March 30, 1972
Telegram from the Japanese Ambassador in Korea to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, 'Observations on the Management of North Korea Issues (I)'

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The Japanese Ambassador in South Korea considers Japan's policies toward the Korean Peninsula in light of the US-China and Japan-China openings.

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Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs | Ambassador Ushiroku

Observations on the Management of North Korea Issues (I)

No. 455 Secret

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The travels of Chongryon-associated Koreans (Chōsenjin) to North Korea have recently provided an opportunity to acknowledge where the issues lie, and how deep they are, in regards to contact between North Korea and Japan. I take this opportunity to provide for your reference my thoughts on contact between Japan and North Korea, particularly the contact of domestic Chongryon-related elements with North Korea.

Firstly, I believe that there should be a fundamental distinctions be made between our contact with North Korea and our contact with Communist China.

1. That is to say that while there are still the usual arguments in regards to Communist China, they have seized legitimacy through their UN membership. We have ended formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan and proclaimed that it is our basic policy to pursue formal relations with Communist China. Given this, contact with Communist China that follows this basic policy will, on the one hand, necessarily increase pressure and difficulty on Taiwan or be conducted at their expense. In other words, this policy would in effect be pursued “AT THE PRICE OF TAIWAN.” At the same time, this is our chosen course of stern and realist diplomacy, and as such we should not continue to take into consideration the injustice of the above. In addition, at this point it appears that Taiwan is prepared to endure heavy burdens.

2. Although the case of Vietnam is slightly different, under the name of Vietnamization, the United States is attempting to maintain the barest minimum in order to save some face. Mirroring the phrase, “après moi le déluge,” the troops have been withdrawn leaving no trace. For this reason, it is doubtful to all parties involved whether or not South Vietnam can continue to be a viable nation while also retaining its current qualities and identity.

3. To summarize, among Asia’s divided nations, it is difficult to deny that China and Vietnam strongly carry the potential for there to be a situation where “The East Wind Prevails Over the West Wind,” or some other similar situations. In contrast with the above, the situation of the Republic of Korea is completely different from that of countries like Taiwan.

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Following the UN resolution on the establishment of Republic of Korea and the attitudes taken when Korea was officially recognized by various countries, including the Japan-Republic of Korea Treaty, in terms of international law the Republic of Korea is a state limited to the south of the Peninsula; notwithstanding their moral claim to the entire Korean Peninsula. To put it differently, even if North Korea were to improve its international position in the future, unlike the situation of Taiwan, North Korea would not replace the Republic of Korea’s international position. Even if the state of affairs proceeded in the best possible manner for North Korea, it would still result in international recognition of North-South coexistence, like the German ‘One Nation, Two States.’ Similar to the situation for West Germany, considering the factors, such as the Republic of Korea’s population, geographical area, and position in international society, there is more potential for a situation where “The West Wind Prevails Over the East Wind.” It is clear that North Korea will not replace the position of South Korea. In other words, there is no reason to be concerned that the North will grasp legitimacy. As long as this is the case, and barring the North’s use of force or unification through violent revolution, the replacement of international positions is an impossibility.
For this reason, our work to enhance contact with the North requires neither concern about an eventuality where the positions of North and South Korea may become replaced, nor concern that such contact is carried out at the expense of the South. We should proceed with ample consideration paid to our ally, the Republic of Korea’s position, but without guilt. We should also be prepared to not be swayed by some domestic elements that claim that ‘North Korea is next.’ They wrongly draw analogies between the Korean Peninsula and the totally dissimilar cases of China and Vietnam. Concerning North Korea, our acceptance of Republic of Korea is certainly not a losing bet.

4. Enhancing our contact with North Korea would contribute towards decreasing tensions in the region. If tensions were to increase such that it risked war on the Korean peninsula, that would present the greatest threat to our national interest, and it would necessitate our complete dedication to decreasing tensions. However, at this time the Republic of Korea has neither the capacity nor confidence to invade the North. Similarly, notwithstanding their true intentions, the North is also subject to an international environment that favors peace. Therefore, it appears that at this time there is an absence of serious and imminent tensions that might concern our national security. From the standpoint of our national security, it is sufficient if our measures to decrease tensions with North Korea simply follows the general trend of détente. We should not pursue, so called, détente so diligently that it causes difficulty for our ally, the Republic of Korea, or that it leads to distancing between Japan and South Korea.

5. Even with the basic understanding as described above, détente with North Korea is more likely than not to be at the level of gesturing, rather than one coming from a deep consideration of domestic politics. Be that as it may, implementing détente with North Korea must reflect the above described basic understanding of the situation and be free of flirtation with North Korea. Furthermore, when we are determining the pace (or interval) and timing of such measures, we must do so while being truly an ally to the Republic of Korea and pay close attention to their position and the possible psychological impacts that détente may have. As a neighboring country, we must be more sympathetic to the Republic of Korea, especially since they are worried that their importance may be waning since the Nixon Doctrine and the thawing of Sino-American relations. (The Unite States decision to defer the issuance of passports for North Korea is an object lesson to this point.)

The Red Cross dialogue may serve as a sort of benchmark for when thinking about the pace and timing. In the Red Cross example, care must be taken as to not outshine and deflate the diplomatic measures of the Republic of Korea by going much deeper than surface level détente vis-à-vis North Korea. This would also provide invaluable data on reading the atmosphere ahead of the upcoming discussion and deliberation on the Korea issue at the UN General Assembly.
電信写

総番号（TA）16115
72年 月 30日 09時分
72年 月 20日 10時9分

外務大臣殿

北緯問題処理振りに関する所見（1）

第455号 極秘

往電第399号に関し

先般朝総連系朝鮮人の北緯訪問の件は、はしなくも日朝接触に当っての問題点の所在、根深さ等につき再認識を得させる契機となったが、この機会に日朝コンタクトを特に国内総連系分子の北緯との接触問題につき本使の感じたる所を何等御参考まで次のとおり。

先ずかが国の北緯接触の増進と中共に対するそれとの間には本質的差異が存すべきものと思われる。

即ち、中共の場合はその国連加盟に於いての万般の議論はともあれ、今やポツキンのミハダは中共側に居るわれが国も台湾との正式国交を止め、中共と正式国交を聞く方向に進むべし基本方針を宣明するに至った以上、われ国の基本方針に則した中共との諸般のコンタクト増進に当つては、右は半面において必然的では台湾に対する広く困難の増加しき、そのせいにおいて行なわれることに

「AT THE PRICE OF TAIWAN」に
電信写

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2. 本電の主導変更その他については相関関に連絡ありたい。

お互い推進される結果となるが、これは重要敏い現実外交の為ですとして欠かせますや右に不当にかたい意する要ならない。また台湾も今や「ふまれても、分けられても」的にん自重心態に存するものと考えられる。

3. ヴィエトナムの場合はやや異るといえど、今や米国は大戦の結果として降服したがはれ、米国の主導するサミットの名の下に米国の最少限度の面をさせた「後は野となれ」と式に撤兵のものはあっても従って南越が将来において現在の体質とIDENTITYのままで長くVIA BLE NATIONとして存続し得るか否かについては自他ともに疑問の深さところであるだろうか。

36. 約言すればアジアの分裂国家のうちかなシナとヴィエトナムについてはといわゆる「東ぶう西ふるを圧し」はたかかる。またそれに近い事態になるポテンシャルを強く包蔵するものなることは否定し難しいところであろうか。

右に対し韓国の場合はその立場はききの台湾等の場合と全然異っている。韓国成立に関する国連決議や日韓条約をはじめ各国の韓国承認の際なった態度に因り韓国はその全朝鮮半島に対するMORAL CLAIMは別として国際法的には南鮮のみの国家であり、逆に言えば将来如何に北鮮の地位が上って来ても右が台湾の場合の如く、韓国の国際的地位をREPLACEするものではなく、事
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電信写

態度が北鮮にとって最もうまく運んだ場合といえばドイツ
の如くONE NATION中におけるTWO STATESとして南北鮮が MSI
を存することができるものちであるが現在の南方の人口、面積、国際社会における地位
等より見て、西ドイツの場合と同じくかむらり「西ふらが
東ふらを圧する」と世界的に有するとしたら見える
であろうのかくして北鮮による南鮮の地位のREPLAC
Eがないことがはつきりしている今即ち「ニシキのミハタ
」が北に行き心配もまたかかる兆とも見られない以上
（北による武力ないし暴力革命方式の統一がない限り）右
「REPLACE」は起こ得ないのでが国の北との接触増
進工作は北によるREPLACEのEVIETUALITY
を念頭に置きつつ南の制限において（AT THE O
COST OF SOUTH KOREA）。これを押進める
必然性も必要性も全然なく、「わが国としては何等の後めた
さなく、その与国たる韓国の立場に十二分の配慮を払って
処理すべきであり」万が一にも前述の如く事情の全然異なる
中国ヴェイエトナムのケースから類推し「次は北鮮も」と
きそい Surpriseが如き国内一市のムードに流されることとなきよ
うから心すべきであろう。朝鮮においては韓国を支持する
ことは決して負けず向きにかけていることにはならない
など今日北鮮との接触増進の名分はこの地域に
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電信写

等を決めるよう留意すべきで特に現在韓国はユンスンのドクトリンが未中止きどけ以来「落目」になりつつあるが如き心境にあるときだけに国が国たる同盟のわが国としては一層思いやりのある配慮を要しよう命(この点米国が北鮮向けパレスポートの発行を1年間延期したのは他山の石と言えようか)

なるべく右側の矢印がタイピングを考える為の若干の標準としては非正十字会談等において韓国も内々試みている対北鮮かん和の水かき外交より日本が大はばにとび離れて独立をも右韓国側の外交措置をOUTSHINEしうるほどせねばならないようにとの考慮もかんがり念るべくか未来に来るべき国連総会における朝鮮問題審議の模様をくら気もにらみ合わせるべき重要データーとなるう。

(了)