

Power in Japan and People's Living Condition

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Abstract

The Japanese Society is characterized as a company-dominated society under which big business holds a favorable position in the distribution of economic results at all the three levels of the society ; the firm, inter-firm, and the state level. Big business needs, and has received the support of the state in keeping its favorable position. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the power wielding institutions of Japan, which control Japan's so-called "company-oriented society". Power in Japan takes the form of a cozy relationship between big business, bureaucracy and the ruling political party. First this relationship is analyzed in terms of the power base, the purpose and gain from collaboration. It then explains how the power coalition formed and how it maintains its close-knit relationship. The conclusion of this paper is that the three institutions' grip on power is based on the dismantling or paralyzing of the counterchecks against the ruling powers, which is accomplished by weakening trade unions under Rengo's doctrine of business unionism, and keeping democracy out of the hands of the people.