



RELATIONS BETWEEN BUREAUCRACY AND CABINET

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Abstract

Japan's bureaucracy is a kind of independent and powerful part in its political system. In British, which almost has the same political system as Japan, its civil servants smoothly realize the order from their political minister. Why and how does this difference appear? There are a lot of factors that make this happen, and the main reason is the difference between each country's party systems. Though the two countries have almost the same electoral systems, their party systems are so different. In Britain, there is a mature two-party system, parties' leaders control their parties' resources and distribute them to their candidates. On the contrast, in Japan, before 1993, there was a predominant-party system, and a juvenile two-party system is being built up, nowadays.

Introduction

As we know, Japan's bureaucracy is one of the most independent and powerful executive branches in democracy countries [4]. Though Britain also has a parliamentary system and a kind of nominal monarch, British bureaucracy, also called civil servant, compared with Japanese, is a bit weak and their power is unfixed. In Japan, bureaucracy's power has been confirmed by Constitution. No matter who is the minister of a department, its power would not be severely impacted. Even if there were an earthquake in parliament, the bureaucracy smoothly works as usual. As there is no fixed Constitution in Britain, the function and responsibility of a department has never been permanently limited, so the power of the department is also flexible. Civil servants, does not as their Japanese coordinate, seriously follow their political ministers' order, and not compose an independent part of government as powerful as Japanese bureaucracy.

In this study, the conditional variable is the given constitutional monarchy democracy; the independent variable in this study is a state's party system; the dependent variable is relation between the bureaucracy and cabinet; the intermediate variables are stability of a cabinet, relation between the premier and ministers, relation between the parliament and cabinet, and degree of stability of intraparty politics. The main hypothesis of this study is: within a constitutional monarchy democracy, its party system would decide the stability of its cabinet, relation between premier and minister, relation between parliament and cabinet, degree of stability of intraparty politics, and finally decide the relation, we study in this essay, between its bureaucracy and cabinet. Besides above, this study has been focused on Japanese case and uses British case as reference.

Japanese Case

In order to study the relation between Japanese cabinet and bureaucracy, we can divide the time line of its development into four parts: period of Meiji Constitution, postwar chaos time, period from 1955 to 1993, and post-1993. Before investigate the detail of these periods, we have to give out some basic characteristics of Japanese parliament and cabinet.

Parliament: there are two houses, or called bicameral, in Japan's parliament, House of Councilors and House of Representatives (upper and lower), both of them are forced to consist of elected members, and represent the interests of all the people, nowadays. Bicameral, originally, was set up to avoid kings' dictatorship and tyranny of the majority, so House of Representatives has been built up to represent citizens' profits and House of Councilors represents aristocrats' and kings' benefits. Because of that, at very beginning, the councilors of upper house were selected by a nondemocratic, no electoral, and highest ruler nominated way, and the members of lower house were elected by general. Consequently, with the spread of modern democracy, many countries have either gone to unicameral legislatures or unequal bicameral systems, with the lower house dominant. Members in both houses are selected by election, which have different rules and standards. In Japan, before 1993, both houses have been dominated by the same political party, check and balance between the two houses have almost ceased to function.

Cabinet is the executive department, a kind of extension, of parliament. Premier, the head of cabinet, should be signed by lower house [6]. The members of cabinet are selected from councilors by premier. There are some differences between cabinet and bureaucracy. Cabinet is the executive department of parliament, and bureaucracy is a standing body, nominally led by cabinet, for laws and policies execution. Ministers, selected by elections, but bureaucrats are selected by an apolitical, but professional, way.

Period of Meiji Constitution

In order to emphasize emperor's power, according to the Japanese Constitution before WWII, legislative authority of cabinet is derived from imperial sovereignty, as well as the premier has been put in the position only a bit prior among all ministers and ministers were supposed to bear responsibility to advise their emperor. In this way, the power of both premier and parliament had been limited. At beginning, the Meiji Constitution confirmed the parliament's power of exercising legislation. Since the upper



house, controlled by the emperor, could thwart the results of lower house, and emperor also save the right to appoint a premier.

Moreover, the Meiji Constitution stipulated that the Army and Navy ministers should be appointed by the emperor and must be officers in active. Consequently, this legal framework hides the dangers of cabinet fragmentation and collapse, as well as undue military influence. Besides the lower house's prerogative of approving budgets, the rights of the two houses were equal, but parliament could not really control its cabinet.

Chaos Time

The period from the end of WWII to 1955 is the chaos time of Japanese democracy. According to 1947 Constitution, the premier must be a member of parliament, and should be chosen by parliament, even the most of his cabinet's members are supposed to be councilors. With this Constitution, Japan built up a, parliament based, modern political system. However, it was not working smoothly at its beginning.

According to this postwar Constitution, Japan's parliament is known as the National Diet. It is the supreme organ of state power and the solely legislative institution. The premier only has the right to submit bills to parliament, if he wanted it to be legally executed. After that, Japanese parliament gets biggest power (include making laws, approving budget, approving treaties, and amending the Constitution) among the three power branches. But that Constitution also stipulates procedures by which the executive and judicial parts can restrain parliament. For example, it gives executive part the power to dissolve parliament and gives the court the power of judicial review. Those arises chaos.

Along with the Article 7, which allows the emperor to dissolve parliament with the advice and consent of the cabinet [2]. The Article 69 of the Constitution specifies dissolution of the lower house as one response, a cabinet can make, to the non-confidence motion toward the cabinet from lower house. From 1948 to nowadays, there are always debates about whether a cabinet has the power to dissolve parliament without the non-confidence motion from parliament [2].

In that period, since parliament didn't build up as many committees as today, it had to follow cabinet's leading in making professional bills. During those days, there was no powerful enough party or parties coalition that could control the competition system. A lot of parties appeared and disappeared, the party system fluctuated so severely.

Period 1955-1993

Ever since the merging of the conservative parties in 1955, the Japanese election was consistently dominated by the LDP (Liberty & Democracy Party) until 1993. During that period, Japan's party system is a predominant-party system. The change of interparty balance influenced the appearance of parliaments and, especial, cabinets so severely. That made cabinets so frequently be reshuffled, and the terms of parliaments were also so short.

As the interparty balance changed, parliament might make non-confidence motion towards incumbent cabinet, and the cabinet could dissolve parliament and asked for a new election to let people judge their performance within 10 days. That made Japanese political system very unstable.

As in a predominant-party system, LDP's politicians have to set up their own back-up organizations. There are a lot of groups within LDP, and none of them is strong enough to suppress all of the other groups [3]. The politicians have to cooperate with each other to win an election. As no group can suppress all of the other groups, the premier also cannot control his party and parliament efficiently. Within LDP, politicians are much more important than their party. Since LDP was certainly to win an election, politicians' own characteristic is more important in attracting voters. Due to that, LDP's MPs (Member of Parliament) do not treat their incumbent cabinets so seriously and always ready to castoff them.

Within that predominant-party system, no one could survive from intraparty conflicts. Japanese premiers and their cabinets, during that period, had no guarantee of their positions. They located in the central of intraparty competition and faced an unclear future. On this condition, we could not suppose them to effectively control Japanese bureaucracy.

Post-1993

The LDP lost control of lower house in July 1993. It is the end of Japan's predominant-party system. From then on, the relation between parliament and cabinet is getting close to the Constitution's stipulation. Nowadays, a two-party system is in building, and the diversity of the political system is increasing, too.

Relation between Cabinet and Bureaucracy in Japan

After review the development process of Japanese political system, we can assure that the Japanese governmental system, based on a fixed Constitution, is clearly prescribed. Function, responsibility, political resource and power are explicitly located. A phrase to describe it is 'Fixed barrack, floating soldiers'. No matter who becomes the premier or ministers of a cabinet, apolitical bureaucrats are almost doing the same daily work. Their work contents are never changed dramatically, so is their power. Accompany with Japanese cabinets' short tenure, bureaucrats almost survive from party politics because all of the things in touch with bureaucracy have been assured.

Under a political system that individual politicians are more important than their parties, cabinets largely reflects the



internal politics of the ruling party, and are very unstable [5]. Ministers don't have enough time to setup their control of bureaucrats. As ministers are running for short-time benefits, they do not want to conflict with their departments' members, so they tried to avoid impose any reforms that would arise bureaucrats' hostility. A minister that in predominant-party system, without an election, does not have a lot of chance to replace his premier, so during his tenure the main aim should be keeping his department working smoothly. That is what makes Japan's bureaucracy so independent and powerful.

Nowadays, as a two-party system is building up, under the pressure of uncertain outcome of next election, MPs from the same party would treat their incumbent cabinets more seriously; this would significantly longer their cabinets' tenure. In order to win the next election, cabinets have to done some attractive works to maintain their popularity. On that condition, bureaucracy and its members could not work as neutrally as before. The relation between ministers and their departments would get close, and bureaucrats have to follow ministers' leading smoothly, if they want to keep their power and position. Detail differences are given in the Table 1.

British Case

As one of the oldest democracy country in this world, Britain is a standout sample of parliamentary democracy. There are two chambers in British parliament, commons and lords (upper and lower). The members of lower house are being elected every 5 years. Traditionally, most of the members of upper house are inherited aristocrats, or being appointed by queen. Nowadays, with the efforts of Labor Party, the house of commons has passed an act that allow the members of the house of lord to be selected by election, and this would impact British political system a lot in future.

In Britain, as it is transferring from a two-party system to a multiparty system, there are always some opposites. Compare with individual politicians, a party's political resources are more abundant. To a rational politician, take election system in consideration, who wants to win a position in some level of governments, his first step should be to be one of the candidates of a party. He has to win an intraparty election, and then he could use the name and resources of that party to participate a national or district election.

To a party leader, the situation is totally different. British parties choose leaders that can lead them to win an election, this means the parties need popular leaders so seriously, and after that the leaders can control the parties' main political resources. Not as in Japan, a nominal British party's leader is the real power controller of that party. Once a party leader has been selected, the party's powers are centralized into his hands. Generally speaking, in British election and party system, party is much more important than individual politicians, but most of a party's resources are controlled by its leader, and the party must adapt its rhythm to its leader's.

Parliament is supposed to be the most powerful part of British government, as there is no real constitution and effective highest court. In reality, the most powerful part is not parliament, but cabinet. Since a premier is not only the leader of the winner party, but also the controller of the majority in British parliament. A British premier also has a right to ask for a new election at any time, during his 5 years tenure [1]. This makes it theoretically possible for them to choose a date when victory is easy. Anyway, because a premier control the majority party's members' future of winning the next election, before he loses his control of his party, or basic support from voters, no rational party members dear to betray him. Without rebellion of majority party, it is impossible for a parliament to really constrain its cabinet. As a premier control the majority of parliament, his cabinet almost can act as unrestricted as possible.

A cabinet consists of ministers appointed by a primer, and would be the heads of Whitehall departments. They must be members of either the House of Commons or the House of Lords. Historically, a cabinet is the forum in which the prime minister brings together governing party's leading members, many with competing departmental interests and personal ambitions, to ensure agreement about main government policies. As we show above, the main reason for a politician to participate a party is to win an election and higher his position. A cabinet is a production of intraparty competition there are always some ministers prepare to replace incumbent premier. The chance to be the next premier stimulates ministers to bigger their departments' influence and grab more headlines.

Civil servants (British bureaucrats) compose the insolvable executive branch of the government. Though they are selected by an apolitical way, their actions are political; especially, higher civil servants who compose the smallest and most important executive group are acting as politicians. Top civil servants are like bipartisan politicians, always ready to work for whichever party wins an election. Top civil servants prefer to work for a minister who has clear views on policy and can bring more political resource to their departments to bigger their power. In order to catch a headline or squash criticism, a busy politician doesn't have time to go into details, so higher civil servants are expected to be able to respond their ministers' political views and to give advice consistent with their outlook, the wills of the governing party and Downing Street.

Concern with their own benefit, civil servants dislike a minister who tries to grab media's attention by expressing views that will get the department into trouble later, even he can bring them more short-time power. High-level civil servants are expected to be able to think like politicians, anticipating what their ministers would want, and objections that would be raised by parliament, interest or pressure groups, and the mass-media [6]. Ministers are expected to be able to recognize the obstacles in the process of achieving desirable goals that civil servants identify for them. To avoid the imaginary revenge from premier, civil servants has to



follow the cabinet's order as smoothly as possible.

Without fixed constitution, the governing area of a department is not clearly limited either, and can be rearranged a lot. A minister, has close relation with his primer, can assure the resources important to his department, secure and bigger its influence and power. In order to secure their own power, civil servants should catch up with their ministers, and this makes cabinet manipulate civil servants more easily. Because of above, accompany with British cabinets' long tenure, civil servants are forced to keep a close and solid relation with the incumbent cabinet. To realize it, they have to implement the ministers' order smoothly.

Comparison between Japanese Case and British

Table 1, Main Differences between British and Japanese Political System

Parliamentary Political system	Britain	Japan
Election System	PR/SMD/SNTV/FPP	PR/SMD/SNTV/FPP
Trend of Party System's Development	Two-party to Multiparty	Predominant to Two-party
Political Power Distribution	Parliament Dominating	Share and Balance
Efficient Highest Court	No	Yes
Independence of Premier	Strong	Small
Premier's right to ask for a new election	Yes	No
Parliament and Cabinet's Relation	Stable	Unstable
Power of Departments	Depend on Ministers	Fixed by Law

From Table 1 we can find that, except their parliamentary political systems and electoral systems, there are a lot of differences between British and Japanese. All of these differences make British bureaucracy, compares with Japanese, situate in so different status. But the most important factor that causes the most of differences is difference between their party systems.

In Japan, before 1993, as LDP always won elections, its intraparty politics severely impacted cabinets' stability. When the balance within LDP had been changed, the parliament would vote to unconfident to incumbent cabinet. Without stability, a cabinet has neither stimulant nor possibility to rule bureaucracy effectively. The only thing it can do within its short tenure is to keep bureaucrats working as they supposed. Because neither premiers nor ministers have enough time to impact bureaucrats working styles essentially, and bureaucrats get a chance to work independently. In Britain, there is no effective Highest Court can stop and correct parliament's monarch, bureaucrats don't have a protector that would support them when they offended the cabinet that control the parliament.

During LDP's ruling period, due to no pressure of losing the next election, MPs belong to LDP were not attached themselves with incumbent cabinet tightly. Whenever the intraparty power balance has been changed, they immediately change their attitude to incumbency. This severely weakened the stability of a cabinet and the power of a premier. On that condition, a cooperant intraparty system has been built up, and politicians compromise with each other.

A production of compromise is that a Japanese premier cannot control his party efficiently. Before 1993, as LDP always won elections, the importance of a premier was so low. A premier in Japan also do not have right to ask for a new election, this means his influence on his party is relatively small. A premier that cannot control his party effectively, how could his cabinet perfectly control bureaucracy?

Table 2, the Record of British Cabinets 1940-2010

Year	Party in Cabinet	Primer
2010-Now	Coalition	David Cameron
1997-2010	Labour	Tony Blair-Gordon Brown
1990-1997	Conservative	John Major
1979-1990	Conservative	Margaret Thatcher
1976-1979	Labour	James Callaghan



1974-1976	Labour	Harold Wilson
1970-1974	Conservative	Edward Heath
1964-1970	Labour	Harold Wilson
1963-1964	Conservative	Sir Alec Douglas-Home
1957-1963	Conservative	Harold Wilson
1955-1957	Conservative	Anthony Eden
1951-1955	Conservative	Winston Churchill
1945-1951	Labour	Clement Attlee
1940-1945	Coalition	Winston Churchill

From Table 2 and 3, we can easily find that British cabinets serve more stable than Japanese ones. From 1945 to 2010, there are only 15 British premiers. In the period 1955-2010, Japan, under the slogan 'Judged by people', has almost 28 different primers. This factor impacts the relation between cabinet and bureaucracy so severely. Without a durable cabinet, especial in a predominant-party system, bureaucrats do not dear to show their royalty to any ministers, they have to work neutrally and independently. And ministers do not have enough time to set up or realize their own management styles, either. They have to fit themselves into preexisted environment.

Table 3, the Record of Japanese Cabinets 1955-2010

Prime Minister	Selection Date	Partisan Support
Fourteen successive LDP prime ministers	Nov.22,1955–Nov.4,1991	LDP1
Kiichi Miyazawa	5-Nov-91	LDP
Morihiro Hosokawa (JNP)	9-Aug-93	JNP+JRP+NPH+SDP+DSP+SDF+Komeito
Tsutomu Hata (RP)	29-Apr-94	JNP+JRP+DSP+SDF+Komeito
Tomiichi Murayama (SDP)	30-Jun-94	LDP+SDP+NPH
Ryutaro Hashimoto (LDP)	11-Jan-96	LDP+SDP+NPH
Ryutaro Hashimoto (LDP)	7-Nov-96	LDP2
Keizo Obuchi (LDP)	30-Jul-98	LDP+Komeito+LP
Yoshiro Mori (LDP)	5-Apr-00	LDP+Komeito+CP
Junichiro Koizumi (LDP)	26-Apr-01	LDP+Komeito(+CP)3
Shinzo Abe (LDP)	30-Sep-06	LDP+Komeito
Yasuo Fukuda (LDP)	26-Sep-07	LDP+Komeito
Taro Aso (LDP)	24-Sep-08	LDP+Komeito
Yukio Hatoyama (DPJ)	16-Sep-09	DPJ+PNP+SDP
Naoto Kan (DPJ)	8-Jun-10	DPJ+PNP

1, From 1983 until 1986, the LDP gave one cabinet seat to the small New Liberal Club, which merged back into the LDP in 1986.



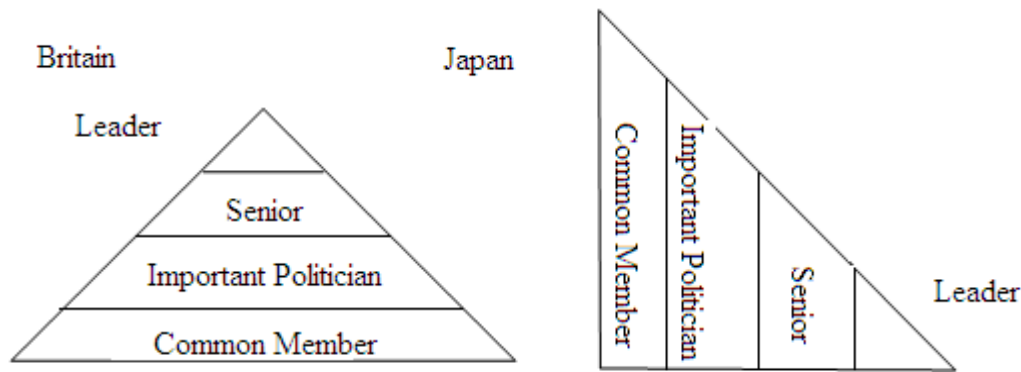
2, Started as a minority government, but the LDP added enough new members to gain a majority.

3, The CP dissolved after the November 2003 General Election, with its remaining members joining the LDP.

Party Abbreviations: Komeito: Clean Government Party; CP: Conservative Party; DP: Democratic Party; DSP: Democratic Socialist Party; JNP: Japan New Party; JRP: Renewal Party; LDP: Liberal Democratic Party; NCP: National Cooperative Party; NLC: New Liberal Club; NPH: New Party Harbinger; PNP: People's New Party; SDF: Social Democratic Federation; SDP: Social Democratic Party.

From Fig 1 we can clearly see the differences between the two countries' intraparty systems. British intraparty system looks like a pyramid; all of British parties political power is centralized in their leaders' hands. On contrast, Japanese parties' leaders are more like representatives of their party. The relation between leaders and their parties is cooperation. Unlike in Britain, Japan's parties' leaders could not impact the outcome of an election efficiently.

Fig 1, the Outlook of Japanese Intraparty Politics and British



Bureaucracy, in Japan, has neither incentives nor needs to set up a close relation with a cabinet. They have been selected by an apolitical way, and, according to laws, also supposed to act apolitically. Under a predominant-party system, no matter how a cabinet changes the meaning for them is the same [5]. After 1993, a two-party system began to establish, the stability and tenure of a cabinet would gradually increase. Premiers' control of their party would also grow significantly. In the near future, Japanese bureaucrats would lose their independence step by step, and the influence from a cabinet would be increased significantly. Accompany with above factors, the differences of party systems between Japanese and British create the different relations between two countries' cabinets and bureaucracies.

Conclusion

To sum up, Japan's bureaucracy is a kind of independent and powerful part in its political system, but, in British, almost has the same political system as Japan, civil servants are smoothly realize the order from their political minister. There are a lot of factors that makes this phenomenon appear, and the main reason is the difference between each country's party systems. Though the two countries have almost the same electoral systems, their party systems are so different. In Britain, there is a mature two-party system, parties' leaders control their parties' resources and distribute them to their candidates. On the contrast, in Japan, before 1993, there was a predominant-party system, and a juvenile two-party system is still in processing, nowadays.

The relations between cabinet and bureaucracy, in Japan and Britain, are dramatically different. Though both countries are parliamentary political system, there are big differences between their party systems. This factor basically causes the phenomena we study about in this essay. Nowadays, party systems in both countries are changing day by day, as competitions are getting furious, a premier's control of his party would be more efficient. In Japan, aim to keep controlling their government, MPs from premiers' party have to follow premiers leading more smoothly, and this would bigger premiers' power and his cabinet's stability. Accompany with these changes, in future, Japan's cabinet and bureaucracy relation would get close as much as it in Britain. In Britain, as its party system is changing from two-party to multiparty, a cooperant political system is building up, the stability of a cabinet and premiers' power would be limited. The British bureaucrats may act more independently, in future.

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