

Sciusgalli

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... continuing study of the situation.

The Welfare Ministry's refusal to accept the Rikkyo Report as conclusive deflated a few feathers among Rikkyo University professors as well as Meteorological Agency officials. One professor was quoted as expressing his regret that the Ministry had claimed "the result of the survey involved appreciable observational errors." A Meteorological Agency official stated that: "It is the first time that such strong radioactivity has been recorded. I cannot say definitely about the question of tolerable limit, but it can at least be said that the recorded figure is quite close to the limit and hence deserves caution."

The division of opinion on the Rikkyo report has tended to emphasize the fact that even among so-called Japanese experts there is confusion and disagree-

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... on what constitutes the maximum tolerable limit. It is worth noting, however, that the Welfare Ministry took considerable pains to contradict the scientific basis of the report and to exert a moderating influence on a rather volatile subject. (SSC)

II. Current Foreign Office Role in Relations with USSR

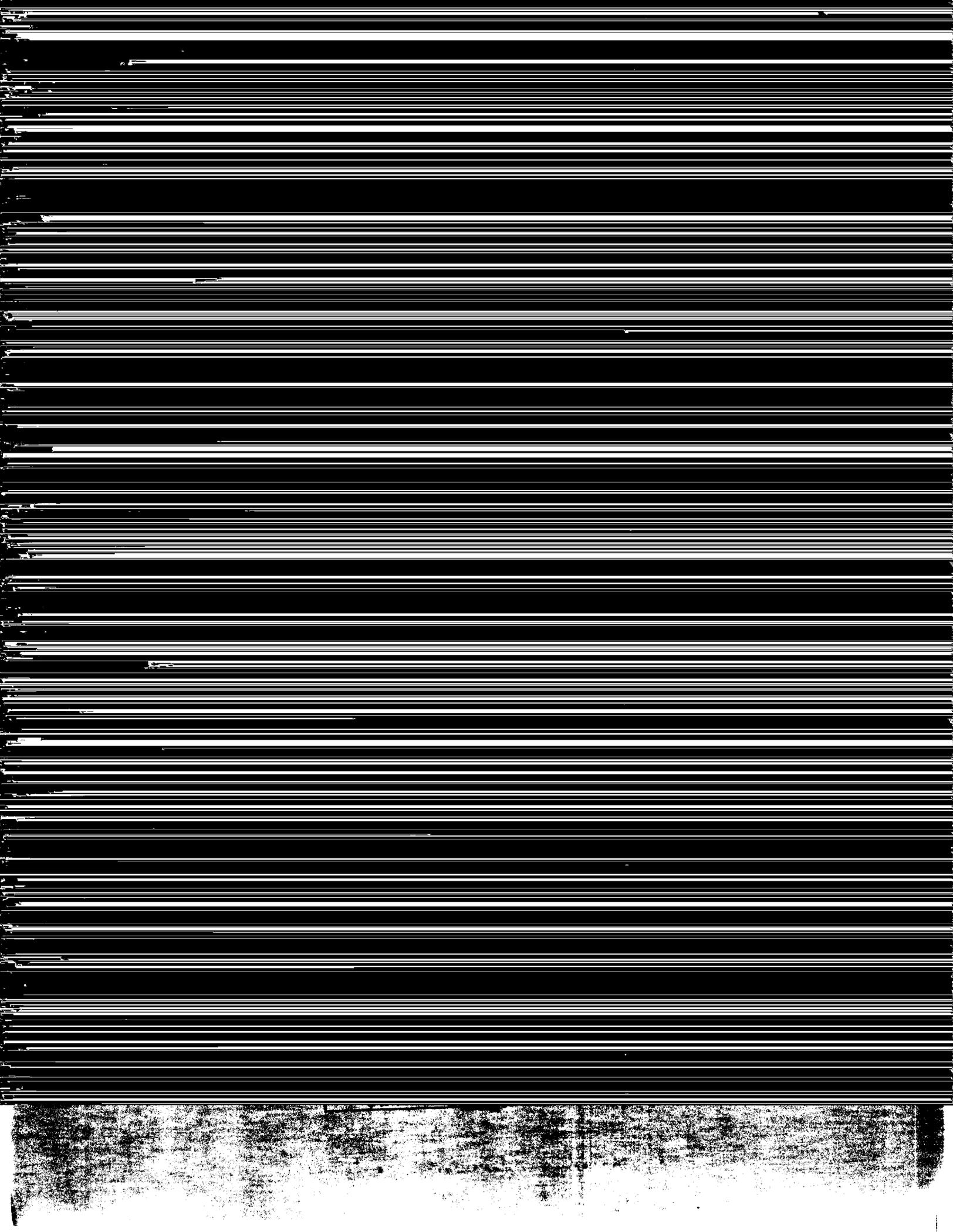
As recent Embassy telegrams have indicated, the Foreign Office has been largely on the sidelines on the recent controversies over Japan's policy for resuming negotiations with the USSR. This situation has been reflected in reactions ranging from clear disgruntlement to cynical humor on the part of middle and lower level Foreign Office officials with whom Embassy officers have been in contact. As one official put it, "not even the Japanese politicians know what Japan's policy is."

The situation has not escaped press attention: Asahi, for example, on September 27 carried a lengthy report asserting that its personnel bemoan the fact that the Foreign Office is "quiet as a mouse" despite feverish activity on the diplomatic front. This, the story continued, is blamed on the Foreign Minister, whose reserved personality, lack of political force and influence, and cavalier attitude toward staff work have brought the prestige of the Foreign Office, and his own prestige therein, to a low ebb.

Another element of reported criticism, that Shigemitsu has lacked the courage to assert himself affirmatively on the issues of policy toward the USSR since the first few days after his return from Moscow, is not without foundation. There have been few public utterances of any consequence from him. His address at the Harris Centennial banquet of the America-Japan Society September 22 was a tribute to the first American consul and thereby to American-Japanese friendship -- a theme, of course, appropriate to the occasion but one which showed no disposition to utilize the opportunity for his own political purposes as might have been expected. (In contrast was the speech of former Prime Minister Shigeru YOSHIDA, whose name was added to the list of speakers subsequent to the first formal invitations. Yoshida obviously attended for the purpose of making the point that there were some Japanese who believed, as his address concluded, that "this is no time for us to flirt with Moscow.") In cabinet meetings as well, it appears, Shigemitsu has been virtually silent where Soviet-Japanese relations are concerned. His spirits are understood to have improved, however, since it was tentatively decided that if and when the Prime Minister goes to Moscow Shigemitsu will be acting Prime Minister.

But it is not only the present Japanese Government leadership that is by-passing the Foreign Office. Ever since Agriculture-Forestry Minister Ichiro KONO blazed the trail to the door of the Soviet Fisheries Mission in order to confer with Sergei Tikhvinsky on the question of a five-point settlement formula, late in August, others have followed suit: Tatsunosuke TAKASAKI, Cabinet member in charge of the Economic Planning Agency, and the Socialists Shichiro HOZUMI and Shichiro MATSUMOTO. Tikhvinsky, for his part, has likewise by-passed the Foreign

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date officially recognized by the LDP was defeated by a margin of 60,000 votes by another conservative running as an Independent. In the Osuma Prefectural election shortly thereafter internal factional difficulties which had prevented the organization of a new LDP prefectural organization until this summer was a telling factor in the fact that the official party candidate ran a weak third in a four-man contest.

Reports reaching Tokyo from the local areas reflect the fact that the same factional struggles so apparent here have their counterparts throughout the country. Divisions exist either as between "mainstream and anti-mainstream" or

1 See Embassy despatch 292, September 25, 1956, item II.

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...ing areas during the recent elections.

At the same time, few Socialists will admit in private that their victories have stemmed from their own policies, and some are privately expressing concern lest they come to power too soon. In this respect they somewhat resemble the reluctant prospective bridegroom who finds himself being propelled toward the church a little faster than anticipated.

Despite the number of recent Socialist successes, most political observers feel that with the conclusion of the Soviet negotiations and the selection of a successor to Hatoyama the LDP fortunes will take a turn for the better. This feeling assumes, however, that the leaders of the party will somehow at last be able to settle the problem of political succession. (SSC)

VIII. Waseda Militants Criticized

Apparently the clamor and uproar over the arrival of Michigan University professors Gordy and Page at Waseda University under the USOM-arranged agreement between Michigan and Waseda has ended and the incident seems to be closed. About the only public notice now being taken of the affair is to be found in letters to the editor and other press comments criticizing the group which so bitterly and loudly opposed the project. Recent press comment has not always been favorable to the agreement itself, but on the whole has generally expressed sentiments disapproving of and identifying the leftist source and nature of the opposition. Because the issue is a relatively small one, the general press coverage can not be fully compared with the outpourings in some of the more celebrated controversies of the past. However, the comment this time is much less one-sided than on previous occasions. The extent of the comments -- whether

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spontaneous or induced -- favorable to U.S. interests has been unprecedented in recent times. (NY)

For the Ambassador:

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...arranging with the Japanese government...
...for letting the Russians get away with it.

However, the Foreign Office has not been entirely without function in this situation. Embassy despatch 254, September 13, reported one important contribution to the Hatoyama letter to Bulganin. And planning is under way for the post-normalization contingencies. One Foreign Office official requested (and was given) information on the Department's schedule of special allowances to personnel serving in Moscow by way of assistance in Japanese preparations for establishing an Embassy. In addition, the Embassy has learned that the Foreign Office intends to make every effort to obtain a consulate at Vladivostok; "since the principle of reciprocity is our sole criterion, and our sole weapon with the Soviets," as one officer put it, the only Russian consulate that would be permitted in Japan would be at Hakodate. However, it was realized that Soviet agreement might be hard to come by since no other country has a consulate in Vladivostok. The impression left was that the Japanese would be quite pleased to accept a consulate in Hakodate in return, and quite firm in denying it otherwise. The refurbishing of the Russian consulate building in Hakodate, recently reported, was apparently done by the Japanese custodians as a means of trying to assure that the Japanese consulate building in Vladivostok would also be returned in good condition.

A Foreign Office source has also told the Embassy that there would be "no necessity" for Japan to engage in cultural activities in the Soviet Union and, therefore, there would be "no necessity" for the Soviets to open any cultural centers in Japan. This same official anticipated that the Japanese Embassy in Moscow will be beset with problems related to the whereabouts of the more than 10,000 Japanese missing in the USSR. Foreign Minister Shepilov, he said, had promised Shigemitsu to conduct a search for information on these people, and the Japanese Foreign Office had given the Russians all information it had available on their identity. But the Embassy's biggest headache at first, he thought, would be to pursue the search. (WBC)

III. JCP Membership

Speaking before the Thursday Lecture Club of the Industrial Club on September 27, Justice Minister Ryose MAKINO announced that current Justice Ministry estimates set Japan Communist Party (JCP) membership at about 125,000. In a speech which played down somewhat the seriousness of the internal communist threat in Japan, Makino went on to say that about 5,000 communists are believed to be employed by the various departments of the government. However, according to Makino, the Government does not plan another "red purge" such as the one carried out several years ago. He announced that because sufficient security countermeasures have been taken, there is no need for concern over communists stealing

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...whether he is referring to anything recent or concrete. Moreover, Makino's apparent attempt to place the nature of the threat that the JCP represents in its proper perspective by comparing the size of the JCP membership with that of the Teachers Union is somewhat disconcerting, for Makino neglected to point out that although a very small number of teachers are JCP members, communist influence in the Teachers Union is of substantial proportions. (A commentator in Asahi Shimbun also deplored this statement but for far different reasons. He said that it was typical of Makino to link the Teachers Union and the JCP together as the same sort of organizations.) Although some press reports hinted that Japanese security agencies may be taking a more gloomy view of the situation than that displayed in this speech, there was little significant newspaper reaction. (HT)

VI. Rightist Activity (continued)

A somewhat pathetic footnote was added to recent rumors of possible rightist violence when a group of about fifty extremists staged a demonstration in front of Prime Minister Hatoyama's private residence on the night of Tuesday, September 26. The group, which included some women, was led by Bin AKAO of the Great Japan Patriotic Party (Dai Nippon Aikoku-to) and consisted primarily of his followers. They carried banners protesting Hatoyama's proposed trip to Moscow. Police prevented them from entering the grounds of the residence, but about twenty of the demonstrators staged a sit-down protest outside the gates throughout a very rainy night.

On Thursday, September 27, the National Protection Society (Gokoku Dan) held a rally in the plaza in front of Tokyo's large Shinjuku Station. Members of the Diet received bizarre invitations to the rally which were represented as coming from the deceased conservative leaders Taketora OGATA and Bukichi MIKI. These invitations invited the recipients to attend the funeral service of the "traitor" Prime Minister Ichiro HATOYAMA. There were no assassinations or other attempts to add a note of realism to the mock ceremony. Press reaction and public interest

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concerned almost exclusively with the problem of negotiations with the Soviets, it is fairly clear that the Yoshida-Ikeda group which dominates it has a larger political objective in mind: evidently this group hopes that the Council will become the nucleus of a conservative opposition movement which will eventually -- perhaps immediately after Hatoyama's return from Moscow -- be in a position to force Hatoyama's retirement and to wrest political power and hegemony of the conservative party from Kono and the "mainstream" faction.

The Kondenka is still in a rather amorphous state, and it is too early to predict whether it will achieve any or all of its objectives (as this note is being written Hatoyama's trip has still not been definitely agreed upon), or whether it will develop into a viable political force as its sponsors hope. Most observers at present tend to discount the importance of the Council, pointing out that only a hard core of Yoshida's followers are firmly committed to the organization, that none of the principal leaders of other factions are participating, and that though the members are generally agreed that Hatoyama should retire promptly, there is no agreement at all as to who should be his successor.

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