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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

STAFF SUMMARY SUPPLEMENT

August 15, 1958

400. Japanese Reaction to Contaminated Ships - We have sent to our Embassy in Tokyo, with the authorization to give it to the Japanese, the AEC's evaluation report regarding the condition of the Japanese ships allegedly caught in radioactive fallout from the Pacific tests. According to the report, it appears quite possible that the rain which fell on the Takuyo Maru, which was the only one of the two ships caught in the rain squall, did contain radioactive fallout from the tests. The amount, however, was not sufficient to have caused radiation sickness in the crew members. Medical examination showed no evidence of radiation injury. The report noted that ship's log stated there was an increase in radiation levels to about 15 times normal readings, and commented that even if this had been so it would not have resulted in a total dose sufficient to produce even minimum symptoms of radiation sickness.

Following the arrival in Japan of the ships that had been exposed to radiation and the government's confirmation that the crews were "safe," our Embassy in Tokyo reported the local press is covering the incident in a relatively well-balanced fashion. The Japanese Foreign Office has expressed appreciation for our having made available the full report by the US Atomic Energy Commission team. Meanwhile, however, there has been a spate of press stories about other Japanese ships being "dusted" by radioactive fallout. Nevertheless, Japanese officials hope that the public announcement about the two government ships will help undercut publicity on the other vessels.

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DECLASSIFIED
State guidelines
Authority: 48 CFR 155.201
By: TB MJC/els 7/14/99

Carbon destroyed 8/19/58