

The Japanese Working Class Movement from the 1950s to the Middle of 1970s

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The following text was originally written with limited materials at hand at Paris in 1982, and I have made some stylistic changes to the original text - November 1991. For the final chapter, see [The Last Vigor of the Japanese Postwar Reformist Workers Movement and its Impasse in the 1970s — the beginning of the downfall of Sohyo Trade-Union movement](#) [1]

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1 Postwar trade union structure

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Japanese working class did not have its classic period of the Second International, a period of mass workers movement before the first world war, nor did it have mass trade union

movement and mass workers parties even between the two world wars, during which there was no bourgeois democracy in Japan. Numerical size of the Japanese working class was roughly 3 million in 1914, 7.2 million in 1925 and 8.18 million in 1935(R. Ohashi, "Class Composition of Japan", Tokyo). Manufacturing workers and miners were 2.24 million in 1925 and 2.9 million in 1935(ibid.).

Modern workers movement began to develop under the direct impact of the Russian revolution only in the 1920s. Number of unions and size of unionized workers were respectively 387 and 137,000 in 1922, 457 and 254,000 in 1925, 712 and 384,000 in 1930, and 973 and 420,000 in 1936, the year 1936 being one year before the beginning of the Japanese colonial war against China. The workers movement was permanently harassed by the state repression, and there were two major currents; straight rightwing social-democrats and non-communist and communist leftwingers.

The organized workers movement remained a minority of the working class, and there was no mass explosion of workers struggles all through the 1920s and the first half of 1930s. When Japanese imperialism started the full-scale colonial war against China, the trade union movement was totally suppressed, and there was no organized workers movement from the late 1930s to the defeat of Japanese imperialism in 1945.

Only after the defeat of Japanese imperialism, Japanese workers exploded massively in their struggles in late 1945 and thereafter. About 400,000 workers were unionized at the end of 1945, and number of unionized workers became about 3 million in 1946, while the absolute size of working class was between 13 and 14 million in 1945.

Thus, very much different from the cases of major Western European countries and even from the US trade union movement, the massive trade union movement of Japanese working class developed only after the second world war, and mass workers parties also developed closely inter-related with the trade union movement.

1.1.2 A structurally reformist and bourgeois democratic mass workers movement was established only in the middle of 1950s, after the end of the Korean war. The Sohyo(General Council of Trade Unions of Japan), which was founded by combined forces of majority reformist elements and minority rightist Social-Democrat elements under the encouragement of the US military occupation command in 1950, two weeks after the outbreak of Korean war, represented such a structurally reformist trade union movement as majority mass workers movement in the latter half of 1950s and towards the 1960s.

The Sohyo was founded upon the decisive defeat of the immediately postwar militant trade union movement(Sanbetsu-Kaigi: All Japan congress of Industrial Trade Unions) under the CP leadership through a drastic rationalization of whole economy in 1949. More than 100,000 workers of the national railway, postal and telephone-telegram services and 170,000 governmental employees were dismissed and 370,000 workers were fired in the private sector in 1949. Through this rationalization, the Japanese capitalist economy was linked to the world capitalist market with the fixed exchange rate of \$1=360. Furthermore, immediately after the outbreak of Korean war in 1950, the US military occupation command ordered political dismissals of the CP members and sympathizers as "Red Purges"; 10,972 workers were sacked in the private sector and 1,196 governmental employees were thrown out in 1950.

Foundation of the Sohyo was a result of definite split between the militant CP elements and the reformist elements in the Sanbetsu-Kaigi trade union movement, and the former's almost total defeat through the 1949 rationalization and the subsequent "Red Purges" at the beginning of Korean war. When the Sohyo was founded in 1950, it embraced almost all the major national trade unions both in the private and public sectors, and it claimed 3.65 million membership. As for the Sanbetsu-

Kaigi under the CP leadership, it retained only about 40,000 members in 1951.

Setting-up of the reformist Sohyo was supported by the US military occupation command, which had been the real political power in Japan since the Japanese defeat in 1945. The founding congress of Sohyo gave its political support to the US “democratic efforts” at the Korean war.

It might be important to note the difference between the case of immediately postwar workers movement in Japan and those of France and Italy confronted with the new “Cold War” from the late 1940s to the early 1950s. The Japanese CP, which had been an active majority of mass workers movement from 1946 to 1948, was almost totally smashed in the trade union movement in 1949-50, but, in Italy and France, both CPs kept their dominant position in their respective national trade union movements from the late 1940s to the 1950s. In the latter cases there were continuities, but in Japan there was a real defeat and interruption/discontinuity. Since then, the Japanese CP had never regained a majority position in the national trade union movement.

1.1.3 The 1949-50 rationalization was the starting step for the postwar Japanese capitalist economy in its recovery and subsequent sustained expansionist growth in the capitalist world market.

Japan was the advanced base for the US war in Korea, and the Korean war boosted the Japanese capitalist economy which had just carried through the drastic rationalization in 1949-50. In 1953-54, the economy recovered the previous peak of war economy during the early 1940s, and it entered a sustained and long-span growing process. Thus, an internal balance of national economy was established between the governmental fiscal structure and the private sector economy through the general growing process during the 1950s.

And, this economic framework was the very basis upon which the Sohyo trade union movement could establish itself as a mass reformist movement, embracing the great majority of workers both in the public and private sectors, in the late 1950s. This “institutionalization” of Sohyo as a mass reformist workers movement was an organic part of the simultaneously on-going relative stabilization of bourgeois democratic system of the Japanese state, which had been introduced under the US military occupation immediately after the second world war.

When the question of energy/chemical-industry transformation from coal to oil was posed at the end of the 1950s, there were severe and prolonged struggles of the coal miners, whose union movement had been the strongest in the private sector, in 1959-60, but they were betrayed by the reformist Sohyo leadership and were defeated definitely in 1960. Thus, the energy/chemical-industry transformation proceeded massively, and the whole Japanese economy entered the accelerated expansionist growth of the 1960s.

In summary, the reformists, who sold out the militant workers movement during the drastic rationalization of 1949-50, founded the Sohyo, and the Sohyo trade union movement had never met a large scale capitalist economic crisis the mid-1950s to 1973-75. Confronted with the dramatic collapse of the expansionist economic growth and depressionary and structural readjustment measures of the government and the bosses, the Sohyo union bureaucrats capitulated totally and the mass of workers were paralyzed in the framework of Sohyo union movement.

1.2 Intra-enterprise unions and the employment system

1.2.1 More precisely, problems of the specific Japanese intra-enterprise unions must be taken up and analyzed critically.

According to a bourgeois expert on the Japanese industrial relations, “the Japanese labor-

management relation has its three pillars; the intra-enterprise union system, life-long employment system and seniority-order wage system(wage-scale parallel to age-order).”(Y. Ashimura, “Short Introduction on Labor Movement”, Tokyo)

“Most of the Japanese unions are organized on the basis of individual enterprises; they are not organized horizontally on the basis of job-categories or industries. Those unions, organized on the basis of enterprises, form industrial federations as their upper structure .” “Intra-enterprise unions are organized only among those permanent employees” who are life-long employed, blue-colors and white-colors mixed all together, excluding non-permanent, periodic-contract workers and subcontract workers, and “those unions tend to concern themselves centrally about their own enterprises and to limit the activities within the enterprises.” It is not unusual “for union office-bearers to become staff-personnel of the management.”(ibid.)

“There is an ‘autonomy of intra-enterprise unions’; individual unions can reject directions and orders from their industrial federation. Thus, it is rather not so easy for an industrial federation to have a complete unity of component unions’ actions.” “Basic units of trade union finance are those intra-enterprise unions. Those unions collect the union dues from the membership” through the check-off system, and “the unions pay regular fees to their industrial federations.”(ibid.) Thus, intra-enterprise unions can boycott their federations financially very much easily.

1.2.2 Basic concept of the intra-enterprise unions: the basic unit of a union is the employer who employs workers and other employees for their life-time at least theoretically; those workers and employees constitute their intra-enterprise union, corresponding to their common and single employer, and those non-permanent, periodic contract workers or subcontract workers are excluded from the intra-enterprise union.

In the private sector, there is normally one intra-enterprise union at one enterprise, even though the enterprise has several factories scattered regionally, and those unions gather to form their industrial federation as their upper structure. It is not necessarily unusual that there are two or three intra-enterprise unions among the workers/employees of a enterprise, due to union split(s).

In the public sector, the national railway system, postal system, telecommunication system and tobacco corporation are national enterprises, and workers/employees of individual national enterprises are organized in their own intra-enterprise union(s). In the case of the national railway, there are three national unions(two reformist unions and one rightwing) and other local unions(one of them is under the CP leadership, and another one is under left-centrist group). There are two national unions, reformist one and rightwing one, among the postal workers/employees, and one national union and some local unions(one of them is under the CP leadership, and another union is under our leadership) among telecommunication workers/employees. The two local unions of the national railway and the two local unions of the telecommunication are results of expulsions by the union bureaucracy. (Those union situations were at the time of 1982.)

As for the local governmental workers/employees and municipal transportation and water-supply workers/employees, they are unionized according to individual prefectures, municipalities and towns, and those unions are federated nationally. Teachers have the same union structure as the local governmental workers/employees, but there are also a great number of private schools(primary schools, middle schools and high schools), colleges and universities, teachers/employees of which are unionized separately under the same system of intra-enterprise union. There are also reformist unions and rightwing ones among the teachers/employees of the “public sector” schools.

1.2.3 The rate of unionization is extremely high in the public sector, except the education system, and the rightwing unions are anti-workers-movement basically as agents of the authorities and

managements.

In the private sector, life-long employed workers/employees are almost totally unionized in individual intra-enterprise unions at big enterprises, due to the specific intra-enterprise union system itself, and it was not uncommon that, when a serious conflict developed between the workers/employees and the management, the given intra-enterprise union splitted between a militant part and a pro-management part, or the intra-enterprise union expelled those who wanted to fight for their cause against the management. In the public sector, too, almost all the unions splits have been results of various union struggles.

At the smaller enterprises in the private sector, the rate of unionization becomes lower, paralleling to the size of enterprise.

Non-permanent, periodic workers, subcontract workers and part-time workers(mostly women) are basically not unionized.

In 1972, there were 30.31 million wage-earners in the private sector, and 8.47 million were unionized, the rate of unionization being 28%. There were 9.23 million wage-earners at the enterprises which hired 500 or more, and the rate of unionization among those 9.23 million was 63.6%. There were 4.85 million wage-earners at the enterprises which hired from 100 to 499, and 31.5% were unionized among them. There were 5.05 million wage-earners at the enterprises which hired less than 29, and 3.4% were unionized among them.

Table 1: Union membership and estimated rate of unionization (private sector)

Year	1958	.	1969	.	1972	.	1981
Size of enterprises	members (,000)	%	members (,000)	%	members (,000)	%	%
500 or more	4,134	61.3	5,356	63.0	5,873	63.6	62.8
100 - 499	1,180	37.6	1,455	33.5	1,528	31.5	28.1
30 - 99	372	10.3	444	9.8	454	9.0	8.3
29 or less	292	3.1	513	4.9	376	3.4	3.2
Total/average	6,154	26.7	7,890	28.3	8,473	28.0	24.7

1.2.4 Life-long employment is common in the public sector and at bigger enterprises in the private sector.

Big businesses, public corporations/enterprises and central/local governments recruit young people as life-long employed, normally immediately after the latter's' graduation of schools(now mostly highschoools and colleges/universities). Enterprises train those young people as their permanent workforce.

At the big private manufacturing enterprises, those life-long employed constitute the permanent and

core workforce of individual enterprises, and, at the same time, those enterprises hire non-permanent workers under the system of periodic contracts(3 months, 6 months or one year) and, in some industries(shipbuilding, steel), introduce subcontract(indirectly employed) workers. The managements are free to refuse renewal of those contracts, that is , to dismiss those non-permanent workers. They are conjunctural workforce for individual enterprises.

Status of a life-long employed permanent worker is very much different from that of a non-permanent, contract worker. The former is a component or insider of the given enterprise, and the latter is a noncomponent or outsider who is temporarily employed or subcontracted by the enterprise. The life-long employed permanent workers have their specific material benefits within their enterprises. Those permanent workers are privileged in their enterprises, and those life-long employed are organized in their intra-enterprise unions on the basis of their common status in relation to the individual enterprises. They are intra-enterprise employed workers. Thus, the intra-enterprise unions are very specific, especially in the case of big businesses.

One can find similar relations between the permanent core employees and the part-timers(mostly women) in the commercial and service sectors.

This whole system of life-long employment and its significant implications in relation to the specific intra-enterprise unions were fully established in the private sector through the expansionist economic growth of the 1960s. Thus, straightly pro-management rightwing labor bureaucracies developed very quickly in the big manufacturing enterprises in the first half of the 1960s, and they became definitely dominant force in those industries in the latter half of the decade.

1.2.5 However, it does not mean that the life-long employed permanent workers/employees are really guaranteed life-long employed. In fact, big manufacturing businesses dismissed a large number of those permanent workers, especially the older layer, in the depressionary years of 1974-78.

In the shipbuilding industry, 7 major enterprises had 87,095 permanent workers/employees and 26,599 subcontract workers in the shipbuilding section in October 1974, and there were 53,487 permanent workers/employees and 7,874 subcontract workers in April 1979. That is, 38.6% of the permanent workers/employees in 1974 had been pushed out of the shipbuilding at the time of April 1979, and there was 70.4% decrease of the subcontract workers during the period. In the case of Mitsubishi shipyard at Nagasaki, there were 16,401 permanent workers and 11,241 subcontract workers in October 1974, and 11,138 permanent workers(32.1% decrease) and 5,166 subcontract workers(54% decrease) in August 1979.

As for dismissal of the non-permanent contract or subcontract workers, it does not matter to the intra-enterprise unions, because they are not union members. But, when dismissal is posed to the permanent workers, it is a serious problem for the concerned intra-enterprise union, and the matter depends on the degree of the union's independence from the management and the balance of forces between the union and the management. If there is a serious conflict/fight on the matter, the union at the given enterprise splits normally, and such cases have been more common at the smaller enterprises. However, at the bigger enterprises, unions are basically under the control of the managements, and those unions accepted the dismissal and even forced the concerned workers to accept the dismissal during the depression. When permanent workers are dismissed, they lose their union membership automatically and logically, because they are no longer components of the given enterprise.

1.2.6 Seniority-order wage system(a system of automatic wage-increase parallel with age) is closely intertwined with the life-long employment system. when a young one is employed by some

enterprise, his/her wage is very low, and his/her wage will rise gradually in parallel with his/her age as long as he/she remains to be employed by his/her enterprise.

In the private sector, it is extremely difficult for female workers/employees to continue their jobs for the "life span"; normally they are forced to give up their jobs, when they marry or get kids. In the public sector, the situation is better for women. Thus, in the private sector, the life-long employment system and the seniority-order wage system are not applied to women workers. When a women has got a kid, she must find a part-time job. This is one of the institutional reasons why the level of female wages is very much low(the female wage level was 48% of the male one in 1977).

"In the major Western European countries, wage level of the age group less than 18 years old is about 60% of the average wage level of male workers, that of the age group of 60 years old or more is in the range of 95-100%, and that of the age group of 40 years old is around 105%. In Japan, wage level of the age group less than 18 years old is 46% of the average, 115% for the age group between 40 and 50 years old, and 75% for the age group more than 60 years old."(K. Furuya, "Knowledge on Wage", Tokyo)

The wage difference between the younger and the middle aged is bigger at the bigger enterprises than that of smaller ones(see the table 2).

The wage difference among age groups decreased relatively under the pressure of young-workforce shortage in the latter half of the 1960s and the early 1970s(see the table 3).

There is no uniform national minimum wage system.

Each enterprise, especially bigger one, has its own complicated wage-scale system, although there is no significant inter-enterprise wage difference among the big enterprises in the same industries.

In the 1950s, the Sohyo trade unions normally had their specific youth caucuses/sections and women caucuses/sections, or mixed youth-women caucuses/sections at all the levels of branches, unions, industrial federations and the Sohyo itself. Even today(1982) the Sohyo and its reformist unions keep the system formally. As for the specific women caucuses/sections, it is due to the specific oppression of women, with the immediate historical background of a male family-head system and the denial of female suffrage before the defeat of Japanese imperialism in 1945. As for the specific youth caucuses/sections, it is due to the low level of wage for younger layer of workers.

As mentioned earlier, significant number of life-long employed permanent workers, especially the older section, were dismissed in the manufacturing sector in 1975-78. Simultaneously, the big manufacturing businesses restrained the automatic wage-increase of older workers, oppressing the function of seniority-order wage system for the that section of workers, as a part of the capitalist rationalization. The older section of workers have been hit most severely, precisely due to the seniority-order wage system, and the unemployment is the highest among those older workers.

Table 2: International comparison of wage differences among age groups (manufacturing sector)

Country	Japan 1977	West Germany 1966	France 1966	Italy 1966
< 18	46	57	58	61

Country	Japan 1977	West Germany 1966	France 1966	Italy 1966
18 - 20	61	84	83	82
21 - 24	75	98	97	91
25 - 29	92	103	104	99
30 - 34	106	105	107	103
35 - 39	115	105	107	103
40 - 44	115	103	105	103
45 - 49	115	101	103	102
50 - 54	113	99	101	102
55 - 59	97	97	99	104
> 59	75	94	95	102

(Average of total workforce = 100)

Table 3: Seniority-wage system in Japan(manufacturing sector))

Age	.	< 18	18-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-49	50-59
Wage difference (1)	1961	100	167	228	325	411	515	655	638
Wage difference (1)	1976	100	135	169	211	248	283	304	307
Wage difference (2)	1961	100	159	210	264	286	334	328	300
Wage difference (2)	1976	100	123	160	204	230	244	240	224

(1) Enterprises: 1,000 or more workforce

(2) Enterprises: between 10 and 99 workforce

1.2.7 At the smaller enterprises, the life-long employment system does not mean much, nor the system of periodic/subcontract employment. Smaller enterprises are unstable and easy to go bankrupt. Especially in the manufacturing sector, many of them are subcontract factories of the big enterprises, and the typical example is the automobile industry, which also utilizes the non-permanent workers extensively.

Wages at the smaller enterprises are much lower than those at the bigger ones. Wage difference in the manufacturing sector in 1972 is as follows: 100/average wage at the enterprises with 1,000 or more workers, 86.2/enterprise with 500-999 workforce, 75.3/100-499, 65.3/50-99, 61.7/10-49, and 56.5/1-9.

In the middle of 1960s, shortage of young workforce became severe, and the average age of workforce became older in the smaller enterprises. At the enterprises with workforce of 10-99,

weight of 35-years-old-or-more age group increased from 27.1% in 1958 to 39.5% in 1968, and weight of 24-years-old-or-less age group decreased from 47.3% in 1958 to 32.6% in 1968. Out of the total workforce between 35 and 39 years old in the manufacturing sector, those who worked at the enterprises with 1,000 or more workers decreased from 43.1% in 1960 to 39.5% in 1968, and those workers at the enterprises with 100-999 increased from 24.1% in 1960 to 28.7% in 1968. As for the age group 40-49, a decrease from 46.5%/1960 to 41.6%/1968 at the enterprises with 1,000 or more workers, and an increase from 22.3%/1960 to 27.0%/1968 at the enterprises with 100-999. In 1969, in the manufacturing sector, weight of the workers/employees aged 50 or more was 5.8% of the workforce at the enterprises with 1,000 or more workers, 8.5% at the enterprises with 300-999, 11.2%/100-299, 17.8%/30-99 and 22.5%/29-and-less.

In 1972, out of the total 30.31 million wage-earners in the private sector, those employed at the enterprises with 500 or more workforce were 30.5%(9.23 million), 16.0%(4.85 million) at 100-499 workforce enterprises, 16.7%(5.05 million)/30-99 and 36.6%(11.10 million)/29-or-less.

Smaller the enterprises, bigger the mobility of workers.

Smaller enterprises cannot be the basis of material privileges for specific categories of workers in any significant way.

In this context, a reformist/left-reformist current of trade union movement continued exist at the medium/small-size enterprises all through the 1960s and 1970s. The Zenkoku-Kinzoku(Zenkin), an industrial union of machinery workers, represented the current most typically. This union had 222,000 members in 1974, and the membership decreased to 167,000 in 1979(roughly 25% decrease), due to bankruptcies and dismissal during the depression and industrial restructuring. The CP is rather strong in the union, although it is a minority. In this sector, there is other rightwing industrial union Zenkin-Domei, which had 311,000 members in 1974 and 288,000 in 1979 respectively(roughly 9.5% decrease). The Zenkoku-Kinzoku was targeted by the bosses during the depression.

1.2.8 In the public sector(national railway, postal system, telecommunication system and tobacco corporation) and the governmental sector(mostly local governments, public education, water-supply and partially local transportation system), the life-long employment is also the standard.

However, there are two important differences between the public and governmental sector and the private sector.

One aspect is the fact that the weight of non-permanent workers/employees is small, material basis for internal division among the workers/employees being rather limited, although managements and authorities began to introduce the subcontract system as much as possible in the 1970s.

The other aspect is the fact that the technological innovation has been extremely uneven in the public and governmental sector during the economic expansionist period of 1960s. The telecommunication system had extensive and successive technological innovations in the 1960s and 1970s, and the whole system had gone through a profound and thorough transformation. As for the national railway and the postal system(mail and saving), various technological innovations were introduced in the 1960s and 1970s, but the situation had remained very much uneven and mixed with the older systems and new ones. As for the local administrations and public education, introduction of technological modernization had been limited in the 1960s and 1970s.

Table 4: Major national trade union federations

All figures are in thousands

Year	1973	1980
Sohyo	4,341	4,551
private sector	1,584	1,362
public/governmental sector	2,75	3,189
Churitsu-Roren	1,374	1,357
private sector	1,373	.
Shinsanbetsu	70	62
Domei	2,278	2,162
private sector	2,098	1,986
public/governmental sector	180	176
Non-affiliated	4,420	4,625
private sector	.	4,099

Two important cross-federation groupings of unions

Year	1973	1980
IMF-JC	1,794	1,869
Chemical Federation	.	655

Sohyo (General Council of Trade Unions of Japan): Sohyo is the trade union basis of the SP, and its majority union bureaucrats of Mindo are intertwined with the SP of reformist and pacifist social democracy. The CP is a substantial minority. Sohyo also comprises the pro-management union forces of the steel and chemical industries.

Churitsu-Roren (Federation of Independent Unions of Japan): Its major union is the electric/electronics workers union, and it formally supports the SP, especially latter's rightwing current. It has a joint committee for annual spring wage-increase campaign with the Sohyo.

Shinsanbetsu (National Federation of Industrial Organizations): It supports the SP formally, and recently it affiliated with the Churitsu-Roren.

Domei (Japanese Confederation of Labor): Anti-communist rightwing federation. It is closely intertwined with the DSP of rightwing social democracy, which has been strongly pro-LDP(ruling bourgeois party).

IMF-JC (International Metalworkers' Federation Japanese Council) Gathering body of the pro-management union forces of big metal/machinery manufacturing enterprises.

2 Political parties

2.1 Socialist Party (SP)

2.1.1 The Socialist party has been a reformist and pacifist social-democratic party and the working-class majority in the parliament from the 1950s to the 1970s.

It has been a pure parliamentary party with the membership of 30-40 thousand in the 1960s and about 60 thousand in the 1970s, the Sohyo being the major electoral basis. Or, the SP has been a parliamentary reflection of the Sohyo workers' movement, Sohyo's reformist apparatuses being the major organized force of the party.

2.1.2 In the latter half of 1940s, immediately after the defeat of Japanese imperialism and before the 1950 Sohyo foundation, the SP was a majority working-class party in the parliament, and the rightwing current was the party majority.

The SP formed a coalition government under SP premiership with bourgeois parties from June 1947 to February 1948, and it joined another coalition government under bourgeois premiership from March to October 1948. The two governments were a complete failure and came to an end with a corruption scandal, in which the SP rightwing boss was involved together with the bourgeois prime minister of the second coalition government.

Thus, the SP rightwing current was discredited much and the whole SP was thrown into a big confusion. An internal recomposition process began to develop inside the party, combined with the reformist recomposition process of the trade union movement from the late 1940s to the early 1950s. The SP leftwing current began to increase its intra-party weight, supported by the reformist union forces which eventually became the majority current of the Sohyo trade union movement in the 1950s.

2.1.3 Confronted with the global "cold war" situation and the Korean war, the SP congress took a neutralist "non-alignment" position and opposed the "peace treaty" between Japan and the imperialist and neo-colonialist governments, with the USSR and the newly established People's Republic of China being excluded, and with the US military bases and the Japanese military rearmament.

The reformist union forces of Sohyo supported this neutralist and pacifist position upheld by the party leftwing current, and the self-styled "Marxist" leftwing secured the majority of the leadership at the congress.

Subsequently the SP splitted between a leftwing faction and a rightwing faction, the former being supported by the majority of Sohyo, in 1951. The leftwing SP and rightwing SP respectively got 54 and 57 seats at the 1952 general elections(the CP got none), 72 and 66 seats at the 1953 general elections (CP/1), and 89 and 67 seats at the 1955 general elections (CP/2). The balance of forces turned in favor for the leftwing SP.

2.1.4 In 1955 the SP was reunified, and immediately after two major bourgeois parties were also unified as the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Thus, a quasi-two-parties system was established between the ruling bourgeois LDP and the pacifist SP in the latter half of 1950s. At the 1958 general

elections, the LDP got 287 seats and the SP got 166 seats (CP/1).

The best period of the SP was the latter half of 1950s. The SP under the leftwing majority leadership kept its neutralist-pacifist stance against the US-Japan security treaty, US military bases in Japan, newly founded Self-Defense Forces and the US "containment" policy toward People's Republic of China. The SP represented the broad and deep pacifist consciousness of the Sohyo workers against the US "cold war" policies and Japanese remilitarization in the 1950s. The Sohyo became a massive reformist trade union movement and it became the solid electoral basis of the SP in the latter half of 1950s.

In this context, the leftwing current continued to increase its intra-party strength under the direct support of Sohyo reformist forces, at the expense of the rightwing, and finally the rightwing pro-imperialist social-democrats were marginalized politically at the beginning of 1960s.

In 1959, some substantial part of the rightwing current splitted again as a minority(45 members of the lower house) from the SP on the question of US-Japan security treaty, and the rightwing splinter group founded the Democratic Socialist Party(DSP) in 1960. This split became a big failure for the rightwingers, and the SP got 145 seats and the DSP only 17 at the 1960 general elections.

2.1.5 With the 1960s, however, the SP entered a period of stagnation, precisely reflecting the weakened position of the reformist Sohyo trade union movement and its stagnation.

Results of various general-elections for the SP show its stagnating situation: 145 seats out of total 467 in 1960, 144 out of 467 in 1963, 140 out of 486 in 1967, 90 out of 486 in 1969, and 118 out of 491 in 1972. Toward the end of 1960s, the SP's electoral position was weakened successively to the advantage of an urban petit-bourgeois party of Buddhist Komei(Clean Politics) Party and the CP.

The leftwing SP majority of the 1950s splitted internally between a moderating "structural reformist" current and an anti-"structural reformist" current in the 1960s. The new division inside the the SP corresponded to the similar internal differentiation among the Sohyo reformist union forces in the 1960s.

The "structural reformist" current was supported by moderating reformist elements of the Sohyo unions. The anti-"structural reformist" current was composed of two subcurrents, pro-peking and pro-Moscow. The pro-Peking "Socialist Study" faction, which was extremely opportunist, secured the party president in 1965, and it took a tolerant attitude toward left-centrist elements in the party, while the pro-Moscow "Socialist Society" faction took a rigid legalist and reformist stance, adopting an uncompromising position against left-centrist and far-left elements in the Sohyo trade union movement, especially among young workers.

In 1967, the "Socialist Study" faction's party president was replaced by a new president T. Narita. Faced with the youth explosion of students and young workers in 1968-69, the SP took a hostile attitude toward the militant youth movement, and the Socialist Youth was thrown into a deep crisis and various splits, through which left-centrists and Trotskyists left the SP and Socialist Youth. Under the party president Narita, the pro-Moscow "Socialist Society" faction increased as a new party-leftwing in the Sohyo trade unions and the SP itself from the late 1960s to the early 1970s. The "Socialist Society" faction was pro-Moscow internationally, and very much Kautskyist domestically.

At the end of 1950s, the SP changed its organizational structure in the effect that only the party's prefectural units were entitled to elect the delegates to the congress, depriving the members of parliament of their automatic right to be congress delegates, and through this party structure the "Socialist Society" faction became the majority, actively recruiting new party members, in the first

half of 1970s.

2.1.6 Eroded by the “Socialist Society” faction, the position of the “Socialist Study” faction was weakened, and the faction made a rightwing turn, joining the force with the “Structural Reformist” current, from the end of 1960s to the early 1970s. The rightwing turn of the “Socialist Study” faction was accelerated by the new pro-imperialist and anti-Soviet international policy of the Chinese bureaucracy in the early 1970s.

Thus, there were two major currents inside the SP in the middle of 1970s: the leftwing around the “Socialist Society” faction as the SP majority and the rightwing of joint anti-“Socialist Society” groupings.

2.2 Democratic Socialist Party (DSP)

2.2.1 At the time of early 1980s, the DSP was an anti-communist rightwing social-democratic party, with the Domei as its trade union basis and with some smaller-scale bourgeois elements as its basis; a political minority inside the working class.

As mentioned earlier, the rightwing Social Democracy was the SP majority in the latter half of the 1940s, immediately after the defeat of Japanese imperialism. It lost the SP majority position in the early 1950s, and its intra-party weight decreased progressively all through the 1950s. When this rightwing social-democratic current splitted from the SP in 1959, it was a small minority, and the newly founded Democratic Socialist Party(DSP) got only 17 seats at the 1960 general elections, the SP getting 145 seats.

The DSP remained a political minority of the working class all through the 1960s and 1970s. Its position at the lower house of parliament was 23 seats at the 1963 general elections, 30/1967, 31/1969, 19/1972, 29/1976, 36/1979 and 32/1980, in spite of the fact that the Domei had 2.28 million and 2.16 million membership respectively in 1973 and 1980.

2.2.2 As mentioned earlier, too, the rightwing trade-union forces were strengthened very quickly and were established definitely as an overwhelming current among the workers of large-scale manufacturing enterprises all through the 1960s, and the Sohyo-affiliated steel workers and chemical workers federation were also dominated by the pro-management union forces. Thus, the SP-affiliated reformist union forces were weakened very much at the level of trade union movement.

However, this new balance of forces between the rightwing pro-management forces and the reformist forces at the level of trade union movement had not been transplanted at the level of general parliamentary politics all through the 1960s and 1970s. The SP kept its position as the working-class political majority.

The trade unions at the large-scale private enterprises were very much intra-enterprise, not being able to exercise their socio-political influences over the general workers and lower layers of petit-bourgeois population outside of their respective enterprises, and the DSP’s international and domestic policies were always extremely close to those of the LDP government, being regarded as a political supplement of the LDP. Thus, the DSP remained to be a political minority of the working class, in spite of the strengthened position of rightwing pro-management forces in the trade union movement.

2.3 Communist Party (CP)

2.3.1 The CP was the dominant political force of the militant national trade union federation Sanbetsu-Kaigi (All Japan Congress of Industrial Trade Unions) from 1946 to 1949. In those years,

the militant Sanbetsu-Kaigi was the leading force in the trade union movement, but the CP's position at the parliament was very much weak in comparison with the SP, which was under the rightwing majority at the time.

The CP got 5 seats at the first postwar general elections, the SP getting 93 seats, and the CP and the SP got 4 and 143 seats respectively at the 1947 general elections, the SP becoming the biggest party in the lower house. The SP formed a coalition government with bourgeois parties, but the coalition was a total flop. Consequently, the SP seats decreased drastically to 49, and the CP seats increased very much to 35 at the January 1949 general elections.

But, as mentioned before, 1949 was the year of large-scale rationalization of the economy, and the militant trade union movement of Sanbetsu-Kaigi was defeated definitely by the US military occupation command and the Japanese bourgeoisie.

2.3.2 From 1945 to 1949, the CP took a position to define the US occupation armed force as "liberation forces" and kept to follow a consistent conciliatory policy toward the US occupation command, thereby politically disarming the militancy of Sanbetsu-Kaigi workers, and laying down the course for the 1949 defeat.

At the beginning of 1950, the Cominform/Moscow criticized the CP's conciliatory orientation and forced the CP to harden its position against US imperialism, and the criticism from Moscow provoked an internal division between the majority apparatus and the oppositionists inside the party.

The US occupation command hardened its attitude toward the CP, and it ordered to deprive the CP leading members of their civil rights about three weeks before the outbreak of Korean war. Immediately after the outbreak of the war, the CP was de facto illegalized, and the US occupation command ordered the massive "Red Purges".

The CP was thrown into a deep crisis, and the CP majority apparatus went into building its own sectarian underground structure, excluding the oppositionist elements and, thereby, carrying out a party split forcibly. The Chinese Communist Party supported the underground restructurization of the JCP majority apparatus, and the JCP leadership moved to Peking in 1950. In 1951, the majority CP adopted a new nationalist and adventurist orientation of armed struggle for liberation of Japan from the US domination.

However, the CP's retreat continued during the Korean war, and the CP lost all the seats at the 1952 general elections and got only one seat at the 1953 general elections. The CP defeat was complete in 1953-54.

The rise of the CP and its defeat were both dramatic during the five years immediately after the defeat of Japanese imperialism.

2.3.3 In 1953-54, Moscow and Peking changed their international policies, adopting the "peaceful coexistence policy", and the Japanese CP followed the turn. A special national conference was held in 1955, and the CP liquidated the adventurist orientation of the early 1950s, adopting an extremely opportunist orientation of reformism, and it took an initiative to heal the party division.

The party was thrown into a chaotic situation as a result of the national conference, and the 20th congress of the USSR CP and the Hungarian and Polish events in 1956 accelerated the internal confusion, the party apparatus being discredited very much. A de facto internal democracy prevailed spontaneously at the rank and file in 1956 and 1957.

Under such an internal situation, a party congress was held in 1957. The pre-congress discussion

was conducted partly publicly and rather democratically, although a Trotskyist delegate, who was a member of the Kyoto prefectural committee and elected from the prefectural unit, was deprived his right to participate the congress at the final stage.

At the congress there were two major currents; the majority current stood for a “national-independence revolution” and the minority current of about one third of the delegates stood for an “anti-monopolist-capital socialist revolution”. The two major current remained to exist after the 1957 congress.

The “national-independence” majority as the apparatus current supported the Chinese CP against Moscow, when the Sino-Soviet debates broke out in the early 1960s. The minority “anti-monopolist-capital” current became “structural reformist”, supporting the Italian CP’s “strategy”, and most of its active members were expelled from the party, supporting Moscow against Peking, in the first half of the 1960s.

2.3.4 From 1956 to 1958, there was a national student faction inside the party. The student faction was the leadership group of the Zengakuren(National Federation of Student Unions) student movement, which was successfully rebuilt independently from the party apparatus in 1956-57. The student faction was very much opposed to the official party leadership, and it was a part of the “anti-monopolist-capital socialist revolution” current.

Student CP members were radicalized through the massive and militant student movement, under the influence of the Algerian armed independence struggle, and Trotskyists got a chance to influence those student communists inside the party. In 1958, there were clashes between the party leadership and the radicalized student communists, and about 500 student members were expelled from or left the CP, together with less than 100 worker members, in 1958-59. This was the beginning of Japanese far-left movement, and there were two major currents among those expelled; spontaneist/left-centrist and Trotskyist.

Through the 1957-60 clashes between the spontaneous mass militancy of Sohyo workers and the bourgeoisie/government, the CP was not in a position to be able to play any active role, because the CP had not yet recovered as a centrally organized party, although individual workshop-groups and workers of the party participated the Sohyo workers’ struggles. But politically the CP leadership took a rightwing opportunist position, giving its de facto support to capitulationist reformist forces of the Sohyo unions, being in contradiction to the militant position of the national student faction of the party. This was the immediate political reason which caused the split of radicalized student communists from the CP. As for the “anti-monopolist-capital” current in general, the current did not have its uniform position on the trade union struggles of 1957-60.

2.3.5 As a result of the 1957-60 trade union struggles, and especially due to a large and massive mobilization against the revision of US-Japanese security treaty, a politicization process developed among the Sohyo workers. At the same time, there was a significant rise of trade union movement among workers of medium/small-scale enterprises and other weaker sections(hospital nurses, taxi drivers) from the end of 1950s to the early 1960s.

The CP capitalized the politicization of Sohyo workers and the radicalization of new layers of workers rather well in the early 1960s, and this was the beginning of CP’s rebuild-up and new growth toward the late 1960s and early 1970s.

As mentioned before, the CP majority apparatus took a pro-Peking position against Moscow, expelling all the pro-Moscow elements of “anti-monopolist capital” “structural reformists”, from 1962 to 1964. The CP took a kind of “Third period” type political “leftism”, adopting a strong anti-US

stance in parallel with the Chinese international position, and, at the same time, the Japanese CP's relation with the North Korean Workers Party became very good.

In spite of this political "leftism", the CP's orientation was timid and cautious in actual workers struggles. Thus, the CP leadership was openly opposed to the 1964 spring-wage increase strike actions of Sohyo public-sector unions, playing a role of blatant strike-breaker. This timidity and hopeless sectarianism of the Japanese CP was a precise reflection of the China's international isolation and the Chinese CP's international policy at the time.

At the very moment, General Secretary of JCP, K. Miyamoto, happened to be on his visit to Peking. The blatant strike-breaking action of the CP boomeranged to the party as a major political blow. The CP was discredited politically among the Sohyo workers, and the reformist apparatus of the telecommunication workers union threw off the CP members massively from the union. Consequently the CP lost its offensive momentum in the Sohyo trade union movement, and this was the exact result of JCP's pro-Peking orientation in the first half of 1960s.

2.3.6 When the the US started its direct military intervention in Vietnam in 1965, the JCP supported the Vietnamese Workers Party in its call for formation of international united front of all the workers states against the US imperialism, differing from Mao's sectarian intransigence against Moscow.

Shortly before the outbreak of Mao's "Cultural Revolution" in 1966, the JCP general secretary visited Peking. The both delegations of the JCP and CCP finalized a draft joint statement, which included a point on Vietnam, and at the time Liu Shao-chi was at the CCP leadership position. But at the final stage Mao himself intervened in the business of CCP-JCP joint statement, and the draft text was totally scrapped. Thus, there was no joint statement, and this was the definite break of the JCP's relationship with Peking.

Peking began to denounce the JCP as "revisionist", and the latter denounced the "Cultural Revolution" as Mao's criminal act, from very much petit-bourgeois legalistic stand. Simultaneously, all the pro-Peking Maoist elements were thrown out of the JCP. The JCP kept its international bloc with the Vietnamese Workers Party and the North Korean Workers Party in the latter half of 1960s.

All the pro-Moscow elements were expelled from the JCP in the first half of 1960s, and all the pro-Peking elements were thrown off from the party in 1966-67. The JCP's international relationship with the Soviet CP and the Chinese CP was totally broken off. The JCP became an independent nationalist party, in spite of its closer bloc with the Vietnamese and the North Koreans. Thereby, the JCP's deep nationalist adaptation to the Japanese bourgeois democracy began to develop definitely, showing its active interest in the parliamentary reformism of Italian and French CPs.

2.3.7 Contrary to the Italian and French CPs, the JCP was very much weak in the trade union movement, the Sohyo reformist majority being affiliated to the SP. However, the JCP developed its own specific parliamentary reformism through its active intervention in local municipality/community reformist politics.

The continuous expansionist growth of Japanese economy brought about a huge exodus of rural population, especially its younger layers, to the rapidly industrializing urban centers. There were 37.67 million of agricultural-household population, 46.1% of the total population, in 1950. The agricultural-household population began to decrease drastically around 1960, and average annual rate of decrease was 12% in the first half of 1960s. There was an exodus of 8.23 million workforce from the rural area to the urban centers during the ten years of 1959-68, and there was an inflow of 5 million population into the three biggest urban centers(the Tokyo and greater metropolitan area, Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe area, and Nagoya and its three neighboring prefectures) in the decade of 1960s.

Consequently young proletarian population of suburban areas around big cities grew very rapidly, but their conditions of city-life were very much poor - problems of housing, education, health, child-care, etc.. Here the CP found a fertile ground for its parliamentary municipality reformism in the latter half of 1960s and the early 1970s.

The CP became the most active reformist force of municipality activities among the urban proletarian population and partly among lower layers of urban petit-bourgeois population. Thereby, the CP's electoral basis expanded very quickly from the latter half of 1960s to the early 1970s. The CP's seats at the lower house were following: 3 at the 1960 general elections, 5/1963, 5/1969, 14/1969, 39/1972, 19/1976, 41/1979 and 27/1980.

At the same time, the SP-CP-Sohyo supported prefectural governors and municipal mayors increased rapidly, too. The SP-CP-Sohyo bloc won the Tokyo metropolitan governor in 1976, and governors of Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto were under the control of the reformist bloc in the early 1970s.

2.3.8 It is important to note the fact that the current CP was framed basically as a mass workers party, with the municipality reformism as its major sphere of activities, from the late 1960s to the early 1970s.

As mentioned before, contrary to the Italian and French CPs, the Japanese CP was a minority force in the reformist trade union movement. In the early 1970s, the CP built up its strong influence in the teachers' unions and municipality employees unions, and in a lesser degree in the national railway workers union and Zenkoku-Kinzoku(national union of machinery workers of medium/small-scale enterprises). However, the center of CP activities and electoral influence was its municipality reformist practice.

Thereby, there was a specific mutually-complementing division of labor between the SP affiliated trade union forces and the CP municipality reformism, and there was a structural logic that the political limitation of the SP affiliated union forces would be an automatic limitation for the CP's perspective, the former being in a structurally hegemonic position in relation to the latter.

In the early 1970s, the CP had more than 300,000 party members and a daily paper of more than 300,000 copies with its own independent national circulation system. It had build up a vast influence among part-time working women and proletarian housewives, and it had a massive youth organization.

2.4 Far-left groups

2.4.1 Origin of the Japanese far-left movement was the expulsion of radicalized student and worker members from the CP in 1958-59. As mentioned before, about 500 students and less than 100 workers were expelled from the party at the time.

As for the student members, they had formed a national fraction inside the party, and worker members were expelled not as a national current of workers, but as a part of the student current. Those worker members were basically composed of a whole leadership of a Tokyo district committee, members of which have now disappeared from the working class politics, a group of Osaka telecommunication workers, key members of whom continue their activities as Trotskyists even today, and a group of Mitsubishi Nagasaki shipyard workers who also continue their activities now.

Major reason why the far-left split from the CP was limited mostly among the student members was the fact that the rank-and-file militancy of Sohyo workers was defeated through the struggles of

1957-60. The militant Zengakuren student movement under the CP student faction had rather good and fraternal relations with the rank-and-file left-centrist/left-reformist current of worker activists inside the Sohyo unions from 1956 to 1958. But, when the radicalized student communists splitted from the CP, they could not penetrate into the worker-activist current.

2.4.2 Among the former CP student members, there were two major currents; the majority spontaneist Communist League which took a state-capitalist position on the workers states and rejected the Fourth International, and the minority Trotskyist current (Japan Revolutionary Communist League and Internationalist Communist Party) which stood for the Fourth International. The former might have had about 800 members at its height of 1960, and the latter had about 250 members (JRCL/200 as a national group and the ICP/50 as a Tokyo group).

The Trotskyist current, particularly the JRCL, played the leading role in support of the teachers union's struggle against the government in 1958, and the Communist League played the leading role in the massive street mobilizations against the revision of US-Japanese security treaty in 1960.

However, the Communist League was totally disintegrated in the latter half of 1960, immediately after the massive mobilizations against the US-Japanese security treaty, and it did not exist as an organization in 1961. The two Trotskyist groups were also thrown into politico-organizational crises in 1960-61, having various splits. The background of the crisis of the incipient Japanese far-left movement was the fact that the movement failed to penetrate into the Sohyo workers movement, while the Japanese capitalist economy entered a period of sustained expansion, bringing about the stagnation of the workers movement in the 1960s. Thus, the far-left movement entered a period of recomposition from 1962 to 1964.

There is one important aspect in regard to the formation of Japanese far-left movement; that is, there was no Maoist pro-Peking current inside the movement. This is due to the fact that the far-left movement was born in the late 1950s, before the open Sino-Soviet debate, and partly due to the fact that there was the CCP-JCP bloc against the USSR CP when the Sino-Soviet debate developed in the early 1960s. Only after the deterioration of the CCP-JCP relationship, a far-left Maoist current began to develop in the latter half of 1960s.

2.4.3 In 1964-66, the recomposition process of the far-left movement was finalized, and there were following major groups.

Kakumaru (Revolutionary Communist League, National Committee, Revolutionary Marxist Faction): Defining the workers states simply as "Stalinist states" and rejecting the defense of those states from imperialism, adopting a trade-unionist orientation with a substantial implantation inside the national railway drivers union, this group rejected a solidarity position with the Vietnamese liberation struggle against the US, and took reformist position against the militant and violent explosion of students and young workers in 1968-69. This group is politically much similar to the French Lambertist group, and has eventually become a part of the Sohyo reformist union bureaucracy.

Chukaku (Revolutionary Communist League, National Committee, Core Faction): This group's position on the workers states was much similar to that of the Kakumaru, but it emphasized an anti-imperialist position more strongly, and was forced to side with the Vietnamese liberation struggle after the 1968 Tet offensive. The general political orientation was a "Third-Period"-type political leftism. The group penetrated among young workers rather well both in the private and public sectors, and was the best organized group and one of the most militant far-left groups at the height of students/young workers explosion in 1968-69.

Bundo(Communist League): This was a heterogeneous Mao-spontaneist group, very much loosely organized, and again totally disintegrated at the height of the youth explosion. From this disintegration, the “Red Army” faction, a genuine Maoist group and other spontaneist groups developed.

Trotskyists (Japan Revolutionary Communist League, Japanese section of the Fourth International): The former JRCL and the ICP were unified as the section of the Fourth International, and the section basically carried out entrust works inside the SP and its Socialist Youth, especially among young workers of the Sohyo unions.

Kaiho (Liberation Faction of the Socialist Youth and the SP): This group was born as a self-styled “Luxemburgist” current inside the the Socialist Youth and the SP, and it rejected the Leninism and the Third International as a whole. The group was an opportunist left-centrist group, and had a rather good implantation among the Sohyo young workers of public sector in Tokyo.

2.4.4 Under the stagnating situation of the Sohyo reformist trade union movement, young workers began to move in opposition to the reformist leadership inside the Sohyo unions, independently from the CP leadership, since 1963-64, and the various far-left/left-centrist groups began to gain influences among the Sohyo young workers in the mid-1960s.

When the youth department of the SP took an initiative to found a nation-wide structure of young workers movement, composed of youth caucuses of the Sohyo unions, the Socialist Youth and various groups of young workers, against the normalization treaty of Japan and South Korea relation and the US military intervention in Indochina, it was the SP’s attempt of maneuver to outflank the CP among the Sohyo young workers. The nation-wide structure was called as the “Antiwar Youth Committee”.

However, all the far-left/left-centrist groups participated the antiwar youth committee actively, and turned it into an effective united-front vehicle to mobilized young workers militantly against the Japan/South Korea normalization treaty and the US war in Indochina, especially at the greater metropolitan area, in 1965. Thus the SP-affiliated reformist leadership of Sohyo was forced to freeze the antiwar youth committee at the end of 1965.

2.4.5 There was an ebb of all the mass movements in 1966. In 1967, the far-left/left-centrist groups took initiatives to rebuild the militant movement of young workers and students against the US war in Indochina, and there were various signs of new youth militancy under the leadership of those groups even before the 1968 Tet offensive.

Anyway, the Vietnamese 1968 Tet and French May 1968 had great impacts on the Japanese students and young workers. Mass of students and a significant layer of the Sohyo young workers exploded violently in 1968-69.

The SP, CP and the reformist Sohyo leadership took the hostile attitude toward the youth explosion, directly or indirectly supporting the police repression against the youth, and the far-left/left-centrist groups, except the Kakumaru, took the leadership of the explosion. In this context, the Japanese section of the FI left the SP and its Socialist Youth, and the majority of the Kaiho faction was forced to split from the SP, too. The peak of youth explosion was in 1969, and there were various violent confrontations with the police forces in the campuses and streets.

All the far-left/left-centrist groups, excluding the Kakumaru, had more than 5,000 active members, and all those were jointly in a position to be able to mobilize about 10,000 young workers under their direct command. Furthermore, the campus/street explosion of students and young workers had

significant impacts on the youth caucuses of Sohyo unions, and there was a strong tendency to join the militant movement among those trade union youth caucuses, in opposition to the reformist union leaderships and CP.

However, the far-left force, headed by the Chukaku at the time, failed to take full advantage of the big potential to build up an organized and independent oppositionist current inside the Sohyo trade union movement. The Chukaku dominated the far-left forces in 1969, and it adopted a much simplistic linear street-confrontation orientation.

About 8,000 students and young workers were arrested in 1968-69, and the campus/street youth radicalization exhausted itself at the end of 1969. The riot police established its control over the campuses and streets in 1970.

2.4.6 In spite of the defeat of campus/street explosion, radicalization of the young workers continued to develop at the workshops, especially at the national railway and postal system, in 1970-72. This radicalization among the national railway and postal system young workers triggered a new general rise of the Sohyo workers militancy in 1972-73.

But, at this moment, the far-left forces around the Chukaku, except the Japanese section of the FI, took hopeless “militaristic” orientations, and at the same time the physical internal fightings started between the Chukaku and Kaiho on the one hand and the Kakumaru on the other under the initiative of the latter. As for the disintegrated Bundo, there were numerous intra-Bundo physical fightings.

Thus, the Japanese far-left/left-centrist groups entered a tragic period of self-destructive degeneration. The Japanese section of the FI was the only far-left group which was opposed to the degenerating method of internal physical fightings.

Table 5.1: General Elections Results(Lower House seats):1946-55

Year	1946	1947	1949	1952	1953	1955
Liberal Party	140	131	264	240	199	112
LP splinter	.	.	35	.	.	.
Progress Party (Democratic P.)	94	121	69	85	76	185
Cooperation Party (National Cooperation P.)	.	14	29	14	2	.
SP/Rightwing	.	.	.	57	66	67
Socialist Party (SP/Leftwing)	92	143	48	54	72	89
Workers-Peasants Party	.	.	7	4	5	4
Peasants Party	.	.	6	.	.	.
Communist Party	5	4	35	0	1	2
Others	38	25	11	5	1	2

Independents	81	13	12	19	11	6
Total	466	466	466	466	466	467

(Almost all of Independents are bourgeois politicians.)

Table 5.2: General Elections Results(Lower House):1958-80

1958-1969

Year	1958	1960	1963	1967	1969
Liberal Democratic Party	287	296	283	277	288
New Liberal Club	.	.	.	.	.
Independents	12	5	12	9	16
Komei Party (Buddist/petit-bourgeois)	.	.	.	25	47
DSP	.	17	23	30	31
SP	166	145	144	140	90
Social Democratic Federation	.	.	.	.	.
CP	1	3	5	5	14
Total	467	467	467	486	486

1972-1980

Year	1972	1976	1979	1980
Liberal Democratic Party	271	249	248	284
New Liberal Club	.	17	4	12
Independents	14	21	19	11
Komei Party (Buddist/petit-bourgeois)	29	55	57	33
DSP	19	29	35	32
SP	118	123	107	107
Social Democratic Federation	.	.	2	3
CP	38	17	39	29
Total	491	511	511	511

(Almost all of Independents are bourgeois politicians.)

For the final chapter, go to [The Last Vigor of the Japanese Postwar Reformist Workers Movement and its Impasse in the 1970s — the beginning of the downfall of Sohyo Trade-Union movement](#)

Footnotes

[1] ESSF, article 21738.