

# Koizumi's Top-Down Leadership in the Anti- Terrorism Legislation: The Impact of Political Institutional Changes

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*Japan's response to the September 11 terrorist attack was quick and conducted through top-down leadership by Prime Minister Koizumi. It was seen as a sharp break from Japan's pacifism and slow, unclear response patterns of the past. As the lack of leadership became a focal issue for Japanese politics in the 1990s, three major institutional changes were introduced to shape the leadership of future prime ministers: the 1994 electoral system, the Diet and government reform of 1999, and Hashimoto's administrative reform efforts, which took place in January 2001. This paper analyzes the impact of these changes on crafting Japan's 2001 anti-terrorism legislation.*

On September 19, 2001, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi announced his plan to actively support U.S. reprisals for the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, DC. In his statement, Koizumi called terrorism "Japan's own security issue." On October 8, immediately after the first U.S. air attack against Afghanistan, Koizumi expressed full support for U.S. and British military action, and pledged to help within the framework of its constitution. His cabinet rapidly drafted anti-terrorism legislation to dispatch Japan's Self Defense Forces overseas under wartime conditions for the first time in the country's postwar history. Japan's national parliament, the Diet, passed the legislation

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three weeks later, incredibly fast for such significant bills. In his swift action on the terrorism legislation, Koizumi demonstrated a new style of decisive, top-down leadership that represents a sharp break from the past.

What made Koizumi's decisive leadership style possible? As Japan's economy struggled through a decade-long recession in the 1990s, lack of strong leadership became a focal issue for Japanese politics. In response, the three major institutional changes were introduced that supported the increased centralization of power in the office of the prime minister: the 1994 electoral system reforms, the government reforms of 1999, and the administrative reforms of 2001. This paper will examine the impact of these changes on the decision making structure in Japan, taking the anti-terrorism legislation as a case study.

### **Institutional Changes**

#### *Prior to 1994: Divided loyalties*

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which is often regarded as a conservative force in Japanese politics, controlled the Diet, and thus the government, from the time of its formation in 1955 until 1993. During this long, single party rule, the LDP became highly decentralized. Powerful LDP members formed and maintained separate factions that competed for national influence. Leaders of large factions played a decisive role in LDP presidential elections because factional coalitions with a majority in the party chose the party leader, who then became prime minister. These factional leaders were, in some ways, more powerful than the prime minister, and their open challenges weakened his leadership. The competition among LDP factions in elections accelerated fundraising races, which were seen as a major cause of political corruption.

The LDP's factionalized structure also influenced the makeup of the cabinet. Although appointive authority belonged to the prime minister, factions served as a channel for allocating cabinet posts. When the prime minister formed his cabinet, he had to consider the factional balance and specific requests for posts from each faction. Cabinet members, therefore, were often more grateful for their appointments and remained more loyal to their faction leaders than to the prime minister. As a result, cabinet members advanced their faction's political and policy priorities, making it more difficult to form a unified, effective cabinet.

The cabinet's limited term also reduced its effectiveness. From the late-1950s on, each LDP government conducted cabinet reshuffling almost every year. By the 1970s, the political career ladder within the LDP became more institutionalized. Regardless of ability, almost all the LDP lower house members were entitled to a cabinet appointment after their sixth term. This high turnover for cabinet ministers strengthened each ministry's professional bureaucracy. During their short tenure, cabinet ministers had difficulty exerting control over the bureaucracy and had to gain its support to function in their position. In return, they often represented their ministry's sectional interests in the cabinet.

In addition to the intra-party factionalism and government sectionalism within the cabinet, the cabinet's lack of policy initiative weakened the prime minister's power. While Japan's constitution gives executive power to the cabinet, the Cabinet Law did not clearly define the prime minister and the Cabinet Secretariat's—his supporting body equivalent to the U.S. White House or the British Prime Minister's Office—authority in initiating policy. Many officials at the Secretariat were on loan from other ministries. Since their loyalty often went to their home ministry rather than to the prime minister, they were reluctant to encourage policy initiatives from the cabinet. Bureaucrats in the ministries, therefore, initiated most policies. They consulted with policy experts in the LDP and built consensus within the government around policy initiatives, reducing the cabinet to a largely ceremonial role. The policy process in the Japanese government was thus highly decentralized, making it difficult for the prime minister to exercise strong leadership.

#### *The 1994 electoral changes*

In July 1993, two groups within the LDP left the party to join the opposition parties protesting the government's failure to reform the electoral system. This forced Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa from office, and the LDP lost its majority in the lower house in the subsequent general election. Eight opposition parties formed a government under Morihiro Hosokawa (1993–1994),<sup>1</sup> and introduced new electoral rules with the major objective of weakening factional power. The old “middle-size” electoral system of the lower house, with three to five seats in each district, encouraged multiple candidates from the LDP. The competition among candidates from different LDP factions was much more fierce than LDP-opposition party competition because the LDP candidates had to

fight each other for the same bases of support. LDP candidates, therefore, relied not on the party organization but on their faction for financial and other campaign resources, which aligned their loyalties with their factions, not with the LDP leadership or the prime minister. The electoral system was also considered a cause of political corruption because LDP factions actively sought financial resources in order to compete among themselves.

The 1994 electoral reform introduced 300 single-seat electoral districts and 200 seats allocated for proportional representation in the lower house. This change created a significant shift in the power balance within the LDP that indirectly weakened factional influence over the prime minister. In the old system, constituents brought casework and requests to the more senior, politically powerful politicians in their district if there was more than one LDP representative. Since the reform, young LDP members in the single-seat electoral districts receive virtually all requests from their constituents, giving them a stronger political base and putting them on more equal political footing with the party elders.

Since the electoral changes, these politicians have become more vocal in criticizing the government and older LDP members. For example, LDP lower house member Taro Kono (age 37) openly criticized LDP Secretary General Hiromu Nonaka for the LDP's

defeat in the 2000 general election and called for his resignation from the party's number two position. The old electoral system often stifled such criticism because the powerful factions could remove troublesome younger Diet members by supporting a rival district candidate in the next election. The single-seat district system neatly eliminates this threat, as no LDP candidate is al-

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The new power of younger Diet members to act independently of the LDP factions helped Koizumi win power in 2001. For the April 2001 LDP presidential race, the younger members demanded that the LDP president be chosen not only by LDP Diet members, but also by local party members. At the March 2001 LDP meeting, Kono presented a plan that allocated 346 votes among local, public elections by LDP members on top of the 346 votes from Diet members. This move came in response to the closed-door selection of Yoshiro Mori as Prime Minister by the party leaders following Keizo Obuchi's sudden death, which had generated widespread public and media disapproval. Although the LDP faction leaders did not want to allocate so many votes to non-elected LDP members, which would effectively have taken the election out of their control, they were forced to make some concessions. A compromise agreement increased the votes of each LDP prefectural chapter from one to three, giving local LDP members a total of 141 votes.

The largest LDP faction, with 101 LDP Diet members, was led by former prime minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, who looked upon this electoral change optimistically. This faction, previously led by former Prime Ministers Kaukei Tanaka, Noboru Takeshita, and Keizo Obuchi, had played a decisive role in selecting party leaders for more than twenty years and boasted of their connections with local chapters. However, several younger members said openly that they might vote against the faction's decision to support Hashimoto in the election. Younger members of the other LDP factions also called for independent voting, i.e., not along factional lines. They demanded an open forum in which to question the four LDP presidential candidates, and held a two-day session with them before the election. Many of them returned to their districts and expressed their personal support for Koizumi. Koizumi earned a landslide victory, winning 298 out of 487 votes by capturing nearly 90 percent of the 141 local chapter votes. Hashimoto only received 155 votes with support from his and one other faction.

Koizumi was the first LDP president and prime minister to be selected outside of the traditional factional power struggles. He was elected by an overwhelming majority of LDP local branches, giving him enough legitimacy to pick his own cabinet without consulting faction leaders. As evidence of his independence from the old party chieftains, Koizumi's new cabinet had an unprecedented number of women (five), including Makiko Tanaka as Foreign Minister, and civilians (three). In a press conference, Koizumi

boasted that “LDP members finally understand what ‘appointments without factional intervention’ is. They have realized that I am serious.”<sup>2</sup> Koizumi also stated that he would cut down on cabinet reshuffling in order to minimize the opportunity for factional influence. Polls taken by major newspapers immediately after the establishment of his cabinet showed that Koizumi’s initial support rate had rocketed to the highest level since the collection of such data began in 1946, 78 percent according to *Asahi Shimbun*, 85 percent according to *Mainichi Shimbun*, and 87 percent according to *Yomiuri Shimbun*. The *Asahi* poll found that the biggest reason for Koizumi’s extraordinary popularity was his rejection of factional influence.<sup>3</sup>

The new electoral rules for the lower house shifted the balance of power between junior and senior members of the LDP, which led to changes in the LDP presidential election rule. Under the new rule, a candidate with wide popular support like Koizumi has a better chance of winning the presidency, and therefore the premiership. As Koizumi demonstrated, this can give the prime minister a freer hand in forming his cabinet and running the government relatively independently of factional influences.

#### *The government reforms of 1999*

When the LDP formed a coalition government with Ichiro Ozawa’s Liberal Party in 1999, Ozawa asked for a set of institutional changes to strengthen the role of the cabinet and curb the bureaucracy’s influence, with the aim of alleviating government inertia. His demands included downsizing the cabinet, diminishing the role of bureaucrats in the Diet, and introducing a new forum for debates between the prime minister and other party leaders.

Ozawa demanded the reduction of cabinet ministers from twenty to fifteen through the consolidation of several junior cabinet positions with the idea that decision making would be easier in a smaller cabinet. In his view, a large cabinet made it difficult to reach unanimous decisions and opened the door for incompetent politicians. By reducing its size, Ozawa believed, the cabinet would become more unified, more selective, and more efficient. He compromised with the LDP by agreeing to reduce ministerial positions to fourteen by January 2001, but with up to three additional cabinet posts without a ministerial portfolio.

In order to enhance the power of the cabinet, Ozawa also proposed the abolition of “the government commissioner system,”

which allowed bureaucratic officials to answer questions from the opposition parties in the Diet. This practice encouraged the dependence of politicians on the bureaucracy for detailed policy knowledge. Since the elimination of the commissioner system in 1999, bureaucratic assistance has been limited to providing “government witnesses,” who answer only highly technical questions, and only upon the specific request of a Diet committee. At the same time, the abolition has forced the prime minister to select politicians with deeper policy expertise for cabinet seats, since cabinet members are now responsible for answering opposition parties’ questions about policy. The result has been a more knowledgeable and efficient cabinet with more strength relative to the ruling party and the bureaucracy.

The LDP-Liberal coalition government also ushered in an important change to the Diet structure, establishing a new standing committee on national basic policy in both houses in January 2000. These committee meetings have become an important arena for substantive policy debate; at the meetings, the prime minister and the leaders of the opposition parties and coalition partners are expected to debate freely, modeled on the British “question time” system. Koizumi used these televised meetings to create public support for his policy initiatives. In June 2001, shortly after his election, Koizumi announced his determination to pursue administrative reform during one of these committee meetings. The combined viewing rate for the live broadcast was more than 20 percent—unusually high for parliamentary coverage.<sup>4</sup> The prime minister, who had a weak power base within the LDP, thus used the committee meeting as a platform to explain his policy goals to the public and suppress opposition within his own party.

#### *The 2001 administrative reform*

The lack of strong leadership in the Japanese government became the center of public debate after the disastrous experience of the Great Hanshin (Kobe) Earthquake of 1995, when government relief efforts were ineffective. Reinforcing the power of the prime minister became one of the major themes of administrative reform efforts under Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto (1996–1998). The Diet approved the framework of Hashimoto’s reform plan in June 1998. But the detailed legislation needed for implementation was not enacted until July 1999, and it was not until January 2001 that some institutional changes and ministerial reorganization were

introduced. Hashimoto's reforms included revision of the Cabinet Law to establish clear authority for policy initiatives from the prime minister and the Cabinet Secretariat, and the reorganization

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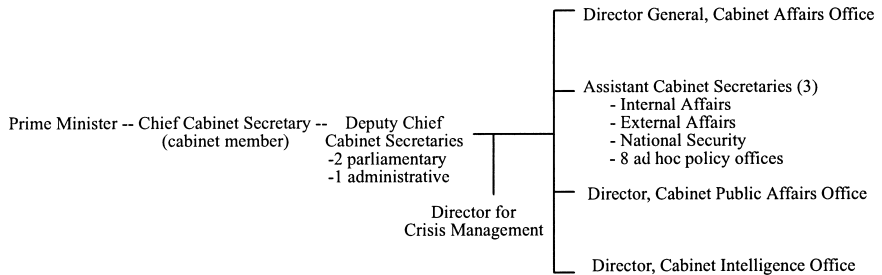
of the Secretariat. In addition to the 1995 earthquake, the government's response to the 1996–1997 hostage crisis in Peru and the 1997 oil spill disaster in the Sea of Japan made strengthening the prime minister's power, especially in crisis management, a top priority issue. In June 1999, the Diet revised the Cabinet Law to define clearly the role of the prime minister and the Cabinet Secretariat in initiating policies. The

law clarified the prime minister's authority to propose important, basic policies at cabinet meetings. Under the old law, this also was technically possible, but cabinet meetings had never, traditionally, been the place for policy initiatives. The cabinet dealt with policy issues that had already been discussed and pre-approved by top bureaucrats. This practice strengthened the bottom-up style of Japanese government decision making, and weakened the prime minister's political initiative. The revised law supported a more decisive role for the prime minister.

The revised Cabinet Law also reinforced Cabinet Secretariat authority. It states that the Cabinet Secretariat's role is "to present policy direction for the government as a whole, and coordinate policy strategically and proactively," and instructs other ministries to recognize that, "the Cabinet Secretariat is the highest and final organ for policy coordination under the Cabinet."<sup>5</sup> This definition allows the prime minister and the cabinet to initiate and proceed with policy processes independent of the relevant ministry.

Interestingly, Hashimoto himself, after resigning as prime minister and becoming a cabinet minister, became the first to take advantage of the revision. (Many politicians did not know how to respond to this new arrangement.) In December 2000, Hashimoto was appointed Minister for Administrative Reform under the third cabinet of Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori. In January 2001, without

Figure 1: The Organization of the Cabinet Secretariat



Source: Author

prior consultation with the relevant ministries, Hashimoto announced reform plans for the civil service system, special corporations, and public service corporations. The National Personnel Authority (in charge of rules and regulations regarding civil servants) and the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Post and Telecommunications (in charge of administrating public service corporations) both filed complaints with the Cabinet Secretariat over the lack of prior consultation. Hashimoto, however, rejected their complaints based on the revised Cabinet Law, which clearly defined the Secretariat's authority to initiate policy, and submitted his reform plan to Prime Minister Mori,<sup>6</sup> setting a precedent for Koizumi's anti-terrorism legislation.

A subtler but still significant change was the formal abolition of three policy offices within the Cabinet Secretariat: the Offices of Internal Affairs (headed by a Ministry of Finance official), External Affairs (headed by a Ministry of Foreign Affairs official), and National Security Affairs and Crisis Management (headed by a Japan Defense Agency official). These offices had been created in 1986 to strengthen the Secretariat, but at the time of Hashimoto's administrative reform efforts, had come under fire for lack of coordination and sectional infighting. With the January 2001 reorganization, these three policy offices merged into one unit, the Office of Assistant Cabinet Secretaries, under the leadership of three Assistant Cabinet Secretaries. When necessary, the unit can form ad hoc offices for specific policy areas. The new arrangement was designed to provide institutional flexibility by dealing with linked policy issues in a more integrated way, enabling the government to respond to situations in a timely manner.<sup>7</sup>

The reorganization unexpectedly increased the influence of the Ministry of Finance (MOF), while weakening that of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). As virtually all the ad hoc offices

focused on domestic rather than foreign policy, they fell under the responsibility of MOF. Of the eight ad hoc policy offices established under the new unit as of January 2001, four reported to the assistant cabinet secretary from MOF.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, scandals surrounding MOFA's misuse of secret funds and the internal power struggle between Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka and high officials further undermined its influence in the Cabinet Secretariat.

One final institutional change under the Hashimoto cabinet strengthened the Cabinet Secretariat's ability to take leadership and respond quickly in times of crises. In April 1998, the Hashimoto government established a new Cabinet Secretariat position, the Director for Crisis Management. Although the new director's powers impinged on the jurisdiction of existing agencies, such as the Japan Defense Agency (JDA), there was no strong opposition from the bureaucracy because of the enthusiastic public support for stronger leadership. The director heads the Cabinet Situation Center, a department established after the earthquake in 1995 to enhance the government's emergency preparedness by serving as an information gathering center.

The reorganization of the Cabinet Secretariat and the revision of the Cabinet Law, as well as the other institutional reforms mentioned above, all played out in an remarkable way in Japan's response to terrorism.

### **Case Study: The Anti-Terrorism Legislation**

#### *Initial reaction*

On September 11, 2001, Koizumi reacted rapidly to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Forty-five minutes after the incidents, he established a liaison office at the Situation Center of the Cabinet (later upgraded to the Emergency Anti-Terrorism Headquarters headed by the Prime Minister). He then called a cabinet-level meeting of the National Security Council for the first time since 1998. At the press conference after the meeting, Koizumi announced the government's initial action plan, and described the terrorist attacks as "grave challenges not only to the United States, but also to the entire democratic society."

Reinforced by the various reforms discussed above, the Cabinet Secretariat responded quickly and strongly. The top officials of the Koizumi government shared the conviction that it was important to treat the situation as a crisis immediately. Many remembered that Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu had failed to identify the

August 1990 Gulf Crisis as a “significant emergency,” leaving MOFA to respond through normal diplomatic channels and significantly delaying Japan’s crisis response.<sup>9</sup> This time, after swiftly identifying the situation as a crisis, Koizumi was able to take advantage of newly created institutions, such as the Cabinet Situation Center, to take control and respond effectively.

After the initial reaction, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Teijiro Furukawa quickly assigned the project of designing Koizumi’s response to an existing task force, led by JDA officials, that had been formed to study the Contingency Law, which provided a legal framework to allow the Self-Defense Forces to use force in the event of an armed attack against Japan. MOFA officials, who had earlier dominated foreign policymaking, were forced to play a subordinate role in the task force because of the reorganized Cabinet Secretariat. By avoiding interagency conflicts between JDA and MOFA, this new arrangement made the formulation of Japan’s response plan easier and faster. Only eight days later, on September 19, Koizumi announced his plan to support U.S. reprisals for terrorist attacks.

His plan included the dispatch of Self Defense Force ships to help the United States collect intelligence, ship supplies, and provide medical services and humanitarian relief. He also pledged to strengthen protective measures for U.S. bases in Japan. In addition, Koizumi announced non-military measures that included \$10 million to help fund the rescue and cleanup work after the attacks in the United States, a plan to provide emergency economic aid to Pakistan and India to help solicit their cooperation, and measures to avoid

confusion in the international economic system. In developing the plan, task force members carefully examined lessons from the Persian Gulf War. Although Japan provided as much as \$13 billion in financial help toward that ef-

fort, its contribution was widely perceived as “too little, too late.” The task force members recognized that financial contributions

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alone would not be highly appreciated by the international community. On September 25, Koizumi visited the United States to meet President George W. Bush, and pledged to implement his plan as quickly as possible. Koizumi's plan elicited much praise from U.S. policymakers as it was more than many experts in Japan and the United States had expected and was presented in a timely manner.<sup>10</sup>

Public support for strong leadership facilitated Koizumi's quick response. In a September 27 policy speech after returning from the United States, Koizumi again expressed his determination to implement his plan quickly. Opposition parties and some LDP members criticized Koizumi for making such an important international commitment so swiftly, without the traditional consultation with the ruling and opposition parties. However, such criticism never gained an audience as public support for the Koizumi cabinet remained extremely high. According to a poll conducted on September 21–22 by *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, the leading national business newspaper, 70 percent of respondents were in favor of Japan's support for U.S. military action.<sup>11</sup> The approval rating of the Koizumi Cabinet was 79 percent.

### *The political process*

Popular support enabled Prime Minister Koizumi not only to make a swift initial response, but also to pass the anti-terrorism legislation through an unusual short-cut political process. Koizumi was keenly aware of the importance of timeliness in Japan's response to the campaign against terrorism. A normal political process might delay the implementation and again invite international criticism of "too little, too late." Government policies are usually vetted first with the relevant subcommittee of the LDP's Policy Research Council, whose members are referred to as *zoku* (or "policy tribe"). After this approval, proposed policies move to the LDP's General Council to build a party consensus behind them, and then become the party's official policy. Under the coalition government, policies further require an agreement with LDP's coalition partners—Komeito and the Conservative Party—before cabinet approval.

In the case of the anti-terrorism legislation, however, Koizumi saved time by reversing this political procedure, seeking agreement from the coalition partners before consulting the LDP's policy committees. Once the three parties reached an agreement, it would be difficult for individual LDP members to oppose the decision.

To secure agreement from the coalition partners, especially from Komeito, which had been proud of its pacifist stance on national security issues, the Koizumi government tried to avoid constitutional controversy. Article Nine of the constitution prohibits Japan's direct military involvement abroad. The current official interpretation of this article allows Japan to exercise individual self-defense, but not to participate in collective self-defense—military action that is not specifically tied to defense of Japan proper. Although Japan's assistance to the U.S. military campaign under the anti-terrorism legislation might well have been classified as collective self defense requiring reinterpretation of the constitution, Koizumi repeatedly stated that Japan's measure would be limited within the constitutional framework.

The Koizumi government needed to win passage of two pieces of legislation in order to move ahead with the anti-terrorism plan. One bill would revise the Self Defense Force Law to authorize SDF action to defend U.S. bases in Japan against unexpected terrorist attacks. The existing law authorized SDF action only when a situation was already in progress and could not be handled by the police. A second law would authorize rear support for U.S. forces in the Indian Ocean area, including provision of supplies and medical services, transportation of personnel, search and rescue activities, and humanitarian assistance to displaced persons. The 1999 Regional Crisis Law strictly limited the area of such support to Japan's territory, or the sea and airspace surrounding it. The new law would allow support in foreign territory with permission from the relevant foreign government. More concretely, it would expand legitimate activity areas to territories and seas between the Indian Ocean and Japan.

On September 25, the three coalition parties agreed on the outline of the new law. In order to avoid constitutional objections on the grounds that the anti-terrorist action was a kind of collective self defense, they announced that the new legislation would be based on Japan's signatory status of the UN Charter and the Security Council resolutions, which called on all states to take appropriate measures for the prevention of terrorist actions. The following day, the government explained the legislation to representatives of the opposition parties. One day later, the outline was finally reported to LDP members at a General Council of the party. The members of LDP policy subcommittees were the last group to learn officially about the new legislation at a September 28 joint meeting of the Cabinet, Defense, and Foreign Affairs subcommittees.

When the plan was submitted to the Diet, the opposition parties criticized the government draft. The left-leaning Social Democratic Party denounced the U.S. campaign and portrayed the Koizumi plan as a step toward Japan's remilitarization. On the right, the Liberal Party criticized Koizumi's plan as "ad hoc, spur-of-the-moment half measures." The Liberal Party maintained the position that the use of armed forces must be approved by the UN, as in the case of the Gulf War, in order for Japan to send its troops to participate in an international dispute. Ozawa also criticized Koizumi for avoiding discussions of collective self-defense and constitutional reinterpretation.

In order to avoid Diet passage by the ruling parties alone, the Koizumi government sought cooperation from the Democratic Party, the largest opposition party. These efforts were not successful, however, because the two sides could not agree on political concessions to the Democratic party in exchange for its support. Despite this lack of support from any of the opposition parties, the leaders of the ruling parties were confident that the public favored the legislation. According to an *Asahi Shimbun* poll conducted on October 13–14, 51 percent of the respondents supported the anti-terrorism legislation, while 29 percent opposed it.<sup>12</sup>

Once the decision was made to pass the legislation without any support from the opposition parties, action in the Diet was swift. On October 16, the revised government bills were introduced and passed in the special committee of the lower house. Two days later, the bills passed on the lower house floor. On October 29, the

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bills were enacted after passage in the upper house. In all, the process took only twenty-four days. The total time for deliberation in the committees of both the houses was only sixty-two hours, compared with 179 hours for the

1993 Peacekeeping Operation Law (after the Gulf War) and 154 hours for the 1998 Regional Crisis Law (after the revision of the U.S.-Japan Defense Guideline). Koizumi's top-down style of leadership, supported by strong public approval, enabled the quick passage of such a major piece of legislation.

## Conclusion

The piecemeal institutional changes of the 1990s have created a new environment within the Japanese government that encourages top-down leadership by the prime minister. The redistribution of power between junior and senior politicians within the LDP that followed the 1994 electoral changes contributed to the creation of a more open election for the LDP presidency, which led to Koizumi's landslide victory. Because factional support had little to do with his victory, Koizumi was able to reject factional influence in choosing his cabinet, and to be more independent in his decision making.

The 1999 government reforms shifted power away from the ruling party toward the prime minister, a shift that Koizumi exploited in his swift action on anti-terrorism legislation. Abolition of bureaucratic assistance in the Diet created a spotlight effect for Koizumi to appeal to the public in his own words to support his policy stance. It also enhanced the prime minister's ability to form a more competent cabinet. In addition, the 2001 administrative reform provided Koizumi with clear legitimacy to take stronger policy initiative, and empowered the Cabinet Secretariat to carry out his policy objectives. These changes also helped Koizumi's more visible leadership style, which was welcomed by the public and the media, and contributed to his high popularity. The public saw Koizumi as a new kind of leader and strongly supported him.

These changes alone, however, do not guarantee the success of a more centralized, top-down leadership, as is demonstrated by Koizumi's subsequent failure, in the spring of 2002, to push through the Contingency Bills that would have provided for Japan's response to any future military attack. This effort was made using the same unorthodox method employed to achieve passage of the anti-terrorism legislation, yet in this case, it was unsuccessful. While the changes described in this paper may not have ushered in a completely different style of politics in Japan, they have certainly gone a long way towards revitalizing the political process and opening up avenues for more effective national leadership.

### *Notes*

<sup>1</sup> The eight parties are the Japan Socialist Party, the Renewal Party, Komeito, the Japan New Party, Sakigake, the Democratic Socialist Party, the United Social Democratic Party, and the Democratic Reform Federation.

<sup>2</sup> “Denwa Ippon no Koizumi-ryu,” *Asahi Shimbun*, 26 April 2001.

<sup>3</sup> Seventy-two percent of the respondents said this was the reason for their support for Koizumi. “Koizumi Naikaku, Shiji Saiko 78%,” *Asahi Shimbun*, 30 April 2001.

<sup>4</sup> NHK television recorded 6.9 percent, Fuji Television 3.3 percent, and Nihon Television 10.2 percent. <[www.sponichi.co.jp/society/kiji/2001/06/08/02.html](http://www.sponichi.co.jp/society/kiji/2001/06/08/02.html)> (12 August 2002).

<sup>5</sup> “The Guideline of Policy Coordination System,” Cabinet Decision, Cabinet Secretariat, Tokyo, 30 May 2000.

<sup>6</sup> An officer at the Cabinet Secretariat, background interview by author, 18 September 2001. For the details of the proposal, see the official document by Naikaku Kanbo et al., “Komuin Seido Kaikaku no Owaku ni tsuite,” 27 March 2001. The proposal is available at <<http://www.gyokaku.go.jp/siryou/index.html>> (in Japanese language only) (18 November 2002).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> These were the offices of administrative reform, IT, protection of private information, and educational reform.

<sup>9</sup> A former director of the Cabinet Security Affairs Office makes this point. See Sassa Atsuyuki, *Shin Kiki Kanri no Nouhou* [New know-how for crisis management] (Tokyo: Buigei Shunju, 1991), 17–72.

<sup>10</sup> “U.S. Welcomes Japan’s Anti-Terrorism Assistance Package,” White House Press Release, 20 September 2001, <<http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/01092018.htm>> (12 December 2002).

<sup>11</sup> “Koho Shien ‘Sansei’ ga 70%,” *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, 25 September 2001.

<sup>12</sup> “Hoan Sansei 51%, Hantai 29%,” *Asahi Shimbun*, 16 October 2001.