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89 TOKYO 8300

UNCLASSIFIED

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ACTION EAP-00

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 INR-07 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 PM-10 PA-01
INRE-00 DES-09 ACDA-12 USIE-00 SP-02 SNP-01 CEQ-01
PRS-01 /044 W

362636 110946Z /24

P 110933Z MAY 89
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2614
INFO SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MANILA

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MB

EXCISE

JCS WASHDC
CHINFO WASHDC
CNO WASHDC
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI
CINCPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA
COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA
COMSEVENTHFLT

REVIEWED by Julene DATE 8/24/90
() RELEASE () DECLASSIFY
(X) EXCISE (X) DECLASSIFY in PART
() DENY () Non-responsive info.
FOI/EO or PA exemptions 552 (b) (1)
TO authority to:
() CLASSIFY as _____, OADR
() DOWNGRADE TS to () S or () C, OADR

COMUSNAVPHIL SUBIC BAY RP
SECRET SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 08300

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: MARR, MNUC, PREL, JA, US
SUBJECT: 1965 LOSS OF NUCLEAR WEAPON
REFS: STATE 142989 (DTG 060202Z MAY 89 - NOTAL); B)
CINCPACFLT 092224Z MAY 89 (NOTAL)

- 1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.
- 2. SUMMARY: GOJ REACTION TO THE RECENT GREENPEACE REPORT ON THE LOSS OF A NUCLEAR WEAPON FROM A U.S. CARRIER IN 1965 HAS THUS FAR BEEN MUTED. IN SHARP CONTRAST, HOWEVER, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE JAPANESE MEDIA HAVE RESPONDED SHARPLY AND VOCALLY TO REPORTS

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THAT A NUCLEAR WEAPON REMAINS ON THE PACIFIC FLOOR IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS OFF OKINAWA. TO DATE, THE FOCUS OF PUBLIC ATTENTION HAS BEEN THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE WEAPON REPRESENTS A CONTINUING ENVIRONMENTAL DANGER, ALTHOUGH U.S. REASSURANCES THAT THE WEAPON DOES NOT POSE A HAZARD HAVE TAKEN THE EDGE OFF SOME OF THE MORE VOCAL CRITICISM. MEDIA TREATMENT OF THE ISSUE HAS QUIETED SINCE MONDAY, BUT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND CIVIC GROUPS ARE INCREASINGLY CRITICAL OF GOJ "INACTION" IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORT. WHILE THE GOJ HAS THUS FAR ADOPTED A LOW-KEY POSTURE, SUBSEQUENT REVELATIONS THAT THE U.S. CARRIER ENTERED YOKOSUKA IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE INCIDENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS MAY COMPEL THE GOJ TO TAKE THE ISSUE UP WITH IS FORMALLY. END SUMMARY.

3. THE WEEKEND REVELATION BY THE GREENPEACE

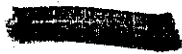
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ORGANIZATION THAT A U.S. NAVY A-4E LOADED WITH A NUCLEAR WEAPON HAD FALLEN OFF THE USS TICONDEROGA IN 1965, AND THAT THE WEAPON, PLANE, AND PILOT WERE LOST HAS PROVOKED A PREDICTABLE STIR IN JAPAN. THE STORY WAS FRONT-PAGED IN VIRTUALLY ALL PAPERS EARLIER THIS WEEK AND THE TELEVISION NEWS HAS DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE COVERAGE TO THE REPORTS FROM THE U.S. CONTAINING THE GREENPEACE ALLEGATIONS, INCLUDING THOSE REFERRING TO A U.S. "COVER-UP" OF THE INCIDENT. THE PASSAGE OF 24 YEARS SINCE THE ACCIDENT - AND THE FACT THAT THE U.S. MADE THE INCIDENT PUBLIC IN 1981 - HAVE HELPED TO TAKE THE SHARP EDGE OFF INITIAL LOCAL REPORTING OF THE INCIDENT BUT DESPITE DISAPPEARING OFF THE FRONT PAGES DURING THE WEEK, THE ACCIDENT IS STILL WITH US IN THE JAPANESE MEDIA.

4. IN CONTRAST, THE GJJ'S REACTION HERE IN RESPONSE TO

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OUR NOTIFICATION HAS THUS FAR BEEN MUTED. UPON RECEIPT OF REF A, POL-MIL OFFICER ADVISED MOFA NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS DIVISION DEPUTY DIRECTOR SUGIYAMA OF THE IMPENDING PUBLIC RELEASE OF THE GREENPEACE STORY.



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7. PUBLICLY, MOFA OFFICIALS ARE CITED IN THE MEDIA AS ENGAGED IN THE COLLECTION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING THE ACCIDENT FROM THE U.S. AT THE SAME TIME, OTHER PRESS REPORTS EARLY THIS WEEK QUOTED MOFA OFFICIALS AS NOTING THAT THE INCIDENT HAD OCCURRED IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS. IN RESPONSE TO PRESS INQUIRIES ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE VESSEL MIGHT HAVE ENTERED A JAPANESE PORT WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS ABOARD,

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MOFA OFFICIALS ARE REPORTED TO HAVE STATED THAT SINCE THERE WERE NO CONSULTATIONS CALLED FOR BY THE U.S., THE GOJ VIEW IS THAT THERE WAS NO INTRODUCTION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

8. MUCH OF THE FOCUS OF THE MEDIA TREATMENT CONTINUES TO BE ON WHETHER THE WEAPON POSES A THREAT TO THE ENVIRONMENT. ONE ARTICLE IN THE ASAHI SHIMBUN ON MAY 10 ASKED, "IS IT REALLY SAFE?", WHILE AN ASAHI EDITORIAL CALLED THE SITUATION AN "H-BOMB NIGHTMARE." NEVERTHELESS, MEDIA SPECULATION ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF AN EXPLOSION OR MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE APPEAR TO HAVE SUBSIDED SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE WEEK, AND THE FACTUAL FOLLOW-UP RELEASES BY DOD (REF B, FOR EXAMPLE) APPEAR TO HAVE HELPED.

9. COMMENT: THE GOJ'S LOW-KEY RESPONSE TO THE ACCIDENT, HOWEVER, CONTINUES TO DRAW FIRE FROM THE

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PRESS AND FROM LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. PREDICTABLY BECAUSE OF THE LOCATION OF THE ACCIDENT, THE OKINAWA MEDIA HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY CRITICAL AND THE OKINAWA PREFECTURAL ASSEMBLY REPORTEDLY WILL MEET SOON TO DRAW UP A PROTEST RESOLUTION CRITICAL OF BOTH THE U.S. AND THE GOJ. LOCAL LABOR GROUPS IN OKINAWA AND SOUTHERN KYUSHU ARE ALSO ORGANIZING PROTESTS (ONE GROUP HAS ASKED TO CALL AT THE EMBASSY ON MONDAY TO DELIVER ITS PETITION). YOKOSUKA MAYOR YOKOYAMA, UP FOR RE-ELECTION IN JUNE, INDICATED TO THE PRESS THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO "IMMEDIATELY SET OUT TO INVESTIGATE THE CASE."

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