

Poll Reveals Distrust

On 4 April, the Prime Minister's Office released its annual poll conducted on social consciousness.

The percentage of people who think Japan is headed in an unfavorable direction rose 8.8 percentage points from the previous survey to 44.3%; those who think the country is headed in a favorable direction declined 8.7 points to 31.4%.

This marks the largest gap ever between those who feel the national situation is declining as opposed to improving at 12.9 points (Figure 1).

Regarding the question "In what respect is the situation declining?" (multiple answers possible), the most frequent answer was "Business Conditions," at 53.3%, up 17.6 points. Also up from the previous survey were "Employment and Working Conditions," "Economic Strength," and "National Finances," illustrating how widespread recessionary sentiment is among the population.

Further, 70.1% of those surveyed do not think public opinion is reflected in national policies, the highest since this question was added to the survey in 1982 (Figure 2). This clearly shows political distrust among a public disgusted by successive scandals caused by the plutocracy dominating the ruling party.

This survey was conducted in December 1992 among 10,000 men and

women over 20 years of age (effective answers 71.8%). The poll has been con-

ducted every year since 1969, except in 1970 and 1973.

Fig. 1:
In What Direction Is Japan Headed?

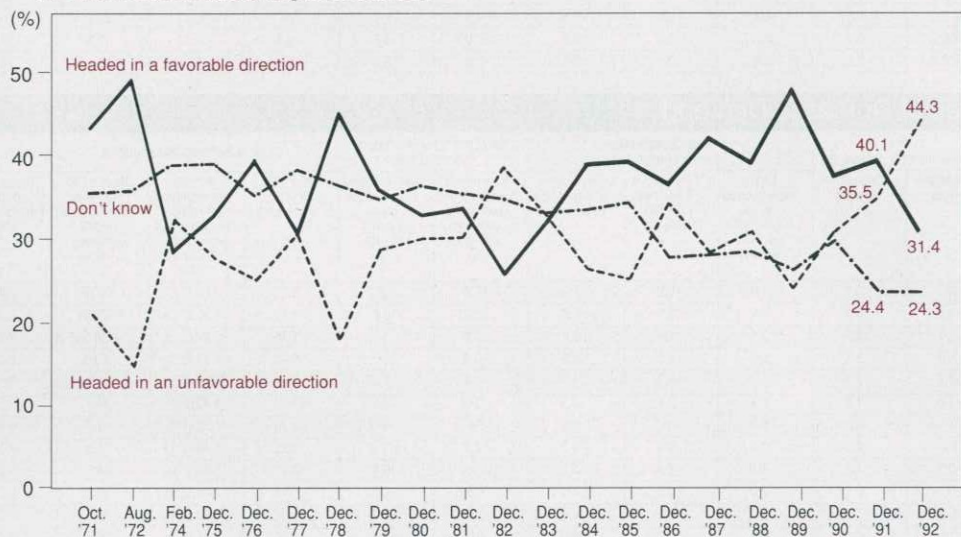


Fig. 2:
To What Extent Is Public Opinion Reflected in National Policies?

