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Central Intelligence Bulletin

State Department review completed

Top Secret

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25 February 1971



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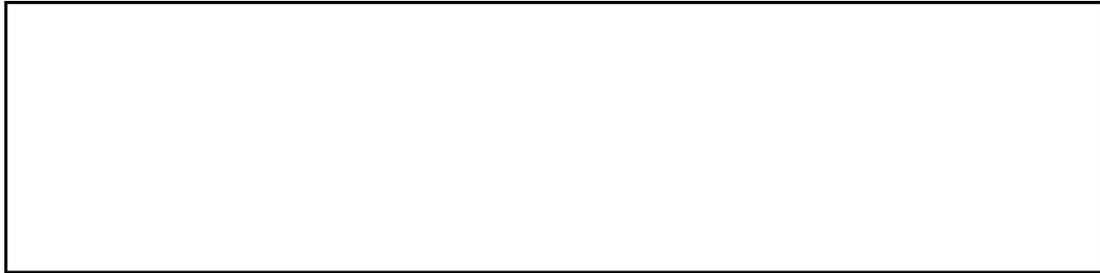
Approved For Release 2003/08/21 : CIA-RDP79T00975A018300100003-5

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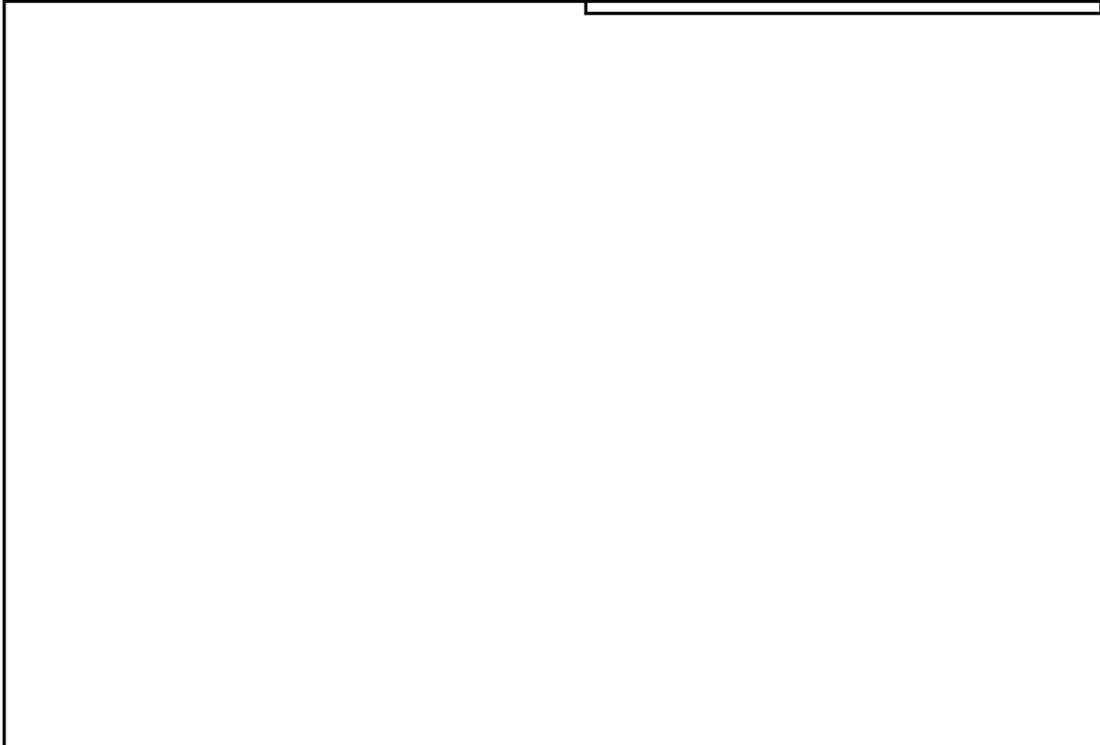
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JAPAN - COMMUNIST CHINA: Tokyo apparently plans no change in its China policy.

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JAPAN - COMMUNIST CHINA: TOKYO APPARENTLY HAS DECIDED AGAINST ANY SHARP CHANGE IN ITS CAUTIOUS CHINA POLICY.

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] FOREIGN MINISTER AICHI TOLD THE US AMBASSADOR ON 23 FEBRUARY THAT PROTECTING NATIONALIST CHINA'S POSITION IN THE UN WOULD BE A PRIME OBJECTIVE OF JAPANESE POLICY. HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE INTIMIDATED BY PEKING, ALTHOUGH TOKYO STILL HOPES FOR IMPROVED BILATERAL RELATIONS. AICHI SAID THAT DESPITE OCCASIONAL "GESTURES" TO PEKING, THE SUBSTANCE OF JAPANESE POLICY REMAINED UNCHANGED.

AICHI EMPHASIZED THAT THE JAPANESE AND US GOVERNMENTS SHOULD KEEP IN STEP ON THE CHINA ISSUE. HE ADDED THAT TOKYO WAS IN NO HURRY TO REACH A FINAL DECISION ON STRATEGY BEFORE THIS SUMMER, IMPLYING THAT OPPOSITION PRESSURE IN THE DIET HAD BEEN LESS THAN ANTICIPATED.

THE FOREIGN MINISTER GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT HE AND PRIME MINISTER SATO HAVE CONCLUDED THAT IN VIEW OF PEKING'S HOSTILE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SATO GOVERNMENT, A MORE CONCILIATORY APPROACH WOULD BE UNPRODUCTIVE. FOR THE PRESENT AT LEAST, THE SATO GOVERNMENT PROBABLY WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT TAIPEI'S DIPLOMATIC POSITION, WHILE MAKING PRO FORMA EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH PEKING IN ORDER TO KEEP DOMESTIC POLITICAL PRESSURES IN CHECK. RECENT PRESS LEAKS CONCERNING UNSUCCESSFUL JAPANESE EFFORTS LAST YEAR TO INCREASE CONTACTS WITH CHINESE COMMUNIST DIPLOMATS IN EUROPE PROBABLY WERE DESIGNED TO PAINT AN UNFAVORABLE PICTURE OF PEKING'S ATTITUDE TOWARD IMPROVED RELATIONS.

PEKING, IN DISMISSING JAPANESE ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH "OFFICIAL CONTACTS," HAS MADE EXPLICIT ITS VIEW THAT JAPAN'S TIES WITH TAIWAN POSE THE BIGGEST OBSTACLE TO ANY NORMALIZATION OF STATE RELATIONS WITH TOKYO.

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