

When Will X-Day Come for Chinese Communist Party?

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The international situation in the past year features three points: the number of major players in the world has declined to two – the United States and China; Russia is shifting from a central player to a backseat player; and the birth of Japan's Shinzo Abe administration and South Korea's Park Geun-hye government has set the stage in Northeast Asia for the U.S. Obama administration's pivot to Asia policy.

U.S.-China relations differ from Cold War

Particularly in Asia where the United States and China are central players, we see strange phenomena that are unprecedented in the history of international politics. While China has enhanced interdependent economic relations with all other countries, the United States has been growingly relied upon by all other countries more or less in the field of security. The United States and China have remained militarily vigilant to each other while deepening their economic relations. This is basically because China, which is expected to overtake the United States in economic size by 2030, has built on its military power to brush off international rules and crack down on dissidents and ethnic minorities at home.

U.S.-China relations that media describe as representing “a Cold War” or “a China containment policy” are far different from the past conflict between the Soviet bloc and the U.S.-led democratic camp, which clashed ideologically with each other and formed their own economic blocs. China has never had any ideological dispute with the United States. A strange phenomenon has become a reality whereby Communist China is plagued with widening income gaps, while the capitalist United States is striving to expand social security and other social safety nets.

Hard-line policies for the regime's survival

The reason China has defied universal values internationally and domestically became clearer by now. It is against the backdrop of widening income gaps and leadership corruptions that has prompted citizens to doubt the governance of the Communist government. The New York Times in October and November disclosed accumulated riches (estimated at least at US\$ 2.7 billion) of Premier Wen Jiabao's family. Wen had been popular as “Uncle Wen” who was supposed to be the most clean among Chinese leaders.

Even under the gag rule, the communications revolution has brought more than 550 million in Internet population in China. As indicated by the Arab Spring phenomena where dictatorships in the Middle East and North Africa have fallen, information manipulation has become difficult.

It has become clear that Chinese leaders have switched to a hardline foreign policy for their survival. At the end of 2012, I am wondering whether I could see the consequence of the change in 2013.

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