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Control: 9272
Rec'd: March 21, 1954
5:32 a.m.

FROM: Tokyo

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 2261, March 21, 3 p.m.

Action Assigned to NA/E

Action Taken tel copy

PRIORITY

Reference Embassy telegram 2259 Date of Action 23 March 54

1. From Tokyo point of view successive psychological and security developments FUKURYU MARU incident argue importance promptest United States action if material damage to United States, Japan relations is to be avoided.

2. Following indicate growing dimensions problem:

(A) Security: Experts preliminary appraisal cabled reference telegram. Several papers have published hypothesis hydrogen bomb based on calcium carbonate as major constituent. Today's MAINICHI published report of chemical analysis radioactive dust from FUKURYU MARU made by Professor Kenjiro Kimura and Dr. Masao Tsuzuki of Tokyo University. Main element calcium carbonate; other elements zirconium (ZR 95), niobium (NV95), tellurium (TE 132), iodine-132; plus such rare earth elements as lanthanum and cesium, and such alkaline earth minerals as calcium, strontium, and barium. Additionally, daily bulletins on condition of patients and their blood counts are being published.

(B) Public relations: Japanese press is of course fanning extreme emotionalism of public regarding all nuclear questions and engendering a good deal of anti-Americanism in process. Themes currently being stressed: (1) United States irresponsibility in current tests based on widely featured stories from United States that explosion larger than expected and various conditions miscalculated; (2) United States disregard for victims based on theory that their treatment depends on knowledge constituents of bomb which United States withholding at hazard victims lives; (3) Japanese racial sensitivity: "Why should we continue to be world's only victims of A-bombs"?

(C) Subversive: Embassy officer who accompanied Morton and party on Yaizu trip March 20 reports Communists have already begun to exploit situation. March 19 local JCP officials including ex-Diet men called on union and fishermen's families

and offered

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-2- 2261, March 21, 3 p.m., from Tokyo

and offered assistance and sympathy. Same day group of Communist front organization physicians, wearing Mao Tse-tung badges visited Yaizu patients promised campaign to raise funds for their relief. Responsible Foreign Office official who has been studying local situation past two days quoted today's papers as saying that, however compensation problem may ultimately be settled, some immediate financial assistance to fishermen and families essential if Communists are to be headed off.

(D) Economic: Losses to fish industry and effect on Pacific tuna fleet operations of larger danger area receiving growing attention. Press has now reported tuna boat detours to and from fishing grounds could add as much as three days to their voyages each way. Due to importance of fish in Japanese diet majority of population has had direct occasion to discuss incident (few ate fish at all last week in central Japan) thus magnifying potential political consequences of dislocations in fish industry and marketing. Embassy doing what it can to minimize export trade consequences (see Embassy telegram 2260).

3. I have appointment with Okazaki today and will tell him frankly that we expect better cooperation than we are getting. As always, top government level is responsive, but lower echelons are off on lines of their own. In particular, we expect effective moves limit publication technical data derived from ship, plus government effort to obtain more balanced press treatment, plus release FUKURYU MARU to United States Navy (last is not now so important from security standpoints but would be useful psychologically).

4. We will need Japanese cooperation in all these matters now and for some time to come. To strengthen our hand, I urgently recommend that I be authorized inform Foreign Minister that, without prejudice to question of responsibility for accident, United States Government will immediately assume full responsibility for medical expenses of injured, and will pay fishermen's wages while they remain hospitalized with perhaps solatium to their families (in accordance Japanese custom). I believe such gesture on our part if promptly made will ease situation, and will improve cooperation from government, scientists and physicians on other aspects of problem.

5. I recommend also and most strongly that prior any further Pacific tests we make statement at highest quarters United States Government that effects of explosion have been fully calculated and safety precautions adequate. Nervousness is very high here, and repetition or magnification FUKURYU MARU incident could have most serious effect on our future cooperation.

EOC:RMG/1

ALLISON

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