

5

EXERCISING POWER AS A NÔRIN ZOKU

Matsuoka followed the classical career pattern for a *zoku*. His long-standing membership of PARC and Diet committees on agricultural and forestry, his attainment of the top executive positions in the key committees as well as his subcabinet positions on agriculture, forestry and fisheries earned him membership of the LDP's agriculture and forestry 'tribe'. Acquisition of formal policy positions over a period of time indicated an accumulated level of expertise and influence in a particular policy domain as well as the possession of close relations with the ministry responsible for administering that sector. As Matsuoka aspired to senior executive positions in the party and leadership positions in the government, he was aiming to use his status as a 'tribe Diet member' (*zoku giin*) as a means of furthering his ambitions to even higher office.

BECOMING A ZOKU

It is difficult to pinpoint when Matsuoka actually became a *nôrin zoku*. According to some commentators, he had the right to be called a *nôrin zoku* right from the start of his political career 'because he had received support from the late Tamaki Kazuo and because he represented the traditional locality of Kumamoto'.¹ Certainly, by the mid 1990s, Matsuoka's power to plunder the pork barrel had become widely known as a result of the projects built in his own district funded by the UR countermeasures package.² By 2000, 'while being a middle-ranking Diet member elected four times, his career history as a *nôrin zoku* stood out'.³ Matsuoka allegedly monopolised agricultural, forestry and fisheries public works subsidies as chairman of the Lower House AFF

Committee.⁴ In 2000, Nokyo's National Council recognised Matsuoka as a key member of the next generation of agricultural leaders.⁵

Others, however, have not been quite as willing to accord Matsuoka the status of a *nôrin zoku*. He was described as 'not a traditional *nôrin zoku*, because he was not supported by the MAFF. He did not get the backing of the MAFF to stand in politics'.⁶ Furthermore, Matsuoka never had an easy relationship with MAFF officials, which was the norm for *zoku*. As Nakanishi comments, the 'best *nôrin zoku* are those who speak for the MAFF'.⁷ In practice Matsuoka only defended the MAFF's interests when they aligned with his own. A typical example was his support for the MAFF in forcing through Nagasaki Prefecture's Isahaya Bay Drainage Project.⁸ A DPJ executive observed that 'Matsuoka was joked about as "the caretaker of MAFF interests" (*Nôsuishô no shôeki no bannin*) because he resisted all opposition to the Isahaya Bay project, which reclaimed part of the Ariake Sea in Isahaya Bay'.⁹ The Ariake Sea was a nearly land-locked body of water bordered by the prefectures of Nagasaki, Kumamoto, Saga and Fukuoka. The ¥250 billion public works project filled in Isahaya Bay by reclaiming the land to create farmland and a large reservoir. The project area was surrounded by a 7 km-long main dyke whose gates were closed in 1997 to keep out seawater in order to facilitate the fill-in work.¹⁰ Matsuoka was reported as saying that 'as long as the LDP exists, we will not open the dyke (drainage) gate(s)'.¹¹ He also commented, 'there are only a few people who oppose it [the Isahaya Bay project] locally. They are only doing it for their own benefit. They live in the hills and worry about damage to the water, and making a living by taking photos of mudskippers'.¹² Locals, however, complained that the initial justification for the project (reclamation in order to create farmland) changed to 'water damage countermeasures policy'.¹³ In fact 'the only real purpose seemed to be to complete a large-scale public works project and so the official objective of the project did not really matter'.¹⁴

'GODFATHER' OF THE *NÔRIN ZOKU*

Despite Matsuoka's disputed *zoku* status, it is clear that Matsuoka was no ordinary *nôrin zoku*. In fact, by 2000, Matsuoka was regarded not just as a *zoku*, but as a *zoku* boss. He had become known as the 'new godfather'¹⁵ and 'Don' (as in Don Corleone) of the *nôrin zoku*.¹⁶ Being a 'Don' was equivalent to being a *nôrin zoku* boss, the most influential of veteran lawmakers. It bestowed extensive powers in a range of different domains. As 'a dominant *nôrin zoku*

figure, he had influence over related groups, in budget acquisition, and in personnel affairs relating to politicians and bureaucrats'.¹⁷

Many of the references to Matsuoka's being a 'godfather' were to his leading position in the field of forest policy. He was called the 'Don' of forestry administration (*rinya no don*)¹⁸ and 'an influential tribe Diet member' (*yûrokyu zoku*) from the Forestry Agency'.¹⁹ One journalist in charge of MAFF issues said, 'because he is the only Diet member from the Forestry Agency, it is fair to say that in regard to forestry issues, he is a godfather-like figure'.²⁰ Nakanishi *et al.* wrote in 2002, 'Diet member Matsuoka has rapidly expanded his influence over the last few years as an influential tribe Diet member from the Forestry Agency and has come to be called "the boss of forestry". His influence extends from the budget and personnel affairs to the distribution of projects by the Forestry Agency'.²¹ Itô agreed that on forestry administration, Matsuoka 'had no equal'.²²

INFLUENCE OVER MAFF BUREAUCRATS

As a *zoku*, Matsuoka was expected to be both a protector and a beneficiary of the MAFF. As one of the gatekeepers of the political process, Matsuoka's job was to shepherd MAFF-drafted policy measures and bills through the party and the Diet as well as to lobby for the ministry's budget as a member of the ministry's supporters' group (*ôendan*).²³ In exchange, ministry officials, through the exercise of their discretionary powers, could arrange favours and benefits that would become the patronage Matsuoka dispensed to clients and supporters, and which were important ingredients in Matsuoka's electoral and political survival. Ideally, the relationship between Matsuoka and the MAFF should have been one of equality and mutual dependence.

However, the Matsuoka–MAFF connection did not quite fit this pattern. Because Matsuoka had strong ideas, MAFF officials said they had difficulties in dealing with him, and that he was not easy to talk to.²⁴ It was far from unusual for Matsuoka to shout and put pressure on MAFF executives in divisional meetings, which were held almost every day when the Diet was in session.²⁵ He was regarded 'as someone who did what he liked, and while, from the MAFF's perspective, he could be a reliable person, he could also be really annoying'.²⁶

As far as the ministry was concerned, Matsuoka had only two positive attributes. First, as 'a bureaucratic OB, he studied policy extensively'.²⁷ Second, he 'was a convenient person for the MAFF to organise the Etô-Kamei faction',²⁸

which was dominated by LDP ‘Old Guard’ politicians and which ‘had many loud-mouthed agriculture and forestry “tribe” members’.²⁹ These included Yatsu Yoshio, the faction’s secretary-general and one-time MAFF minister, and Furuya Keiji who acquired his *jiban* from his *nôrin zoku* father Furuya Keiyû.³⁰ The Etô-Kamei faction inherited the mantle of the leading *nôrin zoku* faction from former Prime Minister Suzuki, whose faction (Kôchikai)³¹ had been a *nôrin zoku* stronghold. After Suzuki retired in 1990, Etô Takami took over as leader of the *nôrin zoku*.³² This group was known as the ‘fighting faction’ (*butôha*) amongst the *nôrin zoku*.³³

When it came to links with bureaucrats, Matsuoka had extremely close connections to some officials in the MAFF. The term ‘Matsuoka children’ was even used to describe the ministry.³⁴ Matsuoka’s personal connections in the MAFF spanned both career and non-career officials.³⁵ His *senpai* (seniors) were former Administrative Vice-Minister, Tanaka Hironao (who entered the MAFF in 1956), former Director-General of the Food Agency, Ishihara Mamoru (who entered the MAFF in 1970, close to when Matsuoka entered it), former Livestock Department Director, Nagamura Takemi (who entered the MAFF in 1972, but who resigned over the BSE problem) and others. Matsuoka also had a close relationship with the former Director-General of the Hokkaido Forestry Management Bureau, Ogawa Yasuo (who entered MAFF in 1968), and who was called ‘the Boss of Hokkaido Forestry’.³⁶ Matsuoka reportedly made the best use of these ‘Matsuoka children’.³⁷

Matsuoka also had extremely intimate relations with non-career officials such as a former assistant divisional director of the Agricultural Structure Improvement Bureau, Satô Masato. Satô had a cosy relationship with the company building ‘Refresh Villages’ using UR countermeasures money provided under pressure from Matsuoka, *zoku giin* and agricultural groups.³⁸ Satô was reportedly at Matsuoka’s beck and call in relation to the expenditure of the UR countermeasures funds.³⁹ Matsuoka was also close to a party official in LDP headquarters (a Mr Y), forming what was known as the ‘Matsuoka—the LDP’s Mr Y—the MAFF’s Satô’ line.⁴⁰ As a former MAFF executive explained

[i]t is true that Satô was close to Matsuoka. Satô was a *jimukan* from Hokkaido and a dazzling and dynamic type of person. He was quite proficient at his work and obtained and handled budgets skilfully. His boss evaluated him highly. Since he just worked on structural improvement projects, he was rather puffed up with pride. He became a sort of ‘structural improvement

zoku'. He did not listen to what his division chief said, and he conducted everything by himself. According to rumour, he selected projects in a self-willed manner, and was entertained by a large number of companies and prefectural government officials. However, three to four years ago, corruption in structural improvement projects came to light. A MAFF investigative committee was launched, and punishments were imposed. In consequence, MAFF officials conducting structural improvement were all replaced, and Satô was transferred to a local office.⁴¹

After Satô was punished and transferred to the Tokai Agricultural Administration Bureau (Tôkai Nôsei Kyoku),⁴² Matsuoka tried to get him returned to headquarters (the MAFF main ministry in Tokyo). He repeatedly told the Director-General of the Structural Improvement Bureau, Yamamoto Tôru, in the presence of others, to return Satô to the bureau in the MAFF.⁴³ However, another ex-MAFF Diet member opposed Satô's return, and the plan failed.⁴⁴ Instead of being returned back to the MAFF in Tokyo, Satô was transferred to the Kanto Agricultural Administration Bureau so Matsuoka could save face to a certain extent.⁴⁵ However, it was through his relationship to Satô that Matsuoka was able to wield so much influence over the allocation of the UR countermeasures package.

MAFF officials also had long memories about the way Matsuoka behaved when he was deputy minister in 2001. Matsuoka saw the deputy minister's position as an opportunity to throw his weight around his old ministry and to subject the ministry to his power. He wanted to create a more hierarchical relationship, in which officials in the ministry were subordinated to politicians in the LDP. Matsuoka's behaviour naturally created a lot of resentment amongst officials in the MAFF. Surprisingly perhaps, it also created resentment amongst other *nôrin zoku* because it overturned customary decision-making norms and the traditional working relations between the party and the bureaucracy.⁴⁶

Matsuoka's treatment of MAFF officials while he was deputy minister was commonly attributed to various grievances that he had held during his time in the ministry. One official reasoned that because Matsuoka was a *gikan* while in the MAFF, he gave the *jimukan* a hard time when he became deputy minister.⁴⁷ As a Forestry Agency OB explains

Matsuoka was a *gikan* who graduated from Tottori University. Even though he was a high-ranking *gikan* (*jôkyûshoku*), he was often dismissed and treated coldly by career bureaucrats (*jimukanryô*) in the main ministry. So behind his yelling at the bureau chiefs who once looked down on him, there is a bitterness from that time (when he was in the Forestry Agency).⁴⁸

According to some MAFF officials, Matsuoka had very strong views on agricultural policy and was infamous for calling up MAFF bureaucrats and yelling down the phone at them.⁴⁹ Even the WTO section of MoFA received many phone calls from him. It 'was so easy for Matsuoka to threaten officials, he could do it before breakfast'.⁵⁰ Few MAFF officials could have anticipated his eventual appointment as minister in 2006.

POLICY INTERVENTION

As an agricultural 'tribe' Diet member, Matsuoka exercised considerable influence over agricultural and forestry policy. At one time he held all the main PARC agricultural and forestry committee executive posts, which put him in a position to exercise power at critical stages of the policymaking process. His two most active and influential posts as a *nôrin zoku* were as chairman of the Agricultural Basic Policy Subcommittee and as secretary-general of the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery Products Trade Investigation Committee.⁵¹ In the subcommittee, Matsuoka played a pivotal role in the making of all aspects of rice policy and rice policy reform. In the trade investigation committee, Matsuoka was a key figure in formulating Japan's position in agricultural trade negotiations.

Through his committee executive posts, Matsuoka also earned membership of the *nôrin kanbu*, which gave him broad powers over all important agricultural and forestry policies. This made him a target for petitioning groups of all kinds across a range of policy areas. He regularly hosted groups of petitioners in his parliamentary office.

For example, in July 2005, Matsuoka received a delegation from Kumamoto Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, which made a number of policy requests. Following the visit, Matsuoka publicly committed himself to 'protecting Japanese agriculture for safe and anxiety-free food'.⁵² In August of the same year he received a delegation from Kyushu forestry-related groups. They spoke to him about a budget proposal for the 2006 supplementary budget, which would provide compensation for the damage caused by heavy rain. Matsuoka agreed that he would tackle disaster restoration as an important issue.⁵³ In October, he received a number of representatives from agricultural groups. They wanted to present a number of requests relating to countermeasures for wheat and soybeans produced in 2006.⁵⁴

Matsuoka's *giin gaikô*

As secretary-general of the trade investigation committee Matsuoka gained international notoriety as one of Japan's leading *nôrin zoku* through his conduct of *giin gaikô*. Because the LDP had to develop and hold its own position on agricultural trade policy matters independently of the government (meaning the MAFF) and the Koizumi administration, Matsuoka saw overseas delegations as part of his executive role in the committee. He claimed even to have spent his own money in exchanging opinions with a large number of countries concerned.⁵⁵

Wherever he went, Matsuoka conducted a type of parallel diplomacy, designed not only to provide backing for the official Japanese government negotiating position but also to press WTO officials and representatives of foreign governments to his and the LDP's position on agricultural trade. This position was rabidly anti-free trade and pro-protection. Matsuoka was unrelenting in pushing his opposition to agricultural trade liberalisation at all points. According to one representative of a foreign trading power, 'he was not backward in saying how he wanted to run the world. He was absolutely committed to his [constituents'] cause. Discussions with him were conversations that went nowhere. He was like a travelling salesman who offered the same message all the time.'⁵⁶ His message ran along the following lines

[a]gricultural production and food self-sufficiency are very important for Japan. This is especially true for cereals (meaning rice) because of the global shortfall. Cereal production can be expected to decline for every degree of global warming. The environment and food have become big problems. This makes the issue of 'bearers' of production in Japan a significant theme. It is imperative that we foster bearers in the current situation of the global retreat of Japanese agriculture. Urban dwellers have strong expectations of agriculture, and I've always backed the idea of urban dwellers' cultivating farm plots and their becoming 'quasi-farmers' (*jun nôgyôsha*) and for city people to have connections with agriculture and rural society. This is one way of resolving the problem of the shortage of cultivatable land. The cities and rural areas will become as one through agriculture. The multifunctionality of agriculture and rural areas and agricultural, mountainous and fishing villages are connected to the totality of people's lives and get the support and understanding of all people. We're being gradually pushed by foreign production, which must not be allowed to harm domestic production. If we consider the problem of food safety, because our country's agricultural products are superior in terms of safety, quality and taste, we should aim for exports. We are world leaders in product improvement and agricultural technology.⁵⁷

In early February 2003 Matsuoka exchanged opinions with the Australian ambassador to Japan, John McCarthy, about the WTO negotiations. As Matsuoka put it

[t]he stance towards the WTO negotiations between Japan and Australia is very different. For Australia and the United States, food is just another traded commodity. However, for Japan and the great majority of European countries, consideration is given to the aspect of food as playing a role in land and environment conservation. Their opinions are different on the point whether a country should make farm products free trade products or not. I made sure that the Australian ambassador understood the policy of the Japanese side.⁵⁸

In February 2003 Matsuoka also participated in an International Assembly of the Parliamentarians' Association for Agriculture and Fisheries (PAAF) in Seoul. The league brought together parliamentary members from 46 countries around the world. Matsuoka was serving as both chairman and deputy chairman of the association. The meeting was held because the WTO was entering the critical phase of establishing 'modalities' (agricultural trade liberalisation criteria)⁵⁹ in March. The second proposal for the 'modalities' was due to be announced in March 2003. Members attending the conference 'reconfirmed their intention to join together to appeal to the WTO to realise fair and justified trade rules enabling different agricultures to co-exist, and not to destroy agriculture in each country given that farming was based on differences in natural conditions and historical backgrounds in each country.'⁶⁰

Earlier, in Bangkok, Matsuoka had attended the Asia Population Development Conference, where he had exchanged opinions with others about the problem of pressure on food security from advancing globalisation and future increases in global population, including in Asia. The conference ended with a resolution to consider the perspectives of population and environmental problems in WTO negotiations.⁶¹

Matsuoka's most assiduous courting was of WTO officials. He wore a path between Tokyo and Geneva in his endeavour to convince WTO officials of the need to protect Japanese agriculture. In the 2003 new round of agricultural trade negotiations, 'the Japanese with the best-known names in Geneva were Sakurai Shin [the chairman of the trade investigation committee] and Matsuoka Toshikatsu.'⁶² Sakurai and Matsuoka became well known in the WTO as 'arrogant *nôrin zoku*'.⁶³ They were called 'Sakura to Matsu' (Cherry and Pine).⁶⁴

In February 2003, Matsuoka conferred with WTO Director-General, Panitchpakdi Supachai, and Chairman of the Agriculture Special Sessions, Stuart Harbinson, when they visited Japan to participate in a WTO mini-ministerial-level conference in Tokyo. Matsuoka advanced claims for inserting considerations relating to the environment and population problems into the

trade-negotiating framework. However, Supachai and others would only acknowledge that 'we are fully aware that each country's claim is different'.⁶⁶

At one point during Supachai's visit to Japan, Sakurai, who was chairman of the trade investigation committee,⁶⁷ and Matsuoka, who was secretary-general, went for direct talks with Supachai. They gatecrashed the Imperial Hotel where he was staying, despite the fact that Supachai had refused an interview on the grounds that he was busy.⁶⁸

In early March 2003, in the lead-up to the final WTO negotiations on the modalities, Matsuoka visited Geneva and Paris together with Sakurai as representatives of the 'Diet Members' Group to Support WTO Negotiations' (WTO Kôshô Shien Giindan) under the direct control of the LDP PARC chairman. Matsuoka claimed that he was appointed head of the delegation because of his 'connections with top-level executives of the WTO and the countries of the European Union and [his] achievements in Diet members' diplomacy over a long period especially in this field'.⁶⁹

In Geneva Matsuoka and Sakurai once again held talks with WTO Director-General Supachai and exchanged opinions with the ambassadors of the United States, Australia and European Union. In the discussions with the ambassadors, whom Matsuoka described as representing 'only a minority of WTO member nations',⁷⁰ he argued that a negotiating framework 'that failed to consider the earth's environmental problem and the food problem of poor nations harmed the benefits of the countries in the world in the long run'.⁷¹

In the discussion with Supachai, Matsuoka and Sakurai issued a strong demand that the director-general take the interests of Japan and other countries that imported farm products into account in the negotiations.⁷² Matsuoka pitched the debate in terms of a dispute about how to deal with conserving the earth's environment as the point at issue in agricultural trade negotiations between the European Union and Japan on the one side, and commercial food-exporting countries such as the United States and Australia on the other.⁷³ He asserted that trade in agricultural products 'cannot be liberalised in the same way as liberalising trade in industrial products'.⁷⁴ Farming had more than an economic function since it helped to protect the environment and prevent natural disasters.

In fact Sakurai and Matsuoka attracted a lot of negative press as a result of their visit and their tactics. They were described as 'storming' Geneva and arguing furiously with Supachai,⁷⁵ 'saying "we are putting ourselves out on a

limb [by directly approaching you] on this one” and spouting statements such as “it is a crisis of the existence or death of the Japanese race”.⁷⁶ Sakurai said, ‘Japan should not compromise in the international task of liberalising trade in farm products because the survival of (the Japanese) people is at stake’.⁷⁷ Matsuoka made a similar comment, arguing that ‘trade in agricultural products cannot be liberalised in the same way as liberalising trade in industrial products because of the multifaceted functions of agriculture in a nation’s economy. In Japan, rice paddies play the same roles as dams in that both can prevent natural disasters’.⁷⁸ Supachai was shocked, saying ‘I thought Japan was an advanced industrial country, but what comes here are just loud-mouthed agricultural and forestry tribe members’.⁷⁹ A Japanese popular weekly magazine commented

[a]t the end of the day, the activities of the over-the-top agricultural and forestry ‘tribe’ members are, after all, no more than a political performance for the benefit of domestic farmers and agriculture-related groups. Sakura and Matsu have no power to influence foreign policy....They don’t have the energy or force of the previous agricultural and forestry tribe members who could boast 300 rice Diet members.⁸⁰

In fact, the director-general of a bureau in METI was quoted as saying, ‘they think they are in charge behind the scenes, but in reality, they’ve become the laughing stock of the international negotiations.’⁸¹

On his return from the Geneva trip, Matsuoka attended a meeting of the trade investigation committee study team and reported back the results of the conference with the WTO director-general, the ambassadors of the European Union and others. With respect to the agricultural trade negotiation framework, Matsuoka and Sakurai affirmed the importance of even stronger cooperation with the countries of Europe in the agricultural trade negotiation process.⁸²

In May 2003, Yatsu Yoshio (who was head of the trade investigation committee study team) and Matsuoka once again trekked to Europe, this time for WTO non-farm products (forest and fishery products) market negotiations. Their purpose was to convey their perspective on Japan’s standpoint on market access negotiations for non-farm products. Matsuoka exchanged opinions with the Chairman of the WTO Non-Agricultural Market Access Negotiating Group, Ambassador Girard, who said he planned to promote debate on the issue for the benefit of all member nations including Japan.⁸³ Matsuoka made the usual points about the need for co-existence and co-prosperity, and a realistic settlement of non-agricultural market access issues.⁸⁴ After returning home, he and Yatsu reported back to the trade investigation committee.

When the WTO Doha Round reached its anti-climatic ministerial-level conference in Cancun, Mexico, in September 2003, Matsuoka was on hand, pushing the agricultural protectionist line. He gave a speech to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) meeting, which was being held at the same time. His speech was in English and, in it, he appealed for understanding of Japan's agricultural trade negotiating position as head of the Japanese joint Lower and Upper House Representatives' delegation. He reported that he received 'big praise from the participants of each country'.⁸⁵ When he returned to Japan he, along with MAFF Minister Kamei Yoshiyuki and chairman of the trade investigation committee (Sakurai) gave an account of the WTO meeting in Cancun to a meeting of the *sansha kaigi*.⁸⁶

The intrepid trippers, Sakurai and Matsuoka, went back to Geneva in December 2003 to conduct further 'Diet members' diplomacy'. Once again they conferred with WTO Director-General Supachai and Chairman of the General Board of Directors, Carlos Pérez del Castillo, and others. Matsuoka reiterated the Japanese point of view, which, he claimed, was the same as some countries in Asia and the European Union.⁸⁷ Essentially, this was the standpoint that there should be a 'coexistence of diverse agricultures', which acknowledged the importance of the conservation of the earth's environment. Matsuoka demanded that 'future discussions at the WTO should not lean towards only the ideology of food exporting countries' side'.⁸⁸ On their return home, Matsuoka and Sakurai once again reported back to a meeting of the trade investigation committee.

In March 2004, under the theme 'Internationalisation and Japanese Agriculture', Sakurai and Matsuoka reported on the 'Diet members' diplomacy' they had been conducting to the Agricultural Basic Policy Subcommittee.⁸⁹ Matsuoka also gave a lecture on the results of the Diet members' diplomacy that they had been undertaking in relation to the WTO agricultural negotiations to the 'Young Diet Members Agricultural Policy Study Association' (Wakate Giin Nôsei Benkyôkai).⁹⁰

In the same month, as leader of a Lower House delegation, Matsuoka attended the Steering Committee of the 'Parliamentary Conference on the WTO' held at the headquarters of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Geneva. The purpose of the conference was to supervise the activities of the WTO. The gathering discussed how to strengthen its influence over international commercial issues starting with the WTO.

On the same trip, Matsuoka conferred with the chairman of the WTO Agriculture Negotiation Group, as well as the chairman of the Non-Farm Products Market Access Negotiation Group, and other WTO leaders. He made representations to the effect that export promotion measures such as export subsidies by industrialised nations should be immediately removed, and that Japan was unable to comply with any further liberalisation without consideration being given to forestry and fishery products.⁹¹

In June 2004, Matsuoka made three trips in a crescendo of agricultural trade diplomacy, two to the United States and one to South America on the WTO agricultural trade negotiations. Each time, Matsuoka was dispatched by the Trade Investigation Committee along with Chairman Sakura, and Acting Chairman Yatsu. In the United States they conferred with the chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and the chairman of the House Agriculture Committee in order to emphasise the importance of rice paddy agriculture in Japan, particularly with respect to conserving land and the environment. In Matsuoka's view, the representatives of America's farm sector that they met gained a considerable understanding of the importance of rice paddies in Japan.⁹² The meetings were held on the understanding that Matsuoka would report to the US Ambassador to Japan, Howard Baker, on his return to Tokyo. Matsuoka, Sakurai and Yatsu later held discussions with Ambassador Baker on the outline agreement of the WTO agriculture negotiations scheduled for July 2004.⁹³

Matsuoka's visit to the countries of South America started in Brazil, which was one of the pivotal players in the G20 group (the major developing nations) within the WTO. His aim, once again, was to achieve wide recognition of Japan's negotiating position at the G5 ministerial-level conference of the WTO (consisting of five major nations and regions—including the United States, the European Union and Brazil). This was due to be held immediately before the presentation of the draft of the outline agreement by the WTO Committee on Agriculture Chairman, Tim Groser, scheduled for early July 2004.⁹⁴

In Matsuoka's discussion with Brazil's foreign and agriculture ministers, he immediately identified Japan and Brazil's common interests at the WTO: the complete abolition of agricultural export subsidies, the drastic retrenchment of the domestic agricultural support policies of the United States and others, and the problems for developing nations such as Brazil in securing export quotas to developed nations. Matsuoka also underlined the importance of rice paddies in Japan. Both ministers agreed that the claims made by Japan were

completely consistent with the claims made by Brazil. The Japanese and Brazilian sides confirmed that they would negotiate in cooperation. Both the Brazilian ministers said that they would act as goodwill ambassadors for Japan at the G5 in relation both to rice tariff problem and the environmental preservation functions of rice paddies.⁹⁵

After Brazil, Matsuoka went on to Chile and Argentina where he met their foreign and agriculture ministers. Both countries supported Japan's claims at the WTO agriculture negotiations, and all promised to engage in mutual cooperation in order to resolve the WTO agricultural negotiation problem.⁹⁶

In July 2004, Matsuoka was a member of a larger group of LDP Diet politicians who made the trip to Geneva, the LDP WTO Agriculture Negotiations Diet Members' Group (Jimintô WTO Nôgyô Kôshô Giindan). The group was dispatched in the lead-up to the announcement of the WTO General Council's Doha Agenda work program (the 'July package') containing, amongst other things, a 'Framework for Establishing Modalities in Agriculture'. The group included all the top guns of LDP agricultural policymaking. Its leader was Sakurai as chairman of the trade investigation committee. Others included Norota Hôsei (CAPIC chairman), the head of the Study Team (Futada Kôji), the chairman of the Agriculture and Forestry Division (Nakagawa Yoshio), and the vice-chairman of the PARC.⁹⁷

In January 2005, Tim Groser visited Japan. He exchanged opinions on the WTO agricultural negotiations with Matsuoka and other executives of the Trade Investigation Committee at LDP headquarters. Groser had come to Japan with the establishment of the modalities for the next WTO Ministerial Conference in mind. Matsuoka and his colleagues strongly pressed Groser for modalities that took into account the co-existence of diverse agricultures and a balance of interests between agricultural importing and exporting countries. He was reminded by Matsuoka that the Japanese government and LDP treated important items such as rice in a separate framework. The LDP agricultural leaders appealed for sufficient guarantees for a number of sensitive items, and for the establishment of rules to lower tariffs that applied to sensitive items less than those that applied to general items.⁹⁸

In April 2005, it was decided that Matsuoka would chair the group leading delegations to South America (Brazil and Argentina) on FTA issues. The following month he reported back to the committee on his trip to South America.

In June 2005, Matsuoka met again with the Australian ambassador, this time Murray McLean, who came to Matsuoka's office in the Diet building. As

Matsuoka recalls, he got the ambassador to understand the reality of Japanese agriculture. He emphasised that the mission of the LDP was to protect Japan's farm sector in world trade rules, and that he worked like a beaver as a representative of the LDP's mission in this respect.⁹⁹

In July 2005, the executives of the Trade Investigation Committee, including Matsuoka (along with Sakurai and Yatsu) visited Geneva again. They conferred with Groser with a view to getting special treatment for sensitive products in the light of the scheduled issuing of the committee chairman's draft for negotiations. Matsuoka and his colleagues explained Japan's standpoint. They said that Japan could not expand the tariff quota for rice while consumption was declining and requested Groser's understanding of Japan's position. They reported that they had received sufficient acknowledgement from other countries as to the sensitive nature of rice for Japan, adding that there was no necessity for any improvement in market access for rice in order to conclude negotiations.¹⁰⁰

Back home, Matsuoka (representing the LDP) attended a meeting with representatives of agricultural groups from foreign countries hosted by Zenchû. The representatives agreed that trade rules should be formulated that allowed the co-existence of diverse agricultures.

In September 2005, Matsuoka, as the representative of the Japanese Lower House, travelled to Geneva again, this time to attend a management committee meeting of the IPU's council relating to the WTO. Matsuoka delivered another speech in English in which he put Japan's position on agricultural trade, including the need for trade rules that prioritised environmental preservation under the title 'how agricultural trade rules should be'.¹⁰¹ After Matsuoka's return to Japan, he attended the LDP's Trade Investigation Committee to give his report on the negotiations that he had conducted in Geneva, including with the head of the IPU's management committee, the chairman of the WTO's Committee on Agriculture and the assistant director-general of the WTO. In Matsuoka's report, he declared that he had told the WTO officials that market access, export subsidies and domestic support were the three areas for simultaneous resolution and that Japan had lowered its domestic support more than other countries (for example, Britain had increased its domestic support), and he reported that both officials showed understanding of what he had said.¹⁰²

Following his successful re-election to the Lower House in September 2005, Matsuoka publicly committed himself to a position on the WTO agricultural

trade negotiations. In his own words, this position would 'take the circumstances of our country's agriculture into consideration, and would assert what Japan needs to assert in international society and do our best for a harmonious settlement'.¹⁰³

In October, Matsuoka once again flew to Geneva in order to attend the Five Interested Parties (FIPs—the United States, European Union, Australia, India and Brazil) meeting. In response to the proposal for uniform tariff reductions on agricultural products, he again reasserted Japan's position, which held that sensitive products such as rice should be excluded from tariff reductions. He pointed out that recent proposals from developing countries such as Africa were close to the Japanese position, but there remained a big gap between the United States and European Union proposals, and the question remained whether there would be agreement at the WTO Ministerial Conference held at the end of the year in Hong Kong.

Immediately prior to his departure for Geneva, Matsuoka attended the National Council's 'WTO Agricultural Negotiations Emergency Countermeasures, Basic Agricultural Policy Establishment National Representatives Gathering', and took on board the views expressed at that meeting. He attended the same gathering in the following month, and as secretary-general of the LDP's Trade Investigation Committee, he reported on his recent trade diplomacy in Geneva. Also, as chairman of the Agricultural Basic Policy Subcommittee, he explained the contents of the direct payments system. He noted that it was a problem in which all farmers were intensely interested. He made a full report on the WTO agricultural negotiations that he had undertaken in the party's trade investigation committee later that morning.¹⁰⁴

With all this frenetic travelling and advocacy, Matsuoka certainly made sure that the LDP's hardline opposition to agricultural trade liberalisation was widely heard around the world. How much this contributed to actual negotiation outcomes is hard to gauge, but at least it advantaged him personally. He was able to demonstrate his commitment to farmers and to agricultural organisations in his constituency, which supported his re-election.

Promoting Japan as an agricultural exporter

Matsuoka has become a central figure in Japan's agricultural export offensive, a cause that he pursued as a form of disguised protectionism. When Matsuoka talked to two Japanese housewives in a highly publicised meeting in April

2004, he explained to them the importance of increasing the food self-sufficiency rate in the same breath as the LDP's plan to export Japanese food overseas.¹⁰⁵

Matsuoka later embarked on a personal crusade for agricultural exports.¹⁰⁶ He obtained the all-out approval and consent for his initiative from Prime Minister Koizumi. In fact, in late 2004, the prime minister cited the anecdote of Japanese apples being sold for ¥1000 a piece in China.¹⁰⁷ Japanese rice has also become popular as a 'brand food' in the countries of East Asia including China.¹⁰⁸ Koizumi later held a meeting with apple growers, and unveiled a vision to increase exports of farm products to the ¥1 trillion a year level. He invited pioneer farm operators to the Kantei to exchange views. Learning that one of the attendees was running a farm underground in an office building in Ōtemachi, the central business district in Tokyo, the prime minister visited it in February 2005, praising the unique enterprise saying: 'Agriculture is a new industry. Agriculture has limitless possibilities'.¹⁰⁹ Koizumi was reported to be pinning his hopes on agriculture as the 'trump card' to turn around the construction-based rural employment structure, and to revamp his own image as someone who had 'turned a cold shoulder to rural areas'.¹¹⁰

In February 2005, during question time in the Lower House Budget Committee, Matsuoka made a pitch for the LDP, government and concerned groups to unite in an agricultural farm export offensive instead of staying in the usual defensive mode. He commented, 'it is time for Japanese agricultural products to shift from defence to offence'.¹¹¹ His view was that

'Made in Japan' agriculture, forestry and fishery products should be actively treated as export items since these products are fully competitive internationally. Like industrial goods, 'made in Japan' agriculture, forestry and fishery products are outstanding 'products', which have passed through the 'baptism' of the severely selective eyes of Japanese consumers. Although there is the criticism that these goods are 'high cost', the exceptional quality of some agricultural products such as apples and pears makes them increasingly in demand in some niche markets in Asia and elsewhere, where affluent consumers seek good-tasting delicacies.¹¹²

Matsuoka's activities in this area culminated in two delegations of politicians which he led to Beijing in January and June 2005 in order to make a pitch for exports of high quality Japanese rice to China, including some of the top Japanese brands of rice from Niigata and Kumamoto prefectures. Japan had still to obtain approval for rice exports to China. Even though selling rice to China would be like sending coals to Newcastle, Matsuoka argued that the kind of rice Japan wanted to export to China was top quality. Rice exports

would, therefore, constitute a kind of 'niche' marketing. Matsuoka was quoted as saying, 'Japanese agricultural products should be the equivalent of the Mercedes-Benz or Rolls Royce of the automobile sector'.¹¹³ Obviously he was making a pitch to the wealthy consumers of Asia. Moreover, if Japanese agriculture became an export industry, it would give the impression that farming in Japan was an internationally competitive industry worth promoting. It would go some way towards countering those who constantly criticised Japanese agriculture for being inefficient and lagging in productivity compared with other Japanese industries and with farm sectors in other developed countries—especially those that exported into the Japanese market. Matsuoka was very happy to see that his policy activities somehow contributed to 'the expediting of agricultural, forestry and fishery exports' being included as one of the major elements in the government's 2005 New Basic Plan, which provided an agricultural policy blueprint for the next 10 years.

In April 2005, the Japanese government launched a government-private sector council called the National Council for Promoting Exports of Agricultural and Marine Products. Its objective was to push exports of domestic farm products, aiming to double the value of agricultural exports over five years. Ideas included developing types of crops that catered to overseas markets. The council brought together representatives of the MAFF, METI, MoFA, local governments, agricultural cooperatives and food manufacturers. At the plenary session to launch the council, the prime minister noted, 'Japanese agricultural products, which are expensive but tasty, are fully exportable. Agriculture is a promising industry'.¹¹⁴ He urged the farm sector to switch from its defensive approach to an aggressive one.¹¹⁵

In June 2005, Matsuoka received a delegation of agricultural groups from Kumamoto in his Diet office. They sought the implementation of fruit tree countermeasures. Matsuoka acknowledged that in Kumamoto, fruit tree agriculture was a key industry. He agreed that it was important to adopt a policy that would reward farmers' efforts. His way of approaching the issue, however, was to 'expand "agricultural policy on the offensive" (*seme no nôsei*) through farm product exports as well as expanding the demand for domestic fruit'.¹¹⁶

Following his successful re-election in 2005, Matsuoka once again took up the 'agriculture as an export industry' theme. He declared that Japan must 'put into effect an "agricultural policy on the offensive" in order to establish Japan's high-quality agricultural products as a large-scale export industry'.¹¹⁷

POLICY INTERFERENCE

Whereas intervening in policymaking via the PARC's agricultural and forestry committees largely facilitated Matsuoka's representation of sectional interests, his interference in the administrative decisions of the bureaucracy enabled him to guide benefits to specific localities and to obtain favours for particular clients. It was in the area of public works and associated construction contracts that the relationship between Matsuoka and the MAFF was observed to be the closest and even one of 'adhesion' (*yuchaku*).¹¹⁸ The direction of mediation flowed from companies to politicians and then to government officials,¹¹⁹ prompting some commentators to ask whether Matsuoka was a Diet representative or a political broker.¹²⁰

In order for Matsuoka to undertake activities as a political broker, it was 'indispensable to have a "fat pipe" that controlled government offices'.¹²¹ One political reporter described how Matsuoka interfered in the MAFF's administrative affairs

Even in relation to small matters, his secretary always rings up the MAFF division in charge. Matsuoka then invites the divisional director or bureau director to an expensive Japanese-style restaurant. If they don't do what he says, he browbeats them. But if they are obedient, he suddenly changes and tames them with food and drink. In the fiscal 1999 supplementary budget, for example, Matsuoka made them allocate almost 20 per cent of the structural improvement works budget for the whole country to Kumamoto Prefecture, saying 'allocate ¥10 billion from the agricultural, forestry and fisheries budget to Kumamoto Prefecture. It's serious because hothouses were destroyed by a typhoon.'¹²²

As a *zoku*, Matsuoka's powers to undertake policy interference were considerably enhanced because the *nôrin zoku* were the most influential actors in steering MAFF-drafted policies and bills through the PARC's committee process. They were the kingpins on whom MAFF officials were most dependent and to whom they were the most indebted. *Zoku* status bestowed much greater access to bureaucrats and thus recognition by those seeking favours that Matsuoka was a key person to approach. As a *zoku*, Matsuoka wielded unparalleled influence in mediation activities, and hence acquired the ability to collect the most money in exchange for favours.

Generally speaking, policy intervention and policy interference led to very different political and policy behaviours. In pursuit of sectional interests, Matsuoka conducted public lobbying activities, in party committees, in Diet

members' leagues, *vis-à-vis* bureaucrats, and *vis-à-vis* party executives and the government leadership. In contrast, in pursuit of concessions and favours for himself and his clients, Matsuoka conducted private lobbying or petitioning activities mainly *vis-à-vis* bureaucrats. Policy intervention was overt and even propagandised (Matsuoka acted as a policymaker in formal policymaking contexts and claimed public credit for what he did), while policy interference was generally covert and lacking in transparency (Matsuoka acted as a broker or mediator in the pursuit of benefits for certain localities or favours for individuals, be they company executives, group leaders, local politicians, friends, or relations or whatever). When locals, including businessmen, came to Tokyo to petition for favours, they needed an agent or 'broker' who could act for them, someone who could intercede with bureaucrats. Matsuoka was the person who got things done for them. This meant interceding with the MAFF in areas of the ministry's allocatory or regulatory discretion; it was a part of Matsuoka's activity that did not usually see the light of day, and only recently became subject to attempted government regulation.¹²³

The more public policy interference conducted by Matsuoka largely involved his leading delegations from his regional area to administrative offices in Tokyo, and his claiming of credit for the delivery of public works to his electorate. In December 2003, Matsuoka accompanied a delegation from the Central Kyushu Regional High Standard Road Promotion Association (Naka Kyûshû- Chiiki Kôkikaku Dôrô Sokushin Kiseikai)—chaired by the mayor of Aso Town—on a visit to MLIT. Their purpose was to request that the ministry construct the highway cutting across the centre of Kyushu. The association consisted of the municipalities in Kumamoto and Oita prefectures along the road. The delegation met the MLIT administrative vice-minister, chief engineer, technical officer, director-general of the Road Bureau and others individually. While expressing understanding of the fact that conditions for public works were severe, as the 'voice' of the people living in the area, the delegation told the MLIT officials that they looked forward to the early construction of the road and requested the cooperation of the ministry.¹²⁴

In a similar episode in the following year, Matsuoka received a delegation from Nishihara Village assembly. Nishihara Village was in Aso County, and its assembly members continued to think of Matsuoka as their political representative, even though he had lost the seat of Kumamoto (3) in the 2003 election and switched to representing the Kyushu regional bloc.¹²⁵ It was

Matsuoka's reputation for bringing public works projects back to his local constituency that drew the delegation to Matsuoka's office. They demanded the provision of subsidies to construct a gymnasium in Nishihara Municipal Junior High School as well as prefectural road 206. Matsuoka commented on his website that

[t]he provision of regional social capital is the hope of residents in that town. Although realisation of the demand is doubtful under the Koizumi administration's 'uniform budgetary cutback for all ministries and agencies', the construction of the gymnasium and prefectural road 206 are essential projects, which all residents of Nishihara Village are hoping for and want to realise at any cost. I promised to do all I could to realise this demand as soon as possible.¹²⁶

Matsuoka's record of public works achievements reveals many egregious examples of the fruits of his policy interference. In Matsuoka's own constituency, in addition to projects funded by the UR countermeasures package, there were other equally infamous cases.

In Soyô Town located in the foothills of Mount Aso in Aso County, the town administration spent ¥13 billion (of which ¥5.7 billion came from central government subsidies) on rebuilding a primary school that only had 67 students. This was nothing but a project that aimed to generate profit for particular construction companies, and had nothing to do with raising the standard of education in the town at all. It was a representative example of the construction politics (*doken seiji*) that thrived not just in Kumamoto (3), but in the whole of Japan.¹²⁷

In the same town, Matsuoka supported successive mayoral elections of Gotô Keiki, one of his affiliated local politicians, by helping to secure subsidies for the construction of the new Soyo Town Hall in 1999 and the rest and recreation facility called Soyô Kaze (Light Breeze) Park, managed by the Soyô Kaze Yûgaku (Study Away Association), a limited liability company (*yûgen gaisha*) that was financed totally by Soyo Town.¹²⁸ Both Matsuoka and his faction boss, Kamei, were present at the lavish opening ceremony of the new Soyo Town Hall 'displaying the closeness of the incumbent mayor to two prominent members of the Lower House'.¹²⁹ Until the 2003 Lower House election when Matsuoka's support rate in Soyo Town fell to 51 per cent, he obtained consistently high support rates in this town (77 per cent in the 2000 elections, as shown in Table 3.2).

In addition, Matsuoka has also been an avid promoter of a major dam project, the Kawabe dam in Sagara Village in Kumamoto Prefecture, and he proudly claims to be quite important as a leader of the movement to promote the Isahaya Bay project.¹³⁰ His involvement with the construction industry has been described as so close that 'he appears to hold two posts: as a *nôrin zoku*

and as a member of the construction “tribe” (*kensetsu zoku*).¹³¹ His reputation for promoting public works is such that ‘[e]ven many MAFF people and other *nôrin zoku* frown on the comments and conduct of Matsuoka, with the comment, “although Matsuoka talks in grandiose terms, in fact he spends money recklessly (*baramaki*) on farmers and on companies purely for his own election”’.¹³²

There are, however, two sides to Matsuoka’s policy interference. On the positive side, he has been an active sponsor of particular projects in particular districts. On the negative side, he has used his influence to prevent particular projects in particular districts from going ahead. The need for a plurality has put a premium on his exerting both kinds of influence. As Arai Satoshi, MAFF OB and former DPJ member of the Lower House for Hokkaido (3) in 1993–2005 explains

[t]he pressure from the *zoku giin* began to intensify when I was an assistant divisional director in the MAFF in the early 1980s. When my seniors were in the same position in the MAFF, politicians did not stick their noses into the details of subsidised public works projects, but they began interfering even at the town and village level. Looking at this local scene, I began to think, ‘if we leave this as it is, the Japanese political administration will start to destroy Japan itself’. Therefore, I try as much as possible now not to involve myself in MAFF-related areas even after I became a Diet member. The pressure from the *zoku* became even more intense under the SMD system. Under the MMD system, Diet members restrained each other, and it did not become very unfair. Now in order to get one’s opponents to lose, candidates have begun to say things like ‘do not conduct a project in that town’ and ‘don’t use companies that support his opponent’.¹³³

Matsuoka became expert at blocking budget allocations to those who opposed him by ordering MAFF officials to stop subsidies to his opponents. His ‘arrogance was such that he pressured relevant places so that the leaders of opposing factions—his rivals for election in Kumamoto (3)—didn’t get any subsidies.’¹³⁴ In this way, he could also reward or punish counties and towns according to the votes he received from them. For example, Matsuoka requested the MAFF to stop public works and providing budgetary funds to municipalities where he obtained lower votes or where people had expressed opposition to him. A blacklist was circulated in the MAFF’s Structural Improvement Bureau of those municipalities where Matsuoka instructed the ministry officials to terminate public works projects. The existence of such a list was revealed by a MAFF official working in the bureau. He disclosed that ‘shortly after he became an assistant divisional director at the Structural Improvement Bureau in 1998, his immediate superior casually instructed him along the following lines, “[t]here

are the names of towns and villages Matsuoka *sensei* told us. Do you know the names?’”¹³⁵ Apparently, the relevant MAFF officials had earlier visited Matsuoka’s office in the Diet members building in Nagata-chô. They had taken along the list of places where various subsidised projects were going to be undertaken in the municipalities of Kumamoto (3). The list of projects was part of the 1998 MAFF budget and they explained the list to Matsuoka. The list showed which municipality was going to receive what subsidies (i.e. the geographic distribution of subsidies).¹³⁶ Matsuoka then demanded that projects in numerous municipalities on the list not be executed. The officials made up a list of the blacklisted municipalities and distributed it to the relevant posts in the MAFF.¹³⁷ The reason why Matsuoka blacklisted particular localities was not clear to the MAFF officials. They assumed that one reason could be that Matsuoka’s voting rate in those particular municipalities was low compared with other municipalities and that the head of the municipality had antagonised Matsuoka.¹³⁸

One project in Ichinomiya Town, Aso County, was on the blacklist. The MAFF official in question called up the Kyushu Agricultural Administration Bureau and the Kumamoto Prefecture Agricultural Administration Department telling them the details of Matsuoka’s demand and asking them to give up the project.¹³⁹ When asked to confirm or deny the existence of the blacklist, Matsuoka stated, ‘[e]ven if the sun rises from the west, there is no such case’.¹⁴⁰ A similar denial was issued by the administrative vice-minister of the MAFF at the time, Takagi Yûki.

The circumstances of the abandoned public works project in Ichinomiya Town, however, were revealed by other sources. According to Nôminren

[a] local newspaper wrote that a direct sales facility for farm products was about to be created as a town project in Ichinomiya Town in Aso County. Because the town mayor did not pay his compliments to Mr Matsuoka for the project, Mr Matsuoka pressured the prefecture and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to trash the budget for the project.¹⁴¹

The project would have been funded from the MAFF’s structural improvement budget as a mountain village promotion project. Prefectural officials reportedly pressured town assembly members who supported mayor Ichihara Norita (who was anti-Matsuoka), to persuade the mayor to pay his respects to Matsuoka.¹⁴² As Ichihara himself explains

[i]n 1992, Matsuoka asked me to join his *kôenkai*. Since I was under the good offices of another Diet representative, I declined the request. In the mayoral election that year, I was defeated by an opponent supported by Matsuoka. After this opponent became the mayor of the town, he

was diligent in constructing large-scale facilities in the town. However, in 1998, the mayor was arrested for bribery in relation to a meal-providing centre, and I took up my old position. Probably early in April, a government official of Kumamoto Prefecture Aso Office began saying ‘would you please call on Mr Matsuoka to pay your respects?’ I asked ‘for what reason?’, then the official said ‘because otherwise we cannot obtain approval for mountain village development works’....I thought ‘nonsense’ and did not visit Matsuoka. Then, the budget was actually stopped. During the time of the Matsuoka faction mayor, the budget went ahead normally.¹⁴³

Matsuoka apparently demanded that the Structural Improvement Bureau ‘reserve its resources’ and gave the Ichinomiya Town project as an example. In response, the Kyushu Agricultural Administration Bureau reserved the budget for the Ichinomiya Town project in a private notification to the prefectural budget.¹⁴⁴

The whole episode ‘provides a glimpse into Matsuoka’s attitude as a Diet member: he treats warmly those who ingratiate themselves with him, but he takes away the livelihood of those people who disobey him completely.’¹⁴⁵ Matsuoka applied pressure using the subsidised project as bait and government officials as mere pawns, although in a series of interviews, Matsuoka claimed that ‘he had not done such a thing at all.’¹⁴⁶

The fact that MAFF officials acted as Matsuoka’s agents in not allocating the budget for particular projects in particular municipalities reveals his powers of policy interference. Matsuoka’s personal intervention became the guideline that MAFF administrators followed.¹⁴⁷ Such interference presented ‘a clear case of “privatisation” (*shibutsuka*) and “monopolisation” (*rôdan*) of bureaucratic administration by *zoku giin*’.¹⁴⁸ Even though he was a *zoku*, Matsuoka was still a backbencher, and it is clear that he had free and direct access to bureaucrats in the ministry and could make demands on them. This constituted an unusually direct line of contact between individual backbenchers and individual bureaucrats, which is normally outlawed in parliamentary cabinet systems where politicians deal with the bureaucracy only through the relevant ministers.

NOTES

- 1 Nakanishi Akihiko and Special Reporting Group, ‘Suzuki Muneo, Matsuoka Toshikatsu’, p. 105.
- 2 See Chapter 4 on ‘Exercising Power as a *Nôrin Giin*’.
- 3 Itô Hirotohi, ‘Matsuoka Toshikatsu Daigishi no “Maboroshi no Hon” to Nôsuishô Baiomasu Jigyô to no Fushigi na Kankei’ [‘Matsuoka Toshikatsu Diet Member’s “Phantom Book” and Its Strange Connection to the MAFF’s Biomass Business’], *Zaikai Tenbô*, January 2003, p. 53.
- 4 Itô, ‘Heisei Jiken Fuairu: Nôrin Jigyô Hojokin o Dokusen Suru Matsuoka Toshikatsu’, p. 65.
- 5 “‘Nôrin Giin’ mo Kôkeisha Fusoku?’ [“Agriculture and Forestry Diet Members” Also Lack Successors?], *Nôsei Undô Jyânaru*, No. 30, April 2000, p. 1.

- 6 Personal interview, MOF official, January 2003.
- 7 Nakanishi, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 28.
- 8 Hasegawa, 'Kanjudanomi no Hazama de Shundô', p. 24. See also below and Chapter 7 on 'Electoral Vicissitudes'.
- 9 Nakanishi, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 28.
- 10 *The Japan Times*, 24 May 2005.
- 11 Nakanishi, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 28.
- 12 *Mainichi Shinbun*, 17 May 1997.
- 13 See <http://piza.2ch.net/giin/kako/987/987905181.html>
- 14 *ibid.*
- 15 Itô, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu Daigishi', p. 53.
- 16 Nakanishi and Special Reporting Group, 'Suzuki Muneo, Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 94.
- 17 'Za Sankuchuari', p. 59.
- 18 Nakanishi and Special Reporting Group, 'Suzuki Muneo, Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 100; Nakanishi and Journal Reporter Group, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu to Iu Giwaku Nin', p. 179.
- 19 Nakanishi and Journal Reporter Group, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu to Iu Giwaku Nin', p. 179.
- 20 "Nishi no Muneo", p. 38.
- 21 Nakanishi and Journal Reporter Group, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu to Iu Giwaku Nin', p. 179.
- 22 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu Daigishi', p. 53.
- 23 Itô, 'Heisei Jiken Fuairu: Nôrin Jigyô Hojokin o Dokusen Suru Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 66.
- 24 "Muneo no Bôrei", p. 28.
- 25 Ayukawa, 'Jimintô de mo Shinkô suru "Matsuoka Hazushi"', p. 20. See also Chapter 6 on 'The Identical Twins of Nagata-chô'.
- 26 Itô, 'Heisei Jiken Fuairu: Nôrin Jigyô Hojokin o Dokusen Suru Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 64.
- 27 Nakanishi, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 28.
- 28 This became the Kamei faction after Etô retired from politics at the time of the 2003 Lower House election. Kamei himself left the LDP in August 2005, when he failed to secure LDP endorsement in the Lower House election. He became a member of the Kokumin Shintô (People's New Party) and now serves as its acting head. See also Chapter 7 on 'Electoral Vicissitudes'.
- 29 Nakanishi, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 28.
- 30 *ibid.*
- 31 The Kôchikai was an LDP faction originally founded by Ikeda Hayato, and was subsequently led by Ôhira Masayoshi, Suzuki Zenkô and Miyazawa Kiichi, all four of whom served as prime minister. Its leadership was then passed on to Katô Kôichi, followed by Ozato Sadatoshi and then Horiuchi Mitsuo.
- 32 The Etô-Kamei faction's position as the *nôrin zoku*-dominant faction was attributed to the electoral demise of some prominent agriculture and forestry 'tribe' Diet members from other factions in the 2000 elections as well as the previous departure from the LDP of leading agricultural policy experts, who had experience of being MAFF Minister such as Hata Tsutomu, Kanô Michihiko and Tanabu Masami. These developments reportedly gave rise to a dearth of human resources amongst the LDP's *nôrin zoku*, with the result that the Etô-Kamei faction came to the fore. 'Za Sankuchuari', p. 60.
- 33 'Kaibunsho ga Tobikau Inshitsusa Nûsui "Jinji Kûsû" no Uchimaku' ['The Insidiousness of Mysterious Documents Flying About: Inside Information on MAFF "Human Resource Battles"'] *Shûkan Daiyamondo*, 20 April 2002, p. 56.
- 34 Nakanishi and Journal Reporter Group, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu to Iu Giwaku Nin', p. 183.
- 35 The career class is made up of those officials, like Matsuoka, who have passed the Level 1 entrance exam for the public service, while the non-career class are those who have passed the Level II and III exams. They are known as middle-ranking (*chûkyûshoku*) officials.
- 36 Nakanishi and Journal Reporter Group, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu to Iu Giwaku Nin', p. 183.
- 37 *ibid.*, pp. 183–84.

- 38 Hasegawa, 'Nôsuishô o Haishi seyo', p. 37.
- 39 Nakanishi and Journal Reporter Group, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu to Iu Giwaku Nin', p. 183.
- 40 *ibid.*, pp. 183–84.
- 41 *ibid.*, p. 183.
- 42 It is also reported that he was sent to the Kyushu Agricultural Administration Bureau. Hasegawa, 'Nôsuishô o Haishi seyo', p. 37.
- 43 *ibid.*, p. 37.
- 44 Nakanishi and Journal Reporter Group, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu to Iu Giwaku Nin', p. 183.
- 45 Hasegawa, 'Nôsuishô o Haishi seyo', p. 37.
- 46 Ayukawa, 'Jimintô', p. 20.
- 47 Personal comment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs official, March 2005.
- 48 'Kinkyû Nyûin shita', p. 28.
- 49 *ibid.*
- 50 "Muneo no Bôrei'", p. 28.
- 51 See Chapter 4 on 'Exercising Power as a *Nôrin Giin*'.
- 52 Matsuoka Toshikatsu Official Site, 'Hisaichi no Genchi Chôsa ni Hairimasu' ['Participating in On-The-Spot Investigation of a Disaster Area'], in *Katsudô Hôkoku [Activity Report]*. Available from <http://matsuokatoshikatsu.org/index1.html>
- 53 Matsuoka Toshikatsu Official Site, 'Gomeifuku o O'inorimasu' ['I Pray for his Happiness in the Next World'], in *Katsudô Hôkoku [Activity Report]*. Available from <http://matsuokatoshikatsu.org/index1.html>
- 54 Matsuoka Toshikatsu Official Site, 'Yûsei Mineika Tokubetsu Iinkai no Shidô' ['The Special Committee on Postal Privatisation Starts'], in *Katsudô Hôkoku [Activity Report]*. Available from <http://matsuokatoshikatsu.org/index1.html>
- 55 Matsuoka Toshikatsu Official Site, 'Tô Nôrinsuisanbutsu Bôeki Chôsakai de WTO Kôshô no Jôkyô Kaiseki' ['Situational Analysis of WTO Negotiations at the Party's Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery Products Trade Investigation Committee'], in *Katsudô Hôkoku [Activity Report]*. Available from <http://matsuokatoshikatsu.org/index1.html>
- 56 Personal communication, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (Australia) official, June 2005.
- 57 This is a summary of Matsuoka's views revealed in an interview and reported on *Rensai Kikaku [Serial Project]*. Available from http://www.nca.or.jp/shinbun/20040213/nouiin040213_2_rensai.html
- 58 Matsuoka Toshikatsu Official Site, 'WTO Kôshô ni tsuite Chûnichi Ôsutoraria Taishi to Iken Kôkan' ['Exchanging Opinions with the Australian Ambassador to Japan About the WTO Negotiations'], in *Katsudô Hôkoku [Activity Report]*. Available from <http://matsuokatoshikatsu.org/site002//public/003.html>
- 59 The modalities are a rough negotiating framework showing in what areas agriculture should be liberalised, but largely without specific numbers. In Matsuoka's own words, 'the modalities are applied to all WTO member nations and regions, and decide the numerical value of the reduction in domestic protection such as lowering tariffs and domestic subsidies by what extent over what years.' Matsuoka Toshikatsu Official Site, 'Gurôsa WTO Nôgyô Iinkai Gichô to Kaidan' ['A Talk with Groser WTO Committee on Agriculture Chairman'], in *Katsudô Hôkoku [Activity Report]*. Available from <http://www.matsuokatoshikatsu.org/site002//public/059.html>
- 60 Matsuoka Toshikatsu Official Site, 'Nikkanchû Kokusai Nôgyô Kaigi o Kaisai' ['Holding a Japan-Korea-China International Agricultural Conference'], in *Katsudô Hôkoku [Activity Report]*. Available from <http://matsuokatoshikatsu.org/site002//public/003.html>
- 61 Matsuoka Toshikatsu Official Site, 'Ajia Jinkô Kaikatsu Kaigi ni Sanka (Bangkok)' ['Participating in the Asia Population Development Conference (Bangkok)'], in *Katsudô Hôkoku [Activity Report]*. Available from <http://matsuokatoshikatsu.org/site002//public/003.html>
- 62 'Za Sankuchuari', p. 59.

- 63 *ibid.*
- 64 *ibid.*, p. 58.
- 65 *ibid.*, p. 59.
- 66 Matsuoka Toshikatsu Official Site, 'Supachai WTO Jimukyokuchô to Mendan' ['Talking Personally with WTO Director-General Supachai'], in *Katsudô Hôkoku* [Activity Report]. Available from <http://matsuokatoshikatsu.org/site002//public/003.html>
- 67 Sakurai was also from the Etô-Kamei faction. He lost his Lower House seat in the 2000 elections because of a scandal, but cleared himself of disgrace by getting back into the Diet in the House of Councillors in 2001 as a member for the PR (national) constituency.
- 68 'Za Sankuchuari', p. 59.
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- 119 Nakanishi and Journal Reporter Group, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu to Iu Giwaku Nin', p. 178.
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