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The Japanese Side's Response following the Publication of the Communique of the Talks between Premier Zhou Enlai and Ishibashi Tanzan

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Summary:

While the Social Democratic Party of Japan supported the Communique of the Talks between Ishibashi Tanzan and Zhou Enlai, the Liberal Democratic Party criticized it by saying "it provides no solution for current Sino-Japanese relations."

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1. Remarks from the Liberal Democratic Party and the Government of Japan on our Japan policy and methods.

The Secretary-General of the LDP, Kawashima [Shijiro] said that the communique implies that there has not been a change in thinking among the Chinese side whatsoever since the publication of the Asanuma-Zhang Xiruo declaration of March [1959].

Figures in Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs remarked that "...however, people may find that China did not want to turn a cold shoulder to Ishibashi and the efforts he made. This indicates that China is making a new strategic move against Japan." "It seems that, starting with the visit of Ishibashi, Communist China will still maintain their strategy of communicating with the class that conservative political parties belong in order to keep the attention they've received from Japanese people, which has cooled down by now."

Cabinet Secretary Shiina [Etsusaburo] said that after the Cabinet called a meeting to study the communique, they found that there is nothing new in it, and it provides no solution for current Sino-Japanese relations. Therefore, the Government of Japan would not change its China policy. (Mainichi Shimbun denied that such a meeting took place.)

2. Replies to several key issues of the Communique from the Kishi [Nobusuke] Clique.

Kawashima said: "Ishibashi's statement is largely in tune with China, but the communique is packed with things out of tune with the foreign policy of the Japanese government and the ruling party. Though we had consistently denied the existence of a two-Chinas policy or any hostile policy against China, Ishibashi unexpectedly raised these [issues] in the communique, which may attract wide criticism." Kaya Okinori (Chairman of the Foreign Policy Research Council) commented that Premier Zhou's remarks in the communique about Japan being hostile to China are a misunderstanding. Just as what Ishibashi said, such a policy was never adopted, and would not be adopted in the future.

Kawashima said that "the idea of separating politics and economics is not just an idea of the Kishi Administration. It is a common belief among liberalist countries. Why did Ishibashi agree with the CCP's idea that politics and economics should not be separated?" Cabinet Secretary Shiina said that "this would provoke the United States and Japan, thus it was inappropriate."

Kawashima added that "Ishibashi expressed his dissatisfaction with the current situation and international relations, but with what specific issue? And what is the resolution?"

"Premier Zhou said something like 'supporting the efforts made by the Japanese people, sympathizing with the peoples' wish to have peace and neutrality,' but how could a totalitarian state support and sympathize with those in a free country?"

Kawashima also said that "Ishibashi did not mention the security treaty [with the United States], so I believe that it would not have an impact on Japanese politics immediately." But Mainichi Shimbun (located in Osaka) commented that Ishibashi's dissatisfaction with Japan's current situation and international affairs seemingly

cannot be separated from the revision of the security treaty, and they believe that the communique has sown the seeds of turbulence for the Kishi Administration and the LDP.

However, Kawashima and Kaya also said hypocritically that “they have no objection to the principle of making contributions to world peace.” “The spirit of the communique is decent.”

Kawashima said that “the Government of Japan and the LDP would not change its China policy of separating politics and economics for the sake of breaking the deadlock between China and Japan, but I believe that just as the communique proposed, it would be a good choice to visit China and deepen our mutual understandings.”

Matsumura Kenzo said that “it does not really matter what the communique is like. What matters is the fact that there have been discussions and what has been discussed.”

3. Responses from the Social Democratic Party of Japan, Matsumura Kenzo, etcetera.

Asanuma Inejiro said that, in content, this communique is not much different from the Asanuma-Zhang Xiruo joint declaration. Therefore, this communique is a further development of the path of “people-to-people diplomacy” opened by the Social Democratic Party of Japan [SDPJ]. We hope that after Ishibashi returns to Japan, he can work towards bringing these non-governmental negotiations to an official level. The SDPJ is also prepared to cooperate along these lines.

Okada Soji, the Director-General of SDPJ’s International Bureau, said that “as there is a détente in the making with Khrushchev’s visit to the United States, the foreign policy of the Kishi Administration, which attempts to revise the security treaty in order to form a military alliance, is indeed one of turning back the clock. This is completely contrary to Ishibashi’s intentions to and attitudes toward build a friendly relationship with China. Therefore, it could be said that this communique apparently showed the possibility of a potential split within the LDP on foreign policy. The SDPJ would like to cooperate with Ishibashi, working towards the normalization of relations between Japan and China.

4. Responses from trade circles

The President of the Japanese Association for the Promotion of International Trade, Yamamoto Kumaichi, said that Communist China has not changed its attitude at all, judging from the communique. Therefore, in terms of restoring Sino-Japanese trade, there is nothing to be expected under the current conditions. However, this communique marked a beginning for people who want to visit China for negotiations in the future, so there is still a glimmer of hope.

The Nihon Keizai Shimbun reported on the 20th that “the majority of trade circles believe that the visit of Ishibashi, which could be regarded as a turning point, would be followed by a second and third wave of delegation to visit China. They have high hopes because the issue of Sino-Japanese trade might gradually become more concrete [jutihua].

In his interview with NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation), Ishibashi said the reason he agreed with the Chinese on the inseparability of politics and economics was because of China’s tough stance on the issue. China hates the United States to the

core. Therefore, temporary compromises must be made in order to open up Sino-Japanese relations.