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MEMORANDUM

UNCLASSIFIED October 25, 1973

SUBJECT: Visit of Mr. Sadaaki Numata, North American Division, Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs

REFERENCE: Status LNO Memorandum of Conversation, October 19, 1973

On the evening of October 18, Mr. Numata, who had come to Saipan in connection with arrangements for the Japanese war remains retrieval mission now on its way to the eastern districts, hosted a dinner at the Hafa Adai Hotel for some thirty persons involved in the bones-collection missions. With both the High Commissioner and his deputy off island, the ranking TT Government representative present was Special Assistant Dwight Heine. Marianas District Government was represented by DISTAD Ada, Deputy DISTAD Akimoto, the latter as local coordinator for the Japanese missions, having made the arrangements for the dinner, and Chief of Public Works Tenorio. Local Marianas officials present included Saipan Legislature speaker Ben Camacho and Mayor Sablan. There were no members of the Congress and, except for Camacho, no members of the Marianas Political Status Commission. There were also no members of the Saipan business community. Guests included the local land commissioner, some workers in the TT Finance Department, and a representative of Trans-Pac shipping line.

Why this rather lack-lustre guest list is hard to judge. Mr. Numata was the genial, if somewhat formal host and welcomed his guests by thanking those who had aided the Japanese missions and saying that he hoped this particular occasion would mark the beginning of closer ties of friendship between Japan and Micronesia. He expressed his pleasure at seeing for the first time these beautiful islands and noted in passing his recent visits to New York and London as interpreter for Foreign Minister Ohira at the UN and for Prime Minister Tanaka in his talks with British Prime Minister Heath.

Numata spoke in low key and in diffident manner, and it is not likely that his words made any significant impression on most of his audience. But his presence and hospitality on behalf of the GOJ, a point made clear by Deputy DISTAD Akimoto who introduced him, were probably not lost. It remains however something of a mystery as to why this affair, the first, so far as I am aware, to be hosted by the Government of Japan through an officer of its Foreign Ministry, should have been staged at such a working level. While it was set up by Mr. Akimoto he was clearly acting on the basis of Mr. Numata's requests.

My own guess is that this arrangement was deliberate and that Mr. Numata as a relatively junior though competent professional, was probably sent to Saipan on an orientation trip to pave the way for any future, more official business which might arise as for instance in connection with the prospective Japan-Micronesia Association involving Japanese economic interests. In any event, an official emissary of the GOJ has made his public appearance in Micronesia.

cc: Ambassador Franklin Haydn Williams
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