

Justice and Order: Part 13

In the recent Japanese House of Representatives election, the voter turnout rate was 53%. In other words, 47% of people did not vote. Only one in two people voted. Though the Liberal Democratic Party's occupied 76% of seats their share of votes did not exceed 48%. The LDP proportion of votes was 25%. However, the Abe government was re-elected.

In Australia, the voter turnout rate is 90%. Is this because Australians, unlike Japanese people, have a greater interest in politics? This interest cannot be seen in the majority of Australians, so why is the voter turnout so surprisingly high? In Australia voting is compulsory, and those who do not vote are punished.

Australia and Japan, unlike North Korea are democratic countries. In North Korea, everything is decided by the General Secretary of the Communist Party. In Australia and Japan, it is the constitutionally defined citizenry that decide. How that is the people decide national policy? This is because the privilege to choose candidates through an election ballot is with the citizenry. If people abstain from voting, it could shake the very roots of democracy. Accordingly, in Australia voting is compulsory in order to protect democracy.

Let us consider the 2014 Japanese House of Representatives election once again. The proportion of voters who expressed their support for the Abe cabinet did not exceed 25%. Democracy is the gaining of the majority of voters and the citizen's consensus, however it could not be said that Prime Minister Abe has this time been re-elected by gaining national consensus.

After the Second World War, former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew was involved in the creation of the independent Singaporean state. He considered that democracy was impossible in Asia, and that strong leaders were required. Countries such as this appear to be democratic on the surface, but in effect there is no real political opposition. It is being proven that democracy does not yet exist in Japan.

Basically, Asian people do not yet comprehend democracy, and are not used to elections. This may be unavoidable for Japan because it has been a relatively short time since national sovereignty was formed.