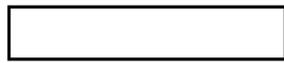


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**Nº 42**

12 December 1972

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**SECRET****Japan's 1972-1969 General Elections for the House of Representatives**

	December 1972	December 1969
Liberal Democratic Party	271	288
Japan Socialist Party	118	90
Japan Communist Party	38	14
Komeito	29	47
Democratic Socialist Party	19	31
Minor Parties	2	0
Independents	14*	16
Total	491**	486

\* *Some dozen of the independents are expected to affiliate with the Liberal Democrats.*

\*\* *The House of Representatives was expanded to 491 members in 1970 with the addition of members from Okinawa.*

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JAPAN: Prime Minister Tanaka's conservative party has retained a solid majority in the House of Representatives, but major gains by the Communists and Socialists could pose new difficulties for the ruling party.

The Liberal Democrats won a respectable 271 of the 491 seats at stake. About a dozen independent candidates are expected to join the party's ranks, so that the conservatives will begin the new Diet session with a total strength of some 283 seats. The election had only a minimal effect on the factional balance within the party, but several of the Liberal Democrats' older politicians were replaced by younger candidates.

The impressive gains scored by the Communists will qualify the party, now the third largest in the Diet, to introduce non-budgetary legislation. Japan's nationalistic and pragmatic Communists received surprising support in the rural strongholds of the Liberal Democrats, as well as from traditional urban constituencies.

The Socialists achieved a more modest victory, recovering over half of the 50 seats lost in the last general election. Gains for both of these parties reflect increasing voter dissatisfaction with the Liberal Democratic Party's handling of domestic affairs and the erosion of the conservative party's rural base by rapid urbanization.

Communist and Socialist gains were made largely at the expense of the Komeito and Democratic Socialists. The Democratic Socialists did not get their usual support from their affiliated labor union and suffered from the retirement of several key party leaders. Political scandals and the severance of formal relations with the lay religious organization Soka Gakkai, in turn, limited

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voter and monetary backing for the Komeito. Furthermore, Komeito and Democratic Socialist cooperation in several districts appears to have been a resounding failure.

The decline of the relatively moderate Komeito and the Democratic Socialists will heighten the effectiveness of united Socialist-Communist attacks on Tanaka's policies. In the face of such a challenge, the prime minister will be forced to pay greater attention to the maintenance of party unity. Tanaka will form a new cabinet at the end of the month. It is not likely to alter national policy significantly, but it will probably incorporate younger, more dynamic politicians able to move the Liberal Democrats in directions more appealing to the electorate.

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EGYPT: The current spate of war rhetoric in Cairo stems in part from the government's concern with troublesome domestic issues.

Several influential Egyptian writers have discussed the country's predicament and concluded that rather than endure the present unhappy situation, a resort to limited fighting might serve some useful purpose. On Saturday, Ihsan Abd al-Quddus, an editor who sometimes reflects President Sadat's views, stated that even if Egypt suffers another defeat, that would be "more honorable than surrender."

Egyptian leaders may hope that threats of the use of force will bring renewed diplomatic efforts to break the Middle East deadlock. In addition, the threat of a fresh outbreak of hostilities may serve to stifle dissent over domestic ills.

Disaffection was in evidence at a weekend session of Egypt's normally docile legislature. During the meetings, extraordinarily sharp criticism of government policies surfaced, directed primarily at Prime Minister Sidqi. Among other charges, Sidqi's assertion on 27 November that the government had completed plans for preparing the state for war was rejected as "unconvincing." The virtually unprecedented attack by the legislature on Sidqi would appear to be indirectly aimed at Sadat. The frank coverage of the criticism in the government-controlled press, on the other hand, could point to a plan to dump the unpopular Sidqi. Rumors of the impending formation of a "war cabinet" have been circulating in Cairo during the past two weeks.



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EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES: A strike of community employees that began yesterday may effectively paralyze almost all business in the EC institutions until the end of the year.

The strike makes good on threats by the EC employee unions to go off the job if the Council of Ministers failed to honor a decision of last March which established rules keying salary levels to rises in the cost of living and changes in purchasing power. Agreement was prevented by Germany and France, who argued that the new formula would conflict with their domestic anti-inflation policies. One element of the formula involves averaging the increases granted in the national civil services, and the two dissenting states are presumably disputing the EC employee unions' interpretation of these salary increases.

The strike has been called for nine days, but since its termination would generally coincide with the Christmas holidays, community work--in the absence of an unlikely early settlement--would not be resumed before January. Although a Council of agricultural ministers was held yesterday as scheduled, a wide range of current business, probably including other Council sessions, will be affected by the strike. Moreover, much legal paper work remains to be completed in time for the formal enlargement of the EC on 1 January. US and other diplomatic missions in Brussels, meanwhile, are finding it almost impossible to conduct business with the Commission.

The dispute has been aggravated by the current institutional malaise attributable in part to problems growing out of the impending enlargement. It now threatens to become a full-fledged confrontation between the Council and the lame-duck Commission headed by Sicco Mansholt. Mansholt is refusing to

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heed the Council's request--a normal procedure during past strikes--to "requisition" a skeletal staff to carry on urgent business. Mansholt also reportedly plans to seek a ruling from the EC's Court of Justice in Luxembourg.

The Commission itself is being challenged in the European Parliament today by a motion of censure alleging failure to meet a deadline for proposing an extension of parliamentary powers. While it is doubtful that enough votes could have been mustered to unseat the Commission, the parliamentarians may now be even less willing to attack the Commission--its traditional ally--given the executive's new battle with the Council.

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USSR-CHINA: Western press reports from Moscow concerning an alleged clash on the Kazakhstan-Sinkiang border last month that resulted in Soviet fatalities are unconfirmed. The absence of authoritative reaction from Moscow also suggests that, if a border incident in fact occurred, the Soviets did not deem it a serious provocation planned by Peking. When fighting broke out in 1969, Moscow was quick to publicize its case, and charges and countercharges were traded in the open. Questioned yesterday about reports of a new border incident, a Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman disclaimed any knowledge of the subject. Moreover, according to Western press reports yesterday from Peking, Chinese Foreign Ministry officials have dismissed the press stories as "sheer malicious fabrication" by the Soviets. [redacted]

\* \* \* \*

MALAYSIA-CHINA: Kuala Lumpur appears prepared to move toward diplomatic relations with Peking once it has cleared such a step with its neighbors. A top-level Malaysian foreign affairs official has expressed optimism over the prospects for accommodation, following talks last month between a Malaysian Government delegation and Premier Chou En-lai. Although Chou did not fully ease Kuala Lumpur's concern over Chinese propaganda support for Malaysian insurgents, the official expressed confidence that this matter could be resolved to Kuala Lumpur's satisfaction. The pace of Kuala Lumpur's progress toward diplomatic relations with Peking will be largely determined by the views of its partners in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)--Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore, and Indonesia. Prime Minister Razak told Parliament on 4 December that Kuala Lumpur intends to gain ASEAN agreement before he moves ahead on accommodation with Peking. In particular, Malaysia is anxious to stay in step with Indonesia on this issue. Jakarta is inclined to delay a restoration of diplomatic ties with China, at least until spring.

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ZAMBIA: President Kaunda will soon sign a bill passed by Parliament late last week converting Zambia into a one-party state. The formal establishment of his United National Independence Party as the country's paramount policy-making body is the key to an extensive government reorganization Kaunda hopes will enable him to implement his socialist programs. Zambia's small, tribally based opposition parties have been powerless to block Kaunda, and security forces should be able to contain any anti-government demonstrations that tribal supporters of these parties might attempt. Eventually, however, more serious opposition to the government may emerge from among educated Zambians who administer the government and economy. They already blame meddling by poorly educated and unsophisticated party politicians for the administrative inefficiency and economic mismanagement that have thwarted government programs.

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