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TS# 185869

25 June 1965

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*Noted by Del.*



MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Probable Reactions of Certain Asian Free World Countries to a Possible US Military Action

#### THE PROBLEM

To estimate probable Philippine, GRC, and Japanese reactions to possible US use of their airfields (Okinawan airfields in the case of Japan) as bases for B-52 operations in Vietnam.\*

#### DISCUSSION

1. The Philippines. Under the terms of an informal agreement, the US has some obligation to notify the Government of the Philippines of the use of Clark Field for the stated purpose. Whatever the legal effect of this agreement, the US would, as a matter of practical politics, have to give notice of its intentions. President Macapagal would be inclined first to seek the support of other leading Philippine political figures; the forthcoming (November 1965)

\* For significant air distances involved, see Attachment.

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presidential election has made Macapagal extraordinarily cautious in this respect. We do not believe that he would encounter sufficient objections to make him withhold his assent. The government would probably calculate that the US action (whether against the VC in the south or the DRV itself) did not involve a serious threat of retaliation against the Philippines. However, Macapagal and his leaders would take the occasion to solicit increased US military aid.

2. Filipino public reaction would probably not be significantly adverse to either Macapagal or the US. The majority of the population would be either favorable or indifferent, though a few Filipinos would be fearful of retaliatory Communist actions, especially in the event of an attack on the DRV. Small-scale leftist demonstrations, similar to those of recent weeks, would probably occur in Manila.

3. GRC. The Government of the Republic of China (GRC) would probably welcome the use of its air bases by US B-52s for operations against either the VC or the DRV. The government would construe the attacks as a further

- 2 -

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indication of US determination to stop Communist expansion in Asia. It would use the occasion to try to involve the US more deeply in support of GRC operations against the mainland. Outside the government, there might be some fear that US use of Taiwanese airfields would expose Taiwan to Communist Chinese retaliation. However, any popular opposition that did develop could easily be controlled by the GRC.

4. Japan. The US has no legal obligation to inform Japan of military deployments involving Okinawa, and the US has not done so in the past. Nevertheless, it is highly unlikely that B-52 operations of the magnitude contemplated could be mounted from Okinawa without their being known to the Japanese government and public. Hence, failure to notify the Japanese government in advance would almost certainly reduce its confidence in the US and impair Sato's political position. The Japanese press and a fair volume of public opinion have been strongly critical of US actions in Vietnam.

5. Although most Japanese are accustomed to Okinawa's growing role in support of US military activities in Southeast

- 3 -

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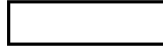
Asia, the use of Okinawa-based B-52s, even if restricted to raids on South Vietnam, would significantly upgrade the importance of this role in Japanese eyes. Many Japanese would resent the use of what they regard as Japanese territory to prosecute a war in which they see Japan holding no vital interest. The Sato government, though it would not share this sentiment, would find itself more vulnerable than before to attacks on its support of US policy in Vietnam. Sato would probably remain steadfast, but he would almost certainly lose some public support for himself and his party which faces upper house elections next month. These reactions would be considerably intensified were the B-52 attacks to be launched against the DRV and, in this case, Sato might seek to disassociate himself from or even oppose the US action. If Sato misjudged the public temper and was pushed from office, a successor government would almost certainly be more resistant to the US course of action and less favorably disposed to the US generally.

6. On Okinawa itself, the US action would provide an issue for the leftist opposition parties and increase

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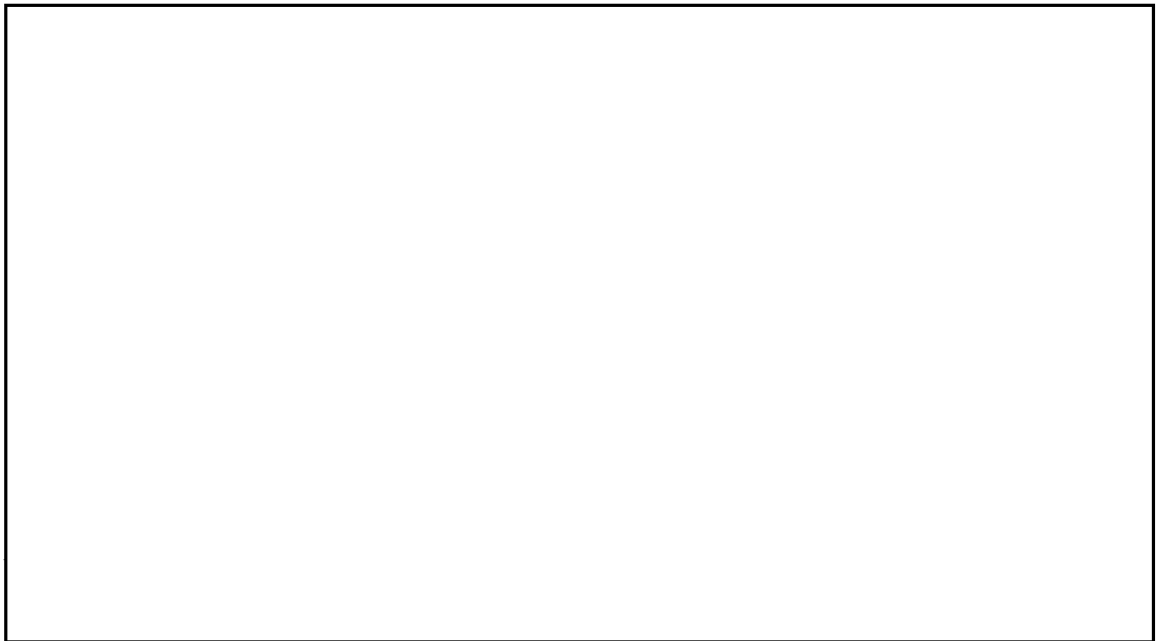
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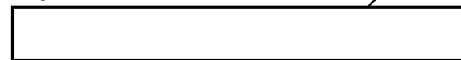
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Okinawan sentiment in favor of an early return of the island to Japan. The legislative elections in Okinawa, now scheduled for November 1965, are expected to be close in any case; the impact of the US actions might tilt the balance against the incumbent conservatives. This in turn would help undermine Japanese popular and political support for Sato's relatively permissive attitude toward the US occupation of the Ryukyus. Ultimately, Okinawa's heightened involvement in the Vietnam war could become an important factor in the leftist campaign to discredit the US-Japan Security Treaty.

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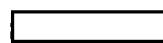
FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:



SHERMAN KENT  
Chairman

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ATTACHMENT  
(28 Jun 65)

SELECTED AIR DISTANCES

(Statute Miles)

	<u>Saigon</u>	<u>Hanoi</u>
Philippines (Clark Field) to:	975	1050*
Taiwan (WC Coast) to :	1275	900**
Okinawa to :	1700	1375**
Guam to :	2600	2600*

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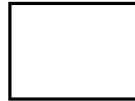
\*Overflies Hainan Island if most direct route used.  
\*\*Overflies China Mainland if most direct route used.

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*25 June 1966*  
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FORM NO. 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101  
1 AUG 54 WHICH MAY BE USED.

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