

**国**の省庁や地方公共団体で働く行政官の頭の中に常に存在すべき言葉は？と問われたら、私は迷うことなく「法に基づく行政」と「説明責任」だと答える。どんなに精緻な法制度も執行プロセスにおいて何らかの行政判断を伴うものがほとんどである。法に基づく行政と国民への説明責任はともに、行政に携わる者の頭にいつもあるべき言葉であろう。一方で、説明責任にはそれを求める人の立場によって「誰に対するものなのか」、その内容が異なるように思える。

私は「現在の国民、住民への説明責任」と「将来の国民、住民への説明責任」の両方を同等に考えるべきであると思う。現在の国民、住民への説明責任はたいていの場合、議会での説明を通じて関与した組織の責任者で

ある政治家や行政官自らが果たすことができるのに対し、将来の国民、住民への説明責任はそれが出来ない。その点で個々の行政官が感じるべき責任はさらに重いものであるべきだ。行政判断を行った組織や当事者に成り代わって将来の国民に説明責任を果たすのが公文書であると考えれば、それは国民やマスコミのみならず、担当した組織や行政官にとっても計り知れなく重いものであることは自明である。

行政組織における公文書は、大きく分けて「意思決定」に関わるものと、「プロセス」に関わるものに分かれるであろう。「意思決定」の多くが決裁行為というルールに基づき行われているのとは異なり、どのようにその決定がなされたのか、どのように実施されたのかという「プロセ



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ス」の記録は個々の組織や担当する行政官によって差があるのが現状である。特に国の省庁においてはプロセスについて何まで残すべきかのルールはなく、仮にあったとしてもそれを実行する労力や時間的余裕もないのが現状であろう。

各省庁の行政官の業務のかなりの部分が「現在の国民への説明責任」を果たすために行われ

る政治と議会への対応に割かれている現状に鑑みれば、「将来の国民への説明責任」を果たすために相応の労力と時間を割くことができる環境を作っていくこともまた、政治や社会全体で考えるべき大切な視点ではないだろうか。

## 公文書と行政

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What words should constantly be on the minds of officials working at national government ministries and agencies and regional governments? Without question, those words would be “public administration based on the law” and “accountability.” No matter how elaborate a legislative system may be, the processes of executing that legislation will, in almost all cases, require some kind of administrative judgment. Public administration based on the law and accountability to citizens are words that should always be on the minds of anyone involved in public administration. On the other hand, who they should be accountable to will differ depending on the position of the person demanding that accountability.

I believe that administrative officials need to be accountable to the citizens and residents of today and to the citizens of the future in equal measure. In most cases, accountability to today’s citizens and residents can be

fulfilled by explanations to the Diet or regional legislative assemblies, given by the politicians and administrative officials of the organizations involved. However, accountability towards the citizens and residents of the future cannot be achieved in this way. On this point, individual administrative officials should feel an even graver responsibility. If we consider that it is public records and archives that will fulfill that accountability to the citizens of tomorrow on behalf of the organizations and officials who are making administrative judgments today, the immeasurable gravity of that responsibility is obvious, not just for the people and the mass media, but also for the organizations and administrative officials involved.

The public records and archives of government organizations may be broadly divided into those that concern “decisions” and those that concern “processes.” Unlike many of the

decisions, which are made pursuant to rules in the form of acts of approval, the current situation is that the records concerning “processes,” that is, how those decisions were made and how they were executed, can differ depending on the individual organizations and officials involved. Notably, in national government ministries and agencies, there are no rules for how far back records of processes should be kept. Even if such rules existed, the reality is that officials do not have the time or manpower to implement those rules.

The current situation is that a significant part of the work of officials of these ministries and agencies is taken up with dealing with politicians and the Diet to fulfill their “accountability toward the citizens of today.” In light of this reality, the creation of an environment in which they can devote equivalent time and labor to fulfilling their “accountability toward the citizens of tomorrow” is, it would seem, an important perspective that should be considered by the political sphere and by society as a whole.

