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peror as the sovereign ruler of the country, was to continue to the end of the war. The Potsdam Declaration (Document 14), which urged Japan's formal surrender, did not refer to this issue. Thus in accepting the declaration, the Japanese government was able to point out that the "said Declaration does not comprise any demand which prejudices the prerogatives of His Majesty as a sovereign ruler." In response to this Japanese message, Secretary of State James Byrnes stated that after the surrender, "the ultimate form of the Government of Japan would be established by the freely expressed will of the Japanese people," which in effect gave no assurance of the preservation of Japan's national polity. There were possibilities of coup d'etat by young officers that had as their aim disruption of the surrender negotiations and waging of a last desperate battle in the hope of obtaining concessions from the Allied powers. However, in the end counsel of reason prevailed, and as Foreign Minister Togo Shigemitsu (1882-1958) described in his memoirs (Document 15), an intervention by the emperor played a major role in the final decision to surrender. The last selection, the Imperial Rescript on Surrender, is self-explanatory (Document 16). In defeat, the emperor was at his best. Without his active cooperation and the use of his prestige, the surrender and the occupation would have been far more difficult and painful. On August 30, General of the Army Douglas MacArthur landed at Atsugi airport, and on September 2 the instrument of surrender was signed aboard the U.S.S. Missouri. Thus was begun a new chapter in the history of Japan.

13 Memorial of Prince Konoe Urging Termination of War, 1945

Your subject respectfully submits this memorial for your Imperial Majesty's consideration. He now believes that regrettable as it may be, defeat in the war will become inevitable, and upon this premise he wishes to set forth his views. It is true that defeat will be a blashm on our national polity; however, defeat alone will not endanger our national polity because public opinion in England and the United States has not insisted on a change in our national polity. (Of course, there are some extremist views and the future is by no means certain.) From the point of view of preserving our national polity, which concerns your subject most, is not the defeat itself, but the possibility of a communist revolution accompanied by the defeat.

Both domestic and international situations are seemingly moving rapidly toward a communist revolution. In the international scene, there has been an outstanding advance in the position of the Soviet Union. Our people have never been able to grasp the true intent of the Soviet Union. Since the adoption in 1935 of the policy of a United Front—that is, the two-stage revolution tactic—and the subsequent dissolution of the Comintern, many of our people have taken lightly the danger of bolshevization. This is a superficial and unrealistic view. The Soviet Union has never abandoned its policy of bolshevization of the world, and this is made abundantly clear by its recent overt maneuvering in European countries.

The Soviet Union is attempting to establish Soviet regimes in European countries bordering it and pro-Soviet regimes in other European countries. Their work has been steady and it has been mostly successful. The Rho regime in Yugoslavia is a prime example. As to Poland, the Soviet Union first forced a government among the Polish refugees in the Soviet Union and then insisted that it could not deal with the Government in Exile in London. 22 While professing that it does not interfere in the domestic politics of other countries, in reality the Soviet Union has always interfered in the domestic politics of European countries, with a view to leading these countries to become pro-Soviet.

The Soviet Union is equally applicable to East Asia. In Yam, Okano 23 came from Moscow to lead the Japanese Liberation League, and made contact with the Korean Independence Alliance, Korean Volunteers' Corps, and Formosa Vanguard Corps. They are now appealing their causes to Japan proper.

Thus there is every reason to believe in the danger of an eventual interference by the Soviet Union in Japan's domestic politics (e.g., legal recognition of the Communist party, Cabinet portfolios for Communist party members, suspension of the Peace Preservation Law and of the Anti-Comintern Pact). Now looking at the domestic scene, your subject finds that conditions are ripe for the success of a communist revolution. They are poverty, greater voice exercised by labor, proportionate increase in the pro-Soviet sentiment accompanied by the rise of reaction against Great Britain and the United States, reformist movements among military officers, bureaucrat officials joining such movements, and the underground activities of the militants, who are behind these movements. Of these, what worries your subject most are the reformist movements of some segments of the military.

A great majority of our younger officers seem to think that we should not criticize our national polity and communism are compatible, and their avid advocacy of internal reform within the military stems from this belief. Most of our professional soldiers come from families of middle or lower classes, and many of them are thoroughly imbued with the ideal of our national polity through their military education. Therefore, communists enjoy advantages to appeal to them by suggesting the compatibility of our national polity and communism.

It is now clear that the Manchurian Incident, followed by the outbreak of the China Incident, and their subsequent extension into the Greater East Asia War were a chain of events carefully planned by the military. During the Manchurian

22Okano is the alias used by Nanako Sato, leader of the Japanese Communist Party exiled in Moscow.

23Koike goes on to criticize Soviet activities in Russia, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and the United States.
Incident, they publicly stated that the incident was aimed at internal reform in Japan. This is a well-known fact. During the time of the China Incident, the same conspirators in this group publicly avowed that "it is better to prolong the incident. If it is solved then there will be no internal reform."

This clique in the military that advocates internal reform may be aiming at a communist revolution. However, these bureaucrats and civilians surrounding them—call them rightists or leftist, for the rightists are those communists under the garb of our national policy—hitherto attempt to bring about a communist revolution. It is quite accurate to say that they are the ones who manipulate those unenlightened, simple-minded soldiers.

The above is the conclusion your subject recently reached after calm reflection incorporating his extensive experiences dealing with the military, bureaucracy, rightists, leftists, and others during the past ten years. When your subject looks back to the happenings of the past ten years from this vantage point, there were many events that would support this conclusion.

Your subject received the mandate to form a Cabinet twice. During his terms of office, he adopted some of those reformist doctrines in order to avoid internal friction. His eagerness to maintain national unity led him to overlook the true intent hidden behind their doctrines. All of these came from your subject’s ignorance of the matter. He deeply regrets this and begs for the forgiveness of Your Majesty.

Recently, as the fortunes of war turned for the worse, increasingly voices are raised extolling that the 100 million sufferer rather than dissonance. Those who advocate such a cause are not the so-called rightists, but rather the communists who instigate from behind, hoping that through the resulting confusion, their aim of effecting a revolution may be realized.

While on the one hand they advocate complete destruction of the United States and Great Britain, on the other hand they are fostering pro-Soviet sentiment. One segment of the military even aver that Japan should align with the Soviet Union regardless of the sacrifice involved. Another school thinks of collaboration with the Chinese communist forces in Yanan.

This being the case, conditions for the success of a communist revolution are becoming better each day both internally and externally. Should the tide of war worsen, even further, this situation might develop rapidly.

If there should be a ray of hope in the war, it would be different. However, viewing from the premise that defeat is inevitable, we are fighting a hopeless war. Should we continue it any further, we would be playing into the hands of the communists. From the point of view of upholding our national policy, we must conclude the war as soon as possible.

The greatest obstacle to the termination of the war is the existence of the clique in the military who brought about the current chaos from the time of the Manchurian Incident. They have lost confidence in pursuing the war to a successful end, and insist on resisting the enemies in order to save face.

In attempting to bring about an early end to the war, unless we make a clean sweep of this group, there may be great confusion caused by the collaboration of rightist and leftist civilian co-conspirators with this group to attain their goals. To end the war we must first make a clean sweep of this group.

Once we make a clean sweep of this group within the military, those opportunistic bureaucrats and rightists and leftist co-conspirators are likely to cease functioning. This is so because they do not have power of their own and must manipulate the military to effect their sinister designs. As it is said, destroy the roots and the leaves will wilt of their own.

Perhaps this is folly on your subject’s part, but he wishes to speculate that once a clean sweep of this group is made, the military’s composition is changed, the attitudes of the United States, Great Britain, and China might become more lenient toward us. Originally the United States, Great Britain, and China proclaimed that their war aims were to destroy Japanese military clique.

If the character of the military should change and its policy were altered, would they (the Allied powers) not reconsider the desirability of continuing the war?

Setting this aside the prerequisites to saving Japan from a communist revolution lie in the clean sweep of this group and rebuilding of the military. Your subject humbly begs of Your Majesty to take an unprecedented resolution in this matter.

14 The Potsdam Declaration, 1945

Proclamation Defining Terms for the Japanese Surrender, Signed at Potsdam and Issued by the President of the United States (Truman) and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (Attlee) and Confirmed in the President of the National Government of China (Chiang), July 26, 1945.

(1) We—the president of the United States, the president of the National Government of the Republic of China, and the prime minister of Great Britain, representing the hundreds of millions of our countries, have conferred and agree that Japan shall be given an opportunity to end this war.

(2) The dangerous land, sea, and air forces of the British Empire and of China, many times reinforced by their armies and air forces from the west, are poised to strike the final blows upon Japan. This military power is sustained and inspired by the determination of all the Allied Nations to prosecute the war against Japan until she ceases to resist.