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Japan Screen Topics

ISSUE No. 77-7

ELECTION FOR THE UPPER HOUSE

157 feet 4 min. 22 sec.

1. (ELECTION POSTERS) A profusion of colourful posters proclaim it is election time in Japan once again. This time, half of the 252 seats in the Upper House of Councillors are at stake.

2. (CROWDS) There are at least 10 identifiable political groups competing for votes.

(MEN ON TRUCK TOP) Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda took over the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party after last December's Lower House election, when the L.D.P. fared badly. Now all the public opinion polls predict the party will lose its already slim Upper House majority.

(SWIMMING POOL/APARTMENT BUILDING) Hoping to achieve that goal is Tomomi Narita, chairman of the largest opposition group, the Socialists.

(MAN/YELLOW MICROPHONE) Yoshikatsu Takeiri, of the Komeito Party, is more confident since his party did well in December's general election.

(CU MAN SPEAKING) The Communists, however, lost badly on that occasion and chairman Kenji Miyamoto is fighting hard to regain falling prestige.

(MAN SPEAKING) Ikko Kasuga, leader of the Democratic Socialist Party, expects to make modest gains similar to those of the general election.

(NIGHT SCENE/MAN SPEAKING) Yohei Kono, leader of the New Liberal Club, and five others defected from the LDP last year, and did surprisingly well in the general election.

3. (SOUND TRUCKS) Japanese law places severe restrictions on campaigning. No door-to-door canvassing is allowed. The candidates spend much of their time touring the street in sound trucks.

4. (CANDIDATES) The Upper House has a very distinctive character. Local constituencies will provide 76 of the winners. But the voters also have to choose from candidates in the so-called national constituency. The top 50 vote-getters nationwide will be elected.

5. (VOTING) The voters queue up early on July 10th to cast their ballots.

6. (VOTE COUNTING) Now it's time to count the votes... almost 52 million ballots.

7. (TELEVISION) With the help of computers and other sophisticated electronic equipment, the NHK national television network can quickly analyse the voting trend. And it is soon evident there is a surprise in store.

8. (STREET SCENES) Crowds gather outside major newspaper offices to see the results being posted. The public opinion polls, it seem, were wrong. The Liberal Democrats are doing much better than anyone expected.

9. (L.D.P. CELEBRATIONS) It may not be much of a victory, but the L.D.P. headquarters is a scene of celebration. Red roses on the board mark the party's winners. Prime Minister Fukuda marks the victory by painting in the eyes on the traditional Buddhist Daruma doll.

10. (NEWSPAPER HEADLINES) With the help of independents, the L.D.P. retains the slimmest possible majority. The left and the new parties suffer badly, while the centre gains ground.

11. (DIET) Once again the Japanese voters peacefully pass judgement on their politicians.

WORLD'S FIRST FLOATING FACTORY

97 feet 2 min. 42 sec.

1. (SHIPYARD) Another first for Japanese shipbuilding--a floating factory built at the Ishikawajima Harima Heavy Industries' shipyard in Kure, near Hiroshima. This is a pulp plant built for a Brazilian company planning to undertake forestry development. The plant is to be moored on the Jari River, which flows into the lower reaches of the Amazon. Built at a cost of over 300 million dollars, it is designed to produce 750 tons of pine pulp a day. The floating platform was built in two parts at the IHI yard. One contains the main pulp factory, the other the facility's power plant.

2. (WATER FLOWING IN) The 30,000-ton platform was not launched down a slipway like ordinary ships used to be. Instead, at the flick of a switch, the dry dock is flooded. Engineers stand by

watching to see that nothing goes wrong. This structure, however, is only the outer shell. The actual factory equipment will be installed in the months ahead.

3. (TUGBOATS) Early in 1978 the fully-fitted platforms will leave Kure for a three-month voyage to Brazil towed by tugboats. They will go via the Indian Ocean and across the South Atlantic. Once at the Jari site 400 kilometres from the mouth of the Amazon, the two platforms will be grounded side by side on piles, and connected together. IHI now believes the industrial platform concept has many uses. Under study are the possibility of building platforms for LNG and LPG liquefying and storage plants, power stations, desalination plants and even steelworks.

MUSIC AT NOON

64 feet 1 min. 50 sec.

1. (SKYSCRAPERS) Shinjuku, a booming western suburb of Tokyo, where the skyline has been completely changed in the past few years by towering skyscrapers. The area is being developed as a new commercial centre of the capital. But the question has arisen of how to entertain the thousands of office workers with time on their hands in the lunch hour. At the foot of the 55-story Mitsui building an open plaza has been taken over every Thursday for a lunchtime band concert.

2. (BAND) This is the band of the Japanese Ground Self Defense Forces. They alternate with their colleagues from the air and marine forces in providing an hour of light and popular music. There is no doubt that the concerts are popular. At least a thousand people regularly crowd into the small plaza to enjoy the free entertainment.