

# **SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF JAPAN : 1986-94**

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**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**VIRENDRA SINGH**

**CENTRE FOR EAST ASIAN STUDIES  
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY  
NEW DELHI - 110 067  
INDIA  
1995**

# JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

NEW DELHI-110 067

Centre for East Asian Studies  
School of International Studies

Telegram: JAYENU  
Telex : 031-73167 JNU IN  
Phones : Off:667676,667557  
Ext.:419  
Fax : 91-(11)-686-5886

## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation, entitled  
"SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF JAPAN : 1986-94" submitted by  
MR. VIRENDRA SINGH, in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the award of the Degree of MASTER OF  
PHILOSOPHY, has not been previously submitted for any degree  
of this or any other University. This is his own work.

We recommend that this dissertation may be placed  
before the examiners for evaluation.

G.P. Deshpande  
CHAIRPERSON

*W. G. Deshpande*  
Acr. Chemistry

*Lalima Varma*  
Dr. Lalima Varma  
SUPERVISOR

***TO MY NIECE  
BABY SANDHYA***

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Finally, I would like to state that I alone am responsible for the mistakes that may appear in this dissertation.

  
VIRENDRA SINGH

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## PREFACE

After forty six years in July 1994 the Social Democratic Party of Japan, the number one opposition has again formed a coalition government with the liberal Democratic Party and Sakigake. Earlier it had participated in a three party coalition government for a brief period between 1947-48. Since Japan regained sovereignty in 1952, the Social Democratic Party of Japan has played a significant role as a major opposition party. Now that it has come into power, it is appropriate and important to study the changes on the policies and programmes of the SDPJ, particularly during the last one decade i.e. 1986-94. The main focus of this dissertation is to study changes in its policies and programmes, and performance in the elections during the above mentioned period. These changes are bound to have an impact on Japan's politics in the coming future.

My dissertation comprised of three chapters. The first chapter provides a historical background of the SDPJ from 1945 to 1994. After the formation of SDPJ, it had a long history of splits & defections. The defections and splits occurred from time to time due to ideological difference among the wings of the Party. The policies and programmes of the factions differ on particular issues. For example, on the policy of constitutional change. The right faction was in favour of gradual change, Whereas the left was in favour of revolution-



ary change. The right faction Shamin-Kei was in favour of mutual cooperation between management and labor unions, whereas the left wing favoured the confrontation between management and unions. In the case of foreign policy, it was against pro-US foreign policy. It advocated non-aligned or neutralist policy. But the right wing was in favour pro-US foreign policy.

In this chapter I have tried to highlight the economic policy of the SDPJ, which happens to be the core policy of the SDPJ. Without having a good economic policy no party could survive in any political set up, whether it be socialist set up or liberal set up.

The third point which I have dealt with is the fiscal policy of the party, and attempted to show that SDPJ's fiscal policy is different from other parties? How its nationalisation process of key industries is different from the other Japanese political parties?

The second chapter of this dissertation deals with the 'New Declaration' of the SDPJ, which was commenced in 1985 and the role of SDPJ's veteran leader Tokako Doi, as a real maker of the party. Third section deals with elections of 1989 & 1990.

About the New Declaration of the party the point on which I have tried to emphasize is that it differs from the party's 'Road to Socialism' draft, which

was prepared in 1956. The second point throws light on the personality and policies of Tokako Doi. It is seen that during the chairpersonship of Doi the party reached its zenith. What were the factors responsible for the development of party during her regime is my contention of study. What were the shift in policies of SDPJ during Doi's period? And the third point deals with about the elections of 1989 and 1990. Why SDPJ failed to capture power in 1989 Upper House election and Lower House election?

<sup>have</sup>  
I discussed about the elections of 1991 and 1993 in the third chapter. What were the policies and programmes of SDPJ in this election compared to 1991 election. SDPJ won more seats in the 1993 election of lower house. How it achieved more number of seats? How it formed the government in spite of having lesser number of votes than the LDP? What were the factors which compelled the LDP to support SDPJ to form government at the Centre? These are points which I discussed in the third chapter of my dissertation.

This study is based on the secondary sources, books, Journals, articles and newspapers.

It is hoped that this study may help in understanding SDPJ policies and programmes of the period 1986-94.

**CHAPTER I**  
**BACKGROUND**

The phenomenon of forming political parties is not new to Japanese politics. Political parties were founded as early as the 1870s and the first parliamentary elections were held in 1890. But with the fragmentation of political power among several civilian and military elite groups, parties faced a constant struggle to establish their centrality in the political system. By the 1920s considerable progress was made toward establishing the practice of party government but due to growing militarism in 1930s the conservative parties lost their hold on political power. Socialist parties, which were known as proletarian parties, had grown in popularity more so after the adoption of universal manhood suffrage in 1925. However, after the promulgation of the peace preservation Law in the late 1920s. The popularity of the political parties received a set back. In 1940 all political parties were dissolved.

During the second world war many conservative and socialist leaders joined the government - created Imperial Rule Assistance Association and actively supported war time government. But some of old leaders - continued to be active outside the IRAA. Soon after the end of war political leaders began to reorganize political parties. In October 1945, leaders of all the noncommunist parties in the prewar proletarian movement agreed to join forces and formed the Japan socialist party. Thus, the Japan socialist party came into existence. Less than a month later Ichiro Hatoyama, who had been chief cabinet secretary from 1927 to 1929, minister of education from 1931

to 1934, organised the Liberal party. A little later two another conservative parties the Progressive Party (And the Japan cooperative party came into existence.<sup>1</sup>

The Japan socialist party, which is now known as the Social Democratic party of Japan (SDPJ) has its headquarter in Tokyo. The party is headed by the chairman of its central executive committee. Its administrative chief is the secretary - general. But the ultimate authority theoretically resides in the congress. The Congress selects its party's chief officers and debates on all the major issues confronting the party. It debates on the policies and programmes to be adopted by the party and it's relations vis-a-vis other parties and federations of unions.

The programme adopted at its' first convention in November 1945 described the party as "the national rally of the labouring strata", with the main purpose to bring about political liberty and social democracy; improvement in people's living standard and eradication capitalism. At this convention two main principles which came forward were first it should be based on working class especially the industrial labor and second, it should represent the interest of all revisionist section, It denounced military groups, the bureaucracy and the Zaibatsu. It dedicated to restore the dignity of the Diet, establishing responsible government and promoting socialist democracy. It declared that

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1. Gerald L. Curtis, - *The Japanese way of Politics* Columbia University Press, New York 1988, pp. 4-5.

the party would strive to transform the economy from capitalism to socialism and to regain international good will for Japan by peaceful means. At the time of its formation it was an amalgamation of three different factions namely, shaminkei on the right, the Nichiro - Kei in the centre and the Rono - Kei on the left. Consequently ideological differences within the party was unavoidable. The shamin - Kei was in favour of mutual cooperation between management and labour unions. It (shamin - kei) opined that by the cooperation between management and labour unions the maximum interest of workers could be served. Rono - Kei's view was just the opposite of shamin - kei for it was in favour of confrontation between management and unions. Rono - kei's logical argument in this regard was that the confrontation might put pressure on management and they would be forced to give maximum to the working class.

SDPJ has been the main opposition party throughout the post world wars period. It's main contestant for this position have been the, Democratic socialist party, the Komeito, the communist party and the New liberal club. The Democratic socialist party was formed in 1960 by Nishio Suehiro a veteran leader of the SDPJ but it is known more as a middle of the road party.

Among all these political parties the SDPJ's ideology and programmes have enabled it to secure support from all section of the society. It had the support of a large number of the young, well educated urban electorates as

well as of organized blue collar workers, and the labour class. The SDPJ's policy of opposition to constitutional revision, support to democratizing reforms that had been introduced during the early post war years when Japan was under American occupation; opposition to rearmament and to the US Japan Security Treaty. Its support to socialist ideas always appealed general masses which labelled it as the "Japan Peace Party".

It was in 1947 that a coalition government of the SDPJ, the Japan Democratic Party and the People's cooperative party was formed under the leadership of Katayama Tetsu. But the government faced grave economic problem which it could not tackle. Added to this was the ideological difference between the different parties which were party to the government.

The Katayama Cabinet was succeeded by another government under the leadership of Ashida Hitoshi, who became Prime Minister. Ashida's government's main goal was to improve living of standard of the people. There was pressure on the government by the Labour unions to increase their wages. The government consequently recommended the amendment of the public service law. which denied the right to strike. The stand taken by the socialist party on the rights of the labour union was not similiar to the other partners in the coalition. It was not in favour of restructure the activities of the labour unions. In spite of policy difference with other parties socialist did not disassociated itself from the government. However, the government suffered a

setback when the Showa Denko scandal came to light. Showa company, then Japan's largest fertilizer producer, were accused of giving bribes to senior government officials in order to secure a low-interest loan from the government run Reconstruction Finance Corporation. In all, sixty four people were arrested in the Showa Denko scandal, including an incumbent Cabinet Minister (The head of the Economic Stabilization Board) Prime Minister Ashida and his Vice-Premier and JSP leaders Nishio Suehiro, nine members or former members of the Diet, and ten senior government bureaucrats (including later P.M. Fukuda). Forty three people eventually were indicated, including Ashida and Nishio. Due to these reasons the scandal ridden government was bound to resign on moral ground on October 7, 1948.

SDPJ has a history of splits and defections. The first defection took place in 1948, when Hirano Riziko led right wing defected from the party. The defection took place due to the dismissal of Hirano by then Premier Ashida Hitoshi which was not opposed by the left wing. SDPJ associated Kuroda Hisao and his faction dissociated themselves after voting against Ashida government budget and formed a new mini party Rodosha Nominto, (labor-farmer party). The issue on which they voted against the government was the non-implementation of land reform. The second major split took place in 1950, in which three major factions of SDPJ separated themselves from the party.



The left wing advance intensified the conflict within the SDPJ as the left succeeded in defeating the right in the election for Secretary General in 1950, though a right wing leader was elected Chairman of the Central Executive Committee at the same time. At the Seventh Congress in January 1951, the left wing delegated clearly outnumbered the right wing, and the left overwhelmed the right wing in lower house.<sup>2</sup> The right wing socialist leaders came from three major groups: leftist intellectuals, leaders of the prewar labor movement, and leaders of the prewar tenant farmer's movement.<sup>3</sup>

The SDPJ broke over the peace and security treaties in 1951.<sup>4</sup> This time the SDPJ heavily divided over San Francisco Settlement. The left wing was against any type of rearmament, whereas right and the center wings were in favour of rearmament of Japan keeping in view of security problem. Hence, the left, right and center went separately on two different poles. The ideological difference between the left and the right wing within the SDPJ is seen in Inamura-Morito debate, who were veteran socialist and prominent members of the prewar non-communist labor-farmer-faction and a moderate of prewar social Democratic movement respectively. The debate between two personalities revolves around several important points. The right wing maintained that socialism would be attained through the effective govern-

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2. Tani Satomi, "The Japan Socialist Party before the Mid 1960s" Tetsuya, Kataoka (Edited) - *creating single party Democracy Japan's Post War Political System*. However Institution Press 1992, P.-85.
  3. Ishikawa Masumi - *History of post-war - Japanese political Structure* (Tokyo : Nihon Hyovonsha, 1978), p-27.
  4. Oeake Hideo, "Rearmament controversies and cultural conflict in Japan" Kataoka Tetsuya, (Edited) - *Creating single-Party Democracy Japanese's Postwar Political system*, However Institution Press 1992, p.-71.

ment, while the left claimed that there should be a revolutionary change from capitalism to Socialism. Secondly, the right wing was in favour of broadly based with all Social classes on an equal footing - in essence a "national party", whereas the left wing wanted to give more preference to workers to establish a "class party". Not only on this issue, but also on foreign and defense policies issue - both the wings were on the opposite end particularly on peace settlement and rearmament of Japan. There were three principles on which both differed:

1. A peace treaty with all the belligerent powers.
2. Permanent neutrality
3. No military bases to be given to a foreign power.

The outbreak of the Korean war and the authorization by General Douglas MacArthur of a quasi-military "police Reserve" made the issue of rearmament a focus of intense political controversy. In January 1951 a fourth principle was added by the SDPJ: "opposition to rearmament". The principle were rejected by the Shamin-Kei and this rejection became the major factor for split.<sup>5</sup>

The right wing maintained that in the world of power politics a separate peace was inevitable and it was in favour of countering communist aggres-

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5. J.A.A. Stockwin, "The Japan Socialist Party: A Politics of Permanent opposition Hrebenar, J. Ronald (Ed) *The changing party system in 1980s: From one Party Rule Toward an Era of coalition govt.*, p.-91.

sion directly or indirectly by some sort of self-defence. Another reason of rift between two wings of SDPJ was the re-evaluation of party's poor performance in 1951 election. The right wing was of the view that poor performance was due to unrealistic attitudes towards the peace treaty. "Police-Reserve" policy was another issue on which the two factions differed sharply. The left wing rejected this policy while the right was in the favour. Thus, the confrontation between the two wing was obvious.

Both the right & left faction merged in 1955. This decision to merge was mainly from the point of winning elections. The Liberal and democratic forces had also joined hands to form the liberal democratic party. However, with the socialist party the left wing dominated, which was sympathetic to Marxism of Ronoha faction. SDPJ emphasised on class struggle against "monopoly capitalism". The left wingers - did not however, reject parliamentarism, instead they regarded the European political system as indispensable to Japan's modernisation.

In 1958, the Prime Minister - Kishi Nobusuke attempted to revise the police duties. A mass demonstration against government gave a boost to the image of the socialist. Protest against the revision of Japan - US Security Treaty in May-June further provided the JSP with an opportunity to embarrass the government and its popularity.

In 1960 the party faced another split. Nishio Suehiro, who was uncompromisingly anti-communist pulled his faction out of the party and formed the Democratic socialist party. The reasons for this can be traced to the defection of right wing union in 1954 from the Sohyo federation. During the late 1950s a number of long drawn out strike by left wing union had resulted in the creation of other unions. Split also took place due to lack of political acumen of its leaders, personality clash among the leaders and poor organisation. It failed to attract new members having talent and political will.

The experience of May-June of 1960 over the revision of US - Japan Security treaty and the November 1960 assassination of SDPJ Chairman Asanuma Inejiro by an ultranationalist forced the party to sympathetically consider liberal policies. Eda Saburo supported the Idea of bringing about "structural reforms". Interest in structural reform in the SDPJ initially was confined to a small number of intellectuals in the party secretariat. It had no particular proponent among the party's elected members.

Eda's grip on the party was temporary and fragile. The vietnam war and issues related to it created a new tension between government and oppositon party in the second half of the 1960s. The SDPJ opined that Japan had been used by US forces for its operation in Vietnam and that this threaten Japan's own security.

Regarding to peace treaty with Republic of China, the DPJ was in favour. Asanuma in March 1959 in the course of SDPJ mission to china made a remark that "American imperialism is the common enemy of the people of Japan and China."<sup>6</sup> So, to save Japan from American imperialist grip, the only way suggested by the SDPJ was to have a peace treaty with China.

### Performance in Elections

So far as SDPJ's performance in the Diet election is concerned, the socialists power in the lower house of the Diet grew between 1952 to 1958. In 1955 election it achieved a sizable portion of votes and got 156 seats in the lower house of the Diet. It was due to the merger of two wings of the Social Democratic Party of Japan.

**Election Results in the Lower House<sup>7</sup>  
(By number of Seats)**

**Table 1.1**

Years	Conservative Parties	Social Democratic Party of Japan			Japan Communist Party	others
		Left	Center	Right		
1946	272		94		5	129
1947	291		143		4	34
1949	333		48		35	50
1952	325	54		57	0	30
1953	310	72		66	1	17
1955	297	89		67	2	12
1958	287		166		1	13

6. J.A.A. Stockwin, "The Japan Socialist Party Resurgence After Long Decline. Hrebenar, Ronald J. (Ed). *The Japanese Party System* west view press 1986, p.90.

7. Kataoka Tetsuya, the 1955 system the origin of Japan's postwar politics. Kataoko Tetsuya, Ed. *creating single party democracy*. Hoover Institution press stanford univ., p.-162.

In the 1958 general election, the first house election following the 1955 party merger the socialists received the support of 32.8% of those voting and obtained 35.5% of the seats. While the LDP won 57.8% of vote & 61.5% of seat.

No political party could survive without having a fixed economic policy in any political system. Each and every party has its own planning in the field of economy. After the reunification of socialists, they prepared a five year plan to 1957. The SDPJ appended four specific legislature measures designed to achieve immediate reform of tax structure, local financial reconstruction, a minimum wage and protection of domestic labor. Four measures are.

1. As Japan has rich water resources, if advanced scientific means were used to exploit available resources, the nation's industrial base could be developed.
2. Emphasis was given by SDPJ on the expansion of trade to achieve economic independence and to increase employment.
3. Other section dealt with was establishing and raising levels of consumption by improving labouring condition and democratization of industry.
4. There was stress given on financial policies which could provide credit for economic expansion on all levels.

So far as local taxes are concerned, the five year plan called for the reduction and adjustment of the inhabitant tax for salary earners, taxes on one man business and taxes on cheap food. But in order to help local government overcome the loss of revenue, an increase proposed in local distributive tax. Basically these policies came under the purview of tax policies of the SDPJ. The SDPJ wanted to make a balance between national income and individual income, so that both could proceed in better way.

The nationalisation of key industries has been a basic policy since its foundation while it was in power. In the five year plan it advocated the socialisation of six key industries namely, coal, iron, electricity and steel, chemical fertiliser, principal means of land and sea transportation, and cement. Three more categories were added later-in this list other energy fuel, air transportation and the new industries made possible by scientific advances. By this plan, industries would be regulated by a separate Act which would enable government to determine the level of production. To bring it into practice the SDPJ in its national convention in 1958 described the Socialization as a gradual process that would lead to public ownership of means of production and to the democratization of key industries. Democratization as SDPJ meant that it would entail making management responsible to the popular will. But SDPJ's effort of socialization of key industries failed. The Katayama government fell when it tried to nationalise the coal men.

After regaining sovereignty, the Left and Right faction of the socialists were more concerned with the integration of social welfare into a social security system. For this Katayama, Chairman of the Planning Board, of the JSP constituted the social security system - investigation Board. The Planning Board gave priority for a national system of annuities. Though, the five year plan did not elaborate a scheme for a national system of annuities. The SDPJ plan was more than the Board's recommendation. It sought to cover the whole population. To SDPJ, all workers between ages of 20 and 54 - would be obliged to contribute annual insurance premiums. For immediate benefit the SDPJ proposed non-contributory annuities for those who were between ages 60-65 years. The Board also recommended the annuities but low in figure. In this prompted the Kishi government to take drastic steps and increase the pensions of former military personnel by 10% in 1958. The SDPJ opposed the proposal and demanded the adjustment with a national system of annuities. At the same time it demanded higher annuities for the former military personnel and also demanded compensation for loss of their military pensions in the form of commutation bonds.

### **Power Base of the Socialist Party**

So far as the question of support base of the SDPJ is concerned, it mostly came from the Sohyo, the largest union federation. Both ideologically and



organizationally, Sohyo was the backbone of the SDPJ after San Francisco. The SDPJ has never had to hold mass organization to conduct effective election campaigns. Sohyo provided SDPJ members as well as candidates. Not only Sohyo had been support base of the SDPJ but also local organizations like consumer's cooperatives, farmer's cooperative and environmental groups etc. But these groups were not so affluent to provide finances to meet the expenses of the elections.

Relying heavily on these groups was in the long run not beneficial for the SDPJ. In the 1963 general election, twenty six incumbent Diet members of the SDPJ, including about ten leading figures, lost their seats. With long tenures in office, most of them had relied mainly on personal reputation, not on labor organisation. They were supplemented by candidates supported by Sohyo. The plateau on which the SDPJ stayed during the 1960s reflected the equilibrium between the exit of the old type socialists and the advance of the newcomers who did not want to rely mainly on Sohyo. SDPJ support in the urban electorate in metropolitan area was 28% in 1955, gradually 20% was taken away by JCP and Komeito. the SDPJ share of the electorate and the absolute number of votes at the genral elections changed in three different areas. Two are typically metropolitan and one is a typical rural area i.e. Kyoto, Osaka and Hyogo prefecutres, and the Shikoku district respectively. Though the number of voters of SDPJ increased in metroplitan but it was unable to

capture these new voters and only maintained those it had secured by the end of the 1950s.

Thus, the period of 1960s was the period of defections, splits and decline. The Period of 1970s started with a fruitful consolidation. In this period the personality clash among leaders lessened. Between 1970-1977 the party's two top post of Chairmanship and General Secretaryship were in the hands of Narita Tomami and Ishibashi - Masashi, Both had no strong faction within the party. During this period political and economic scenario was taking its turn in Japan as well as on global level. During the oil crisis period of 1973-74 the left politics was checked by right leaders to come on the fore-front.

The year of 1977 was indeed a turning point for the SDPJ. Two influential leaders of the party Narita and Ishibashi announced their decision to resign. This led to leadership crisis in the party. Finally in December 1977, Asukata Ichio, the mayor of Yokohama became the Chairman of the party and Togaya Shinnen Secretary general. Under the new leadership the party did not fair well in the 1979 and 1980 elections and lost the prestigious Kyoto governor elections of 1977.

Despite having support base in urban areas, SDPJ did not perform well in governor's election. It had the support of a large number of young, well educated urban electorate. It had a sizeable support of organised collar

workers particularly in those constituencies where industrialization had already taken place. The support of labour federation unions helped SDPJ to accelerate the decline in popularity among the voters of urban areas. Among them Sohyo was on the top. Sohyo is a national confederation of labor unions. It is the strongest in the public sector, among teachers, railways workers, postal office workers in general and local employees in particular. But, on relying heavily on Sohyo the SDPJ by the 1970s was no longer a predominantly urban party. The party also drew support from occupational groups. Blue collar workers provided one third of its support. A quarter came from white collar workers. Rest support was given by the farmers to those leaders who had taken active part in farmer's movement before the war. The role of small business and merchants cannot be ignored in strengthening the SDPJ position.

### SDPJ support by occupational category 1955<sup>8</sup>

**Table 1.2**

<b>Data</b>	<b>Percentage of Support</b>
FARMERS	25%
MERCHANT & BUSINESS OWNER	13%
BLUE COLLAR WORKERS	33%
WHITE COLLAR WORKERS	26%

*Source: From data in Asahi Shinbunsha yoron chosa - Shitsu Nihorji No. Seiji*

*Ishiki.*

8. Gerald L. Curtis, *The Japanese way of politics* Columbia Univ. Press New York 1988, p.121.

After decades of decline and refusal to adopt its policy prescriptions, the SDPJ in 1986 adopted a new statement. It convinced the general masses that it had put all the old fashioned Marxism and policies behind. Its Chairman Ishibashi declared that he now presided over a "new SDPJ" The important work done by Ishibashi was to rewrite the party's 1955 platform "The Road to Socialism", which was full of Marxist concepts and Rhetorics. The party's 1955 platform reads:<sup>9</sup>

"More involvement in electoral Struggle will not create problem for increasing the party's strength in the Diet, but, even if, a majority were obtained, it would not be able to establish a stable government. The only road to peaceful revolution is the coalescing of democratic forces in the institutions of society, the emergence of a major political and economic crisis, and the victory of the SDPJ at the polls."

Effort was made to find out a middle path between advocacy of dictatorship of proletariat and a commitment of pluralistic democracy to bring out the fair image of the SDPJ. The final formulation lost the basic concept of Leninism, which was very important for the SDPJ. The formulation reads that:<sup>10</sup>

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9. *Ibid.*, P.122.

10. *Ibid.*, p.143.

"It is natural that the proletariat must exercise a form of class rule when it grasps state power in place of the bourgeoisie.....But the so called dictatorship of proletariat of the Soviet Union or China which experienced violent revolution in all likelihood will be unnecessary in the case of Japan, because of its historical and social conditions, it is likely to take the form of something closer to the ideal of socialist democracy".

By amending the Leninist concept, the SDPJ was able to build its image in the public and as a result it performed better in 1980s elections. In the local elections of 1980s it performed well. Due to liberal attitudes towards the domestic policies SDPJ got success more than expected in 1980s.

SDPJ also benefitted from the scandals which severely tarnished the image of the ruling LDP.

In summer of 1988, Takeshita government was traumatized by the "Recruit Scandal". The Recruit cosmos company, a Share Stock Company floated unlisted shares, which was against the Japanese law. In November a SDPJ Diet member Veda Takumi admitted before the Diet that his secretary had accepted Recruit Cosmos shares and this statement was followed by Takumi himself. Taking moral responsibility, Takeshita resigned. He was succeeded by Uno Sosuke in June 1990 who resigned due to his involvement in an illicit relation with a female official.

The election of House of Councillors was conducted in July 1990 and in this election the SDPJ emerged as the largest party. It won 35.6% of the votes in the national constituencies and 31.6% in the prefectural constituencies. The LDP forced into minority position of 109 seats out of 252 seats. Apart from the Recruit scandal; sex scandal and the issue of consumption tax, the issue of lifting agricultural protection from some agricultural products, which was promised by the SDPJ benefitted the SDPJ in the election. Out of 26 single member constituencies which were mostly agricultural or rural prefectures, SDPJ got 23. Earlier 25 seats were won by the LDP. In this election 12 women candidates from SDPJ were elected. This was a matter of surprise for the Japanese people. This was known as "Madonna Strategy" in the Press.

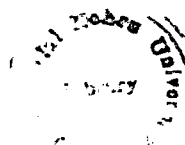
The elections of 1990, SDPJ failed to win majority in the lower house election. It got only 86 seats out of 136 in the lower house. In the 1989 election it was 136. After 1990 election, the SDPJ formed a body known as New Wave Society consisting 28 lower house Diet members out of 50. This society maintained a close link with social Democratic Federation, which was active in reforming party structure and policies to make it a party of true opposition and potentially of government.

Taking the responsibility of defeat of the party in 1991 elections Takako Doi resigned from the chairpersonship of the SDPJ.



Takako Doi was succeeded by Tanabe. During the regime of Tanabe the question of self defence forces and sending Japanese soldiers in peace-keeping mission was a much discussed issue. The Government was reluctant to send forces but the SDPJ was totally against it. The party regarded the SDF unconstitutional. The party propogated the policy of disarmament and neutrality.

After the 1993 lower house election Morihiro, Hosokawa, from the Japan's new party was elected Prime Minister, with the help of the SDPJ and Komeito & other minor parties. on 28th July 1993 this government failed on 8th April 1994 and Hosokawa had to resign. This happened due to conservative stand on constitutional Reforms, which he was trying to implement. An another cause of fall of the government was the allegation put on Hosokawa acceptance of bribe from Sagawa Kyubin, a parcel delivery. He was succeeded by Hata. SDPJ did not join Hata Government. Hata Tsutomu could not prove his majority and his cabinet had to resign. Elections were held in April 1994. The SDPJ emerged as the second largest Party obtaining 74 seats in the Lower House but the LDP emerged as the single largest party but did not have a majority. The LDP in coalition with SDPJ formed the government. SDPJ leader Tomiichi Murayama became the Prime Minister. After Japan regained sovereignty in 1952 this was the first time that the socialist party had come into power and that to in coalition with the LDP whom it had opposed for more than four decades.



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**CHAPTER - II**

**SDPJ Under the Leadership of  
Takako Doi and 1990 election**



The 'New Declaration' of the SDPJ has an important place in the history of Japanese economic and political set up. Without understanding the New Declaration adopted by the SDPJ, it would be very difficult to understand SDPJ'S policy of rearmament. SDPJ response to rearmament was the product of a complicated process with a complex political and social background. Regarding it two aspects are important.

1. The ideological conflict between the modern and the traditional that existed within the party not only between the radical liberals and the conservatives, was a serious impediment in winning the support of intellectuals, white collar workers, and unionized workers. The left faction was in the majority.
2. Internal conflict within the Socialist Camp was based not so much on economic policy but on defence policy. Difference were so sharp that not only the left and right wing differed on these issues but within the right wing also there were differences of opinion.

Ishibashi Masashi with difficulty succeeded in forcing through the adoption of the 'New Declaration', a policy document to replace the Marxist 'Road to socialism' which had defined SDPJ objectives since 1964. New Declaration of SDPJ was adopted in its 27th congress in 1985. In the new Manifesto of January 1986, the SDPJ declared its decision to abandon Marxism-Leninism.

This policy similar to those carried out by Socialist parties in Western Europe (West Germany, Australia, Switzerland, Denmark, the Netherland, and Belgium) around 1960.<sup>1</sup> The SDPJ's New Manifesto carefully avoided any reference to defense issues. Economic policy was a departure from the tradition of Marxism and the labour movement.

From its founding in November 1945 until the fall of the Katayama Tetsu Government in 1947, the JSP was controlled by Katayama, Nishio Suehiro, Mizutani Shozaburo and the other leaders of the socialist right wing, especially those of the former Shakai Minushunto group the so called Shaminkai socialist People's Party group.<sup>2</sup> Katayama introduced socialist doctrine into economic policy and "bourgeois" or parliamentary, democracy into politics.

Collisions of the two views took place not over socialist economic policy but over foreign and defense policy.<sup>3</sup> First, for the SDPJ left wing, national defense was a revival of militarism, and the choice was between the absolutist emperor system and democracy between premodern and modern.

Second, for the right wing, the defense and foreign policy issues in early post war Japan offered little real choice, well defined choices existed only in

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1. Otake Hideo (Article), "Rearmament controversies & cultural conflict in Japan" p.65, Kataoka Tetsuya (Ed) *creating single party democracy, Japan's Post war Political system* - Hoover Institution Press Publication, 1992.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid*, P.68

the minds of intellectuals. It was the “excessive” idealism of the left that was at issue.

Third, those conservative leaders who demanded rearmament showed less interest in defense itself than in using it as leverage to restore traditional values. The defense controversy was the conflict between modernity and tradition.

Under Ishibashi Masashi leadership efforts to establish an image, appropriate to the ‘New Socialist Party’ was made. Previous SDPJ leaders had opposed the visit to Japan of US presidents on the ground that they opposed Security Pact. Now SDPJ welcomed Ronald Reagan’s visit in 1984 and Ishibashi himself visited Washington in 1985.

On the self defense forces, the SDPJ’s classic formulations was that it was ‘unconstitutional but lawful’. The New Declaration is not a nine day wonder but it had seeds of development within it from very beginning of its foundation 1986 Election.

In July 1986 elections for upper and lower houses of the national Diet were held. The elections produced a sweeping victory for the liberal Democratic Party under Nakasone yasuhiko and the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ) was badly defeated. Socialist representation in the lower house fell

to eighty five seats the lowest number since the election of 1949 that followed the collapse of the Katayama and Ashida cabinet. Ishibashi, accepted responsibility for the defeat and resigned from the party Chairmanship.

Tokako Doi was chosen as party leader. She had a multifarious personality. Before entering parliament in 1969, she taught constitutional law at Doshiha University in Kyoto. She was elected seven times Diet member.

The female poet Nagase Kiyoko wrote in 1940 that “women are bonded to the earth with ideals that reach the heaven”. Nagase penned that phrase, women’s pragmatism & idealism had change the course of politics. The choice of a woman as leader of a political party for the first time in Japanese political history caused an immediate sensation in the mass media and among political leaders. This was because that Japanese Society is a male dominated Society.” On her selection, the then Agriculture Minister Hisao Hironouchi commented that” women are useless in the World of politics” and cited Japanese history as proof that “ A nation would fall when a woman becomes ruler”. He further said that “woman's primary task was to keep the house-hold”. He stressed that “It is wrong for women to come to forefront of politics. The British Prime Minister is an exception but she has a husband and children, Doi does not, so she will not be able to serve as Prime Minister”).

Nevertheless Doi advent as chairwoman of the SDPJ was an asset for the

party. The percentage of women voters is more than men in Japan. Within six month of Doi election as leader, a newspaper poll showed the party's popularity rising nine points to twenty four points. By the spring of 1987, Doi persuaded 187 Housewives all political newcomers to run for the office in local election. Her personal popularity and hard labor resulted in increasing support for the party, which broke the monopoly of the LDP on political front.

Policies and programmes adopted by the SDPJ, keeping in view with lower House election, dubbed as "Doi's proposal". The theme of the Doi proposal is "moderate but authentic reform". It covered four main areas, (i) Politics, (ii) Economics, (iii) International & Economic relations, and (iv) democracy as the underlying principles of the SDPJ's policies. It stated that economic reform shall be pursued within the frame work of fair and equitable market economics. The party would seek an independent and reciprocal economic ties with other Asian nations other than United States of America.<sup>4</sup> Doi proposal clearly stated that the SDPJ had abandoned its former ideal of planned economy socialism. Instead, party adopted the principle of market economy based on social democracies of Western Europe. To her, "New economic growth would only be achieved through market principles. These market principles are not transitory, they are the principles of the economic system of the future".<sup>5</sup>

4. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, July 20, 1989.

5. *The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, July 26, 1989.

The proposal was highly critical of Japan - US relations. The SDPJ's position regarding the United States of America stems from its interpretation of the US Japan security treaty, which was a means of using Japan in the interest of America's anti-communist strategy. The party policy admitted of compromise, however, "A coalition government would maintain the security treaty in the interest of diplomatic continuity", while the proposal was very firm in calling for "strict application of the three non-nuclear principles, a halt to Japan - US joint military operations, and the scalling down and eventual removal of U.S. bases". It also said that careful consideration should be given to Japan - US relations in dealing with the security treaty and enforcement of the three nuclear principles should be carried out through consultation between the two countries. Doi's proposal also talked about the Security Defense Force but by imposing limits. Military spending would be strictly confined to within one percent (1%) of Gross National Products, the principles of civilian control would be respected. The SDF mandate would be strictly limited to the defense territorial land, air space and sea, and maintenance of plan to acquire, offensive weapons would be re-evaluated.<sup>6</sup>

On nuclear power policy, Doi's policy programme essentially called for a non-nuclear Japan. her proposal advocated for:

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6. *The Patriot*, New Delhi, April 27, 1989

1. Recognizing a certain role for the power plants already in operation, while keeping a strict check on safety.
2. Not permitting construction of new power plants or facilities for disposal of nuclear waste material.
3. Replacing nuclear energy through development of new, alternative energy sources, such as energy and conservative technologies.

In spite of having progressive and nationalist policies, Doi was criticised by other parties leaders. Many leaders of other political parties blamed her that she had turned SDPJ into a women's party. In the answer, she said "we are a male dominated society and women's burdens are heavier than males, so naturally women will be more sensitive."<sup>7</sup> Sections of Bureaucrats and business executives were also critical Doi. This criticism may be attributed to their linkage with Liberal Democratic Party.

Despite of opposition from the political parties leaders, bureaucrats and business officials, she tried to improve the party's image. She said,"there is something very wrong with our language. We have been dedicated using trade union jargon, the kind that means little to people, on the street. Politicians who do not take the language of the people have little hope of

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7. *The Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, July 26, 1989.

winning their hearts”.<sup>8</sup> This statement shows her brilliant political acumen and grassroots understanding of politics. Not only this, she did a lot regarding the membership of party. For it, she created a new category, which did not demand that anyone joining party to surrender one percent of his/her income. It was this change, which brought housewives in, as volunteers. Prior to this declaration by Doi, 80% membership was from trade unions.

The SDPJ, under the leadership of Doi changed its many policies and programmes as well as election strategies. She tried to improve the image of the party against the background of the financial scandals in which many political leaders were involved.

Hitoshi Ashida was charged for illegal financing of the showa Denko company, Shigeru Yoshida for a ship building scandal, Kakuei Tanaka was involved in the lockheed scandal and Uno-Sasaki and Noboru Takeshita for his involvement in the recruit scandal. The SDPJ promised clear political atmosphere in Japan. The SDPJ held the view that the long domination of government by the LDP was responsible for the corruption in politics and subsequent crisis for parliamentary democracy. About the relations with LDP it said, the SDPJ did not recognise LDP as a partner in a coalition government, though it might cooperate with it in local elections if there was convergence of policies.

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8. *Ibid.*



Regarding Japanese constitution SDPJ stated that it was devoted to defending and implementing the constitution aims of pacifism, democracy and internationalism, and that it was the party against the revision of the Constitution. On the emperor system, though, it was highly critical of the system, promised to preserve the Constitution including the Symbolic presence of Emperor. It also believed that in the Japanese constitution the state has been bestowed & with many powers to interfere in individuals as well as community's affair. On the particular issue of relations between State and religion, the party maintain that State interference in religious matters or activities and vice-versa was wrong. Freedom of religion must be preserved, it opined.

So far as the policies on foreign relations are concerned, it stressed on the the realization of peaceful existence of countries. It wanted to pursue a non-aligned policy centering on the establishment of peaceful co-existence and relation based on reciprocity and equality in the Asian region. It favoured an omni directional diplomacy without tilting to any particular country. The SDPJ's leadership criticized LDP on 1951 peace treaty. It viewed that the Soviet occupation of all the Kurile islands, which were parts of Japan's territory was unjustified. It demanded the return of all Kurile islands and a peace treaty with the Soviet Union that contained an agreement on the reversion of the entire Kurile chain of islands.

On the question of construction of nuclear plants, it had promised that it would not approve the construction of new nuclear plants nor of facilities to store radioactive waste. Using liquified natural gas and other thermal power plants and facilitating the use of new energy sources and energy conservation to achieve an end to dependence on nuclear plants would be the goal of the SDPJ. On farm policy, it assured people that there would be no liberalization of rice, a product fundamental to the nation's food culture and there would be no export of other agricultural products.

Regarding consumption tax charged by the LDP government, SDPJ was in opposition of the tax, on the basis that it would hamper the daily lives of the Japanese people, particularly women. The SDPJ announced a two stage programme to abolish the consumption tax and reform the tax system. Basic features of the SDPJ proposed reform include introduction of a single tax rate scale for all income levels, a numbering system and protection of taxpayer's rights and a review of the taxes for corporations, property and other assets.

If the Tokyo Metropolitan elections were any indication than the SDPJ's policies seemed to have been well accepted by the people. In the election of Tokyo metropolitan held on July 2, 1989 the ruling LDP suffered a major setback, while SDPJ made a dramatic gain. The LDP lost 20 of its 63 seats and the SDPJ increased its representation from 12 to 36. The SDPJ gained

position number two from four in the assembly. SDPJ members and affiliated became top winner in 34 out of 41 constituencies.

**Table 2.1**  
**Result of Tokyo Metropolitan election 1989**

<b>Parties</b>	<b>No. of Seats</b>	<b>No. of Candidates</b>	<b>Previous Assembly</b>
LDP	43	71	63
SDPJ	36	41	12
KOMEITO	26	28	29
JCP	14	43	19
DSP	05	13	03
OTHERS	03	26	00
INDEPENDENTS	01	24	00

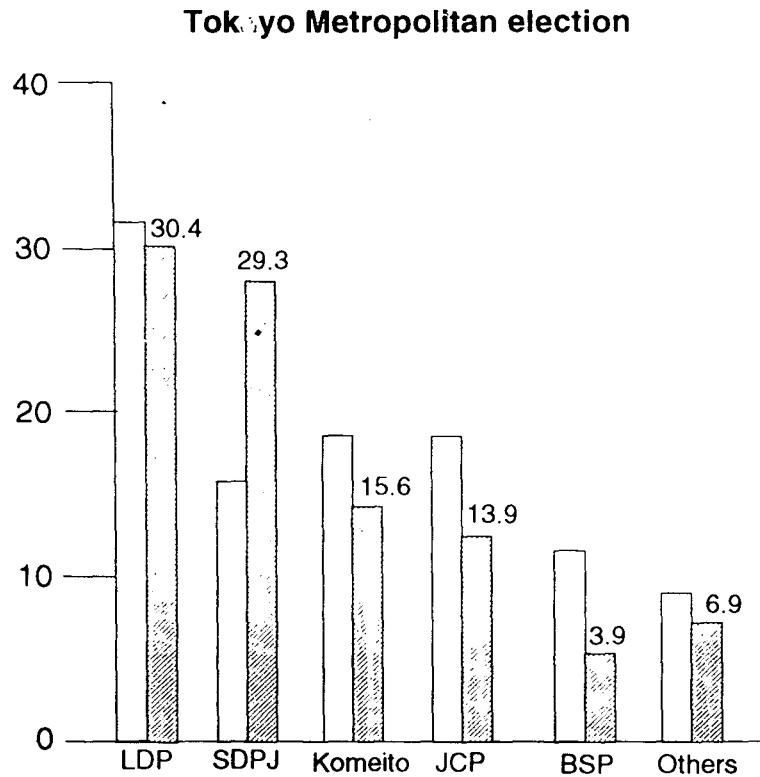
*Source: See Japan Times, July 4, 1994.*

Reacting on the result, Doi at the party headquarter claimed that “the outcome of the election fully reflected the people’s anger at the LDP plitics.”<sup>9</sup> This was the first time in 16 years that the SDPJ expanded its strength in the assembly to 20 or more seats. The SDPJ’s female candidates in particular fared well, apparently backed by women voters, who were critical of the geisha scandal surrounding the Prime Minister Sosuke. In this election female turnout was 61.29% compared with 56.6% for men.

9. *Japan Times*, July 4, 1989.

Table 2.2

## Voters Party Choices

**Upper House Election 1989<sup>10</sup>**

The election for the Upper House was held on July 23, 1989. The LDP to win over the sympathy to the public apologized for the involvement of a number of LDP Diet members in financial scandals. "As the ruling party, we apoloize to the public for having generated serieous distrust of national politics", The campaign platform reads. On the tax system the policy

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10. *Ibid.*

package said the party would 're-examine' the recently introduced consumption tax to eliminate its allegedly inherent faults. It said that LDP would keep in mind public opinion. This written apology was used to clean the scandal ridden image. In spite of the apology the LDP did not do well. It was the SDPJ which emerged as the winner winning 46 of the contested seats, and winning 35% of the vote in national constituencies. The LDP got only 27% of the vote.

**Table 2.3**

**Upper House election 1989**

<b>Parties</b>	<b>Proportional Representation</b>	<b>Electural Districts</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Seat up for election</b>	<b>Seat not up for election</b>
LDP	25	53	78	66	73
SDPJ	25	30	55	22	20
Komeito	17	05	22	12	10
JCP	25	45	70	08	09
DSP	17	08	25	06	05
Zeikinto	09	01	10	01	01
Salaryman	09	01	10	01	01
Niin Club	01	0	10	01	01
Taiyonokai	09	01	10	01	0
Rengo	0	12	12	0	01
Shimpoto	05	05	10	0	0
Others	234	81	315	3	01
Independents	-	43	43	05	04
<b>Total</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>

*Source: Japan Times, July 6, 1989.*

On the party victory Doi said "the citizen have made the right choice expectations are high for the SDPJ and we will fulfil them to best of our

ability.”<sup>11</sup> The main cause of the LDPS’s defeat in 1989 election was the consumption tax that went into affect on April 1, 1989. The tax turned voters, particularly women voters, away from the LDP and towards the SDPJ. In essence the consuming tax 3% levy on everything from children’s snacks to school supplies to maternity expenses. It forged a direct link between life and national politics, that is why, out of 46 seats won by SDPJ, 11 went to women. In all 22 women were elected to the upper house from opposition parties. The LDP got only 36 seats out of 126 contested.

In this election socialists cleverly wooed Japanese women who outnumbered men as eligible voters (some 46.5 million women voters out of a total electorate of 90.3 million). The socialists fielded 12 women candidates in the elction, twice as many as in 1986 election. All in all, a total of 146 women candidates contested as compared with 82 in the previous upper house election 17 women had succeeded in compaign for seats in the house of councillors.<sup>12</sup>

1989 election both parties the LDP and the SDPJ visualized a change in their support base. One was the degree of urbanization and other, the degree of dynamism as measured by social mobility and economic growth. In the both last two upper house election (1986 and 1989) the LDP placed on the

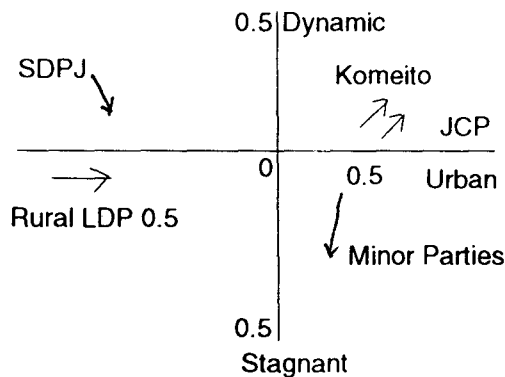
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11. *The Tribune*, Chandigarh, July 29, 1989.

12. *New Ftract Times*, Kaulalumpur, July 25, 1989.

far left of the urbanization axis, demonstrating that country side continued to be its main support base. The vote shares of the SDPJ were also relatively high in the less urbanized districts, but socialists tended to draw greater support in more dynamic communities. Because they picked up extra votes fairly evenly across the nation wide constituencies in 1989.<sup>13</sup>

**Table 2.4**  
**Correlations between Upper House Election**  
**Results & District types, 1986-89**



States from July 1986 Poll.

Horizontal - From rural to highly Urbanized District. Axis

Vertical Axis - From stagnating to dynamic districts.

Social attitudes of the voters is directly related to the support base of LDP & SDPJ in Japanese politics. The LDP suffered a decline in support among all occupations, the biggest loser in the commerce and service sector and among the manual workers. The variations of support for the LDP probably

13. Kobayashi Yoshiaki - Article, Voter attitudes & the 1989 election, *Japan, Echo*, Vol. XVIII, Special issue, 1991.

reflects the degree of unhappiness with the 3% consumption tax. The LDP also hurt by gender gap. Women in particular were upset with consumption tax and angered by the reported womanizing of Prime Minister who sousuke, who stepped down after the election.

**Table 2.5**  
**Social Attitudes of the LSP & SDPJ Voters (%)<sup>14</sup>**

Occupation	LDP		SDPJ
	1986	1989	
Farming, Forestry Fishing	75.9	-	-
Commerce Service	48.8	24.4	32.9
Office Workers	29.6	16.9	39.4
Manual Laborers	35.0	16.3	33.8
Self employed	48.0	37.0	35.6
Full time home makers	37.9	26.2	37.6
Unemployed	38.2	31.4	34.7
<b><u>Sex</u></b>			
Male	44.7	24.9	35.4
Female	39.1	24.5	33.3
<b><u>Age</u></b>			
Twenties	24.4	18.5	33.9
Thirties	33.1	19.4	38.0
Forties	37.8	18.5	34.9
Fifties	51.3	26.1	33.9
Sixties	55.3	35.8	31.6
<b><u>School</u></b>			
Middle School	50.4	26.8	34.6
High School	39.0	22.5	37.6
College	32.3	26.2	30.3

Source: "Shakaito hyo no 'uwakido' O Keiryō Suru," in *Bungeishurji*, Dec. 1989, p.179.

14. *Ibid.*



Among the age groups young people supported SDPJ. As far as the educational qualification of voters is concerned, the voters of high school passed supported more. The attitudes of SDPJ changed after victory. After the victory SDPJ became less concern to abolish the US - Japan treaty than it previous announcement. The SDPJ attitudes over opening up the farm market SDPJ was even more protectionist than the LDP. It declared that the party would focus on humanitarian and environmental aspects of transfers of resources to third world countries rather than commercial one. The party became less willing to see politics separated from economics. The SDPJ proclaimed that greater emphasis would be placed on arms control and North - South initiatives and participation in U.N. activities.

In January 1990, the House of Representatives i.e. lower house of Diet completed its term. The Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu dissolved the House during its plenary session on 24th January 1990 and the cabinet scheduled a general election on 18th Feb. 1990. Just after the declaration of election date every party started campaigning for the election. In this campaign race the SDPJ and the LDP were on the forefront. Both parties started their campaign in their own style.<sup>15</sup>

In course of campaign Takako Doi, the Chairwoman of the SDPJ asked

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15. *The Tribune*, Chandigarh August 5, 1989.

public to put an end to forty years of corrupt rule of LDP. Doi said, while addressing a public meeting that "politics starts an election. An election stained with money results in politics, stained with money". In this election let us smash money politics.<sup>16</sup> Further she said "It was the people who helped to bring political reform to the East European countries. In Japan as well, I would like to create a parliamentary democracy in which a new kind of politics will overcome the old".<sup>17</sup> "I would like you to cause a bigger wave than the one you made during the Upper House election and I would like to move a bigger mountain than the one you moved in the last election", she said. To raise funds for the election, the SDPJ sold a card on which a message was written. The written message was "Love is essential to politics". On the wording of the message was aimed at LDP leader Uno Sosuke who was involved in the sex scandal. The SDPJ commissioned a tune "one word" which urged voters to "love with selfishness and by doing so, make the mountain move". The party official statement was released that the song would be performed in English because young people find the language fashionable. This was made to woo the young voters.

Takako Doi, the star campaigner of the SDPJ called on the people to vote out the LDP and she criticized LDP for not demonstrating its regret over the recruit and sex scandals. On the other hand, Kaifu in his first election

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16. *Japan Times*, January 12, 1990.

17. *Ibid.*

campaign said "This election is choice between a free society and socialism."<sup>18</sup>

LDP gave more emphasis on the structure of Society having linked with economy. It advocated for a free market society, while SDPJ due to its commitment towards socialism made much emphasis on the socialistic pattern of society, in which there would be equity in all sphere of life. The SDPJ's main campaign issues were.<sup>19</sup>

1. Related to consumption tax, which pushed LDP back in the last upper House election.
2. The call for clean politics. As Japan has a history of scandals and corruption in politics.
3. No import of agricultural products.

Before the election of House of Representativea Mayoral election was held on 23rd Jan. 1990. In this election an independent candidate backed by the SDPJ, JCP and Shamiren won defeating an independent candidate backed by the LDP. This first municipal election of 1990 was widely regarded as bellwether for the lower house election. In the lower house election which was held on 24th Feb. 1990, the LDP got absolute majority obtaining 275

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18. *The Hindu*, Madras February 6, 1990.

19. *Ibid*.

seats out of 512. The SDPJ got 136 seats and only 81 seats went to all opposition parties.

**Table 2.6**  
**Party Position in Lower House Election 1990<sup>20</sup>**

<b>Parties</b>	<b>Seats before Election</b>	<b>Seats won</b>	<b>Seats after election</b>
LDP	295	275	286
SDPJ	83	136	139
Komeito	55	45	46
JCP	27	16	16
DSP	26	14	14
Shamiren	4	4	4

After the Post election mores to enroll unofficial candidates and recruit independents, the SDPJ came out with 139 of the 512 Lower House Seats, 54 more than the election of 1989.

So far as the support base of SDPJ in two types of districts most urbanized and least urbanized is concerned, in latter type farmers class had negligible ratio of farmers, its concerned, it got least seats in least urbanized districts. it shows the farmers gave more support to SDPJ in 1990 than 1986 election. Numbers of voters of both type most urbanized and least urbanized grew more than the last election.

20. Matsuzaki Minoru, "Election 90: The Socialist Miss their chance" *Japan Echo*, Vol. XVII, November 2, 1990 P.

**Table 2.7****SDPJ<sup>21</sup>**

<b>District Type</b>	<b>1986</b>	<b>1990</b>
A	14	27
B	21	30
C	21	30
D	17	27
E	20	26
	86	140

A - Most urbanized districts

E - Least urbanized

The SDPJ got more seats in this election than the last election. But the percentage of vote gone down.

**Table 2.8****Share of Vote (%)<sup>22</sup>**

<b>Parties</b>	<b>July 1986</b>	<b>July 1989</b>	<b>Feb. 1990</b>
LDP	49.4	27.3	46.1
SDPJ	17.2	35.1	24.4
Komeito	9.4	10.9	8.0
JCP	8.8	7.0	8.0
DSP	6.4	4.9	4.8

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*

The SDPJ despite its continuous effort could not capture power. The main reasons for its failure were:<sup>23</sup>

1. The SDPJ did not reform its policies. Its classical theory of socialism was still supported by a big section of the party. The SDPJ's policies contained many antiquated elements. The SDPJ opposed the ruling parties policies on various issues that did not often provide an alternative policies. It also to a great extent continued with its old policy towards South Korea and united States. These did not appeal the voters.
2. Another reason for failing SDPJ was the lack of methods, which could attract public towards its policies and programmes. The SDPJ did not involved itself in issues affecting the existing interest of Public.
3. The SDPJ committed mistake in its campaign. The main issue was the consumption tax but it highlighted this issue as a point of reference in 1990 election. There was difference among the opposition parties on the imposition of excise tax on the luxury items, this difference resulted in the distribution of the same vote among opposition parties, which caused SDPJ heavy lose.

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23. Sugimori Koji, Article, Charting the course to a Socialist *Japan Echo*, Vol. XVIII, November 1990.

**CHAPTER - III**

**SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF JAPAN**  
**IT'S POLICIES AND**  
**PROGRAMME INTHE EARLY 1990S**

The Gulf crisis posed a major crisis for Japanese foreign policy. The Social Democratic party of Japan always stood for international peace and peaceful coexistence among nations. It always tried its best to resolve international problems by means of cooperation and coordination. No other political party in Japan is genuinely concerned over the disastrous problem arisen at global level; whether be it the Gulf crisis, Korean crisis or Cambodian crisis. During the Gulf crisis in 1991 the SDPJ showed its keen interest to sort out the crisis. In this connection, the chairwoman of SDPJ Takako Doi met Iraqi President Saddam Hussain and urged him to pull his forces out of Kuwait quickly, so that the devastating war could be checked. She also appealed him to accept a plan put forward by French President Francois Mitterrand involving talks on the middle East.<sup>1</sup>

To bring out a consensus policy of Japan towards the Gulf, the then Prime Minister Kaifu met separately the leaders of all main five opposition parties to discuss about the situation. Komeito and the DSP expressed their support for additional financial contribution to the US led multinational forces, while other parties the SDPJ, JCP and Shamiren made their opinion against it. The SDPJ was highly critical of financial contribution to multinational forces. The DSP was only party who supported the government's plan to send Self

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1. *The Japan Times*, Jan. 14, 1991.



Defence Forces Aircraft to help evacuate refugees but the SDPJ opposed this move. Tokako, the Chairwoman of SDPJ Doi in her plenary session speech in Diet said "The government should never be allowed to take advantage of a confused situation and SDF troops abroad, ignoring public opinion. She kicked government's Persian Gulf War<sup>2</sup> policy in the Diet. She told a plenary session of the Lower House that & 9 billion, which is about ¥ 1.2 trillion pledged in additional financial support for the multinational forces violates the constitution which forbids the use or threat of forces to resolve international conflicts. "There has been no cabinet since the end of World War II that has been more bellicose than that of Prime Minister Kaifu" she said."<sup>2</sup> The SDPJ criticised government for expressing full support for the US led forces. The SDPJ leaders charged that Japan had abandoned its sovereignty by meeting unconstitutionally the US request for more money.

A Lower House discussion on measures to raise the \$9 billion in aid, pledged to the multinational forces in the Gulf was delayed when the SDPJ cited a procedural error by the government. The SDPJ said that it could not be agree to open the budget committee session because the government had not yet submitted a revised fiscal 1991 budget. It cited Article 59 of the Diet law, which requires the approval of the plenary session of the relevant Diet

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2. *Ibid.*

chamber before an item already discussed by a Diet committee could be revised. The number one opposition party demanded that the government should submit the revised 1991 budget and that the plenary session of the lower house be opened.

The SDPJ proposed the demilitarization of the four islands to encourage arms reduction and peace in the Asia Pacific region in addition to the promotion of free personnel exchange and joint development.

However, the SDPJ in spite of its liberal policies did not seem to gain popularity with the Japanese people. This was clearly reflected in the prefectural elections held in April 1991. In this election LDP was triumphant in the 44 prefectural assembly elections. The LDP scored 161 more wins than in election four years ago to take total of 1,543 seats. The SDPJ sustained heavy setbacks, losing as many as 98 prefectural assembly seats to retain only 345 positions the lowest since the party's founding.

**Table 3.1**

Party	Local Assembly Seats (1991) <sup>3</sup>	
	Now	1989
SDPJ	345	443
LDP	1,543	1,382
Komeito	159	186
JCP	98	118
DSP	82	104
Shamiren	04	05
Others	33	35
Independent	429	397

In Tokyo mayoral election, the SDPJ did not field its candidate due to internal conflict and contradiction. It supported Mitasonori Ohara, who was joint candidate of oppositon. But, inspite of all opposition parties support he could not win. The Shunichi Suzuki, a candidate fielded by the LDP won the election.

3. *Japan Times*, April 10, 1991.

**Table 3.2**  
**Tokyo Election Result 1991<sup>4</sup>**

<b>Candidates</b>	<b>Percentage of Votes</b>	<b>Total Votes</b>
Shunichi Suzuki	49.9	2,292,846
Hisanori Isomura	31.3	1,437,233
Shigeo Hatada	9.2	421,775
Mitshnori Ohara	6.3	290,435
Yuya Uchida	1.2	54,654
Others	2.1	93,809

As a result of the poor performance of by the SDPJ backed candidates in the elections resignation of several leaders was demanded. Kazuo Saita secretary general of the party's chapter, said that candidates did not have sufficient time to campaign.

Analysing overall result of the 7th April 1991 election, Yamaguchi said" the loss of the prefectural assembly seats and the Tokyo defeat clearly show his party does not yet have enough power to overwhelm the LDP on its own."<sup>5</sup> Further he added "we gained seats in the past few local and central elections due to advantages created by public opinion and public criticism of the

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Japan Times* April 11, 1991

consumption tax and Recruit stock for favors scandals. But our organisation and activities lacked power to defeat the LDP without such advantages this time."<sup>6</sup>

The Electoral Reorm Bill presented to the Diet aimed at wiping out corruption in politics. The bill called for the establishment of a single seat constituency system for the House of Representatives and a parliamentary panel to redraw lower house electoral zones. The draft bill for single seat constituency system for general election included a standard for political parties allowed to fill candidates in national elections. They needed more members in the Diet and to have gained 3% or more of a ballot in the most recent elections. The bill also gave opportunity to candidates with no party affiliations. But the SDPJ did not support the bill.

With the help of DSP it drafted a bill on electoral reform. The two major opposition parties proposed a system combining proportional representation with single set district representation they also drafted a bill designed to prevent corruption, incorporating stricter measures of political fund central and to introduce a system to subsidize political parties with money from the state coffers. According to proposal, the number of lower house seats was to

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6. Ibid.

be reduced 500 from current 512. The another proposal regarding electoral reform was given by the SDPJ and Komeito proposed the election of 200 seats through the single seat system and remaining 300 through proportional representation the proposal called to divide the nation into 12 blocs. A plan for building a private Ad-Hoc council on political reform was also adopted.<sup>7</sup>

The SDPJ announced its intention to draft a bill for the establishment of an independent securities watch dog modeled after the securities and exchange commission in the United States of America. The SDPJ chairman Makato Tanabe told a local news conference on 1st September, 1991, that the party wanted to set up such an organisation in order to prevent a recurrence of scandals and also emphasised that the finance ministry would handover responsibility of monitoring the securities industries to watch dog body to ensure impartiality and transparency in the securities market. Under the terms of the draft the body would be headed by an administrative committee of five people up picked by the prime minister and the group would act as an extraministerial bureau within the prime minister's office.<sup>8</sup>

Due to earlier defeat meted by the SDPJ it started extending an occasional support to the government. It viewed that the continuous defeats were due to

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7. *Asahi Evening News*, May 24, 1993.

8. *Japan Times*, September 2, 1990.

consistent opposition to government's policies and programmes. It supported the Tokyo metropolitan government's decision to raise bus fares to ¥ 180. The rise in fares included 3% levy, worth about ¥ 5½ according to metropolitan governments transportation bureau. The bureau has annually shouldered about ¥ 1.2 billion in consumption tax costs since its implementation in April 1989.

The SDPJ under the leadership of Tanabe followed more or less the same line of policies which was followed by his predecessor Doi. He criticised the government for proposed 5.38% increase in defence spending. He called for reducing the ground defense forces man-power and stopping purchase of US made multi launch rocket system ground to air patriot missiles and other high-tech weapons. The SDPJ criticized the government for preparing a bill which allowed Self-Defence Forces personnel to join U.N. peace keeping operations. They party maintained that "Bill goes beyond the government's constitutional regulations and violates a 1954 ban by the house of councillors on SDF deployment abroad." The SDPJ called for a reduction of 1,300 to 2,000 each from the maritime Self-Defence Force and Air Defence Force. And it also proposed an environmental tax to create a fund for global conservation. Revenues from land holding tax should be used to buy lots for public housing and other public purposes.<sup>9</sup>

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9. *Japan Times* Sept. 19, 1991.

The SDPJ submitted a bill to the Diet on contribution of United Nations Peace Keeping efforts as an alternative to the government sponsored bill. Bill stated that "Japan can not join U.N. peace keeping forces or ceasefire surveillance mission". The opposition bill limited the nations contribution to civilian roles such as election observation and medical help, both compatible with the constitution. The bill stipulated that Self-Defence Forces personnel could not join peace cooperation team without resigning their military posts. Japanese personnel in U.N. peace keeping would be placed under the command of the international body rather than cabinet as expected in government's bill.<sup>10</sup>

Regarding the national flag the leadership of SDPJ proposed reversing its position against the use of the Hinomaro (sun flag) as the national flag on condition the Diet adopts a resolution publicly declaring Japan's responsibility for the pacific war. The number one opposition has long opposed the use of the flag, citing its association with Japan's aggression against Asian neighbours. As far as national anthem is concerned the party suggested the traditional "Kimgayo" be replaced, as its lyrics reflects the past when sovereignty rested with the Emperor. Kimgayo literally means "the reign of Emperor." The SDPJ also stressed that it did not serve an educational purpose to oblige pupils to

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10. *Japan Times* Nov. 23 1991.



hoist the sun flag and sing the anthem at school ceremonies as stipulated in Educational Ministry's study guidelines. The Education Minister of shadow cabinet of the SDPJ said "a new anthem that stresses sovereignty rests with the people should be adopted".<sup>11</sup>

SDPJ's stand on Disarmament SDPJ strongly supports disarmament.

Accordingly it has urged China to reduce its atomic arsenals. It called for the establishment of an Asian Pacific Security Organization for military confidence building, disarmament, political reconciliation and economic and cultural exchange in North East Asia. It further asked for Chinese co-operation with the new international registry system of conventional transfer, which was adopted at the UN General Assembly in late 1991.

The SDPJ which backed large scale disarmament and viewed the SDF as unconstitutional, was turned over the Defense agencies possible move to reduce this size of Ground Self Defense Force personnel stationed in Hokkaido.

The SDPJ said that it stands firm on its disarmament policy and would work out a complete plan to reduce the strength of the SDF to realize large scale disarmament at home in conjunction with global disarmament. In this

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11. Japan Times, Nov. 26, 1991.

record, to revamp the party a blue-ribbon committee of SDPJ was formed. The platform accepted the existence of the Self-Defense Forces. But the panel wanted the party to pursue its original goal of a phase reduction and re-organization. The party's traditional advocacy of total disarmament was not included in the panel's initial draft. It is said in the final draft that the SDPJ does not deny Japan's right to self-defense as an integral part of authority and power of a sovereign state. The platform indirectly favoured the existence of SDF.

It is said in the draft that the SDF missions should be strictly limited to the protection of Japan's territory and forces should not be armed with any offensive weapons that pose a threat to neighbouring countries. The draft called for steps to divide the present SDF into three organizations:

1. a national guard; 2. a corps of experts designed to participate in united Nations sponsored peace-keeping operations; 3. and an organization for domestic and overseas disaster relief activities. Tanabe summarizing the committee's discussing said that the basic idea of the reform plan was to "address reality as it is, but at the same time adhere to party's policy goals and continuous efforts towards realization of the aim of total disarmament"

Seeing the internal political scenario as well as global situation SDPJ softened its stand on the participation of SDF personnel in Cyambodia peace-

keeping operation in 1992, the party clarified its stand on UN peace-keeping force. It maintained that officers and personnel on loan from the SDF could participate in UN peace-keeping activities with their military status, inact under a law and that would be in effect for only two years. The SDPJ had earlier insisted that SDF personnel would have to quit the military to join U.N. mission abroad. Tanabe reiterated an earlier proposal for legislation with a two years life to allow Japan's participation in U.N. Peace-keeping activities during Cambodia's reconstruction. Under that proposal peace-keeping operations would be carried out by a separate corps instead of the SDF. The Japanese team would not be involved in such military activities as usually undertaken by a U.N. Force rather would involve only in medical, rehabilitation, election monitoring and other civilian activities.

The SDPJ policy towards Emperor underwent a change. It voiced support for a proposed visit by the Emperor to China for the first time. It maintained that the SDPJ had supported the visit only in principle and that it should not be utilized by any one to gain political mileage. SDPJ assured that it would not criticise the Imperial visit to South and North Korea but the condition was that the host countries should welcome the visit. And Japan must apologize for war-crime perpetrated during world War II.<sup>12</sup> These remarks were aimed at

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12. *Asahi Evening News*, May 14, 1993.

winning mainstream support for the largest opposition party in the house of councillor election of 1992. Japanese people were sufficiently loyal to the Emperor and SDPJ hope gain by taking such a stand.

### **Upper House Election 1992**

The upper House elections were proposed to be held on 27th July 1992. SDPJ's sought the help of DSP. After a heated discussion both parties came to a conclusion not to field candidate against each other. It was a part of mutual cooperation and coordination between two major oppositions.

In the spirit of co-operating with the DSP decided not to field a candidate against a DSP incumbent supported by Rengo. In April, the SDPJ's Hiroshima constituency decided to support DSP incumbent Hiroyuki Konishi in the election, setting aside its earlier plan to back Tetsa Noda, an incumbent SDPJ member of upper house. SDPJ chairman Tanabe told that his party was ready to rebuild its tie up with DSP, indicating that the party would try to minimize the impact of disagreements over the peace-keeping law on election cooperation. Ikuo Ito, secretary general of DSP's during election said "I am sure that Rengo backed candidates, jointly supported by the SDPJ and DSP, will try to avoid controversy over the peace-keeping law"<sup>13</sup> Nakai of DSP had the

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13. *The Daily yomuri*, August 26, 1996.

similar view. He said "The SDP will not try to spoil the Rengo election cooperation with the SDPJ by taking up the peace-keeping issue".<sup>14</sup>

The election campaign for upper house was started from 8th July 1992. The two major parties - the ruling LDP and main opposition SDPJ chartered different course of actions for the triennial poll. The SDPJ viewed the election as a referendum on the just enacted laws that authorized the government to send SDF overseas. Opposition leaders called for income tax cuts, particularly for low income earners, of about 1 billion. But the LDP opposed on the ground that tax cuts would require the government to issue deficit covering bonds. In course of election campaign, poster campaign was an important part. In this election different political parties pasted different colourful poster to woo the voters. The number of official posters were based on the number of candidates each party fielded in the both local constituencies and proportional representation section. One of its important posters showed of SDPJ a bouquet of lowers on top of a military helmet with gun, which depicted "Are you going to send SDF on peace".

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14. *Japan Times*, June 24, 1992

Table 3.3

## 1992 Upper House Candidates by Party

Party	Proportional Representation	Local Constituency	Total	Proportional Constituency	Local Constituency	Total
LDP	27 (24)	55 (51)	82 (75)	16	23	39
SDPJ	25 (9)	18 (13)	43 (22)	19	28	47
Komeito	17 (7)	6 (3)	23 (10)	06	04	10
JCP	25 (5)	46 (4)	71 (9)	04	01	05
Rengo	- (0)	0 (-)	22 (1)	0	12	12
Niin club	10 (1)	0 (-)	10 (1)	0	01	04
Shamiren	9 (-)	0 (-)	9 (-)	01	0	01
Sports Peace	10 (-)	122 (-)	10 (-)	0	01	01
Minor Parties	190 (-)	39 (-)	312 (-)	0	01	01
Independent	01 (1)	0 (-)	39 (2)	01	04	05
<b>Total</b>	<b>330 (50)</b>	<b>311 (7)</b>	<b>641 (127)</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>125</b>

Source: See Japan Times, July 24 1992.

- ( ) - candidates (incumbents)

In the upper house election, the SDPJ won 21 seats compared with 22 it was fighting to retain. The ruling LDP won 69 of the 127 seats contested and appeared likely to hit 70 despite a record low voters turnout. A peculiar thing,

which had been seen in this election, was the poor turnout of voters. The poor turnout of voters showed the disillusionment from politics as well as political parties.

**Table 3.4**

**Upper House Strength by Seat**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Prefectural Constituency</b>	<b>National Constituency</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Held over</b>	<b>Total Strength</b>
LDP	50 (51)	19 (24)	69	39	108 (114)
SDPJ	12 (13)	10 (9)	21	47	24 (20)
Komeito	6 (3)	8 (7)	14	10	11 (4)
JCP	2 (4)	4 (5)	06	05	6 (8)
DSP	1 (2)	2 (3)	03	03	12 (13)
Rengo	0 (1)	- (0)	0	12	4 (-)
JNP	- (-)	4 (-)	04	0	17 (12)
Others	6 (1)	2 (2)	18	9	

The election victory by the LDP shows that, in general, voters backed the new law allowing SDF participation in U.N. peace-keeping mission. The outcome also shows the public faith in the LDP capability to cope up with the current economic showdown. On the poor performance of SDPJ, its secretary general Yamahana said "party poor showing is regrettable and that he

has been searching his soul on why the party failed to present voters with concrete way to contribute in international peace."<sup>15</sup>

The SDPJ got lesser percentage of votes in both constituencies as compare to 1989 upper House election. LDP, on the other hand got more percentages of votes in both constituencies.

**Table 3.5**  
**Popular Votes (%)** <sup>16</sup>

<b>Party</b>	<b>Prefectural Constituency</b>	<b>National Constituency</b>
LDP	43.62 (30.70)	35.21 (27.32)
SDPJ	12.95 (26.38)	17.57 (35.05)
Komeito	7.78 (5.10)	14.83 (10.86)
JCP	10.64 (8.81)	8.46 (7.04)
DSP	2.24 (3.63)	4.76 (4.85)
Rengo	9.75 (6.82)	(-) (-)
Others	13.02 (18.57)	19.15 (14.88)

*Source: See Japan Times, July 24, 1992.*

(1989 election)

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Japan Times*, July 24, 1992.



**Table 3.6**  
**Over the Years (%)<sup>17</sup>**

<b>Years</b>	<b>LDP</b>	<b>SDPJ</b>	<b>Komeito</b>	<b>DSP</b>	<b>JCP</b>	<b>Others</b>
1980	54	19	11	04	05	08
1983	55	18	11	05	06	06
1986	57	16	10	06	06	06
1989	43	28	08	06	12	-
1992	42	27	10	04	13	-

### **Reasons of Defeat**

The weakness of the SDPJ also has roots within the Party. In the campaign for the upper House elections, the socialists trouble deciding whether to join other parties in supporting joint candidates; the stumbling block was the SDPJ's opposition to military participation in U.N. peace-keeping operations, a position that some of the proposed candidates, like Mirota Kensaku in Tokyo did not share.<sup>18</sup>

Other reasons for defeat were:<sup>19</sup>

17. *Ibid.*

18. Shinohara Hajime - Article, The prospects for a multi party system. *Japan Echo*, Vol. XX, November 4, winter 1993, p.41.

19. Nawazawa Takao - Article. The opposition Parties and their Labour Backers. *Japan Echo*, Vol. XVX, November 2, Summer 1992.

1. The SDPJ lacked the public interest in matters of ideology. It failed to convince people of its ideology it's commitments.
2. An another reason of its defeat in the Upper House election was that the SDPJ seemed to have lost the ability to deliver messages that media and public would respond to as plausible blue prints for the future.
3. The left wing was out of touch with the general public. The SDPJ was heavily dependent on the left wing.
4. To the general public the active SDPJ members looked like misguided idealists clinging to an ideology which in the post old War era had almost disappeared.
5. Sohyo, the largest labour union long time support of SDPJ kept itself away from SDPJ, in this election be cause of SDPJ tie with Rengo. Rengo has less membership than the Sohyo. Not only this, Rengo itself divided into many factions. It was full of contradictions within the party. It could not address matters like agricultural imports, nuclear powers, Japan's international role and other issues facing the country and which had direct link with public and its welfare. This also affected the SDPJ and its popularity.

The SDPJ tried to topple the government by proposing a no confidence motion against Miyazawa government in the Lower House of the Diet. The LDP held 274 seats in the lower House. Compared with 140 for the SDPJ, 46 for Komeito, 16 JCP, & 13 for the DSP. In addition there were 8 independent members of whom 3 were in the opposition camp and 15 vacancies. The motion was tabled in the House of Representatives. In the non-confidence motion Miyazawa was defeated by the opposition by taking help from Hata, who had 35 members. And as a consequence, Miyazawa was forced to dissolve his cabinet and declare a date for election.

Election for the lower house were scheduled to be held on 18 July 1993. Election Campaign Started with full vigour. In course of election campaign, in a speech LDP Leader Miyazawa said, "The SDPJ has radically different policies from the LDP and other opposition parties. It says the self Defense Force is unconstitutional and if there is to be coalition government, it will not be able to allot any budget for the SDF."<sup>20</sup> Yamahana Sadao in contrast made an appeal during a campaign at Horraido that "we must make a new coalition with the SDPJ at its core. We want you to cast a ballot of no confidence against Liberal Democratic Party."<sup>21</sup> He further said, the envisaged coalition would

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20. *Japan Times*, July 5, 1993.

21. *Ibid.*

"develop policies in a sincere manner in accordance with public's wishes," implying it would inherit most of the LDP policies to minimise the turmoil of a transition.

Finally, on 18th July 1993 election for the House of Representative was held, in which LDP emerged as the largest party, securing 223 seats.

**Table 3.7**

**Result of 1993 House of Representatives Election**

Party	Seats Won	Incumbent	Former Members	Others	Candidates	Previous Strength	Presentation from 1990
LDP	223	179	18	26	285 (212)	227	275
SDPJ	70	64	01	05	142 (121)	134	136
Shinto	55	34	02	19	69 (35)	36	-
Komeito	51	24	01	26	54 (25)	45	45
JNP	35	-	-	35	57 (-)	-	16
JCP	15	08	04	03	129 (15)	16	14
DSP	15	10	04	01	28 (12)	13	-
Sakigake	13	09	-	04	16 (10)	10	04
Shamiren	04	04	-	-	4 (4)	04	01
Minor Party	-	-	-	-	62 (1)	02	21
Independent	30	11	4	05	109 (4)	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>955 (449)</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>512</b>

Source: Japan Times, July 19, 1993.

**Table 3.8****Popular Representation (%)**

<b>Party</b>	<b>%</b>
LDP	43
SDPJ	13.7
Komeito	10
Shamiren	0.8
DSP	2.9
Sakigake	2.5
JNP	6.8
Shinto	10.8
JCP	2.8
Independent	2.9

**Percentage of Votes**

<b>Party</b>	<b>% of Votes</b>
JCP	7.7
LDP	36.6
SDPJ	15.4
Kameito	8.2
Shinto	10.1
JNP	8.1
Sakigake	2.6
Shamiren	0.7
Minor Parties	0.2
Independent	6.9

Rapid changes in the international environment and the end of the East West rivalry and the growing insignificance of ideology had its impact on left inclined parties like the SDPJ.

Another effort for the coalition appeared on the scene between SDPJ, Japan New Party and of Japan Renewal Party. But were the SDPJ were did not welcome the idea of Hata becoming premier. The JRP suggested JNP's Hosokawa with the SDPJ and DSP being safe in their camps, Ozawa, Yamaguchi and other architects of the coalition focused their attention toward NJP and Sakigake. They began to pursue both parties. They had a head start over the LDP, which could not even start its planning until the hurdle of Miyazawa's resignation was removed. Earlier Hosokawa was in fix whether he should join coalition or remain neutral. And wanted to see the consequence of case against Kanemura on tax evasion charges. The coalition was jeopardised knowing that he has been in close tie with JRP, who had been to be the Ozawa boss in Takishita faction. The LDP took decision to bring Takishita, the former Prime Minister who resigned from Prime Ministership in 1989 following the involvement of recruit scandal. This gave Hosokawa an excellent excuse for joining non-LDP camp. After that, Ozawa met Hosokawa and convinced him that JRP would not insist for Hata as Prime Minister rather it would support.

The JNP - Sakigake bloc issued a blue print for political reform on 23rd July & made them nearly impossible to go closer to LDP. Both parties felt comfortable to go with non-LDP coalition. And, thus after a high level political drama, a seven party coalition government was formed under Hosokawa 28th July 1993. This government was formed on the basis of only one slogan, that was to remove LDP anyhow. All parties thought to finish the 38 yrs. political hegemony of LDP.

Ultimately a seven party coalition emerged with Hosokawa as Prime Minister. He resigned on April 8, 1994. Following were the reasons for tendering resignation.<sup>22</sup>

1. The pressure of holding together a coalition which spanned a spectrum from far left to conservative right, while trying to implement major constitutional reforms and economic reflation, had produced rumour of Hosokawa's possible resignation.
2. By early March Hosokawa's authority within the cabinet had been weakened to such an extent that he was unable to implement a planned cabinet reshuffle in which he had intended to remove Masayashi-Takemura, leader of Sakigake, from the post of cabinet secretary.

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22. *Records of World Events*, Vol. 40, Number 4, 1994.

3. The catalyst for Hosokawa's resignation was the accusation of financial misconduct. Allegations were that Hosokawa's accepted a loan of ¥ 100 billion from the Sagawa Kyubin in 1982.

The second allegation concerned accusation was that Hosokawa had tried to cancel the 1987 purchase of 300 shares in the newly privatised Nippon Telegraph and Telephone telecommunications giant, which were later sold at considerable profit. Hosokawa insisted that purchase had been legitimate, and that it had been made by late father-in-law. Hata succeeded Hosokawa as Prime Minister.

The SDPJ, under the leadership of Tomiichi Murayama broke alliance from the coalition headed by Hata. The party took such a step as a reaction to the formation of a parliamentary group consisting shisheito, the Japan new party, Democratic Socialist party, Jiyuto (Liberal Party) and Kaikaku-no Kai. The SDPJ alleged that this 130 member parliamentary group wanted to dominate over it. But, SDPJ's chairman promised to extend party's support in passing 1994 budget since it was former partner of the Hosokawa government, so it has responsibility for the budget. He denied support to the government over other matters.



The LDP proposed no confidence motion against the Hata government. The SDPJ voted in favour of motion, which brought a government in minority. As a result Hata was compelled to resign.

After the resignation a new coalition government of the liberal Democratic Party, SDPJ and New Party Syakigake combined was formed under the leadership of Murayama. Just after installation as Prime Minister, he announced that his administration would take a serious note on the consumer interest, respecting the spirit of constitution.

On domestic political reforms he said, a bill would be introduced to demarket the newly introduced single seat electoral system, economic management to bring economic dependency. Murayama promised that the government would do its outmost deal with Korea and US The Prime Minister said, the government would work to establish a democratic political system.

On the foreign policy issues the government is firm to continue the foreign policy with US, USSR, and China on the line of previous government, despite of differences with its coalition partner LDP. The mninster of international trade and industry Ryuotoro - Hashimoto, who had earlier a reservation over the Uruguay Round Trade agreement said, he would examine the agreement and process leading to an accord. Defense Agency Director general Tokuichiro Tamazawa said, in this regard, the Murayama government would up hold the

constitution and Japan - US Security Treaty and pursue a defense policy on military issues.

He viewed that the government would do its best to contribute to U.N. peace-keeping efforts **within** the frame-work of the existing peace-keeping law.

**CONCLUSION**

The social democratic party of Japan has an important place in the Japanese political history. Despite being in opposition it played a very crucial role in setting up a new socio - politico-economic dimension in the society. Prior to the Meiji period Japan was a feudal society. But after the Meiji restoration it began to turn into a industrial society gradually and now it is the second highly - industrialized country among the non-communist countries.

The SDPJ followed the Marxian-Socialist ideology, supporting working class. It emphasized of the formation of socialistic pattern of society in Japan, so that masses could be benefitted. The SDPJ advocated the establishment of exploitation free society based on freedom, equality and solidarity. The domestic policies - and programmes of the SDPJ are formed in a manner that maximum upliftment of down-to-earth people could be done. Its political activity is based on the principle of a "society giving precedence to the improvements of the people's welfare.

So far as the ideological base of the SDPJ is concerned, it was based on the Marxian socialism which has undergone change now. Initially Marxism and socialism were studied by the academic world. A big section of the intellectual, were drawn towards this ideology. Japan's policy of 'Fukuko Kyohei' (rich country strong army) led to rapid industrialization which in turn

led to unrest among the working class. To begin with leadership was provided by the intellectuals.

With the great Depression which followed the first world war led to closure of several factories and employment. The working conditions and low wages contributed to the growing popularity of socialist parties.

However, with the rise of militarism in the 1930s and the enforcement of peace preservation laws several of the left parties were disbanded and leaders went under-ground.

The Social Democrats have considered themselves to be a natural allies of organised labour. The main support in terms of candidates and finance came from the labour unions especially from sohyo. After the land reform in Japan, social Democratic party of Japan, tried to get support from farmer class. Business houses supported the conservatives, only a small percentage supported socialists. These interests were becoming more organized and politically less apathetic. Other interest groups like women, youth and consumers were attracted by the SDPJ ideology, policies and programmes.

The SDPJ had been the main opposition but it could not replace the Liberal Democratic Party because of several weaknesses inherent within the

party. The most important of which was the existence of several factions, reformist right wing socialists and Revolutionary left wing. The three had differences among themselves but agreed to the parliamentary path for capturing power. One of the main problem is ideological differences between the different factions continued till today. The other was it's almost total reliance on the labour unions. It tried to bring about changes in its policies and to get support from other quarters other than labour unions. This was not welcomed by the labour unions and its support for the socialist party gradually dwindled. Due to dependence on sohyo and recruitment of leaders from Sohyo the SDPJ grown into a labour dominated party. The requirements of parliamentary politics and the actual pattern of support made it a national party whereas the support of sohyo and other labour unions categorized SDPJ in a class party. The right wing was against the heavy reliance of SDPJ on the labour unions. It favoured a move for a broad based support rather than limit it to the labour class alone.

The foreign policy of SDPJ is based on:

1. The question of rearmament of Japan.
2. The Japan - US Security Treaty.
3. The self Defense forces.

The SDPJ was not in favour of rearmament simply because its basic policy is based on the principle of 'neutrality'. The SDPJ was also against the security treaty with US. The existence of this treaty was a reminder of Japan being a power which was secondary to US.

However, after the SDPJ came into power in coalition with the LDP it had not criticized the treaty. In fact it seems to have accepted it.

The agricultural policy as a part of a domestic policy, the SDPJ stand was that the party was very much concerned with the problems of people as well as farmers. As it opposed the rice import policy of the LDP government.

The policy of industrialization of key industries showed its leaning towards the class. The SDPJ policies and programmes. Marxian - Socialism as well as welfare of the worker's more or less contributed in prefectural and national election.

The victory of the SDPJ in the 1989 Tokyo Assembly election and upper house election was due to the political ability of its then chairwoman Tokako Doi. But she was not sole factor responsible for the victory. The declaration 'Road to socialism' contributed much to the SDPJ's victory. Because of it SDPJ left its dogmatic ideas and followed pragmatic one.

The SDPJ came to power in coalition with the LDP in 1994. Tomiichi Murayama became the first socialist Prime Minister after Japan regained its independence in 1952. But it has paid a price for coming into power. It seems to have given up its stand on important domestic foreign policy issues which it held so far. The SDPJ had not brought out any changes in the policies adopted by the earlier LDP led government.

However, in the changed world environment where economics supercedes ideological concerns it seems that sooner or later the SDPJ would have to compromise on its policies regarding the SDF, Japan - U.S. Security Treaty etc.

Thus, after the end of cold war, it changed its attitudes towards the various foreign and domestic issues like:

1. The question of Japan's rearmament. Earlier it opposed rearmament policy of Japan. But, due to change in international situation the SDPJ also changed its policy towards rearmament. It softened its attitudes regarding to defense policy.
2. Japan - US Treaty SDPJ was die hard of Japan - US security treaty on the logic that imperialist America exploited the boiling world situation. But in the 1980s it changed its old policy of security and accepted it more or less.



3. The Self Defense Force, During the cambodian crisis, SDPJ opposed it by tooth and nail the existing government's policy to send self defense forces - under the guidance of U.N. as peace-keeping force. Later on it changed its policy on SDF and supported the government's proposal to send the forces with some ammedements the SDF of Japan would be sent under the auspices of the UN only. Since Makato Tanabe took over the Chairman from Takako Doi in the summer of 1991 the party's effort has been to transform itself from a credible opposition party to one which could replace the LDP as a governing party by the mid 1990s.

The main goal of the SDPJ convention held in December 1991 was to prepare a platform which would be in keeping with the changing world scenario. It also pledged to organize both political group and individuals of liberal thinking into a viable political force that could take power.

Thus, the main emphasis in the 1992 election was "liberal". This was to attract working women, ordinary citizens, workers, office goers and even liberal democrats who might consider joining hands with the SDPJ.

SDPJ 'determination' to breathe new life into the party was clearly visible in the draft of the "1993 Declatation". The party had accepted the realities of an "entirely new era" following the cold war. Consequently, careful reading of this declaration shows that the term "Socialism" which appeared, frequently

in the 1986 declaration was not to be found in the new declaration. The emphasis now was on "Social Democracy" based on the principles of "Freedom, Justice and Solidarity". SDPJ's stand on foreign policy issues, as mentioned earlier changed.

The LDP on the other hand suffered because of splits and formation of independent parties by the splinter groups. Its image was also tarnished not only by involvement of LDP leaders in financial scandal, but its' stand on issues like rice import was also important not reviewed well. Consequently, it is not surprising that it could not win even a simple majority in the election. It had to take the support of SDPJ to form a government. Politics as the saying goes makes "Strange bedfellows", SDPJ which for more than decades had been opposing the LDP now had in coalition with it formed a government in July 1994 under the leadership of Tomiichi Murayama. After coming into power SDPJ has continued to follow the policies adopted by the LDP earlier.

However, within the SDPJ there is serious difference over the programme which it should adopt in future. It would be interesting to watch the developments in the coming future.

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