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Atomic Energy

Submitted herewith as an enclosure to this despatch is a Memorandum of Conversation. The Memorandum covers a conversation held on July 27, 1956 between Mr. Satsichiro MATSUI, Chief, Third Section, International Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. J. A. VAN SWEARINGEN, American Embassy, Tokyo.

For the Ambassador

Frank A. Waring
 Frank A. Waring
 Counselor of Embassy
 for Economic Affairs

Enclosure: Memorandum of Conversation

FOR COORDINATION WITH

State

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

EXEMPTIONS Section 3(b)

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Disp. No. 170
From Tokyo

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT : Atomic Energy

PARTICIPANTS: Sashichiro Matsui, Chief, Third Section,
International Cooperation Bureau,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
J. A. Van Swearingen, American Embassy, Tokyo

Date: July 27, 1956

Mr. Matsui is the principal atomic energy authority in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He is not a technician and his principal interests in atomic energy are political and economic.

The reporting officer met with Mr. Matsui in order to obtain his views on some of the matters previously discussed with Mr. Hidetoshi Shibata, as reported in a memorandum of conversation dated July 31.

Mr. Matsui was asked whether or not Sir Christopher Hinton in his opinion was in a position to offer British atomic energy assistance on a "no secrets basis". Mr. Matsui replied without hesitation that it would be impossible for Sir Christopher Hinton to make any such offer to Japan. Without any further comment by the reporting officer, Mr. Matsui held forth at some length on the subject of the British-U.S. agreement on security measures. Mr. Matsui then made the rather surprising statement that Mr. Shibata (See Memorandum of Conversation dated July 31) was responsible for conveying the "no secrets" idea to Matsutaro Shoriki, Chairman of the Japanese Atomic Energy Commission.

Mr. Matsui confirmed Mr. Shibata's information on Japanese plans for the use of atomic power in ship propulsion machinery. He went on to state that the Atomic Energy Commission is in the process of making a major decision as to whether Japan should initially emphasize atomic energy for power stations or for ship propulsion machinery. In this connection Mr. Matsui stated that the Foreign Office would be most happy to receive from the United States all possible information on the technical aspects of atomic powered ship propulsion machinery, including full details of the Nautilus. Mr. Matsui was not encouraged to believe that any such information would be made available to the Government of Japan.

In answer to a question regarding the reported delay in the departure of the Japanese Atomic Power Investigation Mission to Britain, Mr. Matsui

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 OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
 WASHINGTON, D. C. 20540

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confirmed a news story which indicated that the British Government had requested the Japanese to delay their departure for several months. According to Mr. Matsui the British Government stated that it does not now have available plans for a satisfactory atomic power reactor for presentation to the Japanese and that several more months will be required to draft such plans. It was easy to infer from Mr. Matsui's remarks that he believes that Sir Christopher Hinton overestimated himself when he proposed the Mission to Britain on the occasion of his visit to Japan in mid-May.

Mr. Matsui stated that Dr. Murvin Fox of the Brookhaven Institution wrote to the Foreign Office late in June requesting information on the availability of Japanese technicians to help staff the Nuclear Research Center in Hanada. The Foreign Office reply, according to Mr. Matsui, was to the effect that Japan sends a formal U.S. proposal. Mr. Matsui made it clear that Japan fully supports a nuclear center in principle and fully intends to supply staff members. However, the Foreign Office would like to have some information on the kinds and numbers of technicians required, the length of their service in Hanada, and the compensation to be paid to them.

In commenting on the forthcoming International Atomic Energy Agency meeting, Mr. Matsui expressed the belief that the United States is withholding certain important information which the Japanese delegates to the Conference will require if they are to make any significant contribution. The Japanese are particularly anxious to know the terms of participation in the Agency which will be imposed, specifically, what will be expected of Japan by way of supplying technicians, what kinds of technicians will be required, what and for how long.

Finally, Mr. Matsui expressed concern that no reply has yet been received by the Japanese Embassy to its Note Verbale of February 15, 1956, concerning the availability of 4,000 kilograms of uranium metal.