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Leadership and Rivalry in the Soviet

Foreign policy in the case of Chernenko Administration

Kazuro UMEZU

1. Introduction

On May 14 this year Soviet Olympic Committee Chairman Gramov spoke at the press conference. Though the content of his speech was full of contradiction, two antagonistic tendencies could be seen in it. He says that reactionary conservative, anti-Soviet group and radicals in the U.S.A. took an attitude that would not guarantee security toward Olympic players from Soviet at the instigation of the Reagan Administration. In the attitude, strong intent of the Soviet secret police KGB, which is responsible for the players of the Soviet Union for the safety, can be seen.

On the other hand, he emphasized their good faith shown by the fact that the Soviet Union itself has appealed three times (on April 10th, 24th, 27th) to the American government and International Olympic Committee to realise their participation in the Los Angeles Olympic Games. That was the positive intent of the Chernenko Administration itself.

Chernenko, in the dinner given in the Kremlin on the 10th of May, to which the King of Spain Juan Carlos and his wife were invited, declared that Soviet would never deliver a nuclear attack on non-nuclear countries. Prof. Igor Ratishev wrote an article "The menace of America toward Asia" in *Novoe Vremia* (New Age), No.19 of '84 (May Number). In the article introducing the discussion in Yokohama conference about "Peace and Change in Asia and the Pacific Area," he appealed to hinder American vessels loaded with Tomahawk from calling at Japan. The Politburo has already sent out invitations to Kremlin to Miyamoto, the Chairman of the Japan Communist Party and to the leaders of the Japan Socialist Party.

Chernenko has carried out those foreign policies which estrange non-nuclear countries such as Spain and Japan from America. On the other hand, he has been supporting protest movements against nuclear force in the countries which are the members of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), among which some have already received the arrangement of American intermediate range nuclear missiles, and others are going to receive.

As concerns an improvement in the relations with China which has been anxiety since Brezhnev Era, he dispatched the first Vice-Premier Alhipov on May 10, and was to tackle a large scale economic exchanges.

Chernenko's foreign policy means a slow process. He was to wait until protest movements against nuclear force among members of NATO are exalted and pershing 2 and cruising missile arranged by America are frozen or withdrawn. By the time he must attain the goal of the 11th five-year-plan successfully, and get ready to submit the draft plan of the 12th five-year-plan to the 27th Party Convention. Moreover, under Secretary-General Chernenko the New Communist Party Platform, which was left unfinished though Former Secretary-General Andropov set about, has already been drawn up.

Abreast the time when Soviet expressed a boycott of the Los Angeles Olympic Games, Dolgikh, a candidate for a member of Politburo and concurrently Secretary of Central Committee, attended the first party convention of "The Socialism of All Greece", that is the Government party of Greece left-wing regime, as the head of the representative group of the Soviet Communist Party. It was Premier Tikhonov who visited Greece under the Former Andropov Administration and got good results in the field of economic cooperation. Dolgikh's visit to Athens has a rather important meanings.

In this way Secretary-General Chernenko has set about forming a long range regime including successors. He has to solve lots of domestic task steadily. To give the highest priority to domestic policy, Soviet should not hurry the restoration of the negotiation for nuclear disarmament interrupted in November last year. The terms of the restoration were to withdraw new-style intermediate range missiles arranged by America. So it was Chernenko's fundamental policy to gain time until political power of the countries joining NATO gives in to a movement against nuclear force in their own countries.

If Olympic players from Soviet and East German teams join the Los Angeles Olympic Games and monopolize gold medals, then national prestige of Soviet will be enhanced. It will result in international recognition of leading position of Soviet as a peace-loving nation. The Los Angeles Olympic Games could be the best chance for Soviet Union to demonstrate an amicable diplomatic step.

There is a great resemblance in character between the incident of boycotting the Los Angeles Olympic Games and that of shooting down a plane of Korea Airline on September 1 in 1983. Then the Soviet military felt uneasy about Andropov's attitude making concessive proposals in succession toward the negotiations for reducing INF (Intermediate Nuclear Force) in Geneva (my book *Disappearance of Andropov*). The incident of shooting down a plane of Korea Airline ended the negotiation for nuclear disarmament.

The incident of boycotting the Los Angeles Olympic Games this year has expansion, which includes postponing a visit to China of the first Vice-Premier Alhipov, the visit to Moscow of Head of North Korea Kim Il Sung, and the Statement on May 20 by Defence Minister Ustinov. An American weekly magazine *Time* carried the declaration by the Soviet high official circles in May 21 number. It was as follows. "Now the whole world must have learnt that the Soviet government will never fail to do what it says it will do. The first sign was interruption of the INF negotiation in Geneva of last autumn. The incident of this time was the second sign. To replace "the Soviet high official circles" with "The Soviet military and KGB" establishes its identity.

2. The Position of Far East in the Soviet Foreign Policy

Soviet has an intention of failing the Seoul Olympic Games four years later after the boycott of the Los Angeles Olympic Games. Boycotting of this time has made it certain that not only countris within the sphere of Soviet influence, but also the Third Worlorders, which had friendly relations with them, would not join the Seoul Olympic

Games four years later. The Seoul Olympic Games were supposed to become a 'lever' for the Chun Doo Hwan Administration of South Korea to reinforce political and economic stability. From political standpoint stability means that South Korea receives recognition from many countries including those within the Communist bloc through the Seoul Olympic Games. The more countries including the Communist bloc join it, the better.

But soon after the incident of boycotting the Los Angeles Olympic Games of Soviet Union, within the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Lausanne proposals for changing the place of the Seoul Olympic Games have been offered. This means a failure to the Chun Doo Hwan Administration. From economic standpoint as well changing the place of the Seoul Olympic Games gives a severe blow to Korean industry. For Korean construction industry barely recovered from a decrease of order, which was caused by a depression of oil-producing countries in the middle East, as a result of a demand for construction such as a stadium for the Olympic Games in the country.

It was for two reasons that Soviet postponed, virtually suspended, a visit to China by the first Vice-Premier Alhipov the previous day. The first reason was that China had attacked Vietnam. The second was that Soviet had an intention to check the approach to South Korea by China. China has decided to join the Seoul Olympic Games in 1988. And China has connived at the export of Chinese coal, which was exploited by combined effort of China and America to South Korea. Being irritated by the situation progressing into economic exchanges between China and South Korea, Soviet formed the strategy to get China into international isolation instead, by boycotting the Los Angeles Olympic Games and making more countries sympathize.

On May 23 in the speech at the reception for the Head of North Korea Kim Il Sung, Chernenko referred to the relations with China. He said Soviet had consistently insisted in making the relations between Soviet and China sound and improved. Soviet never expects better relations between China and South Korea. The relations are against the soundness of the relations between Soviet and China.

It has been said that it was to make Soviet side approve of Kim John Il, who was a hereditary successors for which there was no precedent within the Communist bloc, that the Head of North Korea Kim Il Sung visited Moscow. The Head Kim Il Sung, however, did not go with his son Kim John Il, which highlighted the other intent. In the statement made by the Head Kim Il Sung through Tass, which was announced in *Izvestia* dated on April 10, there was a word requesting military assistance of Soviet. It emphasized that North Korea was inferior to South Korea both in the scale of the army and in the field of modern military technics.

On May 23 at the reception held in the Kremlin he mentioned that Soviet people had given positive support to the struggle of North Korea aiming at the establishment of socialism and peaceful unification of their own country. He indirectly thanked Soviet for its military assistance. According to the article "A Policy of cooperation for Mutual Advantage of Korea", which appeared in *Various Problems of the Far East* the March '84 number, the weight which the enterprise constructed in North Korea with the help of Soviet accounts for in the gross product of the country was as follows (as in 1982).

Electric power about 63 percent, steel 33 percent, cast iron 11 percent, rolling mill for iron and metal 38 percent, oil products 50 percent. In addition, the construction of main lines for wireless broadcast containing branch lines from the capital pyongyang to the border line between North Korea and Soviet and relay stations, and the construction of factories in Pyongyang of microelectromotor which could produce 1,000,000 piece in year and such were supplied by the assistance of Soviet (p.23-24 of the same magazine).

We have to know the fact that it is in fact Soviet that bosses the national economy of North Korea not China. Soviet has come to present North Korea strong lines along which Soviet increases military assistance, calling the policy a counterplot against "Japanese militarism "and "the Washington-Seoul-Tokyo military axis". What did North Korea repay Soviet with to acquire the enlarged military assistance as a result of the visit to Moscow of the Head Kim Il Sung? We must take every chance to inquire into this question from now on. Anyway we can say it is the background of the conversion of a foreign policy, which means that Soviet has rapidly approached to North Korea, that has significance.

The first Vice-Premier Alhipov of Soviet Union suddenly put off the schedule on the previous day of a visit to China. One of the reasons was, as I already referred, that Soviet had an intention to check the approach to South Korea by China.

One more reason which was more important was a military collision between China and Vietnam. *Isvestia* dated May 12, quoting *Nyansan*, the party newspaper of Vietnam Communist Party, censured Chinese troops for their continual border violation of Vietnam and bombardment especially from the beginning of May. And it is said that the censure kept pace with the time of a visit to China of President Regan of America.

An American weekly magazine *Time* May 28 number points out correctly that the military collision between China and Vietnam had an intention to check the attack against the surviving guerrillas of the Pol Pot by Vietnam. It says that therefore Chinese troops will continually bombard the border of between China and Vietnam so that the Pol Pot army, which China supports might not be got into extermination. It judges that there is a very strong possibility that Chinese troops will reinforce the military pressure against the border between China and Vietnam in future. *Time* judges not only the circumstances above, but also the circumstances that China has a strong fear that Vietnam has offered Cam Ranh Bay in the South China Sea as a navy base of Soviet.

In short, so far as Vietnam is an ally of Soviet and therefore, takes a policy that it keeps company with the distant countries and attacks neighborhood, it is said that the China-Vietnam dispute and their opposition will continue. Consequently there is in fact little hope for making the relation between Soviet and China sound and improved.

The postponement of a visit to China of Alhipov of this time has, in fact, a meaning as good as suspension. It means a serious failure for the Chernenko Administration which was going to improve the relations with China.

The bombardment against the border between China and Vietnam by China was repeated periodically according to the attack against guerillas of the Pol Pot By Vietnam. Therefore, the leading faction of the Chernenko Administration, which had aimed at a

visit to China of the first Vice-Premier Alhipov it would not interfere with the improvement the relations between Soviet and China, has been got into a defeat. It can be said that the reason was an offer of the newest techniques including military skills which president Reagan of America brought to China as "present".

To put too great emphasis on the improvement of the relation between Soviet and China might cause estrangement of Vietnam allied with Soviet. Under such circumstances the Soviet Pacific fleet will not be able to use Cam Ranh Bay as a base. Therefore, in consequence of the higher priority of military consideration, the improvement of the relations between Soviet and China is left to let go.

3. The Position of Western Europe in the Soviet Foreign policy

On May 20 in the form of answering questions of reporters for the Tass, Defense Minister Ustinov threatened both Japan and America undisguisedly.

The threat starts from a queer logic that the arrangement of new-type intermediate range nuclear missiles in allies of the NATO by America has thrown nuclear powers off their balance.

After the all Europe Security Concil in Helsinki of the summer in 1975, Soviet, betraying the expectation of Western countries which are vacant because of detente, arranged the threatening intermediate range missiles SS20 west of Ural. Leaving of the fact, in a great hurry, the Western countries requested the Pershing 2 and cruising missiles in West Germany, England, and Italy. As a result, a balance of nuclear powers in Western Europe was barely attained.

Defense Minister Ustinov is getting at the heart of a threat. He emphasizes that in December in 1983 Soviet arranged the intermediate range nuclear missiles SS20 in East Germany and Czechslovakia, which are treaty powers of Warsaw Treaty Organization, and that now they have been further reinforced. This is justified as a measure against the loss of a balance of nuclear powers.

Furthermore he threatens with the fact that Soviet has reinforced atomic submarines on the sea from which Soviet can attack the targets on the land of America in 8 or 10 minutes after a discharge, which was an item which was taken international notice in the view that the late Secretary-General Andropov expressed on measures against the arrangement of the intermediate range nuclear missiles of America on November 25 in 1983.

The interpretation of the American Government circles seems to be that the threat of Ustinov is a statement having been repeated until now, not new one. Indeed there are some points that can be considered in such a way, but is not more important to inquire into the time and background of the utterance?

First, as regards the time of the utterance, it must be considered as a part of a strong foreign policy following the boycott of the Los Angeles Olympic Games. In Chernenko's speech made in the reception for the Head Kim Il Sung on May 23, there are sharp words which have never been used. Because I can not yet use the original words at

the moment of writing this article, let me use a translation on the *Mainichi*. It is as follows. Japanese militarism has revealed its nature that is, expansionism and colonialism more than once. Nevertheless, in Tokyo a voice requesting for revenge being heard again, the claim for the territory has been broached.

There is no precedent for such violent wording as "revengeism" toward Japan by the chief leader of Soviet. The following is one of possible interpretations. Prime Minister Nakasone inspected Afghan displaced persons' camps when he visited Pakistan, which got on nerves of Soviet side and caused the wording "revengeism" of this time. But the wording "revengeism" can be considered as a grand design of Soviet that Soviet puts the Korean Peninsula in the place of Vietnam by one charge and spurs North Korea to revenge on colonial rule by Japan by making a spearhead of Soviet of the country.

Let me reflect on the background of Ustinov threat. The 9th of May was the anniversary of victory of Soviet over Germany. Every year the leaders of Soviet troops contribute commemorative articles to the newspapers on parade. one of the remarkable features was that the head of political leading administration of Soviet troops General Epishev did not write for the papers. In place of him, the head of the General Headquarters of the strategy rocket troops and Vice-Minister of Defence Torpuko, who is representative of strong faction as well as General Ogarkov, contributed a commemorative article "Victory of People" to *Trude*, the party publication of the Central Council of Soviet Labour Union. As for the political leading administration of Soviet troops, only Vice-Head wrote a commemorative article "The Communist Party which encouraged victory of the people and organized it" for *The Life of Party* No.9 (in May). Epishev, who is from a party bureaucrat belonging to the Ukrainian Connection, might let his turn go by buried behind strong troops.

One more feature is that the utterance of Secretary-General Chernenko is quoted in both an article of Ustinov "Victory smashing myth and fantasy" (in *Pravda* dated May 9) and a statement of the chief of the General Staff Ogarkov (the answer to questions of a newspaper for *Red star* dated May 9).

When Chernenko visited "Sickle and Hammer" metallurgy factory in Moscow this year's April, he said to labours, "All the aggressors will be revenged continuously. Shall we let all the friends and hostile people of ours learn of this?"

Both Ustinov and Ogarkov quotes this utterance of Chernenko, which does not show the leadership of Chernenko toward the military authorities, it can be judged that the leaders of Soviet troops exploited utterance convenient to themselves.

4. The Fate of the Chernenko Administration

The oppression toward Tudeh (Communist Party) by the Khomeini Administration in Iran. The allies Mozambique and Angola, unable to overcome the ruin of domestic economy, entered into a cease-fire and non-aggression treaty with Republic of South Africa and accepted economic assistance of the Western countries. In addition, China took action by cooperation of military technique between America and China and economic

cooperation between China and South Korea. If we stand by watching the temporary recession in power of Soviet, we can find that there is a stronger danger that the recession will last long. The Secretary-General Chernenko, however, positively carries out a domestic policy and is too passive in a foreign policy. These must be judgement of the leading faction of Soviet troops, that is, strong faction. The comemorative article of victory over Germany of May 9 was a sign of the conversion to strong lines to abroad.

According to the cablegram from a special correspondent in Bonn for the American press *Washington post* dated May 24, the high official of the government of West Germany, who visited Soviet in the suite of the Foreign Minister Genscher of the country, mentioned that the status of first Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister of Soviet Gromyko has risen. The high official said that Chernenko was stiffed like a tree and had difficulty in breathing in a conference with Genscher. The high official compared the present condition of the Secretary-General Chernenko to the end of the late Secretary-General Brezhnev (in *Nikkei* dated My 25).

Two examples will prove the elevation of status of Gromyko in Politbureau. The first example is the fact that Gromyko has entered his name in the list of the committee of arrangement for a new party platformed in the Central Committee of the party. From the Politbureau only two persons, Gromyko and Gorbachov, are members of the committee. Neither Grishin nor Romanov are elected as committeemen.

The second example is the letter from Gromyko to the Secretary-General of the United Nations De Cueleir which was presented on May 20. This letter is treating the relation between disarmament and economic development. In it he assumes the proposal for disarmament by the allies of NATO to be deception, and blew his own trumpet representingly that Soviet has proposed to appropriate a reduced part of the military expense for economic development of developing countries since the 1950's.

There is an information, which is not certified, that Gromyko was a representative of the strong faction which insisted on boycotting the Los Angeles Olympic Games in the Politbureau. Judging from the content of the letter of Gromyko, that can be guessed. It might be a matter of course that a strong opinion against America satisfies the advantage of the Soviet military authorities.

On Soviet papers dated May 20 the answer of Chernenko for Galvin and Sagan, both America scholars, appeared prior to the letter of Gromyko and the threat of Ustinov. Supporting the decision of the United Nations General Assembly which prohibits atomic armament in space and the use of nuclear force for attack on the earth, the answer states the Soviet will freeze atomic armament in space even if concluding an agreement with America. The content of Chernenko's answer gives an impression that it indicates its own way off the strong lines against America which Soviet goes.

After Soviet decides to boycott the Los Angeles Olympic Games, suddenly journalism in Europe and America began to convey a rumor of Chernenko's sickness. It is natural that there should be anxiety about his health, because he is the aged who is to celebrate his 73th birthday in September of this year. Since Soviet changed its foreign poli-

cy into strong one none the less, increasingly journalism has conveyed a rumor of Chernenko's sickness, which can not but be judged that there is a relation between the two persons. It means that the faction supporting strong lines against abroad, which equals anti-Chernenko faction, has inspired the rumor of Chernenko's sickness in Western journalists.

For *Red Star* dated May 19, Red Star Medal bearer, who has stern titles, that is, lieutenant technical, colonel, manager of an airplane repair shop, A. Cocolyn, wrote "The way to conquer inactivity and spiritlessness." It is a proposal for raising the labour productivity by introducing the working group system into munition plants. The late Secretary-General Andropov proposed systematizing this working groups, or contracting teams in the general assembly of the Central Committee in June 1983.

In Ustinov's article quoted previously insistence similar to that was seen. He states that it was because socialist economy, which was the material function of the military force and victory against Germany of Soviet, was superior to fascist economy that Soviet could gain a victory.

It is clear that the military authorities of Soviet will support lines of economic improvement. Gorbachov, who is the driving force of the lines, is still only a frail figure as a prince is. Therefore, as a guardian, Gromyko had come to the fore.

The Chernenko Administration has weakened and got unstable now that it has a long-range task. If it is going to control the military authorities of Soviet, and tackle reconstruction of Soviet economy, the hawk-liners against foreign countries will take advantage of it. This is the fate which successive administrations of Soviet have faced. Particularly in the case of the Chernenko Administration, what is more unfortunately, the period of it corresponds to that of the temporary retreat in power of Soviet in the south of Africa, the Persian Gulf, and China.

After the recession of the domestic policy against abroad, that is new detente policy, the strong policy against abroad, making the initial step of boycotting the Los Angeles Olympic Games, has become in the lead. This fact typically represents the nature of Communism that it prays wealth by expanding abroad.

It is the realities that Japan, that is an innocent sheep, is made the target for victim and North Korea, that is a wolf, is being instigated. (completed on May 25, 1984)

p.s.

The Conference of persons in charge of sports of 11 countries in the Communist bloc in Prague in Czechoslovakia was closed on May 21 after presenting the cooperative communique.

By it, boycotting the Los Angeles Olympic Games of North Korea has become decisive. In addition, it is suggested that North Korea should boycott the Seoul Olympic Games four years later. It can be said that the prospect in this article is proved right.