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FROM: Tokyo

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 2264, March 22, Noon

PRIORITY

Reference Embassy's 2261 concerning FUKURYU MARU incident.

Okazaki and I discussed last night various aspects FUKURYU MARU case and its ramifications. I pointed out serious security problem and requested Japanese Government take all steps necessary restrict access information obtained from ashes and investigation of ship to people in whom Japanese Government had complete confidence. I also referred to numerous unfriendly press stories and apparent desire of press and scientists to extract for public consumption all possible information regarding type and composition of bomb used at Bikini. Okazaki said that while it would be possible to call in top Japanese press people and explain seriousness of situation to them with possible favorable results, it would be much more difficult to control activities of doctors and scientists who already have had access to ship and to ashes. He said there were no adequate law at present which would give government power to control these persons. However, he requested Embassy to furnish him specific list of desired actions and he promised to give frank statement as to what could or could not be done. In consultation with available United States experts Embassy is now preparing such list for presentation.

Okazaki then went on to outline difficult situation in which government finds itself in Diet as result of present incident. Questions have been asked by opposition parties as to what basis international law there is for United States setting off large portion of Pacific area for atomic tests. Okazaki has to date replied that United States action is consistent and in accordance with trusteeship agreement over former mandated islands but he says this will not long prove satisfactory, particularly in view of greatly enlarged area now notified to Japanese Government. More serious, however, in Okazaki's mind are questions which right Socialists have raised as to what assurance can be given that fish from area involved or from outside area where ashes may have fallen are not contaminated and even if caught outside area might be danger to health

Japan.

Control: 9334

Rec'd: March 22, 1954
12:30 a.m.

Action Assigned to NA/EA

Action Taken tel report

Date of Action 23 Mar 54

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-2- 2264, March 22, Noon, from Tokyo

Japan. This problem will be increased in intensity within large area in view of great Japanese dependence on fish from this section of Pacific. In addition, questions have been raised about warm current from Southern Pacific which flows up towards Japan and passes near Kyushu. What assurances can be given that this current has not been contaminated and that it in turn will not contaminate coastal waters of Japan? Okazaki told me confidentially that as result of these questions which he said seemed to him to have some reasonableness, he might be forced to approach Embassy officially and set forth these and similar questions, together with request that until authoritative satisfactory answers could be given, Japanese Government would have to request United States to postpone any future test.

Throughout conversation Okazaki was friendly and reasonable but was obviously concerned over possibilities of greatly deteriorating United States-Japan relations unless early steps could be taken which would calm present fears and anxieties.

He said early indication from United States Government that it would at least be responsible financially for medical care of fishermen and relief to their families would have great favorable effect. He said Japanese Government was investigating what it could do for relief of these fishermen and their families and had about decided to take such action on assumption that they would be eventually reimbursed by United States.

As stated in my 2261, I believe prompt United States action along these lines before Japanese Government has publicly taken action would be of real benefit and I again recommend I be given authority to announce such action. I also urgently request prompt advice from Department with respect to questions raised by Okazaki so that if possible we can forestall official Japanese protest or request for postponement.

ALLISON

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