto produced by DPJ candidates in this election.

DPJ candidates in elections since 2000 have also made use of Alternation in Government (Topic 59). This comprised 5.6% of the average DPJ candidate manifesto in 2000; 9% in 2003; 8.9% in 2005; and 15% in 2009. “There is a Japan that will never be realized without an alternation of government”, one candidate told voters. “Your vote”, they declared, “can change Japan”. “This election”, another candidate declared, “will decide the future of Japan. Japan’s future will begin with an alternation of government!” Candidates

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

told voters that an alternation of government would change politics from “politics run by bureaucrats to politics run by the people”. “Tax”, one candidate declared, “is not something that is owned by the bureaucracy. It is owned by the people. I promise to bring tax policy back into the hands of the people!” Candidates told voters that wasteful spending of their money via tax and insurance fees, epitomized in government practices such as amakudari, was a product of the mutual, back-scratching relationship that had been built up over the long years of one-party rule between politicians and bureaucrats.

Instead of wasting more money on concrete, in the form of unnecessary roads, tunnels, and other forms of “wasteful waste” (*muda no muda*), candidates told voters that Japan had other, more serious problems to deal with: namely, the low birthrate and the rapidly-aging society. Addressing these problems would require much larger outlays in the realm of social security, and would require the development of a better pension system, as well as better medical and nursing care. Only with an alternation of government, candidates implored, would the lives of the people be protected (*kurashi wo mamoru*). Only with an alternation of government could Japanese people live without fear and worry, reassured that they would be looked after in their old age. Candidates promised to support the raising of children, the realization of an education system that “gives everybody a chance”, and community sovereignty. Candidates sought to impress upon voters that the shift in government spending required to make this happen was impossible under the LDP. This was why voters ought to vote for them. “Love”, one candidate declared, “is to change Japan”.

7.5 Electoral Strategies of SDP and JCP Candidates: Equally-Extreme

I find no evidence that the running of candidates in a single member district to increase the party's vote share in PR has modified the platforms of either the Social Democratic Party or the Japan Communist Party. Their positions on foreign and national security policy appear to loom just as large as they did under SNTV-MMD. Instead, it appears that the attention being paid to foreign and national security policy by conservative politicians after they reach office has kicked new life into the platforms of these parties, and has added concreteness to their appeals. This section presents a qualitative interpretation of the topics these candidates used in elections under the new electoral system.

7.5.1 SDP Candidates in All Elections

Topic 37, Stubbornly for Peace and Human Rights, was the platform offered by candidates running from the SDP in all five elections under MMM. In the 1996 election, 22% of the average manifesto produced by SDP candidates was devoted to this topic; in the 2000 election, 31%; in the 2003 election, 20%; in the 2005 election, 19%, and in the 2009 election, 6%. Figure 7.8 displays the mean proportion of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of SDP candidates in the 2000 election. Candidates announced that they were “Stubbornly for Peace” (ganko ni heiwa). They promised to spread Japan's Peace Constitution around the world and push for military disarmament. They declared their commitment to a non-military international contribution. Some candidates declared their opposition to

the emergency legislation (*yuji rippo hosei*), while others called for “a 21st century with no war!” One candidate explained, “Having a strong military will not lead to peace. Blindly following the U.S. will not bring security to Japan. It will only raise the chances of entrapment.” “Rather than using force to get rid of threats”, the candidate continued, “I will choose the path of confidence-building and disarmament, based on our cherished peace constitution”. Candidates announced that they would “take cooperation with the United Nations seriously” and were “resolutely opposed to the dispatch of the Self Defense Forces to Iraq.”

By protecting Japan’s peace constitution, candidates told voters, they would “make Japan’s democracy better”. Other candidates called for a reduction in size of the Self Defense Forces. Others pledged to protect the peace constitution in the face of “the expansion of government power”, which implied that the peace constitution was already being threatened by this expansion. They called for a shift away from Japan’s current education system, which they described as being heavily slanted toward academic achievement (*gakureki chūshin*), to a form of education that “nurtures the individual personalities of children” and “gives children breathing space”. Many candidates stated their firm opposition to revision of the Fundamental Law on Education. Candidates also promised to “protect fundamental human rights” and realize a society with no discrimination based on gender, in which men and women could participate on an equal basis (*danjo kyōdo sankaku*).

7.5.2 JCP Candidates in 1996

Topic 11, No Tax Increases, No U.S.-Japan Alliance was one of three platforms offered by candidates running from the JCP in 1996. As Figure 7.9 reveals, the mean per-

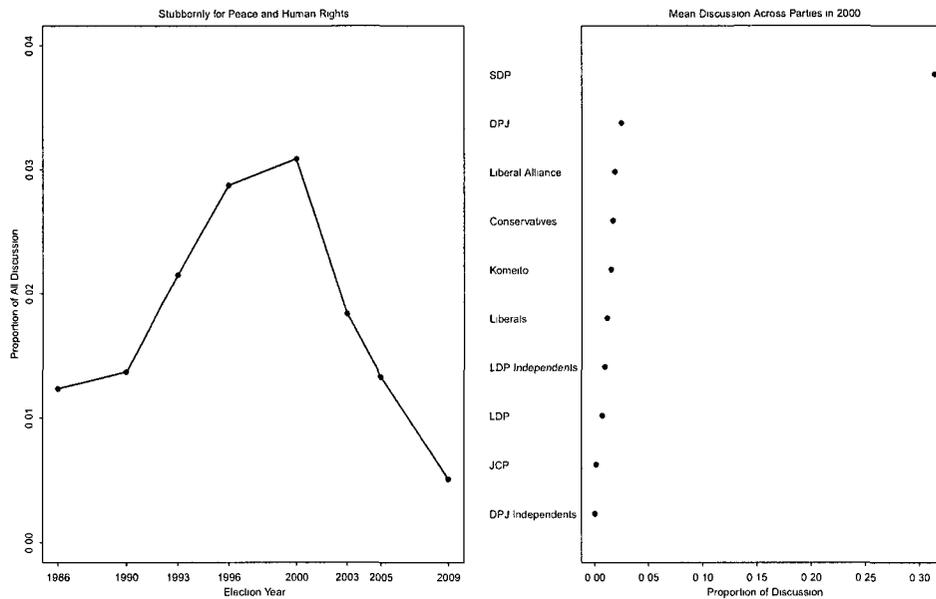


Figure 7.8: SDP candidates campaigned on a platform of Stubbornly for Peace and Human Rights after 1996. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 37 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 37 was discussed in elections under MMM. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 37 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 2000 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 37 was an SDP topic, and comprised 30% of the average manifesto produced by SDP candidates in this election.

centage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JCP candidates was 60%. Candidates declared that the JCP was “the only party that would stick to its position of opposing the imposition of a consumption tax”. They described the positions of the LDP-JSP-Sakigake coalition government and the two new opposition parties, the NFP and DPJ, on the tax, telling voters that “whatever fancy words these parties are using, such as “re-verse” or “freeze”, in reality they are a coalition for a two-digit tax increase” (niketa zōzei mezasu daizōzeiha). Candidates told voters that the JCP was the only party that would keep its promise not to impose the tax, and the only party capable of developing a plan for fiscal

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

reconstruction that did not involve a major tax increase. “Only by the Japan Communist Party winning”, the candidates told voters, “will you be able to stop a tax increase”. “By cutting wasteful spending on the military and on public works, and correcting the preferential tax rates enjoyed by large corporations”, candidates explained, “we can restructure the sources of government revenue without a consumption tax”.

The second major plank in candidates’ platforms was their position on the U.S.-Japan security alliance. If elected, candidates would get rid of the U.S.-Japan alliance, get rid of all U.S. military bases, protect Article Nine (the peace clause of Japan’s constitution), declare Japan’s independence, and pursue a peaceful foreign policy. These candidates declared that the Japanese people should be the “main characters” (*kokumin ha shujinkō*, *kokumin koso shujinkō*) of politics. “The Japan the Japan Communist Party aims for”, candidates told voters, “is comprised of three pillars”. The first was “privileging life and livelihood and realizing the democratic regulation of big business”. The second was “protecting the constitution and contributing to peace in Asia and the world”. The third was “protecting freedom and democracy into the future”.

Topic 31, No Reform of Medical Care, was the second platform offered by candidates running from the JCP in 1996. As Figure 7.10 reveals, the mean percentage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JCP candidates was 13%. Candidates told voters that the JCP would “protect the lives and rights of Japanese citizens and stop the government from writing off welfare and medical care”. Candidates told voters that the government would swindle Japanese citizens out of an extra 2.5 trillion yen each year with its decision to increase the portion of health insurance and cost of medicine borne by the people (to 20% and 30%, respectively), which had been undertaken under the banner of “administrative reform”. Candidates told voters that the JCP was resolutely opposed to

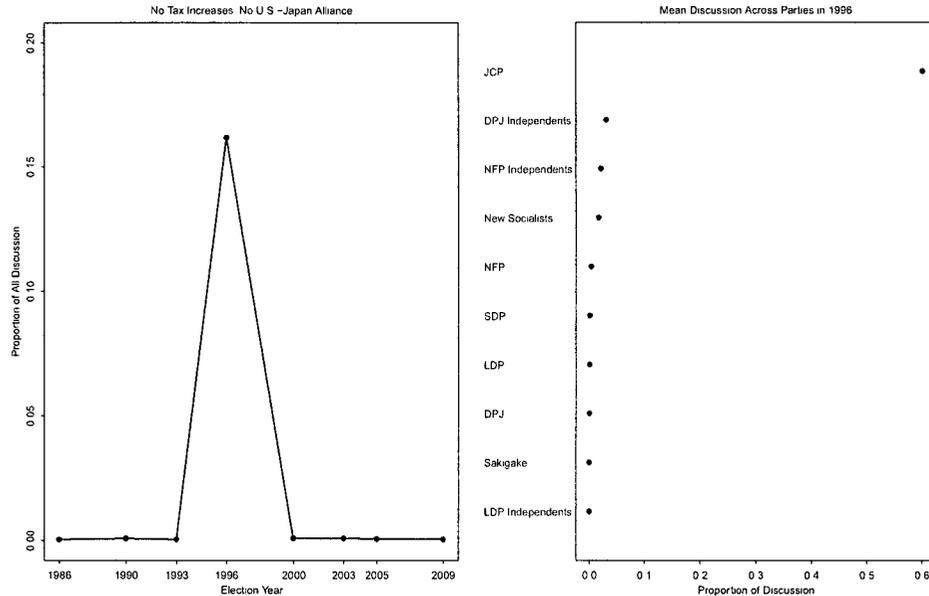


Figure 7.9: JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No Tax Increases, no U.S.-Japan Alliance in 1996. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 11 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 11 was discussed in the 1996 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 11 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 1996 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 11 was a JCP topic, and comprised 60% of the average manifesto produced by JCP candidates in this election.

reform of the medical care system. Instead, the JCP would create a new Nursing Care Insurance System that would improve the quality and provision of medical care and insurance.

In addition, candidates promised never to accept “dirty money” from large corporations in the form of political donations or money from the newly-established public subsidy for political parties. Given that all the other parties were accepting this cash, the JCP was uniquely positioned to make policies “from the standpoint of the people”. Candidates called on voters to “pass judgement on Liberal Democratized politics” (sōjimintōka), which “ignored the voices of the Japanese people”. They asked voters to vote in a “new flow of

politics in which Japanese citizens are the main characters” (kokumin ga shujinkō). Candidates told voters that the JCP would “vigorously oppose liberalization of the rice market”. Candidates appealed to the JCP’s “74-year-long history as an independent political party”, saying “The Japan Communist Party has a long history of battling against tyranny and oppression by other countries, including the U.S., Soviet Union, and China”. “We are the only party that opposed the aggressive war and the domination of other countries”, candidates declared. Candidates called on their voters to support the JCP, “the only reliable opposition party” (tashika na yato).

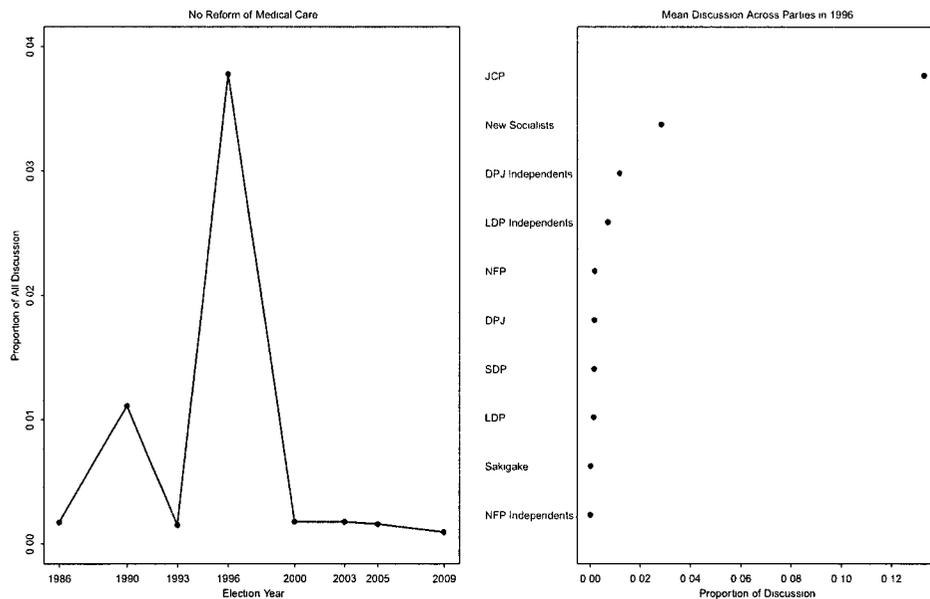


Figure 7.10: JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No Reform of Medical Care in 1996. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 31 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 31 was discussed in the 1996 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 31 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 1996 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 31 was a JCP topic, and comprised 13% of the average manifesto produced by JCP candidates in this election.

Topic 49, No More Iron Triangle, was the third platform offered by candidates running from the JCP in 1996. As Figure 7.11 reveals, the mean percentage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JCP candidates was 14%. Candidates pledged to drag politics away from “the iron triangle that is politicians, bureaucrats, and large corporations” (seikanzai no yuchaku). “It is time to get rid of politics in which the voices of the people are ignored” (kokumin wo naigashiro ni shitekita seiji), candidates told voters. They pledged to “bring politics back into the hands of the people”. Candidates used the bureaucrat cover-up of HIV-infected blood products (yakugai aids) and instances of large-scale corruption in the construction industry as examples of how collusive relationships with big business “twisted government administration and hurt the average Japanese citizen”. Candidates called for genuine administrative reform that abolished political donations from companies and the practice of amakudari. Plans to move the capital city away from Tokyo under the banner of “streamlining government” (tohaigō), candidates told voters, were nothing more than a fake reform designed to provide 20 trillion yen worth of benefits to General Construction.

“As the only party that does not accept political donations from corporations or the public subsidy for political parties, the Japan Communist Party is the only party that can break up the collusive ties between these actors and realize genuine administrative reform, in which the people’s voices will be heard”, one candidate told voters. Candidates promised to aim for the abolition of the consumption tax and the reform of tax policy, so that it would be based on “progressive, income-based taxation”. Candidates also pledged to “reconstruct agriculture” and increase the national self-sufficiency rate to 60% of foodstuffs. They also pledged their opposition to the construction of all new nuclear power plants.

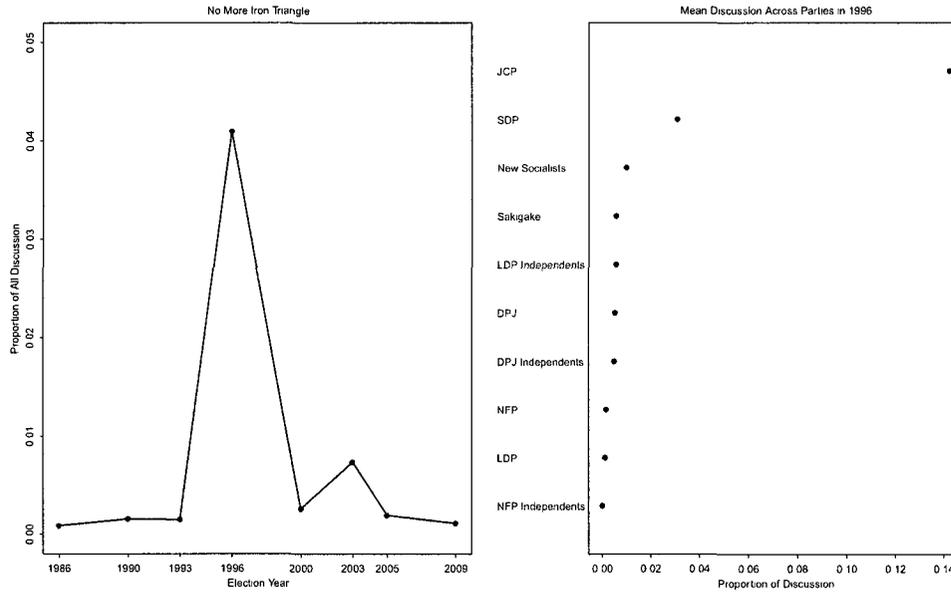


Figure 7.11: JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No More Iron Triangle in 1996. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 49 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 49 was discussed in the 1996 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 49 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 1996 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 49 was a JCP topic, and comprised 14% of the average manifesto produced by JCP candidates in this election.

7.5.3 JCP Candidates in 2000

Topic 21, No More LDP, No More Public Works, was the platform offered by candidates running from the JCP in 2000. As Figure 7.12 reveals, the mean percentage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JCP candidates was 75%. “Let us change stale-mated LDP politics into a new politics that flows into the hearts of the Japanese people!”, candidates declared. While Japan faced a serious economic recession, with citizens struggling to find the money to do the most basic things, candidates decried the fact that Japanese politics had “come to a complete standstill in every single policy area” (subete no bunya

de yukidumatteiru). Candidates called on voters to “pass judgement on LDP politics and the government of Mori Yoshiro”. They told voters that the election was an opportunity to “settle the accounts” of the government (sōkessan) for the Prime Minister’s statement that Japan was a land of gods, which they pointed out, challenged the Constitution’s principle of popular sovereignty. Instead of merely opposing the “evil government”, candidates told voters, they would battle the evil government with a policy plan of their own, entitled “Japan Reform”.

Candidates summarized the plan for voters. First, the JCP would “change the way the government used the proceeds from taxation”. Whereas 50 trillion yen was being funnelled to General Construction each year via a bloated budget for public works, only 20 trillion yen was being spent on social security. Candidates promised to reverse this and “put people’s livelihoods at the center of the budget”. Second, the JCP would enact new rules protecting the lives and rights of people from the actions of large corporations, which they pointed out was “normal in many European countries”. The third concerned the U.S.-Japan alliance. “While our goal is to abolish the U.S.-Japan security alliance”, candidates told voters, “even before that we will pursue the path of peace, step by step”. Fourth, candidates declared their fervent commitment to protecting Japan’s constitution and “correcting the distortions” (yugami) of Japanese society. Many candidates declared their respect for life, and their opposition to the resurrection of the Meiji-era Imperial Rescript on Education, which they told voters, “has nothing to do with lives or rights”.

7.5.4 JCP Candidates in 2003

Topic 16, No More Big Business-Favoritism, was one of three platforms candidates

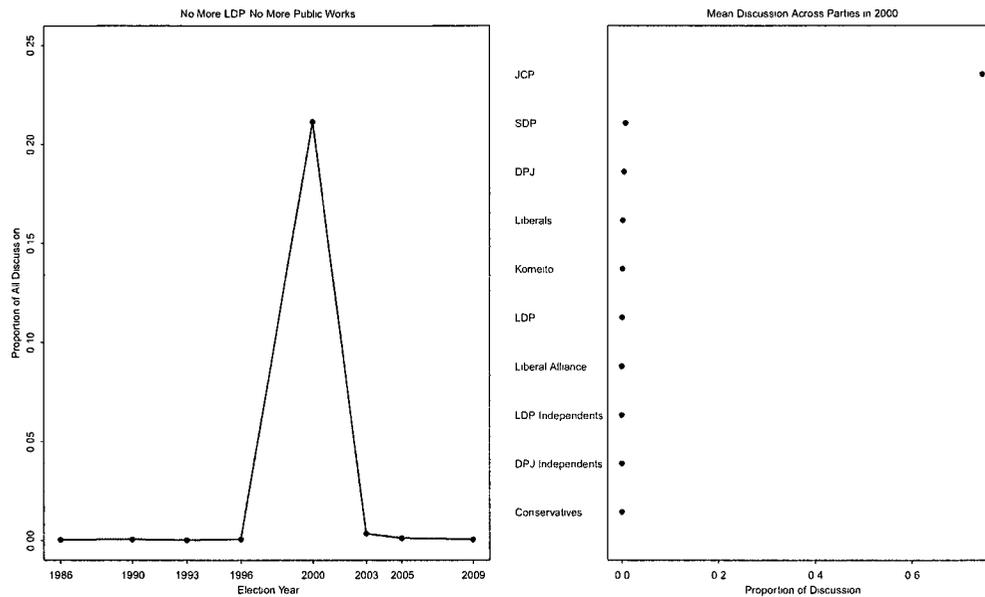


Figure 7.12: JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No More LDP, No More Public Works in 2000. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 21 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 21 was discussed in the 2000 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 21 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 2000 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 21 was a JCP topic, and comprised 75% of the average manifesto produced by JCP candidates in this election.

from the JCP ran on in the 2003 election. As Figure 7.13 reveals, the mean percentage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JCP candidates was 10%. Candidates promised voters that they would stop “putting large corporations first” (zaikai shuyaku) and “being a follower of the U.S.” (amerika iinari). Instead, they would “protect people’s livelihoods and peace” (kurashi to heiwa). “While the media is making this election a choice between the LDP or the DPJ”, candidates told voters, “can we really expect the LDP-Kōmeitō government or a DPJ government to protect our livelihoods, when both are on record as supporting both constitutional revision and an increase in the consumption tax?” Candidates told voters that the JCP was a “a clean opposition party that can stand up to

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

an evil government” (akusei ni kippari tachimukau seiketsu na seito). They explained that the Keidanren was making the government raise the consumption tax and reduce taxes on large corporations in exchange for a hefty sum of money at election time. “This is a political cash-for-favors arrangement like no other!”, candidates cried. “The Japan Communist Party has no strings attached to the political world. Who do you think is more qualified to protect your livelihood?”

Candidates promised to create a pension system that did not require an increase in the consumption tax or the introduction of a tax that would hurt “ordinary people”. They would raise the portion of the basic government pension from one-third to one-half. The revenue for this could be raised, they assured voters, by cutting spending on the military and spending on public works. In the future, they explained, pension payments could be made contingent on personal income, with large corporations and rich people paying more. Candidates reminded voters that while the LDP had promised that the proceeds from the consumption tax would be devoted to social security, “over the last fifteen years proceeds from the consumption tax have gone into filling up the hole in government revenue created by tax cuts for large corporations”. In keeping with their criticism of big business favoritism, candidates promised to “clean up” (issō) the problem of restructuring and unpaid overtime in large corporations. They promised to implement rules “already adopted in European countries” to “protect workers from unreasonable restructuring” (ranbo na risotera) and from having to do unpaid overtime, which they argued would create an extra 1.6 million jobs for the Japanese economy.

Topic 45, No Consumption Tax, No Constitutional Revision, was the second platform offered by candidates running from the JCP in 2003. As Figure 7.14 reveals, the mean percentage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JCP candidates was 66%.

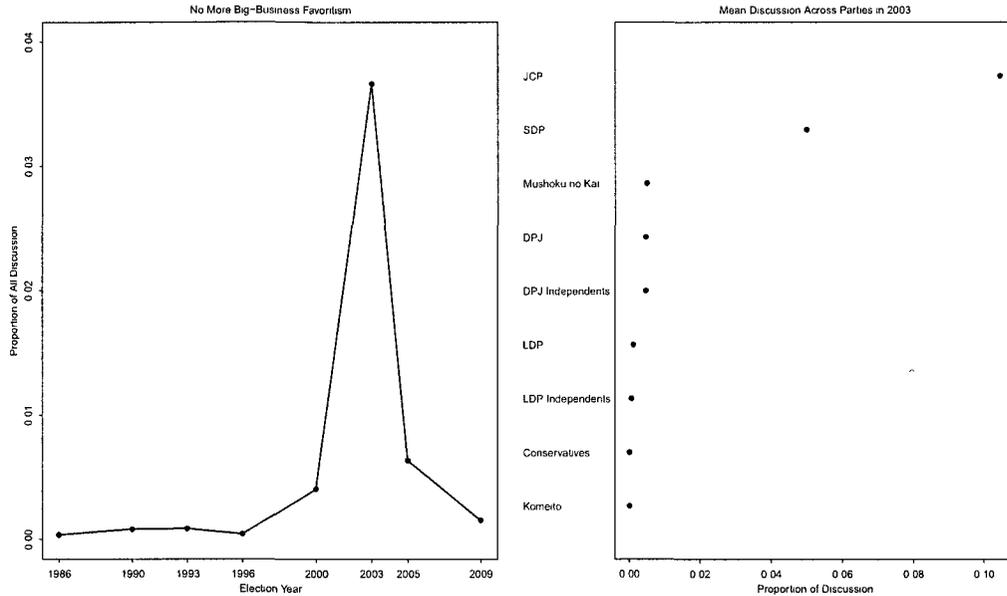


Figure 7.13: JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No More Big Business-Favoritism in 2003. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 16 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 16 was discussed in the 2003 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 16 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 2003 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 16 was a JCP topic, and comprised 10% of the average manifesto produced by JCP candidates in this election.

Candidates told voters that the evil LDP-Kōmeitō coalition government was scheming to impose a huge consumption tax on the Japanese people and conduct an evil revision of Japan’s beloved Peace Constitution. If we stand by and do nothing, candidates declared, “the government will yield to the demands of large corporations and impose a two-digit consumption tax on us!” “Prime Minister Koizumi has already betrayed the wishes of the Japanese people with his support for the Iraq war”, candidates continued, “now, he is planning to send the Self Defense Forces into a war zone.” Candidates told voters that both the LDP and the DPJ were on record as favoring constitutional revision, with the LDP publicly committing itself to “revision” (kaiken) and the DPJ publicly committing itself to “creative

constitutionalism” (sōken).

Candidates implored voters to help them “stop the evil government from making Japan into a country that can wage war at the drop of a hat” (nan no kigane mo naku senso dekiru kuni ni). Candidates reiterated their firm opposition to the dispatch of the Self Defense Forces to Iraq and their determination to “defend Article Nine at all costs” (mamorinuku). They informed voters that representatives from the JCP had been travelling to Asia and the Middle East in order to publicize the party’s position on the Iraq war and its commitment to abiding by the rules of the United Nations. Candidates promised to “break free of the U.S.-Japan alliance for the twenty-first century” and “become a truly independent nation that can contribute to the peace of Asia and the world”. At the end of the day, candidates told voters, “Japan ought to make a contribution to world peace in accordance with the principles of Article 9”.

Topic 60, No Other Party Can Be Trusted, was the third platform offered by candidates running from the JCP in 2003. It was also part of the platform offered voters in the 1996 election. As Figure 7.15 reveals, the mean percentage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JCP candidates was 3.4%. In 1996, it was 6%. Describing the consumption tax as “an evil tax that bullies ordinary citizens” (shōmin ijime no akuzei), candidates promised to oppose the imposition of a 5% tax. Far from being used to fund welfare, candidates explained, the tax would be used to fund the profligate binge of spending being undertaken by the government (hōman zaisei) and to provide even larger benefits for large corporations and rich people. Candidates told voters that the LDP’s promise to freeze the consumption tax was nothing but an election-year ploy. The freezing of the tax would only be possible, candidates sought to impress upon voters, if the Japan Communist Party, the *only* party resolutely opposed to its introduction, did well in this election.

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

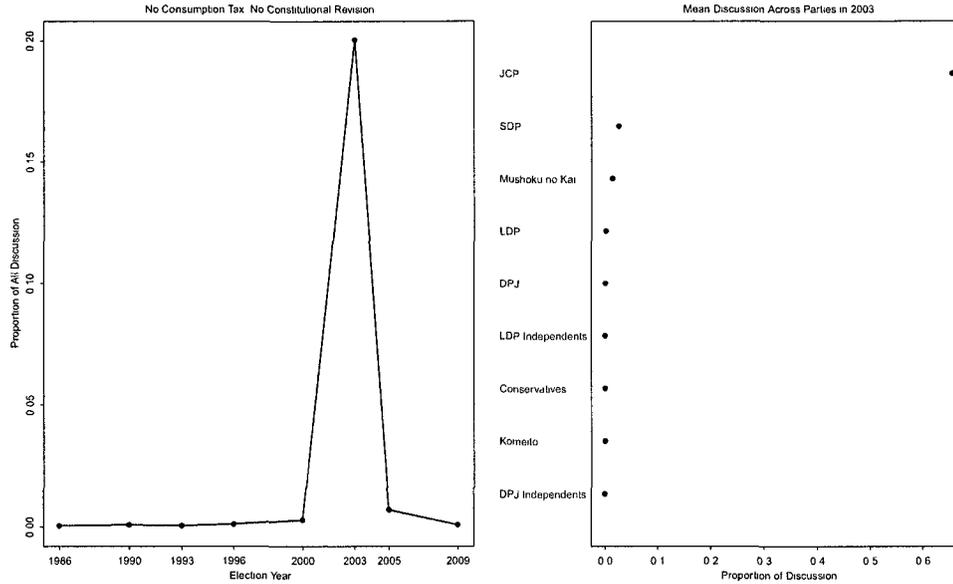


Figure 7.14: JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No Consumption Tax, No Constitutional Revision in 2003. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 45 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 45 was discussed in the 2003 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 45 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 2003 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 45 was a JCP topic, and comprised 66% of the average manifesto produced by JCP candidates in this election.

Candidates told voters that while an array of new political parties had appeared on the scene, every one of them, from the Sakigake to the SDP to the DPJ, was nothing more than “a change in name” (*kanban wo kakegae*). The positions of these parties on using taxpayer’s money to bail out the housing loan corporations, for example, or on raising the consumption tax, were exactly the same as they had been before. The formation of these new parties was no fundamental change and nothing but “alliance and rupture within the ruling camp” (*rigō shusan*). Candidates told voters that the JCP was the only political party that had asserted popular sovereignty in the pre-war period, fought oppression by the Soviet Union in the postwar period, and had continued to this day to struggle for peace and

democracy. Candidates called for a “new Japan”, of which there would be two components: a shift in diplomacy from “following the U.S.” (taibei juzoku) to “a relationship of equality and friendship” (taitō na nichibei yuko kankei he), and a shift from sovereignty held by large corporations to sovereignty held by the Japanese people.⁵ Candidates called for a withdrawal of all U.S. military bases from Japan and the dissolution of the U.S.-Japan military alliance.

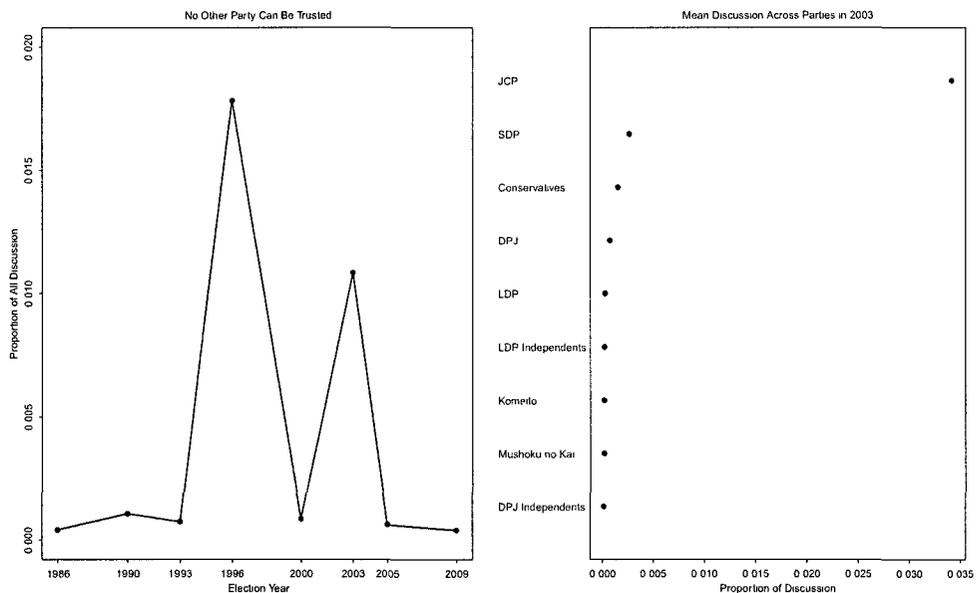


Figure 7.15: JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No Other Party Can Be Trusted in 1996 and 2003 elections. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 60 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 60 was discussed in the 1996 and 2003 elections. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 60 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 2003 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 60 was a JCP topic, and comprised 3.4% of the average manifesto produced by JCP candidates in this election.

⁵In saying this, candidates are playing on the similarity of sounds between *shuken zaisei* (sovereignty held by large corporations) and *shuken zaimin* (sovereignty held by the people).

7.5.5 JCP Candidates in 2005

Topic 34, No Tax Increase, No Constitutional Revision, was one of two platforms candidates running from the JCP ran on in the 2005 election. As Figure 7.16 reveals, the mean percentage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JCP candidates was 32%. Over the last four years, candidates told voters, “the Koizumi Government has passed a number of evil revisions to the pension and medical care systems, which have done nothing but hurt the Japanese people”. What Japan needs is “a reliable opposition party capable of battling with the Liberal Democratic Party”. They sounded the alarm that the LDP-Kōmeitō government were on the verge of a major tax reform that would impose a hefty new tax burden on Japanese citizens. The DPJ too, candidates told voters, was planning to increase the consumption tax by 3% as well as raise income tax. Candidates told voters that the JCP would stop spending money on non-essential and non-urgent public works projects, and on highway construction using money in the fixed budget for road construction (*doro tokutei zaigen*). They would mend distortions in the budget by taxing large corporations and the financial world. They would stop “a tax increase that hurt ordinary people”.

Candidates explained to voters that the only reason Japan had not been involved in a war since the end of the Second World War was because of the twin principles of renunciation of war and arms enshrined in Article 9. Candidates warned voters that both LDP and DPJ governments were on the verge of “making Japan into a country that can wage war”. Candidates cited specific parts of the LDP’s proposal to revise the Constitution (dated August 1st) and the conclusion reached by the DPJ’s Research Commission on the Constitution (dated April 25) as evidence of these parties’ revisionist intentions. According to these

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

documents, candidates told voters, the LDP would clarify Japan's right to have a Self Defense Force (SDF) in the Constitution and would allow it to be dispatched overseas. It would also delete the "war renunciation" and "prohibition of war potential" clauses, which would allow the SDF to use military force abroad if there was a United Nations Resolution to this effect. Even the Komeitō, candidates told voters, had joined in the debate on constitutional revision. "The Japan Communist Party", these candidates declared, was the "only opposition party that would safeguard Japan's Peace Constitution through and through". Candidates told voters that they would not forgive "movements to whitewash Japan's past aggression". To this end, candidates informed voters that they were conducting their own, "opposition foreign policy" (*yatō gaikō*).

Topic 36, No Postal Privatization, was the second platform offered by JCP candidates in the 2005 election. As Figure 7.17 reveals, the mean percentage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JCP candidates was 50%. Candidates promised to put an end to the LDP's plan to privatize the postal service. They told voters that privatization would ruin the network of post offices. Banks and post offices would disappear from rural areas and the residents of these areas would no longer have access to any of the services. While Koizumi is using the word "privatize", candidates told voters, the government's postal corporations had their own, self-supporting accounting system and actually used none of taxpayers' money. Postal privatization, candidates explained, was nothing but a plot by American banks and securities companies to get their hands on the yen holdings in the postal savings and life insurance systems. Candidates promised to protect the existing network of post offices and improve the quality of the services they provided. They explained to voters that all of the other parties (the Komeitō and the DPJ), were "running on the same tracks" (in favor of privatization). Whichever party holds the reigns of government, candidates told

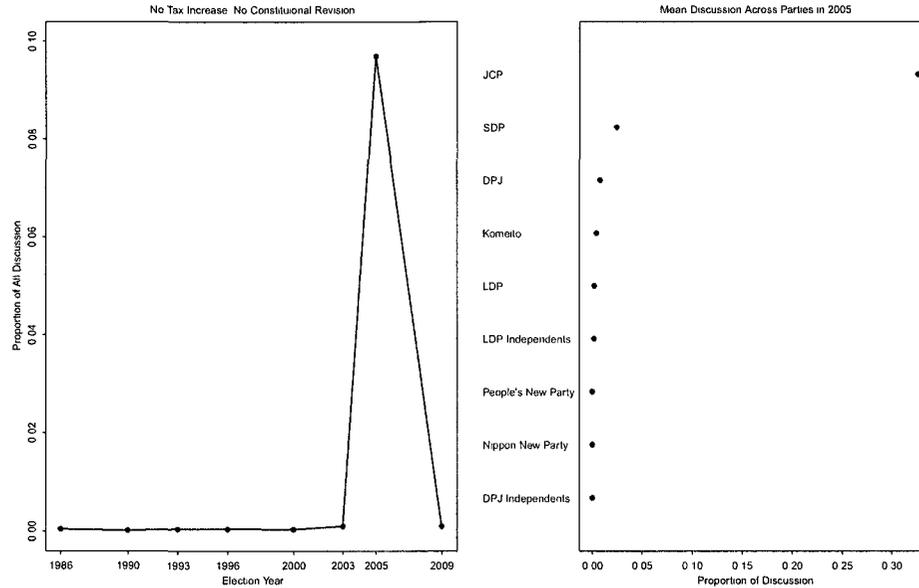


Figure 7.16: JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No Tax Increase, No Constitutional Revision in 2005. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 34 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 34 was discussed in the 2005 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 34 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 2005 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 34 was a JCP topic, and comprised 32% of the average manifesto produced by JCP candidates in this election.

voters, “you can rest assured that the Japan Communist Party will continue to oppose postal privatization, tax increases that hurt ordinary people, efforts to make Japan into a country that can wage war, and the long work hours and unpaid overtime demanded of employees by large corporations!”

7.5.6 JCP Candidates in 2009

Topic 64, Free Medical Care, No Military Spending, was the platform offered by can-

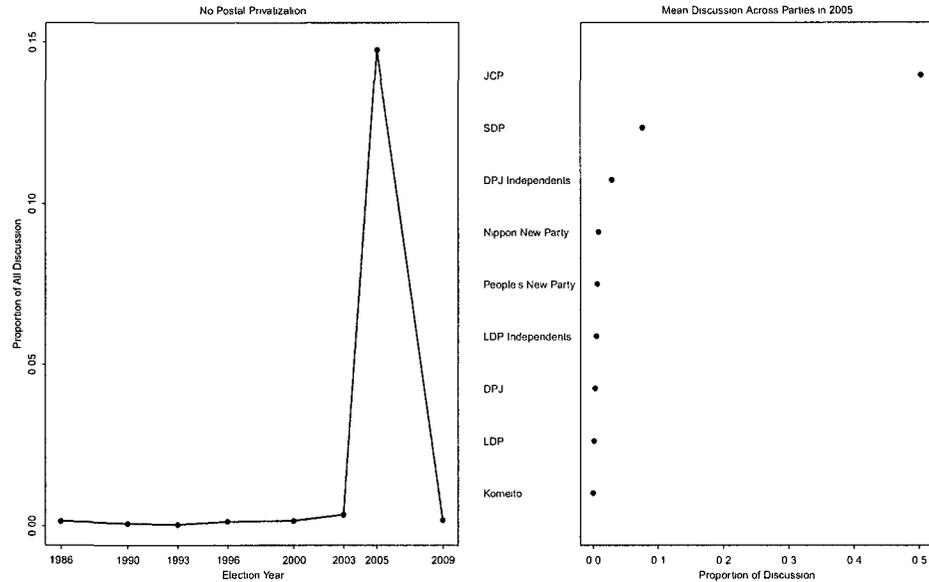


Figure 7.17: JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of No Postal Privatization in 2005. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 36 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 36 was discussed in the 2005 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 36 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 2005 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 36 was a JCP topic, and comprised 50% of the average manifesto produced by JCP candidates in this election.

didates running from the JCP in 2009. As Figure 7.18 reveals, the mean percentage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of JCP candidates was 91%. Government policy has ignored our need for social security, candidates told voters, and “has created medical refugees and nursing care refugees out of ordinary people!” “I feel your anger at the government as if it were my own”, one candidate declared. Candidates promised to provide free medical care for the elderly and for children, abolish the Latter-stage Elderly Health Care System, cut the portion of the health insurance fee borne by citizens by 10,000 yen (approximately \$100 USD), and establish a basic pension for every citizen. With regard to education, candidates promised to make high school free and establish a scholarship

system for universities. With regard to employment, candidates would increase the number of dispatch workers with permanent employment, and increase the minimum wage to 1,000 yen (approximately \$10) per hour to remove the phenomenon of the “working poor” and the problem of “death-from-overwork”.

Candidates concluded with statements of opposition to the overseas dispatch of the SDF, opposition to “arrangements” between Japan and the U.S. that were costing Japanese citizens 3 trillion yen per year, and promises to change the U.S.-Japan security alliance into a friendship treaty. This would mean that Japanese citizens “would no longer have to pay for the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty with the consumption tax”, a number of candidates told voters. Candidates told voters that if all sources of waste in the government’s budget were eliminated, namely, military spending; the “sympathy budget” (omoiyari yosan) the Japanese government paid the U.S. government each year; the fixed budget for roads; and the money for the public subsidy for political parties, Japan would be able to save 5 trillion yen annually. When added to the 7 trillion yen that would be gained by abolishing tax breaks enjoyed by large corporations and rich people, Japan could save 12 trillion per year, candidates told voters. This would be more than enough to fund the programs they had in mind. Candidates asked voters to “bring an end to the LDP-Kōmeitō government”, and realize a politics where “the people are the main characters.”

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter has provided powerful evidence that conservative candidates started discussing foreign and national security policy as soon as the electoral system was reformed, and that this was part of a broader shift in their electoral strategies, from promising private

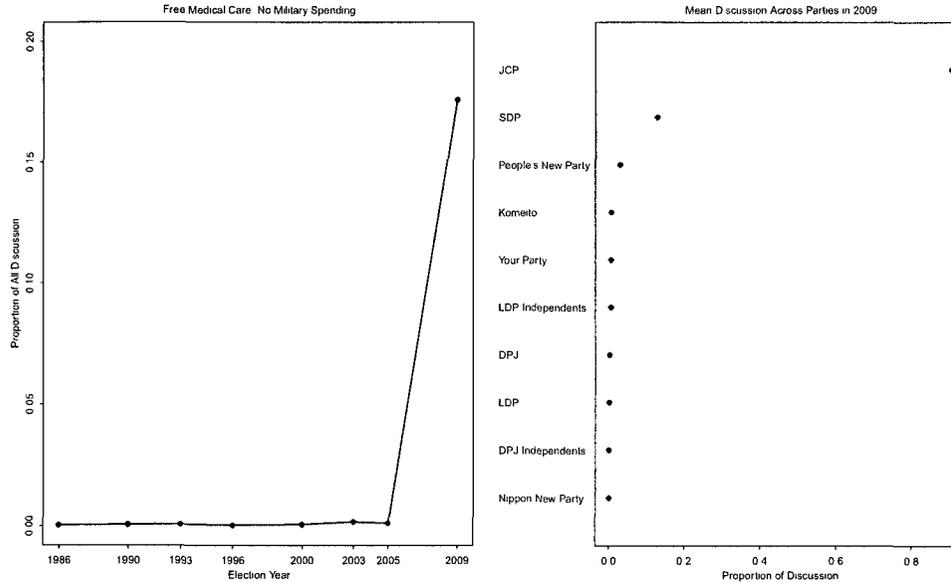


Figure 7.18: JCP candidates campaigned on a platform of Free Medical Care, No Military Spending in 2009. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 64 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 64 was discussed in the 2009 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 64 in the manifestos of the serious candidates competing in the 2009 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 64 was a JCP topic, and comprised 92% of the average manifesto produced by JCP candidates in this election.

to promising public goods for the national-level median voter. I also examined the electoral strategies of candidates running from Japan's new second party, the Democratic Party of Japan, and Japan's traditional opposition parties, the Japan Communist Party and the Japan Socialist Party (renamed the Social Democratic Party). I showed that the former pioneered the use of a bashing strategy to demonstrate its non-targetability, and the latter appear to be relatively unaffected by the change in electoral rules. The result is that foreign and national security policy is being contested in elections today, whereas it was not prior to 1996.

Again, evidence is found in language. Conservative candidates now have their own words and their own phrases for their positions on foreign and national security policy.

Chapter 7. Campaigning Under MMM: Foreign and National Security Policy is Contested

To match the opposition's words for defending the constitution (gōken and kaiaku), which were introduced in the previous chapter, conservative candidates created kaiken ("constitutional revision"), sōken ("constitutional creativity"), and kaken (adding to the constitution) (Hook and McCormick 2001). They have also started referring to Japan's kokueki ("national interest"), and asking voters to "think about the shape of our nation" (kono kuni no katachi). The fact that all of these words are being used in elections today is strong evidence that the game has changed. The next chapter takes a closer look at the shift in discussion of foreign and national security policy, and considers whether it is best explained by external events, new candidates, or a shift in the preferences of politicians.

Chapter 8

Explaining the Variation in Level of Discussion After 1996

This dissertation sets out to explain the puzzling turnaround in attention to foreign and national security policy by conservative Japanese politicians in the mid-1990's. Why conservative politicians chose this particular time period to pay attention to issues they had kept at arm's length for decades is not well-explained by existing theories in international relations. The theory presented in Chapter 2 argued that the turnaround in political attention is best explained by a shift in the electoral strategies of conservative politicians. Whereas promising private goods for a subset of voters in one's district was the strategy demanded of conservative politicians competing under SNTV-MMD, which was used in elections to the House of Representatives until 1994, public goods for the national-level median voter is the winning strategy for conservative politicians under MMM, Japan's new electoral system, in use since 1994.

The previous two chapters provided powerful evidence that conservative politicians adopted the electoral strategies expected of them by the theory for the final three elections

under SNTV-MMD (1986, 1990, and 1993) and changed their strategies after the introduction of the new system. Conservative candidates went from ignoring foreign and national security policy under SNTV-MMD to discussing it under MMM. I showed that this discussion reflected a broader shift in their electoral strategies from promising private goods for subsets of voters in their districts to promising public goods for the national-level median voter. I showed that in the historic 2005 election, conservative candidates managed to construct a party label they could all rely on in their campaigns. This would have been impossible under the old electoral system. I also examined the electoral strategies of candidates running from Japan's new second party, the Democratic Party of Japan, and Japan's traditional opposition parties, the Japan Communist Party and the Japan Socialist Party (renamed the Social Democratic Party). I showed that the former pioneered the use of an electoral strategy of bashing the groups who had benefited from the elaborate system of privileges constructed by conservative politicians under the old electoral system, and the strategies adopted by candidates running from the latter two parties appear to be unaffected by their running in a single member district. Their criticism appears just as virulent as it was under SNTV-MMD and more focused.

The previous chapter also showed that up to one-third of the platforms offered voters by conservative politicians under MMM are comprised of private goods. While this might appear to challenge the theory presented here, I argued that this is not because private goods helps a conservative candidate win in a single member district, but because it helps her guard against the possibility that one of the remaining pockets of conservative support in the district will run its own candidate. I argue that the presence of numerous pockets of conservative support scattered throughout each single member district is a remnant of the decentralized campaigns demanded of politicians by the old electoral system. I argue

that the introduction of single member districts has given these pockets a very powerful bargaining chip to force any politician who receives the party nomination to continue providing them with private goods. This bargaining chip is their ability to credibly threaten to run another candidate, which would risk splitting the conservative vote. Knowing this, conservative candidates are unable to focus all their energy on winning the election. They have to focus some of their energy on quietening the voices of these groups, by at least appearing to be committed to their interests. This has prevented conservative candidates from adopting an electoral strategy comprised solely of public goods.

While the evidence presented in these chapters provides strong support for my claim that the turnaround in attention to foreign and national security policy by conservative politicians in the mid-1990's occurred because of a shift in their electoral strategies, the previous chapter also revealed that discussion of foreign and national security policy has not reached any kind of equilibrium. The level of discussion remained low in 1996 and 2000, increased between 2000 and 2003, declined between 2003 and 2005, and then increased again between 2005 and 2009. The fact that we do not observe a straight line akin to the line we observe between 1986 and 1993 raises the possibility that electoral incentives may not be the primary determinant of the level of discussion in each of these elections. It may be that electoral reform simply removed the costs of using these issues for conservative politicians, but the actual level of discussion will be determined by other variables. However, the theory presented in Chapter 2 argued that foreign and national security policy ought to form a *central component* of the platforms offered voters by any candidate aiming to win in a single member district because of its property of non-targetability. Thus, the theory argued that it was not only the removal of the cost, but the *attractiveness* of the issue in a single member district that means that we should observe a high level of discussion.

In this chapter, I tackle the questions of why the level of discussion varies across elections, why it has not yet stabilized, why we do not observe a higher level of discussion, and why there is variation across candidate in the level of discussion. I argue that countries that reform their electoral system do not go into the new system as a blank slate. They go into the new system with all the same actors, modes of behavior, and ideas as they had under the old. Japan is no exception. I argue that institutional legacies from the old system and their weakening in some areas but not in others provides a better answer to these questions than the first major alternative hypothesis, which is that they can be explained by external events.

I also consider two additional alternative hypotheses for the variation in level of discussion. The first is that the shift we observe is not the product of politicians changing their electoral strategies, but the product of new politicians entering the race after 1994. The second is the hypothesis that LDP politicians have all shifted to the right since some unspecified point in time, and their new preferences can explain the shift. I argue that Japan's rightward shift is an illusion caused by a few loud conservative voices, none of whom paid any attention to foreign and national security policy before the system was reformed. I argue and provide evidence for the exact opposite scenario: that conservative politicians have moved closer to the center of the ideological spectrum since the introduction of MMM.

8.1 Could the Variation in Level of Discussion be Explained by External Events?

The major alternative hypothesis is that the degree of attention being paid to these issues

by conservative politicians is determined by shifts in the external environment and has nothing to do with the electoral system. This is the argument made in virtually every piece of writing on Japan's foreign and national security policy in recent years (Green 2001; Hughes 2004, 2009a; Samuels 2007; Pyle 2007). If shifts in the external environment matter, we should observe the level of discussion of foreign and national security policy increasing when an important change occurs in the regional or international balance of power. Because political parties do not feature in the neo-realist vocabulary, we should expect the level of discussion to rise and fall in accordance with these shifts, and both the content and the level of discussion to be uniform across candidates. A softer neo-realist alternative hypothesis, which takes into account the fact that candidates might have goals other than meeting external threats, such as winning the election, would be that candidates of all parties should simply shift to discuss the ramifications of the changes for Japan's foreign and national security policy. Being from parties that are competing against each other, a softer neo-realist might concede that some difference of opinion among candidates is likely to emerge, but they would still expect the subject of discussion to concern the change and its ramifications for Japan.

There were numerous incidents that occurred between 1996 and 2009 that signalled a shift in the balance of power. None of these were as consequential for Japan's national security policy, it pays to remember, as the end of the Cold War had been or packed quite the punch that the embarrassment of the Gulf War did. Nevertheless, they signalled that neither East Asia nor the world was the same, and power had shifted. The first was the launching of a missile by North Korea in 1998, which flew over Japanese territory. The second was the terrorist attacks on the U.S. in 2001 and the onset of the war in Afghanistan. The third was the decision by the U.S. to forcibly remove Saddam Hussein from power in 2003 and

the onset of the war in Iraq. Both events affected Japan because it is heavily dependent on the region for oil and because the U.S. issued clear expectations that Japan ought to show the flag in support of its efforts. The fourth was Kim Jong Il's recognition of his country's culpability in the abduction of a number of Japanese citizens in the late 1970's and early 1980's, which occurred in 2002. The fifth was North Korea's launching of more missiles (in 2006 and 2009); its leaving the NPT and testing of a nuclear weapon (in 2006 and 2009); and the abject failure of the Six-Party Talks. The sixth were the territorial disputes and diplomatic spats accompanying the rise of China.

As I noted in Chapter 2, a neo-realist would expect that each of these events should have worried conservative Japanese politicians. Each of them occurred against the background of a weakened U.S. security guarantee. Whereas the threat of the Soviet Union had the effect of anchoring the U.S. presence in Japan and cementing the U.S. commitment to Japan during the Cold War, the evaporation of this threat in the early 1990's meant that the U.S. security guarantee was no longer as certain as it had been during the Cold War. Could the comparatively large increase in discussion of foreign and national security policy by conservative candidates between 2000 and 2003 (an increase of 4.5%) be a reaction to the need to show the flag in support of the U.S. in its wars in Afghanistan and Iraq? Conversely, could the lower level of discussion in 1996 (0.4%) and 2000 (1.5%) be explained by simply not having many external events to talk about? Could the decrease from 6% to 4% of total discussion between 2003 and 2005 be explained by the similar absence of an external event for politicians to grab hold of?

I argue that this is unlikely. It is unlikely because external events have already been shown not to influence elections in Japan. Conservative politicians watched the coming down of the Berlin wall in 1989, the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, and the Gulf

War in 1991 without so much as batting an eyelid. The small shift in level of discussion from 1993 (0.1%) to 1996 (0.4%) means that the first North Korean nuclear crisis in 1994 and the crisis in the Taiwan straits in 1995 also elicited barely any concern. However, the possibility remains that the electoral reform had the effect of making these issues available to conservative politicians, but the actual level of discussion is being affected by what is going on in the wider world. I present two pieces of evidence that cast doubt on this possibility, before presenting my own explanation for the shift in level of discussion across elections, parties, and candidates.

8.1.1 The Content of Discussion Is Unconnected to the Threats

A simple means of weighing up the impact of external events relative to electoral reform is to focus on the content of discussion in Foreign and National Security Policy (Topic 6). If external events were driving the shift in discussion, we should observe the content of discussion focusing on these events and how Japan ought to respond to them. If the need to win in a single member district was driving the shift in discussion, we should observe the content of discussion being comprised of any old issue in Japan's foreign and national security policy that the politician knew about, could talk about, and thought voters could be primed to care about. We should observe a distinct decoupling of discussion from the nature of the threats facing Japan.

As the qualitative interpretation of Foreign and National Security Policy (Topic 6) presented in Chapter 5 demonstrated, the bulk of discussion contained either statements of support for the general principles underpinning Japan's national security policy (such as Japan's relationship with the United States or role in the United Nations), or positions on

issues that had sat on the agenda for years (such as the abduction issue or constitutional revision) and could technically have been talked about whenever, rather than focused discussion of any of the aforementioned external events. We do not observe the content of discussion focusing on the new issues. Instead, we observe the old issues smothering the new issues, and preventing them from being addressed.

The smothering of the new issues by the old issues is visually depicted in Figure 8.1. This word cloud was constructed by taking all the words identified by the topic model as belonging to Foreign and National Security Policy (Topic 6), and examining the relative frequency with which they were used in the 277 manifestos produced by LDP candidates in 2003. The size of the words in the cloud represent the relative frequency with which they appeared in these 277 manifestos. Focusing on the 2003 election allows me to pit the predictions of my theory, which is that the content of discussion ought to reflect issues that politicians know about, can talk about, and can prime voters to care about, against the predictions of the neo-realist alternative hypothesis, which is that external events are driving the discussion. In the period prior to the 2003 election there were a number of external events candidates ought to have reacted to: missile tests by North Korea; mounting evidence that the North was pursuing its own nuclear weapons program; the onset of the war on terror; and the onset of the Iraq War. This was also the election in which discussion of Foreign and National Security Policy jumped from 1.5% of total discussion to 6% of total discussion.

This word cloud provides powerful evidence that the content of discussion in the 2003 election reflected issues that politicians could have chosen to talk about at any point in time, because they have been around for years, and not discussion of how Japan ought to respond to these external events or even discussion of the external events. The size of the words

“foreign policy”, “nation-building”, “international”, “security”, “safety”, “constitution”, “revision”, and “abduction” confirm my findings from the qualitative interpretation. The bulk of discussion touched on either general principles underpinning Japan’s foreign and national security policy or issues that had sat on the agenda for years but had been ignored. The words “Iraq”, “missile”, “nuclear”, “defense”, and “terrorism”, which would have indicated discussion of these external events, are so small they are dwarfed by the other words.

Could it be that politicians were discussing the old issues in order to make room for the new? After all, without revising the Constitution, or at least revising the government’s interpretation that Japan is constitutionally prohibited from exercising collective self-defense, Japan would be hard-pressed to engage in any of the activities necessary to support the U.S. abroad. Not being able to support the U.S. abroad might lead to the U.S. abandoning Japan at a time of need. Thus, could it be that conservative politicians intentionally decided to craft an electoral platform comprised of issues they felt voters would care about because they judged that this would eventually allow them to deal with the real issues, albeit at a later date?

While this is a compelling counter-argument, it is wrong. It is wrong because obsession with resolving the old issues is actually preventing politicians from dealing with the new. It is having the perverse effect of making them worse. Japan’s performance in the Six Party Talks, which were set up in 2003 to resolve the nuclear and ballistic missile threat posed by North Korea, is a clear illustration of how obsession with the old issues prevented (and is still preventing) resolution of the new issues. Observers are unanimous that Japan’s insistence on including “resolution of the abduction issue” on the agenda of the Six Party Talks, and its refusal to consider packages of energy and economic assistance in exchange



Figure 8.1: Discussion of Foreign and National Security in 2003 Was Not Focused on External Events. These words were identified by the topic model as belonging to “Foreign and National Security Policy” (Topic 6). The size of the words in the clouds represents their relative frequency in the 277 manifestos produced by LDP candidates in 2003. The words “Iraq”, “missile”, “nuclear”, “defense”, and “terrorism” are very small.

for the dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear program without "satisfactory progress" on the abduction issue not only drove a wedge between it and all other delegations, but contributed to their abrupt and catastrophic failure (Hughes 2009b; Schoff 2006; Kang 2005; Chanlett-Avery 2008). North Korea walked out of the Talks in April of 2009 and detonated its second nuclear weapon the following month.

Needless to say, focusing on "resolving" an issue that involved seventeen Japanese citizens and happened two decades ago is not the actions of a nation that is worried about the problem right in front of it, the nuclear or missile threat. Why do we observe Japan shooting itself in the foot with the abduction issue? I argue that we observe this because the abduction issue is the angle of Japan's relationship with North Korea that best appeals to *conservative politicians*. It is much easier for a politician to get up in front of voters and ask them to imagine the possibility of their son or daughter being abducted by a nasty dictator, which paints an easy-to-understand picture of good and evil, than it is to ask them to consider how Japan ought to deal with a missile or nuclear threat posed by another state. Conservative politicians, most of whom have spent their careers figuring out how to expand the eligibility of their supporters for existing benefits and how to create new ones rather than thinking or learning about Japan's national interest, will go for the former.

There is a tendency in Japan to treat the abduction issue as something that fell out of the sky. In one interview, I was told that the abduction issue is "as big as Perry coming to Japan in his black ships". When I asked this person why, he told me:

"People who live on the Japan Sea Coast suspected this to have been true for years, decades. They were always told not to go play on the beach after dark because they might get abducted by North Korea. But even though people were told this, I don't think they really believed it. When Kim made his big announcement to Koizumi, people were shocked. It had been true all along! That sentiment is shared by, probably, I don't know, maybe a quarter of all

Japanese people”.¹

The question that is often forgotten in all the outrage directed at the North is that if the abduction issue really was so “big”, why wasn’t it uncovered by an enterprising conservative politician two decades earlier, when it happened? The reality is that the abduction issue did not just fall out of the sky. It was not placed on the agenda by Kim Jong Il. It was pursued by a party leader precisely at a time when his party desperately needed a few issues of its own. It was the visit of Koizumi Junichirō to Pyongyang that produced the admission of guilt by Kim Jong Il. Why this happened in 2002, and not in 1982, when the LDP happened to have an equally-charismatic (and perhaps even more nationalistic) party leader, Nakasone Yasuhiro, is more evidence that what matters is the new electoral institutions and not the external environment.

8.1.2 The Level of Discussion Varies not by External Event but by Party

If the shifts in level of discussion we observe between 1996 and 2009 were being driven by external events, not only should we observe the content of discussion reflecting these external events and their ramifications for Japan, but we should also observe candidates from all parties shifting to discuss these events. While candidates from different parties are likely to present different takes on the issue, with some advocating more military spending and others advocating more confidence-building measures and diplomatic efforts, they should have all shifted to discuss the same issues.

¹Interview, Staff Member, LDP’s Public Relations Bureau, May 10 2009.

We do not observe this. While it is difficult to measure the level of discussion contained in the platforms of SDP and JCP candidates, because they appear next to other issues in a party-election-year topic, the qualitative interpretations presented in the previous chapter suggested that they are discussed at a high level in *every* election. While candidates from the LDP shifted to discuss foreign and national security policy at a higher level in the 2003 election, after most of the aforementioned external events had occurred, candidates running from the DPJ, who are subject to the same incentives to use foreign and national security policy to win in their single member district, did not. Curiously, candidates running from the DPJ shifted to discuss the issue in 2000, *before* most of the external events described above had occurred. Figure 8.2 plots the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to foreign and national security policy in the 1,213 manifestos produced by DPJ candidates running in the five elections from 1996 to 2009 next to the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to foreign and national security policy in the 2,356 manifestos produced by LDP candidates. Between 2000 and 2003, DPJ candidates reduced their level of discussion of foreign and national security policy. The level of discussion in the manifestos of DPJ candidates dropped from 3.4% in 2000 to 2.6% in 2003, 2.4% in 2005, and 1.4% in 2009.

If the aforementioned external events were driving the change in level of discussion, we should observe the exact same increase in discussion between the 2000 and the 2003 election, just like we do for LDP candidates. The blue and gold lines are best interpreted as representing the change in proportion of total discussion devoted to foreign and national security policy in the average manifesto produced by candidates from each party in each election. It shows that while candidates from both parties discussed the issue at the exact same level in 1996 (0.4%), the level of discussion of DPJ candidates rose to 3.4% of the total discussion in 2000 but declined thereafter.

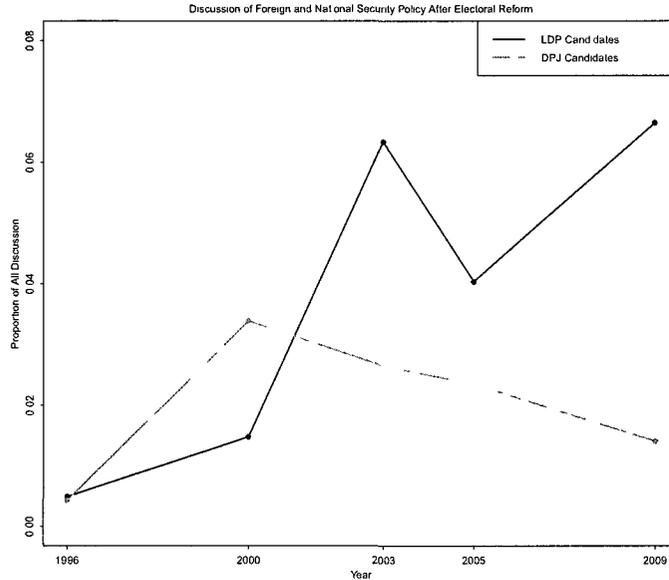


Figure 8.2: Not all candidates are shifting to discuss foreign and national security policy at the same time. The level of discussion differs substantially by party and not by external event. This figure plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 6 in the 1,213 manifestos produced by DPJ candidates running in each of these five elections (the gold line) next to the mean proportion of total discussion devoted to foreign and national security policy in the 2,356 manifestos produced by LDP candidates running in these elections (the blue line).

In the next section, I explain why DPJ candidates discussed foreign and national security policy in the 2000 election but not in subsequent elections. I explain why LDP candidates discussed it more in 2003 and 2009 than in 2000 and 2005. I argue that the variation we observe in the level of discussion across elections, parties, and candidates is not the product of external events but is instead the product of institutional legacies bequeathed the new system by the old. I argue that these legacies are weakening in some areas and in some districts but maintain their stranglehold over candidates in other areas and in other districts.

8.2 Explaining Variation in Level of Discussion Across Elections, Parties, and Candidates

I argue that there are three legacies of the old electoral system that affect the ability of conservative candidates to pursue what Chapter 2 identified as the winning strategy under MMM, which is discussion of foreign and national security policy. The first is the need to please each and every one of the scattered pockets of conservative support in the district. The second is the continued presence of radical opponents, who are making the exact same arguments they made under the old electoral system. I argue that this message presents a formidable barrier for conservative candidates who wish to use this issue. It means that their message has to be simple and united. But their need to provide private goods means that their message is not united. I explain why. The third is the presence of culpable co-partisans, party elders who sat on their hands when issues of foreign and national security emerged on the agenda in earlier decades and sang the same tune of peace as the opposition. This section draws upon each legacy to explain the shifts in discussion we observe across the five elections.

8.2.1 Pleasing the Pockets Means Less Time for the Median Voter

Between 1993 and 1996 we observe only a small shift in level of discussion of foreign and national security by conservative candidates, from 0.1% of total discussion in 1993 to 0.4% of total discussion in 1996. This is understandable when one considers how conservative candidates would have had to prepare for the first election under the new electoral

system. After a long process of negotiation, after which the candidate would have been selected as the party's official nominee in the district, she would have had to work hard to ensure that the pockets of conservative support scattered about the district were satisfied with her selection, and were not so dissatisfied as to try to sabotage her campaign by telling members of their pocket to vote for another candidate or by running their own candidate. To scoop up all of these pockets, candidates would have had to maintain the facade that they were equally dedicated to the interests of these groups as their prior benefactor had been. Maintaining this facade would have required spending a lot of time in the district in the period prior to the election, going to marriages and funerals and holding speech meetings to solicit the requests of these groups.

While candidates were probably very much aware that they needed to widen their appeals to capture support from the median voter, whom they may not have thought about much until then, they were also aware that if they displeased any of the pockets, they could face competition from another conservative candidate in the next election. A candidate in this position is likely to calculate that the optimal strategy would be to use her time prior to the election and the content of her election manifesto to remove any suspicion held by these groups that she was less committed to their interests than their prior benefactor had been. This explains why we observe a heavy dose of private goods in the manifestos of candidates running in the 1996 and the 2000 election. Being so busy removing their suspicions, candidates would have had little time to come up with a popular platform of their own, which explains why they swiped the public goods platform of Reforming Japan, which had been the platform of opposition party candidates running in the 1993 election.

To be clear, my argument is not that these pockets are opposed to promises of public goods. At the end of the day, they do want the candidate to win the election. It is that every

minute the candidate spends with these pockets, inquiring about their members' wellbeing, soliciting their requests, and playing gateball, is a minute she does not spend carving out a platform that could receive support from the median voter. It is extremely unlikely that a candidate could come up with a platform capable of capturing support from precisely the kind of voters who are cut out of these pockets while she is meeting with representatives of the pockets. Merely travelling from one pocket to another is time-consuming in some of the bigger districts. While candidates have staff members, they are so busy coordinating meetings with the pockets and making sure everyone has equal time that they are similarly too busy to think about policy.

Chapter 6 provided some indication of how difficult it was for conservative candidates in urban districts to carve out a platform that appealed to voters outside of their ordinary support networks. The public goods platforms these candidates ended up using were taken straight from the platforms of opposition party candidates and were extremely vague. While this vagueness may have been partly strategic, designed to convey that the candidate cared about issues of concern to the broader electorate but not in a way that would signal to her supporters that she would actually spend time on them after getting elected, I argue that it also reflected a sheer lack of time spent thinking about these issues.

An illustration of the lack of time spent thinking about public goods is provided by the words contained in a manifesto LDA classified as being 100% about public goods, that of Kujiraoka Hyōsuke in 1993. An LDP politician running in Tokyo 10th District, Kujiraoka had first been elected in 1963 and had won eleven terms. His manifesto provides an indication of how candidates from urban districts used public goods under the old electoral system. I translated the text of the entire manifesto as it was written by the author:

Allow me to tell you what I think about this election. We are suffering from an economic recession. We have to do something about this. We developed a

budget for this purpose, twice, which would have alleviated the situation, and just when we were going to pass it, just when many of the world's leaders had gathered in Tokyo for a meeting with Prime Minister Miyazawa about world peace and the economy, an act of pure violence was committed. A non-confidence motion was passed against our Prime Minister, which led to the dissolution of the Diet and the opening of a two-month-long political vacuum.

This act stemmed from the mutiny of the Hata Group (really the Ozawa Group) inside the LDP. I for one knew that Ozawa was talking to the opposition parties and had his designs on a monopoly of power since the time of the election for Tokyo Governor. Ozawa has created a new political grouping and is drawing a pretty rosy picture of the world for us, but at the end of the day, both him and Hata are the darlings of Tanaka Kakuei. The philosophy of Tanaka politics is that politics is power, power is numbers, and numbers get decided by money. It is the very people who have had the LDP under their thumbs for years with this kind of philosophy who have caused this situation today.

While it is not wrong to create a new group with a bright new outlook, shouldn't they show more remorse for their domination of the LDP with this kind of money politics philosophy? I want to ask them, what are you thinking? For better or worse, they were once proud of the power and influence they wielded from being under this umbrella of power. Who are they now to be so cold to the three people who helped them, Tanaka, Takeshita, and Kanemaru? This gives me a very deep distrust of human beings, I am telling you.

I was a pupil of Matsumoto Kenzō and Miki Takeo, and have been elected to the Diet for thirty years now. I was a member of the LDP when it was first founded. When it was founded, it was not such a corrupt party. When I think of those beginnings, I feel filled with regret. The LDP has become a dirty, corrupt party. My political life has been to remember the warning: "Shrewd and powerful but virtueless. Politics with no virtues among citizens will self-destruct".

My goal in this election is, of course, to win. But I also have another important goal. I want to reflect on whether or not our Japan, of which we are so proud, is okay the way it is. I want to ask you all this question. The 21st century won't be our era. It will be our children's and our grandchildren's era. Will Japan be okay then? I am really worried. I will take education, nature conservation,

and peace disarmament seriously. If you ask me what my policies are, they can be summarized as those three. With regard to the dirty state of Nagatachō, I believe that this election is a valuable opportunity for me to ask you to think about this situation, as the holders of sovereignty in Japan.

Elections to the House of Representatives amount to you giving us your seal, for a fixed period of time. This is unconditional. Everything is entrusted to us. I would like you to go to the polling booth with this in mind. Needless to say, if you run in an election, you want to be re-elected. However, telling you all about the true state of politics in Japan is the mission I believe I have been given, and I go into the election with this purpose in mind.

Apart from sounding almost like a stream of consciousness, which was exactly the way it was written, it is immediately apparent from Kujiraoka's manifesto just how much time is spent criticizing one's co-partisans and how little time is spent articulating actual policies. Many of the elements of elections under SNTV-MMD are contained in this manifesto. Being unable to rely on the philosophy of their party, candidates were forced to spend time spelling out their own individual philosophies. Having to beat their same-district co-partisan required thinly-veiled attacks on him, in this case disguised as attacks on the leaders of the faction of which he is part. Having to demonstrate their commitment to the interests of their supporters while also reaching out to voters outside the network leads candidates to make use of public goods but in an extremely cavalier way, which conveys neither that the politician cares about the issue in question or that she possesses any knowledge of it. Perhaps the most striking aspect of this manifesto is that it is entirely unclear what the words "peace disarmament" mean. While "peaceful disarmament" has an obvious meaning, and conjures up an image of Japan helping to disarm combatants in a civil war, "peace disarmament" has no meaning. The words in this manifesto end up conveying that the politician is not particularly interested in his policies, and does not know much about

them.

When candidates are in their district, they are not in Tokyo. This simple observation explains a lot. It explains why candidates continue to swipe the election platforms offered by candidates of other parties in elections under the new electoral system, and it can explain why candidates still use private goods in their campaigns. As Chapter 2 argued, the winning strategy in a single member district is to get together with one's co-partisans to carve out a party label that can attract support from voters across the political spectrum, which everyone can use in their campaigns. The key words here are "get together". Candidates cannot get together with their co-partisans if they are not in Tokyo. And the reality is that having to please these pockets means that they are in their district and not in Tokyo.

If candidates weren't so worried about the possibility of one of the pockets defecting, they might be able to spend more time in Tokyo, preparing for the next election by planning out a platform comprised of public goods with their co-partisans in the party headquarters. But they cannot. While the new electoral system gave candidates new incentives to think about public goods, and construct a party label comprised of public goods, it also left them wedded to the demands of the pockets. The first institutional legacy of the old system that has been carried over to the new is not only the fact that these groups exist, it is that they afford conservative politicians little time to develop platforms comprised of public goods.

I devised an indirect test of this hypothesis. I reasoned that conservative candidates facing a higher probability of sabotage should be less likely to talk about foreign and national security policy not only because of the signal it could send to the pockets, but also because they will have less time to think about it. While all conservative candidates face this threat to some degree, I reasoned that it should have loomed as a larger threat for two types of candidates. The first are candidates who have not yet established themselves as

providers. I reasoned that candidates who had established reputations as providers in any district should have been able to use this reputation as a cushion from which to discuss matters of interest to the median voter. I reasoned that candidates with no reputation as provider will have no cushion and will perceive themselves as more likely to be deserted by the pockets. Candidates in this category are candidates who are contesting the election for the first time, the challengers. While ordinarily, one might imagine that challengers would have the greatest incentives and the highest latitude to pursue an electoral strategy comprised of public goods, this does not take into account the fact that Japan went into the new electoral system with institutional legacies of the old, scattered pockets of conservative support in every electoral district.

The second type of candidate who would have perceived a larger threat of sabotage are candidates in a tag-team situation. As the previous chapter described, tag-teams were the solution devised for districts in which the party had two conservative candidates with equally-strong bases of support, equally-high chances of winning, and equally-high levels of determination to run. The party gave the nomination to one candidate and asked the other to step out of the race, and then allowed the two candidates to switch places in the next election. I reasoned that tag-team candidates would perceive themselves as being more vulnerable to sabotage because there was already a viable candidate in the district, right next-door to them, to take their place should they under-perform. I reasoned that both challengers and tag-team candidates would be more worried about sabotage, and would have thus spent more time with their pockets prior to the election. This should lead to less discussion of foreign and national security policy.

There is a fourth category of conservative candidate: the zombie. Zombie candidates are those who lost their SMD race by a margin small enough to allow them to be resurrected

via the PR list (Krauss, Pekkanen and Nyblade 2006). Zombies are strong candidates who needed just a few more votes to get over the finish line. I reasoned that this should make them concerned with securing the votes of the median voter in the subsequent election. They will also be worried about the pockets, perhaps more than an incumbent would, because the pockets possess the weapon of sabotage. But the fact that the candidate did not win at T=0 and still has the LDP nomination at T=1 will make the pockets rally around the candidate, and make the candidate care more about the median voter. I reasoned that zombies should have a higher level of discussion of foreign and national security policy than both challengers and tag-teams.

I found clear differences in mean proportion of manifesto devoted to foreign and national security policy by conservative candidates who were incumbents (n = 641); those who were challenging the election for the first time (n = 426); those who were in a tag-team (n = 37); and those who were zombie candidates (n = 97).² The mean proportion of manifesto devoted to discussion of foreign and national security policy by incumbents in all five elections was 5%. For challengers, it was 2.8%. For tag-team candidates, it was 2.9%. For zombies, it was 4.1%. Figure 8.3 depicts these differences in means. The p-value for a difference in means test between incumbents and challengers and incumbents and tag-teams were <0.001 and 0.02, respectively.

²The number of incumbents might appear low. This is because the candidates are only coded as incumbents if the district boundaries stayed exactly the same across elections. There was a major redistricting between 2000 and 2003.

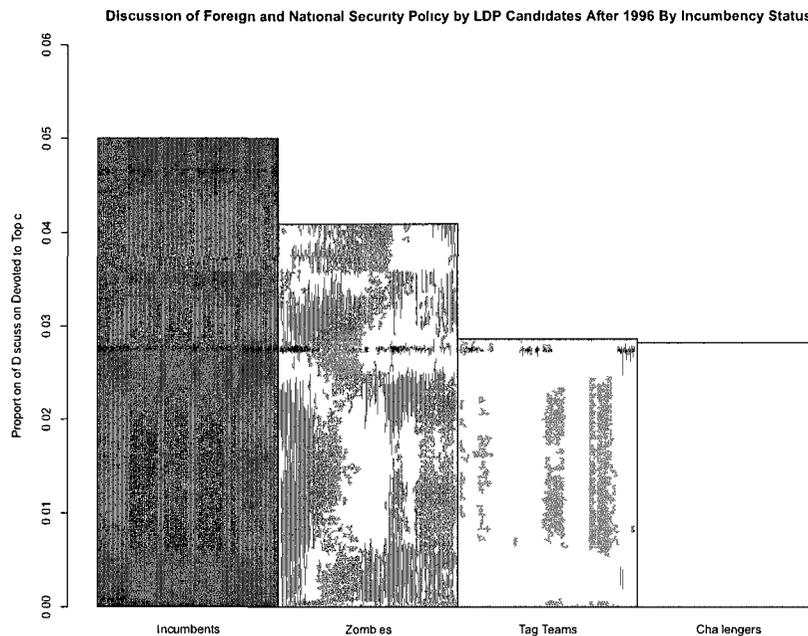


Figure 8.3 Conservative candidates facing a higher probability of sabotage by conservative pockets discussed foreign and national security policy less than candidates who faced a lower probability of sabotage. This figure plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Foreign and National Security Policy across the five elections under MMM by incumbency status. Incumbents and zombies (the two bars on the left) had a higher mean proportion of their manifesto devoted to foreign and national security policy than challengers and candidates in tag-teams (the two bars on the right).

8.2.2 Continued Presence of Radical Opponents

As Chapter 6 explained, the message of peace articulated by candidates running from the Japan Communist Party and the Japan Socialist Party at every election under SNTV-MMD, and the absence of incentives for conservative politicians to mount a coordinated effort to challenge this message, explains why what Japanese people call “peace mania” (*heiwa bokē*) enveloped Japanese citizens. It explains why, out of the four countries studied,

Japanese citizens took the longest time to react to the declining threat of the Soviet Union in the late 1980's (Risse-Kappen 1991). It means that conservative politicians who understood the usefulness of this issue in a single member district had an extraordinarily-large barrier to overcome.

I argue that one reason we do not observe a larger leap in discussion of foreign and national security policy in 1996 or in any of the subsequent elections under the new electoral system is because the addition of the proportional representation tier enables parties who have no chance of capturing a majority in a single member district to exist. As I explained in Chapter 2, these small parties have the incentive to run candidates in single member districts, even if those candidates have no chance of winning, because it tends to increase their share of the vote in PR. In Chapter 7 I discovered that these parties sing the same anti-militaristic song as their SNTV-MMD forbears. Their criticism of the government, and their ability to use any and all government decisions as evidence of hidden militaristic intentions merely found new fodder in the attention conservative politicians have been paying to the issue.

To test whether this is the case, I reasoned that while the presence of candidates from these parties will be affecting the level of discussion of all conservative candidates, it should have a larger effect on the level of discussion of conservative candidates who face this message at a much closer range: in their own district. We should still observe conservative candidates who face off against one of these opponents discussing these issues, because the very fact that they remain in the race suggests that they have adapted their electoral strategy and widened their appeals. But we are likely to observe a lower level of discussion if the arguments being marshalled by the opposition are closer to home.

I reasoned that the presence of a same-district opponent from either the New Socialist

Party or the Japan Communist Party should be associated with a reduced level of discussion of these issues. Chapter 6 described the content of the manifestos presented voters by candidates of the JCP. The New Socialist Party was formed by a group of politicians who split from the Japan Socialist Party prior to the 1996 election, apparently because they were unhappy at the decision of their party leader to enter into a coalition government with the party's erstwhile enemy, the LDP, which happened in June of 1994. In return for receiving the prime ministership, the JSP had to abandon all of the positions upon which it had fought elections under SNTV-MMD, everything from abolishing the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty to denying the constitutionality of the SDF. Indeed, the new Socialist Prime Minister found himself Commander in Chief of the same SDF he had spent his entire career labelling as unconstitutional and evil. After doing very poorly in the 1996 election, the JSP split and renamed itself the Social Democratic Party (SDP). This spectacular turnaround, which exposed the JSP as being more interested in power than in pursuing the policies it had presented voters with for the best part of half a century, leads me to expect that the presence of an opponent from the SDP after 2000 will have no effect on the level of discussion by conservative candidates.

In support of this hypothesis, the New Socialist Party ran on a platform of No American Bases (Topic 26) in 1996. As Figure 8.4 reveals, the mean percentage of discussion devoted to this topic in the manifestos of New Socialist candidates was 43%. Candidates pledged to seek the withdrawal of U.S. military bases from Okinawa, Kanagawa, and all other Japanese prefectures, as well as the dissolution of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty and "large-scale military disarmament". They told voters that U.S. bases produced loud noise and meant that the possibility of a plane crash was ever-present. This was a direct threat to the livelihoods of residents in these areas. They told voters that they would "devote their

utmost” to achieving “the return of the American military to the American homeland!” (beigun wo beiryodō ni). In the immediate future, they said, training and other defense functions should be moved to neighboring Self Defense Force bases.

Candidates explained that their party, the New Socialist Party, was formed out of disgust at the way in which the JSP had “ripped up its promises and abandoned its opposition to the U.S.-Japan security alliance, the consumption tax, and the introduction of single-member districts”. “We will take human rights and peace seriously!”, candidates promised. The major plank of opposition to U.S. military bases was supplemented with slogans such as: “Lets live the Constitution!” (ikaso kempo!); “Lets abolish the consumption tax” (tsubuse shōhizei); “Lets rid Japan of all forms of discrimination, especially that based on gender”; “Lets support the lifestyles of workers”; “Lets achieve full information disclosure”; and “Lets expand local autonomy”. Candidates from Okinawa said that they would “fight for the complete withdrawal of all U.S. bases in the long run”, but in the short run would “adopt measures to strengthen the independence of the Okinawan economy”. One candidate proposed to make it cheaper to fly between the Japanese mainland and Okinawa, which would stimulate the tourist industry. Another candidate told voters he would make Okinawa into a “medical hotspot”, where incurable diseases and other serious ailments could be researched and treated.

As expected, I found a clear difference in mean proportion of manifesto devoted to foreign and national security policy by conservative candidates who were facing an opponent from the New Socialist Party in the 1996 election ($n = 34$), and conservative candidates who were not ($n = 253$). The mean proportion of manifesto devoted to foreign and national security policy by conservative politicians without a New-JSP opponent was 0.6%. For those facing a New-JSP opponent, it was 0.02%. The p-value for a difference in means test

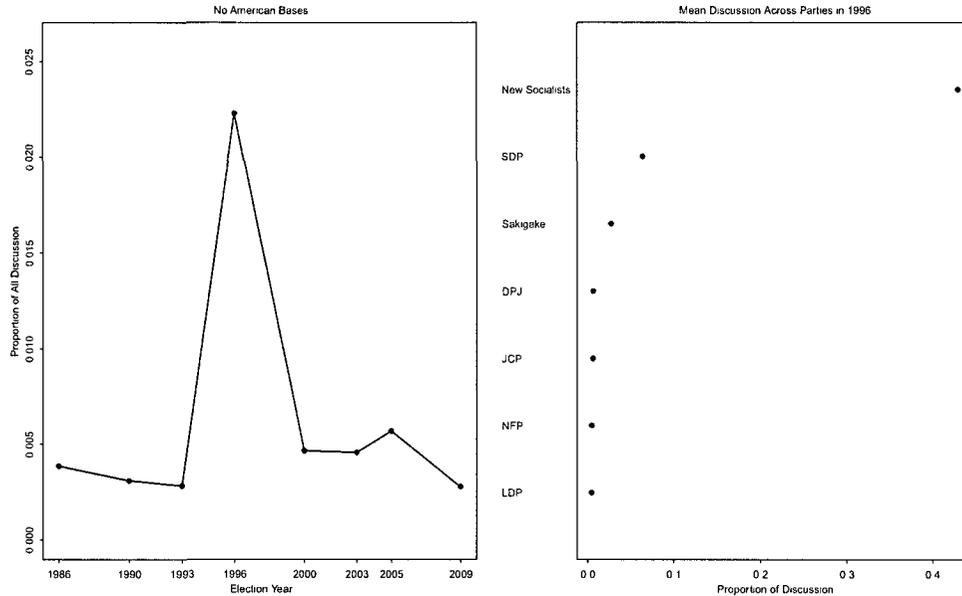


Figure 8.4: Candidates from the New Socialist Party campaigned on a platform of No American Bases in 1996. The figure on the left plots the mean proportion of all manifestos devoted to Topic 26 across the eight elections. It shows that Topic 26 was discussed in the 1996 election. The figure on the right plots the mean proportion of discussion devoted to Topic 26 in the manifestos of all serious candidates competing in the 1996 election by party affiliation. It shows that Topic 26 was a New Socialist topic, and comprised 43% of the average manifesto produced by these candidates in this election.

was 0.004.

For all five elections, I also found a clear difference in mean proportion of manifesto devoted to foreign and national security policy by conservative politicians who were facing an opponent from the JCP ($n = 1242$), and conservative politicians who were not ($n = 172$).³ The mean percentage of manifesto devoted to foreign and national security policy by conservative politicians without a JCP opponent was 5.5%. For those facing a JCP opponent, it was 3.6%. The p-value for a difference in means test was 0.006. As expected,

³The number of candidates ran by the JCP was 299 in the 1996 election; 300 in the 2000 and 2003 elections, 275 in the 2005 election, and only 152 candidates in the 2009 election.

there was no difference in level of discussion between candidates who faced an opponent from the SDP in their district and those who did not.

8.2.3 Continued Presence of Culpable Co-partisans

While conservative candidates may have understood the attraction of these issues under the new electoral system, I argued in the above sections that discussing them was not as easy as it looked. It was not as easy as it looked because conservative politicians lacked expertise in developing election platforms comprised of public goods, and were not afforded much time to develop such expertise even after the introduction of the new electoral system because they had to avoid being sabotaged by one of the pockets of conservative support remaining in the district. It was also not as easy as it looked because of the continued presence of candidates with radically-leftist views, all of whom campaigned on the same message. This section points to another reason why discussing these issues was not as easy as it looked.

I argue that conservative candidates did not jump to discuss these issues in 1996 or 2000 because the party from which they were running, a party whose label they now needed more than ever before, bore some of the responsibility for allowing the mania of pacifism to envelope Japanese citizens and all aspects of Japan's foreign and national security policy. It was their elders within the party who had steadfastly ignored foreign and national security policy under the old electoral system, who had looked the other way when evidence of the abduction issue came to light, and who had never bothered to consider how Japan might assist the U.S. in the event of an overseas contingency. It was these elders who had failed to devote any effort to resolving the history problem, any one of Japan's territorial disputes, or

even coordinating Japan's program of overseas development assistance such that residents of the Chinese towns who received Japanese yen knew that it was from Japan. The fact that almost every identifiable *problem* in Japan's foreign policy had been, in effect, caused by the inattention and hand-waving of conservative politicians meant that no matter how attractive these issues were in principle, using them was difficult.

Why would conservative politicians care about the electoral fortunes of their co-partisan? The removal of intra-party competition by the introduction of MMM and the emergence of a second major party gave conservative politician a much larger stake in the re-election of their co-partisans. Under SNTV-MMD, politicians wanted enough of their colleagues to win, sure, but they had designed the system in a way that if one of them lost, she would merely be replaced by another conservative politician who would join the party after the election. In this way, while their own re-election was never a foregone conclusion (hence the term "blood feuds"), the LDP having enough seats to form the government was. Under MMM, the situation is different. Politicians want to win, and they want their colleagues in other districts to win as well. If they don't, the politician will find herself completely out of government. I argue that this feature of the new electoral system makes politicians wary of discussing issues that could lead them to point the finger at their colleagues.

It is worth reiterating that my own argument is not that conservative politicians chose to ignore these issues under SNTV-MMD. It is that they had no choice over the matter. Under SNTV-MMD, all of the routes through which conservative politicians ordinarily come to care about these issues were blocked. The electoral strategy demanded of SNTV-MMD forced conservative politicians to care more about the number of marriages and funerals on their co-partisan's schedules than about the problems facing the nation. They got more votes by promising to fix the gutters in voter's neighborhoods than by promising to improve

the quality of Japan's education system or fix Japan's relationships with its neighbors. But this was not their fault. It is doubtful that politicians became politicians out of a desire to fix gutters and attend marriages and funerals. Whatever their original intentions were, they soon realized that getting elected meant using all available time and money to fight their co-partisans.

The true power-holders under SNTV-MMD, the people who could make or break political careers, were the members of politicians' *kōenkai* and in particular, those on the very outskirts of their *kōenkai*. It was their very credible threat of defection to another conservative camp that put politicians at their beck and call. It is no wonder that the LDP changed from a party of bureaucrat-turned-politicians in the 1950's to a party of hereditary politicians under SNTV-MMD (Reed and Ishibashi 1992). For a group seeking to maintain its privileges under a new representative, selecting the son or daughter of the retiring politician is the least risky choice.

I argue that part of the reason we observe a jump in level of discussion between 2000 and 2003 and not in earlier elections is because the 2003 election was the first election under MMM in which LDP candidates who did not fight and win elections under SNTV-MMD outnumbered those who had. Whereas in the 2000 election, 61% of the party's candidates were veterans of the old electoral system and only 49% were novices of the new, in the 2003 election, the ratio was 48% veterans and 52% novices. While the newcomer-veteran ratio increased at every election under MMM, as Figure 8.5 shows, the increase was the largest between 2000 and 2003, precisely when the level of discussion of foreign and national security policy increased.

To assess whether the culpability and compliance of veteran politicians can help explain why the shift came between 2000 and 2003 and not before, I reasoned that we should

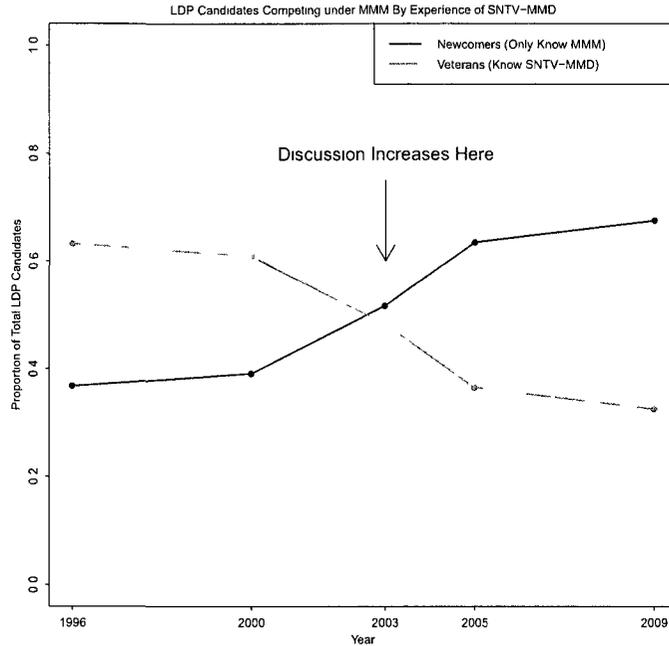


Figure 8.5: LDP candidates with no experience of the old electoral system outnumbered LDP candidates who had for the first time in 2003, when we observe a shift in level of discussion. This figure plots the proportion of LDP candidates who had experienced SNTV-MMD (the gold line) running in each election next to the proportion of LDP candidates who had not experienced SNTV-MMD (the blue line).

observe a difference in level of discussion between newcomers and veterans. Having ignored the concerns of the median voter for decades, allowing them to be determined by the radically-leftist opposition, veteran politicians should be slightly more reluctant to discuss this issue than their non-culpable, younger co-partisans. We should still observe them discussing foreign and national security policy, however, because its attractiveness as an issue under MMM will hold regardless of their personal background. The very fact that veteran politicians remain in the game under MMM has meant that they have overcome this legacy and changed their electoral strategies.

To test this, I reasoned that truly culpable politicians were those who had been elected

for the first time in 1983 or earlier. These politicians would have been in the Diet when the abduction issue came to light and when the whaling issue was thrust on the agenda, and would have had two and three terms behind them, respectively, when the Soviet Union disintegrated and the Gulf War happened. Conservative politicians elected after 1986 could credibly claim to have complained to their elders, and entreated them to pay more attention to these issues, but to no avail. It was also these junior politicians who were more likely to have left the party in the summer of 1993, to join one of the new reform parties (Otake 1996).

I found a clear difference in mean proportion of manifesto devoted to foreign and national security policy by conservative politicians who had won four or more elections under SNTV-MMD ($n = 304$), which would have meant that they were in the Diet from 1983, and conservative politicians who had won fewer elections under SNTV-MMD or none ($n = 1,110$). The mean percentage of manifesto devoted to discussion of foreign and national security policy by these veteran politicians under MMM was 3%, whereas the mean percentage of manifesto devoted to foreign and national security policy by newcomers was 4%. A difference in means test was significant, with a p-value was 0.02. While culpable politicians were 35% of the total number of LDP politicians running in the 1996 election and 29% in the 2000 election, they declined to a mere 19% of total LDP politicians in the 2003 election, declining further to 13% in the 2005 election, and 11% in the 2009 election. Figure 8.6 depicts this decline. The decline as a proportion of total LDP candidates between the 2000 and 2003 elections parallels the increase in discussion of foreign policy that we observe in this election.

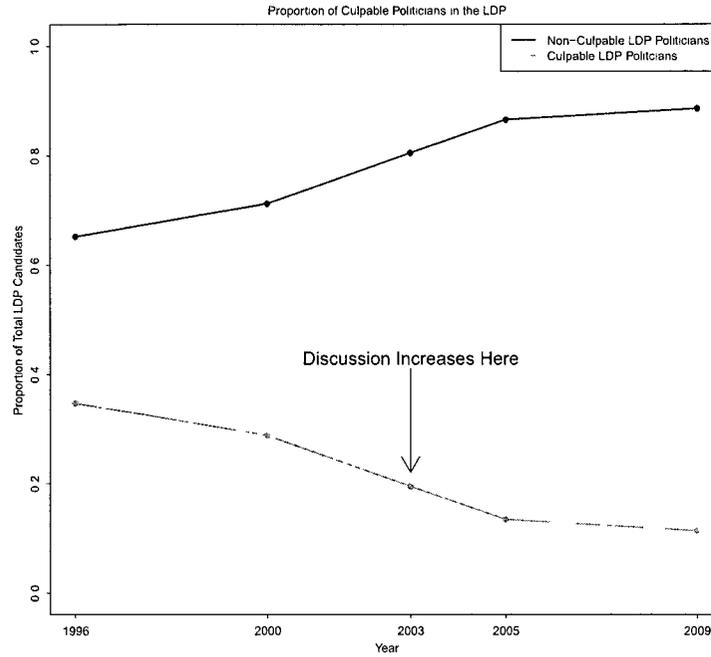


Figure 8.6: The Decline in Numbers Of Culpable Co-partisans. I defined culpable as those who had been in the Diet since 1983 or earlier. The decline is steepest between 2000 and 2003, precisely when we observe a large shift in the level of discussion of foreign and national security policy by LDP candidates. This figure plots the proportion of non-culpable candidates (the blue line) running in each election next to the proportion of culpable candidates (the gold line).

8.2.4 These Three Legacies Can Explain The Shifts

In this section, I argue that combinations of these three legacies can explain the rise and fall of discussion between 1996 and 2009. I argue that we do not observe a large leap in discussion of foreign and national security policy for the first two elections under the new electoral system for three reasons. The major reason is because candidates were scrambling to hold down the pockets of conservative support scattered about their district, which prevented them from thinking about the concerns of the median voter or coordinating on an

electoral platform with their colleagues at Party Headquarters in Tokyo. The second reason is because conservative candidates went into the election facing not only their traditional opponents from the JCP, who adopted the exact same message as their SNTV-MMD counterparts, but also a brand new party dedicated to abolishing the U.S.-Japan alliance. The third reason is because their own party was filled with politicians who were not only culpable, but who had by that stage drunk so much of the opposition's Kool Aid that it made it difficult for anyone in the party to present a more realistic perspective on these issues.

The DPJ, however, was not filled with culpable politicians. Nor was it supported by pockets of supporters who were used to getting what they wanted from their politician. This is why we observe candidates from the DPJ shifting to discuss these issues in 2000, as Figure 8.2 showed. In the 1996 election, the newly-formed Democratic Party of Japan ran 143 candidates, and the mean percentage of total discussion devoted to foreign and national security policy in their manifestos matched that of LDP candidates, at 0.4%. In 2000, the mean percentage of total discussion devoted to these issues in the manifestos produced by the now 242 DPJ candidates jumped to 3.4%, compared to the mean percentage of total discussion in the manifestos produced by conservative candidates, which was lower, at 1.5%. One of the reasons we do not observe DPJ candidates discussing foreign and national security policy in 1996 is because their discussion of these issues was contained within a neat party platform comprised of several topics that all its candidates talked about. The previous chapter presented a qualitative interpretation of this party-election-year topic, Politics for the Civilian (Topic 14). In 2000, DPJ candidates did not have a party label to rely on. Left to their own devices, they turned to articulating positions on foreign and national security policy.

In the 2000 election, DPJ candidates who won had twice the level of discussion of

foreign and national security policy in their manifestos than DPJ candidates who lost the election (4.7% compared to 2.2%). The p-value for a difference in means test was 0.03. While I certainly cannot rule out the presence of other variables, it is likely that conservative candidates watched the success of their DPJ counterparts in 2000 and wanted a piece of the pie for themselves. While the decline in proportion of culpable politicians in their own party was probably the primary determinant of the leap in discussion in the manifestos of conservative candidates in the 2003 election, it is also likely that the DPJ's success with the issue in 2000 had a demonstration effect on LDP candidates in 2003. Understandably, being the governing party, they were miffed that candidates from a party with no experience of governing, which meant no foreign policy experience, had beaten them to it. Being conservative candidates, they were probably also miffed that candidates from another party were articulating something close to their own position on the matter.

Far from a reaction to what was happening in the world at the time, I argue that the shift in discussion of this issue by conservative candidates between 2000 and 2003 is more likely to have been the combined product of a demonstration effect and the declining proportion of culpable politicians in their party. LDP candidates had nudged the issue in the 2000 election with their new public goods topic, Security and Reassurance (Topic 43), which focused on the security of the community. After watching their counterparts in the DPJ discuss the security of the nation in 2000, conservative candidates judged that the issue ought to be theirs, and moved to wrestle it away from the DPJ.

This begs the question, why the decline in discussion in 2005 and the rise again in 2009? I argue that the dip (from 6% to 4%) we observe between the 2003 and the 2005 elections is best explained not by the absence of external events comparable to those that happened before 2003 but by the emergence of the first-ever party-election-year topic for

conservative candidates: postal privatization. As the previous chapter showed, 30% of the average manifesto produced by LDP candidates in 2005 was devoted to two topics: Postal Privatization (Topic 1) and Post Offices (Topic 44). I argue that the emergence of a party label with the capacity of attracting support from the median voter, of which all candidates can rely on in their campaign, reduces their incentives to seek out their own non-targetable issues.

In 2009, we observe a rise in level of discussion because the party leader failed to produce a platform all conservative candidates could use. We observe the exact same phenomena in the DPJ. The only election in which DPJ candidates did not have a party label to use was the 2000 election, precisely when the level of discussion of foreign and national security policy was at its highest. Being left to rely on their own devices, DPJ candidates chose foreign and national security policy. The ability of DPJ candidates to rely on their party labels in the 1996, 2003, 2005, and 2009 elections resulted in a much lower proportion of discussion of this topic. Because parties face the same incentives as candidates to carve out positions on national-level public goods, relying on the party label will mean that the candidate discusses foreign and national security. But it will mean that this discussion is likely to appear as a party-election-year topic, rather than in a topic devoted solely to foreign and national security policy.

In sum, my findings suggest that when candidates are left to their own devices in a single member district, they will choose foreign and national security policy because it is an effective means of showing they are for everyone and no one at the same time. However, being left to their own devices is a very inefficient way of campaigning. The most efficient way to campaign in a parliamentary system with single member districts is to have all candidates rely on their respective party labels. When candidates managed to construct a

party label, or when they were given one by their party leader, we observed a decline in discussion of foreign and national security. But I argue that this is not because candidates are not talking about it. It is because it was subsumed as just one promise alongside others in the party platform. The best example of this is the DPJ's inclusion of a promise to "withdraw the SDF from Iraq by September" in their 2005 party manifesto.

8.3 Could the Shift be a Product of New Candidates Entering the Race?

The above section ruled out the alternative hypothesis that external events could explain the variation in level of discussion of foreign and national security policy by conservative candidates in the five elections since 1996. I argued that various combinations of three important legacies, bequeathed the new system by the old, provides a better explanation for the variation in level of discussion we observe across elections, parties and candidates since 1996. This section tackles a second alternative explanation for why we observe an increase in level of discussion of foreign and national security policy by conservative candidates after 1996. It may be that the shift in discussion was neither a product of external events nor a product of institutional legacies with differential effects, but is instead the product of the entry of new politicians with new ideas after 1994.

The rationale for this hypothesis would be the following. It is possible that the kind of electoral strategies demanded of candidates by SNTV-MMD might attract candidates predisposed to developing electoral strategies comprised of private goods, and the kind of electoral strategies demanded of candidates by MMM could attract candidates predisposed

to developing electoral strategies comprised of national-level public goods. This suggests that any observable shift in electoral strategy is simply the product of new candidates with different predispositions and different policy preferences entering the race after 1996, and not the product of candidates actually changing their strategies. As I explained in Chapter 3, my need to rule this possibility out guided my selection of which election years to analyze. My selection of the last three elections under the old electoral system and the first five elections under the new yielded 563 candidates who competed in at least one election under the old system and one under the new.

I examined how the level of discussion of foreign and national security policy, private goods, and public goods changed after the introduction of the new electoral system for each of these 563 politicians. I found overwhelming evidence that the shift in discussion was not confined to new candidates and extended to candidates who embarked on their careers under SNTV-MMD. Within my subset of 563 politicians, 349 politicians increased their discussion of public goods after the electoral reform (62%), 394 politicians increased their discussion of foreign and national security policy after the reform (70%), and 359 politicians decreased their discussion of private goods after the reform (64%). I ran a Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test to check whether the distributions of discussion of foreign and national security policy, public goods, and private goods were different before and after the electoral reform. The results confirmed that the chance the observations were drawn from the same distribution was very low. The p-values were <0.001 for public; <0.001 for private; and <0.001 for foreign and national security policy.

This provides strong support for my claim that the electoral reform was associated with a shift in the electoral strategies of politicians. The fact that politicians who built their careers on the provision of private goods under the old electoral system voluntarily down-

graded discussion of issues upon which they would have held a clear advantage over their opponents is strong evidence of the power of electoral rules to shape electoral strategies.

8.4 Where Have All the Doves Gone?

The third alternative hypothesis this chapter addresses goes like this. The LDP used to be full of doves. Now, it appears to be full of hawks (Matthews 2003). Where have all the doves gone? Is this evidence that conservative politicians have changed their preferences, and become hawks, virtually overnight? Or is it that the doves have lost out to the hawks in recent years? If so, is this evidence that Japanese voters have become more hawkish, and are simply selecting politicians that best match their preferences? This appeared to happen after the introduction of the new electoral system. Does this mean that there is something about single member districts that produce hawks? Figuring out what happened to the trove of doves inside the LDP is obviously a tremendously important research question, with huge ramifications for our understanding of contemporary Japanese politics and what shape Japan's foreign and national security policy is likely to take in the future. It suggests that the shift in level of discussion of foreign and national security policy that we observe after 1996 could be a product of a change in preferences. Where have all the doves gone?

I argue that doves were a code word for appropriator under SNTV-MMD. To be an appropriator, one had to be a dove. And most politicians wanted to be appropriators, because appropriating was the key to winning elections and the only route to becoming prime minister. Focusing on pleasing constituents and preventing their defection to another conservative camp left appropriators no time for public goods and no time for foreign and national security policy. In Chapter 6 I described the power of the message of peace that

rained down on voters during elections. This message demanded an enormous and coordinated effort to challenge it. Appropriators had no time for such luxuries. They were too busy reading the obituary columns in their local newspapers, getting the children of their supporters good jobs, and holding fundraising parties in Tokyo. Having neither the inclination nor the capacity to challenge this message, it was much easier for them to hop on board and sing the same tune of peace as the opposition. Why? Because becoming a dove enabled the politician to shield herself from the opposition and focus entirely on beating her same-district co-partisan. Why fight two battles when you only had to fight one?

Out of all conservative politicians, the appropriator-doves should have had the toughest time adjusting to the new electoral system. Winning in a single member district demanded appeals that united voters, appropriator-doves were good at appeals that divided voters. It demanded appeals that could capture support from across the political spectrum, appropriator-doves were used to focusing only on their group of supporters and the supporters of their same-district co-partisan. The major reason why adapting to the new electoral system was so difficult for the appropriator-doves was because it exposed their agenda of peace for what it was, empty. Being based on a desire to sweep these issues under the rug where there was no chance they would emerge to bother the politician, rather than a careful appraisal of what the world really looked like or what the options available to Japan were, this agenda was unfit for electoral competition in a single member district. Relying on keywords such as “peace” and promising to work for “peace disarmament” were okay as fluff, but would not cut it as an issue that could win the support of 50% of voters in a single member district.

I argue that the reason we observe doves quietly leaving the political scene after the introduction of the new electoral system is not because single member districts make can-

didates more hawkish, or because Japanese voters have become more hawkish, but because of their own inability to adapt to the new electoral system. Appropriator-doves would have found it extraordinarily difficult to develop the kind of election platforms they needed to win. First, they had the least experience with public goods out of all conservative politicians. Second, they were the most culpable. They were the conservative politicians who had sat on their hands every time a near-crisis had arisen in Japan's foreign policy, cloaking their hand-waving and inattention with fervent statements of support for Article Nine and commitment to peace. Discussing foreign and national security policy meant admitting that Japan had a problem. It was like opening a can of worms. There were so many things that needed to be done and most of them, however spun, had their roots in their own inattention. It is not difficult to see why appropriator-doves might have hesitated before talking about these issues. Third, taking realistic stances on foreign and national security policy risked alienating what was left of their core supporters, most of whom who were accustomed to their politician being a dove and might have felt betrayed.

I argue that the failure of the appropriator-doves to adapt provides the most likely explanation for the decline in power and numbers of the more-dovish Hashimoto, Miyazawa, and Kono factions within the LDP in the late 1990's, and the rise of the slightly-more-hawkish Mori faction, which has produced four of the LDP's last six presidents: Mori Yoshirō, Koizumi Junichirō, Abe Shinzō, and Fukuda Yasuo. This decline in numbers and power has been noted by a number of scholars but has not been explained (Park 2001; Taniguchi 2005; Hughes 2006*b*). I argue that the departure of the doves is not evidence that conservative politicians have changed their preferences, nor is it evidence that Japanese voters have become more hawkish. It is therefore very unlikely that either variable can explain the shift in level of discussion of foreign and national security policy that occurred after 1993.

8.4.1 Hawks Didn't Discuss These Issues Until After the Electoral Reform

More evidence that the shift in discussion identified in this dissertation can be explained by a shift in the electoral strategies of conservative politicians comes when I examine the degree to which conservative politicians identified in research as “hawks” discussed this issue under the old electoral system. If they were hawks, I reasoned that they would have reacted to events such as the end of the Cold War and the first Gulf War in a way that differed from their more-dovish co-partisans. Given the national humiliation of the Gulf War, I reasoned that hawks should have been up in arms in 1993. While we observed a tiny level of discussion in the *average* LDP candidate manifesto produced for the 1986, 1990, and 1993 elections, perhaps politicians with hawkish views found the time to talk about it.

Instead I find that none of these hawkish politicians paid attention to foreign and national security policy under the old electoral system. The list of conservative politicians who changed their electoral strategies the *most* after the introduction of the new system reads like a who's who list of hawkish politicians. Nishimura Shingō, Abe Shinzō, Ishiba Shigeru, Maehara Seiji, Nakayama Tarō, Hiranuma Takeo, Koike Yuriko, Yamazaki Taku, Asō Tarō, none of these politicians we know as “hawks” discussed foreign and national security policy at all under SNTV-MMD. This provides clinching evidence that what matters is the new electoral environment.

8.4.2 Conservative Candidates Are Not Becoming Hawkish, They Are Becoming Centrist

The claim that conservative politicians have become more hawkish since the introduction of the new electoral system is puzzling when one considers that the electoral incentives suggest that the reverse should be true. As I explained in Chapter 2, the need to win in a single member district should, if anything, push politicians toward the center of the ideological spectrum, not toward the edges. Thus, if anything, politicians should be moving toward the ideological center and away from both dovish and hawkish appeals.

I devised a way of pitting my hypothesis, that conservative candidates are moving into the ideological center, against the counter-hypothesis, that they are becoming more hawkish, by using a new model designed to estimate the policy positions of political texts over time. Called Wordfish, the model uses word frequencies to place all documents on a single ideological scale (Slapin and Proksch 2008). The authors assume that the ideological scale approximates a left-right dimension of government intervention in the economy. The model assumes that the authors of the texts choose words from their location on this scale, and thus treats the locations as a latent variable to be estimated. Designed to estimate how the ideological positions taken by political parties varies over time, I reasoned that it could also be applied to estimate the positions of candidates. It takes as input a term document matrix comprised of party (or candidate) manifestos and outputs estimates of the positions of the document on the ideological scale and estimates of uncertainty around the positions.

Figures 8.7 displays the model's estimates of the ideological positions adopted by the 4,199 candidates running from the LDP, the DPJ, the SDP, and JCP for the five elections under the new electoral system. The figure is best read by tilting one's head to the right. In-

tuitively, these conform very well to our expectations of the positions these candidates took in these elections. In all elections, the positions taken by candidates from the JCP (the red dots) are the most ideologically-leftwing, and the positions taken by candidates from the LDP (the green dots) are the most ideologically-rightwing. Candidates from the DPJ (the blue dots) adopted positions that were slightly to the left of the LDP. Candidates from the SDP started off in 1996 at a similar ideological position to their coalition partner, the LDP. Given that this election was held just a year after the SDP leader, Murayama Tomiichi, had renounced most of the platforms upon which the party had fought every election since the 1950's, it is no surprise that these candidates did not adopt leftist positions. The positions adopted by SDP candidates in the 1996 election is similar to the findings of research that used the same model to analyze the positions adopted by parties from 1960 to 1993 (Proksch, Slapin and Thies 2011). These authors found that the JSP adopted a position that was indistinguishable from the position adopted by the LDP in most of these elections, and in particular, in the 1993 election.

Figure 8.8 plots the change in ideological position adopted in the average manifesto produced by candidates of each party in each election. My hypothesis was that candidates from the LDP should be adopting positions that are more centrist over time. The figure reveals that the position adopted in the average LDP candidate manifesto did become more centrist from 1996 to 2005 (moving from -1.42 in 1996 to -1.33 in 2000, -1.24 in 2003, -1.07 in 2005), but moved slightly to the right in the 2009 election (moving from -1.07 to -1.12). This was the election in which LDP candidates shifted to discuss more private goods and more foreign and national security policy. This was also the election in which most of these LDP candidates lost badly.

The position adopted in the average DPJ candidate manifesto became steadily more

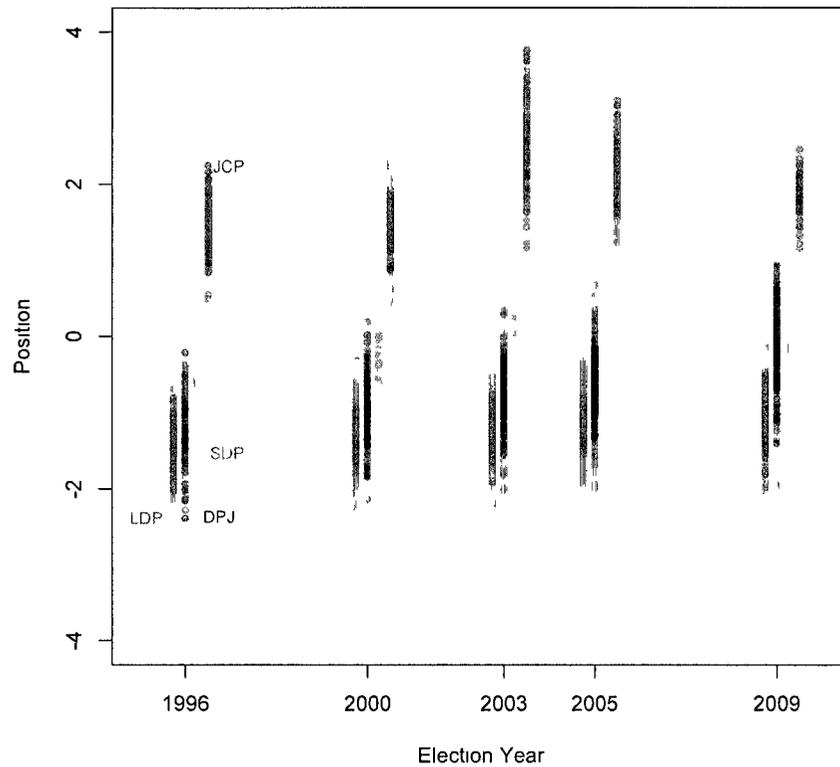


Figure 8.7: Ideological Positions Adopted by Candidates of Major Parties, 1996-2009. The figure is best read by tilting one's head to the right. Candidates of each party are where we would expect them to be, with candidates from the JCP (the red dots) adopting the most leftwing positions, and candidates from the LDP (the green dots) adopting the most rightwing positions.

centrist over time, moving from -0.64 in 2005 to -0.16 in 2009. This was the first election in which the DPJ won. The position adopted in the average SDP candidate manifesto began on the right and moved toward the left, which is what we would expect. The position adopted in the average JCP candidate manifesto became markedly more radical in the 2003 election, which was borne out in the qualitative interpretation of the topics discussed by these candidates in this election. Together, these results enable me to conclusively rule out

the possibility that conservative politicians have become more hawkish over time.

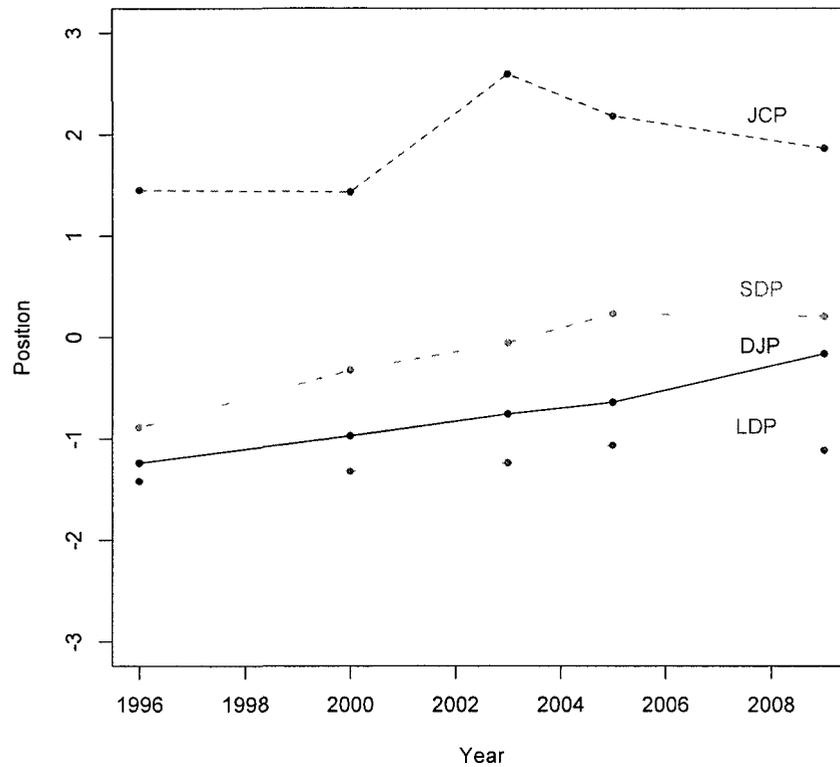


Figure 8.8: Conservative Candidates Are Not Becoming More Hawkish Over Time. This figure plots the change in ideological position adopted in the average manifesto produced by candidates from each of the four main parties in each election.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

On August 6, 1989 the LDP held a presidential election. Uno Sōsuke had been Prime Minister for only three days in June when a weekly magazine had run a story revealing the nature of an affair he was having with a geisha. Public anger revolved not around the affair itself but around reports of his stinginess in dealing with the geisha, which had caused her to complain publicly. The party decided it needed a replacement. Three candidates contested the election, and each published their own 1,000-character views on policy. Like any election for the party president, discussion revolved around domestic policy issues such as the consumption tax, agriculture, and political reform. But being a de-facto election for the Prime Minister, because the LDP held a majority of seats in the House of Representatives, candidates were asked to talk about their “views on foreign policy”. Their remarks are illustrative.

Hayashi Yoshiro told his colleagues that he had been “head of the LDP’s International Bureau” and “had many friends in foreign countries”. Kaifu Toshiki, who won the election and went on to serve as Prime Minister during the Gulf War, told his colleagues, “I have

been involved in politician diplomacy, and have been to Summit meetings abroad”. Ishihara Shintarō, who went on to become Governor of Tokyo and author of the famous nationalist book, *The Japan That Can Say No*, told his colleagues that he had “many friends in leadership positions in foreign countries” (*Asahi Shimbun* 1989). These remarks beg the question, why were candidates for the position of Prime Minister in the world’s second-largest economy, at a time when the bipolar structure of the world was threatening to change into something quite different, using the number of friends they had in foreign countries to advertise their foreign policy credentials? Why didn’t the politicians electing them demand to hear more about their positions on the foreign policy issues of the day, such as what shape they thought the U.S.-Japan alliance ought to take if the Soviet Union were to collapse or if communism was to disappear, or whether they thought Japan should enlarge the scope of its security cooperation with the U.S.?

This dissertation has provided a convincing answer to this question and other questions. The remarks of these candidates are clear evidence of the extent to which foreign and national security policy were not taken seriously by conservative politicians under Japan’s old electoral system. Like candidates for the House of Representatives who used the number of foreign languages they could speak to demonstrate their interest in these matters, the remarks of these prime ministerial candidates are symptoms of a political system in which conservative politicians deliberately downplayed their positions on issues and made everything, even foreign policy, personal.

This dissertation has set out to explain the puzzling turnaround in attention to foreign and national security policy by conservative Japanese politicians in the mid-1990’s. Why conservative politicians chose this point in time to pay attention to issues they had kept at arm’s length for decades is a question that is not well-explained by existing theories in

international relations. While existing scholarship offers two compelling explanations for why conservative Japanese politicians ignored these issues before, which I term *calculated abstention* and *forced abstention*, respectively, neither of these satisfactorily explains the new attention we observe in the mid-1990's. Whereas calculated abstention would expect the new attention to have happened before, and to be aimed at meeting the new threats and addressing the external events, I show that the new attention is being directed at old issues, which are smothering the new threats and preventing them from being addressed. I am able to rule out forced abstention at the outset of the dissertation, due to the absence of an obvious change in preferences on the part of Japanese people about Japan's role in the world or the use of military force as an instrument of state policy.

Instead, this dissertation has looked inside the state, at an institution not ordinarily part of international relations discourse, for the answer. I hypothesized that the turnaround in political attention we observe after the mid-1990's was most likely the product of a shift in the electoral strategies of conservative politicians. Drawing upon research in comparative politics that points to the electoral system as a crucial determinant of how politicians choose to spend their time during and between elections and what decisions they make after reaching office, I hypothesized that conservative politicians started paying attention to foreign and national security policy in the mid-1990's because they had new electoral incentives to do so. Whereas promising private goods for a subset of voters in one's district was the electoral strategy demanded of conservative politicians by Japan's old electoral system, SNTV-MMD, used in elections to the House of Representatives until 1994, I reasoned that public goods for the national-level median voter was the winning strategy for conservative politicians under MMM, Japan's new electoral system, in use since 1994.

In Chapter 2 I argued that foreign and national security policy should have been avoided

like the plague by conservative politicians under SNTV-MMD for two reasons. The first is because it sent their constituents the signal that if elected, the politician would devote time and attention to concerns that had nothing to do with them. This was an extremely risky signal to send in a system where winning elections depended on constant efforts to enlarge one's army of supporters and prevent them from being poached by the well-organized armies of supporters attached to other conservative politicians. The second reason they should have avoided these issues under SNTV-MMD is because candidates running from the opposition parties faced incentives to use extreme positions on public goods to carve out a party label they could all use in their campaigns. The issue of choice for two of these opposition parties, the Japan Communist Party and the Japan Socialist Party, was foreign and national security policy. However unpalatable the stance being offered voters by these opposition parties was, conservative politicians were unable to mount a coordinated effort to challenge it, either during the election or when it came time to make policy. I argue that the presence of these opposing incentives should have created an electoral equilibrium in which opposition politicians owned the issues and conservative candidates ignored them.

Under MMM, the name of the electoral game is not private goods, but public goods. Among the array of public goods politicians have at their disposal, I hypothesized that foreign and national security policy possesses a property that makes it attractive for politicians competing in a single member district, that of non-targetability. Statements about the nation and Japan's role in the world, if general and not extreme, have the effect of benefiting everyone and no one at the same time. I hypothesized that this property should have given conservative politicians new incentives to reclaim this issue from the opposition, and make it a central feature of their platforms under MMM.

Testing my hypothesis about the shift in electoral strategies required new data and new

methods. In Chapter 4 I explained that political scientists have few unbiased means at their disposal for measuring candidate electoral strategy. I argued that material produced by candidates for use during their campaigns is a valid indicator of their strategy. I explained how near-draconian campaign regulations in Japan gave candidates recourse to only six different means through which they could have communicated their policy views to voters during election campaigns across this period. I showed that only one of these means had enough physical space in it to be conducive to the enunciation of policy views. This is the *senkyo kōhō*, or candidate election manifesto. I show that the rules governing the production and dissemination of the *kōhō* have undergone no changes across the postwar period, and approximately 40% of Japanese voters report seeing the *kōhō* of their candidates in the two days before an election. I describe how I collected, selected, and preprocessed my corpus of 7,497 candidate elections manifestos produced by all serious candidates running in the eight elections between 1986 and 2009.

Chapter 4 also described the statistical topic model Latent Dirichlet Allocation used to model the content of the manifestos. By enabling me to estimate the proportion of discussion devoted to *all issues*, in every single manifesto, LDA allowed me to examine not only whether or not discussion of foreign and national security increased after the introduction of the new electoral system, but also whether or not the rest of the discussion fit the predictions of the theory. I reasoned that if we observed candidates changing their electoral strategies in precisely the way the theory expects, this would be further evidence that the increase in level of discussion of foreign and national security policy was a product of their electoral strategies changing and not the product of an omitted variable, such as external events. While my description of the steps required to choose the total number of topics and classify each topic as a public or private good in Chapter 5 might appear

unnecessary, my theory is so new and so contentious that they *were* necessary.

After ruling out the possibility that the story I am telling is backwards, and Japanese politicians reformed the electoral system to engineer a shift in attention to foreign and national security policy, I launch into testing my hypothesis. Chapter 6 used the topics discussed in the 2,520 manifestos produced by serious candidates running in the 1986, 1990, and 1993 elections to test the theory's claims that pertain to SNTV-MMD. I presented powerful evidence that conservative candidates ignored foreign and national security policy in all three elections under SNTV-MMD. While they found the time to discuss some public goods, albeit shying away from concrete policy positions, they stayed right away from foreign and national security policy. Just as the theory expects, conservative candidates adopted electoral strategies that were comprised of private goods for a subset of voters in their district. Qualitative interpretation of the private goods topics provided an indication of the energy conservative politicians put into dreaming up ways to justify the constant stream of private goods, dressing up grubby appeals to construction companies with buzzwords such as "internationalization", "lifestyle superpower", and "the environment", and even telling voters they subscribed to a political ideology of "loving thy hometown".

I showed that the level of discussion of private goods increased at higher levels of intra-party competition, which supports my claim that it was the need to fight against one's co-partisans that encouraged the adoption of this strategy in the first place, and in rural districts, where private goods are easier to distribute. I found strong evidence that candidates from the JCP and the JSP made these issues a central part of their campaigns, and that conservative politicians left them to it.

Chapter 7 used the topics discussed in the 5,247 manifestos produced by all serious candidates running in the 1996, 2000, 2003, 2005, and 2009 elections to test the theory's

claims that pertain to MMM. I presented powerful evidence that conservative candidates switched to discussing foreign and national security policy as soon as the new electoral system was introduced. I showed that this discussion reflected a broader shift in their electoral strategies from promising private goods for a subset of voters in their district to promising public goods. I showed that in the 2005 election, conservative candidates managed to construct a party label that they could all rely on in their campaigns. This would have been impossible under the old electoral system.

I also examined the electoral strategies of candidates running from Japan's new second party, the Democratic Party of Japan, and Japan's traditional opposition parties, the Japan Communist Party and the Japan Socialist Party (renamed the Social Democratic Party). I showed that the former pioneered the use of an electoral strategy of bashing the groups who had benefited from the elaborate system of benefits constructed by conservative politicians under the old electoral system, and the electoral strategies adopted by candidates running from the latter two parties appear to be unaffected by their running in a single member district. Their criticism appears just as virulent as it was under SNTV-MMD and if anything, more focused.

Chapter 7 also revealed that up to one-third of the platforms offered voters by conservative politicians under MMM are still comprised of private goods. While this might appear to challenge the theory presented here, I argued that this is not because private goods helps a conservative candidate *win* in a single member district, but because it helps her guard against the possibility that one of the remaining pockets of conservative support in the district will run its own candidate. I argued that the presence of numerous pockets of conservative support scattered about each single member district is a remnant of the decentralized election campaigns demanded of politicians by the old electoral system. I argue that the

introduction of single member districts has given these pockets a powerful bargaining chip, with which they can force any politician who receives the party nomination to continue providing them with private goods. This bargaining chip is their ability to credibly threaten to run another candidate, which would risk splitting the conservative vote. Knowing this, conservative candidates are unable to focus all their energy on winning the election. They have to focus some of their energy on quietening the voices of these groups, by at least appearing to be committed to their interests. This has prevented conservative candidates from adopting an electoral strategy comprised solely of public goods.

While the evidence presented in Chapters 6 and 7 provide strong support for my claim that the turnaround in attention to foreign and national security policy by conservative politicians in the mid-1990's occurred because of a shift in their electoral strategies, Chapter 7 also revealed that discussion of foreign and national security policy has not yet reached an equilibrium. The level of discussion appears to vary across elections, parties, and candidates. The fact that we do not observe a straight line akin to the line we observed between 1986 and 1993 raises the possibility that electoral incentives may not be the primary determinant of the level of discussion in each of these elections. It may be that electoral reform simply removed the costs of using these issues for conservative politicians, but the actual level of discussion is being determined by other variables, such as external events. Chapter 8 is devoted to tackling this possibility.

I argued that institutional legacies from the old electoral system and their weakening in some areas but not in others provides a better explanation for the shifts in level of discussion than external events. I argued that there are three legacies of the old electoral system that affect the ability of conservative candidates to pursue what Chapter 2 identified as the winning strategy under MMM. The first is the need to please each and every one of

the scattered pockets of conservative support in the district. The second is the continued presence of radical opponents, who are making the exact same arguments as they did under the old electoral system. Their message presents a formidable barrier for conservative candidates who wish to use this issue. It means that their message has to be simple and united. But their need to provide private goods means that their message is not united. The third is the presence of culpable co-partisans, party elders who sat on their hands when issues of foreign and national security emerged on the agenda in earlier decades and sang the same tune of peace as the opposition.

Chapter 8 also examines two additional alternative hypotheses. The first is that the shift we observe is not the product of politicians changing their electoral strategies, but the product of new politicians entering the race after 1994. The second is the hypothesis that LDP politicians have all shifted to the right, and new preferences can explain the shift in discussion. I argue that Japan's rightward shift is an illusion caused by a few loud conservative voices, none of whom paid any attention to foreign and national security policy before the system was reformed. I argue and provide evidence for the exact opposite scenario: that conservative politicians have moved closer to the center of the ideological spectrum since the introduction of MMM.

9.1 The Contributions

9.1.1 Faceless Japan and Peace Mania

The most important contribution of this dissertation is to our understanding of the drivers of change in Japan's foreign and national security policy. My explanation for the

turnaround in political attention and the evidence presented in this dissertation mounts a major challenge to the two dominant explanations of Japan's extraordinarily-pacifist national security policy. Because both of these explanations guide current expectations of the conditions under which Japan's foreign and national security policy is likely to change, it is important to assess whether they are right, wrong, or lacking.

My findings suggest that these explanations are not wrong, but suffer from an identification problem. It was not that conservative politicians *calculated* that it would serve Japan's best interests to adopt a low profile on the international stage and construct policy shields to render it incapable of responding to U.S. requests for more burden sharing. Nor was it that conservative politicians *wanted* to share more of the security burden but were *hemmed in* by the Japanese public's deep aversion to military force. Both of these explanations attribute an awful lot of strategic calculation to conservative politicians. I argue that Japan's extraordinarily-pacifist national security policy was a product of conservative politicians simply having no incentives to pay any attention to this policy area. Far from being a political construct, pacifism happened by accident. It happened because conservative politicians had no incentive to stop it from happening.

Many decisions scholars use as evidence that conservative politicians were motivated by a desire to free ride, guard against entrapment, or cater to the deeply-held, anti-militaristic views of the Japanese people are observationally-equivalent to conservative politicians not caring about or devoting the resources to learn about this policy area. The absence of incentives for conservative politicians explains why the opposition, who were operating under a completely different set of incentives, got the upper hand in foreign and national security policy. They could dominate the public's understanding of the issue because they could have every candidate, in every district, talking about it. Their high level of coordination

meant that they could grab hold of new issues, such as China's acquisition of a nuclear weapon, and gain publicity by wringing their hands about how such an event would empower the rightwing, endanger Japan's fledgling democracy, and lead Japan right back to the horror of the Second World War. While candidates of a *unified* conservative party might have been able to challenge this frame, by pointing out that they were about to do no such thing, candidates of a fractious conservative party such as the Liberal Democratic Party had no such incentives. They could offer their own opinions to voters, certainly, but could not mount a unified challenge to this frame. Every conservative politician had the incentive to defect and focus on what she needed to do for the next election.

The high level of coordination of politicians from the opposition parties extended to their activities in the Diet. Politicians from the opposition could commit to acting collectively in the Diet to delay the passage of important pieces of legislation because they were a unified, cohesive entity. While the strategies at their disposal for delaying legislation were not foolproof, and were those available to opposition parties in most parliamentary democracies, threatening them worked because conservative politicians knew that if they tried to override the cries of the opposition and pass the disputed legislation, the opposition would label this as undemocratic and evidence that conservative politicians were everything from power-hungry to uncommitted to democracy to intent on remilitarizing. Knowing that opposition politicians had this powerful, emotionally-resonant frame from which to draw at any time made conservative politicians extremely reluctant to do anything that could invite this opposition. Knowing that they would lose the rhetorical battle, because they could not coordinate their action to win it, left conservative candidates totally under the thumb of the opposition parties in this policy area.

What were conservative politicians doing in the Diet? Worrying about their same-

district co-partisan. The words of one politician are telling:

“If he’s not in the Diet, I’m worried. I think, where the heck is he? There aren’t any marriages or funerals on my calendar today. I can’t concentrate on policy!”¹

The constant need for conservative politicians to please their constituents, and the ability of the opposition to delay passage of the budget and other pieces of legislation, meant that over time it became easier for conservative politicians to grudgingly accept the narrative put forward by the opposition. They may not have liked it, but accepting this narrative was the only option available to them. The absolute worst-case scenario for a conservative politician, one in which they lived in permanent fear of, was if the U.S. government suddenly decided that it wanted Japan to do something, such as expand its security cooperation with the U.S., sell the U.S. military technology, or spend more money on defense. Conservative politicians knew that if faced with such a request, they would be forced to act for the sake of the U.S.-Japan alliance, which would not only invite the ire of the opposition but threaten the rest of their legislative agenda. It made more sense to kill two birds with one stone by going along with the opposition’s demands for policy shields, which would please the opposition and guard against the possibility that they might one day have to do something the opposition didn’t like.

I want to make it clear what I am not arguing. I am not arguing that conservative politicians did not want to pay attention to foreign and national security policy. I am arguing that they couldn’t. Japan’s electoral institutions were structured in a way that *prevented* conservative politicians from paying attention to this policy area, even if they wanted to. This is why we observe a burst in political attention only after the electoral system changed, and not before.

¹This quote is found in *Asahi Shimbun* (1993b).

The explanation presented here for the shift in political attention has the potential to answer many unresolved puzzles in Japan's foreign and national security policy. While relying on the U.S. so that Japan could concentrate on economic development made sense in the aftermath of the war, when Japan was weak and unable to fend for itself, it made less and less sense as time went on. Yet conservative politicians made no effort to revise it. Absolutely nothing was done to reduce the country's dependence on the U.S., or increase the size of Japan's voice within the alliance. As Japan's economic and technological power grew, its decisions on national security paradoxically appeared to reflect a stronger desire to stay nestled under the U.S. security umbrella, rather than break out of it. Why was Japan's doctrine of dependence, codified in the 1950's, never revised? This is even more puzzling when one remembers that conservative politicians are supposed to be just that, conservative. The Liberal Democratic Party was founded in 1955 on a promise to revise the pacifist clause of Japan's constitution, renegotiate the terms of the US-Japan alliance, and normalize Japan's national security policy. Why did it show such little interest in pursuing the agenda that had led to its creation, despite forming every government from 1955 to 1993?

One question this gives rise to is why do we observe such policy innovation in the 1950's? How could conservative politicians sign and ratify the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, formally upgrade the Self Defense Forces from a National Safety Force, and begin a military build-up program, yet undertake next to no policy innovations in the area since? My answer to this question is that the policy innovations carried out in the 1950's were carried out while conservative politicians were not fighting each other. They were, for the most part, carried out before the merger of the Liberal and Democratic Parties in November of 1955, at a time when Japan had four conservative parties. Because none of these parties

ran more than one candidate in each district, their candidates had incentives to cultivate and rely on a party label. After the merger, conservative candidates were pitted against each other in the same district. Bustling to create what would soon become the gold standard in the delivery of benefits to constituents, the *kōenkai*, conservative candidates learned that talking about foreign and national security policy was not the best way to create loyal teams of supporters or poach the supporters of their co-partisan.

This argument is somewhat at odds with the conventional wisdom in Japanese politics, which holds that Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato took national security off the party's agenda after the demonstrations that occurred over former Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke's renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in 1960, which led to Kishi's resignation, the death of a college student, and the cancellation of President Eisenhower's visit to Japan (Reed 2005, 277). I argue that Ikeda did no such thing. He did no such thing because he had no such power. By the early 1960's, the need to win more than one seat in each district had balkanized the party. Conservative politicians stopped talking about these issues because they were thinking about the next election, and the name of the electoral game was targeted benefits and private goods.

The absence of incentives for conservative politicians to pay attention to foreign and national security policy for four decades can go far in explaining why the sudden incentives to pay attention have not resulted in radical changes to Japan's foreign policy. Conservative politicians are not capable of radical changes because they have yet to learn about this policy area. They have to learn what is *in* Japan's "national interest", a word that entered the Japanese lexicon only after the electoral reform, and they have to learn how to battle the red tape around this policy area, which itself is the product of decades of inattention. The inability of Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki to answer the questions fired at him by opposition

party politicians in the Diet in October of 1990, questions that pertained to what the SDF would and would not be allowed to do if it was dispatched to Kuwait, and how the SDF would and would not be allowed to defend itself, is a spectacular example of how little thought even the Prime Minister had given to these matters. Kaifu would later admit to me “People just hadn’t really thought about it before”.² Breaking through the red tape requires nothing short of rhetorical somersaults. How many shots is an SDF officer allowed to fire before it exceeds the level permitted for self-defense? After hours of being grilled in the Diet in 2003 about what does and what does not constitute a war zone (as the government had promised not to dispatch the SDF to a war zone), Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro finally gave up. Instead of defining a non-war zone, he simply told the opposition “It is the zone where the SDF will be operating!”

9.1.2 Why International Relations Ought to Pay Attention to Electoral Systems

While political attention is a dependent variable not ordinarily the subject of research in international relations, its adoption here has allowed me to unearth a much more compelling explanation for Japan’s extraordinarily-pacifist foreign and national security policy and prolonged absence from the world. My explanation for the turnaround in political attention has revealed that the two dominant lenses through which scholars have viewed Japan’s foreign and national security policy depend upon electoral institutions. Had Japan not possessed these electoral institutions, neither free riding nor anti-militarism would have become such dominant influences on Japan’s foreign and national security policy. If con-

²Interview, Kaifu Toshiki, former Prime Minister and Member of the House of Representatives, August 25, 2006.

servative politician had possessed the incentives to mount a unified and coherent challenge to the frame presented by the opposition, Japan's foreign and national security policy would likely have developed to resemble the foreign and national security policies of other U.S. allies, such as Australia and the United Kingdom. These countries are allied with the U.S., but retain their own independent military capabilities and their own voice.

In this sense, the world is not unimportant. It provides the raw material for politicians. But politicians need electoral incentives to become interested in the world. If they don't have these incentives, they may be interested but will be powerless. In this case, the foreign and national security policy of the state may become decoupled from what scholars expect based on the state's position in the world economy. Our inability to provide a satisfactory explanation for the massive decoupling between Japan's economic power and its political and military power until now has created a situation in which resentment and frustration at Japan's lack of foreign policy power by conservative politicians in Japan today is often mistaken by foreign observers for hawkish intentions. I argue that this is a mistake. The resentment and frustration we witness among conservative politicians today is directed at their own inability and the inability of conservative politicians before them to mount a better challenge to the powerful (yet in many places, illogical) narrative of peace put forward by the opposition. It reflects disappointment in voters for believing this narrative, and it reflects the desire to move Japan toward an equilibrium where discussion of foreign and national security policy is part of everyday discourse.

Focusing on political attention has enabled me to unearth a previously-unnoticed yet crucial determinant of a nation's foreign and national security policy: the electoral system. Until now, political scientists have examined the incentives of politicians to take up these issues but have never entertained the idea that politicians might not have any incentives.

They have taken it for granted that politicians of a national legislature will care about the nation. Because research shows that humans are hard wired to view their nation in a positive light, caring about the nation often translates into the holding of hawkish views. This dissertation makes the rather obvious point that not all democracies are created equal, and it is important for scholars of international relations to understand this.

While it is not new to point to the domestic political determinants of the decoupling that can occur between a state's position in the international economy and its political and military power, it is new to point to a determinant that all democracies share. With some exceptions, looking inside the state in international relations has meant looking at variables that are unique to the state or unique to a group of states, such as an anti-militaristic culture. While it is important to understand how variables unique to a state affect policy outcomes in that state, it is not clear where this discovery can lead us. Under what conditions can we expect that variable to weaken or disappear? Electoral systems, on the other hand, are not a bygone conclusion. They are an institution common to all democracies, and can be adjusted.

Paying closer attention to the nature of the electoral incentives facing politicians allows for the generation of new hypotheses as to why the foreign and national security policies of states assume the shape they do. The U.S. combines a lengthy, nationwide campaign for the presidency with candidate-centered, state-level campaigns for its two legislative houses. The decentralized nature of all three campaigns robs candidates of the ability to rely on their party label. Their inability to rely on the party label gives candidates few incentives to create a strong one. This is a recipe for a system in which organized groups such as the military-industrial complex, and even the army, navy, and air force, could come to hold considerable sway over legislators through their campaign contributions and mobilizational

capacities. It is also a recipe for much discussion about “the nation” because the president, and anyone aspiring to that position, directs his discussion to *the American people*. The U.K., on the other hand, is a parliamentary democracy with single member districts. The party-centered nature of campaigns to its lower house makes for discussion of national-level issues (at least, the national-level issues that are in the party manifesto), but the high identifiability and accountability of the single-party governments produced in this system make tax increases difficult. Which country ended up being the military superpower, with a large amount of military spending and bases in 156 countries, and which country ended up being the loyal ally, with less military spending but much symbolic commitment?

My research points to the important role played by election campaigns in socializing citizens to think about “the nation”. For the five decades from the end of the Second World War until 1996, the only candidates who got up in front of voters and talked about the Japanese nation were the radically leftwing. They spoke of the need to abolish the U.S.-Japan alliance, the need to dissolve the SDF, the need to avoid war at all costs, and the need to protect the peace clause of Japan’s constitution from the militant and dangerous LDP. They drummed it into voters that their party was the *only* party that had remained opposed to the initiation of the Pacific War “until the very end”, an opposition for which they had been persecuted. For this entire period, not a single conservative candidate had the incentive to get up there and challenge this view.

Not only was there a sizeable disincentive to talk about the nation during the campaign, none of the other routes through which politicians ordinarily become interested in foreign and national security policy in democracies were available to conservative politicians. There was no need for those aspiring to the position of Prime Minister or Foreign Minister to demonstrate interest in or develop policy expertise in this area because policy expertise

had nothing to do with their ability to reach these positions or retain these positions. This explains why most politicians with policy expertise in foreign affairs tried to hide this expertise. It is not hard to see that the product of this bias in campaigning is that Japanese citizens are decidedly less nationalistic than citizens of Western countries are often led to believe. After all, citizens of Western countries are subject to campaigns in which “the nation” and other nations are talked about.

9.1.3 Electoral Institutions Leave Powerful Legacies

For comparative politics, my dissertation contributes to the growing research agenda on the impact of electoral systems on policy outcomes. I confirm this impact in the realm of foreign and national security policy. Far from being a theory to explain the positions parties take during election campaigns, I show that electoral incentives explain why politicians become interested in the issues they do. I confirm that a shift in electoral incentives will cause politicians to become interested in issues they were not previously interested in. My research provides strong evidence that the injection of politicians into Japan’s foreign and national security policy is causing “Japan”, if it may be labelled as such, to choose different foreign policies.

My findings also show, however, that electoral systems leave powerful and unanticipated legacies. Some legacies are physical, and exist in the material benefits held by groups organized to facilitate the re-election of politicians under the previous electoral system. These groups will use any and all weapons at their disposal to push their politicians to continue providing them with the same benefits under the new system. The weapon they possess is very simple: their ability to credibly threaten to run another candidate and split

the conservative vote. If policy was controlled by the party leader, politicians would be able to credibly claim that their hands were tied and they possessed no influence of any use to their constituents. But conservative politicians have not yet deemed it in their interests to do anything of the sort. This is because concentrating power in the hands of the party leader, while good for the party, could lead to the passage of policies that could anger these groups and threaten their chances of re-election. It is a classic collective action problem.

Besides explaining an important empirical puzzle, the value-added of applying a theory that has been shown to hold in a number of different settings to a new policy area is modification of the theory and the unearthing of new research questions. My research makes the following contributions to comparative politics. The first is that while politicians appear to have an instinctive grasp of what they need to do to get re-elected, and can adapt their electoral strategies to the new environment, the construction of new institutions and the demobilizing of old institutions takes longer. Cox' landmark study of the origins of the modern parliament in Great Britain does not explain how the equilibrium of centralized parties and a concentration of power in the Cabinet was actually reached (Cox 1987). We know that this equilibrium produces party-centered campaigns, programmatic appeals, and policies for the median voter, which should theoretically provide for a more efficient way of campaigning under Japan's configuration of electoral rules than the converse, candidate-centered campaigns, pork-heavy budgets, and benefits for organized groups, but we know very little about how politicians can coordinate their behavior to reach this equilibrium.

The variation in proportions of the average conservative candidate manifesto devoted to public and private goods in the five elections since the introduction of the new system suggests that the influence wielded by these groups is lower in some elections than in others, and may be declining over time. Future research should compare present-day Japan

with nineteenth century England to figure out how politicians can either demobilize these groups or convert them to loyal bastions of partisan support. My findings suggest that it was less the extension of suffrage in nineteenth century Great British that caused the shift from pork to policy, but the removal of two-member districts. What the case of Japan tells us loud and clear is no matter how many people vote, and how rich a country is, politicians will still find pork useful if the institutions tell them to do so.

The research presented here also suggests that another legacy bequeathed a new electoral system by the old lies in the ideas and frames developed by actors to realize their interests. A particularly strong frame in Japan today is the idea that strong leadership is antithetical to democracy. Conservative politicians deride the idea of everyone in the party competing on the same message as a “communist-style campaign”. They argue that concentrating too much power in the party would rob Japanese politics of “politicians with independent minds”. Politicians constantly speak of the need to “democratize the party leadership”, justifying this in terms of “fairness”. Strong leaders are always portrayed as greedy, power-hungry, and dictator-like. Like peace, this was also an important element of the platform of the opposition parties under SNTV-MMD. It is no wonder that conservative politicians adopted it, because more power for someone else means less power for them. Whereas peace mania is slowly declining, however, this frame is not. Several of my interviewees shared with me their feelings on the matter: “The idea of strong leadership makes me feel sick, to be honest. It’s just not us, the Japanese people, to exercise strong leadership”.³ The continued resonance of this frame, sixteen years after the passage of electoral reform, suggests that Japan may not ever develop the equilibrium of parties with control tower-like structures. Instead, they may choose to switch the electoral system back to SNTV-MMD.

³Interview, Head of International Bureau, LDP, December 19 2008.

My findings about the kind of issues politicians chose to use in campaigns under MMM suggests that countries that switch their electoral system from a system that encourages politicians to provide private goods to a system that encourages them to provide public goods are likely go through an extended period in which most of the groups who received benefits under the old system are bashed. While this strategy is not entirely non-targetable, because it cannot capture the support of voters who are in that category, however small, it appears to work based on the degree to which these groups can be cast as villains. Interestingly, the only group that has managed to cling to its privileged position after the introduction of MMM is the farmers. Future research should address what made this interest group able to retain its hold on politicians and not become the target of bullying.

While the message that electoral systems matter and leave legacies that can take years to undo applies equally to all democracies, I offer one reason to believe that their impact in Japan, and therefore the strength of the legacy to be undone, may be larger than in other Western democracies. This is because of the way information reaches voters in Japan. Like most countries, it reaches voters through the news media. But the news media in Japan is restricted, for the most part, to stories originating in Japan. While the news media will look outside the country for big stories, especially anything to do with the U.S.-Japan relationship and how Japan is viewed on the world stage, its relatively weak command of the English language limits its ability to collect information from outside of Japan. This is not a trivial point. As Susan J. Pharr, Ellis Krauss, Laurie Anne Freeman and others have so richly portrayed, the news media in Japan gets most of its information from the movers and shakers of Japanese society: the politicians and the bureaucrats (Pharr and Krauss 1996; Freeman 2000). The vast network of press clubs, which have permanent abodes in the buildings of the Diet, political parties, interest groups, unions, and government ministries,

serve as the major source of news. Within the LDP, the Hirakawa Press Club gets a whole floor to itself. Reporters are free to roam the hallways, putting ears to the door as they see fit. Stories of young journalists sleeping four hours a night and engaging in “night attacks” on politicians’ homes for information are part of the lore of Japanese politics. If politicians are acting with even half an eye toward the next election, they will be talking about issues of concern to their constituents.

While bureaucrats might possess the ability to monopolize information, this is more likely to pertain to the solution to a problem defined by politicians, rather than the definition of the problem itself. The definition of the problem is the purview of the politician. It is not hard to see that this information structure biases whatever politicians choose to define as a problem. This might have the effect of magnifying the impact of electoral incentives on political outcomes in Japan. And it may create an even tougher institutional legacy to undo than in countries where the media have more diversified sources of information.

In sum, this dissertation has provided the first evidence to date that conservative Japanese politicians have stopped relying on private goods and presumably, the personal ties and social obligations that went along with these private goods, and are instead appealing to voters based on national-level issues. I join Steven Reed in claiming that the days in which conservative candidates could win elections in Japan by saying “we will discuss it thoroughly and take all opinions into account” are over (Reed 2005, 283). As a candidate from the DPJ exclaimed in his manifesto, “Its a policy contest!”⁴ The language politicians use to talk to voters has shifted from a pleading, humble, even fawning tone under SNTV-MMD to a confrontational, straight-talking style under MMM. The interests of voters in urban areas, who were cut out of the system of spoils set up under the old electoral system, are finally finding voice in Japanese politics. Japanese voters are increasingly being presented

⁴Goto Hiroshi, DPJ, 2003.

Chapter 9. Conclusion

with different sides of the same issues in elections today and being asked to decide which side they are on. These are momentous changes in Japanese politics, and their effects on democracy in Japan will be long lasting.

Appendix A

Qualitative Interpretations of Remaining Topics

The 4th topic is **Fixer-Upper for the District**. Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic pledged their devotion to solving problems in the wards, towns, and communities within their districts, drawing a distinction between them and politicians who “forget all about the problems at home after arriving in Nagatachō”.¹ The word “policy” was used almost as a keyword, with one candidate pledging to try their best to “realize policies for the community” (*chiiki seisaku*) and another advertising themselves as “a new breed of policy-oriented politicians” (*seisaku shinjinrui*). Candidates named specific problems in their district they would address if elected. These included problems of traffic congestion in various sub-regions of the district, which they would correct by building more roads; depopulation, which they would alleviate by adopting measures to enliven the local economy; difficulty in accessing adequate medical care by residents of the district, which they would alleviate by trying to increase the number of doctors; and “pain” caused by structural re-

¹Japan’s Capitol Hill.

form at the national level, which they would try to alleviate by making sure the community was looked after.

One candidate promised to improve his town's level of disaster preparedness by building a "disaster prevention park". Another candidate promised to improve the fire-fighting capacity of towns in his district by improving the region's "fire-fighting administration" (*shōbō gyōsei*). Another candidate pledged to move forward with a redevelopment project that would "make our community into a model of residence for the entire country", in which "traffic problems were taken care of and humans could live in harmony with nature". Other candidates pledged to build a "barrier-free" town, kind to the elderly and the disabled". Improving residents' "access to the environment" was a popular promise, as well as promising to consider nuclear, sun, and wind power instead of thermal power.

The 12th topic is **Economic Recovery**. Candidates pledged to "devote great effort" to recover Japan's economy. This was "the very first responsibility", one candidate told voters, the government ought to pay attention to. "Let's be healthful, Japan!" (*genki wo dasō nippon!*), candidates told voters. "Let's have our voices reflected in national policy!", other candidates implored. Genuine economic stimulus packages were necessary, candidates explained, to put Japan's brightening economy "back on track" (*kidō ni noseru*). While candidates tended to be vague on the specifics, several candidates promised to "reduce taxes on corporations and fixed assets" and "tackle reform of inheritance tax". Other candidates offered their vision of the kind of economy Japan should aim for: "an economy in which the efforts of working people are rewarded". While the overall theme of this topic was economic recovery, candidates also promised to recover "Japan", "the creativity and originality for which Japanese people are famous", "Japan's beautiful nature", "the desire for a challenge", and "the trust of the international community".

The 13th topic is **Vision for Japan**. The source of Japan's current malaise, candidates told voters, was "a loss of vision" and "a loss of will" (*kokorozashi*). Candidates running from the Liberal Party promised to "build an independent nation based on individual freedom and creativity". Other candidates claimed that they would "introduce a society where individuals could compete fairly with one another under just conditions". Candidates described their vision for Japan's future and offered concrete "nation-building" promises. Candidates promised that they would "respect history and tradition", "bring back the hearts and the pride of Japanese people", and "transform Japanese society from a self-interested society to an enlightened society", in which people enjoyed "disciplined freedom" (*kiritsu no aru jiyū*). Other candidates promised to "contribute to the peace and environment of the earth", "recover the energy of Japan's economy", and realize a society in which "people can live with their own energy".

Accompanying these national visions were concrete policy promises. With regard to education, candidates declared that compulsory education was the government's responsibility and Saturday would be designated a day of moral education, in which "children would be taught morals and the rules of a group-oriented lifestyle in the home". They promised to reform the "unjust and undemocratic system of public works" by introducing legislation that penalized those who peddled influence by introducing jobs to companies behind the scenes (*assen*). To deal with the labor shortages that were projected to occur in the future, candidates promised to enact legislation requiring companies to re-employ women (or men) who chose to stop working to raise children after their children had graduated from high school. They also promised to enact legislation to guarantee some modicum of employment to retired persons. In order to create a "new, Japan-style economic model" (*nihon gata keizai moderu*), candidates promised to provide free internet access for the entire

country. With regard to the environment, candidates promised to “realize a society that recycled its resources”. With regard to taxation, candidates promised to introduce a “fair tax system” so that people could do their taxes by themselves, which would be facilitated by a 50% reduction on income and residence tax. Candidates promised to use the consumption tax to fund the Basic Pension and medical and nursing care for the elderly *only*. Several candidates lamented the fact that Japan was an economic superpower but its citizens did not enjoy a high standard of living and promised voters to aim for a society in which people’s lifestyles were treated as more important than industry.

The 15th topic is **Political and Administrative Reform**. “Japan is sinking”, declared one candidate. “If we don’t correct politics”, another candidate told his constituents, “Japan won’t become any better”. As candidates saw it, Japan was two steps away from “genuine structural reform”, which would “revitalize Japan”. The first was for voters to bring to life a DPJ government, which would be “free of political shackles” (*shigarami no nai*). The second was for this new government to carry out “fundamental political reform” to break up the elaborate system of interlocking special interests that existed between bureaucrats and *zoku giin*. Only once these benefits were removed could Japan truly have a small government. Candidates explained to voters that vested interests produced an unwieldy and bloated government with low levels of transparency and huge costs for the average citizen. “Small government”, these candidates reassured voters, would not mean a reduction in the quality of service provided by the government. Rather, it would mean a reduction in tax because of all the unnecessary administrative cost and waste in the budget demanded by the system of collusion. Candidates promised to destroy these collusive ties and introduce healthy economic competition to Japan by developing a new administrative system that would need much less economic regulation. “Instead of the public sector monopolizing

the provision of public goods”, one candidate told voters, “I will realize a politics that is not afraid to harness the power of the private sector in nation-building” (min no chikara wo kuni zukuri ni). One candidate promised to do this by establishing NPOs to facilitate the provision of public goods. Other candidates promised to get rid of amakudari, the practice by which bureaucrats “descend from heaven” into lucrative, post-retirement jobs in the private sector. Other candidates simply stated that they would realize reform of “the economy”, “tax system”, “the education system” and “the Diet”. Candidates also promised to realize community sovereignty and protect the earth’s natural environment.

The 23rd topic is **Credit-claiming: Lawmaking**. Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic advertised their accomplishments in the Diet. Candidates listed the number of times they had attended plenary sessions and committee meetings in the Diet, the number of times they had asked questions in the Diet, the Dietmember Leagues they had established or were members of, the pieces of private member legislation they had sponsored, assisted with, or voted for, and other bills they had been instrumental in achieving the passage of. They often listed the progress of this legislation (when it had been submitted, when it had been passed, or when it was expected to be submitted or passed). Legislation candidates claimed to have played a major role in passing included legislation to protect consumers damaged by faulty commercial products; legislation to publicize mistakes made by doctors at public hospitals; legislation to require banks to explain their decisions not to lend money to businesses; legislation to protect taxpayers’ rights; legislation to abolish politicians’ pensions and reduce the pension received by bureaucrats; legislation to require the presence of lawyers when suspects were questioned by police; legislation to prohibit smoking while walking; and legislation to protect human rights from surveillance cameras and other systems for citizen identification such as Juki Net. Other candidates spoke of their

efforts to expose the attempts of bureaucrats to cover up the fact that they had let untreated blood products infect a large proportion of Japan's haemophiliac population. Several candidates appealed to their intimate knowledge of "the law" given their former occupation of lawyer, arguing that this gave them the power to "take on the bureaucracy".

The 24th topic is **Welfare and Medical Care**. Under the headings "Protecting Lives and Livelihoods", "Livelihoods First!", and "Toward a Small Government!", candidates promised to reduce the burden on ordinary people and redirect government spending toward welfare. The first major plank in their platform was opposition to the consumption tax. Every candidate opposed the tax, with many declaring their "staunch opposition" (*danko toshite hantai*). One candidate told voters that an increase in the consumption tax was a "matter of life or death for low-income earners and those living on welfare" (*shikatsuteki mondai*). Candidates criticized both reasons the LDP had given for increasing the tax: the first being the need to fund the Nursing Care Insurance Program and the second being the need for fiscal reconstruction. Tax increases, candidates explained, meant a larger government and more government services, rather than less. But the new Nursing Care Insurance foisted the costs of the service onto Japanese citizens and not the government! "If the government needed to undertake fiscal reconstruction", the candidate went on, "why doesn't it cut other distortions in the budget, such as military spending. Maintaining and expanding military spending in this day and age is like pouring water into a bucket with a hole in the bottom", this candidate declared. Instead of raising the consumption tax, candidates promised to cut waste in the government's budget and create "a slim, functional government".

In keeping with their focus on welfare, candidates promised to "devote great effort" (*zenryoku tokyū*) to building "a system of medical and welfare administration for the el-

derly” (iryō fukushi gyosei) and to correcting problems associated with the new Insurance under the guiding principle of “all lives are equal”. Candidates also promised to “realize a comprehensive package of fiscal, financial, and industrial structure reforms to enliven society and ensure that everyone has stable employment”. Many candidates also promised to reform the education system from a system based “on rote-learning to pass entrance exams” (juken kyōiku) to a system that placed greater emphasis on a combination of “intellectual, moral, and physical education” (chi, toku, taiiku). Many candidates also promised to reform Japan’s foreign policy from a “foreign policy of subservience to the U.S. to a foreign policy of independence” (taibei tsuisho gaiko kara jishu gaiko he no tenkan), create “a Japan that can contribute to the world”, and push for “a compact, sharp, new defense policy”.

The 27th topic is **Investing in Young People**. Candidates declared their commitment to nurturing “the generation of the future”, and promised to build “a society in which the next generation can live happily”. Candidates mentioned problems ranging from the violent crimes committed by schoolchildren to selfishness, irresponsibility, and bullying in schools, which one candidate told voters was the product of a lack of discipline in the home. “While Japan may be a rich country”, another candidate declared, “people’s hearts are not rich”. “No Member of the Diet today”, another candidate pointed out, “is doing anything about the problem of bullying in our schools!” Candidates declared their intention to “change everything. From education up”. Instead of articulating concrete proposals for changes, candidates concentrated on articulating the problems as they viewed them and emphasizing their own qualifications (as mothers, women, doctors, or a young person) to deal with them. “As a mother, and as a women, I am dead serious about education. I want to re-parent Japan” (nihon wo sodate naoshitai). A young candidate told his voters: “I will work toward

a tomorrow full of hope using my youth, my fortitude, and my fighting spirit” (wakasa to fusshoku no toshi de kibō ni michita ashita he ooku hiyaku).

Other candidates went beyond the importance of education and nurturing Japan’s youth to present voters with their visions of the ideal society and the role of politics: “Politics is people-building and people-raising”, one candidate said. “Answering all your voices is my job! I will implement your voice as if it was my own. I will treat everything that makes you fearful and angry as if it was making me fearful and angry!”, said another. Yet another candidate stated: “Politics is not only for a certain kind of person. It is the task of politics to realize everybody’s dreams and hopes, and to give our children a better future. I promise to examine Japan’s current condition critically, and never forget the importance of reform. I will apply my youth and passion to politics!” Another stated: “What is needed in politics is reform. A fresh new force is an adaptable force!” (shinsenryoku ha sokusenryoku). Other candidates articulated their images of society: “a fair society”; “a society in which the pain of others is one’s own pain”; and “a society in which people who work hard are rewarded and people who have little are helped”. While this topic contained a dose of candidates’ self-advertising of their own credentials, the emphasis was on building a bright future for Japan by nurturing Japan’s youth.

The 28th topic is **Protecting People**. Drawing attention to the “many problems afflicting present-day Japan”, such as the growing rate of unemployment and bankruptcy due to firm restructuring, defects in the nation’s system of pensions and nursing care, and the difficulty of raising children, candidates told their voters that they could no longer rely on the “evil government” (akusei) of the LDP and the Kōmeitō. Candidates decried the fact that Japanese society had become “bifurcated” (nikyokubunka), and blamed it on the policies of the Koizumi government. “The introduction of a market economy into Japan has destroyed

people's lives and has made everything about earning more money" (mōke no tame no kyōsō), one candidate declared. Candidates promised a raft of policies designed to "protect people", all of which would have the effect of "reassuring people in their every-day lives". Candidates promised to protect "Japan's agriculture" (nihon nōgyō) and increase the national self-sufficiency rate in foodstuffs. They pledged to oppose gentan, restrict imports of agricultural products and livestock, prevent "evil revisions" of the system of price protections for farmers of rice and sweet potatoes; and "aim for the establishment of a system in which producers could feel reassured". Other candidates extended these promises to fishermen (pledging to develop a system for better management of fishery resources in coastal areas), and forestry (pledging to protect the timber industry from foreign pressure).

Aside from farmers, candidates promised to implement a "social security system based on supporting each other" (sasaeau, wakachiau shakai hōshō seido). As part of this, they promised to realize a Nursing Care Insurance with no added fees. They would stop the slashing of pension benefits. They would stop the increase in health insurance fees. They would stop the introduction of a fixed payment for medical care for the elderly. They pledged to get rid of the phenomenon of pension-less persons (munenkinsha wo zero) and raise the portion of the Basic Pension borne by the government to one-half of the total. With regard to employment, candidates pledged to establish a Workers' Contract Law to prevent unjust layoffs and eliminate age-based discrimination, which would improve the re-employment prospects of mid-career and elderly workers. Candidates also pledged to raise the minimum wage and revise the Worker Dispatch Law. Many candidates expressed their staunch opposition to a tax increase that would hurt white-collar workers, and pledged to revise the nations' regressive tax policy, which favors high-income earners. Candidates also pledged to stimulate what they defined as the "mainstay of the Japanese economy" (nihon

keizai no shuyaku): small- and medium-sized enterprises and local merchants. They would increase the budget for these businesses, prevent the “unbridled expansion of large stores” (ōgataten no muchitsujo na shinshutsu), stop the “bullying of sub-contractors”, and adopt rules to protect companies from a reluctance to lend by commercial banks (kashishiburi). They pledged to shift government spending from “the wasteful construction of artificial islands” and other large public works projects to welfare and peoples’ livelihoods.

The 38th topic is **Local Facilities and Infrastructure**. Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic promised to provide and improve all manner of facilities and services for the cities and towns in their districts, using a matter-of-fact (non-nostalgic) tone and words such as jimito (“my local”). Many of these candidates were from urban districts, and invariably complained that their cities received less subsidies from the government and were victims of an unfair tax system that privileged rural areas. Citizens in urban areas were also victims of excessive government regulation, which made the prices of goods imported from rural areas more expensive than they ought to be. Candidates promised to dilute these regulations, shift more of the government’s budget to the city, and provide a new budget to improve transportation, housing, and other public infrastructure (yosanka suru). The problems addressed by candidates who had rural areas within their district were different, but the approach, investing in local services and infrastructure, was the same. Candidates pledged a raft of policies designed to improve life in rural areas, including increasing the number of doctors, providing at-home care for the elderly, encouraging cooperation among rice farmers to reduce the amount of rice grown each year, building universities in the prefecture so that children could study closer to home, improving transportation systems, and promoting native industries and commerce. Candidates from both urban and rural districts promised to devote more energy to “town-building” (machi

zukuri) and “community-building” (chiiki zukuri), and promised to develop town planning that brought “the uniqueness and individuality of local towns” within their purview to the fore.

The 39th topic is **Saving the Natural Environment**. Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic promised to implement a barrage of policies to protect the water, ground, air, and “the greenery”. One candidate pledged to “protect our beautiful, peaceful earth from environmental destruction by establishing an Earth Day”. Another candidate pledged his support for “conservation of the earth’s natural environment by actively sponsoring citizens’ movements”. While some candidates spoke generally, others named bays, rivers, and areas of their district whose natural environment they would devote their utmost to try and conserve. Candidates offered numerous imaginative solutions, such as establishing “green culture zones” to protect rivers (midori no bunka en). Another candidate promised to realize “a politics that is kind to people and kind to the environment” (hito to shizen ni yasashī seiji). “The 20th century was a century of environmental destruction”, another candidate explained, “I promise to make the 21st century a century of being kind to the environment”. Another candidate promised to get rid of genetically-modified food, prohibit the construction of resorts that ruin the natural environment, and prohibit the use of “environmental hormones that ruin the ecosystem”. Other candidates promised to support industries that invested in the acquisition of environmentally-friendly technologies, while yet others promised to pass legislation to restrict gas emissions, as “a step toward preventing more air pollution”. Another candidate promised to encourage the use of biotechnology and organic farms to improve the quality and safety of agricultural products, and suggested that Japan ought to export its environmentally-friendly technology to the rest of the world. One candidate told his voters that he wanted to change his party, the Social Democratic

Party, to the “the Green Party”.

The 46th topic is **Credit-claiming: District**. Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic advertised their accomplishments in the district. One candidate from Kagoshima advertised his successful siting of a national oil storage station in his district, his completion of an airport for his district, his completion of several large-scale construction and land reclamation projects, his creation of an industrial zone in a bay within the district, his securing of the entry of new businesses into the district, his obtaining of permission from central government ministries for these businesses to make the products they wanted to in the district, and his securing of more favorable taxes on products made by companies in his region. Some candidates provided laundry lists of the subsidies they had obtained for industries in their district, often naming the recipient companies and including the dates the subsidies were obtained and the amount in yen. One candidate declared that while he didn’t have a *jiban* (a firm base of support), a *kanban* (a high level of name recognition), or a *kaban* (lots of money),² he was making tremendous efforts in other ways: “I gave 16 podium speeches this year”, “I am the most knowledgeable politician on the history issue and published an article on this subject in the magazine *Bungei Shunju*”, and “My email magazine is the best in the country. I have published 500 issues!” Another candidate boasted about the number of pamphlets he had printed and distributed to *kōenkai* members over the past year, the number of town meetings he had held in his community, and the number of times he had driven around his district in a car to “converse with constituents”.

The 50th topic is **Catching Up With The Rest Of Japan**. Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic bemoaned the fact that while Japan’s international image was one of a wealthy, prosperous country, the feeling of wealth was not felt in their prefec-

²The three most important assets for a career in Japanese politics. See Stockwin (2003, 81) for a nice description.

ture. “Do we, in Aomori prefecture,” one candidate asked, “feel the benefits of the wealth for which Japan is now world famous?” Candidates argued that “much stronger support” (*kyōryoku na sasae*) from the central government was necessary for their prefecture to be able to experience Japan’s growing prosperity. Candidates presented numerous proposals to enrich and enliven their prefecture. They promised to work actively to nurture local businesses, relax regulations on economic activity, and “put extra effort into stimulating industries that manufacture products unique to our prefecture”. “While the information, welfare, and leisure industries were those that held the most promise for the 21st century,” one candidate explained, “our prefecture should concentrate on developing a strong base in industries that do not require geographic proximity to Tokyo, such as intelligence software, technology, and tourism”. Developing a niche in these industries would do wonders for the employment situation for our young people, this candidate explained. Another candidate promised to improve the air, land, and sea transportation system in their prefecture, which “would enable our Aomori to become a lively northern hub”, through which people, things, money, and information could flow to overseas trading ports in Russia and China.

Another candidate told voters that the government had recently established a Food Safety Commission to guard against and provide for effective punishment against the mislabelling of food. “What this means”, the candidate explained, “is that the government is switching to a policy that favors consumers over producers and distributors. This is a real chance for the producers in luscious Aomori prefecture!” The candidate went on to propose a system of food labelling that made use of the clean, fresh image of Aomori farmers. “If consumers can see the faces of the farmers who produce their food, they will feel more secure. I will make an Aomori Brand that will expand the sales of our food”. Other common pledges were to expand the shinkansen into additional areas of the prefecture, designate

certain areas of the prefecture as technopolis, and build more engineering schools and universities in the prefecture.

The 54th topic is **Economic Stimulus**. Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this topic promised to do their best to “recover from the recession caused by the expensive yen” (*endaka fukyō no kokufuku*) and “prevent a tax increase”. Candidates described the actions of Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro in dissolving the Diet and holding elections for both the HOR and the HOC at the same time as actions bordering on “tyranny”. They decried the fact that Nakasone had completely ignored the cross-partisan agreement hammered out just prior to the dissolution. His actions suggested, they continued, that he didn’t care about the serious economic recession Japan was in, which required “political leadership, not a political vacuum” (*seiji kuuhaku*). Nevertheless, as one candidate put it: “While I continue to abhor Nakasone’s actions, I have accepted them. Bolstered by my strong sense of morality, I promise to realize a change in policy”.

Candidates told voters that the economy of Japan and their very own lives were facing a crisis with the expensive yen. They would do their very best to implement “powerful measures to deal with the expensive yen” (*kyōryoku na endaka taisaku*) and “prevent a tax increase aimed at the masses” (*taishu zōzei soshi*). They would increase internal demand by expanding public works and reducing income and residence tax. They would “strengthen measures for employment” and “measures for small- and medium-sized enterprises”. While the LDP was mulling over the introduction of a large-scale indirect tax, candidates assured voters that they would staunchly oppose the introduction of “any new tax aimed at the masses” and “would work to correct the unfair tax system”. “If the Democratic Socialist Party increases its seat share”, candidates told voters, “we can stop the tyranny of the LDP!” (*jimintō no ōbō wo osae*). “As a party for Japanese citizens” (*koku-*

min taishō no tō toshite), one candidate told voters, “the Democratic Socialist Party will work to create a democratic political system and stabilize the political situation”. “The LDP has been in power now for 37 years, which has created a trinity between the government, the bureaucracy, and large corporations. “Political evil is being exposed everywhere and the citizens are dissatisfied with this situation”, the candidate went on. “Changing this situation is our most important task. We have gone into this election with a mission to change this situation”.

The 55th topic is **Fiscal Reconstruction**. Candidates told voters to think about the “shape of your nation” (kono kuni no katachi). “Use your vote to change Japan!”, candidates implored. Genuine fiscal reconstruction, candidates told voters, will not be realized by raising taxes, but by structural reform of the government and the government’s sources of revenue. Candidates promised to “force through” administrative and fiscal reform to deal with the rapidly-expanding government deficit. They pledged to work toward the “privatization of the three branches of the government-owned postal service”, the “restructuring of government ministries and agencies” (shōchō saihen), the “elimination and consolidation of semi-governmental corporations” (tokushu hōjin no seiri tohaigō), and the “privatization of all other government-affiliated agencies”. “If you want us to cut wasteful spending and the number of government employees”, one candidate explained, “we will have to find a way to reduce the workload of government employees. If goods and services are left to the private sector, the private sector will invest in the right infrastructure and the right employees it needs to be able to provide the people with these goods and services. The private sector will also pay tax. At the moment, the bureaucracy does the same work as the private sector, but uses our tax money and doesn’t pay any tax.” This candidate continued: “The work the government does should be limited to that which is absolutely essential for our

livelihoods. In order to revitalize Japan's economy without raising taxes, we have to let the private sector do what the private sector can do!" (minkan ni dekirukoto ha minahe he). This candidate told voters that all postal services except for mail delivery were services that were "already being provided by the private sector". It is better to leave these services to the private sector, he reiterated.

Other candidates recognized the importance of privatization of government agencies in the path toward fiscal reconstruction, but proposed a more modest, three-stage process, of economic stimulus policies, structural reform of the economy, and then fiscal reconstruction. Other candidates promised to "bring back the health of Japan's economy", telling voters honestly, "We won't be able to avoid a plan that imposes some pain, but we will try to distribute this pain fairly". Candidates also promised to implement political reform, with many promising to introduce a system of direct election for the Prime Minister (shushō kōsensei). This would, candidates explained, "take the selection of the Prime Minister to the Japanese people rather than keeping it in the hands of politicians". "We need take politics out of Nagatachō and put it into the hands of the people", one candidate implored. Other candidates promised to lower the age at which Japanese people became adults and could vote, with the aim of giving both young and old people a sense of responsibility toward society. Other candidates promised to do something about the low level of political trust, which they argued could be fixed with legislation ensuring the transparency of political donations. Other candidates promised to introduce a federal system using the eleven Lower House blocs as one administrative unit. "I won't waste your vote", candidates entreated.

The 56th topic is **Health and Leisure Infrastructure**. Candidates drew mental pictures of the kind of "town" ("a town of dreams, which incorporates the perspectives of the

elderly and the disabled”), the kind of “society” (“a society in which both men and women have equal opportunities”), and the kind of “education system” (“a fulfilling educational system that gives young people dreams and hopes”) they wanted to build for their district. After drawing these pictures, candidates proposed plans for the construction of health, welfare, medical, leisure, and sports facilities in their respective districts. A candidate running in Kagoshima promised to “make the Amami Islands into a place of life and welfare” (*kat-suryoku ni michita fukushi no shima*). The candidate described how expensive goods were on these islands compared with the rest of Japan and even Okinawa. Depopulation, economic recession, people leaving their families behind to work elsewhere (*dekasegi*): these were all problems suffered by the residents of these islands. This candidate promised to reduce freight prices, stimulate agriculture, fishing, and tourism, and invite non-polluting industries to set up camp there. In addition, he promised to make Amami into a “Welfare Island” by building hospitals with the latest in medical technology (“so that the elderly could receive full-time nursing care without worrying their children”) and leisure facilities such as gateball and tennis courts, a marina, ocean-front hotels, hang-gliding facilities, and everything else necessary to make Amami into a “healthy resort island”. After declaring his commitment to an ideology in which every life is treated equally, a candidate from Okinawa pledged to construct a flagship hospital in Naha City with 600 beds and smaller hospitals in the surrounding islands, each with 100 beds. “If we improve medical and welfare facilities in the prefecture”, the candidate argued, “we can cater not only to residents of the surrounding islands but also to the people of Southeast Asia. These facilities will provide a huge boon to the tourism industry, such that its revenue could reach a trillion yen a year.” The candidate argued that promoting medical and welfare facilities on the islands would “provide both reassurance to the elderly and jobs for young people”. Other

candidates proposed very similar plans for their respective districts.

The 57th topic is **Credit-claiming: Posts**. This topic is epitomized by the slogan “I will make use of my experience and accomplishments” (keiken to jisseki wo ikashite). Candidates used posts they had held in the legislature, the party, in local government, and in the private sector to advertise their ability to “get things done for the district”, often linking the post to specific promises. After pointing out that “in an internationalized world, Japanese agriculture will have to take into account the concerns of other countries”, one candidate declared “I hope to use my experiences and accomplishments as Chief of the International Bureau, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Deputy-Chief of the LDP’s Special Committee on General Agriculture and Deputy-Chief of the LDP’s Special Committee on Foreign Affairs to solve the problems facing Japanese agriculture today”. “Let me be of assistance to you”, the candidate asked voters. As Head of the Secretariat of the LDP’s Parliamentarian League for Automobiles, I promise to work furiously for this industry” (shishi funjin), promised another candidate. “Employing five million workers, the automobile industry is the mainstay of the Japanese economy” (yataibone). Yet another candidate stated “As Chief of the Cabinet Committee I promise to improve the benefits provided to former military veterans and their families”. “As Chair of the LDP’s Sub-Division on Education and Chair of the Standing Committee on Education in the House of Representatives”, another candidate declared, “I have worked hard to correct our rundown (kōhai shita) education system”.

The 61st topic is **Housing and Tax Policy**. Candidates whose manifestos scored highly on this category promised to implement policies for the “ordinary person” (shomin and seikatsusha). Candidates promised to abolish the consumption tax, which they described as a “tax that bullies ordinary people and widens the unfairness in the tax system”. They

promised to “realize a fundamental reform of the tax system after securing a popular consensus”. Candidates told voters: “rising land prices are making it difficult for people to buy their own homes. More and more people are renting”. They painted a bleak picture of modern Japan: “People suffer through commuter hell and long work hours. They experience no wealth in their daily lives. On top of that, they have to worry about what it will be like when they get old. Children, too, struggle with entrance exam hell and traffic battles”. Candidates promised to remedy this situation and realize a “richer lifestyle with more breathing space”. “I will protect your lifestyle”, many candidates promised.

For people who rent, candidates promised to designate rent a necessary expense and make it tax-deductible up to a certain point. For low-income households, candidates would provide a housing allowance. Other candidates promised to make rent that exceeded 15% of a person’s income available from the government in the form of a subsidy. Other candidates promised to reduce tax on fixed assets by designating 300 metres-squared of land and 100 metres-squared of housing as space necessary for living, and making this tax-deductible. With regard to inheritance tax, candidates promised to make under 200 metres-squared of a house exempt from the tax. Candidates promised to make part-time work (pāto) and work done in the home (naishoku) under a maximum of 1.2 million yen (approximately \$12,000 USD) tax-exempt, touting their achievements as having been the party who constructed this tax-exempt status for work done at home in the first place.

The 66th topic is **Social Security**. Candidates warned voters that in lieu of raising the consumption tax, Prime Minister Koizumi and the Tax Commission were about to make a huge change to personal income tax. They were planning to introduce a tax to the tune of 10 trillion yen, which would hit white-collar workers particularly hard. If personal income tax rises, candidates explained, so will residence tax and fees for medical and nursing care.

The combined increase of personal income tax, residence tax, and medical and nursing care would increase citizens' tax burden by a whopping 17 trillion yen each year. If Koizumi won the election, candidates declared, the new tax would definitely be introduced. Something else a Koizumi government had in store for voters was a reduction in spending on social security. Candidates explained that Koizumi was planning to cut spending in the following year's budget, especially spending on welfare for the disabled. Candidates pledged to stop Koizumi from "writing off social welfare" (*shakai hōshō kirisute ni*). If elected, they told voters they would replace the existing legal framework for dealing with disabled persons, including the system of income protection, none of which could deal with any kind of serious illness, with a new, comprehensive Law for the Welfare of the Disabled. Candidates would cut the 50 trillion yen being spent each year on public works, and redirect that money to social security. Many candidates criticized the huge proportion of the government's budget going to public works each year. In Aichi prefecture alone, one candidate lamented, the government was planning to build a new highway, a new airport, and a new dam, which were slated to cost taxpayers upwards of 4 trillion yen. If we redirect this money toward social security, the candidate explained, "we can deal with the aging society problem just like other countries in the G8 do, without raising taxes!"

Candidates also drew voter attention to the "crisis" that had befallen the nation's pension system. After naming several problems, including the fact that the funding of the pension system came from insurance fees instead of taxation, candidates promised to create a "minimum security pension" (*saitei hōshō nenkin*) of 70,000 yen, which would be funded by the consumption tax. Candidates argued that abolishing the system of payment-via-insurance-fee would dissolve the problem of some people not having a pension. It would also stabilize the entire system's revenue supply. Candidates also drew voter attention to

the growing rates of unemployed freeters³ and neeters in Japan⁴, as well as those suffering from depression and committing suicide. Candidates promised to correct the imbalance between those with a full-time job and those with only a part-time job. They promised to establish a special account for employment insurance (*koyō hoken tokubetsu kaikei*), which would provide people who had lost their jobs with a monthly allowance of 10,000 yen (approximately \$100 USD), which they could use for training to develop their potential (*nōryoku kaihatsu*) or other activities to support their “return to work” (*saishuppatsu*). “We need to fix this unfair society!”, candidates exclaimed.

The 67th topic is **Nursing Care**. “Abolish the Nursing Care Insurance! Lets Regain the Humanity of our Welfare and Nursing Care System!”, one candidate declared. Candidates told voters that the Nursing Care Insurance was tantamount to the right to live being stolen by the government. “The right to live is heavier than the mountains, and should be awarded each person, equally”, the candidate continued. “Nursing care and welfare are public services that safeguard this basic right. We cannot abdicate our responsibility to provide adequate services”. Describing the Nursing Care Insurance as “stealing the will of the elderly to live”, this candidate declared that he would “abolish nursing care insurance” and “take back a welfare system that respects people’s rights”. The candidate promised to “deliver the cries of life to the Diet”. Another candidate recalled a conversation he had with a senior citizen in his district, in which the person had confessed that he could no longer afford the fee of the nursing care insurance so was debating whether to stop the care he had received up until now. Candidates promised to fix this situation by shifting budgetary allocations for public works toward social security. Several candidates named large-scale public works projects (usually dams) that they would stop the construction of if elected,

³Freeters are part-time job-hoppers.

⁴This is a word coined from the English word NEET, which refers to young people Not in Education, Employment, or Training.

Appendix A. Qualitative Interpretations of Remaining Topics

one describing these projects as “pre-election pork”. If we do this, candidates explained, we can increase government spending on nursing care, welfare, and medical care.

Other candidates promised to “protect the weak”, naming workers, women, children, the elderly, the disabled, and the sick in this category. Candidates also promised to “fight against the destruction of life that occurred with every layoff and every wage cut”. Candidates bemoaned the increasing instances of layoffs due to the economic recession and criticized the government for “catering extensively to large banks and General Construction”. “I will protect employment and make social security the centerpiece of the government’s budget”, candidates declared. Another candidate declared: “I will pass legislation to stop the ability of large corporations to lay off workers whenever they see fit, stop the bullying of small businesses, and protect livelihoods, employment, and the environment”. “From a land of gods”, one candidate declared, “I will make a nation for the people’.

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