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TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

DATE: November 19, 1969
TIME: 11:00 a.m., The White Hou

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PARTICIPANTS: Prime Minister Eisaku Sato of Japan
The President

Genichi Akatani, Deputy Director of Information, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Interpreter
James J. Wickel, Special Assistant to Ambassador Meyer, Interpreter

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With respect to Okinawa, the President said that the key point was the arrangements we could make to meet emergencies in the event of a threat to Okinawa, Japan and the United States. What procedures could we agree to follow? He asked for the Prime Minister's suggestion on what we could state about this in the Joint Communique to assure our own people, and second what procedure we could follow with respect to the use of Okinawa in the event of emergencies. He understood that Okinawa would be placed on "homeland level" as reversion took place, but the key question of deepest interest in the Senate, particularly in the Armed Forces Committee, was what would happen in an emergency? These days war could come quickly, and decisions had to be made in two or three days, or in some cases, in two or three hours. Therefore, he proposed to discuss specifically what statement could be made in the Joint Communique.

The Prime Minister noted that the President had stated that Okinawa would revert to Japan on a homeland level basis, and said that his government was on record as wishing to apply to Okinawa without

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modification all the provisions of the Treaty of Mutual Security and related agreements. Under these arrangements, Okinawa would be reverted on a "homeland level" basis. He agreed that Okinawa played an important military role, as the President had noted, and said that his government recognized this. What to do in case of an "important emergency" presented a difficult problem for his government, because it did not wish to see the United States embarrassed subsequently if Okinawa were reverted on a homeland level basis.

The President felt that the Joint Communique language was most important. While they had no problem understanding each other on this point it was important to consider how both peoples would read the Joint Communique. Therefore, he asked for the Prime Minister's suggestion.

The Prime Minister said that it was difficult to discuss Okinawa in terms of nuclear weapons because it was not clear officially whether they were present there or not. It was only natural for the Japanese to believe that there were nuclear weapons on Okinawa and he would wish to ask for their removal. He recognized the difficulty of discussing their presence and of making a direct public statement that they had been removed.

The President said that this was the key point. He hoped that we could work out some understanding, and had prepared some language

for the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister then produced compromise language for their consideration.

(The Prime Minister passed the Japanese language to the President, who read it in silence.)

The President said that the Japanese language seemed agreeable as far as his understanding with the Prime Minister was concerned. He could see why the Prime Minister needed such language to deal with the political situation in Japan. However, our own people would require "more precise" language with respect to prior consultations, as drafted by our side.

(The President passed the United States language to the Prime Minister, who read it in silence.)

The Prime Minister said that there appeared to be a great difference between the two drafts, but he wished to consider how to bring them closer.

The President said that something between the two might be agreeable.

The Prime Minister asked whether the President's request to have a more precise statement related to the portion dealing with prior consultation? (The Prime Minister then passed the President a second Japanese draft, which the President read in silence; he then nodded his head affirmatively.)

The President said that it seemed to say about the same thing; he felt that it would be better, however, in terms of the Joint Communique. If the Prime Minister felt that he could sell this language in Japan, the President felt that he could sell it here.

The Prime Minister said that he was reluctant to use the term "prior consultation" and indeed this was the only place it appeared in the Joint Communique. However, he could accept this language because the United States Government felt that it could better explain away its problems at home by adding this more precise reference to prior consultation.

The President said it would be very helpful to have the Prime Minister's views on how such consultation could take place. The Sena was as deeply interested in this point as was the Diet in Japan. For example, how could such consultations be conducted, how could we react in the event of an emergency such as the recent shooting down o the American EC-121.

(NOTE: The Prime Minister began to phrase his reply by saying the problem was "introduction in an emergency", but halted his train thought and made a fresh start.) The Prime Minister said that the Un States maintained that Okinawa's military capability would be weakened by reversion (although personally he did not think so). Japan itself w oppose any such weakening of Okinawa's capability in its own interest.

Therefore, Japan wished to have Okinawa reverted but at the same time, wished to avoid to the extent possible impairing its military capability. However, Okinawa could not be reverted with all American rights in fact in their present form; he was obliged to request that the President bear with some weakening.

Turning to the means of consultation, the Prime Minister said that the United States had a hot line, and asked whether a link between Tokyo and Washington would provide the opportunity to conduct such consultations. He understood that there were such links between Washingt and Moscow, Bonn and London. He could discuss a broad range of problems, beyond the military ones, directly with the President from time to time on such a hot line; but not, he added, too often. This should serve as an assurance.

The President said that this was an excellent idea. In the Joint Communique we could indicate that the hot line would be available to cover the entire area of defense in Asia. In addition, he thought that a hot line between Tokyo and Washington would place the relations between our two countries on the basis of equality it should have, on the same level as England and the Soviet Union.

The Prime Minister asked whether this point should be included in the Joint Communique. Personally, he was pleased that the President had agreed so readily to his proposal, but asked how best this point might

be handled. Eventually, of course, it would surface, but he did not think it should be included in the Joint Communique.

The President agreed to this, and to the second Japanese draft of Joint Communique language. He suggested that they shake hands on this. Unfortunately, there would be no photographs of this historic moment.

(NOTE: The President invited the Prime Minister into his private office to see some photographs of his home in San Clemente, California Neither interpreter was present.)

The President said that he had one other item of good news for the Prime Minister, related to the Mace-B. A recently concluded budgetary review had indicated that there was no longer any need for these weapons, and in about three weeks there would be an announcement of this fact, probably before elections in Japan, which would strengthen the Prime Minister's position.

The Prime Minister asked what the press should be told. He assumed that the President would inform Secretary Rogers of their decision before their luncheon at the State Department today. He did not intend to discuss it with the Secretary.

The President said that the Secretary would be so informed before the luncheon.

The President suggested that press officers on both sides tell the press that the Prime Minister and the President had held an extended discussion of various problems, including Okinawa and Asian affairs, that these discussions would be continued tomorrow concentrating primarily on the economic field, and that a Joint Communique would be

released on Friday. The Joint Communique would tell the whole story. The discussions were friendly, extensive, and very constructive throughout. However, he suggested that both sides wait until the Joint Communique, in which their specific agreements could be announced in one package, rather than releasing specific items piecemeal.

The Prime Minister agreed; and so instructed Akatani, who would serve as the press officer on the Japanese side.

The President and the Prime Minister then invited Foreign Minister Aichi to join them; Aichi was informed of the decision on what to tell the press.