

「ルールなき資本主義」をただせ ——綱領の告発が、国民の実感に

高齢者の生存権をおびやかす大増税、その一方で、ライブドア事件や村上ファンド事件など、ぬれ手でアワの鍊金術がはびこるもので、「ルールなき資本主義」をただせ——綱領で告発している日本社会のゆがみが、国民の実感とあうものになってきています。

全国新聞の論調にも変化が



小泉構造改革路線に批判的な記事を掲載する全国新聞

海外メディアからも批判の声

小泉「改革」をきびしく批判した英誌『エコノミスト』

The Economist (October 8-14, 2005) features a special issue on Japan's economic revival. The cover headline is "The sun also rises" and the spread shows an illustration of a man standing in the shade while another sits in the sun, symbolizing income inequality in Japan. The spread includes an article titled "Inequality in Japan: The rising sun leaves some Japanese in the shade".

The sun also rises
A special issue on Japan's economic revival

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Asia

Inequality in Japan
The rising sun leaves some Japanese in the shade

An emotional debate about those untouched by the economic recovery

In a country that by its egalitarianism, an anguished sense of social justice and a culture of unselfishness and on television shows has gathered pace this year about Japan's widening gap between the haves and have-nots. Anti-conservative leaders have blamed the income gap not just on globalisation clobbering the unskilled, but on the structural reforms and deregulation championed by the prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi, and his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Over the past decade, the LDP, which claimed it was that once protected their workers have been able more easily to sack them, or redesign them as "non-regular" staff, who come cheaper. Young adults, even graduates, have suffered in particular, many unable to get full-time work or any work at all.

The rise in inequality reassures somewhat. Fumio Otake, at Osaka University, notes that income distribution by age of household head has remained constant. In other words, the rise in the Gini coefficient can mostly be attributed to a political outcome of Japan's rapidly ageing population. Older people tend to have the widest income disparity, since while some people retire to live on modest pensions, more senior managers get hefty pay rises in the last years of their careers, with pension payments afterwards to match. An ageing population therefore scores higher on overall measures of inequality.

This effect counts for much more than any increase among the young. All the same, that gap has grown among those under 30, according to a 2004 survey. This is probably due to an increase in the number of unemployed and those in part-time work. Between 1990 and 2005, the number of those in part-time work, on lower pay with neither full-time contracts nor benefits—rose from less than one-fifth to nearly one-third of the workforce, hitting the young (and working women) disproportionately.

Labour flexibility did much to help Japanese companies escape from piles of debt

「日本の不平等」という題で格差拡大を扱い、「日出する国は、一部の国民を日陰に放置」とイラスト入りで報じている