

**GHQ/SCAP Records(RG 331)**  
**Description of contents**

THE  
NATIONAL ARCHIVES  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES

- (1) Box no. 2144
- (2) Folder title/number: (6)  
Local Assembly - 1 - Survey

(3) Date: June 1951

(4) Subject:

Classification	Type of record
360	e

(5) Item description and comment:

(6) Reproduction:  Yes  No

(7) Film no.

Sheet no.

## New Phase in the Local Political Circles

### Liberal Party Holds 44 Percent of Prefectural Assembly Seats due to Mass Joining of the Party by Independents

The National Election Management Commission compiled a list of executive heads and local assembly members according to party affiliation indicating the new phase of local political circles following the local elections of last April. This survey was conducted on a nationwide basis for the first time after the local elections.

The survey reveals that:

1. A greater number of independents elected joined political parties after the election than before the election. Particularly in the case of prefectural assembly members, close to two hundred of them joined the Liberal Party and the minor parties only one month after the election. As a result, the Liberal Party holds 44 percent of the total prefectural assembly seats in the country, securing a predominant position in local political circles with a great margin over the Democratic and the Social Democratic Parties.

2. The reduction of the fixed number of local assembly members and the merger of towns and villages were carried out to a considerable extent prior to the election. It became clear that the total fixed number of executive heads and assembly members throughout the country after the election was more than seven thousand less than that before the election.

#### Trend after the election.

The activities of prefectural assembly members are particularly noticeable. The number of independents immediately after the election was 783, but the number was reduced to 587 within one month after the election. On the other hand, the Liberal Party gained 77, while the Social Democratic Party and minor parties, including local political parties organized by newly elected assembly members within the prefectures, registered a gain of 6 and 120 respectively after the election.

Of the prefectures where a great change took place, Ibaragi Prefecture led other prefectures with ten out of eleven independents joining the Liberal Party, followed by Akita and Shizuoka Prefectures where the majority of independents joined the Liberal Party. In Nagano and Mie Prefectures, more than ten independents have organized minor parties within the prefectures. A greater number of independents in Gunma Prefecture went over to the Democratic Party, giving an absolute majority to the party in the prefectural assembly.

As the result of this trend, the Liberal Party has increased its influence in Miyagi, Akita, Ibaragi, Kanagawa, Shizuoka, and Hyogo Prefectures. In eighteen prefectural assemblies, the Liberal Party has the absolute majority. The National Election Management Commission interprets that this change in the prefectural assemblies was due to activities to win over independents in connection with the election of speakers and vice-speakers at the first session of prefectural assemblies following the election.

The Number of Executive Heads and Assembly Members

The number of executive heads and assembly members decreased greatly as compared to that prior to the election. The number was 195,560 as of June following the election as against the total fixed number of 202,603 as of 1 March 1951. The number decreased by 7,043 throughout the country. This decrease was due to the reduction in the number of city, town, and village assembly members, and to the merger of towns and villages conducted between the end of last year and the election. There were 899 cities, towns, and villages which reduced the numbers of assembly members in accordance with by-laws, and the number of city, town, and village assembly members reduced was 4,232.

Furthermore, there was an increase of thirteen cities through the merger of towns and villages within three months since March, while the number of towns and villages decreased by 244. Since the period between September of last year and June of this year, the number of towns and villages decreased by 665.

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 Distribution of Executive Heads and Local Assembly  
 Members by Political Parties (as of 1 June 1951)

	<u>Fixed No.</u>	<u>Liberal</u>	<u>Demo.</u>	<u>S-D</u>	<u>Comm.</u>	<u>Minor</u>	<u>Ind.</u>	<u>Vacancy</u>
Governor	16	9	-	4	-	-	33	-
Mayor	290	40	8	16	-	-	226	-
Head of Town & Village	9,820	392	86	76	1	22	9,212	11
Pref. Assembly Members	2,617	1,151 (43.98%)	276 (10.55%)	340 (12.99%)	6 (0.23%)	257 (9.82%)	587 (22.43%)	-
City Assembly Members	10,042	1,850	504	652	67	296	6,662	11
Town & Village Assembly Members	172,745	4,006	647	1,794	492	926	164,619	231