

## Research Summary

With the generous support of the Sumitomo Foundation, we completed the project titled as Japan as a Factor in the U.S.-China Thaw (1969-1972). We are pleased to report the main proceedings and findings of the research.

The basic question that we are trying to respond to is Japan's role in the U.S.-China Rapprochement during the Nixon era. However, the focus of our exploitation is the perception and influence of Japan in the strategic thinking and the endless haggling of U.S. and China's top leaders, rather than the common trilateral relations among U.S., China and Japan.

The findings were drawn upon the newly declassified archives of U.S., Japan and Taiwan along with some oral history materials. We have paid visits to the National Archive of U.S. (Maryland), the Diplomatic Record Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the archive of Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica (Taiwan). The published archive documents of China were extensively woven into the narrative and analysis. The investigation was divided into three main parts: the Japan factor in the adjustments of U.S. and China's policy toward each other and in the negotiation of two countries' top leaders.

Based on the research we came to the conclusion as below:

(i) The initial purpose and long-term goal of Nixon's China initiative is to tackle the China Threat which would be more horrible in Post-Vietnam War era. The making of China policy was put into the overall Asia strategy in the Nixon administration. It is a dilemma for Americans to encourage Japan doing more in defense to serve as a reliable counterbalance against China while preventing Japan from becoming extravagant independence or leaning on the Soviets radically. As Nixon alleged, his China game was to keep the Japanese in line. Also, Japan was viewed by Americans as a formidable competitor in terms of the opening to China because of Japan's increasing hunger for China market and constant domestic pressure against its rigid China policy.

(ii) The adjustment of China's policy toward America was a logical consequence of trembling fear for its security. As Chairman Mao admitted, the invitation of Nixon and Kissinger from Beijing was forged based on its estimate of joint invasion by U.S., U.S.S.R and Japan. The containment and anti-containment in global stage, the security of its surrounding area and the Taiwan question composed the core concerns of China leadership on its relations with U.S., and all of them were closely linked to Japan. China adopted a tit-for-tat strategy in response to "the ambition and conspiracy of American imperialists and Japanese reactionaries", and they were proactive and shrewd to cast in a bone between U.S. and Japan.

(iii) Japan Question was on the top agenda of U.S.-China negotiation, and the so-called Japan Threat was largely utilized to hammer out the common ground and shared interests between Washington and Beijing. The promise to halt the Japanese ambition toward Taiwan after American reducing the military presence in the island was offered by Nixon, and he also pledged to take every effort to prevent Japan from nurture its military expansionism with economic muscle. In return, Mao and Zhou seemed to accept the notion that the U.S.-Japan alliance would be consistent with the national interest of China. Moreover, the worries of U.S.S.R.-Japan flirting drove them much closer and they agreed to keep regular exchange upon Japan's move. The Japan factor which should had been insurmountable obstacle turned out to be an adhesive in the U.S.-China thaw.

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