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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-06 H-02 INR-06 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-10 P-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12 T-03 GAC-01
OMB-01 IO-12 CU-04 M-03 A-01 OPR-02 SY-03 OC-06
NIC-01 AID-20 RSR-01 /131 W

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R 172851Z MAY 72
FM AMCONSUL NAHA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 859
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO JAPAN
CINCPAC
OAC FORT BUCKNER

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAHA100

SUBJ: OKINAWA REVERSION; LOCAL REACTION
1. OKINAWA PUBLIC REACTION TO REVERSION ON 15 MAY HAS BEEN RESTRAINED WITH VIRTUALLY NO SPONTANEOUS DISPLAYS OF EXUBERANCE. LOW-KEY RESPONSE WAS REINFORCED BY HEAVY RAINS WHICH CAUSED CANCELLATION OF SOME PLANNED COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS.
2. IN STATEMENT 15 MAY, GOVERNOR YARA SAID HE APPRECIATED U. S. AND GOJ ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION, BUT EXAMINATION OF REVERSION AGREEMENT REVEALED MANY UNRESOLVED PROBLEMS, SUCH AS CONTINUED PRESENCE OF BASES. THEREFORE REVERSION WAS NOT COMPLETELY SATISFACTORY.
3. OKINAWA TIMES LEAD STORY 15 MAY REFLECTED SOMEWHAT CRITICAL TENOR OF OVERALL PRESS REPORTING. ARTICLE ALSO NOTED "UNFORTUNATELY" BASES REMAIN, SERIOUS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS MUST STILL BE SOLVED AND SECRETARY ROGERS' LETTER TO FONMIN FUKUDA RE NUCLEAR WEAPONS

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REMOVAL WAS VAGUE AND DID NOT ELIMINATE CONCERN FROM MINDS OF LOCAL PEOPLE.

4. POLITICAL PARTIES TOOK PREDICTABLE PUBLIC POSITIONS. OLDP WELCOMED REVERSION, DESCRIBING IT AS REALIZATION OF PREFECTURAL PEOPLE'S DESIRES. NEXT GOAL SHOULD BE DEVELOPMENT OF PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS PREFECTURE. OSMP, OPP, OSP AND KOMEI TO ALL

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SOUNDED VARIATIONS ON FAMILIAR THEME THAT REVERSION AGREEMENT HAD DISREGARDED LOCAL DESIRES. PRIMARY FOCUS OF REFORMIST DISCONTENT WAS CONTINUED PRESENCE OF U.S. BASES AND DEPLOYMENT OF JSDF TO OKINAWA. FOR QSP, REVERSION DAY WAS ONE OF "HUMILIATION" AND ANGER TOWARD SATO GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO OPP, REVERSION WAS NEW "SACRIFICE" BY OKINAWAN PEOPLE.

5. BOTH GOJ AND PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT HELD REVERSION CEREMONIES AT NAHA CIVIC AUDITORIUM. RANKING JAPANESE IN ATTENDANCE INCLUDED PMO SEIGEN YAMANAKA, AMBASSADOR TAKASE, GOVERNOR YARA, FOMIN PARLIAMENTARY VICE MINISTER ONISHI AND SEVERAL PREFECTURAL GOVERNORS. U.S. REPRESENTED AT BOTH CEREMONIES BY CONSUL GENERAL (HO DELIVERED CONGRATULATORY REMARKS), MILITARY COMMANDERS, AND SOME FORMER USCAR OFFICERS. SPEAKERS AT THESE EVENTS LIMITED THEMSELVES TO EXPRESSIONS OF HAPPINESS THAT REVERSION ACCOMPLISHED.

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STATEMENTS OF GOODWILL, AND PLEDGES TO PROMOTE OKINAWAN DEVELOPMENT. NOTABLE EXCEPTION WAS NAHA MAYOR TAIRA (OSMP) WHO USED PREFECTURAL CEREMONY PLATFORM FOR VITRIOLIC ATTACK ON JUST-ENDED U.S. CIVIL ADMINISTRATION.

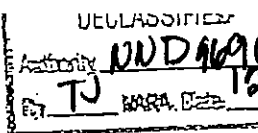
6. WHILE PREFECTURAL CEREMONIES UNDERWAY IN CIVIC CENTER, FUKKIKYO SPONSORED OPPOSITION "PREFECTURAL PEOPLE'S RALLY" IN NEIGHBORING YOGI PARK. APPROXIMATELY 6000 (POLICE FIGURE) REFORMIST PARTY MEMBERS, UNIONISTS AND MEMBERS OF "DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATIONS" HUDDLED UNDER UMBRELLAS TO HEAR REFORMISTS SPOKESMEN CONDEMN 15 MAY REVERSION AS "INCOMPLETE." ALSO APPEARING WAS UNIDENTIFIED AMERICAN WHO, CLAIMING TO SPEAK FOR ANTI-WAR GI'S, ASSAILED "U.S. AND JAPANESE IMPERIALISM." REPRESENTATIVE RALLY THEMES INCLUDED DEMANDS FOR AUTONOMY FOR OKINAWA PREFECTURE, COMPENSATION BY GOJ FOR FINANCIAL LOSSES PRODUCED BY DOLLAR-YEN CONVERSION, "COMPLETE REVERSION" (ELIMINATION OF BASES) AND OPPOSITION TO JSDF. FOLLOWING RALLY ABOUT 5,000 DEMONSTRATORS PARADED TO PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT HEADQUARTERS (GRI PLAZA) AND DISPERSED. DAY'S ONLY VIOLENCE INVOLVED MINOR PARADE ROUTE SKIRMISHES BETWEEN POLICE AND RADICAL STUDENTS WHICH RESULTED IN 8 ARRESTS.

7. COMMENT: LOW KEY RESPONSE OF OKINAWANS TO REALITY OF REVERSION

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IS PROBABLY RESULT OF SEVERAL FACTORS IN COMBINATION, NOT LEAST OF WHICH WAS TORRENTIAL RAIN ON 14 AND 15 MAY. OTHER IMPORTANT ELEMENTS INCLUDE: APPREHENSION OVER LOCAL ECONOMIC FUTURE; WEARINESS INDUCED BY FACT REVERSION HAS BEEN PRIMARY POLITICAL ISSUE FOR 3 YEARS; ADVANCE PREPARATIONS MADE BY USG, GOJ AND GRI; AND FACT THAT IN AT LEAST SOME RESPECTS OKINAWA ALREADY PARTICIPATING IN JAPANESE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES. PETREE
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