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「中日の戦略と対ソ改善」
(英訳)

A:40: China by Mineo Nakagima

As the last December visit by V. Arkhipov of high-ranking Soviet official to Beijing as well as the friendly stance by Chinese Communist leadership toward the new Russian regime of Mikhail S. Gorbachev signifies, the current international political structure has been undergoing its substantial change.

China no longer pursues what it calls anti-hegemonism, or its anti-Soviet strategy while leaning toward the United States, and, in stead, the Asian giant equally distants itself from the two super powers.

Yet, it appears that the students of Chinese affairs still have not come up with any sufficient explanation about the background beneath Beijing's diplomatic sway from its previous stance.

There is a prevailing view that it is impossible for China to reconcile with Moscow as long as Chinese Communist leaderships are willing to obtain Western technology or economic aids.

Another common view is that as long as Soviet continues to deploy its troops along its borders with China and in Mongolia, to extend support to Vietnamese invasion into Kampuchea and to occupy Afganistan, Beijing and Moscow are unable to make rapprochement.

However, such views overlook an important point that the formulation of Chinese foreign policy is determined by internal factors rather than external ones; the internal factors consist of ideology, nationalism and traditional views of the Chinese world order even held by Chinese Communist leaders.

The component of current Chinese leadership led by Deng Xiaoping indicates that this hypothesis is workable in explaining China's diplomatic shift.

It is true that Deng Xiaoping or Peng Zhen severely criticized Moscow as a revisionist during early 1960s. However, they regarded Kremlin as their ideological foe but not as its strategic enemy, which sharply differs from the late Mao Zudong's anti-Soviet perception that exclaimed Moscow as socialist imperialism.

Backed by Deng Xiaoping, other political figures who share his view toward Kremlin have been making political comeback long after they were expelled from Chinese political scene for one reason or another.

For instance, Zhang Aiping, the incumbent defense minister, was a protege of the late Peng Dehuai of defense minister during 1950s who considered that solidarity with the Soviet Union is important in terms of the modernization of Chinese military. Zhang was then deputy Chiefs-of-General Staff under Peng Dehuai.

Zhang had to undergo political setbacks after Mao replaced Peng with Lin Biao in late 1950s. It is believed that Peng's critical view of 'Great Leap Forward' initiated by Mao put his political career to an end.

Guo Feng, who has been posted to the first secretary of Liaoning Provincial Communist Party, had once belonged to the pro-Stalin faction within the communist party led by Gao Gang, party boss of northeast China during early 1950s. Gao Gang reportedly committed suicide after he was purged from the party on the charge that he conspired to separate the northeast region from China.

The current two leading diplomatic figures, Foreign Minister Wu Xuejiang and vice Foreign Minister Qiang Qichen, are also regarded as the proponents of the soft-line policy toward Moscow. Wu and Qiang are distinguished Russian experts among Chinese diplomats. Especially, Qiang has a long experience of working at the Chinese embassy in Moscow.

It is also worth noting that the Deng's leadership has stopped referring to the late Zhou Enlai in public statements or publications for recent years. Although Zhou tried to avoid military showdown with the Soviet Union, he was not in favor of rapprochement for which the current Chinese leaders are seeking.

With the rise of the new leadership that has been demantling Maoism since 1978, there had already surfaced the signs of changes in Beijing's stance toward Moscow.

China has kept silent about a recent shift of SS-20 missiles from Europe to Far East. Beijing has dropped its previous border dispute with Moscow, which used to be the main cause for confrontation between the two countries.

The three obstacles which China now demand the Soviet Union to eliminate are not the bilateral issue between the two countries as it was before, which imply that Chinese communist leadership softened its terms of reconciliation with the Soviet Union.

The eagerness by Chinese Communist leadership to make rapprochement with Moscow also can be found in the fact that those who prefer Soviet-style economy to Deng's market-oriented economy was assigned to host V. Arkhipov during his visit to Beijing: Chen Yun, a member of politbureau, Tao Yilin, vice-premier of state planning council and Po Yipo, deputy chairman of central advisory commission.

As Chinese leadership has been gradually taking soft stance toward Moscow, it also has been improving its relationships even with other socialist countries such as Poland directly backed by Kremelin or Mongolian People's Republic, a satellite country under the Russian umbrella.

Such a drastic diplomatic change leads me to even speculate that China may form an alliance with the Eastern block, though loose.

If such international situation happens, Washington will definitely lose its "China Card", a leverage that has been used for strengthening its bargaining position against Moscow since the Nixon administration.

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