



Tolerance, Suspicion, and Hostility: Changing U.S. Attitudes toward the Japanese Communist Movement, 1944-1947

Henry Oinas-Kukkonen

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Over the course of the American Occupation of Japan, the U.S. attitude toward the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) gradually shifted from one of friendly cooperation to one of mutual opposition. This new study examines the initial approach toward communism in Japan; internal and external factors that affected American attitudes; the various phases of the relationship; and how Japan ultimately became a democratic nation. Oinas-Kukkonen investigates American information gathering techniques used at the time to determine possible links with the Soviet Union. He also discusses the possibility that Nosaka Sanzo, one of the main leaders of the JCP, was an American spy.

Using previously secret records of General MacArthur's intelligence staff and plentiful archival materials on the Occupation, this study explores how the United States originally sought to utilize the JCP to assist in the democratization process. It identifies the perceived threat of a revolution in March 1947 as a key turning point in U.S. attitudes. Involved in a delicate balancing act with multiple Japanese interests, some American officials feared that elements of the extreme left might even evolve into extreme right-wing terrorists. In this comprehensive account, Oinas-Kukkonen includes information on the indirect role of the Europeans in this affair, as well as the roles of outsider groups such as the outcaste burakumin and the Koreans residing in Japan.

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