

Electioneering in Japan in an Era of Institutional Change: Case-Studies of Campaign
Behavior in Urban, Suburban and Rural Election Districts

by

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Vernice S. Dabney, and my father, the late Charles T. Dabney, Sr. Thank you for your steadfast, unwavering faith and confidence in me throughout this academic endeavor. Collectively, I am grateful to my parents and two elder brothers, Charles, Jr. and Vertram who always reminded me of the value of my contribution to the academy, the political science discipline and society.

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List of Abbreviations

MMD election system	Multi-Member District election system
SNTV	Single Non-Transferable Vote
SMD election system	Single-Member District election system
PR election system	Proportional Representation election system
CGP	Clean Government Party or Koumeitou
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
JCP	Japanese Communist Party
JNP	Japan New Party
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MMM electoral system	Mixed-Member Majoritarian electoral system
MIGM	Matsushita Institute of Government and Management
NFP	New Frontier Party
JRP	Japan Renewal Party or Shinsei Party
Shintou Sakigake	New Harbinger Party or New Party Sakigake
SDPJ/JSP	Social Democratic Party of Japan/Japanese Socialist Party

Note: Use of Japanese Surnames

The family name or surname of individuals referenced in this text precedes the given name according to the Japanese convention. Japanese scholars' works published in English that appear in this text are presented in reverse order according to the Western convention.

Note: Interviews

Amegasa Yuuji, Kawasaki City Council member (Asao ward), on October 17, 1996 and June 22, 2000.

Aoyama Keiichi, Secretary for Matsuzawa Shigefumi and Kawasaki City Council member (Tama ward), on March 17, 1997 and June 15, 2000.

Aihara Takahiro, Kanagawa Prefectural Assembly member, (Asao ward), on June 20, 2000.

Fukuda Norihiko, Secretary for Matsuzawa Shigefumi, on February 14, 1997, June 21, 2000 and June 30, 2000.

Fukuda Norihiko, Kanagawa Prefectural Assembly member, on July 30, 2006.

Genba Kouichirou, House of Representatives incumbent (Fukushima 2nd district and Tohoku PR bloc and Fukushima 3rd district), on September 26, 1995; February 18, 1997 and July 5, 2000.

Genba Mikiko, *Hana no Kai* spokes woman, on June 22, 2000.

Iguchi Mami, 2000 Lower House candidate (Kanagawa 9th district), on July 13, 2000.

Kasuya Youko, Secretary for Matsuzawa Shigefumi and Kawasaki City Council member (Takatsu ward), on April 20, 1997 and June 14, 2000.

Matsuzawa Shigefumi, House of Representatives (Kanagawa 2nd and 9th districts) incumbent, on October 30, 1995; February 5, 1997; July 6, 2000 and July 11, 2000.

Oba Hideki, 1996 Field Representative and Campaign Scheduler, on November 16, 1996 and June 22, 2000.

Ogawa Eiichi, 1996 and 2000 Lower House candidate (Kanagawa 9th district), on July 4, 2000.

Yukiko Owaga, Kanagawa Prefectural Assembly member (Takatsu ward), on July 4, 2000.

Yoshida Taisei, Secretary for Matsuzawa Shigefumi and Kanagawa Prefectural Assembly member (Asao ward), on June 18, 2000.

Watanabe Osamu, 1996 and 2000 Lower House election Campaign Manager for Genba Kouichirou, on November 16, 1996 and June 22, 2000.

Usami Noboru, House of Representatives incumbent and challenger, on September 22, 1995; February 14, 1997 and July 11, 2000.

Abstract

The Japanese style of election campaigning has long been seen as very distinctive and as dysfunctional for democratic accountability by Western political scientists and Japanese political participants alike. Major reforms in the 1990s were aimed at moving election campaigns away from traditional Japanese patterns and toward contemporary Western practices. This study evaluates the effect of the reforms on campaign strategies by closely observing three candidates, representing suburban, urban, and rural Lower House electoral districts, through three elections: in 1993, before the reform, and in 1996 and 2000 afterward. The candidates were selected to maximize the likelihood of adopting non-traditional new strategies—all were young, represented new reformist parties, and studied Western-style politics at the prestigious Matsushita Institute of Government and Management (MIGM). Nonetheless, we found that the traditional strategies of mobilization through social ties were quite prevalent and actually more central in 1996 than before the reform, although some trends to the contrary were observable in 2000. Analysis of variations in campaign behavior cross-sectionally and over time helps us sort out explanations for distinctive Japanese patterns, and assess the likelihood of further change.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Over three decades have passed since Gerald Curtis' comprehensive study on Japanese election campaign behavior, *Election Campaigning Japanese Style* (Curtis 1971). Curtis' study of one candidate's campaign behavior for the 1967 Lower House election remains one of the few contributions to election studies entirely dedicated to election campaign strategy. How has Japanese election campaigning changed since it was first described some forty years ago?

Back then, Curtis (1971: 252) predicted:

The direction of change appears unmistakable. Increasing reliance on utilizing the mass media is paralleled by a decreasing reliance on local politicians. . . . There can be little doubt that over time campaign strategy in Japan, as in the United States and Western Europe, will emphasize more and more associational rather than community interests and appeals to the electorate through wide exposure and skillful use of the media rather than through the recruiting of voters into personal support organizations.

To what extent has it happened? In particular, how was behavior affected by a major electoral system reform explicitly aimed at modernizing campaigning? And why is campaign modernization an important political goal? These are the concerns of this dissertation.

Our methodology is similar to Curtis in that it is based on participant-observation, although we are broad where he is deep—rather than a year spent on a single campaign, we examine the campaigns of three candidates across three elections. One election

(1993) is pre reform and two (1996, 2000) are post reform. Our three candidates are in districts that are urban, suburban, and rural, because the urban-rural dimension has always been the main factor in differentiating campaigning and indeed most everything in Japanese political behavior.

Our three candidates are in no sense a randomly selected sample, however. Because we wanted to study change in campaigning we needed to maximize the chances of observing change. Looking at campaigns of a twenty-year incumbent in the ruling Liberal-Democratic Party (LDP) would be interesting but not promising for our purposes. We maximized those changes (and at the same time controlled for several factors) by choosing: 1) New and young candidates, contesting their first national-level campaign in 1993 at ages from 25 to 35; 2) Candidates not associated with the LDP but with new opposition parties; and 3) Candidates who were graduates of an unusual post-graduate school, the Matsushita Institute of Government and Management, which was aimed specifically at producing a new breed of politicians, in how they campaign and ultimately how they govern.

These were our key criteria at the start. When the research began in 1993, we did not know that the electoral system would be reformed in the following year. That was a happy accident for the project that became the major focus for this dissertation.

Analyzing Japanese Election Campaigns

Japanese politicians (and journalists and scholars who write about them) tend to describe and explain electoral behavior, including campaign strategies and tactics, in terms of various dichotomies. Some are dichotomies that are commonly employed in

explaining any social phenomenon in Japan while others are more specific to elections.

There is a common tendency in fact to conflate these dichotomies. Many pages could be devoted to explaining each of these dichotomies. Such explanations, however, are unnecessary for our purposes.

Here is a list, long though not exhaustive, of the conventional dichotomies characterizing Japanese electoral behavior:

- traditional vs modern,
- old-style vs new-style
- rural vs urban,
- older vs younger (voters and candidates)
- Japanese vs western
- past vs future
- relationships vs media
- low political knowledge vs high
- low political interest vs high
- “hard” or “gathered” vote vs “floating” vote
- socially imbedded vs autonomous voters
- culturally vs structurally determined
- secretly spent vs openly accounted money
- selective vs broad policy appeals
- community vs economic interests
- candidate-centered vs party or issue-centered
- mediated vs direct candidate-voter relationship
- veteran vs newcomer politicians
- retail politics vs wholesale politics
- tailored to the multi-member district vs single-member or proportional district representation

These dichotomies represent different dimensions, even different kinds of dimensions.

Most are not truly dichotomies; rather they are continua with points in between.

Moreover, they do not always all go together.

That is, if we were to measure each of a large number of election campaigns along each of these continua, we certainly would not see perfect covariance—for example,

some urban candidates employ quite rural practices. In fact, that experiment would be quite impossible and not very interesting. For our purposes, the point is not to examine each of these factors (the dichotomies or continua), or to establish how independent or correlated they are. Rather, the important point is that Japanese politicians, as well as journalistic and scholarly observers of election campaigns, typically think of election campaigns in terms of these factors, and they think of them as clustering together—everything on the left makes up one type, and everything on the right makes up the opposite type. No particular campaign will be purely one or the other, but candidates, or election campaigns in different elections, can be characterized as more or less one or the other.

Precisely because Japanese candidates think in, or behave according to these dichotomous terms, we use them as our basic descriptive tool for analyzing campaigns. So far as what to call them, we should not just use one of the factors as the names—say, “traditional vs modern,” or “mediated vs direct.” That would be essentialist, privileging one of the factors over the others, and misleading. So the expressions we will use are deliberately contentless—a “Type A” campaign strategy represents everything on the left of the list, while a “Type B” campaign strategy represents everything on the right. Curtis (1971) was confident that Japanese election campaign strategies would move from Type A to Type B, and many scholars since have made similar predictions. Indeed, as will be seen in the review of the literature on the 1994 electoral reform (next chapter), a goal of the reformers was to move Japanese campaigns from A to B. Our study will evaluate how well that effort worked.

The Type A and B Strategies

The Type A campaign strategy is typified by organizational tactics by using local politicians and interest groups (*senkyo keiretsu*, and *reiki dantai keiretsu*). Type A oriented candidates rely on a broad web of support from influential, local notables, namely local politicians and associational leaders of enterprise-based labor unions, professional organizations, neighborhood associations and trade groups. Such intermediaries or “vote-brokers” try to amass a “gathered vote” on behalf of the candidate.

A Type A candidate will often try to build an “electoral keiretsu,” when local politicians and a Diet candidate have determined a mutual benefit from a political alliance. In general, local politicians need pork and political legitimacy provided by national assembly members, while national assembly members need the gathered vote and local-level information provided by local assembly members. Pork more or less tends to be the bottom line of the relationship in the case of rural-based local politicians than urban-based local politicians.

The Type B campaign strategy is typified by tactics that appeal *directly* to voters, including face-to-face encounters and the mass media. Most importantly, candidates pay careful attention to how they will be perceived by voters, including crafting their personal image—young and energetic in the case of our candidates—and enunciating policy positions seen as attractive in their districts. Type B candidates tend to emphasize their attachment to a political party. They take every chance they can to appear on television, although such opportunities are limited particularly in the formal campaign period.

Type B tactics on the ground include formal and informal public speeches, outdoor greetings, rallies and assemblies (*gaitō enzetsu*, *enzetsukai* and *shūkai*), sound truck canvassing (*gaisensha no yūsei*), door-to-door canvassing and mail and telephone solicitation. Public speeches and political rallies are occasions for candidates to present their qualifications for political office and their legislative goals to district constituents, and to distribute political and campaign literature.¹ Type B-oriented campaigns also pay attention to the design and placement of campaign posters, and the content delivered by the sound truck that tour neighborhoods supplemented with live and pre-recorded political messages.

The most enigmatic aspect of Japanese election campaign tactics, one with both Type A and Type B characteristics, is the *kouenkai*, literally “support association.”² When Curtis (1971) did his field work in Kyushuu in 1967, he found *kouenkai* to be a relatively new phenomenon; a way for candidates to gather reasonably stable votes at a time when old social solidarities of villages and local notables were gradually dissolving. Those had been the principle vote mobilization mechanism in most of Japan in the prewar period, and into the postwar, but over time they could gather a smaller and smaller proportion of the votes needed to win a seat.

Two sorts of explanations have been advanced for why the *kouenkai* evolved to perform this function. One is cultural, that Japanese respond best to a sense of personal connection (or *kankei*) rather than joining mass organizations or movements, or

¹ Candidates deliver these speeches to large and small audiences in intimate settings such as neighborhood or community halls, or large, formal settings, such as a town/city auditorium. The dominant settings for public speeches and rallies, however, are train station entrances and shopping centers in which candidates can take advantage of ample pedestrian traffic.

² A comprehensive description of *kouenkai* is offered by Kabashima and Yamada, in “Kouenkai to Nihon no Seiji” (Kouenkai and politics in Japan) in *The Annuals of the Japanese Political Science Association*, 1994 (Tokyo: Japan Political Science Association, 1995).

connecting with abstract ideologies or policy issues (Flanagan, 1967). The other is structural. In Western electoral politics, the organizational vacuum left by declining traditional social ties tended to be filled by political party organizations. In Japan, however, the multi-member district (MMD) electoral system, which required a party to average at least two seats in every district to secure a majority of the legislative seats, meant that party organization was useless to candidates for getting elected. The only party in Japan that consistently ran multiple candidates in all election districts was the LDP, but neither its national party nor local party branches could support one candidate over another, so they were left to fend for themselves through non-party mobilization methods. Of course, both these explanations could well be valid.

Kouenkai can be characterized as Type B to the extent that people simply sign up for it autonomously, that is, without the directive of any person of socio-political authority, because they are impressed with the candidate for their own reasons, and they would like to show their support, meet like-minded fellow voters, and help get their choice elected. An American equivalent would be the “Citizens for X” groups, independent from party organizations, that are ubiquitous in American elections. Such *kouenkai* are often more mailing lists than groups—as pure Type B as can be imagined. However, *kouenkai* are Type A to the extent that people are brought into them through other social relationships (i.e., organizations and associations) in which local notables and elected politicians are involved, and that they take on a hierarchical structure. Following a *kouenkai* strategy most often means efforts to get members more and more attached to the group, such as by sponsoring trips and get-togethers (to the point where the benefits seem to require some reciprocity). A telling difference with “Citizens for X”

in the US is that in *kouenkai*, the flow of political money is downward, to build the organization and attach people to it, rather than upward as campaign contributions. The funds were used for gift-giving to its members for weddings, funerals, and Japanese holidays, and for group excursions (some to Tokyo to visit the legislature, some to hot springs). This gift-giving could easily be interpreted as simple voting buying on one level, but these were common practices in Japanese society. Another telling difference between these two models of grassroots citizen support is that *kouenkai* typically lasted beyond the campaign season and endured as long as the politician continued to run for office.

It is important to keep in mind the dual nature, or ambiguity of *kouenkai* when investigating Japanese election campaigning. In our study, we found that *kouenkai* were generally thought of as more Type A than Type B among the candidates interviewed, and empirically *kouenkai* based tactics most often fell under the Type A rubric.

Political candidates tend to gravitate toward the Type A or Type B strategy when running for office, but the two strategic approaches are hardly mutually exclusive. In fact, all Japanese candidates typically use both, and for that matter people running for election in all countries use some combination of direct and indirect campaign strategies that more or less correspond to our distinction between Types A and B strategy. Nonetheless, the conventional strategy prescription among inexperienced challengers is the Type B strategy, while the strategy prescription for experienced incumbents (or experienced challengers) is the Type A strategy. The case studies presented in chapters three and four will examine campaign strategy under pre-reform and post-reform

conditions in rural, suburban and urban districts, in terms of the candidates' use of the Type A and Type B strategies.

Reform and its Effects

We turn now to providing the historical and institutional context for our study. Election campaign behavior for Japan's Lower House, the more powerful chamber of the National Diet, was the source of considerable public inquiry and criticism over the last few decades. Fueling this inquiry and criticism of campaign behavior was the multi-member district (MMD), single non-transferable vote (SNTV) election system adopted in 1925 which shaped candidates' campaign behavior, and made for a distinctive election campaign.

Under the MMD election system, 511 Lower House seats were apportioned across 129 two-to six-member districts.³ A feature of the MMD election system was that it forced candidates from the same party seeking to gain a majority of the votes to compete for seats in the same district. To illustrate this point, we need only look at the history of one political party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which was particularly single-minded about securing a majority seats in the Lower House. A long-standing indictment of this election system feature was that it facilitated one-party dominance by the LDP

³ The MMD election system was in effect prior to 1925, but the key difference was that the district magnitude consisted of single-members districts and multi-member districts with two to three members. Initially, the district magnitude consisted of 122 three- to five-member election districts—53 three-member districts, 38 four-member districts and 31 five-member districts. The three to five-member MMD election system was adopted because it enabled dominant conservative groups to obtain a majority of seat in the 1925 House of Representatives elections (Hirano, 2006). Both the number of districts and the district magnitude have been subject to mandatory adjustments over the years in according with election laws.

since the LDP was the only party consistently capable of running more than one candidate in election districts.⁴

Such intra-party competition encouraged candidates to define themselves by personality (i.e. personal image), and what Reed and Theis (2003) call “hyper-personalistic” patron-client relationships. The MMD electoral system tended to play up competition over personality and personal relationships (particularly among co-partisan candidates) instead of policy issues and political party platforms. In other words, the electoral system promoted competition for votes using the Type A rather than Type B campaigning.⁵ Almost universally, academics, journalists, and even politicians (when they were speaking to the general public rather than trying to fight their own campaigns), deplored the Type A strategy (because of its link to money politics produced by intra-party competition) and called for more of the Type B strategy. The motivation behind the growing demand for more Type B campaigning, rather, an electoral system that promoted more Type B campaigning, was due to the dissatisfying levels of political accountability in Japanese electoral politics; a hallmark of democratically-held elections. By political accountability we mean candidates’ 1) responsiveness to and representation of members of the electorate to get elected to office; 2) commitment to drawing voters into the political and electoral processes; 3) campaigns and subsequent actions in office based on explicit policies that reflect voter preferences; and 4) transparent use of campaign contributions for political and campaign activities.

⁴ LDP’s dominance in the Lower House was also tied to its failure as the ruling party to reapportion legislative district seats according to population changes. Rural election districts, where the LDP received significant voter support, were over represented by a 4:1 ratio. In this way, the LDP must assume some culpability in the indictment of the MMD election system.

⁵ A long-acknowledged curiosity among scholars is that the MMD electoral system easily could have driven candidates (namely those fielded from the same political party) to differentiate themselves on substantive policy issues, but instead, the system drove them to distinguish themselves on personality.

A main problem with the MMD electoral system was an absence of political accountability; candidates were not accountable to the policy preferences of voters, at least a significant percentage of voters, and the electoral system gave little power to voters to oust candidates who failed to be accountable to them. Under the MMD electoral system, candidates could get elected to office—and stay in office—with as little as 10 percent of the vote (in a five-candidate district-- 20 percent is needed to guarantee victory but most winners got much less than that). In other words, the MMD system gave candidates an incentive to cater to the policy interests and expectations of a small slice of the electorate to get elected. Indeed, this slice of the electorate often was “vertical,” concentrated in one geographic area, or otherwise homogeneous in composition.⁶ The logic of electoral reform was that if the machinery of politics shifted from the MMD to the MMM electoral system (namely the SMD portion), candidates would have to gain a much larger percentage of the vote, requiring an appeal to a cross-section of the electorate that represents the “median voter.” That is best managed through the Type B strategy, where the Type A strategy is most effectively aimed at small niches of voters accessible through political “pork” and constituency service. Appealing to the median voter favors Type B strategy via policy issue appeals and policy records.

The aspect of campaigning that stimulated the most calls for reform was campaign money. Both Type A and Type B strategies require substantial funds, of

⁶ While political turnover regularly occurred under the MMD electoral system (mostly among weaker incumbents, or incumbents tied to scandal), it mostly applied to candidates (and political parties) who had not mastered the Type A strategy well-regarded for generating a reliable percentage of voters. One consequence of the SMD competition is the higher level of electoral safety it is known to produce among incumbent candidates (i.e., incumbency advantage). Short of strong challengers from which they must defend their seat, incumbent candidates have less incentive to expand their support base beyond voters who put them in office. While accountability problems still exist under the MMM electoral system, the SMD seat competition demands that candidates are accountable to a larger share of the electorate than the MMD seat competition.

course, but they differ in how the money is spent (and often enough raised). Type A money typically goes into strengthening relationships with voters, directly as in sponsoring *kouenkai* activities, but most often indirectly by compensating mediators such as local politicians and social notables. In the United States and elsewhere where Type B predominates, most campaign spending is on advertising, which is regulated and limited in Japan. Type B campaigning also involves spending at the grassroots level, as for research on individual voter characteristics, canvassing, telephone banks, provision of transportation, and so forth. American candidates use the Type A strategy too, notoriously in machine politics and in the “walking around money” provided to local leaders for unspecified uses. Conversely, Japanese the Type B strategy also consume funds, but on balance, it would appear that much more money is used for rather murky Type A strategy in Japan than in most Western countries.

Incidentally, that fact that many of these murky uses of money are clearly or potentially illegal under Japan’s quite restrictive election laws means that candidates and staff keep everything about it very close to the vest. It would have been fascinating to trace how the use of campaign funds changed (or did not change) across the three elections for each of our candidates, but it was not possible to get any sort of systematic information.

How campaign funds are raised, as well as spent, has long been a matter of controversy in many countries, with the trend toward greater restrictions and controls. Campaign finance in Japan has never been a transparent matter. Disclosure of the names of campaign donors and the reporting of campaign money was veiled through weaknesses in the election laws. The receipt of large political donations from businesses was tied to

financing of campaign tactics subsumed under the Type A strategy. Hrebenar (1986) writes that corporate contributions were at the center of these scandals, and were welcomed by the LDP because electoral rules restricted individual expressions of participation in the electoral process in terms of campaign contributions and personal activism.

Notable was a series of high-profile political corruption cases in Japan dating back to the mid 1970s (i.e., the 1976 Lockheed scandal) and continuing in the late 1980s and early 1990s (e.g. the 1988 Recruit scandal and the 1992 Kyowa and Sagawa Kyuubin scandals). It was the public condemnation of the Recruit, Kyowa and Sagawa Kyuubin scandals, on top of decades of questionable political and electoral practices that led to the emergence of new progressive political parties in 1992 and 1993.⁷ Along with changing the voting system for lower house elections, which was aimed at reducing the demand for ever-larger amounts of campaign money (thought to be the product of intra-party competition in the MMD), reformist efforts also pointed at how money was raised. A new law passed in 1994 provided for government subsidies of political parties in the hope that this public money could take the place of questionable donations from corporate and other interested sources.

The new parties were geared towards defeating the LDP in the 1993 general election and promoting electoral and political reform legislation. Many of the core members and leaders of these new parties—the Japan New Party (JNP), the Shinsei Party and the New Party Sakigake—were incumbents who defected from the Liberal Democratic Party due to policy and factional differences. These new parties set the tone

⁷ The Japan New Party was established shortly before the 1992 Upper House election. The New Party Sakigake and the Shinsei Party were formed shortly before the 1993 Lower House election.

of the 1993 Lower House election and created the groundswell of support for political reform, an election theme that dominated the 1993 election campaign.⁸ The accessibility and progressive political goals of these new parties even attracted many young, competent individuals who aspired to become national legislators. Additionally, the goals of the new parties persuaded voter to support them at the polls—enough support to undermine the LDP’s 38-year strong-hold in the Lower House.

Upon winning enough seats to deny the LDP continued control of the Diet in 1993, the opposition political parties formed a coalition and mobilized to tackle election reform. The legislation they drafted was intended to redefine political candidates’ longstanding campaign behavior, especially behavior that encouraged political candidates to engage in illegal campaign practices. On January 29, 1994, the election reform bill, which featured a new election system and other election rules related to donations and funding-raising, was passed into law.

Despite the appearance of unified support for the reform legislation, (Reed and Thies, 2003, state that it was a bill no politician could easily reject without public criticism), election reform was not unanimously supported by Diet members. Continuation of the MMD election system was a greater guarantee of electability among many Diet members, although data confirmed the election advantage offered to incumbents competing in a SMD election system. Nonetheless, the legislation passed thanks to the changed composition of the Diet plus strong public support (Christensen,

⁸ It is worth noting that 1993 was not the first attempt to reform Japan’s election system. Past unsuccessful attempts by the conservative LDP to reform the election system occurred in 1956, 1965, 1973 and 1991 (Reed and Thies, 2003; Hirano, 2006). At the heart of each failure was the uncertainty surrounding the political and electoral consequences of a new election system. Numerous alterations to the election system, however, did follow from these failed attempts, including stricter campaign rules stipulated by the Public Office Election Law, and the expansion of the number of election districts and seats apportioned to each election district.

1994). After sixty-nine years the MMD election system was replaced by an amalgamation, the single-member district (SMD) system and proportional representation (PR) system, together called the Mixed-Member Majoritarian (MMM) election system.⁹ The new election system permitted candidates to compete for single-member seats among 300 small districts and one of 200 PR seats in eleven regional blocs throughout the nation.¹⁰ The SMD component of the new election system addressed the political reformers' desire to limit intra-party competition and advance strong, two-party competition. The presumption was that policy centrism would emerge from two major political parties, and that one-party dominance would give way to two parties alternating political power through competitive elections (Seligmann, 1997). The PR component of the new election system, on the other hand, was aimed at preventing a two-party system, since it allowed smaller parties to win a significant number of seats. Without that provision, sufficient support to pass would have been unavailable.

The hybrid nature of the MMM election system was widely hailed by its proponents as a systemic cure for the problems ascribed to the MMD system because candidates from same party were deterred from competing against each other in the same district, and political parties were front and center of the election campaign. Thus, there would be less incentive to continue campaign tactics that thrived on the personal vote under the MMD election system.¹¹ It was also thought that the need for campaign funds would be substantially reduced (at the same time that the collection and management of funds

⁹ The MMM election system is an overtly majoritarian form of the SMD and PR system since three-fifths of all Lower House seats are chosen from single-member districts (Reilly, 2007).

¹⁰ The number of PR seats was reduced from 200 to 180 shortly after the 1996 Lower House election. The Lower House today consists of 480 members.

¹¹ An even more important factor in maintaining the LDP's stronghold in rural districts was failing to redraw election district boundaries in response to population shifts from rural to urban districts. Consequently, rural districts, where the LDP collected the lion's share of its support, were over-represented while urban districts were under-represented (Curtis 1988, Neary 2002).

were regularized). It was hoped that elections would be run on party loyalty and well-articulated party manifestos (policy issue platforms) instead of on constituency favors and political pork barrel programs. The 1994 election reform challenged political candidates to campaign differently.

Yet, reform architects could only speculate about the effects of reform. In fact, reformers built their case about the effects of the MMM election system and the new election rules on campaign behavior observed among politicians of other democratic polities like Italy and New Zealand that adopted new election systems in the last few decades. Understanding the actual effects requires empirical research of election campaign behavior, to which this dissertation seeks to make a contribution.

The Research Design of the Study

This study is based on field research on three politicians across three general elections: one before the election reform in July 1993, and two following election reform in October 1996 and June 2000. Intensive face to face interviews, review of print and electronic media, analyses of printed campaign literature and advertisements, and participant observations of candidates were the principal research methods we used to evaluate campaign behavior for each election under review. Frequent, informal discussions and interactions with the candidates, office personnel, family members and campaign support staff of local politicians and organizational leaders between elections and during the official campaign period buttress the more formal, repeat interviews conducted with the candidates. The formal interviews and participant observations figure prominently in this dissertation. Significant time was dedicated to “shadowing” the three

politicians and their office staff in their home district or at the national Diet office while they conducted pre-campaign and official campaign activities.¹² These activities range from constituency services and outreach (e.g., attendance at social club events and tours with *kouenkai* members of the national Diet) to outdoor speeches. Participant observations occurred bi-weekly between during the pre-campaign period and daily during the official campaign period. The schedules of the candidates' political and campaign activities were available upon request to fill in the information gaps during weeks when participant observations did not occur. The election campaign research was enhanced by volunteerism as a legislative and election campaign staffer. All three politicians selected for this study competed in the 1993, 1996 and 2000 Lower House elections, and possess similar biographic profiles—common factors that provide a methodological strength in a study beset with variability. They are all young, ideologically progressive-conservative candidates backed by opposition political parties.¹³ Each had prior political preparation for a career in politics—one served as staff for a Diet member and two served in prefectural legislatures before running for national office. Additionally, all three are graduates of elite Japanese universities and attended the Matsushita Institute of Government and Management (MIGM), a prestigious and unique academy. The breadth of our multiple year study of campaigns among candidates across

¹² The activities conducted during the pre-campaign period, commonly referred to as *seiji katsudou* (political activities) and the official campaign period, called *senkyo katsudou*, (campaign activities) are largely similar, yet this seemingly insignificant difference is the semantic loopholes in the Public Offices Elections Law (POEL) that permit the former prior to the official election campaign period. Politicians merely need to avoid references to future elections or candidacy to maintain the distinction between these two classifications.

¹³ The progressive conservative label in Japan is a short-hand for political reformist and pragmatist. More importantly, it connotes rejection of the LDP, particularly its self-serving actions to retain political dominance in the Diet. Symbolic of progressive conservatism was an orientation towards political statesmanship, as well as a political posture of Japan as fully sovereign nation less yielding to the policy demands of the West, namely the U.S., on security and economic affairs.

district types compliments the depth of previous case studies on campaign behavior of a single candidate in a particular district type, or a single post-reform election. The finding of the study, we believe, will hold up across space and time because of this methodological approach.

About the Matsushita Institute of Government and Management (MIGM)

MIGM is the first academy of its kind in Japan and the world of industrialized democracies.¹⁴ Located in Chigasaki City (approximately 60 kilometers southwest of Tokyo City), MIGM takes as its mission to train a new breed of Japanese political leaders. Founded in 1979, the Institute was conceived by electronics industrialist Konosuke Matsushita as the answer to the vanity, mediocrity and complacency he observed among 20th century leaders in Japan. MIGM's competitive-entry, five year curriculum combined academic coursework with practical, independent field work experiences in Japan and abroad.¹⁵ Even in the 21st century, the main mission of MIGM program continues to be to the train the next generation of political professionals and promote higher standards of political ethics. Equally true today is the Institutes mission to imprint the philosophy and principles of its founder Matsushita Konosuke on associates through activities designed to train the body, mind and spirit. Among these activities are kendo, tea ceremony, hiking (a 100 kilometer course), morning exercises,

¹⁴ George Washington University's Graduate School of Political Management, a non-partisan political training program in the U.S. features a number of the applied and practical elements offered in MIGM's program. The program, the vision of Neil Fabricant, a lawyer from New York City and former Legislative Director of the New York Civil Liberties Union, began in 1987 with 24 students. Initially it operated from the Manhattan campus of Baruch College then opened a degree program in Washington in September of 1991 on the campus of The George Washington University.

¹⁵ The first students, or "fellows," were admitted in 1981. Since then (as of March 2008), 230 men and women have graduated from MIGM. Many of these graduates have assumed careers in local and national politics.

community outreach and volunteer public service work. The cornerstone of Matsushita's principles and philosophy was a creed that paid homage to a "sunao" (unbiased and humbled) mind and spirit.¹⁶

Now in its twenty-seventh year since its creation, the Matsushita Institute is noted for producing politicians traditionally associated with Japan's elite universities like Waseda, Keio and Tokyo. In the beginning, however, MIGM drew public suspicion when it admitted its first students (called "associates") in 1981 because of the unconventional mission of the program and highly selective admission process—only 20 students were admitted in the first entering class. Twelve years later in 1993, MIGM had come of age.

In 1993, the political conditions were ideal for a number of MIGM alums to run for the Lower House. Backed by the name value of MIGM and mostly endorsed by the new political parties, 23 MIGM graduates contested Lower House seats in the 1993 general election. Prior to the 1993 Lower House election only one MIGM graduate, Aisawa Ichiro (House of Representatives, Okayama 1st district) held a seat in Diet. After the election, the total numbered fifteen.¹⁷ When these graduates collectively emerged in 1993 as Lower House candidates, they caused quite a public stir. Suddenly MIGM was the source of media attention since its graduates showcased their MIGM affiliation as much as their political party affiliation. Observers speculated whether the MIGM would

¹⁶ A recitation of the creed took place each morning as a prologue to each work day by students and the administrative staff in attendance at the Institute. Translated from Japanese, the creed reads as follows: "With a *sunao* mind, we firmly dedicate ourselves to gathering wisdom, seeking out the intrinsic nature of reality through independent study, and searching anew every day for the path that will lead to new growth and development. With deep love for our country and our people, we seek to contribute to the peace, happiness and prosperity of all humankind by searching for guiding principles of government and management based on a new vision of the nature of human beings."

¹⁷ Presently, 70 of the 230 graduates of MIGM occupy local and national assembly seats throughout Japan. The five-year program has since been cut to 3 years.

aspire to create its own political party, in the same fashion as Soka Gakkai did with the Clean Government Party—its graduates running in 1993 certainly outnumbered the candidates backed by smaller opposition parties. The declared political party affiliations of these candidates, however, put such speculation to rest. MIGM was more keen on graduating quality candidates for public office than new political party building. Besides, the new political parties in 1993 (JNP, JRP and Sakigake) had sufficiently filled the progressive-conservative gap in the ideological continuum between Japanese conservative parties and liberal parties.

Case Studies of Three MIGM Graduates

As MIGM graduates running for the Lower House for the first time under new political party labels, the three candidates are quite similar with the exception of the district type—urban, suburban and rural—in which they competed, and in their degrees of success. The districts are fairly close to each other in the Kanto and southern Tohoku areas of Japan. The urban candidate is Usami Noboru. Usami competed in the Tokyo 2nd, 3rd and 4th districts in the 1993, 1996 and 2000 Lower House elections, respectively. He won his first election and lost the next two. The suburban candidate is Matsuzawa Shigefumi. Matsuzawa competed in the Kanagawa 2nd district in 1993 and the Kanagawa 9th district in 1996 and 2000, respectively, and won all of his elections convincingly. Finally, the rural candidate is Genba Kouichirou. Genba competed in the Fukushima 2nd district in 1993 and Fukushima 3rd district in 1996 and 2000. He won the first election, barely lost the second (but was elected on the PR list), and regained his SMD seat in the third. The political party affiliations of these candidates were all opposition parties that

had not existed prior to 1993, but the record is too complicated to list here. These and many other details are in the case studies reported in Chapters 3 and 4.

While the study analyzes campaign behavior of three candidates, the suburban candidate, Matsuzawa, has been given a chapter of his own and is treated at more length. The additional attention to Matsuzawa's campaign behavior partly is to address an under-representation of political science scholarship on suburban electoral politics in Japan compared to urban and rural. Under the former multi-member district (MMD) system, one-third of the 511 MMD seats were regarded as suburban. Under the new system, a slightly smaller proportion (28 percent) of the 300 SMD seats as appears to be suburban.¹⁸

Conclusions reached about electioneering in the suburban district typically are extrapolations of rural and urban districts campaign data. Hence, a focus on Matsuzawa's campaign behavior represents a focus on the electoral challenges particular to the suburban district. Indeed, all Lower House candidates—rural, suburban and urban—face some constituency population fluctuations that may influence voting patterns, while the voter behavior for the rural and urban districts has remained the relatively stable and consistent. Yet, the suburban electorate from which Matsuzawa sought support reflects an influx of individuals from rural and urban locations who bring with them the respective political temperaments of urban and rural districts. The diversity of the socio-economic status, age, occupation, and political attitudes of the electorate in suburban districts, and the continual influx of new residents through urban

¹⁸ These figures were derived by tabulating the total number of urban/metropolitan, mixed (suburban) and rural districts listed in Steven Reed's source book, *Japan Election Data: The House of Representative, 1947-1990* and *Seiji Handbook* (No. 30, p.195). Reed adopts the Asahi Shimbun's demographic/geographic categorizations for election districts.

sprawl and rural migration in the districts yielded less stable and predictable voter behavior patterns (Ben-Ari, 1991). Consequently, suburban election districts, due their socio-demographic diversity, suggest less voter stability and predictability.

With regard to the three elections included in this dissertation, each has its own particular interest, with one pre-reform and two post-reform. There is an excellent book mostly written by Steven R. Reed (2003), *Japanese Electoral Politics: Creating a New Party System*, that also focuses on the same three elections, including three chapters (written by others) on particular regions. This book clearly demonstrates how much electoral dynamics shifted across the three elections, but its focus on the political party system actually says less than one might expect about changes (or non-changes) in election campaign strategies.

In brief, the conventional wisdom indicates that we should have witnessed more Type B campaign tactics in the nation as a whole in the 1993 Lower House election, given the three new parties (two split off from the LDP) and the incessant calls for reform. That should particularly be the case with our candidates, as first-time challengers and recent alums of MIGM. On the other hand, the 1993 election was still conducted under the MMD system with all its incentives for Type A campaign tactics. In 1996, turmoil continued, and the reform had been carried out, again presumably favoring the Type B strategy. Most of the extensive coverage at the time (see Chapter 2) expressed disappointment that this did not happen (see the concluding chapter for some reasons why not). Finally, the 2000 election was for several reasons a more “normal” case to look at the effects of reform than was its first example, and our study is distinctive in including that perspective.

The next chapter is a review of the literature. It is followed by a chapter that looks at Matsuzawa's three campaigns in his suburban district, and then a chapter that does the same in a briefer form for urban candidate, Usami and rural candidate, Genba. These chapters are essentially descriptive case studies aimed more at presenting evidence than analyzing it. The conclusion will propose some hypotheses to explain the variations we observed among the nine campaigns. While these propositions cannot be rigorously tested for applicability to national patterns, given the small sample, they do lead to some interesting and new implications.

The underlying question in this dissertation is the point that puzzles most people who look at Japanese elections—why do they still look so “traditional,” or in our terms, so favor the Type A strategy? Why did the prediction by Curtis cited at the beginning of this chapter not come true? We do not have an authoritative answer, but our interpretations based on detailed participant-observation research throw some new light on the subject.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Gerald Curtis' best-selling book *Daigishi no Tanjou (Birth of a Dietman)*, published in 1971, was an authoritative analysis of campaign behavior in Japan, and even today is often referenced by Japanese politicians and academics alike.¹⁹ His research was a detailed case study of one rural campaign in the 1967 Lower House election that codified how a candidate navigated the MMD election system and the labyrinth of election campaign rules and restrictions uncommon among representative democracies.²⁰ Corresponding to the list of dichotomies presented in the introductory chapter, Curtis's accounts of the "hard vote" and the "gathered vote" on the left side, "floating voters" on the right side, and *kouenkai* or support associations as a then-recent innovation spanning both sides, provided the context for understanding how Japanese election campaigns work.

Explanations for Japan's Distinctive Campaign Behavior

Although Curtis's work was not explicitly comparative with respect to district types in Japan (he examines only one political candidate), or across other democratic

¹⁹ The English version, *Election Campaigning Japanese Style* (also 1971) played a similarly seminal role for the far smaller number of foreign academics who study Japanese politics.

²⁰ With this exception, this review concentrates on writings in English by political scientists. The literature written in Japanese on elections is vast, beyond our ability to treat comprehensively. Literature specific to candidates' campaign behavior, however, is quite limited. Election campaigning per se has been more a topic for journalism than for academic political science in Japan; we believe that most of the important analysis on this subject can be found in the works cited here.

polities, he (as well as other observers in Japan and abroad) saw Japanese campaigning as quite distinctive. Curtis stressed two explanations for the observed distinctiveness of Japanese election campaigns: 1) restrictive campaign rules; and 2) the election system.²¹

Japanese election campaigns continue to be governed by highly restrictive rules. In fact, the number of rules has only increased over the years. Candidates are prohibited from using advertising even in newspapers, much less radio and television, and door-to-door canvassing by campaign workers or volunteers. The number of formal public speeches, posters, and sound-trucks is limited, and voters cannot be offered as much as a cup of tea or coffee if they visit a campaign office. How money can be raised and spent is tightly regulated.

Three reasons have been advanced for such restrictive rules. One is to give a reasonable chance to candidates who do not have much money. Another is to prevent gathering votes by “traditional” inducements such as reciprocity for some gift or favor, or simply direct requests from a respected person. A third can be inferred from the fact that many specific restrictive practices dated from 1925, the year that universal manhood suffrage was instituted. With an expanded, but less informed electorate in Japan, elite political “caretakers” at the time wanted to inhibit the ability of “demagogues” to whip up public emotion, and later elites left these provisions in place presumably for similar reasons.

²¹ Two parallel laws govern Japan’s election campaigns. The Public Offices Elections Law (POEL) regulates the rules of the game of Japanese elections ranging from campaign activities to district magnitude, and the Political Funds Control Law (PFCL), defines campaign spending (*seiji kenkin*) limits. On the importance of electoral laws in general, see Saito, 1995; and Grofman and Lijphard 1986. For an account of these provisions in Japan, including recent changes, see Jain, 1993; Seligmann, 1997; Otake, et al., 1998; Christensen, 1996 and 1998, and Reed, 1999.

Clearly a major reason why election campaigning is distinctive is that Japanese candidates are simply not allowed to do much for gathering votes and mobilizing voters—a luxury taken for granted by candidates in other democracies . Incidentally, these restrictions have probably had the net effect of making campaigns more rather than less “traditional” given that many “modern” campaign tactics were not sanctioned under Japan’s Political Funds Control Law, which places limits on campaign spending (*seiji kenkin*). It remains relatively easy to regulate campaign behaviors, including most ways money is spent during the campaign. However, it is harder to regulate how money is raised and regulate other activities that can be carried out behind closed doors that invite campaign corruption. Disclosures of campaign spending usually have been far from accurate since political parties and candidates have been particularly savvy about taking advantage of the loopholes on financial reports. In fact, Japanese election campaigns require vast sums of money, far more than could be spent legally. In the twelve days of the official election campaign in 1996 alone, for example, candidates’ averaged campaign expenses were well over fifty percent of the 24 million yen spending limit for the SMDs. Yet, the ceiling on spending typically was set high enough that candidates did not exceed the spending limit (Carlson, 2007). It is assumed that much of the money is spent, in effect, buying votes, albeit indirectly by providing cash to influential people to obtain their support, then providing them with the means to encourage other to follow suit, rather than through direct payments to voters.²² Herein rests the opportunity for corruption to enter the electoral and political processes.

²² See Cox and Thies, 2000, Carlson, 2007 and the unpublished manuscript by Matthew Carlson, “Buying Votes in Japan’s Lower House.” *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the The Midwest Political Science Association, Palmer House Hilton, Chicago, Illinois, Apr 15, 2004.*

The second explanation for the distinctiveness of Japanese election campaigns is the unusual election system for Lower House elections, with medium sized, multi-member, single-ballot districts. The details of this election system have been extensively analyzed by many election studies scholar cited and addressed in the previous chapter.²³ Each district had three to five seats, filled by the top vote getters among the usual slate of nine to ten contestants. The most important point about MMD election system is that in order to win a majority a party had to average over two winners per district, and in fact the Liberal-Democratic party ran multiple candidates—often three or four—in nearly every district. An LDP candidate within range of gaining a seat often found it easier to pilfer votes from fellow LDP candidates than from opposition party candidates. The JSP similarly ran more than one candidate in each election district, but unlike the LDP, it found it increasingly difficult to field multiple candidates.²⁴ In various ways, the system decreases the importance of party and increases the importance of individual candidates (including the chances for newcomers to break in to the legislative arena with little or no party support).

To many Japanese and Western political scientists intimately familiar with elections, structural causes like campaign laws and the election system are legitimate explanations for Japanese candidates' distinctive campaign behavior. Yet, they are less convinced by the cultural explanation for candidates' behavioral distinctiveness.²⁵ On the other hand, most non-political scientists (in particular journalists, and many politicians

²³ See Jain, 1993; Seligmann, 1997, Otake, et. al., 1998, Christensen, 1996 and 1998 and Reed, 1999.

²⁴ In terms of party-level electoral strategies at the national level, that put a great premium on running the right number of candidates (lest they knock each other off), but we are concerned with the campaign strategies of individual candidates.

²⁵ In the “rational choice” tradition, Mark Ramseyer and Frances Rosenbluth reject the cultural explanation. Likewise, Steven Reed rejects the cultural explanation. Gerald Curtis largely supports the structural explanation, but he does not ignore cultural factors.

themselves) generally see the cultural explanation as quite credible. Indeed, they care little about the virtues of a parsimonious explanation and social (political) science theory. A notable exception to these generalizations is Scott Flanagan, a distinguished and very theoretically oriented political scientist who takes cultural explanations very seriously.

In a seminal article published three years before Curtis's first book, "Voting Behavior in Japan: The Persistence of Traditional Patterns" (1968),²⁶ Flanagan argued that traditional attitudes and norms among Japanese voters and politicians led to an unusual emphasis on what he called (using sociologists Talcott Parsons' famous "pattern variables"²⁷) "ascriptive-diffuse" relationship between voter and candidate. In effect, what is at work in the campaign process is vertical, patron-client, face-to-face relationships, and by extension, social networks based on such face-to-face relationships. Flanagan called this distinctive phenomenon "*kankei* voting," using a term that means both relationships in general and "contacts" in a political context, particularly with respect to candidates' organization and mobilization of a voter support base.²⁸

Flanagan did not deny the importance of the campaign laws and the electoral system as explanations for campaign behavior, but he maintained that cultural factors had significant independent explanatory power--and indeed, helped account for why Japan instituted and continued such unusual structural conditions. Curtis (in his later *The Japanese Way of Voting*, 1988) rejected the application of the "patron-client"

²⁶ "Voting Behavior in Japan: The Persistence of Traditional Patterns," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 1 (October 1968), 391-412. Also see "The Japanese Party System in Transition," Scott C. Flanagan, *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (January 1971), pp. 231-253; and *Japanese Political Culture: Change and Continuity*. Takeshi Ishida. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1983).

²⁷ Parsons argued that instrumental and expressive interactions, called "pattern variables," existed in societies.

²⁸ It should be noted that this pattern resembles what V.O. Key called "friends-and-neighbor voting" in the American south, as depicted in the classic *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. (New York: Knopf, 1949).

conceptualization but recognized (as indeed he had documented) the pervasiveness of social network relationships of a decidedly Japanese nature.

In the two decades or so after the pioneering research by Curtis and Flanagan, American political scientists explored Japanese elections from various angles. Some took implicit or explicit positions on the structure versus culture debate.²⁹ Most interesting was a series of co-authored works by Flanagan and Bradley Richardson, because the former remained on the cultural side and the latter was essentially a structuralist.³⁰ In the most important book on Japanese electoral behavior, the magisterial *The Japanese Voter* (1991), Richardson and Flanagan with Japanese colleagues tried to link analysis of social networks with the literature on electoral behavior using survey analysis.³¹ That task proved to be quite difficult, but the book includes solid accounts of Japanese elections from the voter's point of view as it related to conventional tactics candidates used to establish and maintain voter support.

There has also been some attention to election campaigning per se, based on empirical observation. Curtis's later books (1988 and 1999) present the overall framework and how it has changed very well. Satomi Tani wrote an excellent study on electoral *keiretsu*.³² That term (borrowed from its main usage to describe Japanese conglomerates) refers to deals between local politicians and Diet candidates, trading pork

²⁹ In fact, this argument has pervaded American social science research on Japan: see John Creighton Campbell, "The Tasks of Social Science Research on Japan: Dispelling Stereotypes, Integrating Theory, Grappling with Culture," background paper for the International Workshop on "Current and Future Trajectories of Social Science Research on Japan." Tokyo University, Institute of Social Science, November, 2006.

³⁰ The work, *Japanese Electoral Behavior* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1977), and particularly the book that became the standard text in the Japan politics field: *Politics in Japan* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1984).

³¹ Scott C. Flanagan, Shinsaku Kohei, Ichiro Miyake, and Bradley M. Richardson. (New Haven: Yale University Press).

³² Overviews are offered in their papers delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, March 25-27, 1994

and political legitimacy for help with the “gathered vote” and local-level information. Haruhiro Fukui and Shigeko Fukai traced clientelist networks of politicians in both urban and rural electoral settings.³³ It is fair to say, however, that the study of Japanese election campaign strategies *per se* in these years was largely a matter of filling in the picture drawn by Curtis.

However, the question of how candidates got elected in Japan was brought front and center by two developments, one theoretical (i.e., intellectual) and one in the practical, real world in nature. The intellectual development was the rise of what is loosely called the “rational-choice” approach, or more specifically principal-agent analysis, in the fields of American and comparative politics. These ideas were forcefully brought to the Japan field by Mark Ramseyer and Frances Rosenbluth in *Japan’s Political Marketplace*.³⁴ They argued that nearly *everything* important about Japanese politics stemmed from its electoral system, which was maintained by the LDP to stay in power. This argument brought renewed interest to exploring the dynamics of MMD elections, Grofman, et. al. (1999) being a representative example. Indeed, a series of articles by the combinations of Gary Cox, Mathew McCubbins and other non-Japan specialists, and Japan-specialists like Frances Rosenbluth and Michael Theis coincided with real world developments in Japan’s electoral politics.

The trend in the real world was a growing debate about reforming the electoral system, which culminated in the law passed in 1994 that shifted the electoral system in the Lower House from MMD election system to the Mixed Member Majoritarian

³³ See “Campaigning for the Japanese Diet,” in *Elections in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan under the single non-transferable vote : the comparative study of an embedded institution*, edited by Bernard Grofman, et. al. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999).

³⁴ Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1993.

(MMM) election system that represented a hybrid of the SMD + PR election systems. This new election system was the most significant modification to the Public Officers Elections Law in decades. Substantial modifications also occurred to the Political Funds Control Law. For example, a public subsidy was provided to political parties upon meeting the funding conditions, corporations were banned from making direct contributions to *kouenkai*, and lower disclosure limits were mandated for political contributions. Instead of 1 million yen ceiling on donations before reform, the names of donors are now disclosed at 50,000 yen.³⁵ The election reform legislation and how it came about has been extensively analyzed by political scientists (Jain, 1993; Babb, 1996; Seligmann, 1997; Otake, et. al., 1998; Christensen, 1996 and 1998, Reed, 1999, etc.).³⁶ A watershed of new scholarship on Japanese election campaigns occurred in response to the passage of election reform legislation in 1994.³⁷ Whether and how the election reform signed into law by its architects would affect Japanese election campaigning became a major focus.

Evaluations of Election Reform

Some politicians and journalists believed that Japan would finally attain the idolized, but elusive Western model of electoral politics—issue-oriented and party-centered elections—under the MMM election system. Yet, the vast majority of political science observers attentively deconstructing reform legislation and calculating the

³⁵ For comprehensive details on the electoral laws see, Hrebenar, 1986 and Carlson, 2007.

³⁶ Much of the literature on Japanese election campaigning in the last decade has been on the election reform, the election results and the consequences of election reform on political party strength. Much less has been written on candidates' actual campaign strategies and tactics.

³⁷ Great attention was given to the immediate, short-range impact of election reform on the election campaign. Thus, many works on the 1996 election campaign are available. Long-range analyses of campaign behavior have not been as abundant. The concentration of interest in subsequent elections waned as it became infinitely clear that evidence post-reform changes, if any, to Japanese election campaigning would take a series of general elections.

consequences of reform were not as hopeful as politicians and journalists. Political science scholars argued that reform enthusiasts were using an unrealistic and outdated standard of measurement for advanced democracies in the twenty-first century (Curtis, 1999; Reed, 2003). Issue- and party-oriented campaigning represented a paradigm that political candidates waxed poetic about, but in reality is virtually unattainable by any democratic polity. Western democracies even failed to live up to these standards. Upon investigating the first Lower House election under the new election system in 1996, Park, Otake, Isao and Masaaki (1998) claimed that excessive faith was placed in the SMD and PR election system to instantly produce policy issue- and party identification-oriented campaign behavior. Yet, they concluded that Japan would require several additional general elections before politicians (and voters) could comfortably appropriate the goals of election reform and cast aside the old campaign habits associated with the MMD election system. The conclusions they reached about the impact of reform underscore one of two outlooks about the direction of campaign behavior under the new election system; one outlook clearly being more positive than the other.

Otake, Isao, Park and Masaaki appeared mixed on the short and long term effectiveness of reform, but most political scientists argued that the change in the electoral system would eventually lead to more issue-oriented and party-centered election campaign behavior, and indirectly to more general changes: party factions and the powers of factional leaders would lose strength, and money politics subsequently would diminish. The key is that all of this probably will occur incrementally over future elections. For example, Reed (1997) maintained that the SMD and PR system will eventually lead to a two-party system (and subsequently party-centered campaigning),

based on Duverger's Law, and that SMD will increase incumbency advantage, which could provide candidates with enough election security to forfeit a candidate-centered campaign behavior for party-centered and issue-attentive campaign behavior. In his book covering the 1993 to 2000 elections, Reed (2003) suggested that campaign behavior did not change rapidly because candidates were still adapting to the new election system. Christensen (1998) was somewhat more positive-minded: he agreed that issue-centered and party-oriented campaign behavior among candidates will take several more elections, but he did find that some candidates already were conducting issue-oriented and party-centered campaigns in the 1996 election.³⁸ His study, unfortunately, did not make clear whether such changes occurred with incumbents and political challengers—a not so insignificant distinction to make in light of the conventional wisdom on campaign behavior for incumbent and challenger behavior.

Other scholars were much more negative than those cited above. Curtis (1999) and Seligmann (1997) thought that party-centered and issue-oriented election campaigning, will not be realized. Curtis argues that future election campaign behavior will continue to be duplications of 1996 election campaign behavior, where campaign behavior mirrored pre-reform behavior. They emphasized the legacy of Japan's electoral history, particularly with respect to the robustness of electoral behavior. For example, Curtis sees the PR component of the electoral system undercutting the impact of SMD by favoring multiple parties and thus overly narrow issue platforms that would not offer voters a clear cut choice. Because multiple parties will not be able to adequately present different issue platforms, candidates will not be motivated to adopt a policy-centered

³⁸ His study, however, does not clearly and conclusively distinguish between incumbents and challengers who adopted these new patterns of behavior.

campaign behavior. Moreover, unless issue cleavages emerge to polarize Japanese society, issue campaigns based on well-developed policy platforms will gain only limited support from candidates. Furthermore, Curtis equally sees *kouenkai* undermining party-centered campaigning since it has become an organizational staple of election campaigns and Japanese political life. More broadly, issue campaigns based on well-developed policy platforms will not develop unless and until real issue cleavages emerge to polarize Japanese society.

Some critics even pointed to electoral reforms in other countries to make the case that institutional manipulation has its limits in structuring voter behavior, party behavior and candidate campaign behavior (Sakamoto, 1999 and Huang; 1996). Italy and New Zealand, like Japan, overhauled their election systems in the early 1990s to correct weaknesses endemic in the PR and pure majoritarian election systems. Like Japan, the immediate effects of reform on campaign behavior, among other things, were less than satisfactory. Italy, for example, adopted a similar mixed election system in April 1993 to address some of the political inefficiencies and corruption produced by the plethora of small parties that emerged from a proportional representation system (both the process and the results in Italy resembled Japan).³⁹ The main goals were to simplify the party system by minimizing the number of minor parties and cutting down on political pork. However, Italy's first election under the new election system in March 1994 fell short of reformists' expectations, in that there were as many parties in both chambers as before. The continued presence of parties actively governing meant that corrupt political and campaign practices common before reform were still the most expedient route to power

³⁹ Italy switched from a wholly proportional representation system to a combination of single-member district and PR system. Three-fourths of the seats in the two-chamber parliament are filled by plurality voting in single member districts and one-fourth by proportional representation.

(Katz, 2006). The early effects of New Zealand's experimentation with a new election were no better. Once described as a "perfect example of a Westminster-style majoritarian government: (Lijphart, 1984), New Zealand rejected the Single Member Plurality election system for a more proportional mixed-member system in 1993 (its first election under the mixed system took place in October 1996). Unlike Italy, the New Zealand's first-past-the-post SMD election system limited the presence of minority party interests. Additionally, its election system manufactured accountability issues through one-party dominant government—ironically not unlike Japan's experience with the LDP (Karp and Bowler, 2001).

Broadly speaking, the pessimists who believed that reform efforts would not have much effect fell into two groups. One group emphasized institutional factors, such as the impact of combining SMD and PR in a hybrid, or mixed system (Reed, 2001). For example, SMDs streamline the number of candidates and political parties and advances campaigns run on well-articulated party platforms instead of social networks, but PR negates that. One factor overlooked by reformers according to Curtis (1999) was that the decline in party identifying voters will encourage candidates to continue to promote themselves over the party in which they hold membership (which calls into question the utility of party membership as an electoral resource for candidates). Others took a cultural approach, for example examining the differences of socio-psychological patterns of behavior among Japanese voters in urban and rural districts to argue the limits of election system tinkering (Otake, 1998). Otake, for instance, argues that since issues matter less with rural voters than personal relationships, the incentive for candidates to

make issues a centerpiece of their campaigns would remain tenuous. We will return to those themes in the final chapter of this dissertation.

Institutional and cultural forces of change aside, one common denominator among all of the literature emerging from electoral reform is that campaign behavior in Japan has been less predictable than in the past. The consensus among reform pessimists, however, was that candidates simply would not immediately engage in a wholesale behavioral shift prescribed by reform. We posit a number of hypotheses drawn from the literature presented here and the case studies in the forthcoming chapters:

1. The Type A strategy is the product of values and norms among voters, which are rooted in Japanese social and cultural patterns.
2. The Type A strategy is the product of candidates' expectations, based on their own experiences or what they are taught about what works to win election campaigns.
3. A Type A strategy prevails because an effective Type B strategy is precluded by tight election laws and regulations.
4. The Type A strategy is the product of the multimember electoral district system.

These hypotheses will be revisited and sufficiently addressed in our concluding chapter.

Chapter 3

Suburban Campaign Behavior: Matsuzawa Shigefumi

This chapter is a case study narrative of one politician's campaign behavior under both the old MMD election system and the new SMD and PR election system; two systems used to elect members to the Lower House, the more powerful legislative chamber of Japan's national Diet. The politician selected for this case study is Matsuzawa Shigefumi, and the focal point of the case study is the electoral assessments and strategic actions by Matsuzawa to get elected to the Lower House for the first time in the 1993 then to return to the Lower House in 1996 and 2000.⁴⁰ The beginning of this chapter is attentive to Matsuzawa's academic training and local legislative experience; important precursors to his Lower House victories, as well as his residential history and perceptions of Kanagawa prefecture.

Matsuzawa Shigefumi is a native son of Kawasaki city and life-long resident of Kanagawa prefecture. His residential tenure was logistically and strategically invaluable to the launching of his political career, particularly with respect to his educational choices of nearby Keio University (KU) in 1977 and Matsushita Institute of Government and Management (MIGM) in 1982. KU remains one of Japan's oldest and respected private

⁴⁰ The 2000 Lower House election was the last general election Matsuzawa contested. In April 2003 he was elected as the governor of Kanagawa prefecture. He continues to serve as the Governor of Kanagawa prefecture today.

institutions of multi-disciplinary higher learning.⁴¹ MIGM is a much newer private post-graduate academy fashioned to nurture progressive leadership in government and politics in Japan.⁴² Admission to these two elite academies allowed Matsuzawa to remain close to the politics of Kanagawa prefecture, particularly the local and national election districts of which his hometown, Asao ward was included. This mix of traditional, conventional (i.e., KU) and modern, unconventional (i.e., MIGM) educational experiences elevated his credentials for a political career, and corresponded to the traditional-modern dimensions of his campaign strategy.

Matsuzawa was not a political wonk when he entered MIGM, however, he possessed the political ambition suited for the academy's program and equally supported the academy's mission: to exact and inspire greater political transparency in Japanese politics and accountability among its leaders.⁴³ Since strategic and tactical planning and campaign management were universally undertaken by MIGM student-fellows aspiring to legislative careers, Matsuzawa was prepared to run for office. In fact, his preparation for the prefectural assembly began in earnest well over a year before the prefectural assembly election date.

Contributing to Matsuzawa's political readiness in 1987 was the electioneering proficiency he amassed while volunteering on several local election campaigns in his

⁴¹ Nearly half of all members of Japan's national Diet (approximately 45 percent in the Lower House) were Keio University, Waseda University and Tokyo University graduates, and sixty percent of the applicants admitted to MIGM were drawn from these same elite universities.

⁴² MIGM, in operation for just two years when Matsuzawa entered in 1982, was still a budding, unconventional and unproven gateway to a career in politics. Employment as a staff member to a politician, a political party, or an organization recognized for its influence in the political arena were still the most traditionally recognized routes to public office, and reliable start to a legislative career in Japan. Another path to politics that was appreciably easier was by political inheritance. Second- and third-generation politicians "inherited" their legislative seats from family members who retired or passed away.

⁴³ Today thirty-two percent of the 213 graduates (as of April 2005) of MIGM hold office at the local to national-level. Currently 94 graduates are engaged in political careers. Sixty-five are public, elected representatives at the local, prefectural and national levels, and half of all MIGM graduates are engaged in professions related to politics.

hometown and interning as a staffer for U.S. Congresswoman Beverly Byron's re-election campaign in 1984. The crux of his campaign strategy in 1987 rested on drawing from his training to convince voters that he was suitable to serve as a prefectural representative. Well groomed for political leadership by means of MIGM's curriculum of lectures, internships and field studies on politics, economics and society, as well as its instruction in public speaking and debating, Matsuzawa wasted little time operationalizing his plan for a public service career. Within a month of completing his training at MIGM in March 1987(April 3) he officially announced his candidacy for the Kanagawa prefectural assembly election schedule for April 12.⁴⁴

As a long-established resident of Asao ward, Matsuzawa chose to vie for one of the two seats apportioned to Asao ward of Kanagawa prefecture's 107-member assembly. His life-long residency in the Kanagawa prefecture bolstered his standing as a "native son" among voters in his first election campaign.

1987 and 1991 Prefectural Elections

At 29 years of age, Matsuzawa was one of the youngest candidates to compete in Kanagawa prefecture's electoral history. As a young political challenger, Matsuzawa presented himself to voters as the candidate who could energetically pursue Asao ward constituents' political interests. What's more, he presented himself as the next generation of progressive prefectural leaders. His campaign behavior for the 1987 prefectural assembly election centered on the experiences he amassed at MIGM. The campaign

⁴⁴ The Kanagawa prefectural assembly is composed on eleven cities (four of these cities have ward subdivisions) and five counties. Candidates compete in 47 districts based on a plurality election system. One to four seats are apportioned to these wards, cities and counties.

leaflets, posters and banners referenced Matsuzawa's affiliation with the MIGM to generate public interest with his candidacy.

The campaign strategy Matsuzawa assembled for an Asao ward seat followed the conventional tried and true campaign strategies of a first-time challenger. That is, his campaign strategy was predominately an energetic strategy defined by a positive, attractive personal image that accentuated his young age, educational pedigree and a native son's acquaintance with the policy issues important to Asao ward constituents. As a personal image-driven election campaign (he held no political party affiliation), Matsuzawa deployed the Type B strategy, composed prominently of informal and formal public greetings and speeches, rallies, assemblies (*gaitou enzetsu*, *enzetsukai* and *shuukai*), and sound truck canvassing (*gaisensha no yuusei*). The substance of this presentation of political know-how was a progressive conservative issue platform that addressed local-level policy concerns related to health care, education, taxation and population growth in the ward.

Matsuzawa was already intimately familiar with these issues as an Asao ward native, but he far more critically examined these issues during his training at MIGM; policy field studies throughout Japan and abroad were essential features of the training at MIGM. His campaign slogan, *kensei ni takkuru*, (lit. *Tackling Prefectural Politics*), implied the necessity to confront and address prefectural policy matters neglected by the assembly members. The slogan, inspired by his recreational participation in rugby in college, was a clever way to infuse his personality and athleticism (i.e., physical energy)

into his campaign message.⁴⁵ “Politics is a contact sport,” insisted Matsuzawa during one of many discussions with him, “requiring physical and mental agility and courage to tackle difficult issues.” The decision to use the slogan was equally a clever way to direct voters to rethink youth as a political asset rather than a liability, as well as to attract young voters.

Partisan ties were common among many of Matsuzawa’s contemporaries in the prefectural assembly, but Matsuzawa’s first prefectural election campaign was absent of political party support. Among the four candidates—two challengers and two incumbents—competing for the two available Asao ward seats Matsuzawa was the only candidate not backed by a political party. The two incumbents seeking re-election were endorsed by the Japanese Socialist Party (JSP) and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

The decision to remain non-partisan was a personal one, despite opportunities for party recommendation or official backing. As a progressive conservative, Matsuzawa’s policy position was more consistent with the Liberal Democratic Party’s than other established political parties, but as a first-time challenger, he reflexively recoiled at an endorsement from the existing parties because of their questionable public approval. Political independence was a less problematic choice for Matsuzawa as a challenger; it allowed him to focus on policy issues without the complications of political party rhetoric. In this sense, pragmatism trumped party ideology.

Despite political party independence, Matsuzawa was a formidable candidate among party-endorsed candidates competing for the two prefectural assembly seats for Asao ward. Contributing to Matsuzawa’s electoral strength was the credibility MIGM

⁴⁵ The slogan corresponded to the rugby attire worn by student volunteers and staffers during the campaign canvassing (a series of campaign flyers presented Matsuzawa and his campaign staff in a huddle adorned in rugby uniforms).

provided in the absence of a political party endorsement. To this end, MIGM training foiled his opponents’ attempts to discredit his readiness as a legislator. Thus, as an independent challenger competing against experienced, party-endorsed incumbents, MIGM intrinsically stood in lieu of the political party, offsetting his legislative inexperience. MIGM was in effect a “quasi-party” label among a limited field of political party choices. Matsuzawa took full advantage of the prestige identified with MIGM—particularly as it applied to the breed of progressive, adept political candidates it trained—to gain the confidence of Asao ward voters. The upside of Matsuzawa’s political independence was that he circumvented alienating a growing base of non-partisan voters and less committed partisan voters who were important targets for support for his first electoral challenge.

Matsuzawa won an Asao ward seat in the 1987 Kanagawa prefectural assembly election. Table 3.1 illustrates the prefectural assembly election results for Asao ward. Matsuzawa secured 37 percent of the votes among the 44,846 voters who went to the polls. Running as a progressive-conservative independent challenger, Matsuzawa unseated the LDP incumbent by offering voters a more attractive political alternative in the areas of policy orientation and candidate appeal.

Table 3.1

1987 Kanagawa Prefectural Assembly Election (Asao Ward)

CANDIDATE/PARTY	AGE	LEGISLATIVE RECORD	VOTE TOTAL
Matsuzawa/INDPNT	29	Challenger	16,625 (37%)
Kobayashi/SDPJ	61	Incumbent	15,520 (34.6%)
Utsugi/LDP	70	Incumbent	8,244 (18.4%)
Takaoka/JCP	54	Challenger	4,457 (9.9%)

Following a successful first term on the prefectural assembly, Matsuzawa decided to run for a second four-year term in 1991. His re-election campaign behavior was sure-footed; he entered the race confident about how to run for and win a local election. Boosting his confidence was the familiarity of his campaign strategy--he repeated the campaign strategy that put him in office in 1987. The continuity of the political climate and electoral landscape in Asao ward since 1987 justified a continuation of the Type B strategy in 1991. The dominance of the DMS for his re-election campaign, however, did not preclude attentiveness to expanding his support base. Over the four years of his prefectural assembly tenure, Matsuzawa had gained familiarity with the socio-political landscape of the ward and insight about his support base. He had strengthened ties with colleagues in the prefectural assembly and individuals of local prominence in the ward. Finally, he developed a few promising *kouenkai* in Asao ward—the most recognizable addition to his 1991 re-election campaign strategy.

Surprisingly absent among his accumulated resources in four years of public service was political party endorsement. Few members (less than ten percent) of the prefectural assembly were independents—most were associated with the LDP, established opposition parties such as the JSP, Koumei, JCP, Shaminren and DSP, and local parties with little political longevity. Yet, Matsuzawa continued to maintain his political independence, though capable of picking up party backing. Incumbency, and the electoral advantages it offered, contributed to Matsuzawa's continued political independence for the 1991 race. The fact that he surpassed the LDP incumbent in total votes in the 1987 prefectural election reinforced his decision to remain non-partisan, despite holding a progressive-conservative position, and receiving LDP courtship.

Equally reinforcing his decision to remain non-partisan was the larger constituency support base he groomed since 1987 through *kouenkai* and other support-building tactics defining his campaign strategy. Some of this support base was drawn from previously immobile Asao ward voters. Since, little over 59 percent of the Asao ward's 77,894 eligible voters turned out in 1987, there was some merit to reaching out to eligible, but non-voting members of the electorate.

Matsuzawa did not take his 1987 election performance for granted. His election campaign preparations reflected his readiness for the anticipated contest from new political challengers for the 1991 prefectural election. Yet, Matsuzawa faced limited competition in 1991. He and the JSP incumbent, Kobayashi Fumiko, were challenged by a single LDP new-face candidate for the two available seats. Given the results shown in Table 3.2, it is likely that Matsuzawa's and the JSP incumbent's political strength in the Asao ward deterred competition in the 1991 election.

Matsuzawa was re-elected to the prefectural assembly for a second term in April 1991. Table 3.2 presents the outcome of this three-way competition. Turnout for the 1991 election decreased to 47.45 percent. Matsuzawa increased his vote by over 4,000, while his Socialist opponent lost votes. With a solid win in 1987 followed by a landslide victory in 1991, Matsuzawa demonstrated that he was a formidable politician.

Table 3.2

1991 Kanagawa Prefectural Assembly Election (Asao Ward)

CANDIDATE/PARTY	AGE	LEGISLATIVE RECORD	VOTE TOTAL
Matsuzawa/INDPNT	33	Incumbent	21,136 (49.2%)
Kobayashi/SDPJ	65	Incumbent	12,474 (29%)
Yamazaki/LDP	40	Challenger	9,344 (21.7)

Deciding to Go National

“Going national,” namely the House of Representatives, or Lower House, was the logical next step for a young, ambitious politician like Matsuzawa. His second election victory in 1991 at the prefectural level motivated him to run for the more powerful Lower House. The Kanagawa 2nd election district, of which Asao ward was a part, equally was the logical district in which to compete. Matsuzawa could have run during his first term in the Prefectural Assembly, since a general election was held in 1990, but it seemed too risky. After his impressive victory in 1991, stepping up seemed worth a try at the first opportunity—a general election would have to be called by 1994.

The decision to run for national office is often the most momentous choice in the career of an aspiring politician. The factors to be considered were different in Japan’s old multi-member district electoral system than, say, in a system with single-member districts.

Curtis (1971) described the common case of an aspiring conservative candidate seeking to develop ties with an LDP faction that did not have an incumbent in his district (or, just as likely, he would be recruited by that faction). Assuming an incumbent LDP candidate in the district had not died or was resigning, and that the LDP was unwilling to try to elect an additional candidate in that district—both are most often true—it would be difficult for the sponsoring faction to secure an official party nomination. The candidate would therefore run as an independent but would be supported financially and otherwise by the faction.

If he won, usually by eliminating an LDP incumbent whose popularity had waned due to age or some other factor, he would be invited immediately to join the LDP and the

sponsoring faction. As a conservative challenger, more often he would lose in his first attempt, but that was regarded as excellent preparation for obtaining an official nomination, or for running a stronger independent campaign, in the following election.⁴⁶

This course would have been an attractive option for Matsuzawa when he began planning his next step after his 1991 victory. Indeed, a conservative incumbent was over 75 years old and likely to retire—this was Tagawa Seiichi, who had split from the LDP years earlier but still kept a share of conservative votes that might have gone to Matsuzawa.

However, similar to other MIGM graduates, Matsuzawa won on record as opposing the political establishment in general and the LDP in particular, and so was reluctant to pursue an affiliation. On the other hand, no other party was available (the JSP had an incumbent candidate), and running as a “pure” independent without even an informal partisan affiliation would be quite difficult.

Luckily, before he needed to choose, the Japanese party system started to change. In early 1992, the maverick politician Hosokawa Motohiro founded a new party, called the Japan New Party (JNP), as a conservative alternative to the LDP. The JNP (*Nihon Shin-tou* in Japanese) won four seats in the Upper House election of 1992—a somewhat disappointing result, but Hosokawa was determined to persevere. Still more dramatically, in early 1993 Ozawa Ichirou and Hata Tsutomu split their followers first from the LDP’s dominant Takeshita faction and then from the LDP itself, to form the *Shinsei-tou*, or Japan Renewal Party (JRP). They forced a non-confidence vote on Prime Minister Miyazawa, leading to a general election being called for July 18, 1993.

⁴⁶ This in fact was the pattern followed by Satou Bunsei, the candidate followed by Curtis (197?).

Matsuzawa could have been a good candidate for the JNP, but as it happened another politician who had been associated with that party got there first. Nagai Eiji was also a former prefectural assemblyman from a locality within the Kanagawa 2nd election district, and was planning to run. In the event, Matsuzawa was invited by Hata to run as an official candidate of the JRP. He was pleased to be a member of this new political party, stating, “I wanted to be a member of a party that would fundamentally change the conceptualization of a conservative party. This is why I joined the JRP” (October 30, 1995 interview).

Not only was the timing of this opportunity fortuitous for Matsuzawa, but the political situation in general—the great political scandals tied to the LDP and its loss of public trust—was quite favorable for a candidate of his type. Matsuzawa reasoned that voters distressed by the LDP’s years of insulated power that bred political arrogance and irresponsibility would seek refuge in his candidacy and the new political parties.

The Electoral Challenge

Running for the House of Representatives meant contending with a vastly larger election district and electorate and a stronger and wider field of political competitors. A total of 1,428,972 eligible voters resided in the Kanagawa 2nd district in 1990, roughly twenty times the size of Matsuzawa’s prefectural assembly district, and of course they were more diverse politically and socio- economically.⁴⁷ It is a suburban district comprised of small, independent business owners; big industry employees; small farmers;

⁴⁷ The 2nd district is one of five in Kanagawa prefecture. It consisted of one town and five cities. One of these cities, Kawasaki city, is composed of seven wards: Takatsu, Asao, Tama, Saiwai, Kawasaki, Miyamae and Nakahara.

young, single and non-partisan men and women; long-term residents; and transient, less socio-politically integrated communities.

Compared to the two to three candidates Matsuzawa competed against for the two Asao ward seats in 1987 and 1991, the number of competitors he could to compete against for a Lower House seat would be significantly higher. For example, in the 1990 general election, eleven party-endorsed and independent candidates competed for the five seats in the Kanagawa 2nd district. A similarly large roster of contestants was expected for the next Lower House election. Matsuzawa needed to collect enough votes to win at least the fifth seat of the five seats. Happily for him, many candidates won seats with a small percentage of votes in Japan's MMD election system. In fact, one candidate had secured a Kanagawa 2nd district seat with just under 12 percent of the vote (107,171) in the 1990 Lower House election.

The diversity of the suburban district meant adopting a more complex campaign strategy than conventionally prescribed for purely urban or rural election districts. The resources Matsuzawa brought to the campaign included additional sources of campaign funding, a broader base of electoral support, and something of a local political network (election *keiretsu*) generated from his two terms in office. His age was another plus: Matsuzawa (35 yrs.) was one of the youngest candidates to contest a seat for the Lower House when he announced his candidacy in 1993.⁴⁸ In a contest crowded with seasoned incumbents from a stable of traditional political parties, young political talent backed by a new political party attracted favorable attention. Added to these personal resources was the advantage of the JRP's endorsement: it was the vehicle Matsuzawa needed to

⁴⁸ The average age for Lower House members nation-wide in Japan was 50 in 1993.

mobilize progressive-conservative voters, disillusioned voters and young voters inspired by the party's leadership, political goals and fresh political talent.

What kind of competition and electoral conditions was Matsuzawa up against in 1993? The Kanagawa 2nd district in which he would compete had long been represented by well-recognized multiple-term incumbents backed by the established parties and supported by many loyal partisan voters. Four incumbents would be running in 1993 (as noted, the maverick conservative Tagawa Seiichi, who finished second in 1990, had retired). The first-place finisher in 1990 (see Table 3.3) was Koizumi Jun'ichirou, the well-known LDP dissident who became party president and prime minister several years later. Third and fourth place were taken by long-term stalwarts Iwatare Sukio of the JSP and Ichikawa Yuichi of the CGP, both with solid voting blocks. The fifth-place finisher was an LDP first-time winner, Harada Yoshiaki.⁴⁹ Also running was Nakaji Masahiro, a senior Japan Communist Party (JCP) politician who had served five terms in the Kanagawa 2nd district but had been edged out by Harada to finish sixth in 1990.⁵⁰

Table 3.3

1990 Lower House Election (Kanagawa 2nd district)

CANDIDATE/PARTY	AGE	LEGISLATIVE RECORD	VOTE TOTAL
Koizumi/LDP	48	Incumbent	168,997 (18.3%)
Tagawa/PRG	72	Incumbent	164,207 (17.8%)
Iwatare/JSP	61	Incumbent	162,341 (17.6%)
Ichikawa/CGP	55	Incumbent	117,601 (12.7%)
Harada/LDP	45	Incumbent	107,171 (11.6%)
Nakaji/JCP	64	Incumbent	86,400 (9.3%)

⁴⁹ Harada had been an official at MITI and served as an aide to LDP powerhouse Watanabe Michio when he was the minister. Watanabe tapped him to run as an independent attached to the Watanabe faction in 1986, when he lost badly, but he came back to win a seat in 1990 as a conservative independent (this time attached to the Nakasone faction).

⁵⁰ In Japan's MMD system it was not unusual for an incumbent to lose an election but then come back to win the next one.

As Matsuzawa thought about running before the breakup of the LDP, the barriers he faced were not as high as they were for other conservative independent hopefuls in that Tagawa was resigning. Tagawa's 164,207 voters in 1990 should be available, and Matsuzawa could calculate that he only needed a bit over 100,000 to surpass the Communist Nakaji, who had drawn under 90,000 in 1990 (and only 102,000 in 1986). However, he would not be competing directly with Nakaji; rather, the immediate threat would seem to be Harada, who had tripled his vote to 107,171 from 1986 to 1990 and would be fighting to gather in the old Tagawa votes himself. Matsuzawa did not have to specifically defeat Harada, but the combination of Harada and the formidable vote-getter Koizumi might well draw enough conservative votes to allow Nakaji to squeak back into office in the fifth slot.

In the event, the biggest worry for Matsuzawa for the 1993 general election was not Harada (who actually slipped back to 82,006 and sixth place—after which he returned to his old home town in Fukuoka and was elected to the Diet there). It was the other new candidate mentioned briefly above, Nagai Eiji. Nagai was well known for his family's supermarket chain (actually called Nagai) in northern Kawasaki City. Like Matsuzawa, he had served in the prefectural assembly from one of the wards included in Kanagawa 2nd district. After three terms he left to run unsuccessfully as the LDP challenger for mayor of Kawasaki City in 1987 and 1989. He thereafter was farsighted enough to help Hosokawa organize the JNP and took a staff position in its nascent organization. Nagai with his strong local ties in Kanagawa 2nd district and the JNP with its fresh, rebellious image were made for each other. In the campaign, the JNP and JRP would compete for

the same pool of disaffected conservative voters, so Nagai was the biggest threat to Matsuzawa's hopes.

Campaign Behavior: 1993 Lower House Election

Matsuzawa had prepared for a wholly candidate-centered Type B strategy for the 1993 Lower House election before receiving the JRP endorsement. Mirroring his prefectural campaigns, he aggressively engaged in informal and formal public greetings and speeches, rallies, assemblies (*gaitou enzetsu*, *enzetsukai* and *shuukai*), and sound truck canvassing (*gaisensha no yuusei*) to generate electoral support. In 1993, Matsuzawa conducted over five hundred of these activities to get his name out in the district. The aim was to exemplify political vitality--the youthful and vibrant image of a rugby competitor tackling policy issues that Matsuzawa had earlier adopted in prefectural election campaigns was repeated for the national election campaign. From the *kensei ni takkuru* (*Tackling Prefectural Politics*) campaign slogan emerged *kokkai ni takkuru* (*Tackling National Politics*).

Matsuzawa's image-based Type B election campaign made a virtue out of a deficit. The only *kouenkai* he had was in the Asao ward that he represented in the prefectural assembly, and his support from local merchant associations, local politicians and local trade unions—prerequisites for a Type A strategy—was modest at best. He could thus argue that he was unencumbered by traditional political ties. He would try to appeal mainly to independents voters and conservative “floating voters” typically identifying with the LDP, but not entirely loyal to any of its candidates competing in the district.

Such was Matsuzawa's strategic perspective as he looked ahead at the next general election. How were his challenges and resources changed by the events of early 1993? First, the public mood certainly favored his sort of "fresh" candidacy over the established parties. Second, obtaining the official nomination of the new JRP brought him some funds, and a modicum of organizational support. Most important in that regard was an endorsement by the recently-established Japanese Trade Union Confederation (RENGO), which had departed from the traditional support that unions had given to the Socialist and Democratic Socialist parties to back reformist conservative parties in 1993. Beyond that, the publicity about the creation of the JRP and the ability of Ozawa and other leaders to get media coverage certainly gave meaning to the JRP label in the minds of voters.

It should be noted, however, that in this regard Nagai probably had an advantage. The JNP was not saddled with the political baggage of the JRP: all 52 JNP-endorsed candidates were first time challengers, while 33 of the 67 candidates endorsed by the Shinsei Party were former LDP incumbents. In the minds of everyday voters, the JNP was the purist of the new political parties, because its members had the greatest distance from the LDP—a powerful claim for Nagai.

The essence of strategy in Japan's old MMD system was to figure out what geographical areas the necessary votes would come from. Matsuzawa estimated he would need at least something over 100,000 votes from the 900,000 or so total votes likely to be cast. His prefectural assembly district, Asao ward, had cast about 60,000 votes in 1990, and Tama, where he grew up, cast about 80,000. He would hope to do well in those two wards, but could not expect to do as well in the more suburban cities on the

southwest coast of Kanagawa (Kamakura, Zushi and Yokosuka—the latter Koizumi’s stronghold).

His key was certainly Kawasaki City beyond the two wards of his natural strength. Kawasaki had more than half the votes in the district. Matsuzawa was reasonably well known because of his long residence in the area, but beyond that Kawasaki had a substantial population in his primary target group: young, progressive-minded voters his own age, newly enfranchised voters (the age of voter eligibility is 20 years-old), non-partisan voters, unfaithful (“floating”) voters, politically disillusioned non-voters and educated voters.

In particular, Matsuzawa’s campaign staff spoke of two particular groups. One was the roughly 35 percent of eligible voters who had not turned out in 1986 or 1990, many disillusioned with politics. The other was new arrivals. The growth of young urban professional residents in portions of the district had ideologically “urbanized” many communities in the Kanagawa 2nd district. The district’s immediate proximity to Tokyo brought a more progressive ideological position that resembles its urban neighbor. Increasing development of housing and commercial conveniences—such as retail shopping centers, medical facilities, leisure and entertainment outlets, public schools and mass-transportation infrastructure and services in the district over the years—attracted new residents (and helped keep young adults from moving out). Many of these newcomers appeared to be less politically and socially constrained by socio-cultural norms of behavior and attitudes that influenced their voting decisions compared with long-term inhabitants of the district.

As a young, progressive-conservative candidate backed by a new reformist political party Matsuzawa was confident he could secure generous support from these voters. He realized that long-term incumbents like Koizumi, Ichikawa, and Iwatare had developed personal networks of voters-- *kouenkai* and election *keiretsu*--that shielded them from the political weaknesses of their respective parties. He therefore defined his strategy in terms of party-, personality- and issue-centered appeals. The party-centered appeal was constructed around the new party image and rhetoric. The personality-centered appeal was constructed around the new ideas and political integrity he would bring to the national legislature. Finally, the issue-centered appeal was constructed around advocacy for political reform (*seiji kaikaku*). To be fair, Matsuzawa's policy message was not limited to political reform. Other concrete issues subsumed under the *Tackling National Politics* campaign theme were the decentralization of policy decision-making centered in Tokyo, greater national contribution to global peace-keeping, and educational reform for the 21st century, to name a few.

Though political reform was the most cogent campaign issue of the 1993 Lower House election, it was the campaign slogan taken up by most opposition candidates running in 1993. As a result it was not an issue in which Matsuzawa could easily distinguish himself from other candidates. Nevertheless, he emphasized the issue to attract young voters outraged by the political corruption endemic in the governing LDP. Overall, the overwhelming focus on political reform among individual candidates and new political parties in 1993 itself favored candidates like Matsuzawa.

1993 Lower House Election Outcome

Matsuzawa won a seat in the Lower House rather easily. His hopes of mobilizing many non-voters, however, did not seem to work: in Kanagawa 2nd district as around the nation, turnout dropped off from the 1990 election (perhaps due in part to voters getting confused by all the new parties). The combined votes for the two incumbent LDP candidates, Koizumi and Harada, dropped from about 290,000 to 230,000, even though a strong conservative candidate and former LDP member, Tagawa, had dropped out. The CGP (Ichikawa), finishing third and JCP (Nakaji), finishing sixth, increased their votes somewhat, but the long-time JSP Diet member, Iwatare lost almost 60,000 votes to just over 100,000 and finished fifth place. Clearly just being in the opposition was not enough to do well (it should be noted that Iwatare had gained over 40,000 votes from 1986 to 1990, which was a very good year for the JSP).

The big winner was Matsuzawa's new-party rival, the JNP's Nagai. With his even more attractive party label along with his local background as a prefectural assemblyman and two-time candidate for mayor of Kawasaki, Nagai was the first-place finisher with 158,573 votes, over 9000 more than Koizumi. Matsuzawa finished fourth with 118,879 votes. Looking at the actual geographical breakdown (see Table 3.4), Matsuzawa, expectedly, garnered the greatest percentage from Asao ward, followed by Tama ward.⁵¹ He received 28.34 percent of the vote (17,990 votes) in Asao ward, and 15.25 percent of the vote (12,365 votes) in Tama ward in 1993. This strong showing of voter support for Matsuzawa in Asao ward illustrates the impact of prefectural assembly service and a "vertical" (i.e., geographically and demographically) concentrated orientation of his support base.

⁵¹ Table 3.4 offers the results of the 1993 Lower House election.

Campaign Behavior: 1996 Lower House Election

In 1993, Matsuzawa had been a new-face candidate, running against entrenched incumbents, in a large multi-member district. He relied mainly on the Type B strategy, depending on his personal image of youth and vitality, attachment to the popular issue of political reform, and the support of a new political party that had an attractive label but little in the way of organizational resources to persuade voters. In 1996, Matsuzawa was the only incumbent running, in a small single-member district. While certainly not abandoning any of his Type B tactics, this time he relied much more on organization.

We can deal first with the effects of the electoral reform passed in 1994, which meant that the 1996 election was run on an entirely new basis. The five multi-member districts of Kanagawa prefecture were divided into 17 geographically smaller, single-member districts.⁵² The new single-member district in which Matsuzawa competed in the 1996 election, the Kanagawa 9th district, was carved from the Kanagawa 2nd district.

⁵² Five single-member districts—the 4th, 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th districts—were created from the former 2nd district. An additional district, the Kanagawa 18th district, was established for the 2003 Lower House election. Based on a national census conducted in 2000, the Committee on Lower Election's Boundary Demarcation recommended an additional district due to an increase in the population. Its promulgation date was July 31st, 2002, and enforced August 31st, the same year. The 18th district consists of Miyamae and Takatsu wards of Kawasaki City. These wards were previously part of the Kanagawa 8th and 9th districts, respectively. The Kanagawa 9th district today is composed only of Tama and Asao wards. These wards originally came from old 8th and 9th districts.

TABLE 3.4
1993 Lower House Election (Kanagawa 2nd district)

	Eligible Voters	Turnout		Matsuzawa (JRP)	Nagai (JNP)	Koizumi (LDP)
		(Valid votes)	Total			
Asao ward	98,492	63,477	63,998	17,990	11,850	5,699
Takatsu ward	129,752	73,025	73,732	9,280	12,879	8,581
Tama ward	139,536	81,031	81,686	12,365	19,910	9,052
Miyamae ward	135,932	81,543	82,313	11,985	15,713	10,168
Nakahara ward	150,364	87,910	88,744	11,100	15,045	9,954
Saiwai ward	110,578	66,520	67,288	7,149	9,965	8,243
Kawasaki ward	156,466	90,402	91,466	8,523	11,460	12,334
Kawasaki City	921,120	543,908	549,227	78,392	96,822	64,031
Yokosuka City	341,273	203,303	205,006	20,172	31,531	53,065
Kamakura City	141,235	89,054	89,741	12,865	18,458	15,475
Zushi City	46,581	30,821	31,090	3,714	6,383	6,305
Mitsuru City	41,296	23,992	24,205	1,860	2,512	7,346
Mitsuru County	24,100	16,082	16,195	1,876	2,867	3,047
Hayama Town	24,100	16,082	16,195	1,876	2,867	3,047
TOTAL	1,515,605	907,160	915,464	118,879	158,573	149,269
				13.10%	17.48%	16.45%

Note: Turnout figures presented in Table 3.4 are calculated according to valid votes cast.

TABLE 3.4, continued
1993 Lower House Election (Kanagawa 2nd district)

	Eligible Voters	Turnout		Iwatate (JSP)		Nakajiri (JCP)		Harada (LDP)	
		(Valid votes)	Total						
Asao ward	98,492	63,477	63,998	7,352	11.58%	5,504	8.67%	4,441	7.00%
Takatsu ward	129,752	73,025	73,732	8,342	11.42%	7,726	10.58%	8,110	11.11%
Tama ward	139,536	81,031	81,686	9,665	11.93%	9,257	11.42%	4,845	5.98%
Miyamae ward	135,932	81,543	82,313	9,465	11.61%	7,485	9.18%	8,152	10.00%
Nakahara ward	150,364	87,910	88,744	10,257	11.67%	9,631	10.96%	7,031	8.00%
Saiwai ward	110,578	66,520	67,288	8,440	12.69%	8,208	12.34%	6,988	10.51%
Kawasaki ward	156,466	90,402	91,466	11,005	12.17%	15,034	16.63%	9,659	10.68%
Kawasaki City	921,120	543,908	549,227	64,526	11.86%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Yokosuka City	341,273	203,303	205,006	21,903	10.77%	14,429	7.10%	18,008	8.86%
Kamakura City	141,235	89,054	89,741	10,429	11.71%	8,176	9.18%	7,314	8.21%
Zushi City	46,581	30,821	31,090	3,983	12.92%	2,247	7.29%	2,765	8.97%
Mitsuura City	41,296	23,992	24,205	1,709	7.12%	2,353	9.81%	2,915	12.15%
Mitsurara County	24,100	16,082	16,195	1,483	9.22%	924	5.75%	1,778	11.06%
Hayama Town	24,100	16,082	16,195	1,483	9.22%	924	5.75%	1,778	11.06%
TOTAL	1,515,605	907,160	915,464	104,033	11.47%	68,487	7.55%	64,610	7.12%

Note: Turnout figures presented in Table 3.4 are calculated according to valid votes cast.

Only a portion of its seven wards and four cities was represented in the new Kanagawa 9th district—Asao, Tama, and Takatsu wards. There was less ground to cover: the old Kanagawa 2nd district had been 155 square miles and the new Kanagawa 9th just 23 square miles. There were fewer people to reach: the Kanagawa 2nd district had 1,505,605 eligible voters in 1993, and the new Kanagawa 9th district just 376,780.⁵³

The smaller district was more manageable for candidates in a sense, but the competition was more intense. Now only one would be elected. Matsuzawa had drawn 118,879 votes in 1993 (and the lowest winner had just over 100,000). In the new single member district, assuming roughly the same level of turnout, again at least about 100,000 votes—over a quarter of all the eligible voters—would be needed to capture a majority. However, that target number of votes would be necessary only in a two-person race. Although Duverger's Law (Duverger, 1954) says that in a rational universe the number of candidates should be equal to the number of seats plus one, politicians are not always rational, and in any case it can take them some time after a reform to figure out the implications. In 1996, there were four serious candidates (the fifth candidate was not considered a threat), and Matsuzawa won rather easily with 72,147 votes (actually under 40 percent of the votes cast).

When the old district was split into five, for many incumbent Diet members and their parties it was not clear where they should run. Many conflicts among politicians occurred, and intensive mediation by party officials followed. For Matsuzawa the choice was simple—he was clearly strongest in his home-town area that made up Kanagawa 9th district. His party choice, the Frontier Party (NFP), in 1996 was a little more complicated

⁵³ Voter eligibility in Japan begins at age 20. Voter registration for Japanese citizens is automatic upon attaining age 20.

since Nagai also was a member of the NFP. The main complication rested with the merger between the JNP and JRP, opposition party rivals turned allies under the NFP, for the 1996 general election.⁵⁴ Although Nagai garnered more votes than Matsuzawa in two of the three wards (Tama and Takatsu wards) of the Kanagawa 9th district in 1993, the NFP ran Nagai in the Kanagawa 10th district (composed of Saiwai, Nakahara and Kawasaki wards) reasoning that he had a more favorable chance of winning in the Kanagawa 10th district than Matsuzawa based on his 1993 performance in Saiwai, Nakahara and Kawasaki wards. He wound up having a much tougher race, but won the Kanagawa 10th district seat rather narrowly. In fact, no other 1993 candidate from the old Kanagawa 2nd district wound up running in the new 9th district, so Matsuzawa ran against all new faces.

As it turned out, Matsuzawa's only significant opponent was Ogawa Eiichi, running for the LDP. Ogawa had held the prefectural assembly seat from Takatsu, one of the three wards in the new Kanagawa 9th district, so he had many local ties as well as the official nomination from the most powerful political party in Japan. Ogawa was not able to mount an effective campaign, however and he was defeated easily by Matsuzawa (see Table 3.5). Matsuzawa collected 21,724 more votes than Ogawa; a comfortable margin of victory, despite concerns that the other two opposition candidates representing the DPJ and the JCP would spoil his shot for the SMD seat. After all, both the DPJ and JCP were expected to draw votes away from the NFP rather than LDP. Indeed the combined vote of the DPJ and JCP candidates well exceeded Matsuzawa's total.

⁵⁴ There had been considerable shuffling of parties and coalitions since 1993; both the JRP and the JNP had disappeared, with their members and others going to the newly organized New Frontier Party (NFP) founded in 1994.

Table 3.5

1996 Lower House Election (Kanagawa 9th district)

CANDIDATE/PARTY	AGE	LEGISLATIVE RECORD	VOTE TOTAL
Matsuzawa/NFP	38	Incumbent	72,147 (35.1%)
Ogawa/LDP	52	Challenger	50,423 (24.5%)
Konishi/DPJ	46	Challenger	46,782 (22.7%)
Doi/JCP	56	Challenger	33,596 (16.3%)
Takagi/LL	26	Challenger	2,788 (1.4%)

Incidentally, the election reform also created a new Proportional Representation tier, one in which SMD candidates could be included on their parties' lists. However, the NFP discouraged dual listing—SMD candidates should avoid the PR list, in order to demonstrate singleness of purpose. Although this strategy was self-defeating and later came to be abandoned by all parties, Matsuzawa was happy with it since he was confident he could win in the SMD.

Matsuzawa's basic electoral strategy changed sharply in the 1996 campaign to a much greater emphasis on "traditional" mobilization. This "traditional" shift is more than a little ironic: as emphasized in chapter two, a key goal of the reform was to push Japanese election campaigning in the more "modern" direction. There are two plausible explanations for this shift. One is "life cycle"—a candidate in his second campaign is likely to have more "traditional" resources available. The other is the impact of the election reform itself. The former explanation is explored in chapter five, and the latter is explored here.

In contrast with 1993 the most notable “traditional” features of Matsuzawa’s strategy in 1996 were his effort to build political alliances with local political leaders (*electoral keiretsu*), expand the number of *kouenkai* units, enlist new members to existing *kouenkai* units, and solidify political allegiances with many small and medium-size businesses, associations, and clubs in the district. Facilitating these support-building efforts was a dedicated team of district staffers who canvassed the district daily to maintain relationships with existing supporters and gather new commitments from local merchants, businesses, and community leaders.

All Lower House Diet members relied to one extent or another on developing and maintaining organizational networks in their election district to deliver a significant portion of the relatively low proportion of votes they needed to succeed in a multi-member district. In a much smaller district, their investment in organizational resources everywhere outside the boundaries of their old districts suddenly becomes useless (or not quite useless, as we will see shortly). On the other hand, votes from the organizations they had already built up under the old system would be a considerably smaller portion of the total votes needed for victory under the new district.

Those old organizations outside the new district boundaries still could be helpful if they could be traded with candidates in those districts—incumbents or at least former candidates, usually formal rivals in the old big district—in exchange for those candidates’ resources in his district. In more stable times, these considerations would apply almost exclusively to LDP candidates (the other parties rarely had multiple candidates), but in all the confusion of the mid-1990s new party candidates like Matsuzawa (and Nagai) were also affected. That is, Matsuzawa and Nagai had been direct rivals in 1993 largely

because they were so similar—former prefectural assemblymen, reformist image, representing a new party. Those similarities also made it easy for them to cooperate once they were in different districts in 1996, particularly since they were now in the same, even newer NFP.

An additional bonus for Matsuzawa, thanks to his new party affiliation, and tied to the organizational coordination was a substantial amount of Soka Gakkai support.⁵⁵ Long-time CGP Diet member Ichikawa Yuuichi had won easily in 1993, but his voters were spread rather evenly across the large election district. Ichikawa took the obvious course and signed up only for the proportional representation tier (where he easily took a seat). Since CGP candidates had a very difficult time drawing non Soka Gakkai voters, and since the CGP had coalesced under the NFP, the CGP was no longer a factor in the SMD race. The CGP asked its followers to support the NFP's SMD candidate, and Matsuzawa benefited from that organizational vote (in this case, exceptionally, without too much effort on his part). What's more, the transfer of affiliation by the labor federation Rengo from the JRP to the NFP brought at least nominal support from unions in his district.

Building, then maintaining a political *keiretsu* with local elected politicians represents yet another organization-based, traditional approach to gathering votes. Much of that work goes on behind the scenes, but Matsuzawa's emphasis on this strategic factor in 1996 is well-illustrated by a specific case.

⁵⁵ The CGP was the political arm of the lay Buddhist sect, Soka Gakkai. Kawasaki city has one of the largest contingencies of Soka Gakkai members in Japan, and an active presence in Kanagawa politics. The Kanagawa 9th districts' inclusion of three wards from Kawasaki, and the tacit commitments from Soka Gakkai and the CGP to New Frontier Party (NFP) candidates meant that Matsuzawa privy a well-organized, disciplined election support base.

Within his election district, Matsuzawa regarded Takatsu as the most difficult ward for him. To a surprising extent, its remaining farming areas had been organized by the LDP in much the way of rural prefectures. It was also the home of Ogawa Eiichi, who had represented the ward in the prefectural assembly before leaving to take the LDP's nomination for the lower house seat. Ogawa would seem to have a clear advantage at least in this ward—but the politics of election *keiretsu* are more complicated than that. Ogawa's old prefectural assembly seat was taken by an LDP politician named Saito Yuuki. However, according to a Matsuzawa staffer, Ogawa had been planning to push his wife, Kuniko, for the seat if he won a seat in the Lower House in 1996.⁵⁶ Saito naturally wanted to keep his job, but could not oppose Ogawa as an elected LDP assemblyman, so he defected from the LDP before the general election (becoming a conservative independent) and threw his support to Matsuzawa.

By all accounts, Saito played a key role in bringing Matsuzawa together with other local politicians in Takatsu—and in the event, Matsuzawa defeated Ogawa even in his home ward. The support Matsuzawa gained in the once well-guarded LDP territory was tribute to his effort to expand his network with unlikely political partners.

The point, in terms of election strategy, is that the reform required spending more time and energy (and no doubt money) on organizational matters than usual: expanding one's *kouenkai*, establishing ties with interest groups of various sorts, and intensifying election *keiretsu* with local politicians. Making deals to exchange organizational resources with former rivals was a delicate and time-consuming operation as well. In all these ways, Matsuzawa relied much more extensively on “traditional” Type A tactics to

⁵⁶ Ogawa's wife, Kuniko, eventually competed in the Kanagawa prefectural assembly. Backed by the LDP, she alongside independent incumbent Saito Yuuki won the two Takatsu ward seats in the April 1999 prefectural assembly election.

gather votes in 1996, despite (or perhaps because) of the radical election reform that was aimed in part at encouraging more “modern” campaign activities.

Which is not to say that Matsuzawa abandoned the direct, Type B strategy he had emphasized in the 1993 election (and earlier when running for the prefectural assembly). In particular, by the end of the 1996 election Matsuzawa purportedly had conducted 2,000 public speeches in front of train stations, supermarkets, and shopping in his career as a national-level politician. Weekdays and weekends, early mornings and afternoons were devoted to greeting constituents during their commutes and daily activities. Shinyurigaoka, Noborito, Mukougaoka-yuen, and Muzonoguchi were the train stations most frequented by Matsuzawa. As prominent shopping hubs and the central connective arteries for the Tokkyu Denentoshi, Nambu, and Odakyu train lines traversing the three wards, these stations received significant foot traffic throughout the day suitable for reaching many voters. Outdoor speeches at these venues were efficient public outreach, but the tactic also served to increase Matsuzawa’s name recognition in the district and express to voters his political commitment and diligence to them and his job.⁵⁷ He even exploited this commitment by formally including his speech-making achievement in his election campaign literature.

As much as Matsuzawa was attentive to delivering speeches in the districts marked by high pedestrian traffic, he also gave speeches in the district where voters were responsive to the substantive content of the speeches. An example of the effectiveness of more modern techniques was the campaign in Asao Ward, where the electorate was

⁵⁷ Matsuzawa’s fixation on outdoor speeches during the pre-campaign period was equally induced by Japan’s parliamentary system that permits the call of an election at anytime through a no-confidence vote in the government. With no fixed election date beyond the requirement of a Lower House election every four years, his actions represented a state of readiness for a potential surprise, snap election.

somewhat younger, more educated, and more professional compared with the other two wards in the district. According to the ward's two-term prefectural assembly member, Aihara Takahiro, Asao ward voters looked mainly to the issue-orientation of candidates and parties (June 20, 2000 interview).⁵⁸

Matsuzawa further cultivated support from these issue-oriented voters in Asao ward and the entire district by holding periodic policy study seminars (*benkyou-kai*) at his district and National Diet offices. Voters were welcomed to attend these forums designed to openly discuss policy issues relevant to the Kanagawa 9th district and the nation in a more intimate setting. Matsuzawa believed that the *benkyou-kai* were good public relations activities and valuable opportunities for voters to voice their policy opinions (March 7, 1997 interview).

Complimenting the *benkyou-kai* were postcard size policy questionnaires handed out during his outdoor speeches. The public opinion surveys queried voters on matters about nursing care insurances and services and postal service privatization. Roughly 10,000 postcards were passed out over this year-long project to sample public opinion of Kanagawa 9th district constituents. Despite the low response rate for these mail-in postcard surveys—less than 10% per survey—Matsuzawa considered this project as communication link with voters during the pre-campaign period. The *benkyou-kai* and surveys allowed Matsuzawa to keep his finger of the pulse of his constituents. More importantly, they illustrate his issue-mindedness and commitment to serving the issue interests of Kanagawa 9th district voters.

⁵⁸ Aihara Takahiro, a fellow graduate of MIGM, represented Asao ward in the Kanagawa prefectural assembly. Aihara provided personal electoral support to Matsuzawa's 1996 re-election campaign to the Lower House in 1996 by mobilizing Asao ward voters to the polls.

What about the importance of the party label? There is little direct evidence on this point with respect to the Kanagawa 9th district, but national-level data would indicate it was more of a minus than a plus. In public opinion polling, the NFP had reasonably high ratings when first created, and during the Upper House election in summer, 1995, but by the general election its public support had declined to below 10 percent (Reed 2003, 147). Matsuzawa himself was anxious about the consequences of membership with an odd alliance of opposition parties, especially one that included the CGP since many voters were suspicious of the Soka Gakkai.⁵⁹ Most voters who gained some familiarity with Matsuzawa, however, were willing to accept his NFP membership. As explained by Matsuzawa, as long as he did not align himself with the LDP his credibility and trust among voters remained reasonably intact (July 11, 2000 interview). Voters understood that the merger of smaller opposition parties from which the NFP emerged was an attempt to compete head to head with the LDP.

Campaign Behavior: 2000 Lower House Election

Compared with 1993 and 1996, Matsuzawa had few problems to contend with entering the general election campaign of 2000. He was now a two-term incumbent, not a newcomer, and his electoral district was unchanged in type (SMD) and size (just three wards). In fact, changes in the party system since 1996 made his task even easier. His previous party, the NFP, had dissolved, and like most of its members, he wound up in the Democratic Party of Japan (see Reed 2003 chap. 3). Since Matsuzawa had defeated the

⁵⁹ The CGP united with the JNP, JRP, and Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) under the NFP banner. The SMD portion of the MMD election system, with its requirement of a plurality of votes to win, made it difficult for these parties to independently compete against the LDP in 1996, so they merged into a single larger party.

DPJ candidate, Konishi, in 1996 (Konishi would not run again for the Kanagawa 9th district seat in 2000) securing the DPJ membership was relatively simple. Matsuzawa was opposed only by a Communist and by Ogawa Eiichi, who was again put forward by the LDP despite his lackluster performance in 1996.

In 1996 a lot of effort had gone into expanding the organizational infrastructure in his district. In the intervening four years Matsuzawa had continued to support his *kouenkai*, electoral *keiretsu* of elected politicians, and ties with various trade and community groups. By the time the 2000 Lower House election was announced, Matsuzawa estimated that he had had built a relationship with some 55,000 members of various social networks. According to Matsuzawa, nearly 10,000 were CGP/Sokai Gakkai members, another 10,000 to 20,000 were labor union members; and about 15,000 were members of his *kouenkai* (July 11, 2000 interview).

There is no way to know how (or for that matter whether) all these people voted. If they all went Matsuzawa's way, his organizational vote would have been well over two-thirds of his total vote, but in fact the results were doubtlessly well short of that. The reality of *kouenkai* membership lists is that a number of individuals are "name only" members. Also, membership overlap is common since some voters are registered members in multiple *kouenkai*. Nonetheless, these factors undoubtedly contributed to Matsuzawa's rather easy victory, as he and his staff concluded after the election. Incumbency gave him many advantages—nothing like the resources Diet members in the governing LDP could command, but very helpful. Another plus were some organizational resources that came with his new membership with the DPJ. Three were prefectural assembly members, and nine were city counselors representing the DPJ or its

loose affiliates, Shimin Rengo (Citizen Union), and the Kanagawa Network Party. In the previous election, Matsuzawa's party-related support had been just five CGP city-level politicians. He also had some union support thanks to Rengo's attachment to the DPJ—probably somewhat more helpful than in 1996, though on the other hand Matsuzawa lost the support he had had earlier from the Soka Gakkai.⁶⁰

What about his new party label as meaning something to voters? Matsuzawa was not confident that his affiliation with the DPJ would be that much help. He doubted that its rhetoric about issues, trying to project an image of political change and image, would attract much voter support. After all, various parties of the recent past—the JNP, the Shinsei Party, New Party Sakigake, and the NFP—had by and large exhausted the message of change and political reform. Certainly the DPJ was not able to match the LDP's ability to generate public support by tailoring its policy platform to specific interests. He therefore decided to continue his candidate-centered approach, conveying a personal image of concern with policy issues.

Certainly Matsuzawa kept up his outdoor presentations and other direct appeals. He conducted between three and five weekly outdoor speeches in front of the most active 18 train stations in the Kanagawa 9th district between the 1996 and 2000 Lower House elections. According to Matsuzawa, it took an average of six weeks to cycle through all of these stations. He also came up with a new device, a canvassing blitz (called a “rolling strategy, *rouraa sakusen*) throughout the district, taking advantage of volunteer support developed via his *kouenkai*. Most important were members of a volunteer “student corps,” who carried literature to individual households, and tried to stimulate

⁶⁰ After its flirtation with the NFP, the Koumeitou (no longer called Clean Government Party or anything else in English) had reconstituted itself, and by the 2000 election was in coalition with the governing LDP.

conversations with residents about their policy concerns and political leanings. An estimated 15,000 to 20,000 residences were visited between September 1999 and June 2000) prior to the start of the formal campaign in June 2000. Although ostensibly designed to give residents an input into his policy platform, the real goal was to project a positive image to the public in a more personal way than speeches and meet-and-greet walks.

Regular outdoor canvassing set Matsuzawa apart from his opponents, who admitted that their electoral defeat was aided by a less than aggressive pursuit of votes to establish connections with voters. Matsuzawa admitted that he did not particularly delight in the hustle associated with this tactic to gain voters' attention and support, but he was much more skillful at it than any of his opponents (July 4, 2000 and July 13, 2000 interviews with Ogawa Eiichi and Iguchi Mami, respectively). In a post-2000 election interview, Matsuzawa's LDP opponent, Ogawa Eiichi, acknowledged that he had underestimated the electoral value of direct, Type B approaches such as outdoor presentations during his 1996 and 2000 election campaigns to safeguard and generate voter support. He agreed that Matsuzawa had "out-campaign" him in that regard (July 4, 2000 interview). Still, it seems clear that Ogawa needed more than outdoor speeches to defeat Matsuzawa. He wound up collecting only 28 percent of the vote (the Communist candidate had 17 percent), while Matsuzawa won with an absolute majority of 52 percent. With fewer candidates there were more votes to divide, and Ogawa increased his support by 15,000 votes, but Matsuzawa gained over 50,000 votes—doing better in that regard even in Ogawa's home ward of Asao (see Table 3.6).

Table 3.6

2000 Lower House Election (Kanagawa 9th district)

CANDIDATE/PARTY	AGE	LEGISLATIVE RECORD	VOTE TOTAL
Matsuzawa/DPJ	42	Incumbent	122,551 (52.6%)
Ogawa/LDP	56	Challenger	64,981 (27.9%)
Iguchi/JCP	39	Challenger	39,751 (17.1%)
Kanzawa/LL	49	Challenger	5,633 (2.4%)

Conclusion

Matsuzawa was clearly a very capable politician. His victory in 2000 was one of the most impressive in Japan that year. Matsuzawa's new party, the DPJ, was now clearly the dominant opposition party with a solid chance of unseating the LDP and taking over the government. However, Matsuzawa chose not to seek his fortune within the national DPJ, the Diet, and perhaps before long the government. Instead he traded on his popularity in Kawasaki and beyond to run for the governorship of Kanagawa, and to win.

Chapter 4

Urban and Rural Campaign Behavior: Usami Noboru and Genba Kouichirou

Chapter three was devoted entirely to the examination of one candidate's election campaign behavior within the context of a suburban district. In this chapter, however, we expand the investigation of election campaign behavior to urban and rural districts. That is, we examine election campaign behavior of two additional politicians under the MMD and MMM systems in the 1993, 1996 and 2000 Lower House elections within the context of the urban and rural districts. We cover much of the same ground as the previous chapter on the suburban district, concentrating on the candidates' campaign strategies including their presentations of self and explanations of the results of the three elections. However, we do so much more briefly to avoid repetition.

The two politicians selected are Usami Noboru and Genba Kouichirou. Usami ran in the Tokyo 2nd, Tokyo 3rd and Tokyo 4th election districts in the 1993, 1996 and 2000 general elections, respectively. Genba ran in the Fukushima 2nd in 1993 and Fukushima 3rd districts in the 1996 and 2000 general elections. By any measure the Tokyo election districts under review are urban and the Fukushima election districts are rural. Accordingly, we begin with the assumption common to the literature on Japanese elections that rural districts are mostly (using our terms) Type A and urban districts are mostly Type B in all the characteristics referenced in earlier chapters. That

is, election campaigning in rural districts is constructed around the personal vote, including candidate image (personality and reputation) and organized political machines (networks of local politicians, organizations and associations). In urban election districts, conversely, voting is said to be more a matter of party identification and opinions about issues. In other words, candidates located in rural settings adopt a campaign strategy that places personality and networks at the center, while candidates in urban settings adopt a campaign strategy that place issues and the party at the center.

Candidates behave in these ways largely in response to the political culture of the city and countryside.⁶¹ Voters who live in urban districts have higher levels of political interest and overall participation (though not turnout), and express greater knowledge about issue-politics (particularly national politics) than voters who live in rural districts. However, urban district voters are less socially integrated, cooperative, and personally connected to political leaders than their rural district counterpart.

The 1993 Lower House election was the first time Usami Noboru and Genba Kouichirou, like Matsuzawa Shigefumi, competed for seats in Japan's national legislative assembly. Both politicians competed for one of five seats apportioned to their respective districts. Usami claimed the fifth seat in the Tokyo 2nd district, and Genba claimed the third seat in Fukushima 2nd district in the 1993 Lower House election. Both politicians won Lower House seats in 1993 with nearly the exact percentage of votes--Usami garnered 12.8 percent of the valid vote, while Genba garnered 12.7 percent of the valid vote. Both politicians had ties to the conservative-progressive splinter party, New Party

⁶¹ A candidate's personal preference for a party-, personality-, network-, or issue-driven campaign is unlikely to override the political culture of the district. Most preferences manifest themselves in the absolute volume or intensity of a campaign tactic that corresponds to a party-, personality-, network-, or issue-driven campaign.

Sakigake in 1993.⁶² Both politicians were among the youngest politicians elected to office in 1993 and in Japanese election history.

Usami Noboru

Usami was born in Ohta ward and went to public schools there before enrolling in Waseda's high school and college. He then attended the Matsushita Institute of Government and Politics (including a stint at an environmental think tank), graduating in its tenth class in 1992. After graduating from MIGM, Usami secured a job as a private secretary to LDP Diet member Takemura Masayoshi. His employment as a Diet secretary was a typical route to a political career considering the atypical training he received at MIGM to advance his political ambition. Takemura had previously been governor of Shiga Prefecture and was well known as an environmentalist and a reformist politician. With the breakup of the LDP in 1993, Takemura helped organize "New Party Sakigake," and became its leader. None of the LDP incumbents who joined Sakigake represented the Tokyo 2nd district, so it was an easy choice for Takemura to tap Usami to run as the official nominee for the Tokyo 2nd district, although at age 26 he was the youngest candidate in the nation and consequently, a wildcard candidate for Sakigake.

The 1993 General Election

The Tokyo 2nd district was composed of Ohta and Shinagawa wards and a small chain of islands off the coast of the Tokyo Bay under the MMD election system. It was the southeastern-most election district of the Metropolis, and bordered Kawasaki City.

⁶² Genba secured a seat in the Lower House in 1993 as independent candidate. However, he received an official party recommendation by New Party Sakigake. His official membership with the New Party Sakigake came shortly after his 1993 Lower House election victory.

This district, and Ohta ward in particular, has a concentration of small-and-medium industry, mostly parts suppliers to larger firms. Its population is quite varied, and as is generally true in Tokyo, all the political parties maintained stable constituencies in this district.

In light of Usami's established residency in Ohta ward, political candidacy in the Tokyo 2nd district was the obvious choice. As the newly tapped Sakigake candidate, Usami faced ten independent and party backed opponents in the five-member district. Who was Usami up against in the Tokyo 2nd district? All the incumbents from the previous 1990 election were running again and they appeared well entrenched. The top vote-getter was the LDP's Ishihara Shintarou, the right-wing electoral phenomenon (now governor of Tokyo), who had gathered 119,743 of the 530,000 votes cast (See Table 4.1). Second with 102,000 votes was Socialist powerhouse Ueda Tetsu, in his fifth term.

Table 4.1

1990 Lower House Election (Tokyo 2nd district)

CANDIDATE/PARTY	AGE	LEGISLATIVE RECORD	VOTE TOTAL
Ishihara/LDP	57	Incumbent	119,743 (22.6%)
Ueda/JSP	62	Incumbent	102,000 (19.2%)
Arai/LDP	42	Incumbent	86,326 (16.3%)
Ouuchi/DSP	60	Challenger	80,882 (15.3%)
Endou/CGP	43	Challenger	76,285 (14.4%)
Okazakai/JCP	60	Challenger	62,557 (11.8%)
Others (5 candidates)	---	Challenger	2,145 (0.004%)

Actually, Ishihara had recently been touched by scandal, and 1990 had been a banner year for the JSP, so both of their votes could be expected to decline somewhat. In Ishihara's case, voters would communicate their disfavours with him by giving their

support to another candidate in 1993. In Ueda's case, voters' anger over LDP policy decisions that fueled a protest vote favoring the Socialists in 1990 would have subsided in 1993.

The other three incumbents were second-term LDP Diet member Arai Shoukei (86,326 votes in 1990); Oouchi Keigo, who was then the Chairman of the Democratic Socialist Party (80,882); and Endou Otohiko of the Koumeito (76,285)—1990 had been his first election but Koumeitou, with its ultra-stable constituency, had held a seat in the district for some time.⁶³

These five candidates—Ishihara, Ueda, Arai, Oouchi and Endou—had been relatively well bunched together in 1990, and it was the two top vote-getters, as previously, who would be expected to decline in 1993. That would not seem to leave a lot of room for a newcomer, and certainly if Takemura had stayed in the LDP there would have been no chance at all for his secretary to get a nomination in that party. As it was, Usami's candidacy was announced only three days before the start of the official election campaign (just 15 days before the election) in the company of about 20 supporters, compared to gatherings of 300 to 400 persons among other candidates in the Tokyo 2nd district.

Given Usami's hasty entry in the 1993 general election, what electoral strategies were available for him? Clearly, his readiness to run for office outweighed his preparedness to run for office. Neither his party nor he personally had any organizational infrastructure in the district. He had no confirmed endorsement or support from any organized groups (i.e., regional or national organizations and associations), no personally

⁶³ The JCP ran the same candidate who had been runner-up in 1990 with 63,000 votes, and there were three very minor independents.

organized support network (i.e., *kouenkai*), and no active assistance from local politicians in 1993. In fact, the endorsement from the New Party Sakigake was the only formal support extended to Usami in 1993. Moreover, as a young person of little family fame or fortune, neither he nor Sakigake had access to large sums of money to run a competitive campaign in the district. In short, he lacked the *jiban* (organized constituency), *kaban* (briefcase full of money), and *kanban* (signboard, or personal reputation) that are the traditional building blocks of Type A election campaigns.

By default, then, Usami was stuck with the Type B strategy. Like Matsuzawa across the river in Kawasaki City, he figured that he should target young voters, conservative loyalists who might well have become fed up with the LDP, and independents. Usami hoped he could capitalize on the groundswell of support for the new anti-establishment parties to mobilize voters he could not reach otherwise. He himself said afterward: “The fact that I declared my candidacy for the Lower House three days before the official starting date of campaign, and yet I won a seat in the Lower House, I think is best explained by the popular appeal of Sakigake in 1993” (September 22, 1995 interview).

Sakigake was a young party and Usami was a young candidate. Everything about his campaign punctuated, if not exaggerated his age and a Generation X identity. For, example, his campaign team (staff and volunteers) was composed of his contemporaries from high school, college, MIGM and the community. To project his young, energetic, “new-style” political image, Usami made use of (ironically) a traditional, old-style outdoor canvassing tactic called *momotarou* to generate voter support. *Momotarou* gets its name from the popular Japanese folktale, “*Momotarou*,” or Peach Boy.⁶⁴ *Momotarou*

⁶⁴ Momotarou is a tale of a boy who is discovered in a giant peach. Eventually Momotarou grows up to become a great warrior and village protector. The story revolves around the support he gathers on route to

requires the candidate and a team of campaigners to announce the candidate's name in a strong, natural voice (i.e., unamplified by an electronic sound system). In a parade-like fashion, the politician and his entourage navigate their way through side streets and directly into the hearts of residential and local business neighborhoods.

This tactic is a public outreach alternative to sound truck canvassing (*gaisensya*), which represents the more common form of outdoor canvassing conducted by candidates during the campaign period. Longtime election observers and historians were amused that the youngest candidate running in 1993 had adopted one of the oldest, more traditional campaign tactics for his election campaign. Usami believed the *momotarou* was an effective and appropriate campaign tactic in 1993 primarily because it distinguished him from other candidates competing in the Tokyo 2nd district; no other candidate performed *Momotarou*. *Momotarou* quickly established with voters Usami's energy, youth and freshness. "By my calculation, I covered about 500 kilometers of the district by foot during the 12 days of the official campaign period. So, I walked more than 40 kilometers per day," stated Usami. He proclaimed that *momotarou* was his wild card tactic, and he believed it resonated with voters in a way that *gaitou-enzetsu* (public speeches made in front of train stations and shopping centers), *syuuakai* (town hall meetings), campaign posters and pamphlets, and *gaisensya* (sound truck canvassing) could not.

Momotarou is far less popular with candidates because it is physically demanding. *Momotarou* appears more meaningful than *gaitou-enzetsu* in the sense that the contact and interaction with voters are intimate. What's more, the contact made is more likely to

the Isle of Death to vanquish a band of evil ogres. Essentially, the focal point of the campaign tactic *momotarou*, is support gathering. Rather, enlisting support of voters along the campaign trail.

be with voters who actually reside in the district unlike speeches at train station which indiscriminately target all resident and non-resident foot traffic. However, it is physically exhausting and consumes much of the time of the candidate. Thus, efficiency is severely sacrificed with *Momotarou*. *Gaitou-enzetsu*, alternatively, is a far more efficient means to maximize a candidate's exposure to voters.

Incidentally, *momotarou* was not the most distinctive aspect of Usami's image-based campaign. That distinction went to "poster-swapping," a tactic that originated out of pure necessity during the sudden candidacy in 1993. Because of Usami's last-minute decision to run, there was no time for professional campaign posters to be printed. Usami thus advertised his candidacy for the Lower House the first few days of the official campaign with a simple, 11 ½ inch by 14 inch homemade poster. A head-and-shoulder silhouette of Usami dominated the poster, with the statement, "tadaima, junbi-chuu" ("Currently under construction"), and a catch-phrase, "jidai wo kaeru no wa yuuki" ("Change takes courage"). Within a few days the homemade posters were replaced by professionally printed ones, but Usami thought the swap itself left a positive impression.

In sum, Usami relied on the reformist image of New Party Sakigake and his own young, energetic image, which he projected mainly through exceptionally energetic, direct campaigning. Arguably, it probably only could have worked in the political turmoil of 1993. In an odd way, the turmoil helped Usami indirectly, by reducing turnout (voters appeared interested but confused by all the new parties, as well as turned off by the old ones—in Tokyo 2nd district turnout fell from 66 to 60 percent). The five incumbents (as well as the JCP repeat candidate) all lost substantial numbers of votes. The results of the 1993 election in Tokyo 2nd district are presented in Table 4.2. Usami

finished with 62,188 votes, which would have been 14,000 votes short of winning a seat back in 1990. The incumbent he defeated was Ueda, the Socialist, who in 1990 (by all accounts a stellar electoral year for the JSP) had finished second with over 100,000 votes, but plunged to 54,820 in 1993 and lost to Usami by about 7,000.

Table 4.2

1993 Lower House Election (Tokyo 2nd district)

CANDIDATE/PARTY	AGE	LEGISLATIVE RECORD	VOTE TOTAL
Ishihara/LDP	60	Incumbent	92,259 (19.0%)
Ouuchi/DSP	63	Incumbent	73,314 (15.1%)
Arai/LDP	45	Incumbent	72,059 (14.8%)
Endou/CGP	46	Incumbent	70,590 (14.5%)
Usami/Sakigake	26	Challenger	62,188 (12.8%)
Okazaki/JCP	63	Challenger	57,346 (11.8%)
Ueda/JSP	65	Incumbent	54,820 (11.3%)
Tokunaga/INDPNT	66	Challenger	2,540 (0.5%)
Takahashi/INDPNT	62	Challenger	348 (0.1%)
Nakamura/INDPNT	63	Challenger	335 (0.1%)

The 1996 General Election

In response to the 1994 election reform, the Tokyo 2nd district was split into the Tokyo 3rd and 4th districts. The Tokyo 3rd district included all of Shinagawa ward, 25 percent of Ohta ward and an island chain off the coast of Tokyo bay. The Tokyo 4th district was composed of the remaining 75 percent of Ohta ward. Although Usami was from Ohta, he had gotten more support in Shinagawa in 1993 (possibly because its electorate was younger). His 1993 support in Shinagawa coupled with the perceived weakness of other candidates challenging the SMD seat in the Tokyo 3rd led him to run in the new Tokyo 3rd district.

For the 1996 election, Usami had the clear advantage of incumbency. Moreover, no one else from the old Tokyo 2nd was moving to Tokyo 3rd—the leading vote-getter Ishihara Shintarou had just retired from the Lower House after eight terms over 25 years, while his fellow LDP member Arai Shoukei and the DSP chairman Oouchi Keigo, who had virtually tied for second place in 1993, went to the Tokyo 4th district. The Koumeitou incumbent elected to move to the PR tier.

However, Usami did face two formidable contenders. First, the official LDP candidate was Kurimoto Shin'ichirou, a popular “television professor” (an expression defining academicians who make regular appearances on television programs of socio-political content), who had been recruited by Ozawa Ichirou as a new candidate for the Shinsei Party in the Setagaya area in the 1993 election, and won. However, when the Shinsei Party fell apart, Kurimoto was influenced by former classmates Koizumi Jun'ichirou and Fukuda Yasuo to move toward the LDP. The LDP already had candidates for the successor districts carved out of his old 3rd district, so it assigned Kurimoto to the new Tokyo 3rd district (his independent candidacy in 1993 and multiple party memberships before the LDP endorsement had weakened his position for preferential district placement granted to other party incumbents). Kurimoto was an outsider to the district, both in terms of any ties with voters and approval from the local party branch, but his face was well known as a Japanese “talent,” and he wound up getting the support of Ishihara's formidable machine (including more than forty ward councilors).

Second, and just as worrisome for Usami, was the launch of another new party, the New Frontier Party, that put up a new face, Matsubara Jin, to challenge the LDP's

Kurimoto. Matsubara was just the type of candidate Usami worried most about. He was also young (then age 40), also a graduate of the Matsushita Institute of Government and Management, and also a life-long resident of Tokyo. Moreover, he had been a two-term city councilor in Ohta linked to the Shinsei Party, which would give him a certain amount of organizational support. Indeed, since the Koumeitou was now supporting the NFP he could expect that Type A support as well.

Despite being the incumbent, then, Usami was up against some tough competition in these two candidates with some Type A support and a good basis for Type B as well. In Matsubara's case, that was strongly helped by his party label: the New Frontier Party still looked fresh in 1996, while no-longer-new New Party Sakigake had come to look much more conventional and was on its way out. The logical place for Usami to go was to the DPJ, which was compatible in ideology and image, and did not have a candidate for Tokyo 3rd. Others from Sakigake and other parties from 1993 had already moved in that direction, but Usami was unwilling to do so. He remained a member of Sakigake because he thought jumping from one party to the next undermined the party system, confused voters, and diminished his credibility with voters he cultivated under the Sakigake label. However, he accepted an endorsement from the DPJ.

We saw in the case of Matsuzawa (and most other candidates) that moving into a much smaller district, where one needed to collect a higher percentage of the vote, led to considerable attention to building up new organizational support, including trying to gain backing from local politicians and groups who earlier had been tied to a competitor in the old, larger district. Usami had no organizational base from 1993 to build on, and as a matter of principle he declined to pay much attention to Type A strategies at all. That is,

Usami continued to subscribe to the same campaign formula as he had in 1993 Lower House election. He targeted the same types of voters in 1996 that he did in 1993, and his campaign behavior changed only nominally. He did establish token *kouenkai*, and he conducted regular town hall meetings (*syuu-kai*) and study groups (*benkyou-kai*), which facilitated contact and communication with voters. Yet, apart from these additions, his campaign behavior did not change. He made no concerted effort to court local politicians to construct an electoral *keiretsu*.

Possession of a keiretsu and electorally motivated ties to politicized organizations rarely came without a cost. The public statement Usami wanted to make in 1996 was that the relationships that Diet members often entered with local politicians and organizations were frequent breeding grounds for clientelism and corruption. It was a statement that condemned traditional campaign behavior. Usami reasoned that since he did not have this kind of support in 1993 (and yet, got elected) he would resist doing so in 1996. He took pride in the fact that his 1993 victory did not require the aid of local politicians, organizations, or an extensive application of conventional campaign tactics. His operational staff, in 1996, as in 1993, was an ensemble of intimates: family members, friends, high school and college peers, as well as residents of his neighborhood in Ohta ward, Higashi-Yukigaya. His election campaign was based on grassroots social networks and young volunteers.

Interestingly, Usami had so much faith in his successful campaign in 1993 that he revived the “poster swap.” Though born out of necessity in 1993, the idea emerged as one of Usami’s 1996 campaign tactics. Two days before election day Usami replaced the traditional, conservative campaign poster with an unconventional one that magnified his

youth and personality. The usual declarations (political slogan, political endorsements, party attachment, etc.) included in a campaign poster framed Usami's nude, crossed-arm torso. Usami believed voters responded strongly to the visual stimuli of candidates (more so than verbal stimuli, which they were used to tuning out), and that they were visually selective and sensitive. Although the poster represented an innovative twist to a common campaign practice, it was risky from the standpoint of its potential to offend traditional-minded voters. Still, Usami counted on the swapped posters, particularly the semi-nude poster, to leave an unforgettable imprint in the minds of voters.

Usami learned from his campaign in 1993, but in retrospect at least he seems to have learned the wrong lessons. Indeed he may have miscalculated from the start. In an interview, Usami mentioned that according to his calculations he only needed to get a little over 20 percent of the vote to get re-elected, if enough candidates competed. He saw no big difference between the MMD and SMD, and as a result, saw no need to make any significant adjustments to his campaign strategy and style. Usami's perspective on the MMD and SMD systems in 1996, in fact, was not unfounded since the multiple candidates slated to compete in the Tokyo 3rd district in the 1996 general election still resembled a competition under the MMD system rather than the SMD system where the field of competitors should narrow to a few serious candidates.

In 1993, Usami had finished fifth among seven serious candidates, drawing 13 percent of the vote, just enough to win. In 1996, he finished fourth among four serious candidates, drawing 15 percent of the vote (see Table 4.3). The winner, the LDP's Kurimoto with his great organizational strength, won with 32 percent of the vote in a tight race with Usami's fellow Matsushita Institute alumni Matsubara (NFP), who drew

just over 30 percent. Even the Communist substantially outpolled Usami—a humiliating defeat for an incumbent Diet member.

Table 4.3

1996 Lower House Election (Tokyo 3rd district)

CANDIDATE/PARTY	AGE	LEGISLATIVE RECORD	VOTE TOTAL
Kurimoto/LDP	54	Incumbent	73,055 (32.2%)
Matsubara/NFP	40	Challenger	67,653 (29.8%)
Wakatsuki/JCP	53	Challenger	42,263 (19.1%)
Usami/Sakigake	29	Challenger	35,025 (15.4%)
Iwazaki/INDPNT	38	Challenger	7,982 (3.5%)

Despite obvious shortcomings of Usami’s campaign strategy for the 1996 general election, he insisted that his poor showing in the polls was due to the media’s dismissive view of his candidacy. “The media made it difficult for the public to support me by presenting data that showed I could not win” (February 14, 1997 interview). His interpretation of the election outcome was denial of the ineptness of his campaign strategy.

The 2000 General Election

Despite his resounding defeat in 1996, Usami vowed to try again. His experience in a losing campaign had convinced him that he had not paid enough attention to Type A campaigning that necessitated building an organizational infrastructure. He started working on building ties with local politicians and groups, particularly small businessmen, and was having some success. However, his prospects in the Tokyo 3rd were looking increasingly bleak. In 1996, even running as an incumbent, he had gotten

only half as many votes as Kurimoto, who was expected to run again for the LDP. Worse still, Matsubara, who had run a fairly close second as an NFP candidate in 1996, succeeded in getting the official DPJ nomination for 2000. Usami's decision not to desert the dying Sakigake in the 1996 campaign meant he forfeited any chance to gain the nomination for 2000 ahead of the much stronger Matsubara.

Accordingly, a few months (March) before the start of the official campaign in 2000, Usami decided to switch to Tokyo 4th (the formal announcement of switch was in April). The DPJ had backed a weak candidate in that district in 1996 and was willing to nominate Usami. While Usami no longer resided in the Tokyo 4th district, he still had ties to the district since it was part of the bigger district he had represented from 1993 to 1996. Thus, the Tokyo 4th district represented a possible avenue back into the Diet for Usami.

His candidacy for the 4th district in 2000, however, was complicated and compromised by events that occurred between 1998 and 2000. In 1998, the easy winner in the Tokyo 4th district in the 1996 general election, four-term LDP incumbent Arai Shokei, committed suicide following disclosure of his involvement in a political scandal. The seat left open by Arai's death was filled by LDP candidate Morita Kensaku in a competitive by-election with DPJ candidate Matsubara Jin.⁶⁵ Morita was a formidable LDP incumbent to beat for the 4th district SMD seat in 2000.

However, it appeared at the time that Morita would not be a factor in the 2000 race because the LDP denied him the official party nomination and asked him to run instead in the PR tier (where in effect he could be guaranteed a seat). The reason was so

⁶⁵ Usami was not among the contestants competing for the open seat since chose to run for the Upper House scheduled only months apart the same year (his bid for an Upper House seat was unsuccessful).

the LDP could ask its supporters to support the Koumeitou candidate, Endo Otohiko. That was a move by the national party to help keep Koumeitou in the governing coalition—Koumeitou was very resentful that its loyal voters had helped elect LDP candidates but the LDP was being no help in getting its candidates elected. The coalition strategy was to squeeze out the competition and win both the SMD and PR seats. As a former *talento* with broad popularity, and a former Upper House member, Morita was well-positioned to win a PR seat. Moreover, as a former Lower House member with a strong CGP-Soka Gakkai support base, Endo was equally well-positioned to take the SMD seat in the 4th district.

Usami figured that many LDP voters in effect would not want to vote for the Soka Gakkai, and they might be available for him to pick up along with voters who would be attracted to the DSP label. However, he realized it would be tough, as he said quite frankly in an interview:

I decided to “return” to the 4th district, so to speak. After all, Tokyo 4th district was part of the old Tokyo 2nd district which I represented between 1993 and 1996. There were people, of course, who still remembered me when I served as a Lower House representative for Tokyo 2nd district. But, about thirty percent of the electorate has changed, that is, migrated in or out of Ohta ward since 1996 (July 12, 2000 interview).

Usami went on to explain that many of his natural constituency—young, educated, non-partisan voters—had moved to other cities or other wards in Tokyo. The voters who remained—older, partisan, or conservative voters—were not as willing as younger voters to offer Usami their support. “Turnout for the 1996 Lower House election was about 50 percent, which meant that I could rely on about 20 percent of voters at best to support me in the next general election,” stated Usami (February 14, 1997 interview).

How to reach the additional votes he would need? Usami's instincts were all for Type B campaigning, but both the lessons of his loss in 1996 and the fact that he was now a candidate of a real political party, pushed him into moving more toward Type A:

I reluctantly ran an election campaign geared towards support from organization and local politicians (*soshiki wa atte shimatta*). I did not want local politicians' support, but because I was backed by the DPJ, I didn't have much choice. They were assigned to my campaign office. I really had not learned how to personally make use of local politicians so, in my mind, they were not an especially strong component of my election strategy. I still think I can do better on my own (July 12, 2000 interview).

He went on to say:

They [local politicians] were difficult to manage. They helped me gain votes, but they also were responsible for the loss of votes. Since I was not accustomed to relying on local politicians, I was not confident about how to direct them in my campaign. They did not really know me, and I did not really know them since I had not had much contact in the 4th district. What's more, they did not know my campaign style, so they could not effectively promote my candidacy.

It is clear from these remarks that Usami's Type A efforts were half-hearted. He did get support from the DPJ keiretsu (five local DPJ politicians along with their *kouenkai*) and Rengo labor unions, but they were not very effective since he failed to fully incorporate them into his campaign strategy.

Usami's reluctance to fully adopt the Type A strategy highlights his self-awareness of the fit of the Type B strategy for his campaign. As a candidate who strongly and more naturally identified with the Type B strategy, Usami hoped to benefit from the DPJ label as the true opposition party, which carried some weight in 2000. The ruling coalition was in bad repute, with poor economic conditions and the unpopularity of Prime Minister Mori. Moreover, many conservative voters were suspicious of the Soka Gakkai and so reluctant to support a Koumeitou candidate.

These factors would seem to give Usami a decent chance—but they were undercut by a surprising development. That was that Morita Kensaku, the LDP incumbent, simply refused to go along with LDP headquarters and bow out of the SMD race. In common with many politicians, he regarded even a sure PR seat as inferior. He resolved to run as an independent—a dramatic event that was heavily covered by the media. That allowed Morita to portray himself as an underdog who had been unfairly treated by the political establishment. “Japanese people have this interesting affection for the underdog, (*hangan biiki*),” explained Usami. “Morita was able to manipulate the public into thinking the LDP was a bully.” “If Morita had not run as an independent candidate for the SMD seat, LDP supporters would have voted for me instead of the Koumeitou candidate in 2000 race,” proclaimed Usami (July 12, 2000 interview).

Morita skillfully played on this underdog image as well as his advantage as an incumbent, and kept hold of most of the substantial organizational resources of LDP candidates as well (indeed, his intensive Type A campaigning apparently led him into election law violations). He won the election in a walk, with 92,711 votes to 59,487 for the governing coalition’s official candidate, the Koumeitou’s Endo. Usami polled just under 50,000 votes (see Table 4.4) and finished third.

Table 4.4

2000 Lower House Election (Tokyo 4th district)

CANDIDATE/PARTY	AGE	LEGISLATIVE RECORD	VOTE TOTAL
Morita/INDPNT	50	Incumbent	92,711 (38.4%)
Endou/CGP	53	Incumbent	59,487 (24.7%)
Usami/DPJ	33	Challenger	49,662 (20.6%)
Tokutome/JCP	48	Challenger	36,498 (15.1%)
Ochano/LL	40	Challenger	2,925 (1.2%)

Genba Kouichirou

Genba Kouichirou was born in 1964 in what is now Tamura City in Fukushima into a sake-brewing family that was well entrenched in local politics. Both his grandfathers had been mayors, and Genba himself married the daughter of Satou Eisaku (not the former Prime Minister, an LDP politician who had served in the Upper House before becoming the governor of Fukushima since 1988). After graduating from the law faculty at Sophia University Genba immediately entered the Matsushita Institute of Government and Management. During his studies he made a field trip to Arkansas and got to meet the governor—future president—Bill Clinton (even today he proudly includes the picture on his website and in his Nagatocho office). He wasted little time entering politics upon graduating from MIGM, and won a seat in the prefectural assembly in 1991 at age 26, the youngest in the prefecture’s history. As presented in Table 4.5, Genba even garnered more votes than the incumbent LDP rival. Only two years later Genba decided to run for national office.

Table 4.5

Prefectural Assembly Election (Tamura County)

CANDIDATE/PARTY	AGE	LEGISLATIVE RECORD	VOTE TOTAL
Genba/INDPNT	26	Challenger	17,236 (34.2%)
Matsui/LDP	54	Incumbent	13,559 (26.9%)
Watanabe/INDPNT	44	Challenger	11,608 (23.0%)
Suzuki/JSP	50	Challenger	7,904 (15.7%)

The 1993 General Election

Fukushima is a rural prefecture, and the LDP had long been the most powerful party in the 2nd district, having won at least three seats in all the elections since its founding. However, the Socialists had also maintained representation in the district, and

in its strong year of 1990 the JSP had won two seats, picking up more than 100,000 votes (out of a total vote of 458,000). The top three vote-getters in 1990 were all from the LDP, led by 76 year old Itou Masayoshi, who had been in the Diet since 1963.

Along with the national political turmoil in 1993, the Fukushima 2nd district underwent some changes with respect to its Lower House representatives. Two incumbents retired (and died thereafter): Itou of the LDP and one of the JSP members. The number-two vote getter in 1990, Watanabe Kouzou, an LDP powerhouse and fixture in the Diet since 1969, left the LDP in 1993. Watanabe traded in the political safety his past three cabinet appointments and influential membership with the Takeshita faction afforded him for membership in the new LDP splinter party, the Shinsei Party. Along with fellow veteran LDP incumbents like Ozawa Ichirou and Hata Tsutomu, he ran as a Shinsei Party candidate in the general election later that year.

This political fluidity in both the national and the local scene favored a newcomer candidate. Genba almost certainly could have gotten an official nomination from one of the other two new parties, the JNP and Sakigake, and given his connections he might have had a shot at an LDP nomination to replace Itou. However, Genba preferred to run as an independent—a time-tested strategy for young conservative politicians breaking into an election district.⁶⁶ For one thing, graduates of the Matsushita Institute were predisposed to be skeptical of the establishmentarian LDP. For another, in 1993 criticism against the LDP was at such a high pitch that even in a very conservative district the

⁶⁶ The election campaign famously described by Curtis (1971) was by a conservative independent. In the classic pattern, all know that a successful candidate would join the LDP upon entering the Diet, and obtain an official nomination in the following election. Indeed, Arai Hiroyoshi had run as a conservative independent in 1990 and finished as runner-up; the LDP gave him an official nomination in 1993 and he won.

party probably looked like a sinking ship, or at least a party incapable of its past multiple victories in election districts that would justify backing an additional candidate for office.

Running as a conservative independent fit in well with Genba's basic electoral strategy. Unlike the other two districts we have discussed, Fukushima 2nd and other similarly rural districts had quite high turnout. Moreover, its population was older than the average rural district because so many young people had moved to cities for jobs or a more vibrant social setting. That meant that the constituencies that Matsuzawa and Usami had targeted, younger non-voters, were a relatively scarce target constituency for Genba. Instead, Genba focused on voters who had voted for the LDP in past elections. Many of these voters had been turned off by repeated LDP scandals, and could be pursued to vote for a young, energetic candidate like Genba who shared their general ideology but did not carry the LDP label.

As Genba saw it, his conservative independent candidacy offered him two main advantages: Firstly, it did not alienate non-partisan voters. Secondly, it did not offend LDP patrons. Essentially, Genba's progressive-conservative political orientation and partisan independence made him an attractive candidate for LDP and non-LDP supporters alike.

Genba's electoral strategies combined elements of Type A and Type B campaigning. On the Type B side, as with our other two candidates, Genba's main concern was projecting an image that would be attractive to voters, and by and large he chose the same sort of image as Usami and Matsuzawa. Given that he was only 29 years old and was running against the establishment, he inevitably emphasized his vitality and bringing new blood into politics. Unlike Usami and Matsuzawa, however, Genba did not

express his vitality through *momotarou* or frequent *gaito-enzetsu*. Public speeches and salutatory expression in front of public venues in Fukushima 2nd district just are not efficient tactics of public outreach due to relatively limited daily traffic and patronage. This being the case, Genba expressed his vitality through frequent door to door political activities. Genba claimed that he built his support base one by one through his door to door visits. The door to door visits intensified during the official campaign period. This intensified version, referred to as *rouaa sakusen*, was a well-coordinated final blitz of support gathering during the campaign period.

Another Type B strategy for Genba was to emphasize issues in his talks, both in public and to *kouenkai* groups. Mainly these were the same issues about the need for reform at the national level that were being emphasized by the new parties of the time. As might be expected of a Matsushita Institute graduate, he tended to go into detail about policy issues, to the extent that one of his aides cautioned him that he was outrunning the interest of his audience, who (as seen by local politicians anyway) did not care much about issues—at least not as much as they cared about the person presenting the issues.

That is, voters' attention to issues followed their attention to the personality, or image of the candidate. Such door-to-door campaigning used by Genba is actually a mix of Type A and Type B campaigning. Obviously the candidate cannot campaign on his own. If he has volunteers either accompanying him or canvassing on his behalf, as was true of Usami, his behavior is representative of the Type B strategy. However, Genba enlisted local notables in this effort. Gathering votes through local notables' canvassing activities was one facet of his Type A strategy.

Facilitating Genba's ability to carry out Type A strategies were his past informal ties to the LDP and local LDP politicians during his tenure on the prefecture assembly. Moreover, although Genba was not an official member of the LDP, he was no stranger to the party or its politics due to his immediate and extended families' roles and participation in local politics. Having two former mayors as grandfathers and the current incumbent governor as his father-in-law certainly was a big help in local vote mobilization (Genba received more votes than any other candidate in Koriyama city, Sato Eisaku's hometown). His family's micro-level sake distillery business provided ties to local agricultural and business interests on the one hand, and access points to local and national organizations on the other. These included the Chamber of Commerce that organized small and medium businesses (Shougyoukai), the Rotary Club, the Junior Chamber of Commerce of younger businessmen, and the association of local construction companies. Such organizations often remained officially neutral in MMD elections for fear of antagonizing other conservative candidates (Curtis, 1971), but if activated they were potent sources of organizational votes that extended the electoral network. In an interview after the 1993 general election, Genba credited the Shougyoukai in particular with gathering votes for him. He also mentioned senior-citizen groups and religious organizations, who supported him informally though not making an official endorsement.

Needless to say, Genba also put a lot of effort into organizing his personal *kouenkai*. A big contrast with our other two candidates was the proportion of public speeches at railroad stations and the like to private talks to *kouenkai* chapters and local clubs—the latter was far higher for Genba. These talks are not aimed at reaching uncommitted voters or convincing anybody, rather they are intended to solidify the

attachment of people with whom he already had a connection. Such talks were also favors to local politicians who used the speaking engagement as opportunities to advance their political credibility with voters since they always were in charge of introducing the candidate to the public assembled. Likewise, these local notables, who served as officers of the *kouenkai*, were responsible for recruiting members in their localities.

In the 1993 election campaign, compared to Matsuzawa and Usami, Genba looked very much the rural politician who relied on the Type A strategy. Compared to other candidates in Fukushima, however, Genba appeared rather “modern,” and even innovative in his use of the Type B strategy, particularly his careful construction of a personal image, and issue-based campaigning. In interviews after the campaign, Genba indicated that he had hoped to run much more of a Type B campaign, using the sorts of strategies he had learned at the Matsushita Institute (or perhaps Arkansas). However, the situation in rural Fukushima soon made it clear to him that it would be both difficult and unproductive to run a full-scale Type B campaign. With respect to hubs of activities (e.g., shopping plazas, parks and train stations), there simply was not a market for a retail style of campaigning in Genba’s district. That is, the Type B strategy was inefficient and insufficient for getting out the vote. Indeed, realities on the ground forced him to pay a good deal of attention to the Type A strategy.

In the election itself, the big winner was Watanabe, who picked up almost 20,000 votes from his 1990 performance to finish number one by a big margin. This record was typical for incumbent Shinsei Party candidates, whose defection from the LDP to run under a new, reformist label, according to Reed, was worth around 30,000 votes (see Reed, 2003). The fact that the Socialists lost votes—from 105,000 to 75,000 across two

candidates in both elections—was also consistent with the national trend. JSP candidates lost an average of 40,000 votes in 1993, albeit from their inflated votes in 1990, and the party lost half its seats. Two of those were in Fukushima (where they would probably have easily won at least one seat if they had only run one candidate).

Ironically enough, the big winner in Fukushima was the LDP. As in 1990, three LDP candidates were elected: two incumbents, and a new, relatively young candidate, Saito Bunshou, who inherited enough of the retired Itou’s vote to finish second. Of course, the other two winners were Watanabe, who until a few months earlier had been an LDP stalwart, and Genba, who had deep LDP ties, cooperated with the LDP in the prefectural assembly, and campaigned very much in the mode of a newcomer LDP candidate. Genba finished third with 55,096 votes, a very credible victory (see Table 4.6). Arai narrowly won the fifth seat, with 47,476 votes.

Table 4.6

1993 Lower House Election (Fukushima 2nd district)

CANDIDATE/PARTY	AGE	LEGISLATIVE RECORD	VOTE TOTAL
Watanabe/JRP	61	Incumbent	97,303 (22.4%)
Saito/LDP	50	Challenger	63,666 (14.7%)
Genba/INDPNT	29	Challenger	55,096 (12.7%)
Hozumi/LDP	58	Incumbent	50,989 (11.7%)
Arai/LDP	35	Challenger	47,476 (10.9%)
Sato/JSP	62	Challenger	41,087 (9.5%)
Takizawa/DSP	68	Challenger	34,815 (6.2%)
Shiga/JSP	68	Incumbent	33,329 (7.7%)
Harada/JCP	34	Challenger	10,451 (2.4%)

When he entered the Diet, Genba joined the New Party Sakigake (he delayed official membership with Sakigake until December 1993), the other new breakway party from LDP. Being part of a party is important for committee assignments and other

aspects of life in the legislature. It is interesting, though, how Genba had calculated that running as a conservative independent was preferable to obtaining the Sakigake nomination prior to the election, as he certainly could have if he chose. His choice was a different one than that made by our other two candidates, Usami and Matsuzawa, who could have run as independents, but chose to go with one of the new parties (Shinsei for Matsuzawa, Sakigake for Usami). The reasons might have been idiosyncratic, but it is worth pointing out that running under a party label is much more advantageous in urban (or suburban) areas than in a rural prefecture like Fukushima.

The 1996 General Election

Prior to the 1994 election reform the Fukushima 2nd district had been composed of five cities and ten counties. In response to the 1994 election reform, the old Fukushima 2nd district became the new Fukushima 2nd, 3rd and 4th districts. In 1996, Genba Kouichirou competed in the new Fukushima 3rd district. The new Fukushima 3rd district consisted of two cities, Shirakawa and Sukagawa, and five counties, Iwase, Nishi-Shirokawa, Higashi-Shirokawa, Ishikawa, and Tamura—his home town. This change in district size, as well as the switch from MMD to SMD, was as big a challenge for Genba as it was for our other two candidates.

The first challenger was party affiliation: Genba had been preparing to run in the next general election as a Sakigake candidate (as in fact Usami did), but just a month before the election he pulled out of the party and instead got an official nomination from the Democratic Party of Japan. Genba left Sakigake primarily because he was worried about the image and viability of the party. Although his support was more candidate-

centered than party-centered, he did not want to continue his membership with a party headed towards decline. He anticipated that the DPJ's broad popularity and popular leadership would be helpful in his 1996 re-election campaign.

However, Genba and his staff repeatedly admitted that any new support generated by the DPJ would be modest at best simply because "the DPJ wind had not quite reached all parts of Fukushima." If anything, voters were more charmed by the political high ground taken by the leaders and co-founders of the DPJ, Kan Naoto and Hatoyama Yukio (like Genba both former Sakigake members), than they were by the policy platform of the DPJ. The key message to be taken from Genba's unceremonious change from Sakigake to the DPJ is that the voters really did not much care, if they even noticed.⁶⁷ The fact that Genba continued to drive around in a car that still carried the Sakigake Party name (staff members did not get around to changing the party name affixed on the side of the car until the start of the official campaign) suggests the triviality of the switch from Sakigake to the DPJ among Genba's supporters. Both Genba and Matsuzawa had come to realize that voters were willing to grant them a fair amount of latitude with their party affiliation, given the historical impermanence of opposition parties, as long as they consistently identified with opposition parties. In fact, Matsuzawa was convinced that voters had punished certain incumbent politicians in a number of election districts for flip-flopping between opposition parties and the LDP between the 1993, 1996 and 2000 general elections (July 11, 2000 interview).

In the 1996 Lower House election four candidates vied for the Fukushima 3rd district SMD seat, but two, a Communist and an independent, were minor contenders

⁶⁷ The same was true for Matsuzawa. Supporters just did not seem to care. Matsuzawa's multiple party memberships were due to the short-life of the parties.

(between them they got less than 10 percent of the vote). The battle for the SMD seat really was fought between Genba and Arai Hiriyoshi, also an LDP incumbent from the old Fukushima 2nd district.⁶⁸ Like Genba, Arai was from Tamura County, and became a very young prefectural assemblyman from that district. Arai had also unsuccessfully contested the 1990 general election as an independent. After losing, he started a popular radio program, which according to a Genba staff member effectively added to his local reputation as a charismatic personality.

These two candidates expose the subtle influences of personality and image on voters in Fukushima 2nd district. Arai possessed the better personality (he also was a persuasive public speaker), but Genba possessed the better physical appearance in that he looked the part of a political leader—a commanding 6'1" compared to the 5'3" Arai.⁶⁹

Arai's substantial local roots made him a formidable Type A candidate, and as an incumbent and indeed the sole LDP candidate in a traditionally LDP prefecture he would have access to major organizational resources as well as a comfortable party label. His good connections in the national LDP (he had been secretary to an Upper House LDP member), along with Itou's retirement in the 2nd district solidified his official nomination for the 1993 general election. Genba was an interesting contrast: also an incumbent, with strong local roots, but attached to a political party with more Type B appeal, based on the image of the leaders, than Type A organizational resources.

Genba knew that he needed a larger slice of the electorate in 1996 (albeit a smaller electorate) than in 1993, and he put a lot of effort into maximizing his personal

⁶⁸ Interestingly, the NFP party, which had absorbed the CGP and DSP, did not post a candidate in the 2nd district.

⁶⁹ Arai was more comfortable making public appearances than Genba. His radio broadcast experiences equipped him with communication tricks to rally the troops. By admission of some of his own staff, Genba was not as polished of a communicator or speaker as Arai.

Type A connections. This was helped by the fact that his hometown, Tamura, represented a much larger part of the district, though that was mitigated by Tamura also being Arai's home town. Genba worked on developing his *kouenkai* and electoral *keiretsu*, and strengthening his relationship with the Chamber of Commerce, agricultural groups and other professional and vocational associations.

Genba also was able to arrange an exchange of organizational support with his 1993 opponent Watanabe Kouzou, who now competed in the new 4th district in 1996. Watanabe handed over his *jiban* in Nishi-Shirakawa, Higashi-Shirakawa, Ishikawa, Iwase and Tamura counties, and Shirakawa and Sukagawa cities, in exchange for Genba's *jiban* in Minami-Aizu, Kita-Aizu, Yama, Kawanuma and Onuma counties, and Aizuwakamatsu and Kitakata cities. The alliance was possible because the NFP (Watanabe became a member of the NFP party when it absorbed Shinsei Party and other smaller opposition parties in 1995) did not run a candidate in the Fukushima 3rd district in 1996.

According to a Genba staff member, there were also personal reasons—Watanabe had had a bad relationship with Arai in earlier days when Arai had been a secretary. Such factors made possible a rather unusual arrangement of cross-party cooperative exchanges of organizational resources—in most cases, it was former opponents from the LDP who cooperated after the old election districts were split up. Election reform redistricting, however, severed some of Watanabe's legislative connection, and subsequently disrupted the personal connection with the voters he sought to deliver to Genba. As Genba saw it, the personal votes mobilized by his network of supportive local politicians were far more reliable than the personal votes Watanabe would attempt to

deliver on his behalf. Local politicians, however, were still tied to the constituents who voted for them, as well as invested in preserving their relationship with national legislators who could channel pork to their constituents.

Given this perception of support, Genba took measures to strengthen and expand his relationship with local politicians. Genba had a team of approximately twenty town, county and city politicians invested in his 1996 re-election campaign. Expanding his support base among local politicians for the 1996 election, however, was somewhat complicated by his membership with the DPJ. When Genba ran for office in 1993 his political independence enabled him to negotiate support from local politicians holding no stated allegiance to any of the major political parties. Yet, when Genba joined the DPJ in 1996 some independent local politicians believed that support for Genba in 1996 would put them at risk with voters who did not have favorable feelings about the DPJ.

Actually, local politicians appeared to fret about Genba's membership in the DPJ more than voters did. Local politicians may have been thinking about the criticism they could expect from other LDP politicians at prefectural or even national levels for backing Genba in 1996. Genba's DPJ membership did not appear to matter so much with voters, as long as he did not deviate from his relatively conservative platform. In any case, the consensus among Genba's staff was that the DPJ party endorsement further legitimized his candidacy and advanced his political credibility in ways that independent candidacy could not. In short, the Type B strategy advantages he got from the DPJ connection in this case outweighed the disadvantages for Type A strategy organizational efforts.

The tactic Genba believed yielded the biggest return of votes was the *kouenkai*. It was Genba's insurance policy in terms of votes he could reasonably rely on—more

reliable than the votes gathered by local politicians or organizations. Genba invested more heavily in *kouenkai*-building than any other campaign tactic. His *kouenkai* organization and membership had been far from developed in 1993. Yet, before the 1996 general election was called, Genba had already established about 300 *kouenkai* branches throughout the Fukushima 2nd district. Most were small, intimate, town-level *kouenkai* composed of twenty to forty members (September 26, 1995 interview). The *kouenkai* were often organized along the lines of the trade or profession of its members. “Many of my supporters were targeted, and eventually picked up one by one as *kouenkai* members,” Genba boasted. Although he admitted that he secured a significant share of support from voters tied to regional and local organizations, he insisted that the largest source of his support resided in his network of *kouenkai*. Since many *kouenkai* members were among those whom Genba reached out to directly, they were some of his strongest campaign promoters and recruiters for votes during the election.

Genba was particularly proud of the way he and his wife, Mikiko, organized female voters under a *kouenkai* tailored for female supporters, named *Hana no Kai*. Genba established *Hana no Kai* partly because eligible female voters have outnumbered male voters in every town, county and city in the Fukushima 2nd district. More importantly, women historically turned out on election day in greater numbers than men. These findings remained true in the 1990, 1993, 1996 and 2000 Lower House elections. To this end, *Hana no Kai* continues to be a great public relations move in the district; it promoted public awareness about the value Genba placed on women’s votes. *Hana no Kai* was created to solidify, that is, “harden” his support from women.

Matsuzawa Shigefumi's comment about women voters in the Kanagawa 9th district is worthy of noting since it equally applies to the Fukushima 2nd district. "Votes from women are harder won (he offers as his explanation that there are fewer opportunities to access and solicit support from women than men who are more "waki poi" or widely connected to social and professional circles), but more reliable and consistent than men. Once women decided to vote for me, they typically continued to vote for me—that's a hard vote," stated Matsuzawa (July 11, 2000 interview). Genba too believed that the votes he received from women were hard votes. Finally, Genba also established *Hana no Kai* because he believed the way to appeal to women stylistically differed from the way to appeal to men. *Hana no Kai* was the forum to cultivate support from women separately from that of men.

In 1996, Genba continued his personal house-to-house canvassing and his other Type B activities, and he often spoke about policy issues. His particular themes were decentralization of government and administrative reform that would entitle prefectural representatives to greater budgetary and policy-making power. In this aspect as well Arai was rather similar, though his emphasis was social welfare. To the extent voters were paying attention to issues—and as noted above, Genba's staff tended not to think so—Arai may have had the edge, since his calls for better welfare policy seemed to get a good response from the large number of older voters in the district.

In short, Genba and Arai followed similar strategies in the 1996 campaign, and they were evenly matched in resources. The election turned out to be very close—Arai won with about 91,747 votes to Genba's 88,214 (see Table 4.7). The difference was in Tamura County, the home town to both candidates—Arai's margin there was almost

6,000 votes, the highest of all the cities and counties in the district. Whether that was due to Arai's edge in recognition thanks to his radio program (pure Type B strategy), or to better Type A home town voter mobilization by way of networks, is an interesting question.

Table 4.7

1996 Lower House Election (Fukushima 3rd district)

CANDIDATE/PARTY	AGE	LEGISLATIVE RECORD	VOTE TOTAL
Arai/LDP	38	Incumbent	91,747 (46.2%)
Genba/DPJ	32	Incumbent	88,214 (44.4%)
Suzuki/JCP	43	Challenger	11,031 (5.6%)
Suzuki/INDPNT	49	Challenger	7,688 (3.9%)

Fortunately for Genba, his narrow defeat to Arai for the SMD qualified him for a PR seat, since those are allocated among losing SMD candidates by the narrowness of their defeat. The DPJ's policy that its SMD candidates should also run in the PR tier (recall that the NFP advised its candidates to compete in either the SMD or the PR competition, but not both), made possible his continuation in the Diet.

Genba admitted his surprise that he had lost to Arai. His closest supporters and staff members speculated that he lost the SMD seat to Arai because of overconfidence: the feeling of certain victory that surrounded Genba's candidacy demobilized voters. Some also thought that he had overemphasized policy issues, or emphasized the wrong issues. Particularly humbling for Genba was that although both he and Arai were "native sons" of Tamura County, Arai turned out to be the voters' "favorite son."

Like other candidates, Genba had felt compelled to pay the most attention to the organized vote for the 1996 election. The shift from getting a small proportion of the

vote in a big district to getting a large proportion in a much smaller district required a lot of attention to building up organizational resources. Arranging the exchange with Watanabe and trying to win over the individual members of his affiliated groups were important aspects of his strategy.

While all that took a lot of time and energy, it can be said that assembling a larger network of organizational support was less of a challenge for Genba than it was for Matsuzawa, and particularly for Usami. First, rural voters were predisposed to be responsive to influence from organizations they belong to or local notables. Second, Fukushima had much more of a traditional social infrastructure than Tokyo and Kawasaki—urban and suburban voters are more likely to be unconnected. Third, with his strong local connections and ties to organizations, Genba had more to work with than did the other two candidates.

What about the Type B strategies that Genba himself thought were the right way to win elections? In general, he gave those about as much attention as he had in 1993. The most interesting point is a negative one—compared to 1993, Genba was now attached to a political party, one with attractive leaders that were waging an active campaign at the national level. He certainly advertised that he was the official candidate of the DPJ, and thought that it gave him some legitimacy, but his campaign behavior and his own analysis during and after the election indicate that he did not consider the party label to be an important factor in the election. At best, party membership complimented his image.

The 2000 General Election

The fact that Genba Kouichirou was a PR representative for the entire Touhoku region of Japan, rather than a representative of the Fukushima 3rd SMD, made not a particle of difference to how he approached the 2000 election. For one thing, he was determined to win back his SMD seat—as noted above, rationally or not, Japanese politicians always prefer winning as a single member than as part of a PR slate. For another, even if he were more oriented to protecting his PR seat, it is doubtful that any campaign strategy would be better than maximizing his vote in his home district.

If Genba's opponent had again been Arai it is hard to know who would have had the advantage—both were incumbents, they had similar image profiles and local roots, and they had run a very close race in 1996. The LDP was in rather low repute in 2000, and the DPJ was on the upswing after the dissolution of the NFP since it was now clearly the major opposition party. Whether such factors would have been enough to move the balance against the LDP's inherent advantages of access to pork and looking like the permanent governing party is moot.

In the event, the LDP candidate in the Fukushima 3rd SMD was not Arai, but Hozumi Yoshiyuki. Hozumi was from the Shirakawa area of the district; after a career in the Ministry of Agriculture he had been elected to the Lower House from the old Fukushima 2nd in 1986, having inherited a *jiban* from a party elder. He was reelected in 1990 and again in 1993, when he received 4,000 votes fewer than Genba but 3,000 more than Arai in the district as a whole. However, Arai had outpolled him in the portion of the old district that became Fukushima 3rd district.

The LDP thus had two incumbents from a single SMD, and, here and in other such situations, its solution was a “Costa Rica” arrangement. That means that one candidate runs in the SMD and the other only in PR, and then at the next election they switch. Necessarily, when running in the PR tier the candidate is given a high enough position (above the SMD candidates) on the list to assure election.

The outcome of the 2000 general election was relatively predictable from the start: Hozumi was not as strong a candidate in the Fukushima 3rd district as Arai had been, and moreover the Costa Rica system was confusing to voters. Indeed, newspaper polls revealed that many voters simply were not aware that Arai’s name would not be on the SMD ballot in 2000. Moreover, Arai continued to run hard in Fukushima 3rd district in order to keep his organization together for a future SMD campaign. That meant emphasizing Type A strategies although PR campaigns are supposed to be quite Type B, centered on party label and policy issues. Arai simply could not convince voters to vote for Hozumi over Genba. In fact, voters’ discomfort with following Arai’s directive to support Hozumi in the 2000 election called into question the conventional wisdom on the reliability of an organizational based or “gathered” vote.

Genba and his staff paid attention to the implications of the Costa Rica. They tried to calculate how voters would respond, particularly in Tamura County where Genba had lost the previous election. However, that had no great implications for Genba’s actual campaigning. He continued to build on the strategy put into practice for the 1996 election. The *kouenkai* was the central nervous system of his campaign. By Genba’s estimate, his *kouenkai* roster by now included some 70,000 names, each of which he

credited as a reliable supporter.⁷⁰ He called his 2000 election campaign a *kouenkai*-centered campaign.

Genba's attention to *kouenkai* reflected his limited faith in the allure of the DPJ in 2000 to attract votes. "The Fukushima 3rd district was a district where a strong party-centered campaign would never be enough to win an election," Genba stated emphatically (July 5, 2000 interview). His comment exposed the limited political legitimacy of the DPJ in Fukushima 3rd district—"the new party wind had finally reached Fukushima for the 2000 general election," said Genba. Genba's comment equally reflected a glum assessment of rural political behavior, at least with respect to rural voters' receptiveness to the legitimacy of purely party-based electoral mobilization.

As with *kouenkai*, Genba continued to target the same types of voters targeted in 1996, which arguably took less time for him to establish a rapport with in 2000. Still, the party label as a Type B strategy no doubt attracted a few voters. Moreover, there was also an organizational payoff since in 2000 since the DPJ had the support of the Rengo labor federation (Genba estimated that approximately twenty percent of his vote was connected with labor unions, and the DPJ nomination was important to unions). That was a new source of Type A support, but he no longer could get a boost from an organizational exchange deal. Since Watanabe and Genba were now completely removed from their former supporters outside their current districts, there was nothing to trade.

While the 1996 campaign was largely an effort to develop his existing organizational strengths to meet the exigency of a larger percentage of the vote in a

⁷⁰ Either the number is an exaggeration or some members did not vote for him—the figure amounts to almost two-thirds of his total vote, which is quite unlikely even for a rural area.

geographically smaller district, in 2000 Genba became much more aggressive about penetrating the organizations or communities that were thought to be secure for the LDP. He had a stronger, more organized and more devoted team of local politicians and organization leaders on board to challenge the political hold the LDP had in certain parts of the district. His re-election campaign team was composed of three prefectural assembly members, and 70 to 100 city, town and village councilors. Like Matsuzawa, who had actually relocated his district office (and residence) to the electorally less favorable Takatsu ward in Kawasaki, Genba invested resources in establishing a stronger presence in Sukagawa city. Though seen as LDP oriented, Sukagawa was fertile ground because neither Arai nor Hozumi had particular ties there. Moreover, Sukagawa was home to Genba's father-in-law, Governor Satou Eisaku, and the birthplace of his wife, Mikiko. Genba Mikiko was particularly instrumental in getting out the vote in this area, visiting about 8,000 homes over the last year before the election (January 10, 2001 interview).⁷¹

It was noted above that Genda's own analysis of his loss in the SMD in 1996 had been complacency—he, his campaign staff and supporters thought he would prevail over his main competition, Arai Hiroyuki. In the 2000 race he and his staff tried harder on all counts. There were more personal public addresses (*kojin enzetsukai*), more *kouenkai*-building, more household visits, more pamphlet distribution, more strategic placement of election offices and a greater enlistment of local politicians' campaign know-how and support.

⁷¹ She was adept at mobilizing voters through her collective experiences gained as the daughter and wife of politicians, and her education at Tokyo University's Faculty of Law.

One interesting wrinkle in Genba's 2000 campaign behavior was that he aggressively targeted young voters. The Costa Rica arrangement between Arai and Hozumi for 2000 facilitated Genba's increased "ownership" of the youth vote in areas formerly garnered by Arai--at 36, Genba was only slightly older than Arai, but he was considerably younger than a 65 year-old Hozumi. Incidentally, the largest numbers of younger voters were located in the cities of Sukagawa and Shirakawa (the latter representing Hozumi's home base), so Genba's Type B strategy, based on issues, images and direct contact, complemented his efforts to garner the support of young voters in these cities.. Young voters, particularly in cities in which they were more abundant, were observably more active and participatory in 2000 than in 1996. Genba believed that young voters were responsible for the 5 percent increase in turnout in 2000, and that he was the beneficiary of this support due to his appeal with young voters.

Genba won back his SMD seat in 2000 with relative ease, winning 118,385 votes to 91,081 for Hozumi, who immediately retired from politics.⁷² The results of the 2000 general election are presented in Table 4.8. Demonstrating the key role played by the Type A strategy, Genba's biggest gains came from Tamura, where he did not have to compete directly with Arai to be the "favorite son," and in his wife's home town of Shirakawa.

⁷² The only other candidate this time was a Communist, who polled only 11,000.

Table 4.8

2000 Lower House Election (Fukushima 3rd district)

CANDIDATE/PARTY	AGE	LEGISLATIVE RECORD	VOTE TOTAL
Genba/DPJ	36	Incumbent	118,385 (53.8%)
Hozumi/LDP	65	Incumbent	91,081 (41.4%)
Suzuki/JCP	46	Challenger	10,683 (4.8%)

Conclusion

Usami and Genba are about as opposite as two candidates in the same party (more or less) can be. Usami, in downtown Tokyo, relied mainly on Type B campaigning while Genba, in rural Fukushima, was mostly Type A (although more Type B than the average rural candidate). And although not properly our subject, it is hard to avoid the observation that Genba is quite a competent politician while Usami seemed feckless.

On those grounds, incidentally, it is our “middle” candidate, Matsuzawa, who appears the most skilled, indeed probably one of the more accomplished politicians of his generation. But further comparisons among the three await the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

We have now explored the campaign strategies of three candidates across three elections in some detail. Chapters 3 and 4 were mostly descriptive, giving pictures of these nine campaigns as seen by the candidates themselves and an outside observer. In this concluding chapter, we will look for patterns and causal explanations by comparing among the campaigns, and by testing some explanatory hypotheses drawn from the literature, or in one case, inferring from the campaigns themselves.

We begin the comparisons with a short quantitative analysis. A short survey was administered to each candidate for each election campaign during formal interviews. They were asked to rank-order seven electoral tactics in the order of personal importance or value to their election campaigns. The seven were chosen not on the basis of any theoretical writings about elections, but rather according to the ways Japanese politicians (and journalists) think about the factors that matter in elections. In terms of the categories we have been using throughout this dissertation, two of these are associated with the Type A strategy: *kouenkai*, and support from associations and organizations. Three are associated with the Type B strategy: policy and issues, media coverage, and the image of the political party. Note that when this list was drawn up in the early 1990s, priorities about campaign finance coincided more with the Type A strategy (*kouenkai*, and other organizational relationships required a lot of money to maintain), and priorities

about personal image were more the Type B strategy. However, upon deeper reflection, the qualitative information we collected, and (as will be seen) the results of this survey indicate that these two fall in neither category of electoral tactics. Rather, they qualify the other tactics included on the list.

To see what factors candidates thought—or at least said—were most important in their campaigns, we can first total the answers of all three of them across all three campaigns. Since the answers were from 1 (least important) to 7 (most), the score could range from 9 to 63 (the latter being $7 \times 3 \times 3$). These total scores are shown in Table 5.1 (in the order they were listed on the questionnaire).

Table 5.1

Campaign Tactics	
Total Scores	
Kouenkai	34
Policy/Issues	48
Association/ Organization Support	27
Media/Media Coverage	39
Personal Image	52
Party Image	41
Campaign Funding	11
TOTAL	252

These results are interesting. What first meets the eye is the extremely low score for campaign finance. That is difficult to believe. It was the famous parliamentarian whose career spanned pre- and post-war Japan, Ozaki Yukio, who said “three things are important in politics: money, money, and money.” Surely that adage is true today in Japan (as in many other countries). However, money is hard for candidates to talk about.

For one thing, it is something of a taboo. For another, some of the ways candidates raise and spend money are illegal. For these reasons, Curtis (1971) had only vague discussions of campaign finance, and our three candidates were quite reticent on that topic in interviews. Evidence of fund-raising or spending improprieties certainly among the three candidates was not found during our participant observations of the political and campaign activities, though this hardly rules out any illegal conduct. Instruction in and discussions on political ethics and accountability during these candidates years at MIGM presumably operated as the moral compass guiding them from financial misconduct. “It’s practically impossible to avoid ethical dilemmas in politics...but, Matsushita Konosuke challenged me to be an accountable, responsible person in my every day personal life and as political leaders,” remarked Genba Kouichirou during an informal conversation in his district office. His comment alluded to his fiduciary integrity.

One of the perennial complaints heard among our candidates was the high cost of sustaining on-going political activities and the general cost of campaigning. Even seasoned volunteers of Genba’s re-election campaign in 1996 commented on the modesty of his district office and campaign activities; a tale-tell sign that he was not flush with cash. The absence of the campaign excesses traditionally more common to rural campaigns illustrated Genba’s commitment to a modern campaign captured in the Type B strategy, an acceptance of the legal spending limits for campaigning and an admission of a limited campaign war chest. Still, as a quality candidate, Genba’s campaign activities, like Matsuzawa’s, reflected a sufficiently funded campaign (quality incumbent candidates usually succeed at political fund-raising), which challenges his claim of a campaign with shallow pockets. In filling out the questionnaire, it is possible that the candidates did not

think money was important because they had enough at their disposal.⁷³ It is more likely that they put it last (in all but two of the nine responses) just because they were used to disregarding it in talking to anyone outside the inner circle.

The highest ranking category was for personal image, followed closely by policy issues. It is not surprising that an attractive personal image was seen as very important. The construction of an appealing personal image is probably true for candidates in all countries, and certainly is clear from observing and talking with these candidates, that they all place great emphasis on how they would be perceived by voters. More surprising, however, is the high rating of policy issues—higher than most would expect for Japan. To some extent, this high score presumably means candidates think that some policy preference espoused by them during the campaign will attract the support of like-minded voters. On the surface this perspective is similar to what is meant by policy issues as a strategy in the West. At a deeper level, however, it is not largely because Western candidates tend to emphasize issues that would differentiate the candidate from opponents, in the minds of voters (and maybe in reality). Raising a “wedge” issue, one where supporters of an opposing candidate will differ among themselves, can be particularly effective. Yet, there are few wedge issues in Japan.

Such policy-issue oriented tactics in Western countries are based on an assumption that some voters believe they have an interest or an opinion that is different from other voters, and that issues mobilize them into action. That means Western campaigning is largely based on what have been called “position issues” where a pro and con position is taken on certain issues like abortion and affirmative action. The other kind is “valence” issues with which virtually everyone agrees. Clear air and a quality

⁷³ Invariably, these candidates insisted that they waged campaigns with limited financial resources.

education are familiar examples—although different voters might not give it the same level of priority, and different candidates might find it more or less advantageous. In a classic essay on Japanese electoral behavior, Scott Flanagan (1991) pointed out that valence issues are very commonly used in Japanese elections compared to position issues. Only a handful of important position issues, identified as “cultural politics” issues, have persisted in Japan throughout the postwar period—pro or con the “peace constitution,” Japanese remilitarization, the expansion of the emperor’s power and the Japan-US security alliance (Flanagan et. al., 1991). Positions on these issues used to predict whether voters would support the LDP vs. the JSP or JCP across many decades, but they were irrelevant in our election campaigns and indeed were never mentioned by the candidates. Still more to the point, none of them talked about *any* position issues—that is, any issues on which an opponent took a different position, or which they thought anyone in their constituency would disagree.

Our candidates stayed away from Japan’s classic position issues because of their limited saliency with votes and the limited leverage they recognized they could gain from them. American candidates, by comparison, equally shy away from the classic position issues familiar to election campaigns because of the potential for them to lose as many supporters as they gain. While the motivation is similar, the difference is that there are few position issues (aside from the traditional ones) to divide the vote in Japan.⁷⁴ Despite limitations, the candidates of our case studies did make use of valence issues as a form of public appeal, and they thought that such issues could be some help to their campaigns.

⁷⁴ Policy issues—position or valence—simply do not affect the vote in Japan the way political parties do. Party voting is more common in Japan because a party vote is isolated from a issue vote. Rather the Japanese electorate does not perceive the vote for a party as a vote on issues.

The best examples, though acutely lacking the policy specificity presumed to draw votes, are “reform” and “change.” All candidates, for the LDP as well as other parties, called for reform and change in the 1990s in Japan, which negated the ability of the reform issue to matter to their electoral success or failure.⁷⁵ A voice in favor of the status quo and against reform could virtually not be found on television or in the newspaper, let alone on the campaign trail. Still, non-incumbents, young “fresh” candidates (even after they became incumbents), and even old incumbents who had split from the LDP (in 1993) all believed—probably correctly—that the banner of reform and change would work better for them. It appears that this is mostly what is meant by a strategy emphasizing policy issues. Incidentally, that might imply that the high rating for policy issues is partly due to all of our observed campaigns taking place in the decade of the nineties—it would not have been as high in earlier decades, suggesting a period effect, since the reform issue in elections prior to 1993 never gained much traction with candidates and voters. That party image and media attention rank above *kouenkai* and relying on organizational support might also be a function of looking at the 1990s rather than earlier times.

The importance that candidates gave to media support would seem to be more a matter of campaign effect than campaign tactic. In many conversations, candidates rarely mentioned the issue of how they could raise the quantity or affect the content of the media coverage they were getting. Party image is more of a tactic since candidates can choose how much to emphasize their party (and, during the earlier part of the 1990s, could even choose their own party to some extent).

⁷⁵ Technically, candidates fulfilled a goal the reform with respect to a greater orientation towards policy appeals.

We noted that the high importance given to tactics of policy issues, party image and media support, the Type B strategy, may have been due to a period effect since all three surveys were conducted in the 1990s. Such speculations about change over time can be examined directly, although narrowly within the decade of the 90s, by comparing the three election campaigns, aggregated across the three candidates. These results are in Table 5.2. The range of possible scores for each year is from 3 to 21.

Table 5.2

Campaign Tactics			
Change Over Time			
	1993	1996	2000
Kouenkai	12	12	10
Policy/Issues	14	16	18
Association/ Organization Support	9	9	9
Media/Media Coverage	13	15	11
Personal Image	17	16	19
Party Image	15	13	13
Campaign Funding	4	3	4

Here, we see a clear time trend only for policy issues, which went from 14 to 16 to 18, and from third to second most important. That finding is consistent with perhaps the most fundamental hypothesis about how election campaigning should be changing. However, the other two Type B tactics—media coverage, and party image—show no real trend. Nor does there appear to be any consistent drop in the Type A tactics (other than the small fall-off for *kouenkai*). In the aggregate the shifts other than for policy issues do not appear to be both consistent and large enough to be significant.

Finally, with respect to cross-sectional differences, comparing each candidate's answers across the three elections is mainly to reflect differences in their districts (or their views about their districts). Table 5.3 gives the results. Here too the possible range is from 3 to 21.

Table 5.3

Campaign Tactics			
Differences By Candidate (District Type)			
	Usami (Urban)	Matsuzawa (Suburban)	Genba (Rural)
Kouenkai	7	7	20
Policy/Issues	15	18	15
Association/ Organization Support	7	8	12
Media/Media Coverage	15	16	8
Personal Image	18	15	19
Party Image	18	17	6
Campaign Funding	4	3	4

It is evident that Usami, in the most urban district, and Matsuzawa, in what we have termed the suburban district, are substantially similar, while Genba, our rural district case study is different. The key is perhaps that Usami's district is largely Ohta ward, which is more oriented to small business than most of Tokyo, while Matsuzawa's district is all within Kawasaki City, which is the eighth largest city in Japan and right in the middle of the greater Tokyo metropolitan area. The heterogeneity of its sub-districts does make it suburban in character, but it is on the urban side of suburban.

While the tactical choices made by Usami and Matsuzawa cannot be differentiated in any meaningful way purely on the basis of their survey responses, the contrast between both of them and Genba is quite clear. Genba's top factor was

kouenkai, at 20, compared with 7 or second lowest for the other two. Organizational and associational support was also a big difference, 12 for Genba compared with 8 and 7. Party images, on the other hand, were seen as much more crucial in the more urban districts, 17 or 18 points compared with 6 for Genba, as was media attention, at 15 or 16 in the urban districts versus 8 in the more rural area. These differences are exactly what is meant by the distinction between Type A and Type B campaign strategies. The graphic presentation of the survey results in Figure 5.1 visually illustrates the behavioral modifications of each candidate between elections.

Lastly, the tactics that do not differ between the urban and rural campaigns are worth a bit of consideration. First, personal image: differences between the Type A and Type B approaches might possibly lie in what sort of image the candidate wants to project—perhaps paternalistic and soothing for Type A, and an energetic change-agent for Type B. However, the descriptive evidence does not show any such distinction—all three candidates tried to look fresh and lively and standing for reform and change.

Similarly, the high position of policy issues among all three could be covering a difference in what sorts of issues are emphasized. As much of the literature on electoral systems described in Chapter 2 has pointed out, we would expect Type A candidates to stress particularistic programs for a locality, traditional pork, and Type B candidates to emphasize more general policy issues. Again, that was not the case in the campaigns we observed. All three candidates talked more about “reform” and “change” than anything else. Indeed, it may not be too much to say that for them the term “policy issues” was more about conveying an image of being interested in policy issues than about appealing

to voters on the basis of specific policies since most of the policies they championed were valance issues.

While no one would claim that this “survey,” with only nine “cases,” is conclusive, it is still quite interesting. By and large, the results of this objective, quantitative exercise bear out what was discovered in the subjective, qualitative research reported in Chapters 3 and 4. For example, the Type A election strategy certainly has not disappeared. Beyond that, the survey results help us rethink some assumptions that underlay the research, such as the ambiguous meaning of “policy and issues.”

Accounting for Variations in the Campaign Behavior of the Case Studies

We turn now to trying to account for the differences we have seen among these campaigns, drawing on the earlier two chapters supplemented by our survey, in order to throw light on the dynamics of election campaigning in Japan.

We have seen variation over time and variation across districts. What factors account for the variations we have observed? Answers to this question throw light on broader issues, including explanations for why campaign behavior in Japan seems to be so distinctive. In particular, we focus on the most distinctive aspect of Japanese campaigning, the widespread use of the Type A election strategy. Way back in 1971, Curtis opined that the Type A strategy he described so well would, over time, give way to the Type B strategy. As the literature from that time through the electoral reform in 1994 to today even indicate, the continued importance of the Type A strategy and its failure to disappear remains a central preoccupation of scholars in this field, so we should take it up

directly. Here are the hypotheses mentioned in Chapter 2, some obvious and some not so obvious, for explaining the prevalence of the Type A strategy in election campaigns.

1. The Type A strategy is the product of values and norms among voters, which are rooted in Japanese social and cultural patterns.
2. The Type A strategy is the product of candidates' expectations, based on their own experiences or what they are taught about what works to win election campaigns.
3. A Type A strategy prevails because an effective Type B strategy is precluded by tight election laws and regulations.
4. The Type A strategy is the product of the multimember electoral district system.

These hypotheses are not mutually exclusive—in fact, all of them could easily be true.

The question is therefore whether they seem to be born out by evidence, and how much explanatory power each has. They are more or less susceptible to testing with our qualitative and quantitative data. The fourth hypothesis is of most interest in the literature and we will examine it the most, including a couple of sub-hypothesis, but the others are significant enough to discuss briefly.

Hypothesis 1: The Type A strategy is the product of values and norms among voters, which are rooted in Japanese social and cultural patterns.

As noted in the introduction, the conventional wisdom as well as a substantial literature on Japanese electoral behavior link the expectations of Japanese voters, and therefore the campaign behavior of Japanese candidates, to norms and values in broader society. These values and norms are best captured in the “vertical” social organization in Japan structured around social relationships, exchanges and obligation (e.g. Richardson, 1974; Flanagan 1991; Richardson and Flanagan 1984; and Ike, 1972). This hypothesis would seem to be supported by the fact that the Type A strategy is still quite common,

despite predictions to the contrary and a fair amount of election system change. On the other hand, Japanese values and norms appear to have changed a good deal as well. Within our study, the time span is too short for a direct test of this hypothesis, but an indirect test is provided by the urban-rural dimension. Although no doubt a little too simple, the proposition that values and norms in urban areas are more “modern” and in rural areas more “traditional” is overwhelmingly accepted in Japan as elsewhere. The fact that our campaigns span both types of districts thus offers some insight.

To summarize, rural voters are seen as socially integrated, cooperative, and personally connected to political leaders, while urban voters are less socially integrated, have higher levels of political participation and express greater knowledge about issue-politics (particularly national politics). Thus, election campaigning in rural districts is seen as constructed around the personal vote and organized political machines (networks of local politicians, organizations and associations). Conversely, in an urban election district, election campaigning is seen as constructed around party labels and policy issues.

Our quantitative analysis above reflected these contrasts (the ambiguous nature of policy issues aside), and the contrasts between Genba’s rural approach and Usami’s urban approach were clear in Chapter 4. It is Matsuzawa’s “middling” or suburban case in Chapter 3 that is most interesting. The quantitative responses above make him nearly indistinguishable from Usami, but the qualitative evidence gives a different impression. The most telling point is that Usami almost ignored organizational considerations in two of his three campaigns, while Matsuzawa paid a great deal of attention to organizing and maintaining his *kouenkai*, building up relationships with various associations, and

constructing an election *keiretsu* based on relationships with local political leaders. In that regard Matsuzawa looked considerably more rural.⁷⁶

The evidence of Matsuzawa's rural-like behavior needs a somewhat broader look. One could argue that Usami was not a very skillful candidate to start with—his initial victory could be called a fluke, and he lost in his next two tries.⁷⁷ Compared to the other two candidates he was deficient in planning, and in mindfulness about how campaigning works. And it is worth noting that his opponents in 1996 and 2000 did make more efforts at more traditional styles of organization despite the urban district, to good effect. In short, the evidence from Usami's own campaigns notwithstanding, it appears clear that Type A campaigning persisted at least to the end of the 20th century throughout Japan. As to whether it is rooted in voters' values and norms and in Japanese culture, we will present other possible alternatives below, but it is worth noting that the candidates themselves certainly thought so. Chapters 3 and 4 are full of examples of Matsuzawa and Genba trying to meet the expectations of their voters.

Hypothesis 2: The Type A strategy is the product of candidates' expectations, based on their own experiences or what they have learned.

Curtis (1971) speculated that Japanese voters would change fairly rapidly but politicians would take a long time to catch up. There is a great body of practical precepts about how to win Japanese elections, largely based on assumptions that might be right or wrong about Japanese voters. Most of the precepts are associated with the Type A strategy. The precepts are reinforced in people's minds by the cases of candidates who

⁷⁶ Matsuzawa's survey responses, curiously, say otherwise, rather that he is more urban. The data collected through interviews and participant observations suggest that candidates' self-reflections of campaign behavior do not always coincide with observed behavior.

⁷⁷ Although our study only accounts for campaign behavior up to the 2000 general election, it is worth noting that on his third attempt in 2003 Usami did finally reclaim a Lower House in the Tokyo 4th district

violated them and lost (Usami may represent one such example). There have also been candidates who rejected the precepts and succeeded. Tsurutani (1977) found enough of these to proclaim that “new style campaigning” or, in effect, the Type B strategy was already coming to the fore and would be the wave of the future, as candidates caught up to “post-industrial,” post-materialist shifts in Japanese society. However, whatever trends he detected did not seem to take hold, or in any case did not really shake the conventional wisdom.

Our study provides a good test of whether the conventional wisdom does lead politicians to opt for Type A behavior, not by comparing among our three candidates but by seeing if all three were different from other candidates running for the Lower House, particularly in 1993 general election. That is because this election, their first at the national level, came fairly shortly after they had graduated from the Matsushita Institute of Government and Management (MIGM). That school was explicitly established to train a new kind of politician geared towards Type B rather than Type A campaigning. It was seen as an American approach as opposed to a Japanese approach to campaigning, and most MIGM students including our three candidates spent time in the US as participant observers of American politics and electioneering.

In interviews after the 1993 election, all three spoke of how valuable the MIGM experience had been to them. Matsuzawa even chronicled the electoral lessons he learned while in the US supported by MIGM in a 1986 *Chuo Kouron* publication. One obvious contribution was that they saw their attendance there as central to their images as fresh, young, innovative, policy-oriented candidates. They also thought that what they had learned was helpful in their initial efforts to structure a national-level election

campaign. In fact, as we saw in Chapters 3 and 4, the campaign strategies pursued by all three candidates in 1993 appeared considerably more Type B than the conventional precepts, more Type B than what we know in a general way about the usual strategies and tactics of Japanese candidates, and more Type B than the strategies of some of their opponents.

Several caveats are warranted, however, with respect to the candidates' Type B orientation in 1993. First, 1993 was a year of unusual turmoil, with widespread criticism of established ideas and institutions in Japanese politics, not to mention the awakening of a new party boom. Our candidates were all more or less "progressive conservatives" who were running primarily against the LDP. That stance leads naturally to the Type B strategy, and if our reference group was composed of candidates who fell into that category, rather than all candidates (including e.g. LDP incumbents) any impact of MIGM training per se would be considerably attenuated. Second, similarly, the fact that this was their first campaign was certainly important. A first-time candidate lacks experience, and he also typically lacks the resources for an effective Type A campaign (although that is much less true when a candidate directly inherits a *jiban*, or support base of relationships from a politician who has died or retired—particularly a relative). *Kouenkai* organizations take time to build, local politicians are unlikely to be impressed by some neophyte the first time he comes around, and so forth.

To the extent that the above is true, we would expect to see a shift in emphasis from the Type B to Type A strategy from the first to the second campaigns. A candidate learns areas where he fell short (and perhaps where his opponents did well). Moreover, as an incumbent, he has the time and resources to work on building up relationships

before his second campaign. The evidence in our case studies meets this expectation. All three candidates (even Usami to some extent) pay more attention to the organizationally-driven Type A strategy in 1996 than they did in 1993. We will qualify this claim a bit below, but we consider the contrast between 1993 and 1996 as a powerful indication that there is a “political life cycle” for election strategies.

If logic dictates a movement from Type B to Type A in a second campaign, what about a third campaign? Probably there is no strong prediction across candidates. Individual candidates will learn about what works and doesn't from their second campaign and make necessary adjustments. One point is worth making: the task of developing Type A organizational resources takes a lot of time. Once established they take less time to maintain. Relatively speaking, that would leave more time and energy for Type B strategies in a third campaign and thereafter, although the necessity to depend on the Type B should diminish in subsequent campaigns.

Note that our survey data, reported in the Tables above, do not support an interpretation of a movement from Type B to Type A followed by some movement back to Type B. That is true as well if the scores for each election and individual candidate are examined. However, we believe that this pattern can be found in the way Matsuzawa and Genba explained each campaign, and in our qualitative observations of how they behaved.

Hypothesis 3: The Type A prevails because an effective Type B strategy is precluded by tight election laws and regulations.

The laws on how political candidates can raise and spend money, and in general on what is permissible campaign behavior, are probably stricter in Japan than in any other

democracy by a large margin (Wada, 1996; Saito, 1995). As noted earlier, this factor is half of a broad proposition that it is structural factors rather than cultural factors that accounts for the prevalence of the Type A strategy in Japanese campaigns.

It is true that the rules are often violated—witness the large number of electoral staff, and sometimes the candidates themselves, who are arrested after each election. However, breaking the law in the direction of the Type B strategy—say, buying TV commercials—would be too obvious even to consider. The violations are nearly always for intensifying the Type A strategy. For example, it is not legal to throw an intimate party with food and drink for local politicians, but it is difficult to detect (and in fact is common). The same would be true of outright bribery of community leaders although we have no information on its prevalence.

Unfortunately, there is no way to test this proposition in our study. Campaign law is a constant, not a variable, in this period, and of course they were the same across the three districts. Readers familiar with election campaigning in other countries will have been struck by the limited strategic repertory available to Japanese candidates. It needs to be mentioned in this conclusion since it is so important, but there is no reason to go into it more deeply.

Hypothesis 4: The Type A strategy is the product of the multimember electoral district system.

Everyone who has written about Japanese electoral behavior has stressed the importance of the medium-sized, single-ballot multimember electoral district that was used in Lower House elections from the early postwar period until it was reformed in 1994. The electoral system's effects on campaign strategies—multimember districts

(MMD) favor Type A—amply described earlier is the other half of the proposition that it is structural rather than cultural factors that make Japanese election campaigns so distinctive. The structural explanation is why it was so widely predicted—or at least hoped—that moving to a single-member district (SMD) system would push candidates more toward Type B.⁷⁸

This is a question that our study can address directly and more precisely. We look at one election under the old system and two under the new system. We follow the same candidates across all three. They are from an urban, a suburban and a rural district—as noted above, this reflects the most powerful explanation of cross-sectional variation in electoral behavior. All three were in five-member districts in 1993, the most extreme form of the MMD. And we observed and talked with these candidates and their staffs as they themselves tried to figure out the strategic implications of the institutional change for them.

Chapters 3 and 4 have told this story and we need not repeat the details. The most significant finding is that at least in the first instance, the reform led them away from the Type B toward Type A strategy, at least for Matsuzawa and Genba (the Usami case is indeterminate). In 1996 compared to 1993, Matsuzawa and Genba devoted much more of their energy and time to building up organizational resources aimed at reaching voters indirectly, and less to tactics to appeal to voters directly. To understand why this should be so, we need to look analytically at why SMDs should favor Type B strategies, and then why that didn't happen in 1996 for our candidates, and more generally.

⁷⁸ We do not consider the implications of having a two-tiered system including proportional representation because it was not an important factor in our candidate's strategies. McKean and Scheiner (2000) have a good logical argument to the contrary but their considerations did not seem to apply in our districts. Incidentally, Genba won in the PR race in 1996. His strategy in both that campaign and in 2000, however, was oriented entirely around the SMD race.

“Duverger’s Law” holds that the number of serious candidates in an election district will be $M+1$, so a five member district is expected to have six serious candidates dividing up the vote. Any individual candidate thus needs only a small percentage of the vote to capture a seat—in 1993, the last seat in our three districts was won with 11.5%, 12.8%, and 10.9% of the votes cast. With so low a threshold to meet to win a seat under the MMD electoral system, how did candidates attract this small slice of the voter? The Type B strategy would be to send some message, or project some image to all voters, hoping it would attract something over a tenth of them. This approach is particularly practical for picking up uncommitted, “floating” voters.⁷⁹ The Type A strategy would be to concentrate on a specific group of voters, trying to induce some sense of connection, often indirectly via local influentials or organizations capable of insuring voter commitment.

Evidence over decades of MMD voting in Japan indicates that organizational efforts can bring in a substantial percentage of the needed vote. That means that the candidates who appeal to non-partisan, or “floating” voters have to pick up only a few to get over the line. Most candidates most of the time have decided that their marginal investment of time, energy and money will be most productive in trying to enlarge and solidify their connected vote rather than improving their appeal to “floating” voters.

The logic behind the popularity of the Type A strategy for many candidates competing in MMDs is clear, but what about the logic for the single-member district? According to “Duverger’s Law” fewer candidates compete in SMD competitions. In most cases the SMD races are fought between just two serious candidates under

⁷⁹ The logic of “floating voter” is germane in a multi-seat district electoral system. The expression describes partisan voters who are uncommitted to a party’s candidates competing in the same election district. Floating voters, unlike independent voters, identify with a certain political party.

“Duverger’s Law.” In that circumstance a candidate will need half of the vote to win. Unlike a campaign operating for a MMD seat, it would be very difficult to build and maintain an organizational network to encompass a large proportion of the needed votes for a SMD seat. The marginal investment of a candidate is likely to be more productive if directed to the Type B strategy to pick up “floating” voters.

The logic is so straightforward and compelling that it is understandable why reform-minded academics and politicians would focus on moving from MMD to SMD as the key to changing campaign behavior. And it is understandable that so many were chagrined when it didn’t work and nothing seemed to change, as well expressed in the title of Hideo Otake’s (1998) book, *How Electoral Reform Boomeranged: Continuity in Japanese Campaigning*. An excellent summary of similar reactions to the 1996 election is McKean and Scheiner (2000).

The explanations of various analysts were summarized in Chapter 2. Here we can take a more analytical look at why Matsuzawa and Genda moved more toward Type A than toward Type B. First, four possible explanations are specific either to their particular situations or to the year 1996: a) political life cycle; b) “Duverger’s Law;” c) Change in district size and organizational rebuilding prerequisites; and d) “Hometown advantage.”

a. Political life cycle

As noted above, it is logical for first-time candidates from an opposition party to rely on Type B, and incumbents more on Type A. Moreover, for various reasons our candidates were much more Type B than average in Japan. A greater emphasis on Type

A in their second campaigns could be making up for that, a natural regression toward the mean.

b. Duverger's Law

Although a single-member district should tend toward two serious candidates, potential candidates do not always recognize the point, particularly in the first instance. Here, Matsuzawa and Genba offer an interesting contrast. Duverger's Law did not work in Kanagawa 9th district. As discussed in Chapter 3, Matsuzawa, backed by the NFP in 1996, competed with representatives of the LDP, the DPJ, and the JCP (a minor party in many districts, but drawing over 15 percent of the vote in the Kanagawa 9th district). These parties divided up the vote sufficiently for Matsuzawa to win with 36 percent of the vote, far from the half needed according to Duverger's Law.

In Genba's case, as seen in Chapter 4, Duverger's Law did work in the Fukushima 3rd district—the district seemed so stable that some parties in fact were not interested in running candidates. As usual, the JCP did run a candidate, but the candidate was never in serious contention for the SMD seat since he attracted under 6 percent of the vote (there was also an independent who was even less successful). In this two-person-dominated race between Arai, the LDP candidate, and Genba representing the DPJ, it was very close, with Genba losing 46 to 44 percent (easily a good enough effort to win him a PR seat).

Why did both candidates pursue the Type A strategy so enthusiastically in the 1996 general election? In Matsuzawa's case, his behavior likely was predicated on the size of the competition. He might well have thought that with so many opposing candidates running in the 9th district he was still running a race very similar to a multi-

member district system situation where an organizational strategy could get him enough of the votes he needed. In Genba's case, the logical explanation is simply, as stated above, that his district is rural enough to overwhelm the logic of the new electoral system.

c. Change in district size and organizational rebuilding prerequisites

A one-time-only factor in all districts in 1996 was that they suddenly got much smaller. For incumbents, that meant that all their Type A organizational infrastructure outside the boundaries of their new district were of no use to them—except perhaps to trade to other candidates, a sensible tactic but one that requires time and energy to negotiate. If the remaining organizational infrastructure in the new district was to be significant at all, it would have to be expanded and strengthened to draw a substantially higher proportion of voters. Such organization-building takes quite a lot of time, energy, and money, particularly since the “low hanging fruit” of people who were easily accessible were already enrolled.

The importance of this point was amply documented in Chapters 3 and 4. Matsuzawa devoted much more attention to Type A activities than he had in 1993, and they were much more important to him. He arranged an organizational trade with a former rival, he worked to secure the Soka Gakkai vote made available to him with his NFP affiliation, and in particular he gained the support of an important local politician. He continued his trademark Type B activities, such as his tiring use of outdoor speeches, but relatively speaking he had switched to the Type A strategy. In the case of rural Fukushima, Genba did not have as much distance to make up because his 1993 campaign had already been quite Type A, but he too devoted himself to making an organizational

trade and put particular effort into expanding his *kouenkai*, including creating a parallel women's organization led by his wife.

Otake's book and the other literature acknowledging disappointment after the reform offer ample evidence that this effect was quite common nationwide, although to our knowledge its transitory nature has not been emphasized—most analysts took it as an indication that moving to SMDs would not have the expected impact on campaigning even over the long term.

d. "Hometown advantage"

The new smaller districts actually give greater weight to incumbents' "natural" base of support in the district. This final point is not transitory, and it has not drawn systematic attention. When the old big districts were broken up, politicians naturally wanted to run in the portion of their own district where they were strongest, typically the area where they grew up and/or currently live. Indeed, some of the knottiest problems for the LDP in 1996 were cases when two of its incumbents were from the same area. Since both fiercely contested the official nomination for the SMD, the party was forced to make many "Costa Rico" deals so they would trade the SMD and PR seats. Not a few of these deals backfire, which, as described in Chapter 4, is how Genba got his SMD seat back in 2000.

Most incumbent candidates in 1996 came to in districts in which their home towns account for a much higher proportion of the electorate than in their old, large districts. The "hometown boy" and "friends and neighbors" effects (Key, 1949; and Black and Black, 1973) are particularly salient in the new election district in light of the higher proportion of voters who attended the same schools as the candidate, have other

connections in the community, or who simply recognize the candidate's name. Most important is that any connection whatsoever makes the voter more accessible to being drawn into the candidate's *kouenkai*. Similarly, leaders of groups and local politicians in that area are more likely to have had contact with the candidate or his family.

The implication of this point on localism goes beyond the importance to individual candidates and applies to the nation as a whole. After all, as an extreme thought experiment, imagine an electoral system where districts averaged about 1000 voters each. In a two-person competition, candidates with the resources to construct a Type A organizational campaign that could bring in a substantial portion of the 501 voters needed for victory would be substantially advantaged. In the US and elsewhere, other things being equal, the smaller the district, the more susceptible election campaigns have been to the kind of organizational mobilization we have characterized as Type A strategy (Maisel and Buckley, 2004). What about 2000?

To account for the counterintuitive fact that the electoral reform actually brought more Type A campaigning in 1996, we proposed three contingent or situational explanations, and one general one. Evidence from the second post-reform election, the 2000 Lower House election, should give us an idea of how well these explanations hold up.

The results for Matsuzawa were clearly shown in Chapter 3. His efforts swung decisively back to Type B. Type A organizational efforts were somewhat more extensive than in 1993, but it was clear that in 2000 he mostly relied on the foundations he had built in 1996. Matsuzawa himself cited his Type B appeal to ordinary voters for much of his success. (Of course, an alternative explanation is complacency—he had won easily in

1996, he had now become the DPJ candidate (the NFP no longer existed) so he no longer had opposition from that party, and the LDP ran the same candidate who had been badly beaten last time, an indication it did not think Matsuzawa could be defeated.) The results for Genba were equally showcased in Chapter 4. Like Matsuzawa, Genba also moved somewhat toward the Type B strategy in 2000, notably taking advantage of the fact that his LDP opponent was not the SMD winner in the 1996 race (he was the PR incumbent, running for the SMD seat following a Costa Rico switch). The opponent was aged 65, to Genba's 36, and Genba attributed the hike in turnout to his direct appeals to younger voters and voters looking for a vibrant candidate. Still, Fukushima was still rural and Genba's campaign was still quite Type A.

Including these further considerations from 2000, then, we can summarize our observations about the central hypotheses as follows:

First, we can reject the view that a sufficient explanation for the distinctive characteristics of Japanese campaign behavior—in brief, the prevalence of Type A strategies—is the multi-member district. Our evidence shows clearly that abolishing multi-member districts in Lower House elections, moving to a single-member plus proportional representation system, did not bring a major immediate shift to Type B.

Second, having said that, evidence from 2000 (and indeed from subsequent elections not covered in this dissertation) indicates a longer-term trend toward Type B strategies, perhaps implying that the impact of electoral reform is delayed.

Third, none the less, the substantial weight of Type A strategies still demands more explanation. The likely possibilities are distinctive values and norms in the Japanese public, and Japan's highly restrictive electoral regulations that inadvertently

make Type B strategies look unproductive and perversely encourage the Type A behaviors they were originally designed to counter.

The Broader Context

This dissertation has been limited to district-level campaign strategies for Lower House elections in one decade. A lot has happened in Japanese politics outside this quite limited sphere that is relevant to our concerns.

First, in the party system, Japan moved toward something approximating a two-party system in the “normal” or “Western” sense, where two large, relatively moderate parties could plausibly get enough votes to run the government.

Second, the dominant Liberal-Democratic Party was taken over, for a time, by Koizumi Jun’ichiro, who was a genuine reformist in at least two significant ways. On the one hand, he vowed to do away with traditional LDP political practices, including everything we have associated with the Type A campaign strategy. On the other, he pursued an explicit neo-liberal policy agenda, thereby bringing to the fore the kind of issues seen as central to Type B campaigning.

The institutional changes of the early 1990s, including electoral reform, were one among several factors that led to both these developments, and conversely the developments themselves affected electoral strategies. Indeed the same sorts of experts who were forecasting a big move to Type B politics back in the 90s, and were so disappointed, were again proclaiming the advent of new politics (i.e. Type B) in the early 2000s.

In the event, political development was not so simple, and at time of writing the experts were again disappointed. The counterreformation that coincided with Koizumi's departure involved both political practice and public policy. Traditionalists in both senses have an edge in the LDP, and indeed are well represented in the opposition Democratic Party of Japan, to the point that pundits are looking toward a reorganization of the entire party system. Short of that, the general election to be held during 2009 is likely to depose the LDP, and certainly will lead to big changes in many aspects of Japanese politics.

One of the most fundamental aspects likely to be affected is democratic accountability. As noted in the introductory chapter, criticisms of the old electoral system and hopes for electoral reform very much centered on accountability, so that the opinions of voters about public policies and how they should be carried out would be better reflected in the legislature and beyond.

There is no question that the persistence of Type A campaign behavior as documented in this dissertation has inhibited the development of democratic accountability in Lower House elections. The likelihood of change may rest on how developments in national politics affect voters' attitudes, and eventually norms. Reform of election campaign regulations could also make a substantial difference.

All that is well beyond the scope of this dissertation. What our research contributes to this discussion is, first, that an important determinant of the effect of such broad shifts on accountability will be via alterations in campaign practices as described here, and second, that the gradual evolution of how candidates perceive their best

strategies for success are likely to make an independent contribution to the process of increased democratic accountability.

Campaign Behavior 1993-2000

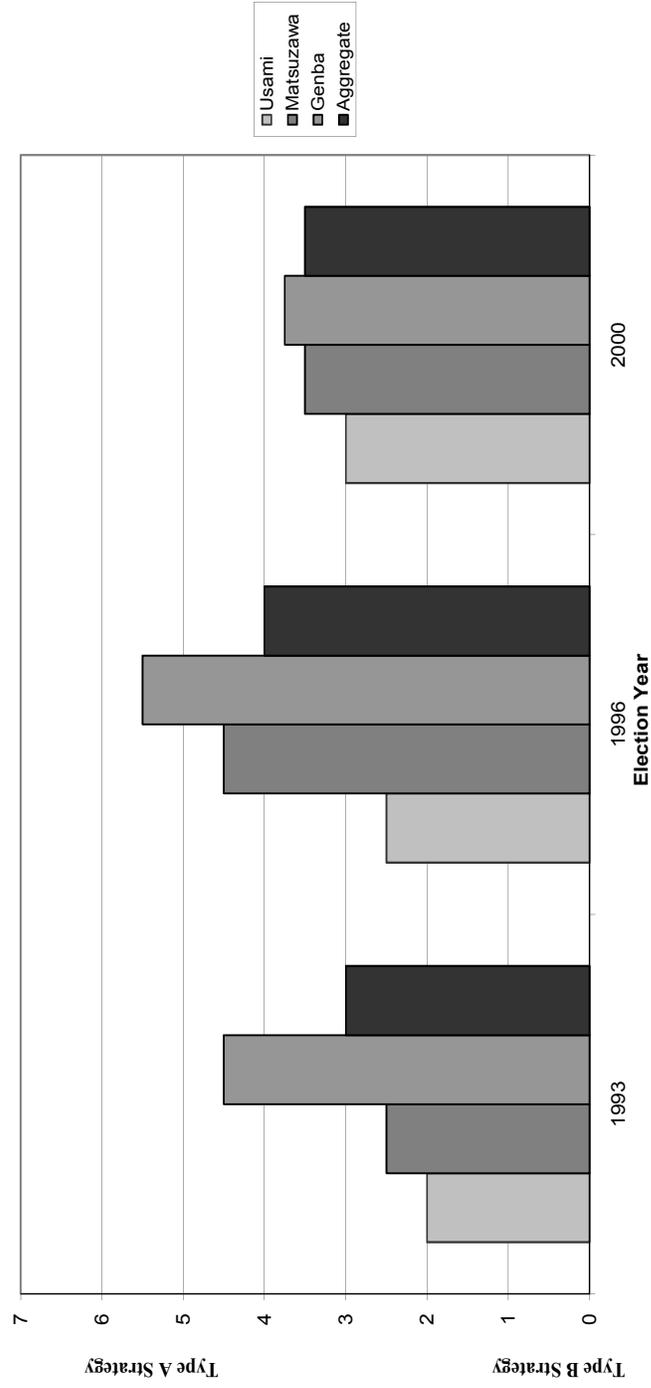


Figure 5.1 Campaign Behavior 1993-2000

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