

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	Japan	REPORT NO.	CS-37750
SUBJECT	Clash in Progressive Party Leadership	DATE DISTR.	10 May 1954
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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

SOURCE: Former Japanese Government official (B). Appraisal of Content: 3.

- At a meeting of the Progressive Party Supreme Staff Committee¹ on 6 April 1954, KITAMURA Tokutaro, Party advisor and former Finance Minister², criticized Progressive Party President SHIGEMITSU Mamoru, holding him responsible for the Progressives' ambiguous response to the Liberal Party's approaches to a merger. KITAMURA advocated that a rapprochement with the Liberals not be undertaken until the investigation of the shipping scandals is completed, since at the present time no one can be certain as to just who is going to be involved in the scandals. He pointed out that the Liberal overtures to the Progressives are a measure of desperation.
- Specifically, KITAMURA criticized SHIGEMITSU for meeting with chief Liberal policy-maker IKEDA Hayato³, reasoning that MIURA⁴, IKEDA's opposite in the Progressive Party, should have been the man to meet IKEDA. When SHIGEMITSU defended this meeting by stating that IKEDA had requested it, KITAMURA countered that SHIGEMITSU should not meet anyone just because they had requested an interview.

Field Comments

- Presumably the Central Standing Committee (Chuo Jonin Iinkai) of the Progressive Party is intended.
- KITAMURA was appointed Transportation Minister in the KATAYAMA Cabinet in December 1947 and Finance Minister in the ASHIDA Cabinet in March 1948.
- According to the press, SHIGEMITSU had a "secret rendezvous" at his home in Yugawara (Shizuoka-ken) on 4 April 1954 with former Finance Minister IKEDA. After the meeting, SHIGEMITSU is reported to have stated, "I think it is important for responsible leaders of the Liberal, Progressive and Japan Liberal Parties to get together and exchange opinions on ways and means to settle the political situation." This statement was heralded as one of the most clear-cut indications of the real possibility of a conservative merger made to date.
- This is probably MIURA Kunio, House of Representatives member from Aomori, whose position as Chairman of the Progressives' Political Policy Committee (Seisaku Iinkai) corresponds to that of IKEDA in the Liberal Party.

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