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Speech at the New Year assembly at the JCP head office

**90th anniversary of its foundation - Record new
page in JCP's history by learning and utilizing
lessons from the past**

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JCP Executive Committee Chair

January 4, 2012

Shii in New Year message calls for further JCP advancement in 2012 marking 90th anniversary of its foundation

January 4, 2012

Japanese Communist Party Chair Shii Kazuo delivered a speech at the New Year assembly at the JCP head office in Tokyo on January 4, calling on all members to make efforts to further party advancement in 2012, the 90th anniversary of party foundation. He said:

I'd like to send my heartfelt greetings to all party members on the occasion of our New Year gathering. I'd also like to express my warm solidarity with those who are working hard to assist in the areas damaged by the 3.11 disaster and the nuclear accident and who are working tirelessly to provide support to the victims. I express my determination to cooperate in making the utmost effort to restore disaster victims' hometowns if possible so they can live without anxiety.

This year marks the 90th anniversary of the JCP founding in 1922. At the beginning of this memorable year, let's confirm our determination to build a strong JCP and to achieve major progress in the next general election.

Record new page in JCP's history by learning and utilizing lessons from the past

First is to record a new page in the JCP's history by studying and utilizing the lessons gained from the past.

When I reflect on the party's 90 year-history, I keenly realize that the JCP has continuously confronted difficult challenges. The party at times made

mistakes, but I can proudly say that the JCP bravely overcame every challenge to work in defense of peace, democracy, and people's lives. I want to point out that the JCP obtained "three treasures" through its struggles.

The first is the JCP struggles in the prewar period in which JCP members risked their lives to oppose the despotic rule of the Tenno (Emperor) and the war of aggression, and to call for peace and people's sovereignty.

During the period of time before the Pacific War broke out, political parties other than the JCP dissolved themselves, and joined together to push for the war of aggression. Many JCP members were killed for their beliefs by the Tenno government. However, the JCP's inimitable pioneer spirit in its struggles eventually overcame the oppression.

This treasure was gained in combination with the JCP founding spirit of "working to reduce people's hardships." After the earthquake and tsunami hit north-east Japan on March 11, many JCP members worked hard utilizing this spirit and earned the trust of many disaster victims. In the prefectural assembly elections in Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima, the total number of JCP seats increased to 11 from the previous 6. An independent local assemblyman said, "The JCP provided support to those who had no access to support from local authorities. No other party has the grassroots-based organizational strength of the JCP." A Liberal Democratic Party executive member said, "At times of national crisis like the 3.11 disaster, the JCP shows a strong presence and commitment to working hard selflessly. Only the JCP has such a presence among Japanese political parties." This JCP presence has continued to expand through the party's experiences accumulated from the prewar period.

The second is the effort to overcome the party's greatest crisis, the so-called "1950 Problem," through which the JCP established its course enabling sovereign independence, in which each nation can steer its own course in its revolutionary transition by disallowing the interference and hegemony of big powers.

In the 1960s, the JCP fought against the unlawful interference from both the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of China's Mao Zedong group, and succeeded in getting the two parties to admit their wrongdoing. The JCP carried out a struggle against the former Soviet Union's hegemonic actions operating under the guise of socialism, such as its aggression against Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan. The legitimacy of this JCP struggle was shown by the collapse of the Soviet Union. The JCP is the only communist party in the world which consistently has maintained a policy of sovereign independence, has developed itself through its protection of this policy, and has contributed to far reaching political and theoretical developments.

The JCP struggle against the hegemony of big powers is a big "treasure" even today. Among the JCP's opposition party diplomacy initiatives in 2011, exchanges with South Korea were notable. In November, I visited South Korea as a member of the Japan-Korea Parliamentarians' Union. At that time, the Korean counterpart highly welcomed the fact that all JCP Dietmembers joined the Union. Many people thanked the JCP for its role in realizing the return of Korean royal assets from Japan. JCP member of the House of Representatives Kasai Akira became the only Japanese parliamentarian who was invited to the ceremony commemorating the return of the royal protocols of the Joseon Dynasty hosted by the South Korean government and received a warm welcome.

The background enabling the development of good relations between the JCP and South Korea is the trust gained from the JCP history of opposing Japan's colonial rule in solidarity with the Korea's independent movement and of fighting against the hegemony of big powers like the former Soviet Union. Whenever I introduce the JCP by saying, "The JCP is totally different from the former Soviet Union and North Korea. The JCP is a peaceful and democratic communist party," Korean people open their minds. The policy of sovereign independence which was developed through the severe struggles is a vital tool in the JCP's opposition party diplomacy.

The third is the JCP's new Program adopted by the 23rd Congress in 2004. In the new Program, the JCP made realistic and rational changes in its theory

regarding a democratic revolution formulated in the 1961 Program. It also developed a new viewpoint on how to understand the global situation and create a future society by overcoming the constraints and problems in the 1961 Program. This change and development were the culmination of what the JCP had been trying to achieve through its pioneering works, struggles, and political and theoretical explorations since the 1961 Program was adopted.

It has been 8 years since the new JCP Program was adopted. It is important that the Program has become familiar to party members in their daily activities. Our major drive to hold gatherings to talk about the JCP Program and discuss a future course for Japan has taken root in members' daily activities and has played an important role in party buildup. The new Program becomes the body and soul of the party when party members study it, use it as a guide for their daily activities, and talk with people about it.

A frequently asked question is why the JCP does not change its name. However, the important thing to understand is the historical reasons why the JCP does not need to change its name. Our name has a direct link to our struggles to defend the interest of the general public for 90 years and is the proof that we overcame all obstacles.

As part of events commemorating the 90th anniversary of its foundation, the JCP Executive Committee decided to publicize collections of the works by the late JCP executives Miyamoto Kenji and Ueda Koichiro. I hope that many people read their works.

Let's make this year commemorating the JCP's 90th anniversary a year of marking a new page in its history by learning from past experience and utilizing the three "treasures".

Make further advancement at ‘historical crossroad’

Secondly, I strongly call on all members to work to make this year a year of marking a new page in history by deeply understanding the current situation of being at a “historical crossroad.”

The recent 4th CC Plenum resolution analyzed the political situation since the change of government in the summer of 2009 and stated that the essence of Japanese politics has come to a “crossroad.”

In an Akahata New Year interview, I also said that when looking back on the party’s 50 year-history since the adoption of the 1961 Program from the viewpoint of “dialectical discussion of political conflicts,” we are standing at a “historical crossroad.”

For the past 50 years under the JCP Program since 1961, we experienced both good times and bad times. While the JCP waged struggles under its people-first policies, the ruling forces carried out anti-JCP campaigns in order to restrain the JCP from gaining strength through elections. We fought against such campaigns and made further efforts for advancement. For the last half century, the JCP marked a peak in the number of its Dietmembers twice and faced two major anti-JCP campaigns.

The JCP marked its first peak in the number of its Dietmembers through the national elections held between the late 1960s and 1970s. In order to stop the JCP advance in elections, the ruling forces carried out anti-JCP attacks and established an “all-are-ruling party” structure through political party realignment which was promoted by anti-JCP and right wing forces that resulted in the 1980 agreement between the then Socialist Party of Japan and Komei Party on a coalition government plan. As a result, the JCP suffered losses in several national elections.

The JCP marked the second peak in the late 1990s when the “all-are-ruling party” setup collapsed. Through the 1996 general election and the 1998 House

of Councilors election, the number of JCP's Dietmembers in both Houses reached record-highs. The ruling forces began to move to establish a "two-party system" which was the strongest anti-JCP effort to date. The Democratic Party of Japan was created as a counterpart of the LDP in the "two-party system" with strong assistance from the business world. Since then, the JCP again suffered losses in national elections.

What is significant here is that JCP advances and anti-communist attacks are not just taking place one after another. As the JCP was hit by the two anti-communist attacks, the first utilizing an "all-are-ruling party" structure and the following promoting the "two major parties" system, people's livelihoods and the whole society were badly affected. The anti-communist attacks were also "anti-people attacks". Every time those in power launched the attacks, they undermined their own strength and reached a deadlock. I'd like to stress that this is the clear conclusion of the half century-long "dialectics of political confrontation."

Now we face the newly-emerging situation: the failure of the second anti-communist attack, which is the establishment of a two major party system.

Voters' expectation for a new government to set a new direction in politics has been completely betrayed by the three successive governments led by the Democratic Party of Japan. The Noda Cabinet has completed the DPJ's shift back to the Liberal Democratic Party. In other words, the attempt to create a framework of choosing a ruling party from the two major parties has failed. If both parties' policies are unacceptable for voters, they cannot choose either. Actually, the major collapse of the two parties' very foundation has now started throughout Japan.

During the year-end and New Year period, the Noda Cabinet continued on recklessly, just following what the U.S. government and the Japanese business circle told it to do. The government decided to promote a big consumption tax hike at the same time as promote the reduction in the House of Representatives proportional representation seats. The outrageous attempt to promote the worst

form of tax increase and destruction of representative democracy must be blocked at any cost.

At the end of last year, in disregard of the consensus of Okinawans, the government first used a delivery service to send to Okinawa an environmental impact assessment report on the new U.S. base construction. When this failed, the Okinawa Defense Bureau director brought boxes filled with the report to the guard station of the prefectural office at 4 a.m. This unprecedented way of doing business has provoked strong anger among Okinawan people.

The government has started backstage negotiations with the U.S. government for entry into the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) economic pact. The U.S. Congress has already forced Japan to accept U.S. demands to open up the rice, beef, and postal markets. This action is also contributing to an increase in public anger.

The Noda Cabinet has now become more LDP than the LDP. As it fails to show the public any outlook and runs out of control, DPJ members are leaving the party as if they are escaping from a sinking ship. Self-destruction has started in the cabinet. In the beginning of the new year, the JCP expresses its determination to confront the Noda Cabinet and shows ways to break away from the present stifling policies in every field.

As we stand at the historical crossroad, what do we need to do to achieve party advance and create a new direction in Japan's politics? I believe there are two key points.

One is to use our wisdom and strength and increase cooperation with a wide range of people in order to develop a national movement that meets with every public demand.

This year, struggles to promote post-disaster reconstruction and to get rid of nuclear power plants continue to be significant. At the same time, crucial issues that will influence Japan's future course, including a consumption tax

hike and cuts in social security programs, the construction of a new U.S. base in Okinawa, and the entry into the TPP free-trade pact will be publicly discussed. It is also a significant year for the struggle to block the dictatorial rule by the “Osaka Ishin-no-Kai” led by Osaka Governor Hashimoto Toru and to defend Japan’s democracy. Let us share a view of creating a new united front by increasing a multi-strata cooperation with a wide range of people, including conservatives, based on our common grounds. Let us exert our strength for further development of the national struggle.

The fight against an increase in the consumption tax rate enters a crucial stage this year. Prime Minister Noda says that a consumption tax hike “cannot be avoided” but never gives a proper explanation about why such a major increase in the consumption tax is necessary. If he claims it cannot be avoided, then why does the government give major companies and the wealthy another tax break of 1.7 trillion yen? Why does it use tax money for wasteful public works projects, including the Yanba dam construction, on which the DPJ in the 2009 general election called for cancelation? Why does it allocate 420 billion yen for promoting nuclear power generation? Why does it try to pay so much to buy a fleet of the next generation fighter jet that costs 10 billion yen each? Why does it maintain 32 billion yen of annual government subsidies for political parties? Why does it reduce pension payments and cut other social security programs while calling for a “unified reform of social welfare programs and the taxation system”? The prime minister has never provided any reasonable explanation for any of this.

In the 2009 House of Representatives general election, the DPJ promised to the public that it would not increase the consumption tax in the next four years. No one can deny this fact. The DPJ-led government is not qualified to submit to the Diet a bill to increase the consumption tax rate without seeking public approval.

The Japanese Communist Party cordially calls for a nationwide struggle to be launched to block a consumption tax hike, which would lead to the destruction of livelihoods, the economy, as well as the state of national finance. We are determined to struggle by showing the alternative way to create financial resources for social security programs by reducing wasteful use of tax money

and based on the taxation principle of people's ability to pay so that social security programs will be improved step by step without relying on a consumption tax hike.

The other key point is to clearly present the JCP policy on how to reform Japan based on its Program and talk about the nation's future with as many people as possible.

The two major parties cannot present to the public what kind of Japan they are trying to create let alone present how to overcome the current issues we are facing right now. This is what the people are criticizing in addition to the malaise and political mistrust they have. We, therefore, need to present a clear vision and hope for a 21st century Japan.

The current stagnant conditions will be overcome only when we change the two abnormal characteristics of government policy: subordination to the U.S. government and the tight control of business circles. Let us widely discuss with the public the kinds of conditions will emerge if we promote a full-fledged restructuring of this old framework.

For instance, what kind of future can we enjoy if we abrogate the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty? A major act of disarmament will take place in Japan with the withdrawal of 55,000 U.S. troops, including a carrier strike group. This would enable Japan for the first time to promote the disarmament of all of East Asia and contribute to peace and stability as the country with its Article 9 fully implemented and enforced. 700 billion yen in the annual budget paid to maintain the U.S. forces, including the so-called "sympathy" budget, will be used to improve the public welfare and livelihoods. To put an end to the current relationship with the U.S. based on control and subordination will enable our country to build a genuine friendship with the U.S. built on equal footing.

How will Japan change by restraining large companies' outrageous practices and building a society governed by rules? Workers will be able to work with

dignity, small- and medium-sized businesses as well as agriculture, forestry, and fishery industries will revitalize, and paths will open for the eradication of poverty and economic disparity. Japan's economy will break free of periods of long-term stagnation and for the first time get on a track promoting a sustainable and healthy development led by an increase in household incomes and an increase in domestic demand.

Significant lessons we drew from the JCP's advance in the late 1990s are not only that the party's value was highlighted in crucial issues at that time, such as the failure of housing loan companies called "jusen" and the consumption tax increase. We also have to remember as an important lesson that having straightforward discussions on our national reform program became the major strength to enable the party to achieve its advance.

Compared with the period back then, those in power are now facing a much more serious deadlock. They cannot show the outlook for the 21st century let alone for the near future. In such a situation, it is important for us to use our Program as our strength and talk about our national reform policy, our outlook for a future society, and the whole picture of the JCP.

During this year commemorating the 90th anniversary of the party's foundation, let us present the true value of the JCP and use our wisdom and strength in order to pave the way for a major party advance.

Create stronger and larger party as the best guarantee of turning possibilities in political conditions into reality

Thirdly, let us do all we can to create a stronger and larger party as the best guarantee of turning possibilities in political conditions into reality.

Overall, we have received positive responses to proposals presented in the 4th Central Committee Plenum: to recognize the upcoming House of Representatives general election as an election to make a fresh start toward the

establishment of a democratic coalition government and to put up candidates in all single-seat constituencies.

It is especially delightful that many JCP members say that the 4th CC Plenum decision aroused their revolutionary spirit. A democratic coalition government we are aiming to achieve is a government which carries out a democratic revolution, and it is very important for us as a revolutionary party to call upon our fighting spirit throughout the party. Many JCP supporters and members of JCP supporters' associations also showed their positive reactions, saying for example, "I'm impressed by the decision;" "Now I've got a party choice to meet my demands;" and "I welcome the decision," and some of them sent us donations anew. Their support encourages us a lot. Let us make a great leap forward in the coming general election in order to meet the people's expectations by fully carrying out the 4th CC Plenum decision.

Regarding our accomplishment in the party buildup effort, 5,300 people became JCP members over the past 6 months and 16.9% of party branches received at least one new member. During 8 months after May, almost all JCP local committees welcomed new members every month. I'd like to express my heartfelt welcome to those who have made a decision to join the JCP.

As for our effort to expand daily Akahata readers, we lost a number of subscribers in December, but we made progress on the whole, despite the increase in subscription fees. I'd like to express my appreciation and respect to all the members who made efforts to increase Akahata readers and to thank all Akahata readers for their cooperation.

As a way to carry on our full efforts to build a stronger party, the 4th CC Plenum decision presents concrete policies. Based on them, I'd like to stress the following three points:

First, we should be aware of the gap between our party's capacity and what the present situation demands. Now that we are standing at a historical crossroad, we should make even more efforts to build a stronger party to be able to proactively open the way forward.

Looking back on history, from the late 1960s through the 1970s we experienced the "first leap". In coordination with popular movements, the

party was gaining momentum leading to great advances in national elections. Such victories gave us greater strength, and the party again made greater progress in following elections. That was the time of a healthy “positive growth cycle”.

However, since the 1980s, we have not been able to make progress in our party buildup efforts under the bombardment of constant anti-communist propaganda. The ruling forces are nowadays declining and reaching an impasse. The conditions are ripe for changing Japanese society. However, we cannot seize the moment because our party’s subjective capability is not strong enough. That is the big gap that must be overcome.

We then launched a major drive to develop our party strength in order to dare to overcome this weakness to turn into a “positive growth cycle” under which a bigger party will lead to a greater advance in elections.

The 4th CC Plenum decision calls for struggle under the slogan, “Let’s have an increase of 50,000 JCP members, 50,000 daily Akahata readers, and 170,000 Sunday Akahata readers in order to create the momentum to boost party strength and set the stage for a JCP advance in the general election.” We set numerical goals from this “positive growth cycle” viewpoint.

Like the time of our “first leap” period, we should open the door in the coming general election for the JCP to be able to steadily advance.

Secondly, each party member’s connection with ordinary people on a daily basis is the key to our party buildup activities. The activity to work to meet people’s demands and the activity to expand party strength based on the “party branches are key players” principle are at the forefront of necessity. These two activities are the very key to enabling a leap forward, which has already been shown in many JCP branches. During the course of our party buildup effort, many branches have recorded great experiences. Let me introduce two examples:

The first is about the experience of local branches in Matsudo City in Chiba Prefecture. This local branch is located in a community where a high radiation level has been recorded caused by the Fukushima nuclear accident. The area is referred to as a radioactive hot spot. In an attempt to protect children from

radiation exposure, all 28 local branches in the city measured radiation levels at more than 200 parks and 3,000 locations. The number of people who took part in these activities exceeded 3,000, including child-raising parents, heads of neighbors' associations, kindergarten teachers and nursery school staff, and neighborhood residents. These JCP activities moved the city government to launch an official project to measure radiation doses across the city and decontaminate radiation areas or objects if detected.

Through these activities, the party gained public trust and 5 people became JCP members and more than 100 people became Akahata subscribers. Here I have a letter from a mother in her 20s with two children. In the letter, she says, "Many times I was about to lose hope, but each time your powerful support gave me courage. I don't know how to convey my gratitude. Thank you very much."

Another example is the experience of a teachers' workshop branch. A JCP member, who is active in an education research circle, gave advice to a young physical-training teacher who was worried that he could not provide good lessons. The JCP-member teacher asked the young teacher what the academic ability of physical education should be, and said, "If you teach only gymnastic technique, instructors at community sports centers can probably teach better than you can. What we teach students through physical education is the joy of being capable of doing things they could not do before, the fair play spirit, the importance of teamship and unity, and the preciousness of peace and democracy." This teacher is earning the trust and respect of young teachers.

In recent years, teachers in their 20s and 30s became JCP members and 5 more young teachers joined the JCP during the current party buildup effort. "I want to be a good teacher." This is the goal of teachers. By listening to them and responding to their demands, this teachers' workshop branch deals effectively with the JCP buildup activity. Such experiences have been seen here and there throughout Japan.

I think we, the JCP members, feel pleasure when we feel we did something good for society or when we realize that we fulfilled someone's demand. In doing so, we gain people's trust and become proud of being party members, which will bear fruit in our effort to build a stronger party in the end. All JCP

branches should put in practice the activity to work to meet people's demands and the activity to expand the party strength.

Thirdly, we need to increase the party strength both in quantity and quality. To be a revolutionary party, we should make a special effort. Our party aims to proceed in the direction toward democratic revolution - a change from politics focusing on the needs of the United States and the business world to politics focusing on the needs of the people. There are a number of political parties in Japan. Some parties use the word "revolution" lightly, but the JCP is the only party in Japan which can be described as a revolutionary party since it pursues a fundamental structural change from the present U.S.- and business-oriented politics.

Since the party was born 90 years ago as a revolutionary party standing firm on the theoretical foundation of scientific socialism, it has developed by overcoming many difficulties and has established strong roots in Japanese society. This year marks the 90th anniversary of the JCP founding. Let us make this year a year to learn from the party Program, learn from history, increase party strength in line with the CC Plenum decisions, practice the 3 principles of party life (participate in branch meetings, read daily Akahata, and pay party dues), and have a sense of being proud to be a revolutionary party member.

A series of lectures on the party Program and on classical theory which we had last year are bringing about positive effects. One branch reported that when the series started, some members in the branch were thinking that Marx and Engels were actually a name and surname and was one person. However, knowing the mechanism of surplus value, these members became to understand a lot of things. They said, "I now know why large companies keep making profits and cannot stop doing so." When they learned about the theory of revolution, they said they were impressed by the lecture, "Only when a majority of people in society understand the purpose of revolution, will revolution be possible. To achieve this, longstanding and tenacious activities are important." They talked with each other saying, "After all, we must win elections," and "Before that, we must increase party members."

By participating in the course of serial lectures, many party members came to see the JCP Program as a guide for their lives, familiarized themselves with

the works of Marx and Engels, and started to enjoy learning something new. Such an atmosphere of expectation and renewal is prevailing throughout the entire JCP. This was an important method use to help the JCP to develop further. The rest of the lectures will take place this year. Until all the lectures are completed, the JCP will keep trying to make the lectures available for everyone in the party to have the opportunity to learn.

To make the coming general election a start of our ‘third leap’

For 50 years of the JCP Program line, we have stood up to anti-communist attacks and opened up new developments. What I’d like to emphasize in my conclusion is that the dialectic process in any political confrontation does not function automatically. A revolutionary force always opens a new chapter of history. However, only when this force becomes able to equip itself with stronger solidarity to face up to a unified counterrevolution, will the force be able to overcome difficulties and proceed onto a new and improved situation. The largest assurance that will make it possible is to build a stronger and bigger JCP. This is the lesson we should draw from our 50 years of struggle.

Japan is literally standing at a historical turning point. In preparation for the coming general election, let us make a success in our party buildup effort at any cost and gain the ability to open an exciting new chapter of history! Let’s work together to make the coming general election the start of the JCP’s “third leap”!

Thank you.

Akahata, January 5, 2012