THE PROGRAM OF THE JAPANESE COMMUNIST PARTY

Discussion by OKANO, Susumu
(NOSAKA, Sanzo)
September 8, 1944

We must first rid Japan of militarism and persistent feudalistic remnants in politics and economics. After the establishment of democracy, we will have a gradual development from capitalism to socialism. All this development should pass through three stages.

FIRST STAGE (Ending of the War and Reorganization of the Country)

I. PROGRAM

A. Stop the war at once.
   Force the end of the war by all means possible.
   Bring about peace.
   (Nosaka assumes full surrender to the United Nations).

B. Overthrow the present militarist government
   Purge the influence of the militarists from the government and politics.
   Punish the militarists and politicians who were responsible for the war.

C. Democratize the Government.

   1. Institute universal suffrage -- for men and women without restrictions or qualifications.

   2. Place full governing power in the Diet. It must be free from the threat of arbitrary dissolution by other constitutional organs. It must have full power to initiate and pass legislation.

   3. Force the retirement of the present Emperor if there be a successor his constitutional powers must be reduced.

   The present Emperor cannot escape some personal responsibility for the war. He did not oppose it at any stage although such action would have been effective if strongly taken, especially at an early point in aggression such as when the militarists invaded Manchuria.

   4. BUT for the time being nothing will be done about abolishing the institution of the Emperor. We do not believe that the people of Japan are ready to completely discard the Emperor; we are content to wait to see, and to be sure the time is right before we propose decisive action.

   Instead we discuss in our propaganda the nature of the Emperor and his position. We explain and expose, without making any direct attack. We avoid the slogan, "Down with the Emperor."
We think that any attempt by us or by the United Nations to utilize the Emperor will be dangerous. It can set an example which can also be used by groups working against our interests. It is important to remember that it will not be easy to treat the Emperor in the same manner as the British King. The whole problem of the future of the Emperorship is better left alone for a while.

5. The Privy Council, the House of Peers, and the peculiar status of the elder statesmen should be reduced toward eventual liquidation.

6. Full democratic rights should be given the people. These are the ordinary basic rights such as the freedom of speech, thought, expression, person and assembly. The granting of these rights must mean the end of the present police government and interference by the police in the private lives of the citizens.

7. All political parties must have freedom and legal recognition. This must include the Communist Party.

8. The present Constitution must be revised on the basis of the above points. This revision must include abolition of the special powers enjoyed by the military, such as direct access to the Emperor, supra-cabinet status, and control of the armed services by active members of those services.

D. Place large scale monopoly capital under government control.

The war was started by the militarists with the support of the big munitions manufacturers. The destruction of the militarists will not be enough unless we also control their capitalist supporters. This control does not mean confiscation. This is not practical nor desirable now. We may, however, confiscate excess profits.

(We will have been helped in these policies by the rigid war-time control which has already been established over industry. Intervention by the government in management is now common. In this sense the militarists have helped us).

E. Japan's economy must be placed on a peaceful, non-militaristic basis.

(We assume that Japan will lose her colonies)

1. The armament industries must be liquidated and their plants converted to peaceful production.

2. Industrialization must be increased, must be more balanced.

After the war we fortunately will have:

(a) A much larger heavy industrial base.

(b) A large body of workers with new mechanical skills.
(c) An industry capable of producing machine tools, machinery, and other precision work. We should therefore, avoid the pre-war over concentration on textiles and other light industry. Our industry can be more diversified with greater emphasis on quality and precision work. (Important in this conversion work will be the rational use of the industrial progress made by Japan during the war.)

3. Agriculture should be mechanized. We cannot accomplish this suddenly, but should make a start. It will provide a large market for machinery and better implements. It will increase Japan's agricultural production.

F. A start should be made toward the liquidation of feudalism in land-holding.
1. The land of absentee landlords should be purchased by the government.
2. This land should be made available to land-poor peasants on easy terms. (Nosaka apparently prefers, however, that title to the land remain with the government.)
3. Part of this land should be used for State demonstration farms to experiment with and to show the farmers the actual advantages of full mechanization.
4. Through these State farms, and by other means, there should be propaganda to encourage the peasants to engage in group or cooperative farming, thus overcoming the present conditions of excessive sub-division and scattered holding. The goal in this will be voluntary collective farming. (In this, also, the militarists have helped us by their present intensive propaganda for cooperative farming as a war measure.)

G. The living and working conditions of the workers must be improved.
1. There should be an eight hour working day.
2. Factory legislation should fix minimum standards of working conditions and treatment of workers.
3. Laws should protect the rights of the workers for: (a) Collective bargaining. (b) Recognition of unions. (c) The right to strike. (d) Social insurance. (We do not expect to have minimum wage laws at this stage)
II. PARTICIPATING GROUPS

The Communist Party will seek and welcome cooperation with any groups which will support this general program. This willingness to join with any groups will extend to the capitalists. Our minimum program is the two main points: anti-militarism and democracy. We will insist on these. We will not insist on all other features of the program, such as cooperative farming, if they meet with general opposition.

III. FORM OF GOVERNMENT

There should be set up a "Peoples Democratic Government". This will be composed of representatives of all democratic groups. These will include: bourgeoisie, liberals and communists. (The inclusion of Communists in the Government is of the utmost importance. They have been the only active force fighting against the war. The liberals in Japan have been weak and lacking in courage and determination. Their silence in regard to the war is difficult to explain and has amounted to support. Only by the inclusion of the Communists can preparations and developments toward another war be absolutely prevented).

IV. DURATION OF THE FIRST STAGE

The length of this period will depend on two factors: the progressive character of the government itself; and the treatment of Japan by the United Nations.

1. If the government gives the people reasonable security and happiness, it will be considered successful and will last a long time. If it does not satisfy the majority of the people, attempts will be made to overthrow it. The government must therefor be progressive and responsive to the democratic desires of the people.

2. Its duration also depends on the attitude of and post-war settlement imposed by the United Nations. If they impose impossible indemnities, and make the position of the country or the condition of the people seem hopeless, they will rise against the government. If they give Japan a fair settlement, the government will be able to improve the general condition of the people and the government will thus be stabilized.

(We can say that change toward more extreme forms of government -- either progressive of reactionary -- will be slower if the condition of the bulk of the people is fairly satisfactory. We prefer the slower development).
SECOND STAGE (Completion of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution)

The first stage cannot immediately accomplish liquidation of all feudal remnants in our society, particularly on the land.

In the second stage we hope to complete the liquidation of these feudal traces and set up complete democracy on a capitalistic basis.

There will be no distinct break between these two stages; the transition and development will be gradual. The first will merge into the second. Some parts of the program for the first stage may not be accomplished until the second; part of the second may be achieved while in most other respects we are still in the first stage.

By the end of the second stage we should have liquidated all feudal remnants, such as:
The Emperor
The nobility, Privy Council, House of Peers, "Elder Statesmen".
The special privileges of the military.
(The Army and the Navy will be completely democratized).
The social discrimination against the Eta (outcasts)

THIRD STAGE (Socialism)

The aim of this stage will be to carry the development through to full socialism. This will mean the liquidation of capitalism.

But this should be a progressive and gradual development. This will be the case if our democracy is strong enough and genuine enough to control and guide our economic development, guaranteeing full democratic freedoms, the rights of labor, social education, and political freedom of all groups. If, however, capitalism is allowed to become so strong and monopolistic that it controls our democracy, then there will be a greater chance of violent revolution. This peaceful development will be slow, but it will be painless and constructive. If capitalism becomes overdeveloped the change may be quicker and shorter, but it will be violent and destructive. We favor the slow, but peaceful way.

Our chief weapon in bringing about this development is education.

We anticipate that the whole process will take decades.
(I -- Nosaka -- only hope to see a democratic Japan during my lifetime.)
This development in Japan will be more rapid than in China. Feudalistic remnants are not as strong in Japan as in China, where they still form the basis of the economy. And in addition capitalism is more developed in Japan than in China. Japan, however, will be behind the more advanced Western powers. The greatest obstacle to the peaceful orderly and progressive development of Japan (and to the post-war security sought by the United Nations) would be the undiminished power and influence of the big capitalists. They must not be left untouched at the end of this war. We must be on guard against their certain efforts to shield themselves behind their liberal "fronts". If their power is not curtailed, they can prevent the democratic, anti-militaristic growth of Japan. They can be the major cause of another world war.