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April 2, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER

FROM: Al Haig

SUBJECT: Okinawa Reversion

Before lunch, you discussed the issue of our [redacted]

[redacted] 3.3(b)(5), 3.3(b)(6), 3.3(b)(9)

While I am sympathetic with Dick Sneider's position on this issue, I believe it more forthcoming than we need be in our initial dealings with the Japanese and true to my profession, I must emphasize that the price we would pay for [redacted] 3.3(b)(5), 3.3(b)(6), 3.3(b)(9) Okinawa, even after a settlement of the Vietnam war, would be extremely heavy. It would seem to me that our willingness to give on the overall issue of reversion would improve our leverage on insisting on a [redacted] capability for our forces there, especially if we linked it to some fuzzy conditions such as an improvement in the international situation in the Far East.

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3.3(b)(5)  
3.3(b)(6)  
3.3(b)(9)

Attachment

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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

JCSM-184-69  
29 March 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Japan Policy as Pertains to Okinawa Reversion Issue (NSSM-5) ~~(S)~~

1. (U) Reference is made to:

a. National Security Study Memorandum No. 5 (NSSM-5) which directed the preparation of a broad study of US-Japan issues, including the Okinawa reversion issue.

b. JCSM-472-67, dated 24 August 1967, subject: "Ryukyu Base Study (U)," which provided the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on an Interdepartmental Regional Group/East Asia Report, subject: "Ryukyu Base Study."

2. ~~(S)~~ ~~The Joint Chiefs of Staff have~~ in keeping with the objective of reference 1a, ~~reexamined the Okinawa reversion issue.~~ They recognize that there are political pressures which may militate against maintaining the status quo for very much longer. Accordingly, it appears appropriate that further comment be provided at this time on the military implications considered by reference 1b.

3. ~~(S)~~ There are fundamental military considerations associated with the issue of reversion of Okinawa to Japan: unrestricted access and freedom of action in the use of our Okinawa bases, including B-52 operations, nuclear ship visits, 3.3(b)(5), 3.3(b)(6), 3.3(b)(9) 3.3(b)(5), 3.3(b)(6), 3.3(b)(9) While there may be a political necessity of settling the Okinawa problem as quickly as possible, the US Government, in its desire to attain an early and amicable solution of this issue, should recognize fully the adverse consequences of Okinawa's reversion under conditions which fail to provide adequate safeguards for our military requirements.

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4. (TS) Current US strategy in the Pacific, which relies on credible deterrence, flexible response, and collective security, is largely dependent upon the system of bilateral defense agreements with Free World countries in the area. The basic tenet of our strategy in the western Pacific is one of containment of communist countries in Asia. Inherent in the prosecution of this strategy is the continuing need for forward deployed land, air, naval, and amphibious forces in the offshore areas capable of executing rapid, coordinated, and sustained military operations. Okinawa remains the most important US military base system in the western Pacific, providing a number of installations performing a wide variety of major military functions. Its proximity to potential theaters of operation is of major significance to the overall US capability and flexibility in meeting our commitments in the Pacific. These commitments are consistent with Japan's defense as well as Asian security in general. Without the continued unrestricted use of Okinawan bases, it is doubtful that US military forces could meet the essential requirements of the US strategy for the Pacific in the foreseeable future. Moreover, it is highly important that both our potential enemies and our allies in the area not draw erroneous conclusions from any changes in our military base rights and posture on Okinawa.

3.3(b)(5), 3.3(b)(6), 3.3(b)(9)

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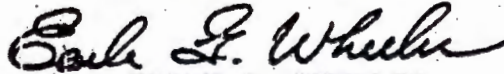
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3.3(b)(5), 3.3(b)(6), 3.3(b)(9)

6. ~~(S)~~ In consideration of the alternatives to the current arrangements governing Okinawa, it would appear necessary for ~~the US Government to negotiate a separate agreement with the Government of Japan which would ensure the continued use of existing military facilities with present rights and privileges unimpaired, at least until such time as free world Asian interests are not threatened. This is considered a reasonable Japanese concession in return for early reversion and continued US protection.~~ In US negotiations, it should be additionally stipulated that Japan would assume appropriate defense responsibilities for the Ryukyu Islands and surrounding waters at the time of reversion.

7. (U) The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend that the above views be used as the DOD policy position on the conditions for the reversion of Okinawa when this issue is considered by the NSC Review Group and the National Security Council.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:



EARLE G. WHEELER

Chairman

Joint Chiefs of Staff

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