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Pressure Groups in the Diet Elections of Postwar Japan

—The Role of Trade Unions and Business Groups—

Kazuo INDŌ

I. The particular pattern of relationship between pressure groups and political parties

Various pressure groups in Japan have been closely related to national party politics and elections, and even to many local elections, after the second world war. The role of pressure groups in these politics has been tremendously important. On one hand, for any parliamentary groups—typically parties—and individual politicians a variety of contributions from established pressure groups mean vital resources to their political life. On the other hand, for any pressure groups contributions to major election campaigns in terms of electoral fund, activity of collecting votes and sponsoring their own candidates may be regarded as a good opportunity ensuring relations with politicians or parties for the sake of preserving or gaining their particular interests.

Among different kind of pressure groups, those which have played a very important part at least more than two decades in postwar electoral politics at national level have been business groups in conservative parties and trade unions' organizations in progressive parties represented by the Japan Socialist Party (JSP). The former continued to be permanently dominant status by holding office except a period of Coalition Government consisting of the JSP, the Progressive Party and the Peoples' Co-operation Party from April 1947 to October 1948, while the JSP has been the biggest parliamentary power among oppositions but just like the status of a permanent opposition. The most typical business groups are four 'peak associations': the Federation of Economic Organizations (Keidanren), the Japan Committee for Economic Development (Keizai Dōyūkai), the Japan Federation of Employers' Association (Nikkeiren) and the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Nisshō). Keidanren is the most important of these four groups. It includes trade groups and eight hundred private enterprises. In trade unions' organizations there are four national centres. General Council of Japanese Trade Unions (Sōhyō), predominantly unions of employees of the public and government

sector, is the biggest and most radical of them. Japan Confederation of Labour (Dōmei), Federation of Independent Unions (Chūritsu Rōren) and New Congress of Industrial Unions (Shin-Sanbetsu) comprise almost private enterprise unions and have been more moderate than Sōhyō.

We can also find that professional groups such as the Japan Medical Association and the Japan Dentist Association, the Agricultural Co-operative Association (Nōkyō) and new religion groups except the Sōka Gakkai have been in close link to conservative parties, particularly to the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) since 1955. The Sōka Gakkai, a sect of Nichiren Buddhism, is the most successful of many new religions since the war. Its membership had increased surprisingly in Japan's rapidly changing economic and social conditions since 1950s. The estimated membership of households changed from 5,000 in 1950 to 750,000 in 1957, and then expanded to 6,250,000 in 1967 and 7,880,000 in 1977. The Clean Government Party (the Kōmeitō) is based upon the Sōka Gakkai. The Kōmeitō was founded as a party having close links with Sōka Gakkai in 1964 and established the second position among oppositions in the Diet (the House of Representatives, the Lower House and the House of Councilors, the Upper House) in 1970s.⁽¹⁾ The Japan Communist Party (JCP) has built a strong organization and contested the third position against the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) in 1970s. The DSP has a close link with Dōmei, while the JCP has become an established minority in the main public sector unions of Sōhyō.

The typical general election results of each decade since 1950s and each party's link with major pressure groups, which is tabulated in the next page, seem to be one of better ways to illustrate a fundamental political structure and trends above mentioned in contemporary Japanese politics.

As it mentioned before, different pressure groups of interest groups are one of indispensable resources to party electoral politics. In this point party politics in Japan seems not to be so different from Western liberal democracies. However, the particular character of Japan, compared with other countries of established democracy, is that political parties in general have high degree of dependence to pressure groups, and sometimes pressure groups were so identified with parties that they played even a part of party virtually. Relations between pressure groups and parties of such a pattern may be a very serious problem,

(1) For Sōka Gakkai and the Kōmeitō see Shigeyoshi Murakami, *Sōka Gakkai = Kōmeitō*, Aoki Shoten, 1967; J.A.A. Stockwin, *Japan: Divided Politics in a Growth Economy*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975., pp. 157-160.; Yukio Hori, High Developing Economy and Sōka Gakkai, *Economist* (Tōkyō), December 18, 1979.

when we consider them from the principle of parliamentary democracy, because interest groups are likely to constrain policies of any closely related parties and alienate never neglected voters to them outside interest groups. In fact these phenomena have occurred in Japan and become one of fundamental problems for her democracy.

TABLE Three General Elections Results⁽²⁾ (and party link with major pressure groups)

	1958	1967	1979	Party link with major pressure groups
LDP { Votes % of Votes Seats	22,976,846 57.8 287	22,447,838 48.8 277	24,084,127 44.6 248	Four business groups (Keidanren, Nisshō and other two), Nōkyō, Medical Association.
JSP { Votes % of Votes Seats	13,093,993 32.9 166	12,826,104 27.9 140	10,643,448 19.7 107	Sōhyō, Chūritsu-Rōren, Farmers' Union and minority of Nōkyō.
Kōmei- tō { Votes % of Votes Seats		2,472,371 5.4 25	5,282,682 9.8 57	Sōka Gakkai.
DSP { Votes % of Votes Seats		3,404,464 7.4 30	3,663,691 6.8 35	Dōmei formerly Zenrō, and some private enterprises.
JCP { Votes % of Votes Seats	1,012,036 2.6 1	2,190,564 4.7 5	5,625,526 10.4 39	Minority of Sōhyō.
Other { Votes % of Votes Seats	2,668,786 6.7 13	2,655,233 5.8 9	4,710,634* 8.7* 25*	
Total { Votes % of Votes Seats	39,751,661 100.0 467	45,996,574 100.0 486	54,010,108 100.0 511	

* These figures include the results of the New Liberal Club founded after a split from the LDP in 1976: the NLC's total votes 1,631,811, its percentage of all voters 3.0% and its seats 4. And in this Other group independent candidates of two successful Communists and two successful Centres (the Kōmeitō and the DSP) are included.

(2) For the results of 1958 and 1967 elections see Masao Soma ed., *Kokusei Senkyo to Seitō Seiji* (Diet Elections and Party Politics), Centre for National Political Public Relations, 1976, pp. 536-537. As to 1979 election see *Asahi Shinbun* (a serious national daily paper usually called *the Asahi*), October 9, 1979.

Then, will such a relationship between pressure groups and parties continue permanently without any change in this country? One could find that the former's political role has changed gradually not to be an acting political party but to be initially interest group's role. This pattern of pressure group's behaviour seems to be a similar pattern with the case of contemporary Western democracies. In this article I would like to make clear in the following part the history of commitments to the Diet elections particularly of trade unions' organizations and business interest groups, and examine how the pattern of commitments has persisted and changed? More than three decades since the war are divided into three periods and the following part of this article is to start from the first period: before the '55 political system (1945-55). The making and establishing period of the '55 system (1955-69) is to follow it, and the declining period of the '55 system (1969-1979) is to be the third.

II. Postwar parties and pressure groups before 1955

Making of pressure groups during the Occupation

Major pressure groups which have been important position in the political process of postwar Japan were shaped during the Allied Occupation (1945-1951), when the political, economic and social situations of Japan were so unstable. Main groups newly appeared were business groups, trade unions organizations and farmers' associations, which were to be permanent big organizations. But civic and promoting pressure groups, such as the Party for Talking Issues on Peace by progressive intellectuals, also appeared. Owing to the reform of the labour law toward a democratic industrial relations by the Allied Power and social conditions of the day, numerous-number of trade unions was organized in a short time and their growth was remarkable. The feature of the Trade union movements could be find in the point that they were organized as enterprise unions and combined as industrial national organizations as well as belonged to two big national centres of trade unions, which revived right and left currents of prewar labour movement. Unionists who had social democratic tradition organized the Federation of Labour (Sōdōmei), claiming 855,000 members of 22 % of all organized workers, in August 1946. And left wing trade unionists who had the root in prewar movement founded the Congress of Industrial Organization (Sanbetsu) comprised 1,630,000 members of 43 % of all organized workers. The

total number of trade unions was 12,000, and the membership was 3,680,000 in June 1946.

On the other hand, in business groups (zaikai), five 'peak associations' comprised the Nisshō, the Federation of Japanese Economy and others organized the Connecting Committee of Business Groups in October 1945 and wanted to establish their hegemony in postwar politics. This Committee dissolved in March 1946 to strengthen the influence of business groups, and the Keidanren was shaped in August 1946. The Federation of Economic Organizations in the Kansai district (Kansai Keidanren) was founded in October of this year. The Dōyūka was founded in April 1946, and two years later the Nikkeiren appeared. Thus Japanese business groups have had four peak associations including the Nisshō.

These pressure groups above mentioned had played a part of being in close links with some newly born parties and going on together with them, as if one body or acting party in the electoral politics during the Occupation and for some time in 1950s. It could be said that the pattern of participations of labour and business organizations to parties and elections in this period had made a prototype of commitments henceforth.

Let us see at first the relationship between trade unions and parties during the national elections (for the Diet) of 1946 and 1947. The JSP was founded (October 1945) and the JCP was reconstructed before Sōdōmei and Sanbetsu were organized. By this fact the JSP could establish a leadership to Sōdōmei and the JCP could do so to Sanbetsu. On one hand, the Japan Farmers Union (Nichinō) was founded on February 1946. There was a land (farm) reform by the Allied in this background. The Nichinō was to be one of important resources for many socialist (especially the JSP) politicians because of its loyalty and voting to them. At the first postwar general election for the House of Representatives in April 1946, the JSP could gain 92 of all 464 seats with nearly 20% votes and the JCP gained 5 seats. On the other hand, in this election of which business groups had much concern because of their interest to economic reconstruction, directors of any companies and barristers were 35% of the Liberal Party's seats (140) and 42% of the Progressive Party's ones (94).⁽¹⁾

The next year despite of the serious frustration of a scheduled General Strike on 1st February, trade unions had grown larger in scale than in previous year. The total members of Sanbetsu expanded to 1,170,000 and Sōdōmei to

(1) Seizaburo Sinobu, *Sengo Nihon Seijishi* (Political History of Postwar Japan) I, Keisō Shobō, 1965, p. 298.

1,110,000 and the Federation of National Railwaymen's Union was 510,000. But the leaders of Sanbetsu who were responsible to the failure of the General Strike suffered greatly from its fact. At the Diet elections for two Houses in April 1947 it was noted that so many number of candidates was in close links with trade unions. In these elections Sōdōmei wanted a coalition government led by the JSP and recommended and supported only socialist candidates, so that Sōdōmei and the JSP were just like the same body. On the other hand, Sanbetsu wanted to make a democratic popular front government and recommended and supported the candidates of the JCP, some socialists and independents. As the result of the 23rd general election the JSP gained remarkably, while the JCP of superior position in trade unions was at the ebb. Some 20 union leaders out of 39 JSP candidates from any unions entered the House of Representatives by this election. The JSP became the first party with 143 seats and 30.7% of votes. At the first election of the House of Councilors the Socialists sprang into a strong position. It was noticeable that the organisational power of trade unions had a great effect already at this time. Seven out of nine Socialist (the JSP) candidates for the national constituency and five out of ten Socialist candidates for prefectural constituencies, of whose sponsorship were provided by any trade unions, won the election. In both Houses the percentage of the election of socialist candidates who had any career of trade union leader of national organization was high. Any Communist candidates from trade unions could not be elected. On the other hand, Conservative parties were in a state of inability to mobilize the organizations of business and civil services. Even a party organization itself was far from being established. By this general election the Centre Coalition Government was brought into being, but the Katayama Cabinet and the Shidehara Cabinet fell in very short time from the failure of economic policy and the charge of corruption.

At this time, because business associations represented by the Keidanren wished to realize a Conservative and stable government, they bolstered especially the Democratic Liberal Party immediately before the 24th general election of 1949. In this election the DLP got a big victory and the Yoshida Cabinet with a stable parliamentary power came into existence, while the JSP suffered severe set back and became the party of only 48 seats with the votes of 10.3% of all votes, the JCP increased the seats from 4 to 35 with 7.5% of all votes. Of course, this result was a heavy shock to the JSP and the Socialist trade unionists. At the national conference of the Japan Teachers' Union (Nikkyōso) severe con-

troversty occurred over the election result. In Sanbetsu the League for democratization (Mindō) against the communist leadership had been formed after February 1948 and increased its influence on main unions. At the end of 1949 Shin-Sanbetsu was organized. Left wing Sanbetsu unions had declined because of the red purge through the order of the Allied authority (GHQ). As the GHQ itself wanted to realize a anti-communist labour organization, it intervened to make Sōhyō as a national centre of moderate trade unions. On 11th March 1950, the Preparing Conference of Sōhyō was held. The first Conference was taken place just four months later with three million members of joined unions. Sanbetsu sustained only 200,000 unionists at this time. Sōhyō was to take a salient part of labour politics.

At the 2nd election of the House of Councilors in June 1950, Sōhyō in the making struggled for the JSP and contributed for it to make a remarkable advance. All candidates from within who were recommended by Sōhyō, had the nomination of the JSP, and their number was 14 for the national constituency and 17 for prefectural constituencies. After all, the elected was 11 out of 15 Socialists elected for the former and 7 out of 21 for the latter. Nikkyōso occupied each four seats and the National Railwaymen's Union (Kokurō) two seats for the national constituency. It was clearly shown that the Socialist candidates with a big union had much advantage of the Councilors election. The JCP was in the utmost slump without potential support by unions.

'Four peace principles' and the split of labour fronts

Soon after the 2nd Upper House election, as the Korean War broke out, the JCP had been forced to be a illegal existence by the severer repression of the GHQ. Politics in Japan had been deployed over a issue of the conclusion of the Peace Treaty of September 1951. At the first Conference Sōhyō had the policy of a 'Total Peace' and permanent neutrality, but adopted a line against North Korean action as an aggressor. However, at the 2nd Conference of March 1951 Sōhyō was to make the program of 'four peace principles': a 'Total Peace', permanent neutrality, no foreign troops to be stationed in Japan, and no rearmament. It meant 'the transformation from a domestic fowl to a duck'. But Sōdōmei, of the right wing, being against 'four principles' split from Sōhyō with 310,000 members. This split did naturally affect to the Socialists. The JSP adopted 'four principles' at the 7th Conference of July 1951, but its right wing factions had been against this decision and for a 'Partial Peace'. Thus at the

Special Conference of October 1951 the JSP split into left and right; the Left Socialist Party and the Right Socialist Party came into being. Two years later four right wing unions, including the Semen's Union and the Textile Union, seceded from Sōhyō, and then resulted in the formation of the moderate Trades Union Congress (Zenrō, later Dōmei) with members of 600,000 in April 1954. This division occurred under the severe political circumstances of 1950s. While the LSP and the leadership of Sōhyō had the stance of radical and political-minded unionism, the RSP and right wing trade unionists who were generally private enterprise union leaders had another unionism.⁽²⁾

At the 25th general election of October 1952 most unions of Sōhyō recommended plural parties—both Left and Right Socialists and the minor Labour-Farmer Party (Rōnōtō)—. But unions of Sōdōmei supported the RSP mainly, and Sanbetsu supported the JCP. Those who were recommended by any unions were so many of 260 in total, from the parties above mentioned to some bourgeois parties. Among them 54 the LSP, 50 the RSP and 4 the Rōnōtō were elected. All successful of the LSP and the Rōnōtō were supported by some unions. The RSP were 50 out of 57. In this connection the elected candidates from trade unions were 18*.

The leadership of the Prime Minister Yoshida was declining. Challenged by Ichiro Hatoyama, the Liberal Party divided virtually into two factions at the 26th general election of April 1953. While the divided Liberals and the Reform Party, formerly called the Democrats, fell back, both Left and Right Socialists made a considerable advance. At the 3rd Upper House election held only five days later, the LSP progressed also. Trade unions in general participated in these elections just the same way as previous year. But it is noticeable that Railwaymen's Kokurō created the Kokurō Political League, sponsored 12 candidates from within the movement—five for Lower House, seven for Upper House—, and donated some money to them as well as both Socialists and the Rōnōtō. Also Nikkyōso sponsored 30 candidates from within the organization; 17 including 15 Left Socialists for Lower House, 13 including 12 Left Socialists for Upper House. The Main slogan of Nikkyōso was 'Never send our pupils into a battlefield'.*

(2) See J.A.A. Stockwin, op. cit., p. 153.

* For most descriptions of trade unions' commitments to parties and the Diet Elections here and hereafter in this article depend upon mainly Rōdōshō, *Shiryō Rōdōundōshi* (The Department of Labour, The History of Labour Movement by Materials), which is published annually, and secondly *Sōhyō Nijūnenishi* (Twenty Years History of Sōhyō), edited by Sōhyō, Rōdōjunpōsha, 1967.

Trade union candidates who won in this general election increased from 29 of previous election to 45. As to Nikkyōso 12 out of 17 candidates were elected; Kokurō two out of five. When the results of the 3rd Upper House election are reviewed, we can find that every successful candidate for the national constituency was held by those from big unions except only one candidate. But for prefectural constituencies the percentage of the returned was not well. After these elections Sōhyō adopted the line of promoting the unity and integration of these socialist parties at the 5th Conference of July 1954. At this time movements toward uniting into a party had been seen among Socialists as well as among Conservative Parties.

Business interests and conservative parties

Business groups exerted decisive pressure on the Liberal Party and the Democratic Party to merge, because they feared socialist advances at the polls as well as wanted a political stabilization for the sake of economic reconstruction concerning with the postboom of special procurements by Korean War. The Japan Democratic Party came into existence by the combination of Hatoyama faction of the Liberal Party with the Reform Party in November 1954, when it was immediately before the change of government from Yoshida to Hatoyama. Already the Dōyūkai published the demand of expecting to end factional strifes within conservative parties in September 1952.⁽³⁾ In October 1952 immediately after the general election four 'peak business associations', being concerned with governmental instability derived from the intra-party conflict of the Liberal Party, held the joint meeting of 36 businessmen and demanded strongly to stabilize political situation of the party of government. Further the business interests might exert their pressure on parties and governments in terms of the context of personal and financial connections through the donation to politicians and parties with close tie with them. In this connection 100 out of 240 Dietmen of the Liberal Party elected by the 25th general election of 1952 were either presidents or directors of any companies.⁽⁴⁾ When we review donations to parties as a working expense or a election fund, reported in public from May 1951 to April 1952, it is found that a great deal of contributions to the Liberal

(3) Keizai Dōyūkai, *Keizai Dōyūkai Gojūnenishi* (Fifty Years History of the Committee for Economic Development), Tōkyō, 1962, pp. 59-60.

(4) Yoshtake Oka ed., *Gendai Nihon no Seijikatei* (Political Process in Contemporary Japan), Iwanami Shoten, 1958, pp. 237-238.

Party was made by big private enterprises and trades. For example, Yahata Seitetsu (Iron Manufacture) and Kokusaku Palpu (Paper Maker) contributed to the Reform Party and even to the Socialists as well as the Liberals, and the Japan Medical Association did to the Reform Party.⁽⁵⁾

Political donations in the 26th general election (1953) amounted to so much money. The Liberal Party was donated nearly 130 million yen by 38 big enterprises and industries. Top level donators were the main industries of the day such as shipbuilding, coal and electric trade. The LSP and the RSP were also contributed far less money than to the Liberal Party by some trades and business. The Medical Association donated three million yen to the Liberal and each half million yen to both Socialist Parties. Donations to them from trade unions were relatively very small money; far less money than even from business interests.⁽⁶⁾ This fact shows that trade unions could not afford to contribute a good deal of money to them because they had very heavy burden to sponsor their own candidates.

Before the 26th general election of 1953, four 'peak associations' (zaikai) expressed their demand to the Government Party to establish a stable Government for economic independence, deploring the Liberal split. Moreover, the result of the election made the zaikai concern so strongly about the instability of the Party that four 'peak associations' declared the almost similar statement again on 21st April 1953. The previous day of the fifth Yoshida Cabinet coming into being, on 20th May, the coalition between the Liberal Party and Reform Party was established in virtue of Takeo Katō of the Mitsubishi group. After that pressures from the zaikai to merge conservative parties into a party had strengthened; the Dōyūkai adopted the resolution to demand it at the National Conference of it on 20th October 1954.⁽⁷⁾ Soon on 7th November, the five top leaders' meeting of the zaikai made an arrangement to realize one merged Conservative Party through outgoing Premier Yoshida. Thus the Japan Democratic Party was created by the amalgamation of Hatoyama's Liberal faction and the Reform Party, and Hatoyama Cabinet was to hold the 27th general election in February 1955.

(5) Ibid., pp. 238-239.

(6) Ibid., pp. 241-243.

(7) Keizai Dōyūkai, op. cit., pp. 62-63, 68.

III. Pressure groups and '55 system

Formation of two-party system

'55 system can be defined as a political system established in the autumn of 1955, when five parties were reorganized into two parties of conservative and progressive camps, and henceforth many political problems have been managed by this system. Its formation could be found closely related with the 27th general election. For opposing two political sides, especially in the level of interest groups—either business or trade unions—desired strongly the unity and amalgamation of parties of their own side.

Just before the election, business circles established the Economic Reconstruction Council (Keizai Saiken Kondankai) as a pool agency for political contribution by the idea of Keidanren, because of their desire to realize a strong and stable government by joining together all conservative powers. Collected 115 million yen for the election, they donated 45 million yen respectively to the Liberal Party and the Democratic Party, 3.3 million yen to the RSP and also 1.7 million yen to the LSP. Each party's fund for the election increased far more than that of previous one. Big business and major industries donated to parties, mainly both conservative parties, directly as well as through the Kondankai. These business interests donated also far less money to both Socialists than to Conservatives. But it should be noticed that donations from trade unions to both Socialists increased remarkably in this election. The LSP accepted donations from almost all unions of Sōhyō, and the RSP got them from all main unions of Zenrō. Contributions from trade unions became the main election fund for both parties. Considering from the point of view of an election fund Left Socialists advanced clearly towards a class party. It should also be noticed that many big unions made their donations to both Socialists and the Rōnōtō under the circumstance of split labour fronts. This fact tells us that there had been a strong demand for the unity of these parties.

In this election, while Sōhyō determined its new line of supporting these socialist parties, it made a proposal for the unity of them and the necessity of an electoral pact. On the other hand, Zenrō took a line for the unity of both Socialists excluding Rōnōtō which had a united front policy including Communists. At any rate, by the organizational power of unions 160 candidates in all three parties were elected. The LSP's share was 89 seats, the RSP's was 67, and the Rōnōtō's was 4. The Democratic Party returned 185 candidates and the Liberal

Party did 112. Total seats were 467 from this election. After this election business associations exerted their pressure upon both conservative parties to merge as soon as possible. Thus the Liberal Democratic Party came into being on 15th November 1955. Shortly before the date Left and Right Socialists managed to unite, influenced by a resolution of Sōhyō to unite them in the Annual Conference of July 1955.

From 1950s to 1960s main political issues in the Diet elections had been problems of the Constitution, democratic rights, peace and security. The heyday of the JSP and Sōhyō bloc was the years from the 4th election for the House of Councilors of 1956 to the 28th general election of 1958. In the former election, the Socialist bloc advanced from 68 to 80 seats of necessary condition for preventing a motion of any Constitutional revision from presenting to the Diet. Also the Socialist Councilors come from trade unions increased from 35 to 48 seats. In those days Sōhyō's influence, exhibited in the Diet and local elections and annual 'spring struggles' for wage started from 1955, had been so powerful that even a phrase of 'Sōhyō now being the Army in old days' had prevailed. By June 1958 Sōhyō had more than 3.5 million members, holding 50.8% of all organized workers, while Zenrō had 0.8 million and other independent national unions one million members. At the 28th general election Socialists marked the peak of its history as it was shown in the Table (p. 3). In this election under the Kishi Cabinet 49 out of 75 candidates from Sōhyō, Zenrō and Chūritsu Rrōren were elected. In the meantime the LDP could hold a strong majority.

Higher growth economy and the consolidation of pressure group and party blocs

The main issue of the 5th Upper House election of June 1959 was the revision of the Security Treaty between U.S.A. and Japan. In this election the LDP won the stable majority of the House, while the JSP remained to maintain narrowly its seats holding one-third. It was noticed that the Sōka Gakkai and the Political Union of Small Enterprises (temporary active group) deployed vigorous campaigns. The Sōka Gakkai succeeded to have three Councilors at the previous 4th election. Entering into politics with a target of constructing 'National Temple' for the sect, it could make all its six candidates return in this election. The Communists also had changed their hard revolutionary line into softer one since 1955, and began to emphasize the significance of participating in elections. In this election a purged Communist leader from Kokurō was

elected. Because successful candidates from Sōhyō and Zenrō were 14 out of 17 Socialists elected for the national constituency, and 15 out of 21 elected for prefectural constituencies, the weight of trade union candidates were increased more than before.

Business circles continued to use ERC, the Kondankai as the main pipe of political donation even after 1955. The sum total amounted to 3,700 million yen by 1960, of which 92% had contributed to the LDP and the remains had done to other parties excluding the JCP. Particularly the donation to the LDP of this agency had risen markedly since the general election of 1958. In 1960 it reached 1,400 million yen.⁽¹⁾ Besides donations to factions and individual politicians by companies or trades had risen also. Business groups had exerted its great influence in the shifting process of the office from Hatoyama to Kishi. After the 28th general election, the Dōyūkai published its outlook of expecting 'a strong Government' and the stabilization of economy. Financial circles had been so dominant in politics that it could not only finance the funds of the LDP, but also control its leadership.

For the 29th general election of 1960 the LDP might raise a fund amounting to 3,500 million yen from business circles: 800 million yen from the Keizai Saiken Kondankai, 2~300 million yen directly from companies and trades, 1,600 million yen to its factions, 300 million yen to individual candidates.⁽²⁾ So we could find one of the typical examples of plutocratic election and factional politics of postwar Japan in this election. Then, in January 1961, the Dōyūkai declared its new line of political renovation that was to dissolve the Kondankai, to reform the electoral system toward single member constituencies, and to restrict largely donations of corporation including trade union. By this the Kondankai was dissolved in June, and the Kokumim Kyōkai (People's Association) was set up as the agency of the LDP's fund based upon a membership fee. However, this change could never result in any fundamental change. The Party and its factions have sought to get money from business circles. The 30th general election of November 1963 was the unprecedented factional election. The LDP, donated 1,000 million yen by business circles, could give every nominated candidate 3 million yen equally, but factions also might obtain more than 1,000 million yen, spending the money to strengthen their own factions.

(1) J. Masumi, Outline of policy-decision-making process since 1955, *Nenpō Seijigaku* 1977 (The Annals of the Japanese Political Science Association 1967), Iwanami Shoten.

(2) Idid.

The first Diet election that both blocs of the JSP-Sōhyō and the DSP-Zenrō fought each other was the 29th general election. Sōhyō defined this election as the settlement of the struggle against the Security Treaty of USA-Japan, recommended all 186 candidates of the JSP, and decided to contribute hundred yen per a member. Meanwhile Zenrō supported the gradual abandonment of the Security Treaty, recommended all the 105 candidates of the DSP, and decided the donation of 100 million yen by hundred yen contribution per a member. The result of the election was the rise of the LDP and the JSP-Sōhyō bloc by contrast with the down of the DSP-Zenrō bloc. The elected candidates from trade unions were increased more than ever before. In the 6th Upper House election in July 1961 the candidates from trade unions were increased furthermore; they occupied 46 members out of 66 candidates of the JSP, the DSP and the JCP. But the organized votes of trade unions could never increased as much as expected. On the other hand, all the 15 candidates of the Sōka Gakkai were elected. Thus it was to found the Kōseiren (Clean Government Union) in 1962. At the 30th general election Sōhyō recommended whole of 198 JSP's candidates. Among them the candidates from trade unions reached the highest point of 84, of whom 55 candidates won the election. In the meanwhile, Zenrō had established the Dōmei Congress of 1.4 million members of 25 unions. Dōmei recommended all the DSP's candidates contained 11 candidates from within, of whom only two were elected. As a whole, successful the elected of the candidates from trade unions increased a little. After this election the Dōmei Congress was reorganized as Dōmei in November 1964. Dōmei had nearly one and half million members of 22 unions, holding the advantage of private enterprise unions rather than Sōhyō.

The 7th election of the House of Councilors in July 1965 resulted in the stagnation of the JSP, the slump of the DSP, and the advance of the JCP and the Kōmeitō. The succeeding 31st general election of January 1967 was regarded as the starting point of a political confrontation because of the revision of the Security Treaty in 1970. The JSP-Sōhyō bloc had its target to hold one-third seats of the House of the Representatives. The JSP depended upon Sōhyō for funds and campaigns. In the meantime, the DSP-Dōmei bloc deployed the campaigns with the target of holding 40 seats. Sōhyō's donation to the JSP amounted to 100 million yen, and 98 candidates from the organization marked the peak of its history. Dōmei's own candidates of the DSP were only 7. The result of this election were the setback of the LDP and the JSP, and the advancement of the

DSP and the Komeitō (see the Table). The elected among the 109 candidates from any unions in the two Socialist Parties amounted to 67, the peak till 1960s.

IV. Pressure groups in the declining process of the '55 system

The political system from 1955 has declined by degrees since the late 1960s, when change to a multi-party system began. In this period of higher growth economy, some change of social conditions has been so remarkable and people's image of values became more various. So far as relations between business groups and parties or elections are concerned, higher growth economy has made a pipe between business circles and the LDP bigger, so that the party dependence upon the zaikai has deepened. At the end of 1966, 70 businessmen had a meeting and agreed on the proposal to collect 2,000 million yen, more 500 million yen than that of previous time, for the LDP fund of coming general election.⁽¹⁾ Then, the LDP promoted to keep a close connection with different kind of pressure groups: big enterprises, trades groups, the Medical and Dentist Associations, and etc. Especially for any Conservative candidates in the national constituency, of the House of Councilors it may be true that it is nearly impossible for them to be elected without any sponsorship of these groups. Even for candidates of prefectural constituencies or the House of Representatives, many of them has been likely to be elected by any sponsorship of pressure groups. This is also true for other parties.

In agriculture groups, initially, the Nōkyō was conservative and the Nichinō was progressive, but independent activities of agricultural pressure groups have strengthened in terms of a rice-price issue since the period of higher growth economy. Through the conflict of a rice-price decision-making, even a dealignment in some local Nōkyō organizations with the LDP has occurred, and political agencies based upon the Nōkyō in each prefecture and the Political League of Farmers (Nōseiren) had been established by 1960. At the 6th House of Councilors election in 1962 eight candidates of this group for prefectural constituencies were elected.⁽²⁾

In the area of trade unions belonging to Sōhyō, it could be found that the pattern of their movements have changed in some degrees of emphasis from the

(1) Masayuki Miyazaka, *Seifu, Jiminto, Zaikai*, (Governments, the LDP, and Business Circles), Sanichi Shobō, 1970, p. 130.

(2) Jōji Watanuki, *Nihon no Seiji Shakai* (Political Society of Japan), Tōkyō Daigaku Shutsu-pankai, 1967.

political struggle fully identified with the socialist parties to the movement of pursuing their own interests. It can be seen in the struggle for the public employees' right to go on strike through the ratification of the ILO Treaty, besides pay increase by 'spring struggles'.

Stagnation of the JSP-Sōhyō and the DSP-Dōmei blocs

The results of the 8th House of Councilors election in 1968 and the 32nd general election in next year showed the setback of the JSP and the stagnation of the LDP, especially demonstrating the decreasing power of trade unions in collecting votes for the JSP candidates. In the 8th Councilors election, the ratio of candidates from within unions among the two socialist parties was so high particularly in the national constituency, that in the JSP they occupied 11 out of 15 and all 4 in the DSP. Of those 10 in the former and 4 in the latter were elected. For prefectural constituencies, the elected Councilors of the JSP decreased to 8 nearly half compared with 6th election. On the other hand, other three parties of the Opposition gained 3 to 4 seats in this election.

In the 32nd general election of December 1969, the JSP-Sōhyō bloc sank further. Sōhyō fought to win its 88 candidates from within, but the elected was only 38 compared with 59 in previous time. Sōhyō regarded the election as the struggle of decisive consequence to the struggle on the Security Treaty in 1970, supporting the JSP with an understanding that 'the crisis of the JSP is the crisis of Sōhyō' and making a decision to collect the electoral fund of 120 million yen for the JSP. Meanwhile, Dōmei also decided to make the fund of more than 100 million yen to support the DSP. It is noteworthy that the Iron and Steel Unions' Federation (Tetsukō Rōren) of Sōhyō supported both socialist parties, and that 28 comparatively small unions of medical, independent broadcasting, and governmental employees, which had advocated the freedom of supporting any parties, virtually campaigned for the JCP. The election resulted in the heavy setback of the JSP from 140 to 90 seats compared with other parties' advance, in particular the JCP and the Kōmeitō. This result may suggest the JSP-Sōhyō bloc's inability to adopt changing social and cultural conditions in higher developing economy. In this connection even in the JSP's stronghold big unions such as the Post Office Union (Zentei), the Telegram-Telephone Union (Zendentsū) and etc, opinion surveys have found that the ratio of unionists who adhered to the JSP fell down year by year, and those who didn't to any party increased greatly. According to a survey of Zendentsū, those who adhered to the JSP were 72.2% in 1960, 51.3% in 1964

and 35.7% in 1969, while those who didn't to any party were 14.7%, 20.4% and 39.1% in the same year.⁽³⁾

The 9th Councilors election of 1971 went on as an extension of previous one. But the 33rd general election of December 1972 was much noteworthy because of the remarkable advance of the JCP and the JSP and the setback of the LDP, the Kōmeitō and the DSP. In this election the JSP could hold 118 seats with 21.9% of all voters; in particular the Communists made an eminent advance from 14 to 38 seats with 10.5% of all voters. 59 of 79 JSP candidates from within Sōhyō and Chūtitsu Rōren won the election compared with 3 of 9 DSP candidates from within Dōmei. Sōhyō recommended all the JSP candidates, donated 200 million yen to the party besides lending it 100 million yen, on the ground that to realize demands on pensions, housing, medical system, and prevent reactionary trends might depend upon the influence of progressive powers represented by the JSP. On the other hand, Dōmei made a campaign for the DSP, providing 120 million yen for that. Among the elected Communists 6 were formerly leaders of some unions; 3 were officials of the Democratic Commerce and Industry Association (Minshō) organizing 200,000 members.

Then how about the relation between business circles and the LDP? It seems that business groups provided more than 10,000 million yen for the LDP and its factions in the 1969 general election, presumably because they intended to hold their political hegemony in 1970s.⁽⁴⁾ In the 1972 general election it seems that they provided about 15,000 million yen for the party in total through three channels: the Kokumin Kyōkai, the factions and individual politicians.⁽⁵⁾ This election, under the Kakuei Tanaka Cabinet, precisely symbolized itself the character of plutocratic election. Tanaka's internal politics had been to make an economic boom by developing and industrializing throughout the Japan Islands. But his policy had resulted in severe inflation and worse environment by rapidly increased public nuisance. So the LDP suffered the setback of 288 to 271 in seats with nearly one percent loss compared with 1969.

(3) Akihiro Ishikawa, *Shakaihendō to Rōdōshaishiki* (Social Changes and Workers' Images), Nihon Rōdō Kyōkai, 1975, p. 112.

(4) Masao Soma ed., *Nihon no Sōsenkyo* (The General Election of Japan), Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1970, p. 115.

(5) M. Soma, ed., *Kokumin no Sentaku, 1972-nen no Sōsenkyo* (The People's Choice, the 1972 General Election), Sanichi Shobō, 1974, p. 54.

Sway in pressure group and party blocs

A plutocratic election escalated further in the 10th House of Councilors election of July 1974. This election has the features which the zaikai (business circles) took place not only different kinds of contribution to the fund of the LDP, but also vigorously sponsored any candidates of the party by means of enterprise-promoted election campaigns with a slogan: 'Defend the liberal society'. Particularly in the national constituency this anomalous way of election campaigns was salient. For example, Mr. Ken Saka, formerly a civil servant, was sponsored by the Mitsubishi group of 27 companies as the corporate candidate; the Koenkai, as a committee for election campaign, was set up by the senior staffs of them. It was quite anomalous that so many enterprises should behave as agencies for the LDP; it might presumably infringe the civil liberty of some members of them. Therefore, Mr. M. Horigome, the chairman of the Central Election Management Committee, dared to warn of it.⁽⁶⁾ Such actions of the zaikai may well be said to be grounded on their fear of the possible reversal of majority in the Diet toward the opposition. The donation at least even in public to the LDP from business interests for this election fund amounted to 15,000 million yen, but it may be estimated to reach 40,000 million yen, if it included the money not in public.⁽⁷⁾

As the consequence of the election, voter's opinion against the plutocratic politics and the enterprise-promoted election campaign won, and some candidates of independent public groups were elected with unexpected votes in the national constituency. There the LDP suffered a setback and the JSP remained stagnant position. So far as the constituency is concerned, the organizations of Sōhyō and Dōmei demonstrated their advantage: all of 8 candidates from within Sōhyō and 4 from Dōmei for it won the election. The returned candidates of the JSP were 10 out of 12; those of the DSP were 4 of 5. Successful candidates (4 of 8) of the JCP for the constituency were also ex-leaders of trade unions. For prefectural constituencies candidates from within trade unions in the JSP occupied 30 out of 45, of whom the successful were 11 of 18. This meant that the dependence of the JSP upon unions had been more than before. As to the JCP candidates 16 out of 45 for prefectural constituencies were occupied by ex-union leaders; one of five successful candidates were ex-union leader.

The trade unions which could have contested on the House of Councilors

(6) For enterprise-promoted election see M. Soma, ed., *Kokusei Senkyo to Seitō Seiji* pp. 207-211.

(7) *Yomiuri Shinbun* (The Yomiuri) 28 July 1976.

elections with their own candidates from within have been likely to be restricted to big unions of more than 200,000 members in general: for example, Nikkyōso, Kokurō, Zentei, Zendentsū, Jichirō (local government employers union), Denki Rōren (electric workers union), Zensen Dōmei, and Jidōsha Rōren (car workers union). It can be explained that the politicisation of Zendentsū, Jichirō, Denki Rōren and Jidōsha Rōren since 1960s has been based upon the eminent increase of the membership of each unions, affected by the changing industrial structure in higher growth economy.

After the election the political leadership swayed and, succeeding the resignation of the Prime Minister Tanaka, the Miki Cabinet came into being. Then the 34th general election of December 1976 was to be enforced in the situation of the Lockheed scandal and the intra-party troubles of the nearly divided LDP, even after the establishment of the New Liberal Club by small seceded group from the party in 1976. As the party was in a state of a division, the public opinions were against a plutocratic election, and growth economy was stopped by the depression of the oil crisis, so business circles could not sponsor the party as well as the previous Diet elections. The zaikai toned down its sponsorship to the party under the leadership of Takeo Miki. According to the Report of the Political Fund of 1975 reported to the Ministry of Home Affairs the donation through the Kokumin Kyōkai decreased from 15,700 million yen in 1974 to 9,877 million yen in 1976. However, the donation to factions has been in a state of an upward tendency: even the major five factions of the LDP gathered over 5,000 million yen.⁽⁸⁾ Prior to the 1976 general election, the LDP made an application for the donation of 10,000 million yen to business associations. But they were not likely to respond it as ready as before, because they would never be fond of the leadership of Miki, whose ideas of politics have been more liberal than any other major politicians in the party. So the Leader Miki could not but postpone to contribute the nomination fee of 5 million yen to each candidate about a month. It is estimated that the Central Office of the party could obtained narrowly 4,000 million yen as the election fund.⁽⁹⁾ Anyway, preparedness for the election in the LDP fell behind largely by the jerky relation between the Miki's leadership and the zaikai wanting the renewal of the party regime. It is not to say that this process had closely related with the severe factional strife in the party. Therefore the donation was made directly to factions and individual

(8) *Mainichi Shinbun* (The Mainichi), 11 August 1976.

(9) *Asahi Shinbun* (The Asahi), 27 April 1977.

politicians rather than to the official leadership through the Kokumin Kyōkai. This is the reason why the party should have suffered a defeat in the election.

Also it must be a noticeable thing that the zaikai's support to the LDP has begun to decline gradually in its donation or election campaigns by the increasing cases of sponsoring the candidates of the DSP or the NLC. Anomalous enterprise-promoted election campaigns were taken place in industries such as iron and steel, automobile, and shipbuilding.

On the other hand, it seems that Sōhyō and Dōmei pitched a ball with full energy in this election. Sōhyō had come to have a plan to reverse the situation of ins and outs in the Diet, and make a majority in it step by the step by next 1977 election of House of Councilors in order to realize the needs of wage, right to go on strike, pensions, protecting employment, and tax reduction. That is the compensation of the failure of losing two successive 'spring strifes' and the strike for the right in 1976. For the purpose Sōhyō spent about 300 million yen by fund raising from the members to sponsor the JSP. Dōmei also spent 150 million yen by fund-raising to sponsor the DSP recommending 42 DSP candidates including 12 from within it. Sōhyō and Chūritsu Rōren recommended 162 JSP candidates including 88 from within them. The election ended with results of advancing in seats which both the JSP and the DSP held in the House of Representatives (the JSP from 118 to 123, the DSP from 19 to 29), and recording the highest elected number of 80 who were from within the organizations: 68 of Sōhyō, 2 of Chūritsu Rōren, 10 of Domei. The JCP suffered severe defeat from 38 to 17. However, the Socialist bloc and the Democratic Socialist bloc have come to face with fluid elements within themselves. The membership of each national centre in 1976 was 4.58 million of Sohyo, 2.27 million of Domei, 1.37 million Chūritsu Rōren, and 70 thousand of Shin Sanbetsu.⁽¹⁰⁾ These three national centres except Dōmei have formed a coalition to support the JSP for longtime. But the Socialist bloc has been in a position of defending itself against pressures from the left and the right since 1970s.

The right wing trade unionism particularly in private enterprises have consistently intended to reorganize the national centre claiming the unity of the labour fronts. In 1964 the IMF-JC including the unions of iron-steel and automobile industries was founded as a organization beyond national centres. Such a trend has been strengthened in 1970s. The establishment of the Congress

(10) Rōdōshō, *Rōdō Kumiai Kihonchōsa* (The Ministry of Labour, Fundamental Survey on Trade Unions), 1975.

for Promoting Trade Union Policies in 1976 can explain it. The organization is consisted of 3.15 million members of 17 private sector unions including the major unions of Dōmei, Sōhyō, and Chūritsu Rōren. Pressure from the left has been shown in the campaign for the liberalization of adherence to party, deployed along the Communist line and penetrated within the unions of Sōhyō. Such a movement may be recognized even for a major union of Dōmei, the Seamen's Union. By 1976 sixty-three unions in national level have abandoned the constraint to adhere the particular party. And in prefectural level not so few unions have made such a preference. These trends might mean the serious problem of a party-union bloc.

In the 11th Upper House election of July 1977 the Opposition might be expected to win the majority of the House. But it could never happen. Inversely the JCP suffered a defeat. This result might own partly to the positive sponsorship of business associations, which wanted to sustain the '55 system under the leadership of Takeo Fukuda who succeeded T. Miki. The donation to the LDP election fund from them through the Kokumin Kyōkai amounted 6,000 million yen far more than that of the last general election.

The 35th general election of October 1979 resulted unexpectedly in the slump, often expressed as 'the defeat', of the LDP which was anticipated surely to gain a stable majority, and the remarkable advance of the JCP, as we can see on the Table. The JSP lost 16 seats compared with 1976, while the Kōmeitō could maintain its holding and the DSP made an advance from 29 to 35. Business groups continued to sponsor strongly the LDP, but it has been clear that they also sought to make a relationship with the middle road group consisted of the Kōmeitō, the DSP, the NLC and the SDA (Social Democratic Alliance), founded in 1977 mainly a seceded group from the JSP. Especially in elections a part of business interests were likely to sponsor the DSP or the NLC. Moreover, their attitude even illustrated some difference from a government policy. For example, in the process of the campaign the Nisshō made an statement against the tax increase policy by a general consumption tax (a counterpart of VAT in the United Kingdom). Besides, a factional power strife between the main currents and the non-main currents intensified more than ever before. Even after the election it has been fought more intensively. These can explain some reasons why the LDP was in a slump.

The zaikai donated to the middle road group or bought the tickets for fund-raising parties. Some enterprises, cooperating with their trade unions, sponsored

the candidates of the DSP. In turn, the JSP-Sōhyō bloc, including Chūritsu Rōren, had 86 candidates from within the unions out of 157, and the elected were 63 out of 107. On the other hand, the DSP-Dōmei bloc had 13 unionist candidates out of 53, and the elected were 11 out of 35. Why did the JSP-Sōhyō bloc suffer the setback? This bloc has continued to decline gradually since 1960s, particularly, in the point of the percentage of the votes of all casted votes from 27.9% in 1967 to 19.7% in 1979. It can be illustrated as a long-term falling tendency. These are many reason of this, but some structural reasons, such as the influence of the left and the right in trade unions already mentioned before, seem to be important. Moreover, it can be noticed that trade unionists have shown the new trend of dealigning with a union or a party recently.

The period from the end of the 1960s to 1970s can be regarded as the declining process of the '55 system. Political demands of the people have been more various in this period, but the major two parties, sustained by the social basis typically represented by business 'peak associations' and trade union organizations, could not have absorbed such demands and responded to them. So the middle road parties and the JCP could have gained their grounds in the society.

V. Conclusions: the functional differentiation of pressure groups from parties

The role of pressure groups in the Diet elections of postwar Japan has been, and is, so great that it is doubtful whether the JSP and the DSP could have been without big trade unions adhered to them consistently, and whether the DLP could have existed without business associations. Pressure groups and parties are so closely related and deeply penetrated mutually that in this point it may be compared with British counterparts: the relation between the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party, and business associations represented by the Confederations of British Industries or the City and the Conservative Party. But in Britain major two parties had grown early as a mass party of the electorate, and pressure groups and parties have firmly established their own functions and independent position reciprocally. Therefore it cannot occur that a pressure group should act as a party without clear distinction and, on the contrary, a party—particularly in any parties of Opposition—should act as a pressure group.

In the relationship between trade unions and its adherent parties, especially from 1945 to 1954, we can easily find that, as that of Sanbetsu and the JCP,

Sōdōmei and the JSP or the RSP, and Sōhyō and the JSP or the LSP, the national organization of unions and the particular party had been nearly identified in political actions without being conscious of the functional differentiation. However, since 1955 trade unions especially under Sōhyō have gradually settled down to their initial issues of wage, working conditions and rights, as political struggles for 'four peace principles' against the reverse course have become no more the first main palce of the labour movement, except for the struggle against the Security Treaty of 1960 and some other problems. It is illustrated by their attitude that recently trade unions have fixed to realize surely their very limited goals: for example, wage, pensions, employment, and right to go on a strike. The movement for the unification of labour fronts reflected in the Congress for Promoting Trade Union Policies also seems to have a behaviour of a pressure group that is necessary to realize the limited targets of trade unions, although there is a current of a anti-communist movement. Furthermore, the phenomenon of the politisation of trade unions in the Diet elections since 1960s doesn't mean any more an acting agency for any party. It seems to be based upon the realistic image of trade union leaders who may think of the necessity to have a political power in order to realize various union demands in compensation for the narrow path of a labour movement in an industrial field. Moreover, trade unions have been integrated by degrees into the administrative machinery, and then even a phenomenon of corporatism could have been found. Now trade unions have become to approach the government of the day directly.

As to the relation between the conservative parties and pressure groups such as business associations and the others, the former had exerted their dominant influence upon conservative parties from 1945 to 1955 through contributing a large sum of money to the political fund and going into politics of some influential businessmen. We can find it in the process of merging of plural conservative parties in 1955 and some governmental changes at that time. The Nōkkyō also had adhered fully to the conservative parties in this period.

However, the bureaucrats group, who have been to be a main conservative current, came back to political circles by the disbandment of postwar purge from a public office in 1952, has become a dominant group of the LDP, and as soon as a period of higher rate of growth economy began and went on, business circles have been absorbed in economic activity. Thus some functional differentiation between them and the political party has been made gradually. Claiming a political stabilization and the modernization of the LDP as well as desirable econo-

mic policies, business associations have continued to contribute much money to the party asking more and more a large sum of political donation. It is clear that the money could have a possibility always to dominate the party. But, as a plutocratic politics symbolized by Kakuei Tanaka has been criticized by national opinions, the Miki Cabinet, although unstable, could shown its new conservative course which the party would not like to be dominated by business associations at any rate. The NLC of new conservative style, which made eminent advance in 1976 election and suffered severe setback in 1979, seems to have some difference from old conservative parties in Japan.

As the LDP has lost its ground by every election since 1970s, it may be possible that the party will lose the majority of the Diet in both Houses during 1980s. Because major pressure groups seem to be so keen about the change of situation, they are preparing for it. Presumably, there is a possibility of materializing a Coalition government consisted of the Chūdō (middle road or Center) group, the JSP, and a part of the conservatives or other forms. So business associations have made some sponsorship particularly to the DSP and the NLC, and then even intended to be in contact with the Chūdō group and some trade union leaders in search of accommodation on government policies. Even Sōhyō has exerted the influence upon the JSP to make the agreement with the Kōmeitō for making a Coalition government excluding the JCP, because of its pressure group interests for near future. We may discern a trend of which a pressure group in Japan are likely to act independently from the old party of its adherence for its interests.