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ELECTORAL VICISSITUDES

The fallout from the Muneo affair and various scandals continued to swirl around Matsuoka in 2002 and 2003. He tried to rehabilitate his reputation in various ways, but in the end he paid a political price in the 2003 Lower House election. Paradoxically, this was also an election in which brakes were put on the popularity of Prime Minister Koizumi, whom Matsuoka openly opposed.¹

THE SCARY 'RESISTANCE FORCE' POLITICIAN

Matsuoka became well known to the broader electorate in Japan as one of the most outspoken members of the *teikô seiryoku*. In a blatantly self-serving fashion, he went around preaching the errors of Koizumi's reforms.² He spoke out against these reforms both inside and outside the party.³ In taking such a stand he 'demonstrated both his conservative side and his action side'.⁴

Matsuoka's first confrontation over Koizumi's economic reform policies went back to June 2001, only three months after Koizumi became prime minister. At the Executive Council of the LDP, of which he was a member at the time (see Table 4.1), Matsuoka, in his vocal role as a *nôrin zoku*, criticised Koizumi for 'pandering to the interests of urban voters'.⁵ The council under Koizumi had become the main battlefield between the government and the ruling party in determining the nation's policies.⁶ Many of Matsuoka's fellow rural stalwarts in the Executive Council were shouting and banging their desks in protest against Koizumi's proposals to benefit urban voters, such as diversifying the use of a special revenue source previously used exclusively for building roads,⁷ cutting tax grants to local governments and giving more Diet seats to urban areas. If implemented, these proposals would have all hit rural regions hard.⁸

In the Executive Council meeting, Matsuoka openly opposed the proposal to expand the use of tax revenues earmarked specifically for road construction, claiming that 'earmarked taxes like the one for road construction should be used for their original purposes'.⁹ He was quoted as saying, 'roads are the lifeblood of regional areas!' [*dôro wa chihô no mei da!*].¹⁰ He had earlier argued against budget expenditure cutbacks 'without sanctuary' (*seiiki naki*) under the Hashimoto administration, arguing that 'there are not yet sufficient roads in local regions'.¹¹ He also opposed any increase in the rate of consumption tax.¹²

Matsuoka, as part of the bigger group of LDP resistance forces led by the road policy clique, successfully derailed Koizumi's plan to overhaul the tax revenues exclusively reserved for road construction. Koizumi aimed to turn such dedicated revenues into general revenues in the process of compiling the national budget for fiscal 2003.¹³ However, Matsuoka always claimed that 'his objective [in opposing Koizumi's reforms] was not to guide benefits and concessions [to local areas]'.¹⁴

Matsuoka served on anti-reform, anti-Koizumi LDP committees whenever he got the chance. He became the mascot (*ojisan*) of the *teikô seiryoku* within the LDP¹⁵ and the leader of a study group that rose in open revolt against Koizumi's reforms in November 2001. The name of Diet members' league to oppose Koizumi's 'structural reforms without sanctuary' (*seiiki naki kôzô kaikaku*) was the 'Diet Members' League to Save Japan From Crisis and Realize Real Reforms' (Nihon no Kiki o Sukui, Shin no Kaikaku o Jitsugen suru Giin Renmei), giving themselves the title 'Save the Nation League of Diet Members' (Kyûkoku Giren) for short. However, there was an immediate change of name to 'Diet Members' League for the Realization of Reforms and the Creation of a Bright Future' (Kaikaku o Jitsugen shi, Akarui Mirai o Sôzô suru Giin Renmei),¹⁶ or 'Future-Creating Diet Members' League' (Mirai Sôzô Giren) for short. The reason for the change was because it was felt that the anti-Koizumi colour was too strong in the 'Save the Nation League of Diet Members', and so the words 'Creation of a Bright Future' were added, which also required a change in the abbreviated name.¹⁷

Matsuoka served as one of the representative executives of this league. In it were 13 Diet members from the Hashimoto faction (an anti-Koizumi faction) and 16 Diet members from the Etô-Kamei faction.¹⁸ The Eto-Kamei faction was generally regarded as anti-Koizumi and anti-reform, like the Hashimoto

faction. It represented the conservative 'old guard' of the LDP. Kamei, like Matsuoka, was an active leader of the anti-Koizumi force. He was very angry with Koizumi for including so few members of the Etô-Kamei faction in his first cabinet.

In December 2001, along with LDP Highway Investigation Committee Chairman and former party Secretary-General, Hiromu Nonaka, and Upper House Secretary-General, Aoki Mikio, Matsuoka opposed Koizumi's proposal to reform inefficient government-affiliated public corporations. These included the four hugely indebted public corporations related to highway construction, which the Koizumi administration wanted to amalgamate and privatise. At a meeting of the Mirai Sôzô Giren, Matsuoka stated that one of these public corporations, the Japan Highway Public Corporation (Nihon Dôrô Kodan), was highly regarded overseas, which was just the opposite of Koizumi's assessment.¹⁹ Matsuoka appeared on the TV program, 'Takeshi's TV Tackle' hosted by Beat Takeshi. When 'he was asked the question: "Where do you want to build an expressway most?" he answered unashamedly, "everybody wants to build near themselves, such as Kumamoto, Kyushu".²⁰ The public was reportedly scandalised by his blatant sentiments in favour of guiding benefits to local areas (*rieki yûdô ishiki*).²¹ An urban voter who undertook his own investigation of Matsuoka commented

[h]is eyes look scary, his expression looks scary, I bet he speaks scarily. In any case, he looks scary. This is my honest impression when I first saw Matsuoka on TV... That's the kind of presence he has and that's the kind of force he exudes from his whole body. Because of how he looked in interviews as an opposition force when the Executive Council was reviewing the revenue source for road-building, the media portrayed him unequivocally as a 'baddie' (*akuyaku*).²²

After Koizumi appointed Inose Naoki to head up a panel to look into reform of the Japan Highway Public Corporation and the three other road-building public entities, Matsuoka criticised Inose on the Asahi TV program, 'Sunday Project'. Matsuoka mentioned that he had quarrelled with Inose on the issue, and that Mr Inose was formerly a member of a radical student organisation (Zenkyôtô)²³ in Japanese universities in the 1960s. He later commented, 'I finished him'.²⁴ The discussion went on a bit and at one point, Matsuoka said: 'I will destroy Yamasaki',²⁵ in a reference to the secretary-general of the LDP at the time. Matsuoka reportedly did not show any sign of worrying about being called a 'resistance force' or being considered anti-Koizumi.²⁶ As one commentator observed, 'for Matsuoka, appearing on

TV saying such things is really a way of conveying a message to Koizumi that he opposed his policies.²⁷

By openly criticising Koizumi on television, Matsuoka became known as the new voice of opposition to the prime minister.²⁸ Initially the 'face' of *zoku* power and the conservatives and the advertising pillar of the *teikô seiryoku* had been Muneo. Matsuoka took over this role in the world of television,²⁹ becoming the 'face' of opposition to Koizumi's reforms. His stubbornness in rejecting Koizumi's programs was said to be similar to the old JSP's approach.³⁰ Occasionally, Matsuoka presented convincing arguments, such as the one he presented against the government's big-boned policy to cap the issuance of national bonds to ¥30 trillion (saying, '[d]on't just put the money together, make policies that deal with the causes of problems'),³¹ but 'these were only fleeting'.³²

When the resistance forces came under criticism, around the time the name of the Diet members' league was changed, Matsuoka began to make insincere statements, such as, 'our enemy is recession and the employment problem, not the Koizumi cabinet.'³³ Before long, he went as far as to say, 'I'm all for reforms, but if its done just on the mood of things, it will leave the root of evil.'³⁴ After that he dropped all pretence and emerged as an unequivocal resistance force. He claimed to be advocating what he called 'the spirit of the one hundred barrels of rice', which meant investing further than for what was just immediately ahead. On that basis, he argued, 'it would be wrong to stop [the construction of] highways. It would be like putting rice away in a warehouse if you don't build highways and just prioritise immediate debts'.³⁵ As one commentator observed, '[i]n Matsuoka's mind] there is no financial difficulty at all. Just build highway around the country by means of public works projects'.³⁶

In December 2001, Matsuoka made several other public comments that were critical of Koizumi. He said that the Koizumi administration would not last long unless it shifted to a policy of aggressive public spending to shore up the economy: 'If the Koizumi Cabinet keeps running on the wrong track, we will have to have second thoughts [about supporting the prime minister]... That would be in the best interests of the public.'³⁷ He added that

[t]he greatest achievement of the prime minister and leader of the LDP in his first eight months of office was that he had led the party to a resounding victory in the Upper House election in July 2001. I would give 150 points to Koizumi for winning a victory for the LDP in the Upper House election, but I would also give him minus 100 points for causing the economy to deteriorate.³⁸

As far as the prime minister's high support rate was concerned, Matsuoka suggested that more people [who did not have a clear reason for supporting him] were becoming passive supporters of Koizumi: 'At first, the public was actively supporting Koizumi...But now people have no choice but to support him although he has achieved almost nothing to put the economy on a recovery path'.³⁹ Matsuoka argued: 'If the prime minister leaves the economic situation as is, further deflation and recession is inevitable'.⁴⁰ He suggested that Koizumi would lose public support, and thus the power to remain at the helm, if the economy deteriorated further in the following year.⁴¹ In an interview with a journalist, he stated

Koizumi's economic policy is wrong. When a country is in deflation, first it is necessary to adopt a policy to stimulate demand in order to grow out of deflation. Structural reform should focus first on bad debt management. The responsibility of executives should be clarified, and public funds should be thrown into banks in one hit.⁴²

When asked whether he was sufficiently opposed to Koizumi to be called a resistance force, Matsuoka replied

[i]t would be a lie if I said I don't have feelings of opposition. However, no matter how much people speak ill of me, I have the courage to keep going. Thanks to our Diet members' league, Mr Koizumi is increasing his popularity. We are caught in a dilemma... Although more than 90 per cent of LDP Diet members do not officially voice their objections, they are not thinking that Koizumi's reforms are right. If they listen to the context carefully, they understand that what I say on television is a sound argument.⁴³

Matsuoka was critical of the Koizumi administration's budget for fiscal 2002, saying that it lacked sufficient measures to tackle the nation's serious unemployment problems. The real issue of the budget for a politician like Matsuoka, however, was that it promoted Koizumi's structural reform agenda, which aimed to slash spending on public works and therefore cut back on the projects Matsuoka could bring back to his own electorate. Matsuoka joined a number of other LDP Diet members in openly rejecting the Koizumi administration's cuts in public works spending because they shrank the pork barrel.

In Matsuoka's way of thinking, the problem with the Koizumi administration's reform policies was that they took direct aim at the type of politician that he was. They jeopardised the vote-winning contract he had with farmers and rural dwellers, as well as the financial supply contract he had with his company clients. The cuts in public works spending, including allocations to agricultural and rural public works, cramped Matsuoka's electoral

style. Similarly, the ‘trinity reform’—which aimed to devolve authority and spending-power from central to local governments and fix the debt-ridden finances of both⁴⁴—threatened to destroy the long-standing structure of vested interests tying together bureaucrats in the ministries, politicians (Diet members and local politicians), and industries (companies and individuals) benefiting from these subsidies. Matsuoka’s primary support was based on a collection of special interests—local, sectional and client-based—rather than broad, policy-based programmatic appeals as a vote-collector for his party (the LDP) and its leader (Koizumi). If Matsuoka could not deliver on local projects, he was of little use to the particular clutch of vested interests that supported him.

Koizumi was also open in his advocacy of another crucial goal that took direct aim at the exercise of policy influence by individual Diet members such as Matsuoka—that of ‘destroying the LDP’ (*Jimintô o kowasu*). By this, the prime minister meant tackling the autonomous policymaking authority of PARC committees that undermined the power of the prime minister and cabinet, and which Matsuoka and the other members of the *teikô seiryoku* used to challenge Koizumi’s reform initiatives. Destroying the LDP also entailed undermining the fundamental basis of the party’s independent policymaking authority—the means by which LDP Diet politicians acquired this power—that is, their independent electoral support coalitions, which locked them into representing, promoting and protecting special interests as well as the interests of specific regional localities.

Matsuoka was identified with the LDP ‘old guard’, who were loath to change the established ways of doing things, who wanted to keep pork barrel politics alive, and who wanted to keep government subsidies flowing to rural-regional areas. For this type of LDP Diet member, politics was just ‘distribution’ (*haibun*). They functioned to distribute funds sucked up in the form of taxes to regional areas. For Matsuoka, ‘[t]he best part about being the LDP was the business of distributing resources through prior scrutiny’.⁴⁵

Koizumi, on the other hand, was aiming for the more equitable distribution of diminishing public resources.⁴⁶ He provided less room in the political system for politicians like Matsuoka, and less potential for guiding benefits from the central government to local areas because of his crackdown on public works spending and the indiscriminate scattering of subsidies (*hojokin no baramaki*) to rural-regional areas. This substantially weakened the appeal of politicians like Matsuoka who relied on this mechanism to win votes amongst locals.

Matsuoka, on the other hand, warned that Koizumi's top-down style of decision making—often ignoring traditional procedures within the party—might lead to 'self-righteousness or despotism'.⁴⁷ He criticised the LDP regime under Prime Minister Koizumi as the 'Taliban regime'.⁴⁸ He accused Koizumi of 'trying to establish cabinet decision-making as the way of doing things, thus bypassing the process of prior scrutiny by the LDP'.⁴⁹ Matsuoka stood for the old policymaking model, naturally enough, because under it, he exercised personal influence over policy through LDP committees. However, the 'traditional practice of having policies cleared by the LDP before submission to the cabinet for its approval... [was] incompatible with the sort of cabinet-led policymaking process that Koizumi...was trying to achieve'.⁵⁰

In taking such a stand against Koizumi's top-down decision-making style, Matsuoka echoed the views of other members of the LDP's 'old guard'. Former LDP Secretary-General Nonaka, who had previously been chief secretary of the cabinet under Prime Minister Obuchi, said that Koizumi was a fascist in the way that he tried to ram his own policies through the party. Matsuoka's view was that '[a] real leader should be able to wrap up various opinions within the group. That is what democracy is all about'.⁵¹ Matsuoka said that he did not care if Koizumi called him and other LDP politicians opposed to his reforms 'resistance forces'. He retorted, '[w]e will continue to make proposals to Koizumi even if we are labelled the "bad guys"'.⁵²

For example, Matsuoka and his close associates confronted Koizumi directly over FTAs, which became one of the big 'reform' issues in agriculture during the Koizumi administration. The prime minister saw FTAs as an instrument of 'structural reform' of agriculture, which meant making the farm sector more internationally competitive by expanding the scale of farming. Koizumi kept on saying that reform was needed in agriculture and that it could not be allowed to hold up agreements on trade.

Matsuoka and others had a major tussle of wills with the prime minister over this issue. Koizumi set up all manner of policy groups essentially to bypass opposition to FTAs from the *nôrin zoku*. In 2002, he attempted to wrest control from the *nôrin zoku* by establishing a special LDP committee to study FTAs (FTA Tokumei linkai) chaired by his appointee as PARC Chairman, Nukaga Fukushima, a commerce and industry *zoku*. The committee's task was to work with METI to formulate basic party policy on FTAs.⁵³ But the *nôrin zoku* were bitterly opposed to the formation of this special LDP committee to study

FTAs, saying, '[u]nder Japan's parliamentary cabinet system, the party decides policy, not the Kantei. The FTA Special Committee neglects the traditional way of deciding party policy, which gathers the opinions of each division such as the Agriculture and Forestry Division'.⁵⁴

In December 2003, after the failure first of WTO negotiations at Cancun in September and then the bilateral Japan-Mexico FTA negotiations in October, the prime minister sought to avoid the possibility of Japan's being left on the sidelines of regional progress on FTAs. He set up an FTA Kankei Shôchô Kaigi (Council of Related Ministries and Agencies on FTAs) under Kantei leadership. For Koizumi, the *nôrin zoku*, who seemed to display blatant disregard for the national interest, had become the object of his irritation. He declared, '[a]fter this, I cannot leave it to the MAFF and the *norin zoku*'.⁵⁵

However, Matsuoka and the other *norin zoku* bosses were not going to take Koizumi's moves lying down. Immediately after Koizumi's announcement of the new council on 11 December, they gatecrashed the Kantei for discussions with Chief Cabinet Secretary Fukuda Yasuo. They went with the aim of correcting the foreign policy position of the prime minister on FTA negotiations. CAPIC Chairman Norota Hôsei and Acting Chairmen Yatsu and Ôshima Tadamori, together with Chairman of the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery Products Trade Investigation Committee, Sakurai, and Matsuoka as secretary-general as well as Chairman of the Agriculture and Forestry Division, Nakagawa Yoshio, assembled in full force and raised the stakes. They demanded to Fukuda: 'you should not progress FTAs over the heads of the party...to swallow all the demands of other countries is weak diplomacy...as we've said up to now, you should move forward in consultation with the party'.⁵⁶ They proposed to Fukuda that it was necessary for the government and the ruling parties to unite as one, hold the same opinion, and face negotiations in the future so as not to be taken unfair advantage of in the negotiations with the partner country.⁵⁷ In short, they demanded their rights of intervention in the matter. Fukuda tried to placate them by saying that of course the party would be consulted. He showed a certain understanding of their position with his comment that 'although the prime minister instructs in many ways when necessary, it is taken for granted that the prime minister discusses issues with others...The prime minister does not consider that only he leads on all points'.⁵⁸

Details of the Japan-Mexico FTA that was signed in March 2004 revealed that a compromise on agricultural market access had been made, falling well

short of endangering domestic agricultural producers in Japan or bringing about free trade in agriculture between the two countries. Not only did Japan commit itself to removing tariffs on just 86 per cent of all imports from Mexico, rather than the required 90 per cent, but politically sensitive commodities such as pork, orange juice, beef, chicken, and fresh oranges remained subject to special arrangements that would continue to protect the producers of these commodities. After the FTA agreement was signed with Mexico, Matsuoka stated: 'The agreement is balanced. We can stage FTA negotiations with other countries, based on this example'.⁵⁹ The precedent of only very limited concessions on agriculture in the Mexican agreement was very important. Not only did it introduce the notion that phased (i.e. incremental) liberalisation was compatible with bilateral FTAs, but it also allowed for liberalisation to occur over a long time period and/or be subject to quota limitations.

JUMPING ON THE BIOMASS BANDWAGON

During the 2002–2003 period, Matsuoka branched out by becoming the major political sponsor of the biomass industry in Japan, his 'new green revolution', which planned to generate energy from food, animal and timber waste. Matsuoka was hopeful of the promise of converting agricultural products such as sugar cane and corn and even timber into a source for ethanol gasoline and thus contributing to the development of agricultural and mountain village regions.⁶⁰

Because biomass was relatively new and unexplored territory, pursuing this cause would make Matsuoka the first in the political world to be involved in it.⁶¹ His primary reasons for jumping on the biomass bandwagon, however, were financial. From his own self-interested perspective, Matsuoka eyed the biomass industry not only as a potential source of budget outlays for public works projects in Kumamoto Prefecture, but also as a new business for companies on which he could prey for political funds.

The project followed the pattern that, whatever venture Matsuoka backed, there were usually advantageous corporate connections in the background. In this case, the executive of 'a particular company that could be said to be Matsuoka's "sworn friend" decided to make biomass into an industry'.⁶² In fact, a group of companies with links to Matsuoka suddenly showed heightened interest in the biomass project. These companies had their main offices in Shinjuku in Tokyo and they all suddenly 'converted' to the business of the industrialisation of biomass.

One company was called Japan Geo-System Approach (as of 1 January 2003). Its previous company name was Japan Amusement System Incorporated (later Nazca), a company established to make pre-paid pin-ball (pachinko) cards.⁶³ Another company in the group was Caldean Integrate Incorporated that had provided information and communication services for computer users, and which changed its name to Green Energy Research Association Incorporated on 19 August 2002. With the change of name, it added 'research and development of biomass methanol and ethanol and its production/sale' to the details in its business purpose column.⁶⁴

The person acting as the representative of the group of companies was Mitsuzuka Kôkichi, a nephew of retired former Minister of Finance and LDP faction leader, Mitsuzuka Hiroshi (Matsuoka's old faction leader). Mitsuzuka Kôkichi was three years younger than Matsuoka, but he was Matsuoka's influential sponsor at one time. He aggressively expanded his real estate business during the bubble period and became friendly with Matsuoka when Matsuoka left the Forestry Agency for the political world and achieved his first election victory in 1990. After that, the two remained close.⁶⁵ Mitsuzuka took pride in being a 'cheer squad' (*ôendan*) for Matsuoka.⁶⁶

In addition to Japan Geo-System Approach and Caldean Integrate Incorporated, Mitsuzuka owned Japan Technoblast Incorporated for purposes of construction engineering and architectural contracts and consulting, and Mitsue Incorporated, a real estate business. Both Japan Technoblast Incorporated and Mitsue Incorporated also wrote 'research into biomass and its production and sales' in the company purpose column during September-October 2002. What is more, Japan Technoblast had amongst its employees, Ikeda Kazutaka, Matsuoka's policy secretary.⁶⁷

According to a source in the real estate industry, Mitsuzuka, whose companies had not done well since 1990, seemed energised by his move into biomass saying, 'I'm going with biomass from now on'.⁶⁸ Mitsuzuka apparently did not keep company with anyone from the Mitsuzuka (now Mori) faction: 'After mixing with several Diet members, the person whom he thought "would be useful" was Matsuoka'.⁶⁹ Mitsuzuka was reportedly energetic at both work and play, and he and Matsuoka would bar-hop across four or five expensive clubs in Kabuki-chô, ending the evening with noodles (*ramen*).⁷⁰ The 'force of Mitsuzuka [reportedly] matched with the force of Matsuoka, known to make bureaucrats and local industries in Kumamoto flinch'.⁷¹

It was suspected that Mitsuzuka had advised Matsuoka to shake himself free of the 'concessions triangle' of money (*kane*), votes (*hyō*) and business (*shigoto*) between politicians and the construction industry.⁷² It was also said that because Matsuoka's blatant guidance of benefits to his local Kumamoto Prefecture was becoming an issue, Mitsuzuka had advised, '[i]t is no longer the era of construction public works politics. Why don't you sponsor businesses in new areas like those related to biomass environment and energy equipment and organise that?'⁷³ Mitsuzuka himself was concentrating all his management resources and putting all his bets on biomass and was busy securing funds to invest in the industry.⁷⁴ He also tried to participate—in various forms—in biomass-related subsidised projects that had begun nationally.⁷⁵

As far as Matsuoka was concerned, the biomass project killed a number of birds with one stone. First, it generated 'new works' in the MAFF budget to support the development of research and technology for utilising biomass, and the construction of action models across the whole country and the development of facilities. These facilities could be to Matsuoka's political advantage if they were located in Kumamoto.

The MAFF launched a 'Biomass Nippon Comprehensive Strategy Project Team' in June 2002. It received the green light from the Koizumi administration's 'big-boned policies number two' in the same month. Matsuoka had struggled to get his pet project into the big-boned policies by desperately badgering Prime Minister Koizumi.⁷⁶ The team consisted of seven MAFF officials under an office chief, with their own room on the first floor of the MAFF. The initial budget for the project allocated ¥22 billion, with most of it going to the MAFF under the government's so-called New Energy Strategy.⁷⁷ The team then asked for ¥29 billion in the draft budget for 2003 to promote the realisation of 'Biomass Nippon', a 'society that uses biomass to its fullest extent with a view to halting global warming and constructing a cyclic society'.⁷⁸ The total budget for 'Biomass Practical Use Frontier Infrastructure Works' in 2003 was ¥22.2 billion while ¥22.6 billion was allocated in 2004.⁷⁹ A MAFF official said, 'in the future, it will increase to many billions of yen'.⁸⁰

Unsurprisingly, Kamoto Town (in Matsuoka's electorate) was chosen for the construction of a plant for processing livestock and food waste at a cost of ¥8.9 billion, under the budgetary rubric of 'Biomass Practical Use Frontier Infrastructure Works'.⁸¹ Because Kumamoto had an extensive livestock industry, the biomass centre for processing livestock waste was ostensibly located there.

However, 'it was logical to think that the location was no accident—that it had been engineered by Matsuoka—although this was denied by the town mayor'.⁸²

Second, from Matsuoka's perspective, the biomass project justified a new public value for both farming and forestry—as a source of energy. Not only Matsuoka but also other *nôrin giin* saw biomass as a means of revitalising agriculture and rural areas. In 2002, a new book on biomass entitled '21st Century: Escaping from Limitations and Chaos' under Matsuoka's authorship was about to be published. The subtitle was 'Environmental Regeneration and the New Energy Revolution'. The authors were Matsuoka and the Biomass Methanol Research Association (Biomasu-Metanôru Kenkyûkai). The timing of its intended publication matched the launch of the MAFF's 'Biomass Nippon' project.

Besides extolling the global environmental crisis in the afterword, Matsuoka wrote 'this book is not only a warning bell, it is also a book that suggests policies'.⁸³ He wrote in the epilogue (dated on an auspicious day in April 2002)

[a]s you can see from reading this book, it has its starting point my feelings of 'crisis' in regards to limitations and chaos manifested in the 11 September terrorist attacks...in all circumstances politicians have the responsibility to present measures to resolve a problem. This book developed an argument for the potential of a second industrial revolution based on biomass methanol.⁸⁴

The book was extremely hostile to the idea of a market principles and economic orthodoxy because of the way these principles treated 'losers' and those deemed 'unfit for the market'. In the book, Matsuoka called for economic principles that that were kind to the 'losers' in a system.⁸⁵

For some reason, the book was not published, even though a publication party was planned. The binding had virtually finished but the publication was cancelled.⁸⁶ It was truly a phantom book.⁸⁷ Matsuoka's office denied any connection with it, although given that he wrote part of the book and that he was the most prominent politician-promoter of the biomass industry himself, this was incorrect. Matsuoka's prominence in pushing the issue was the reason why he was approached to participate.

It seems that the Muneo scandal was the reason why the book was not published. Muneo was arrested on suspicion of accepting bribes for mediation on 19 June 2002. His arrest was not simply a matter involving Matsuoka's sworn friend. There was danger for Matsuoka in it as well. The flurry of criticism extended to him as well,⁸⁸ encouraging him to keep a low profile. The publication date of the book was 16 July 2002, right in the middle of the maelstrom of the Muneo scandal, and the book clearly could not be published

in the circumstances.⁸⁹ Despite having pushed so hard for the biomass project to get off the ground, Matsuoka refused all interviews on the subject. According to his policy secretary, Ikeda Kazutaka, he was so careful that he would not even issue a comment of 'No comment'.⁹⁰

GREENWASH

Matsuoka took direct action to revamp his political reputation, which had been so sullied by his association with Muneo and by the BSE and Yamarin scandals, by becoming an outspoken advocate of interests that appeared directly to contradict his earlier, self-interested activities. He appeared on the program 'Jam the World' (J-WAVE FM radio) in Tokyo in February 2004. The topic of conversation was the import ban on American beef after the outbreak of BSE in the United States⁹¹ and the disappearance of *gyūdon* (beef bowl) from popular restaurants. In his comments, Matsuoka took a hardline stance from a consumer perspective, which was not hard to do given the issue. Matsuoka explained that

[a]lthough Japan gave notice to the United States to secure the safety of its beef and to implement cow inspections along the same lines as Japan and other countries are doing, the United States did not do so for various reasons. So for Japan, the essential problem was that consumer safety cannot be guaranteed. As long as safety and security cannot be demonstrated, Japan cannot comply with the U.S. unilateral demand to resume imports.⁹²

In the wake of this appearance, Matsuoka reported that he received 'favorable comments from urban listeners, who were not usually familiar with agricultural issues, but who said that his comments were good and very easy to understand'.⁹³

Matsuoka's main efforts, however, were directed to revamping his image in the area of environmental policy. He undertook a rather transparent effort to rehabilitate himself through a process of 'green-wash',⁹⁴ which involved the public relations 'greening' of his image. Matsuoka had always professed environmental credentials, showing his (opportunistically) environmentalist side in a number of policy activities, including, of course, biomass and the cause of agricultural protection.

Matsuoka's professed environmentalism was well publicised on his website. The headlines screamed: 'Protecting Water and Greenery and Food', and proclaimed that Matsuoka was tackling 'global-scale population, food and environmental problems in the twenty-first century with all his power (*zenryoku*

de).⁹⁵ Matsuoka asserted that he was playing a major role in the 'Green Energy Revolution' (Midori no Enerugî Kaikaku) in order to protect the global environment. This stance he justified in terms of achieving the 'vitalisation' (*kasseika*) of regional people and agricultural and forestry industries that bring forth green resources.⁹⁶

It was the Yamarin scandal that was the spur to Matsuoka's apparent, full-blown conversion to 'green' environmentalism. Following the scandal, Matsuoka went to great lengths to strengthen his environmental credentials in the international campaign against illegal logging. The need for Matsuoka to promote such an environmental cause was blatant, given his association with Yamarin's illegal logging. Matsuoka tried to bury his past record by becoming a champion of the fight against illegal logging, not only in Japan but also around the world. He changed from someone who received political donations from a company engaged in illegal logging in Japan to someone who actively campaigned against it, particularly outside Japan.

In 2003, Matsuoka became chairman of the LDP's Forestry Illegal and Unlawful Logging Countermeasures Investigation Team (Shinrin Ihô, Fuhô Bassai Taisaku Kentô Chîmu). It discussed reports from the Forestry Agency and the Ministry of Environment about discussions in the WTO Trade and Environment Committee, and the results of the third meeting of the Asia Forestry Partnership and the Japan-Indonesia Illegal Logging Cooperation Action Plan.⁹⁷ In 2004, the committee changed its name to Illegal Logging Countermeasures Investigation Team to Protect the Global Environment (Chikyû Kankyô o Mamoru Fuhô Bassai Taisaku Kentô Chîmu), more in keeping with the times.

Matsuoka attended an International Symposium on Countermeasures for Illegal Logging in Tokyo in June 2003. The symposium was organised by the Japan Federation of World Timber Industry Associations (i.e. the main users of tropical timbers). At one point during the proceedings, Matsuoka made a rather vacuous speech, talking about his hopes for efforts to be taken against illegal logging, about Japan and Indonesia's efforts to stop illegal logging, and the fact that Diet members were prepared to form an international confederation of parliamentarians against illegal logging.⁹⁸

On domestic forestry policy, Matsuoka participated in a meeting of the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Joint Council (Nôrinsuisan Gôdô Kaigi) in July 2003. This was a joint council of the two main agriculture committees in the PARC, the Agriculture and Forestry Division and CAPIC, as well as of the main LDP policy committee on forestry policy, the Forestry Policy Investigation

Committee, and the main party committee on fisheries policy, the Fisheries Comprehensive Investigation Committee (Suisan Sôgô Chôsakai). The joint council met to receive an interim report of the Forestry Agency's Research Association for Citizens' Support for Promoting the Absorption Source⁹⁹ Countermeasures to Prevent Global Warming (Chikyû Ondoka Soshi Kyûshûgen Taisaku no Suishin no tame no Kokumin Shien ni kansuru Kenkyûkai). The meeting acknowledged the need to work even more positively for the introduction of preferential measures for forest preservation through tax reform and securing revenue sources, because forests were a primary source of absorption of greenhouse gases.¹⁰⁰ In Matsuoka's view, Japan's forest maintenance program should play the biggest role in absorbing carbon dioxide. However, forest preservation had not been positively promoted. It was suffering from the long-term deterioration in the domestic forest industry, a shortage of forestry workers and the uniform cutback policy for public works etc.¹⁰¹ When, in 2004 Matsuoka became chairman of the Forestry Basic Problems Subcommittee, one of its key tasks was to discuss the future development of 'Forestry Absorption Source Countermeasures' (*Shinrin Kyûshûgen Taisaku*), and to ensure that finance for the countermeasures was included in the Forestry Agency's draft budget for 2005.

Another issue of concern for the Forestry Basic Problems Subcommittee was that ministries and agencies should use domestic timber in the provision of their services and public works. Each year, the committee received a report from ministries and agencies on this matter, and its members energetically promoted the utilisation of regional timber products in government-sponsored public works.

Yet another task for the committee was ensuring that new production systems were budgeted for, which, according to Matsuoka, would trigger the regeneration of the forestry industry and green employment projects as well as projects for 'successors' (*kôkeisha*) to forest owners. A meeting of the committee was held about this in October 2005 in order to secure funding for such works.¹⁰²

In 2003–5, Matsuoka served as chairman of the LDP's Countermeasures Investigation Team to Protect the Earth's Environment from Global Scale Illegal and Unlawful Deforestation, Import and Export and so on (Sekai Kibo no Shinrin no Ihô, Fuhô na Bassai oyobi Yushutsunyû tô kara Sekai Kanyô o Mamoru tame no Taisaku Kentô Chîmu). Its motto was: 'Stop the Destruction of the Environment, Solve the Problem by Using Domestic Timber!'. In May 2004, the investigation team held hearings with representatives of NGOs on

ways to counter illegal deforestation in Southeast Asia, including a call for Japanese foreign aid to pay for the planting of nursery trees in areas that had suffered illegal deforestation as a result of demand from timber companies in Japan for wood.¹⁰³

In August 2004, Matsuoka gave the keynote speech at a Regional Workshop on Strengthening the Asia Forest Partnership (AFP) organised by the Ministry of Forestry of Indonesia. Both Matsuoka and one of the other recipients of funds from Yamarin, Matsushita Tadahirô, attended, along with two other Lower House Diet members and officials from the Forestry Agency. Matsuoka's keynote speech described 'the current activities in Japan through the AFP for promoting sustainable forest management and controlling illegal logging and its associated trade'.¹⁰⁴ After the workshop, Matusoka led a delegation of 10 Japanese Diet members to East Kalimantan, promising local officials that they would help the local government combat illegal logging in the province. Matsuoka 'said the legislators were seeking information as to those areas to which they could contribute in the fight against illegal logging'.¹⁰⁵ On several earlier occasions Matsuoka had made public presentations on the decline in the world's forestry resources and its impact on water resources, and on illegal deforestation problems and related issues.¹⁰⁶

In 2005, Matsuoka became chairman of the LDP's Illegal and Unlawful Logging Countermeasures Investigation Team (Ihô, Fuhô na Bassai Taisaku Kentô Chîmu). The team discussed putting effort into the positioning of countermeasures against illegal logging in the G-8 summit in England in 2005. At a meeting in March 2005, government spokespersons provided details of the United Kingdom and European Union's illegal logging countermeasures, and discussed proposals for the summit. In following month, Forestry Agency officials talked to the group about the timber trade in Japan and conditions of domestic distribution. A few days later, they held hearings where timber-importing companies made representations, followed by timber groups and NGO groups, and they discussed future action. They conferred on topics to be investigated concerning illegal logging and approved them. They agreed to firm up their standpoint, which would be transmitted to MoFA for the G-8 summit. In the team's view, illegal logging should be on the main agenda of the G-8 in Gleneagles, along with aid to Africa.

In June 2005, Matsuoka chaired a meeting of the investigation team, in which he formulated a system to remove illegally deforested timber from Japanese government procurement as a measure to protect the earth's environment.

One way to do this was through a traceability system for timber to prove its legality. Matsuoka claimed to have great responsibility for this issue since the illegal deforestation problem, he hoped, would be an important item on the agenda of the United Kingdom summit in July 2005.¹⁰⁷ The meeting was followed up later in the year with another, which discussed how timber logged illegally should be excluded under the government's Green Purchasing Law (*Gurîn Kônyûhô*), which made it a duty to consider the environment when the government procured goods.¹⁰⁸

Matsuoka visited Britain at the invitation of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Minister Morley on how to put the deforestation problem on the agenda of the G8 Summit to be held in the United Kingdom later in the year. Matsuoka also held discussions with NGOs, interested groups and government officials concerned with supply policy and trade measures for obtaining timber from sustainable forests, and limiting timber supply for the central government to legitimate timber, a policy that the United Kingdom already had in place.¹⁰⁹

During the same visit to the United Kingdom, Matsuoka attended a meeting sponsored by the Royal Institute of International Affairs on 'Forest Governance and Trade – Japan, the United Kingdom and European Union Initiatives'. The formal objectives of the meeting were 'to share information about efforts by United Kingdom and European Union governments and the private sector to combat illegal logging and associated trade and to discuss policy options available to the Japanese Government and Japanese private sector'.¹¹⁰ In his speech, Matsuoka

emphasised the vital importance of international cooperation and sharing of experience and best practice in tackling illegal logging....Leadership on the issue by the G8 was felt to have great potential and to fairly reflect the responsibilities of consumer nations [i.e. Japan]. Japan's engagement with the East Asia Forest Law Enforcement and Governance Conference and the Asia Forest Partnership were noted, as well as bilateral efforts to work with Indonesia through a Memorandum of Understanding.¹¹¹

A few days prior to Prime Minister's Koizumi departure for the G8 summit, the investigation team briefed him on measures for protecting the earth's environment from illegal logging. It presented a series of recommendations, one of which was that the government should only procure timber that could prove that it was logged legally, and that support for exporting countries should be strengthened. Matsuoka said to the prime minister, 'I want you to assert [these policies] as the government-LDP draft at the summit',¹¹² to which Koizumi replied: 'you can rely on me to do this'.¹¹³

The team was very pleased to see that tackling illegal logging was part of the Action Plan coming out of the G8 summit. Item 37 of the Action Plan acknowledged that tackling illegal logging was an important step towards the sustainable management of forests, and that tackling this issue effectively required action from both timber producing and timber consuming countries.¹¹⁴

After the summit, Matsuoka attended a meeting with representatives of the timber industries of Canada, India, Indonesia and Norway and of Japanese groups. He also made an on-the-spot survey in Indonesia in his capacity as chairman of the investigation team, as well as attending a regional workshop of the Asia Forest Partnership. In Matsuoka's view, illegal deforestation was not only an important discussion item at the summit, but measures against it were an essential part of the solution to global-scale environmental deterioration and a means of reviving the domestic forestry industry. As he claimed

[i]n 2001, I organised an investigation team in the LDP and have continued to appeal [for this cause] not only in Japan but also to countries around the world. Bit by bit, the problem has been recognised even in international conferences. Finally, illegal deforestation measures have become one of the main items at the summit this time.¹¹⁵

For Matsuoka, the answer was for 'countries not to use timber that was logged illegally. Such a system was already in place in the United Kingdom and in other countries that had removed illegally deforested timber from government-procured materials. He wanted to move the Japanese government finally to follow suit'.¹¹⁶

Matsuoka later reported on illegal logging countermeasures to the Forestry Management Activization Council (Shinrin Keiei Kasseika Kyôgikai), a group of Diet members in the LDP, of which he was the chairman. The council represented the forestry and the timber industry in Japan with a view to getting funding allocated in the Forestry Agency's draft budget for a forestry management revitalisation fund.

To further his international work on forestry, Matsuoka became the acting chairman of the supra-partisan Japan-China Tree-Planting Promotion Diet Members' League (Nicchû Ryokuka Suishin Giin Renmei). It promoted a tree-planting project in China using Japanese expertise on how to revive Chinese forests. Forest devastation was a leading cause of large-scale floods in China.¹¹⁷ The league also aimed to assist the Japan-China Tree-Planting Fund (Nicchû Ryokuka Kikin) established by the late Prime Minister Obuchi. This fund was developing a tree-planting campaign in China, where land impoverishment had become a serious problem. The executive committee of the league decided to raise independent contributions focussing on Diet members and actively to

support the campaign.¹¹⁸ In discussions with the Chinese ambassador, Matsuoka took the opportunity to discuss subjects such as environmental problems, FTA negotiations, the Green Energy Revolution¹¹⁹ and the idea for exporting farm products to China, which Matsuoka had proposed earlier.¹²⁰

Quite apart from the blatantly self-serving nature of Matsuoka's leadership of the campaign against illegal logging, the sincerity of his environmental credentials can be questioned on a number of other grounds. First, for Matsuoka, environmentalism was really disguised agricultural protectionism. One of the main arguments that Matsuoka consistently advanced in opposition to agricultural trade liberalisation was the environmental one. Supporting and protecting the domestic farm sector was justified on environmental grounds insofar as agriculture was deemed to possess various environmental values. This fervently held position was one reason why Matsuoka pursued a position in environmental policy committees from an early stage in his Diet career (see Table 4.1). The other reason was his involvement in the forestry industry that had diverse, officially recognised environmental functions. There was a large area of 'protection forest' in Japan, intended to serve the interests of the public. 'Protection forests' included 'headwater conservation forest', 'soil run-off prevent forest', 'landslide prevention forest' and so on.

Second, Matsuoka had actively worked as a Forestry Agency bureaucrat, sponsoring the construction of unnecessary forest roads that required the cutting down of areas of forest.¹²¹ While the Forestry Agency's mission was to protect mountains and forests, it specialised in the felling of trees to build forest roads.¹²² Further, as a politician, Matsuoka worked as political broker for construction companies wanting to get involved in the construction of forest roads, and for developer-clients who sought to convert forestland to other uses. During the period of Matsuoka's close association with forestry administration and forest policy, Japan's domestic forestry industry steadily declined with mountain forests, in particular, falling into ruin.¹²³

Matsuoka saw nothing contradictory about promoting higher prices for the timber sold by domestic forest owners on the Japanese market, while at the same time telling them that they and their organisations protected the green spaces of Japan.¹²⁴ Nor did he see any contradiction in utilising forests for timber while husbanding them as a national resource. He acknowledged that forests were diminishing around the world, but he sought to promote the use of Japanese timber by the Japanese government.¹²⁵ In this case, the economic

self-interest of Japan's forest owners and Matsuoka's political self-interest took precedence over any environmental cause. Matsuoka's position as a chairman of the Forestry Policy Basic Problems Subcommittee was a venue in which he could push this line, arguing that as forests were a resource that were cultivated domestically, they should be positively utilised.¹²⁶

From his vantage point as chairman of the subcommittee, Matsuoka made common cause with the head of Zenshinren about the need to expand the demand for the timber sold by the forest associations. At the same time, he was fond of motherhood statements such as 'making forests healthy protects our lives and the earth', by helping to protect against global warming. Those with a vested interest in Japan's domestic forestry industry (which, ironically meant felling rather than conserving trees)—such as Matsuoka and Zenshinren – latched on to the cause of 'global warming', and sought to harness it for their own political purposes, just as the agriculture lobby harnessed the issue of food self-sufficiency and food security.

Third, as Matsuoka's involvement with the biomass project demonstrated, some aspects of Matsuoka's environmentalism were more about boosting government spending in the agriculture and forestry sector, including for public works projects in Matsuoka's own electorate and thus gaining personal political advantage, than about supporting any particular environmental policy principle. Matsuoka became secretary-general of the Diet Members' League for Promoting the Green Energy Revolution (Midori no Enerugî Kaikaku Suishin Giin Renmei). The foundation general meeting of the league was held in the LDP headquarters on 24 January 2003. In Matsuoka's words, the league 'was established to promote the use of biomass and to aim to manage both the rehabilitation of the earth's environment and new energy production'.¹²⁷ Chairing the proceedings was Diet member Arai Hiroyuki, while the first person to offer greetings was Etô Takami.¹²⁸ Amongst those attending were members of both houses of the Diet as well as officials of the MAFF, the Natural Resources and Energy Agency and the Ministry of Environment, with the bureaucrats attending as observers. Matsuoka made a progress report to the gathering and read out the 'foundation purpose document' of the league, which stated

[i]n the twenty-first century, the regeneration of the earth's environment, which is the foundation of existence, is the greatest theme for human kind....It is estimated that the scale of green energy-related industries is about ¥700 billion and the anticipated impact on industry is ¥1.3 trillion, and through this, the steady decline in our primary industry can be reversed into a large-growth industry.¹²⁹

A total of 91 LDP Diet members participated in the foundation general meeting of the league.¹³⁰ The MAFF had high hopes for the league to become its main link to the political world.¹³¹

The meeting agreed to hold study groups to which academic experts were invited to speak about various aspects of the 'green revolution'. For example, in July 2003, they invited two academics to talk to them on the subject of biomass energy.¹³² They hoped to make a case for supporting and protecting Japanese agriculture on the grounds that it would be a source of biomass energy, saying '[u]ntil now, local administration and farm products policy have always been on the defensive. However, adopting a policy to utilise biomass energy effectively will create an opportunity to be at the forefront of the times'.¹³³ The study group resolved to work hard with the ministries and agencies concerned to realise a concrete biomass policy.¹³⁴

Matsuoka was the driving force behind the league, having the most knowledge and understanding of the issue amongst Diet members.¹³⁵ Even Etô Takami, who attended the general meeting as a representative promoter, said, 'biomass is Mr Matsuoka's endeavour. You need to ask Mr Matsuoka for details [not me]'.¹³⁶ Matsuoka, however, continued to refuse all interviews about biomass.¹³⁷

Internationally, it was another matter. Matsuoka visited Brazil for agricultural trade diplomacy in June 2004, but he took the opportunity to discuss the Green Energy Revolution with the Brazilian ministers. The interest in the visit was Brazil's ethanol application policy.

Matsuoka was also a member of several Diet members' leagues focussing on the environment, including GLOBE Japan (Global Legislators Organization for a Balanced Environment, or Chikyû Kankyô Kokusai Giin Renmei), which held its first general meeting in June 2004.¹³⁸ Around 42 non-partisan Diet representatives with an interest in environmental problems participated in GLOBE Japan. The league was part of an international grouping consisting of parliamentarians hoping to build international cooperation for dealing with global environmental problems. It comprised volunteer legislators from parliaments in Japan and the European Union, as well as the United States Congress.

However, it is, perhaps, the project to reclaim Isahaya Bay that most reveals Matsuoka's shallow environmentalism. Local residents and fishermen have strenuously opposed the project, the fishermen arguing that it damaged the local fishing industry as well as the seaweed catch. In late 2000, an out-of-

season red tide occurred in several places in the Ariake Sea. The discolouration of cultured seaweed (*nori*) crops began to be noticeable, and this started to worry some MAFF bureaucrats. A bad *nori* harvest also ran the risk of influencing the support bases of Koga Makoto (secretary-general of the LDP) from Fukuoka, Matsuoka from Kumamoto, and Noda Takeshi, secretary-general of the Conservative Party.¹³⁹

The MAFF set up a committee of specialists in order to review the project. Most of the members were sceptical about it, and most wanted the dyke gates opened and investigated.¹⁴⁰ There was a distinct split in the committee between MAFF *jimukan*, who were critical of the project, and MAFF *gikan*, who backed it with support from *nôrin zoku* including Matsuoka. The *gikan* on the committee resisted proposals to freeze the reclamation works that were affecting the water quality and an investigation into the dyke opening. They said that a huge budget would be needed to remove 4 million cubic metres of mud before the dyke could be opened.¹⁴¹

In August 2001, the *jimukan* officials proposed a large review of the project, which would mean cancelling it and leaving the dyke gates open for the time being. However, because this would require new expenditure, the plan failed to get MOF approval, and a decision was taken to leave the dyke gate unopened and to reduce the area of reclamation by half.

THE 2003 ELECTION

As a member of the LDP resistance forces, Matsuoka tried to exercise denial rights over Koizumi's reform proposals. Because of the lack of policy cohesion within the LDP caused by the party's decentralised policymaking process, it was not only possible but also acceptable for individual LDP Diet politicians like Matsuoka openly to oppose the prime minister and the Kantei. However, Matsuoka's individual power base in his own electoral district, from which he mounted his attacks on Koizumi, turned out to be not quite so secure after all, as the results of the 2003 election showed. As one political journalist pointed out

Sary resistance politicians, such as Suzuki and Matsuoka, are completely disliked by the population. In particular, since the establishment of the Koizumi government, their role as the baddies has stuck, so they must be fairly anxious....[Their attacks on pro-Koizumi politicians] probably come from this sense of anxiety, but in the end, they are just strangling themselves with their own hands.¹⁴²

Matsuoka initially capitalised on his opposition to Koizumi (by gaining public prominence) but then suffered as a result. He lost the seat of Kumamoto (3) in the November 2003 election, in spite of the fact that the Komeitô once again endorsed his candidacy¹⁴³ and organisations connected to agriculture campaigned vigorously in support of him. One election rally in Kikuyo Town in Kikuchi County drew 3000 people, with the banners of the Kômeitô, the Kumamoto Prefecture Farmers' Political League and local government organisations all visible in the throng. The rally was to hear LDP Secretary-General, Abe Shinzô, give a speech in support of Matsuoka. Other people also spoke, including the heads of the LDP's federation of Kumamoto Prefecture party branches and Nokyo-related groups. They unanimously praised Matsuoka.¹⁴⁴ However, one construction company owner lamented on the eve of Abe's visit to Kikuyo Town to support Matsuoka's campaign, '[w]hy must Abe support such a human being?'¹⁴⁵ Nevertheless, Abe's appearance on the hustings helped to cement Matsuoka's loyalty and eventual backing for Abe's bid to succeed Koizumi, which was rewarded, in turn, with Matsuoka's elevation to the position of MAFF minister in the first Abe cabinet.

In line with the growing custom amongst the competing parties in the election, Matsuoka drew up his own policy manifesto, which was broadly publicised on his website, in order to convince voters to vote for him rather than for one of the other candidates. Not only did Matsuoka's advocacy of a policy manifesto suggest that he was still operating as an independent political entrepreneur with his own political marketing strategy, 'combining "position statements" on the big issues of the day...with special favours to local interests',¹⁴⁶ but it also indicated that he was, or assumed himself to be, in a position to deliver on the promises contained in his manifesto.¹⁴⁷

The results of the election in Kumamoto (3) were very close: Matsuoka lost his seat by only about 3000 votes. He won 76,469 votes, or 40.9 per cent of the total cast vote of 186,857 (see Table 7.1), whilst his main rival, standing as an Independent, won 79,500 votes (42.5 per cent of the total). On the other hand, Matsuoka's vote tally was a precipitous decline of 32,658 votes on his 2000 win (see Appendix), with the loss interrupting five consecutive election victories in his local Kumamoto electoral district since 1990. Even in his *jiban* of Aso County, which, although it remained a rock solid base of support supplying about one third of his total vote, Matsuoka

won only 51.9 per cent of votes (an overall decline of around 10,000 votes), compared with just under 74.4 per cent in 2000 (see Table 3.2 and Table 7.1).

Matsuoka's total county vote dropped by a third (see Table 3.2 and Table 7.1), representing less than half of the total cast vote (40.6 per cent) compared with almost two-thirds in 2000 (see Table 3.2 and Table 7.1). It was in the counties as much as in the cities where Matsuoka failed to gain his customary levels of support. The most telling decline was in Matsuoka's proportion of the total vote won, which fell from 63.6 per cent in 2000 to 40.9 per cent in 2003 (see Table 3.2 and Table 7.1).

Even Matsuoka's most fervent supporters seemed to catch a whiff of impending disaster. In the early morning of polling day, a prominent member of the Dôshikai in Aso Town visited someone who had strongly criticised the Matsuoka-prefectural assembly member-Kawasaki regime, notifying him of Matsuoka's impending defeat.¹⁴⁸

Fortunately for Matsuoka, he was saved from electoral oblivion by the PR district system, scraping in at the bottom of the party list as one of three LDP SMD candidates in Kyushu who lost their seats but who were 'revived' (*fukkatsu*) by the party list in the Kyushu regional bloc constituency. The 'best loser' provision of the Public Office Election Law allowed losers in SMDs such as Matsuoka to be elected under PR if they received more than a legal minimum of votes (which was at least 10 per cent of the total vote in the SMD in which they stood). The LDP's overall vote tally in the Kyushu bloc was 36 per cent, which entitled it to eight PR seats. Matusoka was ranked eighth.¹⁴⁹ He only managed to retain a Diet seat because he won 96.1 per cent of the victor's vote, which placed him third on the list of SMD losers. The party rewarded only those SMD losers 'who came closest to winning in their local district races'.¹⁵⁰ The top five on the party list were ranked by officials of the party executive and were not standing in SMD seats. They were given priority over Matsuoka and others who were simultaneously running in Kyushu SMDs.

Given his low ranking on the winners' list, the 2003 Lower House election was hardly a resounding victory for Matsuoka. This did not stop him and his followers letting off loud fireworks in Aso Town in the early dawn hours of the day after the election, to the anger and disgust of some of the residents.¹⁵¹ During the campaign, Matsuoka's supporters had also put up posters of Matsuoka and Abe in each of the polling stations in Aso Town, which some

residents argued violated the Public Office Election Law. They had to go through the town office to get them removed, resentful that Matsuoka and his followers acted as if they owned the town.¹⁵²

The 2003 election thus made Matsuoka into a PR bloc politician rather than a local constituency politician. It meant that he was held in lower regard compared to his standing as a representative of Kumamoto (3). His position in the Diet and in the party was not as strong as it had been previously. He joined the group of ‘zombie’ candidates (who had risen from the dead),¹⁵³ winning only a bronze medal compared with the silver medalists (purely PR candidates with strong party endorsement) and gold medalists (those successful in the SMDs in their own right).

The loss of Matsuoka’s SMD seat was a big shock, not only to Matsuoka himself but also to his supporters and to other *nôrin giin* in the party. Just past 1am on 10 October (the day after the election), a haggard Matsuoka emerged in his electoral office and according to one source in his *kôenkai* said, ‘he reflected that “what was misunderstood was my own lack of power”’.¹⁵⁴

Some observers interpreted it as a ‘tectonic shift’ in an LDP ‘stronghold’ portending that ‘in the undercurrents in Japan, something was trying to change’.¹⁵⁵ The election results seemed to suggest that ‘the need for construction companies to engage and invite Matsuoka’s attention appears to be diminishing. Matsuoka is becoming a “has-been” for a wide range of social classes’.¹⁵⁶ One old timer in Aso Town commented, ‘[a]n unusual and big change has occurred...it is a change that I haven’t witnessed before in my lifetime’.¹⁵⁷

Matsuoka’s loss was symptomatic, amongst other things, of the punishment that Japanese voters frequently mete out to notoriously corrupt and tainted politicians. Matsuoka was seen as a typical conservative reactionary by many non-rural and non-farm voters, who disapproved of his brush with the political corruption scandal involving Muneo and Yamarin, and hints of others. After Muneo was arrested and had to give up contesting his seat in the 2003 Lower House elections, Matsuoka had gone quiet

[and] it seemed that the unfavorable wind against Matsuoka had stopped. However, as if to be cursed by Muneo’s ghost, he tragically lost his seat in the Kumamoto (3)...For Matsuoka, he was fighting the election amidst unfavourable winds....[In the campaign], Matsuoka appealed to his past record over four terms, but the topic of Muneo was brought up again and again, underlining Matsuoka’s strong image as ‘Muneo of the West’, which was a negative image that worked against him. Matsuoka was fairly annoyed by this whole scenario.¹⁵⁸

Matsuoka's electoral record between 1990 and 2000 suggested that he had never been very popular personally and that he had never really established an impregnable electoral position in either Kumamoto (1) or in Kumamoto (3). For example, in 1993, Hosokawa garnered over 200,000 votes, while Matsuoka only secured just over 80,000 (see Appendix). It would seem that Matsuoka's supporters had only voted for him out of self-interest, which was not a sufficient basis for sustained electoral popularity.

What was particularly galling about the 2003 election result for Matsuoka was that he had not lost to someone from the main opposition DPJ whose candidate garnered only 26,317 votes (just over a third of Matsuoka's vote tally) but to an Independent candidate called Sakamoto Tetsushi, a man who was little known outside his local district of Kikuchi County.¹⁵⁹ Sakamoto was a former journalist for the *Kumamoto Nichinichi Shinbun*, and a former four-term LDP/Independent member of the Kumamoto prefectural assembly, endorsed by the prefectural *nôseiren*. He had to split from the LDP prior to the election because the party's endorsement went to Matsuoka. LDP supporters in the local area were reportedly in the habit of neatly dividing the political world into two halves: 'national politics = Matsuoka, and prefectural politics = Sakamoto'.¹⁶⁰ However, because Sakamoto stood as a candidate for a Diet seat (thereby breaking the unspoken contract), the mud-slinging began.¹⁶¹ As Sakamoto was 53 years old, Matsuoka pilloried him saying, 'you are a betrayer. What can you do becoming a national Diet member past 50?'.¹⁶² The Sakamoto camp retorted, 'Matsuoka's method is just consistently to throw mud'.¹⁶³ It also alleged: 'Mysterious documents [libelling Sakamoto] were distributed and there were as many as seven versions since the opening of the electoral office. They were distributed over the entire electorate, so they would amount to a few hundred thousand copies'.¹⁶⁴

The campaign turned out to be a fierce contest between Matsuoka and Sakamoto. Matsuoka reputedly carried about 50 per cent of the LDP vote, and 60 per cent of the Kômeitô vote. In contrast, Sakamoto's support was a mixture of about 20 per cent of the LDP vote, 30 per cent of DPJ supporters, and 50 per cent of Social Democratic Party (SDP) supporters. According to the *Asahi*, Sakamoto gained great strength from criticising Matsuoka and made inroads into unaffiliated voters and supporters of the DPJ.¹⁶⁵ The DPJ candidate (like Matsuoka, also from the Aso region) was winning only about 50 per cent of the DPJ vote.¹⁶⁶

Table 7.1 Farm household composition/votes cast for Matsuoka by municipality in Kumamoto (1) in 2003
Lower House election

Name of municipality	No. of farm households ^a	Farm households as % of total in municipality/ies	Votes cast for Matsuoka	% of total cast vote	% of Matsuoka's total vote	Placing among 4 candidates
Cities	3,224	16.1	14,019	42.3	18.3	1st
Yamaga City	1,490	13.2	7,414	41.7	9.7	1st
Kikuchi City	1,734	20.0	6,605	43.0	8.6	1st
Counties	17,293	20.7	62,450	40.6	81.7	2nd
Kamoto County	5,052	29.5	15,993	48.1	20.9	1st
Kahoku Town	795	54.3	2,173	60.9	2.8	1st
Kikuka Town	1,158	55.6	2,579	52.7	3.4	1st
Kamoto Town	603	22.8	2,492	48.6	3.3	1st
Kao Town	695	47.2	1,873	52.9	2.4	1st
Ueki Town	1,801	19.1	6,876	42.7	9.0	1st
Kikuchi County	4,570	11.1	21,706	29.8	28.4	2nd
Shichijo Town	795	39.4	1,658	45.9	2.2	1st
Kyokushi Village	1,158	36.8	1,607	47.1	2.1	1st
Ozu Town	603	12.6	3,586	22.6	4.7	2nd
Kikuyo Town	695	8.0	3,936	26.4	5.1	2nd
Koshi Town	1,801	7.4	3,604	29.7	4.7	2nd
Shisui Town	795	14.8	3,094	38.9	4.0	2nd
Nishigoshi Town	1,158	4.7	4,221	28.3	5.5	2nd
Aso County	7,671	31.1	24,751	51.9	32.4	1st
Ichinomiya Town	727	22.4	2,964	50.9	3.9	1st
Aso Town	1,643	27.6	7,510	62.7	9.8	1st

Minamioguni Town	578	38.3	1,287	41.9	1.7	2nd
Oguni Town	854	28.5	1,803	31.7	2.4	2nd
Ubuyama Village	286	47.2	784	67.1	1.0	1st
Namino Village	264	50.9	735	63.0	1.0	1st
Soyo Town	733	49.8	1,544	51.3	2.0	1st
Takamori Town	616	25.1	2,370	52.7	3.1	1st
Hakusui Village	584	44.6	1,409	48.6	1.8	1st
Kugino Village	420	57.1	1,015	57.3	1.3	1st
Choyo Village	401	18.7	1,444	49.0	1.9	1st
Nishihara Village	565	33.0	1,886	51.6	2.5	1st
Total	20,517	19.9	76,469	40.9	100.0	2nd

Notes: ^a Farm household data are for 2000.
Sources: Sômuchô, Tôkei Kyoku, *Heisei 12-nen Kokusei Chôsa Hôkoku Dai 2-kan Dai 1-ji Kihon Shûkei Kekka Sono 2 Todôfuken, Shichôson Hen-43 Kumamoto-ken*, pp. 288-91 and 294-303; Kumamoto-ken Hômu Pêji/Senkyo Kanri Inkai, (*Dai 43-ka*) *Shûgingin Sôsenkyo (Shôsenkyoku) Kaihyô Kekka: Heisei 15-nen 11-gatsu 9-ka [(The 43rd) House of Representatives General Election (Single-Member Districts), The Results of the Vote Count: 9 November 2003]*, p. 2; <http://www.pref.kumamoto.jp/gyousei/senkan/osirase/h15kekka/pdf/no43_03.pdf>.

On the other hand, in strong contrast to Matsuoka, Sakamoto, as vice-president of a body called 'Group Reform' (Gurūpu Kaikaku), was the only candidate who campaigned on a platform of open support for Prime Minister Koizumi's reform program. Sakamoto's policy platform advocated the decentralisation of taxing and subsidy powers from central to local governments, which was one of the main planks in Prime Minister Koizumi's reform program. Sakamoto claimed that he was running for the Diet to change politics and also enthusiastically represented causes such as cleaner politics and 'politics for the people'.¹⁶⁷ His successful election was an implicit criticism of Matsuoka.¹⁶⁸

An LDP prefectural assembly member and supporter of Matsuoka explained his defeat in the following terms

[w]e were defeated by our opponent's strategies. We were accused of benefit and concession politics, and I suppose this mudslinging confused the influential people. Because of the Yamarin affair, we were predicting a difficult election, but we didn't ever think that we'd lose. The LDP also was not a monolithic union. While saying that they would support Matsuoka, about half of the assembly members supported Sakamoto. There was also some rebellion as Matsuoka was only favoring a few specific industries. The Sakamoto camp also distributed three or four (libellous) documents. Sakamoto was elected, but the influential people didn't care who got elected. It means that they gathered the anti-Matsuoka vote.¹⁶⁹

A journalist concurred, saying 'the anti-Matsuoka vote that flowed to Sakamoto is most likely the reason for his win'.¹⁷⁰

Although Sakamoto subsequently joined the LDP's parliamentary caucus (*kaiha*) in the Lower House, meaning that he was considered an Independent member of the ruling camp, and even though he joined the Yamasaki faction, he remained an Independent for electoral purposes at the local constituency level. From the perspective of the local LDP organisation in Kumamoto (3), he was, therefore, not recognised as the LDP member for that constituency. Sakamoto himself acknowledged that, although he was in the LDP *kaiha* in the Diet, he was not recognised as a member of the LDP. Because of that, he received no subsidy from the party.¹⁷¹ In fact, Matsuoka continued to give the address of the LDP's party branch in Kumamoto (3) as an address of his *kōenkai*. This alone suggested that, from Matsuoka's perspective, Sakamoto was merely keeping the seat warm until Matsuoka won it back at the next election. It also meant that Matsuoka would receive the party subsidy for Kumamoto (3) in any subsequent campaign. On top of this, Matsuoka remained secretary-general of the association of LDP Kyushu Diet members.

Even after his defeat, Matsuoka continued to cultivate the Kumamoto LDP federation of branches assiduously. A photograph on his website showed him addressing the women's division of the federation.¹⁷² Clearly, the next Lower House election would be a test to see whether Sakamoto could withstand a renewed onslaught from Matsuoka.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MATSUOKA-SAKAMOTO CONTEST

The significance of the electoral battle between Matsuoka and Sakamoto in the 2003 election lay in the fact that it was a contest between the old and new style of politics, a microcosm of the contest that was being played out on the national political stage under Prime Minister Koizumi. The new style of politician relied primarily on programmatic appeals, with a focus on unaffiliated voters. Such politicians were not so reliant on the traditional electoral ingredients that LDP candidates had so often drawn on for success—a strong local *jiban* and *kôenkai*, the backing of various interest groups, plentiful political funding as well as the advantages of incumbency, which enabled them to guide benefits to local areas (*rieki yûdô*), to act as political brokers for individual clients and to represent organised interest groups. As one journalist commented, ‘the Matsuoka camp fortified itself through these unchanging traditional, stable organisational votes centering on groups such as the construction world and the agricultural political league. The Sakamoto camp launched an election campaign that targeted not only these industries but also more widely’.¹⁷³

Matsuoka's defeat was interpreted as a rejection of his political methods and style. Those voting against him were appealing for another kind of politics, condemning ‘the kind of political methods that relied on state power politics and guiding benefits to local interests as bad’.¹⁷⁴ Matsuoka's defeat showed that a political rival making programmatic appeals could win out over an old-style LDP politician. Undoubtedly, Sakamoto's victory was testimony to voter support for Koizumi and his policy program. Sakamoto backed Koizumi's reforms, knowing that Matsuoka did not. In voting for Sakamoto, voters were voting for a reform program and the prime minister. A politician like Matsuoka could stand on a platform that opposed his party leader if the electoral coalition supporting him were strong enough. Such independence reflected the lack of policy cohesiveness in the LDP, its decentralised

organisation, the weak link between the party and its own Diet members, and the extent to which LDP candidates relied on their own individual power bases.

Fundamentally, the loss of Matsuoka's SMD seat could be explained by his being exposed on two fronts. He was squeezed between the preferences of non-rural and non-farm voters in Kumamoto (3), who were plumping for change by voting for a candidate who had a strong reform image, and dissatisfied farmers and rural dwellers opposed to the Koizumi administration's structural reform orientation and its cuts in public works spending - policies that were contributing to the widespread perception in regional areas that the administration's economic policies, particularly cuts in subsidies and public works, had caused economic recession to deepen in regional areas.¹⁷⁵

An investigative journalist from the *Asahi* journal *Aera*, visiting Kumamoto in 2002, encountered several people who supported Matsuoka's opposition to the structural reforms in his electorate and neighbouring electorates.¹⁷⁶ Even former Chairman Araki of the Araki Construction Group in Kumamoto, who was aware of Matsuoka's bad reputation, made his support for Matsuoka clear in his capacity as a representative of local construction businesses: 'I am opposed to the Koizumi government's structural reforms. When there is a change of government I want Matsuoka to be prime minister. I respect his anti-reformist position very much'.¹⁷⁷

However, not all local opinions were positive about Matsuoka. Yamaguchi Rikio (54), who was born and lived in Aso Town, was a well known farmer who ran a private facility called 'Farmer Village' that took in people who wanted to experience farming life. He said

[e]ven people who live in this area do not really think that character [Matsuoka] is good. Even the locals know that there are all sorts of rumors. These kinds of people thrive because our choices are being eliminated by the small electorate system. We're stressed about that. He's only riding on a system where the LDP and central government control the regional areas. He's only a pawn being used by the central government, and is nothing but an insignificant member sacrificed so that the larger organisation can survive.¹⁷⁸

Yamaguchi's real gripe was the fact that he had to vote for Matsuoka, whom he really disliked, if he wanted the LDP to win the seat of Kumamoto (3) because the SMD system gave him no other choice.¹⁷⁹ Such a view reflected a perception of one commentator that

Matsuoka was a person who was immersed in the negative political structures of the country where the bureaucracy, LDP and *nôrin zoku* teamed together to organise policy outcomes in their own interests and were doing nothing but hanging on. If you walk around Kumamoto (3) electorate, criticism of Matsuoka's crawling around and participating in the execution of projects based on bureaucratic demand echo everywhere.¹⁸⁰

Another stated 'Matsuoka isn't even liked in his local area, but there's an atmosphere of being unable to oppose him'.¹⁸¹ His 'presence is like a local mafia boss. If someone humiliates Matsuoka on television, that person really might get stabbed'.¹⁸²

TOEING THE KOIZUMI LINE

The biggest lesson for Matsuoka from his electoral loss and the main message that he took from it was that if he wanted his old seat of Kumamoto (3) back, he had to relinquish his anti-Koizumi, anti-reform position, and present a reformist face to the greatest possible extent that was consistent with his fervently held policy standpoints. This meant trading away everything but the core positions that retained the backing of his core supporters such as farmers.

The implications for Matsuoka's *giin katsudô* of his status as a PR member were also significant. His switch to the Kyushu regional bloc constituency produced a Kumamoto-wide policy focus. Matsuoka threw himself into a number of causes that were attractive to a wider range of voters.¹⁸³ However, because Matsuoka had an eye on winning back his old seat, he kept his main focus on his old electorate.

On issues where his local supporters opposed Koizumi, he chose the role of coordinator and mediator of the two sides, acknowledging their differing positions but also emphasising the need for compromise. In May 2004, Matsuoka travelled to Kumamoto along with all the other LDP Diet representatives from the prefecture to attend a conference. The meeting was held to discuss local issues with municipal mayors, the chairman of municipal assemblies and town and village associations, and the chief of the secretariat of the association of assembly chairmen. Topics included administrative problems in the prefecture such as deteriorating fiscal conditions, the prolonged deflation-recession, anxiety about employment and the impoverished regional economy.

The town and village representatives heartily complained that, if the Koizumi administration's 'trinity reform' were forcibly imposed without proper

consideration of its impact on local government budgets, which were heavily dependent on subsidies and tax revenue allocated by the central government, even minimal residents' services could not be guaranteed.¹⁸⁴ Matsuoka's solution was for the national and local governments to acknowledge the problem and work together strongly to solve it.¹⁸⁵

Matsuoka went on gently questioning the wisdom of fiscal reforms that would give rise to inequities between regions.¹⁸⁶ His manner was a far cry from the strident criticism that he had levelled at the Koizumi government's policies prior to his defeat in 2003. Matsuoka admitted that the 'trinity reform' was designed to restore fiscal health to the regions, but he also expressed real concerns for the agricultural and mountain village regions of Kumamoto where fiscal resources would become scarcer. It was, therefore, necessary to produce a reform plan that would make both cities and regional areas better, not worse.¹⁸⁷

The loss of his 2003 seat reminded Matsuoka of his vulnerability in the SMD poll, and of the fact that he was beaten by someone who was a Koizumi supporter. He might also need LDP endorsement as a safety net in case he failed to win a plurality in Kumamoto (3) in the next Lower House election and put himself up again as a dual candidate on the party list.

Accordingly, Matsuoka abandoned his membership of the resistance forces and began toeing the Koizumi line. The big test was his position on postal privatisation, which ended up being Koizumi's test of LDP endorsement in the 2005 Lower House election. In 2005, Matsuoka was made a director of the Lower House Special Committee Relating to Postal Privatization (*Yūsei Mineika ni kansuru Tokubetsu Iinkai*). He claimed to be surprised at his nomination, asserting that it was a complete bolt from the blue.¹⁸⁸ Once he became a director of the committee, he said that his responsibility was to make sure that deliberations on the bill proceeded smoothly.¹⁸⁹ However, because some members of the LDP opposed the bill, committee deliberations did not proceed smoothly. Matsuoka said, 'my heart is full of anxiety in accepting such a difficult duty. However, since postal privatisation is a campaign pledge of Prime Minister Koizumi, I will do my best to manage the committee smoothly by making good use of my experience in various Diet deliberations up till now.'¹⁹⁰

This was an important committee in discussing and progressing the postal privatisation bills, not only between the ruling and opposition parties but also amongst the LDP Diet members themselves, some of whom were opposed to Koizumi's pet project. In his position as director, Matsuoka

was in frequent contact with Koizumi and became an ostensible convert to the cause of postal privatisation. He admitted that being a director, and thus being involved in managing the committee proceedings was hard, 'I am stuck all day in the Diet, coordinating etc. with the opposition, from briefing before the committee meetings to the meeting of directors after the committee meetings'.¹⁹¹

The committee kept him exceedingly busy through 2005, leading to the passage of the postal privatisation bills in the Lower House in October 2005. Matsuoka was in the front line of all the discussions, negotiations and coordination on the issue, describing himself as representing the LDP as a 'top batter' in asking questions on the issue.¹⁹² His support for postal privatisation would have put him in a very difficult position, given that his faction boss, Kamei, was one of the chief hold-outs on the issue. In fact, as soon as there was agreement that a dissolution of the Lower House was inevitable, Matsuoka came out more strongly in favor of postal privatisation and parted company from Kamei. Most anti-postal privatisation Diet members were either from the Kamei or Hashimoto factions, both of which were generally critical of Koizumi's structural reform drive. A total of 12 out of the 37 Lower House members who had voted against the postal privatisation bills were from the Kamei faction.¹⁹³ Because of the speed of Matsuoka's departure from the Kamei faction, he was labelled a 'betrayal' by Kamei faction insiders.¹⁹⁴ Matsuoka voted for the postal privatisation bills along with 197 other LDP Diet members.

Blatant self-interest was behind Matsuoka's support for Koizumi's postal privatisation project. He was hoping for the position of MAFF minister in the next Koizumi Cabinet, which would have realised a long-held ambition.¹⁹⁵ During the subsequent September 2005 election, Matsuoka confidently asserted to those around him that he wanted to 'win votes fit for the position of a minister. The post I want is Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries'.¹⁹⁶ In Nagata-chô, however, the probability of Matsuoka's achieving his ambition was put at only about 30 per cent. It was generally thought that MAFF Minister, Iwanaga Mineichi (who had been elevated to the position from deputy minister, following MAFF Minister Shimamura's sacking in August for opposing the Lower House dissolution) would naturally accede to the position. The fact that Matsuoka's name came up in connection with the Yamarin scandal caused by his sworn friend Muneo was generally thought to be Matsuoka's 'Achilles heel'. The majority view was that '[the scandal] is too

fresh [for Matsuoka] to become Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries'.¹⁹⁷ A Kasumigaseki bureaucrat observed that even if Prime Minister Koizumi gave Matsuoka a position based on merit, the best he could hope for would be 'about Minister of Environment'.¹⁹⁸ As it turned out, the MAFF minister's position went to ex-METI Minister, Nakagawa Shôichi, Matsuoka's long-term rival and Muneo-hater. Matsuoka was totally passed over for ministerial preferment.

THE 2005 ELECTION

In the September 2005 election, Matsuoka was again competing against the incumbent, Sakamoto, and a newcomer from the DPJ, Nakagawa Kôichirô. At a meeting in Koshi Town, the night after the dissolution of the House of Representatives, a Bon dance festival was held. Both Sakamoto and Matsuoka fronted up, and Matsuoka greeted the public by saying, '[f]or 16 years, it has only been me in the LDP'.¹⁹⁹ On the podium, Matsuoka and Sakamoto's eyes barely met. Matsuoka kept on repeating: 'This time round, I am the challenger'.²⁰⁰ After the Diet's dissolution, Matsuoka spent most of his time in his local district, frequently making appearances at gatherings of his supporters. At his electoral office, his secretaries made the rounds of various areas in order to give out invitations to regional mayors and prefectural assembly members requesting cooperation with Matsuoka's re-election. There were also phone calls from supporters saying 'do your best'.²⁰¹

The head of Matsuoka's election office, Murata Kazuyoshi said, '[w]e want to dig up support in an honest way'.²⁰² At a sumô competition in Koshi Town, there was spirit and determination in Matsuoka's expression as he shook hands with each person present. He reflected, '[I]ast time, Sakamoto stood; and from my local area Aso, there was a Democrat candidate. I was in an adverse situation'.²⁰³ This time, Matsuoka emphasised his achievements as the chairman of the LDP's Special Committee Relating to Postal Privatization. He campaigned as 'a helper in Koizumi's reform' and strove to revamp his image.²⁰⁴ He began his campaign outside the Aso Shrine, saying '[t]he catchphrase "reform leader" indicates my will to see through reforms and not to give in to difficulties, no matter what. I want to develop agriculture into a No. 1 export industry and to lead and carry out reform of agriculture so that it will no longer need subsidies'.²⁰⁵

A week before election day, Matsuoka went down on his bended knees at an individual speech event for the LDP candidate for Kumamoto (3). It was held in

the Aso City Gymnasium.²⁰⁶ The supporters who flocked to the gathering could not believe their eyes when they saw the behaviour of the candidate who made an impassioned speech, saying 'this is a once-in-a-lifetime request'.²⁰⁷ Matsuoka went down on both hands and knees and lowered his head deeply. The hall went silent for a moment, and then there was big applause.²⁰⁸ Matsuoka conducted his campaign as 'a fight in which he risked his political life and which he could not lose'.²⁰⁹

In an exceptional case of 'burning his bridges', Matsuoka withdrew his joint candidacy in the PR Kyushu bloc saying that 'last time was a 50 per cent victory; this time I will aim for a 100 per cent victory [meaning, winning back his SMD seat]'.²¹⁰ His withdrawal from the bloc seat was the trigger for Prime Minister Koizumi to show his support for Matsuoka, which enabled Matsuoka to secure votes from unaffiliated voters.²¹¹ It also put even greater pressure on Sakamoto.²¹² The head of Sakamoto's election office said: 'We'd like to fight it out on policy issues this time. We will strive for an election that doesn't use money'.²¹³ Sakamoto pushed his reform message again, saying '[l]et's carry out real reforms, improvements and politics'.²¹⁴

Matsuoka's loyalty on the postal privatisation issue was rewarded with LDP (and Kômeitô's) endorsement in the 2005 election. The latter's endorsement was reputedly worth about 2000 votes.²¹⁵ The organisation representing retired special postmasters and their families (Taiju) in Kumamoto issued a recommendation for a 'free vote' because all the LDP candidates from the prefecture had supported postal privatisation.²¹⁶ In a public meeting in his electorate, Matsuoka stated that he was 'in favour of privatisation', as did Sakamoto.²¹⁷ This made the competition between them even more severe as the differences in their policies were not clear. Matsuoka was described in the press as having infiltrated Kômeitô supporters, while Sakamoto reputedly broadened his support amongst unaffiliated voters and made inroads into supporters of the DPJ.²¹⁸ Sakamoto sent his election car out into the rural areas, travelling in search of houses on narrow roads and steep mountain paths. When he found someone, 'he would run towards them and shake their hands'.²¹⁹ In fact, he had 'continued to do the rounds of the local area every week even after he was elected last time, greeting his supporters. He claimed that "support is slowly being established"'.²²⁰

Matsuoka was able to capitalise on the fact that Sakamoto's attitude to postal privatisation was somewhat inconsistent, opposing it right up until just before the Lower House vote. Sakamoto acknowledged that this would have an impact

on his support, but claimed that, as the son of the chief of a privately owned post office, he knew the post office best. Sakamoto also reportedly gained strength from criticising Matsuoka. Kumamoto (3) was widely portrayed in the press as an electorate where a fierce battle for victory was being fought between Matsuoka and Sakamoto, and where the new DPJ candidate could hardly get a look in.²²¹

Sakamoto, however, had difficulty in raising sufficient funds, and put out a call on his website for financial backing for his support association. He explained that he received no subsidy from the LDP, in spite of the fact that he was a member of its parliamentary caucus. He said that he was not a member of the party itself (*seitôin*), and, as an Independent, he could not receive contributions from corporations. He had to rely totally on donations from individual persons.²²² Sakamoto also objected in principle to corporate donations in line with his promotion of clean politics and breaking up the adhesion between politicians and corporations.²²³

All the LDP candidates standing for SMDs and the Kyushu bloc from Kumamoto received the recommendation from the prefectural Chamber of Commerce and Industry. They exchanged policy agreements that committed them to wide-ranging coordination in the event that large stores would be built in local areas and to making efforts to secure budgetary funds and implementing countermeasures for the vitalisation of small and medium-sized businesses.²²⁴

As was customary, Matsuoka also received the backing of the local agricultural cooperatives. The *nôseiren* recommended all the candidates in Kyushu except for one in Kagoshima, an Independent standing in opposition to the postal privatisation bills. The reason given was that the candidates had strong ties with the *nôseiren*, and 'importance was placed on already established pipelines'.²²⁵ Many Nokyo organisations in 2005 made opposition to a plan to break up agricultural cooperatives as a condition for their support of LDP candidates running in their constituencies. Although in Kumamoto there were no LDP incumbents who had voted against the postal services bill, the prefectural *nôseiren*, which feared that 'after the postal service the agricultural cooperatives will be targeted for reform',²²⁶ presented a memo signed by the chairman of the *nôseiren*, Sonoda Toshiyuki, and the six LDP-endorsed representatives from the prefecture who were recommended by the organisation. The memo pointed out that the government's Deregulation and Privatisation Promotion Council (Kitei Kaikaku/Minkan Kaihō Suishin Kaigi) was attempting to announce the separation and division of the agricultural

cooperatives, and on this basis they claimed that 'it is unwarranted intervention and should be withdrawn and reconsidered'.²²⁷ Sonoda stated

Koizumi is out to crush vested interests by saying he is going to 'destroy the old LDP'. Normally where the brakes would work, he puts forward an argument, and pushes [changes] through, and does not hide his feelings of caution. If he proposes it in the Diet, he'll face opposition that will far and away exceed the levels of the postal service.²²⁸

However, the prefectural *nōseiren* rationalised its support for the LDP by saying that 'the stability of the political situation is essential'.²²⁹ The memo was a desperate measure taken under the pressure of necessity.²³⁰

Matsuoka won 86,688 votes or 43.7 per cent of the total cast vote (see Appendix). This was a little over 10,000 more votes than he received in 2003, but it made all the difference between victory and failure by putting him well ahead of Sakamoto. It was this surge in support that won Matsuoka the seat, because Sakamoto's vote tally changed very little (78,796 votes compared with 79,500 votes in 2003).²³¹ The Sakamoto camp bemoaned the fact that 'most of the Kōmeitō's votes went to Matsuoka as the cause of their defeat'.²³² In defeating Sakamoto, Matsuoka reputedly 'vindicated his honor', while in Kumamoto as a whole, LDP candidates were so successful that a new 'conservative kingdom' appeared in the offing.²³³

Following his victory, Matsuoka bowed his head deeply saying, 'I am full of thanks and appreciation that cannot be expressed in words. I would like to repay everyone's kindness through my political activities'.²³⁴ He declared that he would 'faithfully carry out the judgement of the people on administrative, fiscal and political reform, starting with postal privatisation'.²³⁵ His post 2005 election victory statement stressed his pairing of environmental and regional economic objectives

Amidst the stagnation of regional economies, by practising the 'Green Energy Revolution' that uses regional greenery as an energy resource, I will make efforts to make possible the combination of environmental preservation and the stimulation of the regional economy.²³⁶

However, Matsuoka won his seat back primarily because he was now seen publicly to be allied with Koizumi's reform program. Koizumi himself came to Kumamoto to publicly campaign with Matsuoka. On his website, Matsuoka proudly displayed a photograph of himself and Koizumi holding up their arms together on top of a campaign platform. Moreover, photos of Matsuoka with Koizumi were used extensively for Matsuoka's election posters. In Matsuoka's election speeches, he stressed his 'closeness of distance with Prime Minister Koizumi' by frequently raising his name.²³⁷ Election analysts commented that

in Matsuoka's victory, there was certainly a 'Koizumi effect. Unaffiliated voters were mobilised by the national surge of Koizumi's LDP superiority'.²³⁸

Some of the gloss on Matsuoka's victory was subsequently tarnished by the arrest of one of his campaign workers, Ieiri Katsukichi, a resident of Nishimachi in Aso City, for vote buying and thus violating the Public Office Election Law. According to the investigations that led to the charge, Ieiri plotted with Ichihara Shiegyuki, unemployed of Aso City, along with others from Aso City at the beginning of September to ask several voters to gather support for Matsuoka. They were suspected of giving voters several tens of thousands of yen each.²³⁹

The election result meant that Matsuoka's closest mates were now out of the party, including his old faction boss, Kamei, who stood and won for the People's New Party (Kokumin Shintô) in his constituency of Hiroshima (6). Kamei described Koizumi as 'worse than Hitler' for having sent the rebels 'to a gas chamber'.²⁴⁰ Ibuki Bunmei took over Kamei's faction (the Shisuikai) and Matsuoka joined it, along with other *nôrin zoku* such as Yatsu Yoshio, Nakagawa Shôichi and Kawamura Takeo.

Following the election Matsuoka had to find a place for himself in the new, much more unified and policy-cohesive LDP under Koizumi, in which the dual structure of LDP—bureaucracy policymaking continued to be undermined by the shift towards a more prime minister-centred policymaking system. On the other hand, even though the LDP as a party became less dependent on organised interests in the election and although Matsuoka picked up the pro-Koizumi LDP vote, he was still dependent to a large degree on his customary supporters. In spite of his apparent conversion, Matsuoka remained very much a traditional LDP member, dependent on agricultural cooperatives, construction industry groups and other special-interest groups as well as his own supporters' association for his political base, with only a little help from unaffiliated voters. That help, however, could well have made the difference between success and failure, a lesson that would not be lost on Matsuoka.

In the wake of the 2005 election, and with his ambition to secure the post of MAFF minister still unrealised, Matsuoka tried to demonstrate his leadership potential and ability to act as a policy coordinator on issues such as agricultural trade. Appointed as chairman of the LDP's Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery Products Trade Investigation Committee, and in the newly created position of chairman of the LDP's Committee to Rapidly Promote Exports of Agricultural Products, Matsuoka endeavoured to find a compromise between maintaining agricultural protection and responding positively to a policy environment that

was increasingly favorable to bilateral trade deals. The incoming prime minister, Abe Shinzô, had already indicated his strong support for FTAs with other countries in the Asia Pacific. Matsuoka, wearing his hat as a special-interest farm politician, demanded an expansion in the MAFF's agricultural export promotion budget to more than ¥2 billion.²⁴¹ However, wearing his hat as an agricultural trade policy leader, he sought to exploit the opportunities presented by further liberalisation, proposing that Japanese agricultural processors add value to foreign farm imports and then export them to other countries. His public acceptance of trade bilateralism, together with his long-standing loyalty to Abe were finally rewarded with appointment to the position of Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in Abe's first cabinet. However, Matsuoka remained a very traditional politician pretending to be a new style of politician in order to secure the position of minister.²⁴²

In an interview with the press shortly after his appointment, Matsuoka reiterated his trademark themes of aggressively promoting Japanese agricultural exports and expanding biomass energy-based production.²⁴³ On trade matters, he blamed the United States for the failure of the WTO Doha Round whilst declaring that he was committed to the defence of Japan's position²⁴⁴ and to adopting a stance of 'taking whatever we can and accepting whatever we should'.²⁴⁵ On FTAs, he professed a 'give and take' approach, admitting to being less than enthusiastic about trade agreements with countries that would not reciprocate by taking Japanese agricultural exports.²⁴⁶

NOTES

- 1 *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 10 November 2003.
- 2 'Hini Kaku "Matsuoka Toshikatsu Daigishi" no Patoron', p. 58.
- 3 Hasegawa, 'Jimin "Gajô" no Chikaku Hendô', p. 25.
- 4 Nakanishi, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 28.
- 5 *The Japan Times*, 23 May 2001.
- 6 *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, 19 May 2005.
- 7 The 'special road revenue comes mainly from gasoline and vehicle weight taxes. It has been instrumental in improving the nation's roads and highway networks since WWII. However, critics argue that for many years, it has been used by LDP elements for pork-barrel politics.' *The Japan Times*, 23 May 2001.
- 8 *The Japan Times*, 12 June 2001.
- 9 *ibid.*, 23 May 2001.
- 10 This policy objective emerged as a Koizumi administration priority policy task following postal privatisation after the September 2005 Lower House election. Tamagawa Tôru, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu Giin no "Senryaku"' ['Matsuoka Toshikatsu Diet Member's "Strategy"']. Available from http://www.tv-asahi.co.jp/scoop/update/director/20011201_010.html
- 11 Nakanishi, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 28.
- 12 *ibid.*
- 13 *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 30 September 2005.

- 14 'Hini Kaku "Matsuoka Toshikatsu Daigishi" no Patoron', p. 58.
- 15 Nakanishi, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 28.
- 16 'Hini Kaku "Matsuoka Toshikatsu Daigishi" no Patoron', p. 58.
- 17 *ibid.*
- 18 'Nihon no Kiki o Sukui Shin no Kaikaku o Jitsugen shi Akarui Mirai o Sôzô suru Giin Renmei (Mirai Sôzô Giren) Sankasha Risuto' ['Participants List of Diet Members' League to Create a Bright Future by Saving Japan and Realising True Reform (Future Creating Giin League)']. Available from <http://www.bea.hi-ho.ne.jp/naito38/mirailist.htm>
- 19 'Nihon no Kiki o Sukui Shin no Kaikaku o Jitsugen shi Akarui Mirai o Sôzô suru Giin Renmei (Mirai Sôzô Giren) Sankasha Risuto'. Available from <http://www.bea.hi-ho.ne.jp/naito38/mirailist.htm>
- 20 Nakanishi, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 28.
- 21 *ibid.*
- 22 'Seijika o Kattei ni Kenkyû suru' ['Researching a Politician Off My Own Bat']. Available from http://www.geocities.co.jp/WattStreet-Stock/4518/matsuoka_t.html
- 23 The formal English translation of the title of this group is National Joint Struggle. It was the leading group in the Japanese university students' movement in the 1960s.
- 24 Nakanishi and Special Reporting Group, 'Suzuki Muneo, Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 99.
- 25 This was a reference to Yamasaki Taku, who was secretary-general of the LDP at the time. Nakanishi and Special Reporting Group, 'Suzuki Muneo, Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 99. Yamasaki was Prime Minister Koizumi's right-hand man in pushing his structural reform program. After a sex scandal cost him his seat in the Lower House in 2003, the former LDP vice-president and secretary-general in the first Koizumi administration won back a seat in the Lower House in a Fukuoka (2) by-election in April 2005, although Yamasaki had remained special advisor to the prime minister after losing his seat.
- 26 Tamagawa, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu Giin no "Senryaku"'. Available from http://www.tv-asahi.co.jp/scoop/update/director/20011201_010.html
- 27 *ibid.*
- 28 Nakanishi, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 28.
- 29 *ibid.*
- 30 'Hini Kaku "Matsuoka Toshikatsu Daigishi" no Patoron', p. 58.
- 31 *ibid.*
- 32 *ibid.*
- 33 *ibid.*
- 34 *ibid.*
- 35 *ibid.*
- 36 *ibid.*
- 37 *The Japan Times*, 29 December 2001.
- 38 *ibid.*, 29 December 2001.
- 39 *ibid.*
- 40 *ibid.*
- 41 *ibid.*
- 42 Nakanishi, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 29.
- 43 *ibid.*
- 44 The trinity reform of central and local fiscal and taxation systems aims to cut national subsidies to local governments (used for public services, including works projects, education and welfare), to review tax allocations from the central government to municipalities (including a review of allocating taxes to all municipalities on an equal basis), and to cede some tax collection authority (that is, over income, consumption, corporate, liquor, petroleum and tobacco taxes) to municipalities. The reforms are intended to reduce the budget deficits of both central and local governments while promoting decentralisation. In the view of the Koizumi administration: 'Too much money in the form of subsidies and tax grants to municipalities pamper them...If each local authority has to raise its own revenue, this will reduce unnecessary projects for roads and infrastructure'. *The Japan Times*, 14 June

2003. In late 2004, the government hammered out a trinity reform framework that called for cutting ¥4 trillion in state subsidies over the three years that ends in fiscal 2006 and transferring ¥3 trillion in tax revenue sources to local governments. *Asahi Shinbun*, 5 October 2005.
- 45 'Jimintô to iu Kettei Hôhô' ['The LDP Decision Method'], in *Director's Eye*. Available from http://www.tv-asahi.co.jp/scoop/update/director/20011201_010.html
- 46 *ibid.*
- 47 *The Japan Times*, 29 December 2001.
- 48 Tamagawa, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu Giin no "Senryaku"'. Available from http://www.tv-asahi.co.jp/scoop/update/director/20011201_010.html
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- 50 Okano Sadahiko, 'Progress Toward a New Policy-Making Process', *Japan Echo*, Vol. 10, October 2005, p. 41.
- 51 *The Japan Times*, 29 December 2001.
- 52 *ibid.*
- 53 Several comments critical of the government's handling of this issue were made at a December 2003 meeting of the panel, such as 'the government lacks an FTA strategy' and 'its response is haphazard'. *Asahi Shinbun*, 4 December 2003.
- 54 'Kantei Shudô no FTA Suishin ni Hanpatsu shi Kessoku mo, Kyûshinryoku Kadai' ['The Prime Minister's Official Residence Leadership's FTA Promotion, Centripetal Force Topic'], *Nôsei Undô Jyânaru*, No. 53, February 2004, p. 1.
- 55 'Za Sankuchuari', p. 58.
- 56 *ibid.*
- 57 Matsuoka Toshikatsu Official Site, "FTA Kôshô no Kantei Dokusô" o Kensei' ['Restrain the "Unilateral Action of the Prime Minister's Official Residence on FTA Negotiations"'], in *Katsudô Hôkoku [Activity Report]*. Available from <http://matsuokatoshikatsu.org/site002//public/048.html>
- 58 "FTA Kôshô no Kantei Dokusô" o Kensei'. Available from <http://matsuokatoshikatsu.org/site002//public/048.html>.
- 59 *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, 11 March 2004.
- 60 Matsuoka Toshikatsu Official Site, 'Midori no Enerugi Kakumei ga Zenshin' ['The Green Energy Revolution Advances'], in *Katsudô Hôkoku [Activity Report]*. Available from <http://matsuokatoshikatsu.org/index1.html>
- 61 Itô, "Muneco no Meiyû" no Arata na Taidô', p. 287.
- 62 *ibid.*
- 63 *ibid.*, p. 289.
- 64 *ibid.*
- 65 *ibid.*
- 66 *ibid.*, p. 291.
- 67 *ibid.*, p. 290.
- 68 *ibid.*
- 69 *ibid.*
- 70 *ibid.*
- 71 *ibid.*
- 72 *ibid.*, p. 291.
- 73 *ibid.*
- 74 *ibid.*, p. 292.
- 75 *ibid.*
- 76 *ibid.*, p. 288.
- 77 *ibid.*, p. 286.
- 78 Itô, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu Daigishi', p. 52.
- 79 Itô, "Muneco no Meiyû" no Arata na Taidô', p. 292.

- 80 Itô, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu Daigishi', p. 53.
 81 Itô, "'Muneo no Meiyû" no Arata na Taidô', pp. 292–93.
 82 *ibid.*, p. 293.
 83 Itô, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu Daigishi', p. 53.
 84 Itô, "'Muneo no Meiyû" no Arata na Taidô', p. 287.
 85 Itô, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu Daigishi', p. 53.
 86 Itô, "'Muneo no Meiyû" no Arata na Taidô', p. 287.
 87 Itô, 'Matsuoka Toshikatsu Daigishi', p. 53.
 88 Itô, "'Muneo no Meiyû" no Arata na Taidô', p. 288.
 89 *ibid.*, p. 288.
 90 *ibid.*, p. 287.
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- 119 See below.
- 120 Matsuoka Toshikatsu Official Site, 'Chûnichi Chûgoku Taishi to no Iken Kôkan' ['Exchanging Opinions with the Chinese Ambassador'], in *Katsudô Hôkoku* [Activity Report]. Available from <http://www.matsuokatoshikatsu.org/sit002//public/059.html>
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- 127 Matsuoka Toshikatsu Official Site, 'Midori no Enerugi Kakumei Suishin Giin Renmei Hossoku!!' ['Launching the Diet Members' League to Promote the Green Energy Revolution!!'], in *Katsudô Hôkoku* [Activity Report]. Available from <http://www.matsuokatoshikatsu.org/sit002//public/003.html>
- 128 Itô, "Muneco no Meiyû" no Arata na Taidô', p. 290.
- 129 *ibid.*
- 130 'Midori no Enerugi Kakumei'. Available from <http://www.matsuokatoshikatsu.org/sit002//public/003.html>. Another source put the figure at 93. Itô, "Muneco no Meiyû" no Arata na Taidô', p. 290.
- 131 Itô, "Muneco no Meiyû" no Arata na Taidô', p. 291.
- 132 Biomass energy is created from the fermentation of animal dung, which produces biogas—methane and carbon dioxide—for use as fuel. The researchers are professors belonging to the Society for the Study of Green Energy founded by Mitsuzuka. They, along with about eight other professors, are researching biomass energy. The society also accepts executives from Mitsuzuka's businesses and from general construction companies and engineering companies. Itô, "Muneco no Meiyû" no Arata na Taidô', p. 292.

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- 136 *ibid.*
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- 140 *ibid.*
- 141 *ibid.*
- 142 'Hirasawa Katsuei Vs Matsuoka Toshikatsu', p. 45.
- 143 In the 2003 elections, Kômeitô supported 198 out of 277 LDP candidates in SMDs. *Nikkei Weekly*, 24 November 2003.
- 144 Hasegawa, 'Jimin "Gajô" no Chikaku Hendô', p. 25.
- 145 *ibid.*
- 146 Self, Peter, 1993. *Government by the Market? The Politics of Public Choice*, Macmillan, Houndmills, p. 31. This is how Peter Self describes the rational choice theory of Mayhew (*Congress: The Electoral Connection*, Yale University Press, 1974) about how Congressmen in the United States seek 'to get and stay elected'.
- 147 These promises included the following: realising the Green Energy Revolution; establishing welfare systems such as reliable pensions, medical and aged care, and nursing systems; establishing a new education system that would become the basis for building the country in the twenty-first century; establishing a society in which everyone could feel safe; promoting policies for an aged society and for the participation of women; establishing a base for economic activities and daily living; and establishing a base for the regional economy. Available from <http://www.matsuokatoshikatsu.org/index1.html>. A similar list of commitments can be found at <http://www.jimin.jp/jimin/giindata/matsuoka-to.html>
- 148 Hasegawa, 'Jimin "Gajô" no Chikaku Hendô', p. 26.
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- 151 Hasegawa, 'Jimin "Gajô" no Chikaku Hendô', p. 26.
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- 153 Krauss and Pekkanen, 'Explaining Party Adaptation to Electoral Reform', p. 7.
- 154 "Muneco no Bôrei", p. 29.
- 155 Hasegawa, 'Jimin "Gajô" no Chikaku Hendô', pp. 25–27.
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- 157 *ibid.*, p. 25.
- 158 "Muneco no Bôrei", p. 28.
- 159 *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 15 September 2005.
- 160 "Muneco no Bôrei", p. 28.
- 161 *ibid.*
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- 165 asahi.com. See http://www2.asahi.com/senkyo2005/local_news/kumamoto/SEB2...
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- 168 “Muneo no Bôrei”, p. 28.
- 169 *ibid.*, p. 29.
- 170 *ibid.*, p. 28.
- 171 See <http://www.tetsusi.com/sasaeru/index.html>
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- 174 *ibid.*
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- 176 Hasegawa, ‘Kanjûdanomi no Hazama de Shundô’, p. 24.
- 177 *ibid.*
- 178 *ibid.*, pp. 24–25.
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- 181 See <http://piza.2ch.net/giin/kako/987/987905181.html>
- 182 *ibid.*
- 183 See Chapter 4 on ‘Exercising Power as a *Nôrin Giin*’.
- 184 Matsuoka Toshikatsu Official Site, ‘Kumamoto Kenka no Zen Chôson to no Iken Kôkankai’ [‘Meeting to Exchange Opinions with All Towns and Villages in Kumamoto Prefecture’], in *Katsudô Hôkoku* [Activity Report]. Available from <http://matsuokatoshikatsu.org/site002/public/053.html>
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- 200 *ibid.*
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