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FRP: , , , , , , , ,

STAFF

ACTION: EA [] (299) INFO: DCEA/OPE, EYESONLY, MDSX, ODPD, FILE, C/EA, DDO, EA/XO (4/W)

96 3620327 ASO PAGE 001 IN 3620327 TOR: 260842Z MAR 96 []

S E C R E T 260832Z MAR 96 STAFF

CITE [] 24344

TO: IMMEDIATE DIRECTOR.

FOR: LIMIT C/EA [] INFO CHIEF/EA, DCEA/OPE, EA/XO

SLUGS: WNINTEL

SUBJECT: EYES ONLY - FOR C/EA [] OFFICIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT []

REF: DIRECTOR 700784 96 3598980

TEXT:

1. ACTION REQUIRED: PLEASE INCORPORATE THE FOLLOWING INTO THE *TALKING POINTS TO BE USED IN THE PRESENTATION TO THE<JFK> *<ASSASSINATION>RECORDS REVIEW BOARD.

2. AMBASSADOR [] THE EMBASSY [] STRONGLY OPPOSE RELEASE TO THE PUBLIC OF ANY REFERENCE TO THE EXISTENCE OF A [] SUCH ACTION COULD HAVE ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR [] RELATIONS AT A TIME WHEN A NUMBER OF DIFFICULT SECURITY AND ECONOMIC ISSUES REMAIN UNRESOLVED. IT ALSO WOULD RISK REIGNITING EARLIER CONTROVERSIES []

[] PUBLIC CONFIRMATION WOULD, WITHOUT A DOUBT, DISRUPT COOPERATION [] ON IMPORTANT COUNTERTERRORIST AND COUNTERINTELLIGENCE CASES. BY MAKING THE [] OBJECT OF GREATER PUBLIC AND POSSIBLY OFFICIAL SCRUTINY, IT WOULD LOWER THE CONFIDENCE [] IN OUR ABILITY TO PROTECT THEIR IDENTITY AND SECURITY.

3. IMPACT [] THE [] GOVERNMENT DOES NOT PUBLICLY ADMIT THAT IT COLLECTS INTELLIGENCE, AND AS A COROLLARY, DOES NOT ADMIT TO HAVING LIAISON RELATIONSHIPS WITH US INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES. [] AVOIDS PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BECAUSE IT KNOWS THAT [] IS ANATHEMA TO THE LEFT WING OF THE [] POLITICAL SPECTRUM, AND ANY ADMISSION WOULD GIVE THE LEFT NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO ATTACK [] WHICH WAS THE RULING PARTY [] AND IS TODAY THE PARTY OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE LEADING PARTY WITHIN THE RULING COALITION. ANY OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION THAT CONTRADICTED EARLIER []

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DENIALS [REDACTED] WOULD BE USED AS A CLUB BY THE LEFT TO ATTACK [REDACTED] THE PRESENCE OF US [REDACTED] WITH A STATE VISIT BY THE US PRESIDENT FAST APPROACHING AND DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS [REDACTED] [REDACTED] LIKELY TO CONTINUE INTO 1997, THIS WOULD BE A PARTICULARLY BAD TIME TO OPEN THE DOOR TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ABOUT US ACTIVITIES AND INTENTIONS [REDACTED]

4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT [REDACTED] WOULD ALSO REVIVE OLD CONTROVERSIES THAT HAVE LARGELY RECEDED FROM THE HEADLINES. [REDACTED] THE PRESS MADE A MAJOR ISSUE [REDACTED] IN ITS FORMATIVE YEARS. ANYTHING THAT LENT CREDIBILITY TO THE STORY WOULD BE A SERIOUS POLITICAL LIABILITY [REDACTED] THEN FOREIGN MINISTER [REDACTED] PERSONALLY ASKED AMBASSADOR [REDACTED] THAT THE US GOVERNMENT NOT RELEASE DOCUMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT. [REDACTED] EXPLAINED TO AMBASSADOR [REDACTED] CAN DEAL WITH RUMORS AND EVEN UNCONFIRMED LEAKS, BUT OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION [REDACTED] [REDACTED] WOULD BE AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT AFFAIR, THREATENING TO DAMAGE BOTH THE CONSERVATIVE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AS WELL AS THE [REDACTED] [REDACTED] RELATIONSHIP. [REDACTED] EXPLICITLY IMPRESSED ON THE AMBASSADOR THE NEED FOR THE US GOVERNMENT TO HOLD THE LINE AGAINST DISCLOSURE.

5. IN THE FALL OF 1995, A NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ALLEGED THAT [REDACTED] HAS SINCE BECOME PRIME [REDACTED] IN RESPONSE TO THE ENSUING PRESS QUERIES, JAPANESE OFFICIALS OF THE CONCERNED MINISTRY DISMISSED THE STORY AS IMPLAUSIBLE. IF THE US GOVERNMENT DECLASSIFIES A DOCUMENT THAT CONFIRMS [REDACTED] IT WOULD HAND THE [REDACTED] PRESS NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO REOPEN THE ISSUE OF ALLEGED ECONOMIC ESPIONAGE AND ATTACK THE UNITED STATES AND ITS FRIENDS WITHIN THE [REDACTED] GOVERNMENT.

6. DISRUPTION OF LIAISON RELATIONSHIPS: [REDACTED] GO TO GREAT LENGTHS TO KEEP THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH US INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES SECRET. IN THE CASE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THOSE RELATIONSHIPS, ALL CONTACT COULD BE SEVERED IN THE EVENT OF DISCLOSURE AND EMBARRASSMENT. SUCH A RUPTURE IN THE RELATIONSHIP DEFIES EASY REPAIR. THE SOUTH KOREAN AGENCY FOR NATIONAL SECURITY PLANNING, WHICH SERIOUSLY EMBARRASSED JAPANESE LIAISON WHEN IT KIDNAPPED OPPOSITION POLITICIAN KIM DAE JUNG FROM TOKYO OVER TWO DECADES AGO, IS STILL TREATED AS A PARIAH TODAY.

7. IMPACT ON CONTINUING OPERATIONS: OUR ONGOING COOPERATION [REDACTED] IN PURSUIT OF A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST GROUP COULD BE TOTALLY DISRUPTED BY DISCLOSURE. EXTREMELY IMPORTANT US LAW ENFORCEMENT AND INTELLIGENCE EQUITIES ARE AT STAKE IN THIS COOPERATIVE ENDEAVOR. THE TERRORIST GROUP IS PROBABLY NOT AWARE OF THE EXTENT OF US INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR PURSUIT. DISCLOSURE THAT REMINDED THEM OF THE POSSIBILITY OF [REDACTED] COOPERATION AGAINST THEM COULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO OUR ABILITY TO COLLECT INTELLIGENCE ON THE GROUP.

8. IMPACT ON [REDACTED] RELATIONSHIP WITH AT LEAST ONE [REDACTED] PREDATES THE <JFK ASSASSINATION.> PUBLICITY ABOUT [REDACTED] [REDACTED] ACTIVITY, EVEN IN THE PAST, OFTEN CAUSES [REDACTED] TO WONDER ABOUT

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OUR ABILITY TO PROTECT THEIR SECURITY. OLDER NOT
SURPRISINGLY, SEE EVEN PUBLICITY ABOUT THE PAST AS SOMETHING THAT
COULD FOCUS ATTENTION ON THEM AS INDIVIDUALS.

9. CL REASON: 1.5 (C); DECL ON: X1.

10. FILE: NONE. DECL OADR DRV HUM 4-82.

END OF MESSAGE

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