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NOTE

This report was prepared as a contribution to NIE 100-4-57, Implications of Growing Nuclear Capabilities for the Communist Bloc and the Free World

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Intelligence Report

No. 7466

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THE RELATIONSHIP OF JAPAN TO NUCLEAR
WEAPONS AND WARFARE

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April 22, 1957

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This report is based on information available through April 16, 1957

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I. CURRENT OPINION

A. Views of the General Public

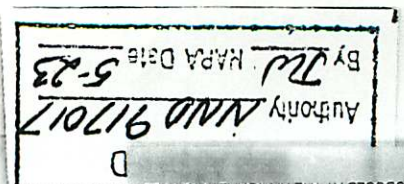
Since its introduction to nuclear warfare at Hiroshima in 1945, the Japanese public has been horror-stricken at the thought of involvement in a future nuclear conflict. Japanese popular feeling today continues to be intent upon this problem, perhaps to a degree unique in the world.

Many in Japan feel that their nation has a spiritual mission, derived from its singular experiences with nuclear destruction, to warn the world of the horrors of modern war. For their own national policy, the Japanese are virtually unanimous in wanting nothing whatever to do with nuclear war potential. They vehemently reject its development by Japan and are even more opposed to permitting Japan to be used by any other state as an operational base or storage place for nuclear weapons. Having been reassured on this score by a succession of conservative governments (which were intimidated by the intensity and uniformity of popular feeling), the attention of the Japanese public is presently focused on preventing nuclear weapons tests, particularly in the eastern hemisphere.

These views are common to all political parties, social groups, and intellectual levels. They are respected in Japan as a political force of the first magnitude, and the occasional political leader who has equivocated on these subjects has, in each case, beat a hasty retreat under severe pressure. The nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki are recalled with a religious fervor, and relics of these events are housed in a "peace chapel." The continuing illnesses and deaths of survivors attributed to nuclear exposure receive wide publicity, even though 12 years have elapsed since the explosions. In 1954, the exposure of the Japanese fishing vessel "Fortunate Dragon" to fall-out from a US thermonuclear test at Eniwetok set off a wave of hysteria. The public feared (and many were convinced) that Japan's tuna supply had been contaminated by the tests, and there were sharply anti-American reactions to what was felt to be US unconcern with the harmful effects of the tests, to disputes over methods of treatment for the afflicted fishermen, and to delays in the US offer of a solatium.

Since then a variety of incidents implying the involuntary involvement of Japan with nuclear weapons has touched off periodic waves of public resentment, keeping this issue an active and sensitive one in Japanese public affairs. Notable instances were demonstrations throughout the nation in 1955 against test firing by US forces of the Honest John missile (the objection was to nuclear weapons capability only, as no warheads were used), alarm in 1956 over fall-out from Soviet tests, and in February 1957 a flurry of objection to reports (later denied by the US) that the US intended to establish an "atomic task force" in Japan and elsewhere. At present there is a considerable furor over the United Kingdom test at Christmas Island. Prime Minister Kishi rejected a proposal to send suicide ships to expose themselves to radiation from the UK test, but he has named a prominent Christian educator to visit London to appeal for the suspension of nuclear tests.

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There was little or no initial press reaction to the new defense policy announced by Great Britain on April 4, and no official comment, although the security problems of the two nations are similar. Apparently the Japanese took for granted Prime Minister Macmillan's declaration that the United Kingdom can not be surely defended against nuclear attack, as confirming their own views, and Britain's intention to reduce military manpower sharply as necessitated by economic considerations. (Indeed, these aspects received scant press coverage in Japan, where news accounts were focused primarily upon Britain's new emphasis on nuclear arms.) It is possible that those Japanese on the left wing who would otherwise have hailed Britain's planned reduction of conventional forces were deterred by concern lest they weaken the common front in Japan against nuclear weapons; and those Japanese on the right wing who would otherwise have wished to support the adoption of nuclear weapons may have kept silence to avoid discouraging Japan's build-up of conventional military power. The new British defense policy also may have seemed remote in its applicability to Japan, which has a relatively small military establishment and has no access to nuclear weapons.

The attitudes of the Japanese public toward nuclear weapons were tested in a nationwide poll taken under US government supervision in January 1956 (Barometer Report #3). Six out of ten respondents felt that atomic energy would prove to be more of a curse than a boon to mankind, whereas similar polls taken in Western Europe on the same question showed varying degrees of net optimism. Again unlike the results in Western Europe, where opinion was about evenly divided, Japanese respondents by a margin of six to one (55 percent vs. 9 percent) said they would favor the banning of nuclear weapons even if it would leave the anti-Communist powers militarily weaker than the Communist powers. Finally, only 15 percent of the respondents in Japan felt that nuclear weapons should be included in the equipment of the nation's armed forces.

These views apply not merely to strategic weapons, but also to those lacking an offensive potential, and even to those merely associated in the public mind with the delivery of nuclear warheads. This was demonstrated in press reaction to recent disclosures that the Defense Agency of Japan had asked the US several months previously for guided missile prototypes. The Sanyo Shimbun of February 9 expressed the consensus of national and regional newspaper comment when it bitterly opposed the introduction of guided missiles into Japan and lashed at the government for having kept secret its request to the US for such arms. "Since it is common knowledge that guided missiles are to be equipped with atomic warheads in most instances," said the editorial, "the introduction of such weapons into this country will be attended ultimately by danger that this country will be involved in an atomic war between the US and the Soviet Union." Tentative explanation by the government that the missiles would contribute to the aerial defense of the nation went unheeded, and was undercut by a declaration of the Prime Minister to the Diet that defense against revolutionary weapons would be impossible. The Defense Agency then shelved its request for US missiles, and the cabinet withdrew draft legislation aimed at protecting military secrets.

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Nuclear warfare holds a particular horror for the Japanese, who realize the vulnerability of their crowded islands and recall vividly the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Continuing illnesses and deaths attributed to the after-effect of these attacks, as well as alarming reports of radioactive fall-out in Japan from recent thermonuclear tests, keep this problem in the forefront of Japanese politics and make non-involvement in nuclear war a prime objective of national policy.

The Japanese public is virtually united in believing that such non-involvement can best be achieved by avoiding any association with any nuclear weapons, or even with dual-purpose missiles. It is particularly opposed to permitting Japan to be used by US forces as a base or even a storage place for nuclear weapons, fearing Soviet nuclear reprisal in the event of war. The theory that US nuclear war potential serves as a deterrent to aggression by the USSR has little standing in Japanese public opinion, and among those who do accept it, few consider that participation by Japan in a confrontation of nuclear forces would contribute to Japan's security. Despite the general antipathy of the Japanese for Communism and the USSR, nearly six out of ten respondents to a US-supervised public opinion poll favored a ban on nuclear weapons even if that were to give the Communist bloc military predominance; less than one in ten disagreed.

Successive governments have bowed to the heavy pressure from public opinion on this subject, and have assured the Diet (contrary to secret correspondence with the US) that Japan's formal consent is required before nuclear weapons may be brought into Japan. In 1955 Prime Minister Hatoyama was obliged to withdraw a suggestion that nuclear weapons might one day be admissible if it were "the only way to maintain peace." Prime Minister Kishi in February 1957, under pressure from Diet interpellations, declared that he would never consent to nuclear weapons storage in Japan, and said Japan would be indefensible in the event of war with "revolutionary weapons."

Yet Japan's indiscriminating attitude toward nuclear weapons probably is not immutable. The Japanese could come to desire for their own forces nuclear weapons having defensive capabilities only (a view already held by some elements in the government), when and if they come to believe that this step would not increase the likelihood of war and would offer some real hope of warding off a potential nuclear attack. On the other hand, no early change can be foreseen in Japan's uncompromising hostility to the importation of offensive nuclear weapons, especially by forces not under Japanese control, except in the case of certain rather improbable contingencies.

Any revised attitude toward weapons, however, will hardly affect the Japanese view of involvement in nuclear war as an absolute and paramount evil, the avoidance of which should take priority over questions of justice, other national interests and obligations, or even calculation of the ultimate victory. This conviction is one of the largest factors in the Japanese objection

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to full military alignment with the US against the USSR, even in time of peace. If general nuclear war were to become imminent, Japan's commitments to the US would be of doubtful dependability.

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Recent developments in the nuclear weapons field ("clean" strategic bombs and small tactical warheads) have made little impression in Japan. Scientific comment has belittled the theory that high altitude bursts minimize dangers from fall-out. The public has not been well informed about the defensive capabilities of tactical weapons, in part perhaps because it is not at present receptive to argument of this nature. Japanese opinion tends to view nuclear weapons development under present conditions as heightening tension between the US and the USSR. It is usually taken for granted that the progressive development of nuclear capabilities increases the likelihood of general war, and that a small conventional war might spread and become an atomic holocaust. (There is, however, little feeling that the development of nuclear war-making potential among the great powers affects the likelihood of local conflicts among small states one way or the other.) Virtually no attention has been given to the possible acquisition of nuclear weapons by other Asian states, through purchase or otherwise, and the Japanese tend to assume that any use of nuclear weapons anywhere in the world would quickly spread into a generalized world conflict. The Japanese have ignored and would find alien the concept that nuclear war-making potential might be useful in bargaining for neutrality during a US-USSR conflict.

Most of the Japanese public evidently perceives the best hope of national salvation in a position of inoffensive inability to wage nuclear war, hoping that the conflict will seek more significant sites elsewhere. The inconsistency of this outlook with the presence of US forces in Japan, which presumably would be attacked by Soviet nuclear weapons regardless of whether they possessed nuclear capabilities, has not been faced by Japanese public opinion. Subconsciously, however, this contradiction may provide some of the energy behind the general desire (expressed in some degree by both political parties) to amend the security arrangements with the US. A majority of those questioned in a recent US-supervised poll felt that US bases in Japan were not a good thing and disapproved of the presence of US troops; only a fifth were in favor of them.

Among the more thoughtful Japanese who are dissatisfied with such a passive role and doubt its efficiency there is particularly strong interest in a world system for the control or prohibition of nuclear weapons. The influential newspaper Asahi expressed this viewpoint in a recent editorial:

The Japanese people know the horrors of atomic bombing and never again wish to be subjected to a nuclear holocaust; they have never ceased to be extremely wary of the possibility of any such situation arising. Of this the US Government should be fully cognizant...and it is hardly possible that the Japanese Government will, in disregard of the people's feelings, permit (US forces to bring nuclear weapons into Japan)... However, we do not delude ourselves in the least with the idea that everything will be all right if only Japan herself does not become a base for nuclear weapons. The stationing abroad of nuclear-supported US commands is only one phase in the realignment of military power now in progress by the US and the USSR, centering around atomic power and guided missiles, and it would be

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impossible for Japan to escape the catastrophe that these developments would cause in the event of another war any place in the world. Both the US and the USSR now believe that a buildup of such might constitutes the most effective deterrent to any plans the other might have for an atomic attack. But it is nothing more than a colossal waste that increases more and more the possibility that all mankind will be exterminated. We believe that the US and the USSR should recognize that there can no longer be any security for mankind's existence outside of a halt to this rivalry...

The Japanese preoccupation with fear of obliteration in a nuclear war tends to suppress the profound suspicion of the Soviet Union which otherwise prevails in Japan, and to obscure in Japanese minds the improbability that Japan could remain neutral in a general war. Some otherwise conservative Japanese, for example, have even been induced to support Communist-front and neutralist organizations aimed at hindering any association of Japan with nuclear weapons, and Communist propaganda has found in this subject one of its most fertile fields of endeavor. Thus the paralyzing Japanese dread of nuclear warfare, and the belief that non-involvement in war is a feasible policy objective, constitute weak links in the association of Japan and the US, both in respect to national policy and public opinion.

A number of important considerations -- economic advantage, ideological outlook, and recent friendly association, as well as the momentum of the Occupation -- impel the Japanese to favor alliance with the US and the western world in general. Actually, however, these considerations are thought of for their current value in peacetime, and neither Japanese public opinion nor the government has seriously faced the consequence of faithful alignment with the US in the event of general war. The Socialists tend toward neutralism even in time of peace. Though they represent a minority, and are somewhat divided among themselves, they have acted together in endeavoring to embarrass the government (often irresponsibly) on questions involving nuclear weapons, and their skill in so doing has been a major roadblock for those in the government who wish to deal with the problem more forthrightly. The conservative Liberal-Democratic Party supports alignment with the US in principle, but has committed itself to the eventual withdrawal of US forces from Japan and has been sluggish in advocating rearmament, partly because the party does not wish Japan to have a provocative military role in an age where nuclear warfare is a threat.

Many Japanese of both parties base their hopes of survival in a world dominated by nuclear weapons upon the assumption that general war can and will be avoided. The Japanese public in general tends to grasp eagerly at real or imagined signs of decreasing tension, and sees Japan in the potential international role of peacemaker, of course to a limited degree. The Japanese do not, however, consider that general war could occur without the use of nuclear weapons; recollection of Hiroshima and Nagasaki renders such an assumption implausible. They accept at face value the assurance of US and Soviet military leaders, which have received wide publicity, that nuclear weapons would certainly be used in a general war, and the high concentration of population in the Japanese islands has tended to forestall hope that many civilians could survive.

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The Japanese public also devotes great emotional energy to opposing nuclear weapons testing, not merely in fear of nuclear warfare as a consequence of weapons development, but because it believes that radioactive materials have fallen on Japan from both the Soviet and the US tests in harmful quantities, especially from a genetic viewpoint. Their scientists have told them so. The Kishi administration has responded to this general opinion more vigorously than its predecessors, with diplomatic protests to all three nuclear powers against experimental explosions and by initiative in the UN for the advance registration of tests.

There can be little doubt that an end to nuclear weapons tests would not satisfy Japanese public opinion, which would then press for limitations on wartime use of weapons. In this area the Soviet proposals for outlawing the use of nuclear weapons, unrealistic though they are and suspicious though the Japanese may be of Soviet promises in other respects, have a more direct appeal to Japanese popular sensibilities than the more limited though more practical US nuclear disarmament proposals. The government, on the other hand, has tended to support the US approach.

The Japanese press has given no specific attention to the possibility that the US might use small, tactical nuclear weapons to defend against a localized aggression inspired by a Communist power. Much of the nation (especially the left wing) would condemn the action out of hand, as opening the gates for a general use of larger weapons. The intensity of this reaction and the extent to which it would attract those who are normally supporters of US defense policies would depend upon the circumstances of the aggression. If it were against an Asian state friendly to Japan, and the aggression were decisively condemned by neutral Asian states such as India, Japanese objections probably would be modified and a consensus of resignation arrived at. If, on the other hand, tactical nuclear weapons were used to repel a Chinese Communist attack on Taiwan, Japanese opinion would be bitterly divided. Finally, if such weapons were to be used by the US under circumstances in which the aggressive character of the Communist action was not clearly evident, Japanese public opinion probably would be outraged.

B. Views of the Informed Minority

Japanese intellectuals associated with non-scientific and non-governmental pursuits tend to share the popular outlook on nuclear weapons, and in fact this group provides much of the outspoken leadership of popular movements opposing rearmament, US bases, alliance with the US, and any involvement of Japan with nuclear weapons.

A striking and perhaps unique exception to this rule was an editorial in the Japan Times of March 10, signed by its president, Fukushima Shintaro. Mr. Fukushima declared,

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It is one of the hard facts of present-day life that the security of the free world, including Japan, is largely dependent upon the continuing deterrent power of nuclear...weapons...In the face of this situation, Japan's reaction to British thermonuclear tests...bears many of the marks of emotional nihilism...

In protesting against these same tests, Japan serves unhappy notice that it is not yet willing to recognize and deal with the hard realities of the current world situation -- a step which must precede any return to greatness...

This forthright statement cannot be interpreted as an indication of impending change in the general views of intellectuals, however. The Times is not a representative newspaper as it publishes only in English, employs many Americans, and is closely associated with Western viewpoints; it should also be noted that Mr. Fukushima made no suggestion that Japan might properly use nuclear weapons itself, or permit the US to use them in Japan. The Times later printed an editorial and a publisher's article differing with Mr. Fukushima.

Several of Japan's best known natural scientists have identified themselves with movements opposing nuclear weapons tests and warfare, and they evidently represent a consensus of their profession. Many scientists, however, preserve a relatively detached and objective attitude, though they are careful to avoid public controversy. For example, a prominent Japanese scientist has informed the US Embassy that the press and radio have distorted and sensationalized his reports prepared for the UN Scientific Committee; he has not, however, attempted any public correction or protest. Wide attention has been given to recent articles by scientists describing the relatively greater fall-out from Soviet (compared to US) tests, and detailing adverse genetic effects from nuclear testing in general.

Can we find out who?

A few scientists, certain military and some government officials are believed to be speculating privately upon the significance of nuclear weapons developments and their possible utility for the defense of Japan. (Popular forums have not been used for this purpose, however.)¹ Some reportedly are impressed by the possibilities for improving the aerial defense of Japan through the use of ground-to-air and air-to-air missiles with small nuclear warheads, and it is in this area that the first break-through in the present monolithic Japanese resistance to any association with nuclear weapons eventually may come. Another possibility for such a changed attitude could be the acquisition of nuclear war potential by a number of smaller nations, particularly by Asian states, which could stimulate Japanese pride and create a determination not to be outstripped. Clearly, however, these possibilities are still conjectural.

1. The Japan Times of April 16, 1957 reported that the National Defense Council is "reviewing Japan's comparative defense ability with and without American atomic weapons and guided missiles," but pointed out that this was a theoretical exercise as the government has ruled out the introduction of nuclear weapons.

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II. GOVERNMENT INFORMATION PROGRAMS

Although Japan is the most highly industrialized nation in Asia, enjoys the highest literacy rate, and has an exceptional level of scientific competence, its public has been provided with no comprehensive, dispassionate assessment of the implications of growing nuclear war potential for the nation's security, civil defense, or foreign policy. The government is avoiding deliberately the public dissemination of any information about the implications of nuclear warfare, because the opposition parties would be quick to stigmatize any such program as a preparation for participation in a nuclear war, and the public would easily be impressed by such a charge. General information available to the public on the effects of nuclear warfare originates not with the government, but from press accounts of statements made in the United States, from articles prepared by private Japanese aimed at showing the futility of rearmament, and from published accounts of the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and its continuing effect upon survivors. Most of these accounts have been highly emotional. Mr. Peto

The government appears to be convinced, though perhaps less drastically than the public, that nuclear warfare could have only catastrophic results for Japan, beyond any power of Japan to mitigate. In this judgment the Japanese draw upon their experience with nuclear attack in World War II, and take account of the proximity of Japan to a wide arc of actual or potential Sino-Soviet nuclear missile launching bases in depth, the concentration of Japan's population and industry into narrow areas, and the exposure of Japan's food supply to radioactive contamination. Prime Minister Kishi on March 11 told a Diet interpellator, "If there should be a war with revolutionary weapons (involving Japan), defense would be impossible." Consistent with this view, the government has made public no program for defense against nuclear attack, nor for emergency measures to relieve civil populations in wartime.

Nor has the government undertaken to lead or inform public opinion about nuclear weapons and warfare. The only exceptions were relatively minor efforts to avoid peaks of public feeling which might have proven politically awkward. During the US tests in the Pacific during 1956, a government research vessel cruised in the waters outside the danger zone and transmitted reassuring reports to Japan about the tolerable radioactivity of the sea and marine life. Also, the government seems to have been urging Japanese scientists to take a more objective public position on the effects of fall-out. (The government has also encouraged the development of a program for peaceful utilization of nuclear energy and has contributed to the success of the USIS "atoms for peace" exhibit.) These tentative, limited actions by the government to inform the public, however, have had no demonstrable effect upon the inflamed, indiscriminating public hostility to nuclear weapons and warfare. At best they have muted some of the worst overtones of fear over weapons testing in time of peace.

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III. INFLUENCE ON NATIONAL POLICYA. Demonstrable Effects

The intensity of Japanese public reactions to association with nuclear weapons in practical ways has limited the effectiveness of Japan's security arrangements with the US. In the present climate of domestic opinion, for example, the Japan Government could not publicly agree to storage by US forces of nuclear weapons in Japan and still retain office. The Hatoyama government tested public opinion on this score on March 14, 1955, with a statement in the Diet by the Prime Minister that Japan might not oppose atomic stockpiling in Japan "if it were determined that a policy of strength was the only way to maintain peace." In a series of Diet interpellations over the next three months, the government was forced to retract this statement and restate its policy in the following terms: 1) the Administrative Agreement provides no authority permitting the US to introduce nuclear weapons in Japan; 2) thermonuclear weapons were not then stored in Japan by the US and any immediate proposal to introduce them would be rejected; 3) Japan's consent would be required for the introduction of nuclear weapons and the US has no intention to bring them in without Japanese consent.

In defending this policy, Foreign Minister Shigemitsu on June 27, 1955, further assured the Diet that he had obtained on May 31, 1955 an "understanding" from Ambassador Allison that US forces were not "in possession of nuclear weapons in Japan" and that the US intended to seek Japanese consent to their introduction. This statement had its desired effect in cutting off Diet criticism of the government's policy. However, there was in fact no such understanding. In a secret letter of July 7, 1955, the foreign minister was officially informed by the Embassy that the ambassador "made no commitments on May 31 regarding the storage of atomic weapons in Japan" and that "the US Government does not consider itself committed to any particular course of action." In reply, a letter from the foreign minister of July 13, 1955, gave assurances that "nothing in the discussions in the Diet commits the US Government to any particular course of action." The tenor of the reply suggests that the government secretly did not share, at least to a decisive degree, the objections of the Japanese public to nuclear weapons storage.

This correspondence remains secret, however, and the public continues to believe that important US assurances have been obtained. This belief was strengthened when the present Prime Minister, Kishi Nobusuke, was interpellated on this subject during a Diet session on February 11, 1957, and again referred to such an "Allison-Shigemitsu agreement" as assuring Japan's neutrality in respect to nuclear weapons. (Apparently he did so against the recommendations of diplomatic advisers.) Subsequently, however, a storm of opposition by the Japanese public to the contemplated deployment of an atomic task force to Japan resulted in a US press statement that it had no intention of sending such forces to Japan and would in any event consult Japan prior to such a decision. Kishi later told the Diet that he would never agree to such deployment. Consequently, the erroneous impression given by Shigemitsu to the Japanese Diet and public has been substantially (though coincidentally)

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validated, and from this sequence of events, it is clear that Japanese public opinion is a controlling factor in the formulation of Japan's national policy toward nuclear weapons: On the whole, the Kishi government may be more accurately described as the follower than as the leader Japanese public opinion on this general question.

The Soviet Union has exploited the influence of Japanese public opinion to wring yet another protestation of "nuclear neutrality" from the Tokyo government, in the form of comment on the Pravda article of January 23 which warned that the USSR would counter a nuclear weapons attack by the US from Japan with identical means. Although a Japanese Cabinet spokesman called this warning a "bluff" and an "attempt to scare," he declared that Japan is not providing any bases for nuclear warfare and stated that his country plans to avoid being involved in war.

B. Inferential Effects

The Constitution of Japan renounces war as an instrument of national policy, and this provision is whole-heartedly supported by official and public opinion, for conventional as well as for nuclear warfare. Associated with this stand is a belief that Japanese forces should not be sent outside the home islands under any circumstances (although the government appears to lag behind public opinion in its determination on this point.) The government has denied repeatedly, in response to challenges in the Diet, that it would undertake any military or other commitments toward a Northeast or Southeast Asian association of non-Communist states, even though these states are not armed with nuclear weapons. The inference is clear, however, that this refusal draws some of its force from the confrontation in Northeast Asia of the world's two largest nuclear powers, as allies of opposing smaller powers in almost every tense international relationship in the area. Japan's national policy makers appear to conclude that nuclear weapons might easily be employed to cause or redress changes in local balances of power, with grave danger of involving the great powers and giving rise to a general nuclear war.

Thus, although Japan perceives national interests outside the home islands, it does not contemplate military action to defend them. For example, despite the fact that officials in Tokyo have indicated privately that Japanese national interests would be affected adversely by a Communist conquest of Taiwan, there can be little doubt that Japan would decline to become involved in any defense of the island. The same principle governs Japan's attitude toward South Korea. Also, the government would refuse any offer of US armed assistance in the settlement of disputes with the USSR, as for example to enforce Japanese fishing rights in the northwest Pacific.

Japanese national policy does not accept the use of tactical nuclear weapons as conventional, and presumably Japan would object to the distribution of such weapons among non-nuclear powers in Asia, though in varying degrees. The Philippines would be least objectionable, as both friendly to Japan and without live issues of a warlike nature with its

1. Nevertheless, disclosure that the Allison-Shigemitsu "agreement" never existed would probably do grave damage to the conservative political position. The Socialists, if they should come to power, might very well make public the letter from Ambassador Allison for its political effect.

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neighbors. The Japanese, in view of their optimistic view of the Peiping regime, could be expected to have a resigned reaction to reports of nuclear weapons in Chinese Communist hands. They would, however, be apt to object quite strongly to transfer of nuclear weapons to the Republic of China, fearing Taipei might launch a nuclear war aimed at regaining the mainland. South Korea would be most objectionable of all to the Japanese, for the reasons applicable to the Republic of China plus the enmity between Seoul and Tokyo, the proximity of the two states, and the greater danger of involving the Soviet Union. The Japanese Government probably would be more prone than the public to resign itself to nuclear weapons in the hands of the Philippines, for example, but both the Japanese Government and public would react violently to the granting of nuclear weapons to South Korea. More immediately, alarm would be aroused in Japan by any disclosure of nuclear dispositions in Korea even in US hands, though the government might eventually express resignation at inability to prevent this development.

The Japanese believe the US would honor its commitments to defend from aggression Asian states allied to it, including Japan, even in the face of possible Soviet retaliation. The prompt US entry into the Korean War impressed the Japanese in this respect. In fact, the Japanese are more apt to fear what they sometimes consider to be US over-readiness to involve itself (and thereby Japan) in local Far Eastern conflicts. Conversely, however, the Japanese doubt the ability of the US to defend Japan and prevent a hostile invasion or devastation. This concern is not related exclusively to the nuclear weapons question, and in fact has its roots in the failure of all Japanese efforts to defend itself in World War II from conventional air and sea attacks, despite exhaustive mobilization against an enemy far more distant than the USSR.

Japan's reluctance to take decisive measures for national defense preceded the Soviet announcement in 1949 that it possessed nuclear weapons, though Soviet nuclear strength has probably tended to confirm the Japanese in these views. Apart from such questions of security, however, there is no important evidence that Japanese national policy has moved in the direction of neutralism or isolationism since the USSR became a nuclear power. In various negotiations with the Soviet Union during the past two years Japan has pressed with determination its territorial, fisheries and repatriation claims, without being intimidated by Soviet objections. Such relaxation of the US-Japan alignment as may have occurred appears attributable less to any growing apprehension in Japan of Soviet nuclear strength than to loss of momentum from the Occupation, the normal tendency of a resurgent state to formulate more independent policies, and friction from outstanding issues between the two countries.

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IV. ANTICIPATED TRENDS

The future for the Japanese attitude toward nuclear weapons and warfare will be largely dependent upon the general course of international affairs, the specific inter-relations of the US, Japan and the USSR, and the trend of Japanese domestic politics. Nevertheless, some limited assumptions appear reasonable.

A. In Time of Peace

The Japanese abhorrence of involvement in nuclear war has deep roots in popular emotions and in the logic of the nation's geopolitical position; Japan can be expected to retain this objective as a paramount aim of national policy. On the other hand, the Japanese in the course of several years may change their view of the best method to achieve non-involvement, and modify their present refusal to have any association with any nuclear weapons. The Japanese are a pragmatic people, and probably would wish to acquire for their own forces nuclear weapons having defensive capabilities only, when and if they were convinced that this step would not increase the likelihood of war and would be effective in warding off a potential nuclear attack. On the more immediate question of whether Japanese opinion will ever become reconciled in peacetime to the importation of offensive nuclear weapons under US control, little change in the present level of uncompromising hostility can be foreseen, except in certain contingencies.

The primary contingency would be a sharp change in the state of tension between the US and the USSR. If the two great powers were to join in an effective program for the control of nuclear weapons, the Japanese would adopt a more relaxed attitude. They do not, however, expect such a development. At the other extreme, if the Japanese are bullied ruthlessly by the Soviet Union, to the point of grievous public resentment and disbelief that the USSR would grant Japan neutrality in war, the Japanese might come reluctantly to conclude that their interests would lie in associating themselves with the nuclear deterrent power of the US. Should neither of these extreme situations arise, however, the Japanese would be more likely to adhere to the status quo in respect to offensive nuclear weapons.

The Japanese for a long time to come probably will be susceptible to influence by adroit Soviet nuclear threats, depending of course on their nature. The Soviet warning to Norway of March 26 illustrates the type of mixed threat and promise, directed against a prospective nuclear weapons alignment, which could exercise a decisive effect on domestic Japanese politics. On the other hand, injudicious Soviet use of nuclear threats, such as in efforts to force Japan to relinquish a vital national interest recognized by the general public (i.e., free access to the Sea of Okhotsk) might well have a contrary effect. Soviet nuclear diplomacy would also gain influence in Japan from any deterioration in US-Japan relations. The USSR and Communist China have an important propaganda machine in Japan at the service of their diplomacy, which

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exploits cleverly the bias of the non-Communist left wing in Japan (especially the majority of organized labor, educators, and student groups) against US security policies as they affect Japan. This machinery probably will continue to be influential and to insure that any swing of Japanese sentiment in favor of nuclear weapons capabilities will be at best irregular and productive of intense controversy.

The Japanese public would be more apt to agree to the presence of advanced weapons if the US-Japan security relationship were to develop in such a way as to give the Japanese a sense of reasonably full control over the forces in their country. Many Japanese feel themselves involved involuntarily as a satellite of US Far Eastern policies, with which they do not fully agree, through the presence of US forces in Japan not under any Japanese control. As an illustration, the violent public reaction to US importation and testing of the Honest John missile, as well as the government's refusal to admit the Matador, may be contrasted with the absence of popular objection to Japan's testing of its own military guided missile, the TM-B-O, a small ground-to-air rocket (which failed).

The Japanese response to these external contingencies will be conditioned by the course of internal politics. If a strong, united, and stable conservative government should develop under a forceful leader, the administration in Tokyo on one hand could act with much greater independence of popular opinion than at present, and on the other hand could influence opinion in favor of nuclear weapons, for example by appealing to national pride and strengthening traditional aspirations for world power status. Also, as the postwar generation of military officers reaches senior rank and the profession resumes a respected place in Japanese life, it can be expected to exert a significant political influence in favor of adopting a complete range of modern arms for the nation's military forces. Conversely, however, long protraction of the irresolution which plagues the conservative movement at present, or a Socialist advent to power, would tend to preserve current attitudes.

Viewed in the perspective of Japanese history, the passion which the public is displaying against the introduction of nuclear weapons would not necessarily and of itself be an insurmountable barrier to a changed national policy. The Japanese public in fact has shown itself capable of radical reversals of thought and attitude, when it has seemed advisable to redress an earlier extreme. For example, during the early 1920's economic expansion rather than war was most frequently portrayed in Japan as the best road to national fulfillment; before long, however, war and militarism came to be regarded generally by the public as Japan's particular genius. In turn this view was eroded entirely in 1944 and 1945 by a wave of pacifism, which among conservatives at least has in recent years begun to ebb. Such psychological reversals in Japan normally have not been capricious but have had root in a change of objective circumstances. It may well be that the Japanese public would be more ready to respond to new or altered conditions for the adoption of nuclear weapons than is apparent in the current intensity of its opposition to any association with them.

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B. In Time of Imminent or Actual Hostilities

If nuclear war between the US and the USSR were to appear imminent, a wave of hysteria could be expected to sweep the country, and the government would be subjected to such intense pressure to disengage Japan from the conflict that the government's actions can not be predicted with assurance, the less so as government leaders themselves would share the anxieties of the public. The government might order Japanese forces to prevent the use of nuclear weapons from US bases, but would be more likely to concentrate upon appeals to world opinion for the withdrawal of US forces, and upon efforts to identify Japan with the neutral nations of Asia. A general strike of Japanese labor, including employees at US bases, and popular demonstrations hostile to US military activity would be probable. This prospect, significantly enough, would under present circumstances depend relatively little on the Japanese view of the justice of the war issues or upon Japanese preference for a US victory. It would be motivated rather by a desperate effort to survive in a situation where, in the Japanese view, war involvement would mean the destruction of Japan regardless of the ultimate outcome. Thus Japan might, contrary to its previous policy of alignment with the US, be responsive to Soviet offers of neutrality, even under humiliating and dishonorable conditions, should war seem certain.

If war were actually to begin, the Japanese probably would persist in efforts to disengage themselves, even if hope of doing so seemed forlorn. Should Japan finally be subjected to massive nuclear attack, a virtual paralysis of Japanese society would be likely to ensue, with little effective governmental or social activity discriminating between the opponents in war. Japanese armed forces might resist Soviet invasion, as a reflex action, but if Japan had previously been subjected to a heavy nuclear bombardment, such resistance probably would be nominal.

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