

Why has Postwar Japan not produced any Statesmen?

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1 . Introduction

In the 1980's, Japan was so vibrant that Harman Khan was led to remark, "The 21st Century would be the century of Japan". Despite Japan's defeat in World War II, the basic structure of its political system survived with only minor modifications. These modifications were the abolition of Japanese militarism and most of the related governmental organizations and supporting structures by the American occupation forces as Japan's punishment for opposing America in the war. This was in line with the American goal during the war "to sweep away Japanese militarism." In Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan, one can see American efforts for the realization of its goals both internally and externally. Shigeru Yoshida, who took the political leadership in post-war reconstruction, used the pacifism based on Article 9 as an excuse not to meet American increased requirements for rearmament that resulted from the escalation of the Cold War, and instead set the strategic goal of national reconstruction as "light armament and establishment of an economic power." Two conservative parties were united for the common purpose of achieving this goal, with the primary manifestation of this being the newly formed Liberal Democratic Party's establishment of their so-called "55-year regime". The regime pursued solely the "economic giant" route, and in the 1980's, Japan successfully became the second largest economic power in the world. However, with the collapse of the former Soviet Union, the Cold War structure also collapsed, and this in turn led to the liberalization of Eastern Europe and its conversion to a market economy, and the ultimate union of West and East Germany. The "55-year regime", established under the prerequisite of a Cold War structure started to show its weaknesses and its reform was presented as political reform. In 1993 Ichiro Ozawa, then LDP Secretary-General, suggested "an ordinary state" as a new national strategic goal for the 21st century. Moreover, after many twists and turns, "political reform" was carried out in the form of electoral system reform, as well as promotion of decentralization and administrative reform. Some observers conclude that these reforms are still ongoing. Given that changing national objectives or transforming policy might destroy the existing privileges that major interest groups have acquired, or indeed might have an

impact on the rest of the world, it is a challenge for statesmen exercising superior political leadership. However, most of the politicians in Japan nowadays are second-generation politicians of a conservative party that reconstructed postwar Japan or the former secretaries of Diet members or government officials. They are surely veterans of coordinating conflicting interests, but there are few statesmen to be found in either the ruling or opposition parties. This explains the lack of any new major national goals aside from the one proposed by Ichiro Ozawa, and also why Japanese politics is adrift.

This paper discusses why there is no political leadership in postwar Japan, and focuses on two issues. The first issue addressed is the postwar political system that prevents statesmen from emerging, and the second addressed the problems associated with the party government, especially the lack of opposition parties capable of holding the reins of government. Both issues will be discussed in turn.

2 . Structural defects making it harder for statesmen to emerge

Since a bottom-up method is used in the decision-making process in Japan, those who are at the top of an organization or at the center of politics usually do not independently decide policies under their mandate. As a result, those inside and outside of the organization are rarely aware of reforms to the status quo or of changes to the course brought about by their leader's decision. But under the prewar Japan's Imperial Constitution only those at the top of the power structure could theoretically make a decision. Needless to say, the top was the emperor. An event which shouldn't have taken place did at the time of Japan's surrender to the Allied Forces. Under the imperial system, in which power and authority were concentrated, as the existing bottom-up system didn't work due to the impossibility of coordinating of conflicting opinions of whether Japan surrenders or not, the emperor under external pressure actually had to accept the Potsdam Declaration, which ended the war and led to Japan becoming a defeated country. This chain of events as the consequence of command-system was inevitable as consensus building from the bottom-up was impossible. Since the emperor had the authority, nobody could raise an objection to his sacred decision. By this decision the character of the political regime could have been changed. It goes without saying that this example was a rare phenomenon of the Taisho and Showa eras.

Under the postwar Japanese political system, the prime minister has all the authority that was shared between the Emperor and prime minister in the prewar era, and the system gave him the mandate to set and implement policies, which might change the political orientation. However, while the Emperor had authority as a result of his divine birth, in the postwar popular sovereignty system, the prime minister is given authority from the electorate, and in the real politics, such authority is procured by the ruling party.

Therefore, the party in power, which adopts a bottom-up method, chooses a prime minister based on approval and compromise of factions. Thus, he certainly has legal authority, but cannot make decisions on his own. If he makes decisions that go against the beliefs or value system shared among bodies of power or decisions without consensus among them, he cannot execute them because of not having real power and will be soon forced to step down when he loses the support of his own party. It was this structural problem that led to the lack of political leadership after Prime Ministers Yoshida and Kishi, which became apparent both inside and outside of Japan. Moreover, another factor needs to be considered, namely the Japan-U.S. security treaty arrangements.

According to the term-usage of modern political science, high politics refers to the international politics of one nation, and low politics to the domestic politics. The equivalent German terms are 'Grosse Politik' and 'Kleine Politik'. A modern state tries not to fall under the control of another state in continuous power struggles by diplomacy or, 'in the worst-case scenario' of failed diplomacy, by war. In other words, a state employs a different means of survival in order to continue "an extension of politics". National functions of diplomacy, defense, and war were performed only by the leader of an absolutist state before the modern state emerged. In a modern state, the top political leader is expected to perform these functions with the cooperation of organizations representing the people. Such duties were referred to as *arcane imperii* since the time of Machiavelli, and then more recently as "national reason" by Meinecke. The English term for these functions has long been *statecraft* (*Arcanum* of national politics/diplomacy). The exercise of these functions is called high politics in American modern political science. Otto von Bismarck, the founding-father of the German Empire, was a high politics expert, and most of the Japanese political leaders who became prime ministers during the Meiji era seem to have been statesmen and high politics experts. On the opposite end of the spectrum, domestic politics is referred to as low politics. This definition changes depending on the social structures of a given state, especially in the developmental stages of a capitalist economy. Low politics in a developed capitalist state during a postwar period can be characterized as a reconciliation of conflicting interests among plural interest groups. These experts are "political men" and are called politicians. According to Max Weber's definition, politicians are those who live 'off' politics.⁽¹⁾ In modern political science terms, they are the experts who play the role of mediator in bridging various interests of the people and government decision-making. Those politicians who share some common domestic political principles set up an association, and a party formed from that association articulates and aggregates the interests of the people and attempts to reflect them in government decision-making. These activities are called low politics. Under the "55-year system", which is also a symbiotic relationship among the government, bureaucracy, and business, a ruling party has

(1) M. Weber, *Politik als Beruf*, 6 Aufl., Duncker & Humblot, Berlin, 1977, S.16.

the rights of permission and approval against each field in the industrial circle and makes full use of information and the expertise of high-ranking bureaucrats, who are from each department in the central government and who give administrative advice. Such bureaucrats set policies that allow the ruling party to convert the interests of the industrial world, which in practice, controls the majority of the people in a socio-economic manner, into policies. However, these bureaucrats from each ministry not only know a great deal of the industrial circle in which they are engaged, but also have a network of personal contacts. Therefore, they are the people who in practice actually make the decisions. Since Japan is a country governed by the rule of law, national authorities do not make decisions unless they are enacted at the Diet through the established law-making process. Thus, there are standing committees at the Diet, which are set up as counterparts commensurating to each ministries in the government. The ruling party, LDP also has Policy Affairs Research Council, which corresponds to standing committees in Diet. Each member of LDP belongs to one of standing committees in Diet and at the same time one field of Policy Affairs Research Council. Thus the ruling party members aggregate requirements from the related industrial circle at the committees and convert them into governmental policies in cooperation with bureaucrats. This is the system that has been established under the "55-year regime". When bureaucrats on the career track retire, they parachute into the industrial world to which they previously gave administrative advice, or become LDP members after receiving a 'baptism' of election and convert to politicians. Currently, there is a new system in which these newly born politicians supervise younger bureaucrats and work with them to decide policies. Wolferen defines this system as "authoritarian bureaucracy"⁽²⁾, a term that is not entirely inappropriate. Politicians manipulate the adjustment of various interests, which is a major task for internal administration, and that inevitably forms "give and take" relations among them. Certain fields in the industrial circle are reflected in policies according to their priority and realized through national authorities. The industries, which received a great deal of benefit, contribute money to politicians and the ruling party, and moreover offer bureaucrats places to parachute in return. This is how structural corruption of "complementary supply" is formed. The mass media continuously reported on, and criticized, politicians for bribery and bureaucrats corruption under the "55-year regime", but this did not eliminate the problem. The reason is simple: the administration never changes. The regulatory function that is in theory the role of opposition parties, does not work in practice. Experts on interest adjustment or low politics are good at building bottom-up consensus and live 'off' politics. They have not been educated and trained as statesmen and cannot serve as statesmen even in the event that they are elected prime minister.

There are two reasons why statesmen cannot play a central role in poli-

(2) K. van Wolferen, *The Enigma of Japanese Power. People and Politics in a Stateless Nation*, 1989, p.33.

tics. One is the unique way in which political élites are recruited in the post-war system. The other reason is that national defense and related diplomacy are all dependant on America under the Japan-U.S. security treaty arrangements. The Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, and Defense Agency Director-General do not experience the necessity of staking their political lives on high politics, and thus, statesmen are never trained. Kimikazu Matsumoto, a member of the editorial board of Asahi Newspaper, describes the ideal statesmen by comparing Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin in an article entitled "Deadlock in Middle East peace talks" in "News Follow Through" of his Newspaper dated on January 8, 2001.

[Can Arafat handle this peace talk?-----.

This is the feeling I had when I was watching the Middle East peace talks at the year-end and New Year. I had the strong impression that the Palestinian Authority, President Arafat was postponing his decision. He was not compromising and was criticized by Palestinians, only asking for compromise from the other party. You need to stake your political life on negotiations that will decide the fate of the people. When you choose peace as a means, you try your best to make it a reality. Statesmen occasionally have to compromise even at the risk of offending their own people.

 In 1993, the late Israeli Prime Minister Rabin shook Arafat's hand in Washington and took a dramatic step toward rapprochement with an old enemy, the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization). He described the difficult events in this way. "I spent many sleepless nights till I knew what I was going to do. How could I make amends if it turned out that my decision was a mistake? This thought occupied my mind. However, once my mind was set, I had a good night's sleep."

He talked to his sister, Lahel (75 years old) when he made his final decision. "You do not sit on the Prime Minister's chair to feel good about it, but to reach your goal." He never changed his mind even though he ended up being assassinated by his fellow countryman.

Does President Arafat make such critical decisions? Currently, exclusive apartment buildings and resort hotels are under construction in Gaza in Palestine occupied territory. There are casinos in Jericho, most of which have connections to patronage by PLO leaders. All the Palestinians know about this. However, if newspapers write critical articles on this corruption, they will face harsh suppression. The people are frustrated with Arafat.
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Apart from the estimation of Israeli's nation-building and following territorial expansion activities, the fundamental character of Israeli politics can be characterized simply as high politics, and thus the politicians responsible for it, as statesmen. In contrast, Japanese politicians under the Japan-U.S. security treaty arrangements face a physical hurdle in their pursuit of becoming statesmen. As a result, only politicians who deal in low politics become prime minister. It is inevitable that outsiders would see this as a clear "lack of political leadership."

Ichiro Ozawa was at the top of the ruling party for a long time and knew a great deal of this "lack of political leadership". He emphasized the necessity of shifting the center of power of the government from bureaucrats to politicians in order to allow Japan to become an "an ordinary nation", and he played himself the role of reforming catalyst, which ultimately brought about a reorganization of ministries and agencies implemented in January 2001. The Cabinet Office, which played the role of a staff office, was established to support the political leadership of the Prime Minister. This system took as its model the supporting assistants of American presidential system, of which the major tasks are diplomacy and national defense. In the latter case, decision-making should be the top-down process characteristic of high politics. If so, the personnel system for civil servants also needs to be reformed to allow for a reshuffling of top leaders in ministries that must occur during a change in administration, like the American example. By the way, West Germany/new Germany, which has adopted a parliamentary cabinet system, also has a similar reshuffling system. Germany does have an appointment system for career civil servants like Japan, but there is flexibility in the system to allow a new leading party to appoint a third of the civil servants who are either division chiefs or in higher positions. As Germany has a federal system and at the same time is the political party-state (Parteienstaat), its decision-making process is complicated much more than any other countries by the "party politicization", "parliamentalism", and "federalism" of the national politics. But in practice party members initiate decision-making, and new ministers can appoint their party members to assistants and heads of divisions/or permanent secretary which are important for policy-making and its execution when the regime changes. Most of the staff in the "Chancellor's office" are also party members, since it helps the Chancellor exercise his political leadership.⁽³⁾ This is often described as chancellor democracy.⁽⁴⁾ Moreover, what is striking is that the Basic Law, the Constitution of West Germany, unlike Japan, guarantees that the Chancellor has political leadership. Article 53 of the Constitution of Weimar Republic has already established the Chancellor's authority as follows. "A Chancellor decides basic political policies and undertakes responsibilities for them against parliament. Under the framework of the basic policies, each minister exercises their consigned duties according to their responsibilities." Article 65 of the Basic Law [administrative authority and duties of the Chancellor] succeeded the same article as it was in the Constitution of Weimar Republic. The Chancellor has the right to decide "basic political policies" as well as to suggest appointments and/or dismissals of ministers and to supervise the administration of office duty. Thus, he exercises strong leadership. Indeed in

(3) K. H. Goetz, *Senior Officials in the German Federal Administration: Institutional Change and Positional Differentiation*, in: E. C. Page and V. Wright, ed., *Bureaucratic Élités in Western European States*, 1999, pp. 165-173; G. K. Roberts, *German Politics Today*, 2000, p.125.

(4) K. Niclauß, *Kanzlerdemokratie. Bonner Regierungspraxis von Konrad Adenauer bis Helmut Kohl*, 1988.

the Bonn Republic the same parliamentary cabinet system as a system of Republic of Weimar era is adopted, but the restrictions on political leadership of Chancellor by the directly-elected strong President were lifted. A constructive non-confidence motion system was also adopted. Now, once the Chancellor takes the chair, he can stay in office for a long time unless his own party abandons him. As an illustration of this, from 1949 until today, 22 prime ministers have come into power in Japan, whereas only 7 chancellors have done so in Germany, as the chart below shows. This trend also seems to support the notion that a German administration lasts longer than a Japanese one, mostly because of such systems.

Chancellors of the Federal Republic of Germany	
1949~63	Konrad Adenauer (CDU)
1963~66	Ludwig Ehrhard (CDU)
1966~69	Kurt-Georg Kiesinger (CDU)
1969~74	Willy Brandt (SPD)
1974~82	Helmut Schmidt (SPD)
1982~98	Helmut Kohl (CDU)
1998~	Gerhard Schröder (SPD)

Japan formed a "cabinet office" in January 2001. However, even if a similar system is adopted to guarantee the Chancellor possession of political leadership and all associated functions, there is yet another prerequisite - a statesman must emerge and claim power. As Japan is the second largest economic power in the World, the entire world pays close attention to where Japan is heading for in the 21st Century. In such a situation, it is imperative for statesmen to emerge. One way is to elect a prime minister by popular vote, as is done in the United States, but unless citizens are democratically educated and politically mature, this system is attended by the risk that such a leader will become a dictator like Napoleon I or III, or even Hitler. A system should be designed to prevent the negative side of populism.

Needless to say, even if a popular vote system is not adopted, Britain has produced statesmen under its parliamentary cabinet system. Moreover, German chancellors such as Adenauer, Brandt, Schmidt, and Kohl have all also been active statesmen. The current Chancellor Schröder has begun to show the capacity for being an active statesman. Why has Germany produced statesmen despite the fact that it, like Japan, adopted a parliamentary cabinet system in the postwar era? There are two major factors. One stems from geopolitics. Germany was in an arena where two super powers - the former Soviet Union and the United States - squared off in head-to-head competition during the Cold War. Although Germany relied on America for defense, it founded the EC with France, which protested against American world rule, in order for Germany to survive in the realm of international economic competition. The other factor was that Germany had to reunify a

divided nation. It continued to engage in high politics by striving to improve relations with the former Soviet Union, in consultation with the States. However, more factors were involved. There is a structural condition in Germany that has produced statesmen. The social-democratic party, Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (hereinafter referred to as SPD) allows for change in administrations. This point will be discussed in the following section.

3 . Absence of opposition parties with the ability to hold the reins of government

An important difference exists between Japan and Germany in terms of their postwar political system. Germany has powerful opposition parties capable of taking over the administration of government. It also has a strong social-democratic power. Japan, on the other hand, does not have an opposition party that can hold the reins of government. According to the principle of constitutional democracy the role of opposition party is to constantly monitor the ruling party and to shift its administration back to "regular procedures of constitutional government" when it becomes evident that the administration is heading for the wrong direction. There were no opposition parties in Japan strong enough to take over the government in order to bring the ruling party to task. Furthermore, there was no an flexible and pragmatic social-democratic power. The main factor contributing to this huge difference between Japan and Germany was the historical experience of the "bourgeoisie revolution". Even though the revolution of 1918 in Germany was ultimately unsuccessful, it gave birth to the Weimar Republic, which had the most advanced and democratic constitution in the world at that time. As the Russian Revolution had begun two years earlier, the SPD, the most powerful Marxist socialist party of the period, decided that it should not take the same anti-liberal and anti-democratic path as the Russian did, and consequently it needed to compromise and cooperate with the military in order to forestall the Bolshevism. This in turn led to the foundation of the Weimar Republic. However, at the end of Republic a ultra-rightist bourgeoisie coalition formed an illicit partnership with the Nazi Party and overthrew the Republic. The SPD was suppressed since it was the only political party advocating for the Republic, and its leaders were exiled from the country. After 12 years of the resistance movement against Nazi dictatorship, exiles in the former Soviet Union and some of the reactivated left wing of the SPD in East Germany organized the Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (hereinafter referred to as SED) with the communist party. In West Germany, on the other hand, the right wing played a central role in reconstructing the SPD. However, a struggle between two wings in the SPD began. The Marxist interpretation of capitalist states was popularly held by most SPD members in their fight against Nazi dictatorship. Those members of the left wing stuck to Kautskyan Marxism, which was rejected during the Weimar Republic era. The other right wing tried to develop SPD as a Fabian socialist party, or a

democratic socialist party. Kurt Schumacher, who was a disciple of the only political scientist belonging to SPD, Hermann Heller advocating for the Weimar Republic, won the power struggle after returning from a concentration camp, and successfully adopted anti-communism and democratic socialism as the party policy. The first general election was held in West Germany in 1949. The SPD gained 28% of the overall vote, and this number did not grow in the second general election held four years later. The German economy grew dramatically in the early 1950's with the support of the Marshall Plan. Accompanying the economic growth were rapid changes in the social structure. Demand for workers with high expertise increased as a result of innovations in high technology. Moreover, rapid growth in tertiary industries reduced the number of blue-collar workers and produced a parallel increase in white-collar workers. The inevitable result was that the SPD was relegated to the status of a minor party as long as it remained a party for the working class and called for support only from this class as its power base. The democratic-socialistic power soberly analyzed the trend of previous general elections and objectively concluded that there would be no possibility to take over the leadership unless it changed its character from a working class party to a national party. The party leader, Brandt, a successor of Kurt Schumacher and a former West Berlin Mayor, effectively exercised his leadership and nullified the Marxist "Heidelberg Program" adopted at the Heidelberg Party Conference in 1925, and then in place of it he adopted a "Godesberg Program" in order to reform itself as a national party at the Godesberg Party Conference in 1959. The party abandoned Marxism in practice by removing it from the core theory of the party program and by placing it as one of the ideas that support democratic-socialism. It was shown in the formula of "competition as much as possible - plan as much as required" in the article "Economic order and social order". The SPD thus recognizes a "social market economy", as prescribed in the Basic Law. The political program declares that it actively follows "free and democratic basic order" in the Basic Law. As for diplomatic and national defense policies, SPD renounced a nonalignment policy and carried out a dramatic policy changeover resolutely by fully accepting the leading party's re-armament policy.⁽⁵⁾ In Germany, along with the SPD's changeover to a national social democratic party, this was symbolized by "Godesberg Program", the leading party and opposition parties worked together in the arena of foreign affairs and national defense. They established competitive relations in addressing domestic affairs since both sides tried to suggest creative policies to offer good living conditions to their citizens and realize these policies. The SPD increased its lead to 36% in the 1961 general election. The number continued growing and ultimately reached close to 46%. In 1966, the SPD agreed with Christliche Demokratische Union (hereinafter referred to as CDU) to form a Grand Coalition Government. After coming into power for the first time,

(5) G. Braunthal, *The German Social Democrats Since 1969. A Party in Power and Opposition*, 1983, pp.194-195.

the SPD audited the leading party and worked hard to acquire the ability to hold the reins of government. This process occurred because "states secrets" gradually veiled national activities during the Cold War and the areas which opposition parties could exercise their auditing function in the parliament became smaller than before. Hence, the SPD attempted to carry out its auditing function from various points of view of opposition parties by positioning itself in the innermost circles.⁽⁶⁾ As a result, in 1969 a small party, Freie Demokratische Partei (hereinafter referred to as FDP), which had formed a coalition government with the CDU, switched its allegiance from the rightwing CDU to the leftwing SPD, and this helped give birth to the SPD-lead SPD/FDP coalition government. The Brandt administration drastically changed West German foreign affairs in line with a "New Eastern Policy" which focused on settlement of the past history, mainly through offering an apology and compensation for Nazi crimes. However, despite his achievement, Chancellor Brandt was forced to step down in May 1974 when his aide, Guillaume turned out to be an East German spy. Deputy leader, Helmut Schmidt replaced Brandt and took over SPD policies. Although replacement of the Chancellor had a negative impact on the SPD, it realized its election slogan of "more democracy" until it gave up the reins of government to the CDU in 1982. It subsequently regained control of government after a 16-year absence in 1998. During those 16 years, the SPD constantly paid close attention to progressive public sentiment, and "democracy from bottom (BASISDEMOKRATIE)" movements promoting further bottom-up democratization, such as complete equality between the sexes, and requests for anti-pollution and environment protection. In 1989, immediately before East and West Germany were reunified, it modified its program to add requirements of complete equality between the sexes and the discontinuance of a nuclear power station, environment protection to the new "Berlin Program".⁽⁷⁾ Soon after becoming the first party at the general election in 1998, the SPD organized a "Red Green Coalition Government" with the Green Party whose main program were opposing nuclear power and promoting protection of the environment. For domestic administration, it decided to abolish nuclear power while working for a "third way" reform to review a welfare state from a socialdemocratic point of view, which the conservative party could not accomplish. The SPD started to achieve some positive results and Germany also gained some ground in the EU thanks to the government's efforts toward foreign affairs. In West Germany, a public subsidiary system for election expenses was introduced in 1967 by the Political Party Law. Since this system was established to eradicate the inevitable political corruption that will often stem from a symbiotic relationship between political parties and the business world, it was believed that no corruption such as dishonest donations to a party would occur. However, when Schröder's "Red and Green Coalition

(6) M. Sase, *Sengo Doitsu Shakaiminshutoushi - Seikennoyayumi* (The History of the Postwar SPD), Fujishakaikyoikusenta, 1975, p. 160.

(7) G. Braunthal, *op.cit.*, pp.205-208.

Government" was formed, the activities of the previous administration over the previous 16 years were subjected to inspection from within. The results of this inspection brought to light the fact that former Chancellor Kohl, who had achieved the reunification of the East and West, had received significant contributions from the business world. He was forced to step down as CDU Party Leader, and the CDU is now reorganizing itself in a manner that will allow it to practice cleaner politics in the future. German party politics exemplifies that changes in undogmatic and powerful parties are conditions essential to maintaining a liberal democratic system free of political corruption.

Japan has experienced an ongoing series of corruption over the last half century during the postwar era, but the example of German party politics proves that such corruption is inevitable. So, why did the SPD, unlike the Japan Socialist Party, gain the ability to hold the reins of government? First of all, as mentioned earlier, the SPD is sensitive to changes in the social structure and constantly tries to be a progressive party for the people. It compares the leading party's policy orientation with the ideal situation for Germany in the world, critically inspects it and presents more feasible options to the people. The SPD never relents in implementing party activities that will gain such support. Secondly, it is actively training its members to be leaders with the ability to hold the reins of government. The party established a school in 1906 to improve the theoretical ability of future leaders and thereby fostered a new generation of leaders. After West Germany was born, the "Friedrich Ebert Foundation" was established and named after the first president of the Weimar Republic, who was a chairman of SPD. This foundation is a kind of a think-tank that brings together young researchers with doctoral degrees from different fields. They are engaged in policy research in all aspects of people's daily life with the objective of realizing the party program. The SPD offers positions to those who are recognized for their achievements at the foundation and considered to be experts in a certain policy field. Some work at organs of the party, where they are responsible for the political education of its members. Some are appointed to top posts at provincial governments where the SPD controls the office. Others are hired at the party headquarters or branches and trained to be politicians. As mentioned earlier, since West Germany/New Germany has adopted a federal system, even though the SPD is an opposition party at the federal government, it is often the leading party at state-governments, big cities and local authorities. Senior members become governors, acquiring the mandate to govern for a certain period of time, and become a party leader after winning a power struggle within the party. When the SPD beats the leading party and assumes the leadership, the SDP party leader will become Chancellor of the federal government and thus take control of the helm of state.

The SPD has another system to recruit élites. As the "student rebellion" that occurred in 1968 in Paris symbolized, conflicts occur outside of parliament in the West. West German was no exception. The Grand Coalition Government overcame strong opposition from intellectuals in support of

Basic Law and adopted emergency law resolutely in 1968. One of the objectives of this law was to address the intensifying opposition movements. The student activists subsequently abandoned its battle with the System and shifted their orientation to one adopting a far-reaching "expedition through system" with a hint of Mao Tse-tung's "expedition" to permeate civil servants and existing parties.⁽⁸⁾ It was "the measure against radicalism (Radikalen-erlass)" that the government took measures against them. As one of the lower organizations within the SPD there is "the young socialist (Jungsozialisten)" (hereinafter referred to as JUSO), consisting of members who are 35-years old or younger.⁽⁹⁾ These dissident students couldn't work in governmental organizations because of "Radikalen-erlass", but they became advocates of perfect equality between the sexes and environmental protection as JUSO members. They steadily practiced promoting their political positions, and some of them became core members of the leftwing within the party. Current Chancellor Schröder was born in 1944 and joined the SPD at 19. After working at the Hannover branch as a leader, he became a chairman of JUSO in 1978. He exercised his skills in establishing a moderate line in JUSO while practicing law. Within two years, he was elected to congress and became Governor of Niedersachsen in 1990.⁽¹⁰⁾ He conducted a political experiment of the "third way" on a small scale and stayed in office until 1998 when he became Chancellor of the federal government.

The SPD led Germany for 13 years from 1969 to 1982. It adopted the catch phrase, "more democracy" and advanced development that harmonized social welfare and economic growth. It also extended the scope of the codetermination law from just coal and steel industries to any corporation with 1,000 employees or more, and established a social welfare state on par with those of northern Europe.

A comparison between the SPD of West Germany/New Germany and postwar Japanese opposition parties, especially the Japan Socialist Party under the "55-year regime" reveals that although they share the same ultimate goal of democratic socialism, their roles as components of the political system are entirely different. In the second decade of the Meiji Era (from 1887 to 1896) and later, not only the government but also opposition parties tried

(8) K.Hirashima : *Gendaidoituseiji*(Modern German Politics),Tokyo Univ. Press,1994, p. 140. These "Year of 1968" members are currently in their 50's and most of them are active in the front lines. One of them is the Foreign Minister, Fischer, in the Schröder administration. The media distributed a photo of him fighting police officers during a dispute outside the parliament in the early 70's. The Opposition party, the CDU asked for his resignation from parliament since he was an extremist. Schröder came to his defense and evaded offense from opposition parties. This coverage in newspapers started around January 2001. Fischer is from the Green Party and there are many "Year of 1968" members. According to newspapers, polls suggested that approval rating of his defense was 70%. This is one example that shows how different trends in public opinion in Germany are from those of Japan. The following covers research of current "Red-Green Coalition Government". Charles Lees, *The Red-Green Coalition in Germany. Politics, Personalities and Power*, 2000.

(9) G. Braunthal, *op.cit.*, p.121 ff.

(10) *Ibid.*, p.104, pp.135-137, p.306.

to model themselves on Germany, as did the postwar Social Party. Since the SPD before World War I emphasized Kautskyism in its program, it did not change its stance against capitalist government policies. The Japan Socialist Party was greatly affected by this SPD's Kautskyism and has consistently shown their opposition to government policy. It strictly followed the antiwar pacifism of the constitution up until the Murayama administration came to power. It is true that the Japanese people believed in the postwar era that war had been a fundamental threat to their lives during World War II. Therefore, this bitter experience made the Japan Socialist Party replace "the right to live" with peace since they believed that maintaining "the right to live" was maintaining a "peace constitution". As a result, it developed a skewed logic that they could realize their party objective, "socialism" by advocating a peace constitution and adhered to a kind of "conservatism" so as to be peace constitution advocates. In contrast, the Liberal Democratic Party took a constant "innovative" attitude to change the peace constitution for an archaic direction as much as possible, so from the peace constitution's point of view, an outward form of "confrontation between conservation vs. innovation" of the Liberal Democratic Party and Japan Socialist Party in the party politics could be "confrontation between innovation and conservation" in reality. The social structure of Japan rapidly shifted from agricultural-based to urban oriented with a successful high economic growth policy. City dwellers completely dominated the overall population. However, the Japan Socialist Party did not try to formulate a creative policy to establish prerequisites for a better life for people living in cities. In other words, the Japan Socialist Party did not actively prioritize implementation of a social democratic policy, which the SPD of West Germany had done much more than peace constitution advocates. As environmental and urban issues suddenly emerged as byproducts of the rapid economic growth policy of the of 1960's, Japanese citizens in urban areas got impatient with the LDP's policy and started to support opposition parties. Thanks to that new citizen-movement, the Socialist Party established their so-called "innovating municipality (Kakushinjitai)" in major cities such as Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto by forming a united front with the Japanese Communist Party, and in doing so achieved improvements in the welfare of the socially disadvantaged and the elderly. However, this was criticized later as "dole-out administration" lacking balance with finance. It did not maintain a social democratic conception and continued to get by in a haphazard way. Threatened by the emergence of such "innovating municipality", the LDP government adopted policies to establish Japan as a country with advanced social welfare systems with the support of a group of knowledgeable bureaucrats. They began implementing these policies nationwide in a top-down manner. Simultaneously, "innovating municipality" essentially lost its role and its failed public finances became obvious when it experienced two oil crises. "Innovative municipality" started to loose ground and the Socialist Party also went downhill in this area.

Taking the above discussion into consideration, I can conclude that there have been no social democratic parties in postwar Japan.⁽¹¹⁾ And at the same time there is nothing worth mentioning in the recruitment of politicians with the ability to hold the reins of government and training systems when you look at the Japan Socialist Party. The fundamental difference between the Japan Socialist Party and the SPD lies at its organization base. The SPD is an organization party of the masses. It has branches at workplaces as well as at residential areas in order to understand the everyday needs of its citizens and to aggregate those needs so that they are reflected in its policies while actively recruiting new members. In contrast, the Japan Socialist Party has its support base in the largest union federation, Sohyo (General Council of Trade Unions of Japan) including labor unions of public sector. It follows a custom whereby executives are replaced by retired executives from unions. As a result, the party acted as a spokesman for the interests of labor unions, such as Sohyo. In other words, the party appeared to be a lobby. Therefore, the Nakasone administration came to power in 1982, aiming at reorganization of the Japanese political system to anticommunism and archaistic directions. This government followed the example of the neo-liberal policies adopted by American President Ronald Regan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Its slogans were "small government" and "strong nation" and advocated deregulation and administrative reform. It successfully privatized Japan National Railways and Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Public Corporation. This led to disorganization of labor unions of public sector and consequently those upper part, Sohyo. As a result the Social Party lost its support base. Moreover, the former Soviet Union collapsed and the threat of a World War III was eased. Structures of ideology conflict were cleared and an international situation in which a peace constitution "conservatism" functioned dramatically changed. The Socialist Party lost its domestic and international grounds for existence and was destined to become extinct soon. Thus, unfortunately there were no opposition parties in postwar Japan to monitor the ruling party and take over the power. For this reason, the leaders of the ruling party did not have the chance to develop the quality of the statesmanship due to the lack of challengers from opposition parties, and thus they did not meet the requirements to become statesmen.

4. Closing remarks - Where is Japan heading for in the absence of proper "steering"?

As discussed above, Japan also did not have the necessary conditions to

(11) Professor Hideo Otake argues that social democratic power was weak in postwar Japan, but conflict of political ideology in Japan basically took place between economic liberalism and social democracy within the LDP. He develops a unique interpretation that social democracy has been superior to economic liberalism in the LDP except for the Yoshida Shigeru administration (from 1949), Zenko Suzuki and Yasuhiro Nakasone administrations and therefore LDP has been a kind of social democratic party (H. Otake: *Jiyushugiteki Kaikaku no Jidai*(The Age of Liberal Reform), Chuoukouronsha, 1994, p. 326).

overcome its lack of political leadership at the party government level which is regarded as a lifeline of parliamentary democracy. The domestic and international environment has changed dramatically since the breakdown of the Cold War order and the rapid progress of "the globalization of economy and information" since the 1990's. There are some signs that Japan will follow a course of decline unless it reorganizes a political system adaptable to this rapidly changing environment. Among those signs, if we look at those from a different viewpoint, there are surely some buds of opportunity for Japanese revival. This is true because the "55-year regime", which prevented strong opposition parties, especially true social democratic parties from emerging, was one of the major causes of the lack of political leadership. This regime itself showed apparent fatigue and the social structure that supported this system quickly collapsed. In this process a new political regime at a social economic level has slowly started to emerge. If such sprouts will grow into large trees and thus in the meantime a new-rising creative political parties can show Japan which direction to go in the 21st century, using those trees as its basis, and if the new parties are able to sound the right notes with its constituents, Japan might be reborn to be a country to lead the world into the 21st century. Therefore, I just hope that such new parties should emerge even one day earlier. However, even if these parties emerge, there are no many options for Japan to take in terms of directions in the world. I would like to briefly mention some of these options as my closing remarks.

As long as Japan is a maritime state from a geopolitical point of view, the relations with America, which is connected to Japan via the Pacific Ocean, fundamentally affects how Japan should be. Japan and America share a universal principle of liberal democracy. Based on the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, Japan might become the 51st state of the United States when regional integration progresses in the future. However, in order to realize the integration, the principle of organization in large corporations needs to change to become more similar to the American model. If major enterprises give up their principle of organization whose base lies in the current social structure, that might mean their existence itself is denied. Thus, this will not happen in the next 10 or 20 years. However, the Japanese culture has been Americanized to a great extent by means of media and the current Japanese society consists of nuclear families. These nuclear families which are one unit of the Japanese society are recently supposed to show an indication of disappearing moral uniformity. If so, as "the globalization of economy and information" is a process of Americanization, the people who believe that Japan should be one of the states in the United States might increase in number.

Another direction that Japan can take is to follow the example of West/New Germany becoming a member of the EU. In other words, Japan pursues regional integration by forming an "Asian Community". Korea, China, Taiwan and South Asian nations are incorporated in a system of division of labor which is inseparably related to the Japanese economy. If Japan takes the initiative in making a decision, an "Asian Economic Community"

is a feasible plan. However, we cannot expect a similar progress in the process from EC to EU because apart from South Korea and Taiwan, Japan and the rest of Asia have different political principles as for the dignity of human being's rights and liberal democracy as well as different values and principles making up societies. Moreover, Japan tends to revert to the old ways of domestic matters. As a result, it has not yet expressed its regret for its past behaviors as an assailant during the Pacific War or "settled the past" to be followed. Japanese efforts might result in arousing suspicion rather than gaining faith. Therefore, if it leaves "settlement of the past" untouched and takes initiatives in forming an Asian Community, aside from American opposition, would-be members will be more cautious and the plan will likely fail. If China shifts from an authoritarian system to a democratic system with a progressive market economy, Japan can affiliate with democratized China in the same manner as the affiliation between France and Germany. However, its relations with America will hinder this plan.

The third direction is that Japan both enters into an inseparable connection with America and establishes an Economic Community with Asian countries including China as one of the countries so that it can act as a bridge between the East and the West, which is a more realistic direction. No matter which direction Japan heads for among the above-mentioned three, it is going to remain a pipedream unless democratic party politics emerge to play a "steering" role. Fostering powerful social democratic opposition parties and developing a conservative party striving for government for the people will set the base for Japan in the future.