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Japan-USSR: The Japan Communist Party (JCP) and the CPSU are becoming further estranged over the Czechoslovak issue.

The latest round of a polemical exchange was set off by the Japanese party's condemnation in late August of the Soviet intervention. Moscow has severely censured the JCP for its criticisms. On 26 October the JCP party organ Akahata responded by equating the Soviets with those "Maoist elements" that condemn the JCP as "antirevolutionary."

Last February a Soviet party mission led by Party Secretary Suslov made an unsuccessful attempt to patch up relations. A return JCP mission to Moscow in early August accomplished nothing, due in part to Soviet irritation at the JCP's support for the policies of the Czechoslovak leadership. The JCP permanent representative in Moscow has returned to Japan and shows no sign of going back to his post. Moreover, the JCP apparently had no contact with politburo member Shelepin on his recent visit to Japan, ostensibly for consultations with Japanese trade unionists.

The JCP's public denigration of both the Soviets and the Chinese and its display of independence from "big power chauvinists" are popular in Japan. These tactics are a continuation of the party's policy of placing primary emphasis on domestic political interests.

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