

November 18, 1967

**Asian Affairs Bureau [Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Japan], 'The Chinese Communist Problem'**

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Summary:

Ahead of a visit by Chiang Ching-kuo to Japan, the Japanese Foreign Ministry reviews the political situation on Mainland China.

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1□The Cultural Revolution and the Chinese Communist Political Situation

The Mao-Lin faction, via the process of the Cultural Revolution that it has promoted over the course of the past two years, has overthrown so-called persons in authority (those who are relatively realistic in their thinking but whom Mao Zedong would view as revisionist and capitalist running dogs) in Party and government organizations, personnel and policies, and has continued the struggle to establish Mao Zedong absolutism in politics, the economy, culture, education, and elsewhere. The result is that by the beginning of this year the overthrow of persons in authority, on the surface, appears to have been more or less achieved. Of course, the way of thinking of Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and others remains. Moreover, whether in the center or in local areas, it appears that unity and solidarity have not necessarily been established within the Mao-Lin faction. Because of this, from spring this year into the summer, a large number of organizations calling themselves the Mao-Lin faction repeatedly confronted and fought one another, whether within Party and government organizations or within those of workers and peasants. Even the military, brought in to bring the situation under control, at times appears to have supported anti-Mao-Lin factions (there were probably times when it misjudged which was the orthodox Mao-Lin faction). Due to this, bloodshed took place in various places and, for a time, industrial production and the functioning of transport and communications were paralyzed.

The Mao-Lin faction, in order to bring the disorder under control and secure the autumn harvest, which accounts for 70 percent of agricultural production, switched tactics from around September this year. Putting in order the center's system, calling on people to follow the Party Center and local governing organizations and the military, along with calling for a "grand coalition" in various areas, the faction seems to be trying to keep internal conflict to a minimum. In this way, the political situation of the Chinese Communists concerning the Cultural Revolution now seems to have left the stage of destruction and entered that of control. The system as a unified nation is being maintained somehow or other, but there are problems to some extent or other even with the Liberation Army, the foremost political weapon for the Mao-Lin faction. In addition, we think that the situation remains extremely fluid because the axes of authority for the Chinese Communists, both in the center and in local areas, are in disorder in their organization and staffing.

In this way, because the confusion in the Chinese Communist political situation will likely continue for the time being we think that the domestic and foreign policies of the Chinese Communists will basically continue to be rigid ones for now.

2□Chinese Communist Foreign Policy

The foreign posture of the Chinese Communists since the Cultural Revolution has been a particularly hard-line one, with the Chinese Communists starting with various countries disputes that seem unnecessary. The result is that various countries have become, so to speak, alienated from the Chinese Communists. Also, the countries around the Chinese Communists have grown increasingly wary. We think that this was definitely not a plus for the future of the Chinese Communists.

How long the Chinese Communists will continue such a posture is a difficult point. As noted above, however, if the Cultural Revolution in Communist China moves in the direction of settling down, then there is the possibility for a recovery of reason and a revival of realistic thinking even among the Chinese Communists leaders. Therefore, we are hoping for the emergence of flexibility in their foreign posture.

Naturally, there is no reason to expect that they will so easily change such postures as those regarding aid to North Vietnam in the war in Vietnam, regarding the Soviet Union or regarding the United States.

3. Our Country's Policy on the Chinese Communists

(1) We think that, as the Chinese Communists are progressing steadily in their nuclear infrastructure, it may take time, but they are likely to become a country in possession of considerable nuclear weapons. We think, therefore, that the countries around China will feel more and more strongly the Chinese Communist threat.

However, should reason and realism return to Chinese Communist leaders, then even if they are Chinese Communists, they are likely to actively avoid making the first move to actually use nuclear weapons. Therefore, the threats are likely to be in such areas as infiltration by political or psychological means or by political intrigue. The most important elements to counter this are for the countries around China to become politically stable and economically developed, and for their people to become affluent. It is necessary for us, before it is too late, to cooperate to bring as quickly as possible stability and prosperity to the countries of Asia.

(2) Japan in regard to the Chinese Communists has adopted for the past 10 years or so a policy of separating politics from economics, that is to say, a policy of avoiding political issues as much as possible and associating with them in trade, economic, cultural, and other areas. With the Chinese Communist side always raising political issues (for example, the Taiwan issue, relations with the United States, and such), maintaining this policy is not easy, but we are sticking to it. We think that in thereby opening a window for the Chinese Communists is of major significance in that it brings the Chinese Communists into contact with the Free World. Also, with newspaper reporters from Japan residing in China and people coming and going, it will be useful for learning conditions inside China. This was particularly the case recently in the course of the Cultural Revolution. The attitude of the Chinese Communists towards Japan, as expected, grew harsh as the Cultural Revolution progressed, with increased criticism of the Government of Japan, the expulsion from China of our newspaper reporters, and the harassment of Japanese trading company employees. Trade volumes, too, either remained flat or showed declines. Recently, however, there was a notice from the Chinese Communist side on the start of negotiations over LT trade, showing their interest in trade with Japan. We think that this may be a sign of a change in the above-noted attitude of the Chinese Communists.

[Paragraph's first line and first half of second line redacted] Even if the Chinese Communists have armed themselves with nuclear weapons, Japan will not do so. In regard to nuclear weapons, we have confidence in the Japan-United States Security Treaty. As for other threats from them, there is almost no worry over influence from the Chinese Communists on Japanese due to the rapidly rising standard of living of our people. We believe that there is a strong sense of nostalgia among Japanese in regard to China but that they will correctly appraise the Chinese Communists as they come into contact with China and increase their contacts. We think that even if our side exercises influence on them, there is increasingly little concern about being influenced from the other side.