

JAPANESE COMMUNIST PARTY

*85 Years of the
Japanese Communist Party and
the Present Stage of its Development*

PRESENT STAGE OF DIALECTICS OF POLITICAL CONFRONTATION¹

Ruling circles' key strategy

When the JCP achieved rapid advances by establishing its new support base in the 1970s, the ruling forces began to structure their political strategy with the JCP as the main enemy. Why did they target the JCP as their main enemy? It is because the JCP is a political party aiming for the realization of social liberation in future society by overcoming capitalism which is the source of the evils of present-day society. It is also because the JCP maintains a scientific view with which it foresees the path of social progress in a step-by-step process and which always fights against the source of people's suffering at each stage of development. Specifically in Japan, the JCP is aiming to put an end to the autocratic rule of large corporations and financial circles and is clearly aimed at ending the systems of oppressive rule by big businesses and financial circles and Japan's subordination to the United States. It is a party that aims for change and the building of a Japan which is truly people-first and democratic.

Because the ruling forces know this very well, they concentrate their attacks on the JCP in order to force the JCP out of the political scene whenever the JCP has advanced or shown signs of advance. In fact, for more than 30 years, the JCP has made every effort to achieve its advances by fighting against the attacks by the ruling forces.

In my book *On the History of the Japanese Communist Party* (published in 2006-2007), I referred to the move as dialectics of political confrontation. Let us think about where the JCP stands today in this dialectical development.

The ruling forces have resorted to different tactics to force the JCP out of the political scene. In the 1970s, they launched a "Defend Free Society" campaign and rehashed the anti-communist political intrigue used by forces of reaction in prewar Japan. In the 1980s they campaigned to unite all political parties except the JCP in support of ruling party policies. In the 1990s, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, they attacked us by arguing that choosing a socio-economic system is what politics is all about.

Today, the key element of their attacks is the attempt to mould Japan's political parties forcibly into a "two-party" system as means of excluding the JCP from the political world.

'TWO-PARTY' LED CAMPAIGN HAS A HISTORY

'Non-LDP' forces vs. LDP in 1993

The "two-party system" campaign has a history. When it first appeared in 1993, it took on the form of a confrontation between the LDP and non-LDP forces. Immediately before the House of

¹ This is an extract from the speech of Fuwa Tetsuzo, former JCP Central Committee Chair, at the Public Assembly Commemorating at 85th Anniversary of Japanese Communist Party, on August 9, 2007, Tokyo.

Representatives general election in 1991, a group led by Ozawa Ichiro -later called themselves *Shinseito*, or the Japan Renewal Party, broke away from the Liberal Democratic Party to form a non-LDP coalition with all opposition parties except the JCP, and urged voters to choose between the LDP and the non-LDP.

As the result of the general election the LDP was replaced as the ruling party by the non-LDP forces and Prime Minister Hosokawa Morihiro's Cabinet was formed. The Hosokawa Cabinet laid the institutional groundwork for establishing a two-party system by introducing the single seat constituency system and the government subsidy system to political parties. The policy agreement signed by the 8 coalition parties stated that they would take over the basic policies from the previous government.

In selling the virtue of "non-LDP" politics, they said to the public, "Please feel at ease. This is a change of government within the framework of LDP policies." They also said that this is just a change within the LDP political framework and that what matters is the change of hands.

'Two party' system campaign in 2003

Another campaign for a "two-party" system came up in the House of Representatives general election in 2003. Just before this general election, the Democratic Party merged with the Liberal Party to form the new Democratic Party of Japan. The business sector was the main sponsor of the campaign to make this election one of choosing the LDP or the DPJ.

Unlike in the 1993 election, they no longer use the call for "taking over LDP policies" as the key slogan. As the LDP and the DPJ share the same policy goals of increasing the consumption tax rate and revising the Constitution, they simply competed for effectiveness in implementing these policies. This was a manifestation of the deepening contradictions between LDP policies and the public interest.

Calling for a campaign to 'choose a prime minister'

In the recent House of Councilors election, they called on the voters to choose a prime minister as the way to draw voters' attention to the "choice between the LDP and the DPJ" just as they had done in the previous election. However, there were two new features.

One is the start of the Abe Cabinet made up mainly of politicians from the pro-Yasukuni Shrine group. This explains more clearly than ever that the LDP's political base was further declining.

The other is that the DPJ changed its campaign tactics. Four years ago, it tried to vie with the LDP for effectiveness in achieving the policy goals which it shared with the LDP. It found this basic tactic no longer viable and carried out a confrontational campaign. This made it easy for the DPJ to absorb people's criticisms of the LDP-Komei government, but it failed to present voters with an alternative to LDP policies.

This is basically what the recent "two party system" election was about. Look at LDP politics. It is in decline. I think it important to note that this is exactly what makes the LDP campaigning toward a "two party system" look differently.

A HISTORICAL VIEW OF 2007 ELECTION

Chair Shii has just talked in detail about the election results. I want to talk about them in a historical perspective and in the light of the JCP Program. The day after the election and vote counting, the JCP Standing Executive Committee published a statement. It gave the following three characteristic features of the election results.

First, it said that the LDP defeat is attributable not just to some politicians' scandals. It said, "Clearly, the voters have judged that the political framework of the LDP-Komei coalition does not provide the public with a promising future." In fact, the post-election moves of the Abe Cabinet and the LDP show that cracks are further widening between them and the general public. To begin with, Mr. Abe was chosen to become a prime minister in September 2006 simply because he was considered useful in improving the public's image of the ruling party in the elections. The recent election results showed clearly that they had the wrong expectations of him. But they have no choice but to allow Mr. Abe to continue to lead the government because they did not have an alternative. This clearly shows the LDP in decline, doesn't it? Secondly, the JCP Standing Executive Committee statement is straightforward in pointing out that the election results do not show that the public is clear about an alternative to the LDP-Komei government. This is how the Japanese and foreign media view the election results. Thirdly, the JCP statement gave a clear view about how Japan's politics will develop. It says that a new era has begun in which we will explore an alternative to LDP-Komei government policies, adding that the importance of discussing it in parliamentary discussions and national elections will be greater than ever. These three points are at the core of the JCP Executive Committee statement.

QUEST FOR A NEW POLITICAL PROCESS AND JCP PROGRAM

We have repeatedly issued the warning about LDP politics forcing Japan into a no-way-out situation. This view is shared by many people. Then, how can we break this impasse? The public does not have an answer to this question yet. The JCP statement says that the nation is at a new stage in which all sectors of the people are called upon to share past experiences to seek and find an answer.

Take a close look at the present situation and you will find that the ideas of the public and the JCP's position will become closer. Why? It is because the JCP Program presents a clear argument regarding how the present no-way-out situation in Japanese politics can be overcome. Some of the pressing political questions facing Japan may be resolved by opposition parties in their common efforts on agreed points, but others can only be resolved through replacing the LDP political framework.

Domestic policies and the question of fiscal resources

When we look at domestic problems in Japan, including social welfare services, gaps between rich and poor, pension schemes, and poverty, we always face the question of fiscal resources needed to solve them. The LDP's attitude is tantamount to telling us to give up our proposals on the grounds that the country has fiscal shortfalls. But the present problem facing Japan is not about fiscal shortfalls. There are two major problems.

80% of tax paid by ordinary people is used to help reduce burdens of big business. We must first ask where is taxable money to be found to increase revenue. During the election campaign we repeatedly said that Japan's large corporations capitalized at one-billion yen or more earn greater ordinary profits now compared to 1989 when the economic bubble was at its peak. Their ordinary profits in 2006 totaled 33 trillion yen, 1.8 times the 1989 profits that totaled 18-trillion yen. However, the amount of tax paid by these large corporations for fiscal 2005 was 20-30% less than in the period of the economic bubble. Actually, their profits were 1.8 times larger, so it stands to reason that they pay 1.8 times the tax they paid during the economic bubble years. But the amount of tax they paid was much lower. If the general public is given the same tax breaks as large corporations, our living conditions would be much better. How absurd it is that only large

corporations are given tax cuts even though they are earning more. How such absurdity be allowed to continue?

I want you to take a look at the following figures. One problem we should look at is the consumption tax. Many people have difficulty paying the consumption tax. The consumption tax was introduced in 1989. Over the years up to the current fiscal year, it is estimated that a total of 188 trillion yen has been collected in consumption taxes. In the same period, large corporations have been given a tax cut 160 trillion yen. This means that 85% of the consumption tax paid by the general public has been used to give large corporations tax cuts. The other point I want to make is how taxes have been increased and cut in the 8 years of the LDP-Komei coalition government. The government, almost every year, forced the general public to pay more in taxes. The total amount of yearly tax increases has reached about 5.4 trillion yen. In contrast, the government has cut taxes on large corporations and the wealthy almost every year amounting to 4.3 trillion yen a year. This means that 85% of the tax paid by ordinary people is given away to large corporations.

Unrestricted expenditure on wasteful military buildup

The second question concerns the wasteful use of tax money. TV and other media nowadays are critical about the wasteful use of tax money, but there is one particular area that TV reports do not take up. That is the military expenditure, the only area where a large-scale waste of tax money is allowed without question.

Until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Japan implemented various military buildup programs at the request of the United States for the Self-Defense Forces ostensibly in case of a Soviet attack. Even after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the SDF did not stop these programs on the grounds that they had already been in place.

The Ground SDF provides a typical example of wasteful spending. It has procured more than 320 Type-90 tanks, most of which are deployed in Hokkaido. The Type-90 tank weighs about 50 tons. It is too heavy to travel over roads and bridges in Japan. It is for this reason that Type-90 tanks were deployed in Hokkaido after constructing special roads and bridges in the event of an invasion by Soviet forces. All of the 320 tanks were deployed after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Including the portion for fiscal 2007, the procurement has cost 300 billion yen. The Maritime SDF has a similar case of wasteful spending. The MSDF procured 6 Aegis ships. The Aegis equipped ship is the most expensive warship in Japan. Japan spent 760 billion yen for them. Japan first ordered them ostensibly with the aim of defending the sea lanes from Soviet attack with Backfire fighter jets. Although these warships were completed years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the MSDF has bought 6 Aegis ships. I found that these warships have been used only for refueling U.S. war ships in the Indian Ocean. Actually, it is of no use in any other areas.

These are just two examples to show how tax money is wasted without any accountability. We know how taxes are collected and expended. Why are many political parties in Japan silent about this fiscal irresponsibility? It is not that they lack the wisdom to do that. They lack a program with which to take issue with Japanese large corporations and the United States. But from now on, political parties' positions on this question will be called into question.

HOW CAN JAPAN'S DIPLOMATIC STALEMATE BE BROKEN?

Let's talk about Japan's diplomacy. Many in the world know that Japan's diplomacy is at an impasse. They also know what the cause is. I want to take up three issues. First, the Yasukuni Shrine view of history. No country that says Japan's past war was a just war is qualified to speak

internationally in the present-day world. The second issue is about Japan maintaining the basic policy of subservience to and unconditional support for the United States since the two countries are in alliance. Such an absurd view cannot earn support anywhere since the end of the Cold War. The third issue is Japan's inclination toward promoting a policy of strength. It is a policy of responding militarily to any event. Japan has a poor hand in diplomacy, an element which is more important than anything else in international politics. In the 6Party Talks on North Korea's nuclear program, when most participants are making earnest efforts to resolve the issue and considering establishing a North-east Asian regional peace organization after a successful resolution of the North Korea issue, Japan does not show willingness to do the same and it even shows dislike for progress toward achieving peace. Many in the world are worried about Japan's diplomatic stance.

The biggest banner of present Japanese foreign policy is a call for constitutional revision enabling Japan to send troops abroad and carry out further arms buildups. Is there a party that can present a way to solve Japan's diplomatic stalemate? None other than the JCP can do so. The JCP Program presents a basic policy for peaceful diplomacy replacing the Japan-U.S. military alliance with a bilateral relationship based on equal rights. It calls for peace to be created through negotiations and for Japan to base its diplomacy on a critical review of its part war of aggression. In realizing this, the JCP Program will prove to be effective for the people to have a choice. The JCP Program includes the party's view of the world. In view of the three major changes that took place in the 20th century, namely the collapse of colonialism, the development of countries striving to achieve socialism, and the end of Soviet hegemony, the JCP Program provides analysis on the world trends in the 21st century, and presents a comprehensive view of peace and social progress. This world outlook has drawn keen attention in all countries we visit. The key to the success of the JCP's opposition diplomacy is its principled yet flexible diplomacy based on this world outlook.

Network for grassroots efforts

The other point I want to make is that the effort to tell the public about a "new politics" that the Japanese people need is not something that the JCP center alone does. During the election campaign, all members of the JCP and the JCP supporters' associations had discussions with the public about a new political framework. Through the process of a popular quest for new politics, we mean to continue the day-to-day efforts that we made during the election in response to public needs. Let us set out to create nationwide networks in which all JCP branches and all JCP supporters associations reach out to the public and explain what the JCP Program entails. We firmly stand for a revolutionary view of the future.

The JCP Program is not a temporary "manifesto" for a particular election campaign. Ours is a manifesto that provides a basic course for Japan to defend the interests of the people and secures the present and future national interests of Japan. This perspective is not something we are forcing the public to accept. If you are serious about defending the public interest, you will necessarily face two major obstacles, the autocratic behavior of large corporations and the business sector and Japan's subservience to the United States. If you were to remove these obstacles, you would necessarily come closer to JCP policies. I think it important for us to have confidence in this potential.

Of course, people's ways of thinking may change. However, people's views and their political awareness will make progress in the long run, as people will learn from past experiences. The JCP has made every effort to bring success to every struggle in defiance of all difficulties before, during, and after World War II. The JCP has carried on struggles by maintaining this revolutionary perspective and without being overly elated or discouraged at the outcome of each

struggle. This is a revolutionary tradition that has run through the 85 years of existence of the JCP. As we mark the 85th anniversary of the JCP, I want to call on you to reaffirm our unbending determination and the spirit of pioneers and explorers in order to acquire the revolutionary stance to enable us to always view the future in a broader perspective so that we can surmount any difficulties we may face. Let us work hard for a bright future for Japan and the world.

FUNERAL SPEECH FOR THE LATE JCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE CHAIR MIYAMOTO KENJI²

Comrade Miyamoto Kenji, allow me to speak on behalf of the Japanese Communist Party Central Committee to bid you final farewell and talk about some of my personal emotions. Miyamoto joined the JCP in 1931, nine years after the JCP's founding. I want to pay my deep respects for his life, devoted for 76 years to the cause of peace and social progress and to the building of the foundations of the JCP. Soon after he joined the JCP, Miyamoto began to work at JCP headquarters as a member of the party leadership. That was a period in which the JCP had to go through one of the most difficult ordeals in its history. The despotic power that was rushing the country to a war of aggression tried not only to exterminate the party championing pacifism and people's sovereignty by launching an extremely brutal suppression, but also to destroy the JCP's moral authority, using every possible means, including the use of agents provocateurs to incite the JCP to commit serious crimes. Miyamoto Kenji was made a target of these vicious attacks against the party.

Miyamoto was arrested, but he firmly defended the banner of peace and a democratic Japan without capitulating to torture. After the arrest, Miyamoto held fast to principle stating, "Although I am ready to formally speak in court, I refuse to speak at preliminary examination behind closed doors." Thus he refused to speak even a word in the preliminary examinations. This was a topic of discussion among young people who joined the party following the War's end. When Miyamoto suffered from the life-threatening disease of enteric tuberculosis in jail, a prosecutor came and tried to persuade him to give his deposition, saying, "If you die without saying a word, nothing about the truth will be recorded. If you let me take your deposition, I can move you to the hospital to die." But Miyamoto flatly rejected the offer. I knew of this story, and I asked him what he was thinking of at that time. He just said, "I believed in the future." I still vividly remember I was very impressed by this response.

Miyamoto's wartime court struggle lasted 5 years from 1940. He made statements about reason and justice, and exposed all false charges made by state power against the party, thus shattering state power's attempts to destroy the party. In the early 1970s, I discovered the "Minutes of the Public Hearing" in a thick pile of documents at his home and read for the first time his statements before the court. I was deeply impressed to read Miyamoto's closing statement, in which he said that "the court of history, which is founded on human justice" should certainly prove that the suppression was wrong and that the party was right. Throughout his 12 years in prison, he was totally separated from the world. He was alone in his court struggle without coverage by the media. According to a chronological record kept by Miyamoto Yukiko, the court hearing that resumed in 1944. The defendant Miyamoto was accompanied by no one. Only a lawyer, (his) wife, and guards occupied the observers' seats in courtroom. Nevertheless, the record of Miyamoto's undaunted court struggle has the unlimited power to encourage its readers to continue to struggle.

² This is the speech given by Fuwa Tetsuzo, former Japanese Communist Party Central Committee Chair, on behalf of the JCP Central Committee at the funeral for the late Miyamoto Kenji, former JCP Central Committee Chair on August 6th.

Kato Shuichi, a critic and one of founders of the Article 9 Association, wrote the obituary of Miyamoto for Akahata, lauding him for his “consistent opposition to the 15-year war”. He said, “Mr. Miyamoto saved the honor of the Japanese people through his opposition to the war.” I also want to point out that the indomitable struggle he waged in jail and in court totally frustrated the plot by state power to discredit the JCP and defended the political honor and moral authority of the Japanese Communist Party. Also, it was historically significant in that it made it possible for the prewar struggles to be remembered by those who were involved in struggles after the end of World War II.

After the War’s end, the Japanese Communist Party for the first time was legalized. It openly began activities calling for the establishment of national sovereignty, democracy, peace, and the defense of the people’s living conditions. But several years later, the JCP faced a serious crisis. In 1950, the JCP came under unjustifiable persecution by the U.S. Occupation forces. The party was made semi-illegal and flagrantly interfered with by the Soviet and Chinese parties under Stalin’s direction. This led to the dissolution of the Party Central Committee and the bringing in of the foreign-prepared armed struggle policy by those who caused the JCP to split. Thus, the party faced its most serious crisis ever. We call this the “1950 Question.” It was about 40 years later that we got the full picture of the “1950 Question” following the collapse of the Soviet Union, which made it possible for us to read classified documents of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. In 1950, I was a member of a JCP student branch and it was totally impossible for us to know the full-extent of the problem. I suspect that even Miyamoto, who dealt with this question at JCP headquarters, had to respond to this issue without the information needed to grasp the situation in its entirety.

Although he had to work within historical limitations, Miyamoto did his utmost to maintain party unity and displayed sound sense in trying to find a reasoned solution of the problem. Recently, I had an opportunity to give a lecture on the history of the Japanese Communist Party at a party school for young activists. I explained how Miyamoto and other party members had been compelled to make a decision as to what should be done to deal with the “1950 Question” under circumstances in which only limited information was available. It was from this effort that the party drew an important lesson that led us to establish the firm position of sovereign independence on which the JCP will never allow any foreign parties to interfere with the JCP, no matter what great achievements they had made in past revolutionary movements. In the class at the party school, I shared my admiration of the effort at that time with students, saying, “It’s amazing that the party established the political line with confidence from that experience.” When the JCP embarked on the path of restoring its unity after overcoming the party split, it drew the following three lessons from the bitter experience of turmoil. The first lesson was that the party must establish its sovereign independence. The second lesson was that in Japan, where people’s sovereignty and the political system of parliamentary democracy are established, any attempt to bring in an armed struggle policy must be rejected. The third lesson is that party unity must be defended based on inner-party democracy by excluding any kinds of divisionism. These lessons are the real guidelines for the party today. It was Miyamoto Kenji that drew these lessons from the “1950 Question” and led the effort to have all JCP members learn from these three lessons. Restoring party unity, the JCP held its 7th and 8th Congresses to adopt the JCP Program defining that the immediate task of the party is to achieve a democratic revolution for which the party will strive to win a majority in parliament in order to take power. The establishment of this programmatic line marked a new starting point of the Japanese Communist Party after the end of WWII. In taking the JCP out of the serious crisis and turning this crisis into a new turning point for a new development of the party, Miyamoto displayed great leadership.

In the 1960s, the JCP experienced a new critical ordeal in its international relations. The party came under direct interferences and attacks by two large communist parties, the Communist

Party of the Soviet Union and China's Mao Zedong group. Since I began my career at the JCP Central Committee in 1964, I have been with Miyamoto on various occasions of political activities, including the struggle against interference by foreign countries, though my responsibility varied from time to time.

Although the Soviet Union and China's Mao Zedong group had different motives in interfering with the JCP, both were hostile to the fact that the JCP maintained its sovereign independence, and they carried out hegemonic attacks aiming at putting the Japanese progressive and peace movements under their control. We often described this struggle as a "life or death" struggle for the party. That was how we really felt at the time. At that time, the JCP was fast-growing, but its vote-getting strength in parliamentary elections was still around 4%. It had only around 4 seats in the House of Representatives. That was the strength that the party had when it faced the attacks by the two great powers using every possible means at their disposal. In fact, the difficulty we had to endure was beyond prediction. However, the party summoned the courage to deal with this difficulty and completely defeated the interventionist attacks. This struggle made the party stronger and led to successive party advances in the House of Representatives general elections in 1969 and 1972. I cannot look back on our struggle against foreign interferences without recalling two historic events. One is what I witnessed in March 1966, when our talks with Mao Zedong in Shanghai ended in rupture and we spent a few days in Guangdong writing reports to be presented to the party on returning home. I remember Miyamoto looking sad as he sat in contemplation in a corner of the hotel garden. When I saw his face, I acutely felt his firm determination to defend the party in defiance of any adversity as well as his concern about many difficulties that may lie ahead.

The other is what I experienced in the final stage of preparation for the JCP 10th Congress in the same year. The portion that dealt with the party's international policy was mainly about how we would struggle against foreign attacks on two fronts. As we were finalizing the document, Miyamoto said, "It is necessary to mention not only the policy for the struggle but also the principles of party-to-party relations." After discussing his proposal, we reached the formula that the party should make efforts as much as possible to carry out joint action on issues agreed upon even with foreign parties that have differences with the JCP on other questions, unless their main policy is one of interfering with other parties. Although it was when the real struggle was about to begin against interference by foreign forces, he was thinking about the norms to be established after defeating the interference. I was very impressed by his farsightedness. In fact, this formula was invoked when the JCP normalized relations with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1979 with the latter admitting that its interference with the JCP was an error, and when we normalized relations with the Communist Party of China in 1998 after working with the new CPC leadership to resolve the historical problems that had persisted between our two parties by making clear the error of the Mao Zedong group's "Cultural Revolution". This international policy provided us with the real power to develop the JCP's opposition party diplomacy.

Throughout the more than 30 years of experiences with Miyamoto Kenji, I learned a lot. He had a considerable influence on me. When it comes to recalling his revolutionary life, I first remember his activities in these three periods. These were periods during which we underwent major crises. In all these struggles, Miyamoto firmly maintained his indomitable spirit and a reasoned manner in responding to challenges, led the struggles to overcome the crises, and paved the way for new developments. He exerted such an enormous influence without which the JCP would have had a very different history. Japan, where Miyamoto Kenji devoted his whole life to the cause of social progress and peaceful development, is in great turmoil at present. Miyamoto passed away during the House of Councilors election campaign. This election showed more clearly than ever that Japan will not have a bright future if the country's obsolete political

framework remains unchanged, and that the pressing need now is to establish a new kind of politics that will meet the needs of the people.

The Japanese Communist Party has an even greater role to play in working to achieve the interests of the Japanese people, to work for social progress, and defend the peace of the world. Many difficulties may lie ahead, but we have learned from our party history that historical dialectics dictate that we must advance always by overcoming difficulties. In times of difficulty, we must maintain an undaunted determination and respond to problems with reasons. This is precisely what Miyamoto has taught us throughout his life. Taking this as a lesson, I bid farewell to Comrade Miyamoto Kenji.