

# JAPAN LABOR BULLETIN

ISSUED BY THE JAPAN INSTITUTE OF LABOUR

*Vol.32 No.11*

*November 1993*

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## Working Conditions and the Labor Market

### Basic Survey on Employment Structure

On September 4, the Management and Coordination Agency published the results of its survey on employment structure. The survey, conducted once every five years, is aimed at obtaining basic data on national and regional employment structure. This year's survey, carried out on October, 1, 1992, covered those aged 15 and over.

**Table 1 Number of Employees by Type of Employment (1992)**

(unit : 1000)

	Total	Male	Female
Employees	52,575	32,046	20,529
Executives in private sector	3,970	3,075	895
Employees excluding executives in private sector	48,605	28,971	19,634
Regular officers and employees	38,062	26,100	11,962
Part-timers	5,967	328	5,639
Temporary workers	2,514	1,283	1,232
Other part-timers	880	574	301
Dispatched workers	163	49	114
Others	1,008	623	384

Note : Employment forms such as "Part-timers" and "Temporary workers" are based on employment classification at the workplace.

The survey found that the proportion of working persons in the population aged 15 and older was 63.1 percent, up 1.7 percentage points from the figure for 1988. By sex, the percentages of employed men and women of those aged 15 and over were 77.6 percent and 51 percent, up 0.6 percentage point and 2.8 percentage points, respectively, from the 1988 figures. The proportion of working women topped 50 percent for the first time.

Employees represent 80 percent of the total labor force, or 52.575 million-32.046 million men and 2.0529 million women-an increase of 6.442 million (13.9%) from the 1988 figure. By type of employment, the number of regular officers and employees was 38.062 million, accounting for 72.4 percent of the total. Part-timers numbered 5.967 million (11.3%), temporary workers 2.514 million (4.8%), other part-time workers 880,000 (1.7%) and dispatched workers 163,000 (4.8%).

By sex, 26.1 million men were regular officers and employees, making up 81.4 percent of all the male employees. On the other hand, 11.962 million women were regular officers and workers, accounting for 58.3 percent of all female employees. Compared with the 1988 survey, regular officers and workers increased by 3.49 million, or 10.1 percent, part-timers by 1.29 million, or 27.6 percent, temporary workers by 628,000, or 33.3 percent, other part-time workers by 150,000, or 20.5 percent and dispatched workers by 76,000, or 84.4 percent. Thus, the survey showed that the percentage of part-time and temporary workers increased sharply.

By type of work, of working women 7.779 million were engaged in clerical and related jobs, accounting for the largest, or 28.8 percent of the total. This was followed by 6.669 million engaged in skilled work, mining, manufacturing and construction as well as general labor (24.5% of all working women), while 3.178 million were engaged in sales jobs (11.8%). Looking at occupations with the largest rate of increase in working women, security workers rose by the highest, or 42.1 percent, followed by clerical and related workers (up 24.3%), managers and officials (up 20.0%) and professional and technical workers (up 20%). The percentage of working women rose in jobs where there are few working women, thus revealing an expansion in women's job fields.

**Table 2 Number and Composition Ratio of Working Women  
by Occupation (1992)** (unit: 1000)

Occupation	Actual No.	Composition ratio
Total	26,980	100 (%)
Professional and technical workers	3,322	12.3
Managers and officials	237	0.9
Clerical and related workers	7,779	28.8
Sales workers	3,573	13.2
Service workers	3,178	11.8
Security workers	27	0.1
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries workers	1,940	7.2
Workers in transportation and communication	112	0.4
Craftsmen and others	6,619	24.5

Note: "Craftsmen" include "craftsmen, mining, manufacturing and construction workers as well as laborers."

## A 1993 Survey on Employment Management

The Ministry of Labour released its 1993 survey on employment management on July 30. The survey is conducted to clarify the realities of the corporate system of employment management. This year's survey was conducted on January 1, 1993, to determine management after hiring and the mandatory retirement system. It covered about 6,000 private firms selected from among those that employ 30 and more regular employees at head offices in nine major industries such as mining and construction. Replies were received from 4,694 of the 6,000 companies.

Looking first at problems involving current employment management, the highest, or 52.7 percent of those firms surveyed complained about "Lack of engineers and difficulty in hiring people." The smaller the size of the company, the larger the percentage claiming such problems. Next, 51.2 percent cited "overhaul of the organization and the staff in order to shorten work hours," followed by 39.2 percent listing "changes in young workers' sense of belonging to the company general morale." By size of company, 8.1 percent overall cited "assignment and treatment of middle-aged and older workers," while 61.8 percent of firms

with 5,000 workers and claimed this as a problem. Furthermore, whereas 5.5 percent of all firms said that they have problems with "treatment of the *Dankai-no-sedai* (Note)," this was claimed to be a problem by a high 28.4 percent of firms with 5,000 or more workers. The highest, or 56.3 percent, or 43.8 percent of firms with 1,000-4,999 workers and 300-999 workers, respectively, cited "overhaul of the organization and the staff in order to shorten work hours" as a problem they have to deal with in terms of employment administration. This was followed by "changes in young workers' sense of belonging to the company and morale" (36% of the former and 43.3% of the latter). Meanwhile, the largest, or a shade over 50 percent of firms with 100-299 workers and those with 30-99 workers complained about a "shortage of engineers and difficulties in hiring people," followed by "overhaul of the organization and the staff in order to shorten work hours" and "changes in attitudes of young workers' sense of belonging to the company."

Concerning future policy toward organizational structure, the largest, or 34.4 percent of firms "maintain the traditional pyramid-type organization," followed by 34.1 percent which are trying to "simplify the organization by unification of departments and sections." By size of company, the highest, or 37 percent of firms with 100-299 employees said they "maintain the traditional pyramid-type organization." Meanwhile, the largest, or 72.5 percent of firms with 5,000 and more employees noted they are "simplifying the organization by unification of departments and sections."

Regarding fundamentals of future personnel administration, 11 percent placed the seniority system ahead of the other systems, while 37.8 percent emphasized the merit-rating system. The larger the size of the company, the higher the percentage of firms which stressed the merit-rating system, with 59.1 percent of those with 5,000 and more doing so.

Regarding the compulsory retirement age system, 88.2 percent of respondents have adopted such a scheme. Of them, 96.3 percent have implemented a fixed age limit. Furthermore, 80 percent (76.6% in the previous survey) of those adopting the fixed age limit set it at 60 and older and 20 percent (23.4% in the previous survey) at 59 and younger.

As for measures taken for those who have reached the mandatory retirement age, 73.1 percent of firms adopting the fixed aged limit have implemented a continuous employment or re-employment system. With those which plan to introduce the two systems in future years added, 83.4 percent have such programs. Moreover, of the firms with mandatory retirement at age 60 or over, 70 to 80 percent employ or re-employ older workers until they are 65 under continuous or re-employment programs. Of enterprises with a continuous or re-employment system with a fixed age limit, 30 percent "continued to employ or re-employ all who wish to

work as a rule" and 40 percent are limited to "those selected by the company as specially needed workers".

Note: Those born in the period from 1947 to 1949, immediately after WW II, are labeled "the *Dankai-no-sedai*."

## Labor-Management Relations

### Yamagishi Re-elected as Rengo Chief

On October 7-8, Rengo (Japanese Trade Union Confederation) gathered for its third annual convention at the Koseinenkinkaikan in Shinjuku, Tokyo. Akira Yamagishi, president of Johororen (Federation of Telecommunications, Electronic Information and Allied Workers), was re-elected for a third straight term as chief of the nation's largest labor confederation. Jinnosuke Ashida, leader of Zensen Domei (Japanese Federation of Textile, Garment, Chemical, Mercantile and Allied Industry Workers' Unions), and Etsuya Washio, chairman of Tekkororen (Japanese Federation of Iron and Steel Workers' Unions), were named acting chairman, a new post, and secretary general, respectively. In addition, 23 vice-chairmen were elected, with a new vice-chairwoman added to 22 representatives from this number of industrial unions (excluding Zensen Domei).

Until September 30 which was the deadline for entering the chairmanship race, the Committee for Recommending Executives (Head: Kannojo Kataiwa, former chairman of Denryukusoren) continued with eleventh-hour coordination efforts among three candidates for chairman, Yamagishi, Ashida and Washio. The committee won approval within Rengo for giving Yamagishi the post of chairman, Ashida that of acting chairman and Washio that of secretary general. Thus, a public election to choose a new chairman was not held, and the new leadership was inaugurated by approving the three candidates at the convention. In the process of selection, some groups praised Yamagishi highly for his contribution to birth of the coalition government in recognition of the fact that he made repeated positive political remarks. Other leading union groups, meanwhile, criticized Yamagishi saying he was too deeply involved with the political parties going beyond the framework of labor unions. However, the challengers' inability to coerce a bloc to bring down Yamagishi led to the latter's re-election. Thus the new leadership was launched through negotiations with some dissatisfaction remaining among umbrella unions.

In the discussions at the two-day convention, criticism that "the process of selecting executives was unclear to umbrella unions and the method was not democratic" was voiced. In the chairmanship election, incumbent Yamagishi showed his willingness to serve another

term and Ashida and Washio also expressed their respective intentions to run in the race.

Leading Sohyo-affiliated union organizations earlier moved to agree not to support Yamagishi due to his activities in the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ) and his responsibility for the SDPJ's historic setback in the July 18 general election.

In this situation, those recommending Ashida grew stronger among old Domei-affiliated industrial organizations. Due in part to the past method in which the chairman was elected from among the former Churen and Sohyo from the era of private-sector Rengo to the present, many claimed that the new leader should be elected from among the former Domei-affiliated unions.

At hearings conducted by the Committee, individual central executive councils' expressed three different views: that the incumbent chairman should serve another term if he expressed his intention to seek re-election, another that the leadership should be replaced with Ashida as chief, and that selection of the chief should be left to the discretion of the Committee. At this stage, the prospective candidates for chairman were reduced to Ashida and Yamagishi.

The Committee concluded that "the incumbent chairman should be re-elected to avoid creating discord within the organization since Yamagishi expressed his desire to seek re-election and also since there were no reasons for forcing a change particularly in terms of Rengo's policies. The Committee suggested to Ashida that he run for the newly created position of acting chairman. By September 27, Ashida conveyed to the Committee that he would accept its offer. This led to Yamagishi's re-election to a third term as chief of the nation's largest labor organization. Ashida had initially expressed his intention to refuse the suggested post but ended up accepting the offer. The Committee asked Washio to run for the position of secretary general, which he accepted. Rengo has thus selected its new leadership, ending the chairmanship race.

## Public Policy

### **A Record High Number of Firms Receive Employment Adjustment Aid Subsidies**

Employment adjustment aid subsidies are given to employers forced to scale down their business activity due to economic fluctuations, changes in industrial structure and other economic reasons. A system designed to help such companies' employees, these subsidies cover a portion of the costs of education and training programs employers offer to employees or wages of laid off employees. The amount of money provided differs depending upon the type

of employment-adjustment measures companies implement such as layoffs, education and training and transfers to subsidiaries and other related firms. The state subsidies cover half of the allowances employers pay to those who are laid off in large enterprises (two-thirds of the allowances employers pay for those on layoffs in medium - and small-sized enterprises). The subsidies cover half of the wages of employees who undergo education and training (two-thirds of the wages of employees in medium- and small-sized enterprises) plus training costs of 1,500 yen per person per month. Furthermore, they cover half of the wages of transferred workers (two-third of the wages of such workers in medium- and small-sized enterprises).

To enjoy the benefits of employment adjustment subsidies employers must apply to the Ministry of Labour as companies in "specified industries" eligible for such assistance. Industry associations to which these firms belong must first apply for participation in this program. The Ministry in October 1992 relaxed criteria for applying for the specified industry designation. The old yardstick called for a year-on-year drop of over 5 percent in both production volume and the number of employees for the most recent three months, while revised criteria specify only that the number of employees has not risen from the same period the year before.

Thus, the number of specified industries has skyrocketed since October 1992 due in part to the economic slump. In October the number of specified industries was 187, and the number of establishments and of workers receiving the subsidies were 171,000 and 4,004,000, respectively. These figures were still lower than those recorded in June 1975 when the nation experienced the first oil shock, where there was an all-time high of 297,000 establishments of 7,779,000 workers. The Ministry predicts that "with the dim business outlook, the number of workers and establishments to be specified as eligible for the subsidies are unlikely to begin to decline in the immediate future."

The Ministry decided to relax eligibility criteria through October of this year and beyond. The relaxed criteria had previously been regarded as a one-year stopgap measure. One business group after another in the steel and computer software industries, which applied for subsidies in October 1992, have applied for extended payment of the subsidies.

Industries eligible for the subsidies so far have implemented characteristic employment adjustment measures. Firms in the steel industry are implementing transfers to subsidiaries and other related firms while individual firms are taking cost-cutting measures by enrolling employees in education and training programs. In recent years, however, moves toward layoffs have become widespread in the software industry as more workers are covered by such

subsidies than in the other industries.

## Special Topic

### Historic Change in Japanese Politics and Labor Movement —The July 18 General Election and Its Effect —

Michio Nitta  
Professor of Industrial Relations  
University of Tokyo  
Senior Researcher  
The Japan Institute of Labour

#### 1. Election Results Formation of Coalition Government

The outcome of the July 18 Lower House elections marked a historic turning point in Japanese politics. The ensuing political process received extensive media coverage. The election results are shown in Table 1 and their implications are summarized below.

Table 1 General Election Results—Seats Won by Party

Party name	Seats	Incumbents	Former members	Others	Results from 1990	Pre-election strength
LDP	223	179	18	26	275	222
SDPJ	70	64	1	5	136	134
Shinseito	55	34	2	19	—	36
Komeito	51	24	1	26	45	45
JNP	35	0	0	35	—	0
JCP	15	8	4	3	16	16
DSP	15	10	4	1	14	13
Sakigake	13	9	0	4	—	10
Shaminren	4	4	0	0	4	4
Minor parties	0	0	0	0	1	2
Independents	30	11	4	15	21	15
LDP-affiliated	10	5	2	3	—	8
Non-LDP-affiliated	20	6	2	12	—	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>497</b>
					Vacant seats	15

Notes: 1) Parties are those recorded by the Election Administration Commission.

2) Results from 1990 do not include those who were officially ticketed after the election.

3) Pre-election strength indicates incumbents after changes through defecting from a party and includes retired members.

4) The total number of Lower House seats decreased from 512 to 511.

1) With its inability to regain seats lost from the split in the party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) lost majority control of the all-powerful Lower House, in which the majority holds the right to appoint a prime minister. Although the party avoided a crushing defeat by strong showings in rural areas and local cities, it ended up with only 235 seats, including LDP-affiliated independents. Thus, the party failed to retain control through a simple majority.

2) Three new parties, Shinseito (Japan Renewal Party) and Shinto Sakigake (New Harbinger Party), both formed by LDP defectors, and Nihon Shinto (Japan New Party or JNP), founded in 1992 by Mr. Morihiro Hosokawa, all did well. They obtained a total of 103 seats, up 57 seats from their pre-election strength.



3) The Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ) sustained a crushing defeat, barely maintaining half its pre-election strength. It ended up with the smallest number of seats in its history. The party's biggest defeat had previously been in 1986, when it won only 86 seats.

4) All other opposition parties experienced no major changes in strength. Komeito increased its seats slightly and the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) also barely managed to maintain its pre-election strength.

Individual parties' intentions expressed before or during the election all indicated that the answer to the following question would produce the next government. Which of the two major forces-the 223-seat LDP or the five-party, 237-seat coalition-Shinseito, the SDPJ, the DSP, Komeito and Shaminren (United Social Democratic Party)-will be able to bring JNP and Sakigake groups (48 seats), into its own camp in order to form the new government? The results were the seven-party, one-Diet group coalition government led by Mr. Hosokawa, thus resulting in the fall of the LDP into an opposition role for the first time since its founding.

## **2. Roles of Labor Unions in the Political Shake-up**

Beneath the political uproar lurked a variety of motives advocating change. Among these was a change in labor unions' political efforts which seemed to play an important role. Let me briefly examine the change in election strategies by labor unions and their involvement in the formation of the coalition.

### **1) Changes in election strategies**

Japan's labor unions had traditionally maintained strong support relationships with social democratic parties (the so-called union-party block). In this election, however, one influential union after another changed its way of dealing with politicians and parties. Specific examples are as follows.

First, unions affiliated with the now-defunct Domei (Japanese Confederation of Labor), such as Zensendomei and Denryokusoren, expressed their intentions to back some rightwing SDPJ candidates, Shaminren and Komeito candidates even some running on the ticket of the JNP, Shinseito and Sakigake, all of whom were conservative in terms of political ideology. Previously, Zensendomei and Denryokusoren had been closely tied to the DSP.

Second, some of the influential unions, aligned with the former Sohyo (General Council of Trade Unions of Japan) and Churitsuroren (Federation of Independent Unions), both of which strongly supported the SDPJ, declared that they would back some candidates of new

conservative parties such as Shinseito, the JNP and Sakigake in addition to the DSP, Komeito and Shaminren candidates. Furthermore, they would not support leftwing SDPJ candidates.

Third, Tekkororen (Japanese Federation of Iron and Steel Workers' Union) adopted the same stance as the aforementioned second group. It had traditionally backed both the SDPJ and the DSP. What attracted particularly wide media attention was the fact that the federation failed to support Takako Doi, former chairwoman of the SDPJ, and instead endorsed a JNP candidate in her constituency.

The SDPJ, DSP, Komeito and Shaminren had traditionally extended partial cooperation to each other in elections. Accordingly, the unions in their related constituencies did support a candidate of a political party with which they failed to have a block relationship. But never had they extended their support so widely as they did in this election. Supporting and endorsing conservative candidates in particular was a totally new policy for them.

It is difficult to quantify to what extent the change in influential Rengo-affiliated unions' policy had on the election outcome. The implications of supporting and endorsing candidates of other parties rather than those with traditional close cooperative relations are unclear. But even if the unions simply indicated their moral support, the effects on these parties, and especially on the new conservative parties, could not be ignored and were greater than expected. In addition, failure of the unions, which had traditionally backed the SDPJ, to support leftwing SDPJ candidates, was clearly a factor in the party's defeat in the election.

## **2) Involvement in establishment of the coalition government**

These changes in support relations in the general election were closely related to changes in the unions' political policy. Coalescence of political forces capable of replacing. However, the LDP was essentially Rengo's policy since its inauguration. Realignment of the political world with the SDPJ and the DSP as pillars, which was expected by many union leaders, did not progress smoothly.

In this situation, the emerging view among some influential leaders was that Rengo would fail to support some leftwing SDPJ candidates and move toward expanding their support and cooperative relations with non-Communist opposition parties, including the Komeito. A review of the support and cooperation relations, it was predicted to some extent, would take place even if no political turmoil, such as a split in the LDP, took place<sup>(1)</sup>.

However, with the breakup of the LDP, realignment of the political world was suddenly real enough, and many Rengo leaders as well as influential Rengo-affiliated unions departed

from their traditional position and openly insisted that a non-LDP, non-Communist coalition government be achieved. Thus, they used their influence to play an important role in establishing the coalition.

Needless to say, the election outcome itself, for which the aforementioned changes in the unions' election strategies were partly responsible, contributed toward formation of the coalition. Not only did the unions favor the establishment of the coalition. The roles played by Rengo and its umbrella unions were never small in bringing together the seven out-of-power parties, whose political policies and ideologies are extremely diverse.

First, Rengo's indication that it would support and cooperate with the JNP and Sakigake, parties holding the swing votes necessary for forming the new government, made its moves toward realization of the coalition government important factors. Take the following noteworthy episode, for instance. On the day before the official election campaign started, Rengo held a meeting to map out its election strategy. Rengo successfully invited leaders of the seven out-of-power parties which eventually formed the coalition government and revealed the facts on TV news shows.

Second, to build the coalition government Rengo played an influential role in controlling forces within the SDPJ of which some members strongly opposed the launching of a coalition for ideological and political reasons. For example, Rengo leaders supported the SDPJ leadership led by Mr. Sadao Yamahana, who otherwise might have been forced to resign as a result of a defeat in the elections, and gave supreme priority to the SDPJ's joining in the coalition. The likeliest outcome of Yamahana's immediate resignation after the elections would have been a fierce intraparty confrontation, within the SDPJ, over who the party's next leader would be. Therefore, joining the coalition as a partner would have become very difficult. (Incidentally, Mr. Yamahana announced on September 7 that he will step down and will not seek re-election in the chairmanship race.)

Another important move toward the installation of the coalition government was the following. The Rengo leadership expressed its intention to actually reconcile with Mr. Ichiro Ozawa, Shinseito's influential leader, as an ally. The SDPJ, and its left wingers in particular, strongly opposed Mr. Ozawa, given his hawkish political philosophy. He favors amending Japan's "peace" Constitution to permit Tokyo's troops to join UN peacekeeping missions and has a close connection with former LDP Vice-President Shin Kanemaru. Kanemaru is the central figure in the most recent money politics scandal-the so-called Sagawa Kyubin affair, in which a parcel-delivery firm spread hundreds of millions of yen to top politicians.

Third, immediately after the election and at a time when it was still unclear where the JNP and Sakigake would move, DSP leadership also hinted that it might move toward an alliance with the LDP. Rengo and leading DSP-supporting unions, it was reported, exerted strong influence in upholding a policy of supporting the seven-party coalition.

As we have seen, indeed, the positive involvement in politics of Rengo leadership as well as influential unions under the Rengo banner and their decisive departure from traditional election strategies constituted two of the significant factors behind Japan's recent major political shake-up.

On the other hand, the election results, and the SDPJ's historic electoral setback in particular, cast strong doubts on Rengo leadership-particularly Chairman Akira Yamagishi-even though he played a marvelous role in building the coalition-among the SDPJ and SDPJ-supporting unions, such as Jichiro (All Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers' Union), Nikkyoso (Japan Teachers Union) and Shitetsusoren (General Federation of Private Railway Workers' Unions of Japan). What kind of impact this will have on Rengo's future involvement in politics and its affect effects on the Japanese political climate will deserve much attention.

### **3. "Political Reform" and Rengo's Political Policy**

At its annual regular convention to be held in October, Rengo plans to formally decide on its own long-awaited political policy together with other important issues, such as selection of leadership. Rengo's political policy was examined by its Politics Committee, which later published an interim report.

A dispute has since been growing over the interim report, which strongly suggests that Rengo stress establishment of tie-ups between individual politicians and unionists instead of continuing the conventional union-social democratic party block relationship. This, as I already indicated, triggered withering criticism from labor unions, under both old-Domei and old-Sohyo banners, which were eager to support a political party as a group of labor unions. <sup>(2)</sup>

Moreover, big changes in the political climate, it is predicted, will produce a variety of difficult issues that will impede the establishment and implementation of Rengo's formal political policy.

Clearly, political reform, the current coalition's foremost political issue (the pillars are reform of the electoral system and reform of the political fundraising system), will have a great impact on labor unions' traditional political activities.

First, details aside, the seven-party coalition government and the opposition LDP have already decided to drastically revise the so-called multiseat constituency system and replace it with a combination of single-seat electoral districts and proportional representation. It is predicted that changing constituencies, if realized, could tremendously affect the conventional political party structure. Generally, the single-seat constituency system works against small parties and may result in creating confrontation between two big parties. If one of the two confronting large parties is assumed to be the LDP, the merger on a large scale of many other parties will be necessary to create the other big party. If not the merger of the parties, the all-out cooperation in elections between the parties will be called for. This scenario indicates that the SDPJ and the DSP, to which labor unions have thus far offered cooperation, will find it difficult to remain the way they are today.<sup>(3)</sup> Thus labor union's involvement in politics would inevitably undergo drastic changes.

Second, to prevent political fundraising scandals, a plan for party subsidies, the other pillar of political reform, is now being studied. This calls for the abolition of political donations by businesses and organizations, including labor unions, and the introduction of a system of personal donations and public subsidies to fund the political activity of parties. This plan, if followed through, will make it impossible for labor unions to act as political funding channels and will probably force them to change their involvement politics.

Of course, it is unpredictable whether these reforms will be translated into action, as Mr. Hosokawa vowed, and it is doubtful that reform of the political system, if implemented, could lead to a total ban on corporate donations, as the activity of political action committees (PAC) in the U.S. political arena shows. However, the political turmoil will certainly continue in the years ahead, and it will surely call for a review of the unions' political activities, which will then be laid out on the table. In light of such circumstances, the fundamental and underlying issue of the nature of political activities in which unions should be involved in order to represent the interests and views of members will arise<sup>(4)</sup>.

#### Notes

- 1) Michio Nitta, "Probing Rengo's Political Policy", *Japan Labor Bulletin*, Vol.30-No.3, March 1991.
- 2) op., cit.
- 3) Among the Socialists are voices expressing strong concern that a political shake-up, like the one currently underway, will likely lead to disbandment of the SDPJ whose ultimate and foremost *raison d'etre* is to preserve the ideals of pacifism stated in Article 9 of the Constitution. The impact these voices will have on the future political shake-up has attracted much attention.
- 4) No detailed sources are given here; however, related articles in the *Asahi Shimbun*, the *Japan Economic Journal*, the *Yomiuri Shimbun* and the *Shukan Rodo News* were principal references.

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

**The 1994 Asian Regional Conference on Industrial Relations**

In cooperation with the Japan Industrial Relations Research Association, the Japan Institute of Labour will hold its fourteenth conference on Asian industrial relations next March.

**Dates:** March 17-18, 1994

**Location:** The Japan Institute of Labour, Research Institute (Nerima-ku, Tokyo, Japan)

**Working Languages:** English and Japanese (simultaneous interpretation provided)

**Registration Fee:** ¥10,000

**Main Theme:** Human Resource Management and Economic Development in Asia

**Sub-themes:** 1. Human resource development, or skill forma-

tion, in indigenous large and middle-sized firms

2. Human resource development, or skill formation, in indigenous small businesses

3. Human resource development, or skill formation, in foreign-owned firms

4. Interaction between human resource management and economic development at the macro level

Further information is available at:

Research Planning Department

The Japan Institute of Labour

8-23, Kamishakujii 4-chome, Nerima-ku,

Tokyo 177, Japan

(TEL.03-5991-5165 FAX.03-3594-1112)

## Statistical Aspects

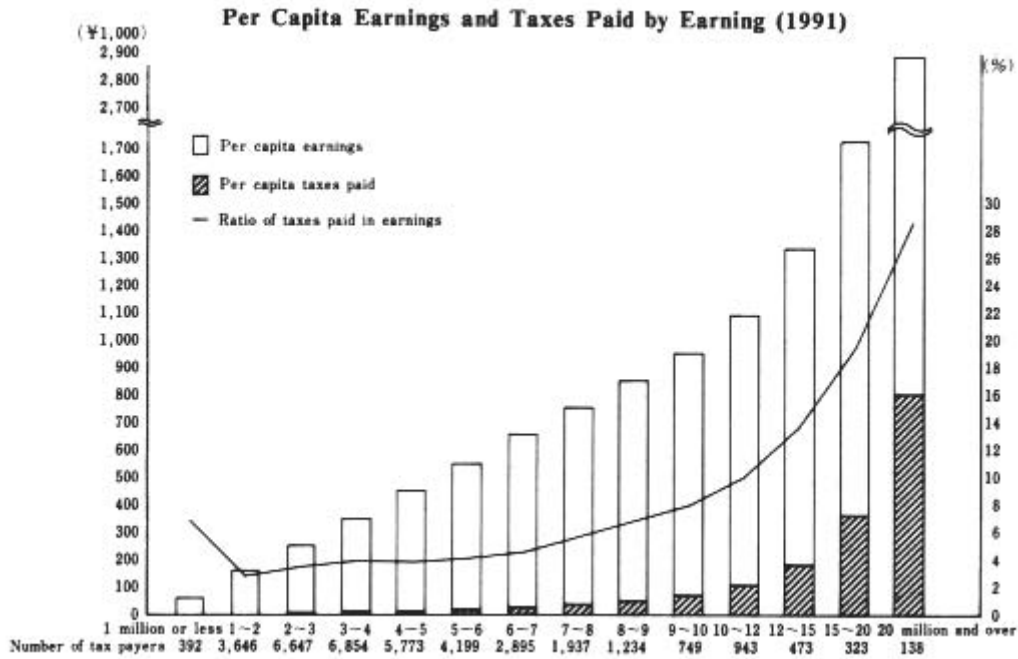
### Recent Labor Economy Indices

	July 1993	June 1993	Change from previous year
Labor force	6,679 (10 thousand)	6,696 (10 thousand)	65 (10 thousand)
Employed	6,520	6,537	40
Employees	5,259	5,233	101
Unemployed	167	165	25
Unemployment rate	2.5%	2.5%	0.4
Active opening rate	0.72	0.74	-0.34
Total hours worked	167.2 (hours)	164.6 (hours)	-2.8*
Total wages of regular employees	272.9 (¥thousand)	273.2 (¥thousand)	1.5*

Source: Management and Coordination Agency, Ministry of Labour.

Notes: 1. \*denotes annual percent change.

2. From January 1991, date of "Total hours worked" and "Total wages of regular employees" are for firms with 5 to 30 employees.



Source: National Tax Administration Agency, *Results of a Survey on Earnings in Private Sector*

Notes: 1) Covers wage earners at private firms. Amount of taxes includes income tax with held alone and does not include the resident tax.

2) In Japan, aside from taxes, tax payers are supposed to pay health-insurance premiums and social-insurance premiums such as the Employee's Pension premium.