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JAPAN

The decision to acquire a nuclear capability in Japan would require the reversal of crystallized public opinion and conspicuously enunciated government policy. Public revulsion to nuclear weapons is based on the experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and was cultivated by an energetic nationwide antinuclear movement in the 1950's. The movement itself has become somewhat discredited among the general public as a result of factional bickering and blatantly partisan political manipulation, but its effect in consolidating anti-nuclear sentiment has by no means been dissipated. Government policy not to acquire nuclear weapons has two aspects. The first is an explicit disavowal by successive conservative governments on intention to permit nuclear weapons on Japanese soil. The second is the prevailing interpretation of the "renunciation of war" clause of the constitution, whereby purely defensive weapons are considered legal, whereas the maintenance of bombers and intermediate range missiles is considered unconstitutional. While the government has rejected the interpretation that nuclear weapons are in themselves actually unconstitutional, the constitution still places important limitations on the kinds of nuclear weapons Japan could acquire. While Prime Minister Sato, and possibly some other conservative leaders, believe that the acquisition of nuclear weapons would be appropriate for Japan, none has given any indication to date of seeing an urgent positive need to do so or of being prepared to make the efforts necessary to overcome these legal and political obstacles.

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Japanese policy on nuclear testing has added another dimension to the policy restriction. When Japan subscribed to the July 1964 limited-nuclear-test-ban treaty, the government stated that it did so in spite of the belief the treaty did not go far enough and a complete ban on testing was preferable. Thus, Japanese support can be expected for a comprehensive ban.

The development most likely to foster a reversal of current policy would be loss of confidence that the United States could and would use its nuclear deterrent power to protect Japan. In present circumstances, Tokyo appears to consider the United States deterrent adequate protection against any external military threat and preferable to Japan's own acquisition of such weapons.

While a substantial further increase in the number of nuclear-capable countries might lead to a reversal of current Japanese policy, there is no evidence that the Japanese foresee circumstances in which national prestige would compel them to possess nuclear weapons. It seems unlikely for example that Indian acquisition of a nuclear capability would constitute any substantial incentive to Japan to do likewise. It seems somewhat more likely that a great increase in the number of nuclear-capable countries would lead to a shift in opinion. In a situation of worldwide proliferation, it is conceivable that the Japanese public would lose much of its special feeling about nuclear weapons and would cease to regard Japanese acquisition as adding to world tension. Thus, proliferation could conceivably lessen the barrier to Japanese acquisition, even though it seems unlikely to be a positive stimulus to acquisition. To date the only perceptible shift produced by the passage of time since 1945, is a relaxation of the taboo on discussion of nuclear weapons; conservative leaders and a limited circle of defense experts and commentators are now willing to discuss the question, at least privately, without fear of political or divine retribution.

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AUSTRALIA

Under situations more or less resembling the present balance of power in the area, Australia, which signed the Test Ban Treaty, will probably continue to rely on the US nuclear shield. It would expect nuclear weapons to be used if necessary in its defense against Communist China or Indonesia. However, the growth of a Chinese or Indonesian threat might lead Australia to want to acquire such weapons itself, rather than being militarily dependent upon the United States. If Indonesia, for example, should explode an atom bomb and eventually produce its own atomic weapons, pressures could be expected to build-up for at least the development of nuclear weapons to Australian soil, and probably for Australian control of them as well. In the event, Australia would hope to acquire weapons from the United States or the United Kingdom. Inability to obtain them could then lead to an Australian decision to produce them itself.

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INDONESIA

President Sukarno has decided that Indonesia should explode an atom bomb at an early date and eventually produce its own atomic weapons. His motive for seeking nuclear capability is to gain for Indonesia a status as a major world power whose interests will have to be taken seriously by other world powers. While Sukarno believes that Indonesia may some day produce its own atomic weapons, he probably realizes that that day is quite remote, and he hopes to accelerate matters by persuading Peiping to aid in the development of the Indonesian program, and perhaps even to give him an A-bomb to explode in the near future. Although Indonesia signed the 1963 test ban treaty, the Indonesian government has virtually repudiated it in recent months by stating that the nations with nuclear capability are using that capability to blackmail non-nuclear nations, a situation perpetuated by the test ban treaty. There is no direct action, short of military force, that the U.S. might undertake that is likely to persuade Indonesia to abandon its plans to become a nuclear power.

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II B. (Communist China)

Peking is not likely to transfer nuclear weapons or weapons technology to other nations within the next five to ten years. To do so would compromise the secrecy which the regime has tightly preserved regarding its own weapons program and also waste scarce materials vitally needed to attain Peking's goal of becoming a full-fledged nuclear power. The Chinese Communists, however, are likely to continue giving moral support and encouragement to "friendly" Afro-Asian nations to develop nuclear weapons through their own efforts. To mask Peking's unwillingness to give weapons assistance and to gain prestige and political influence, Communist China probably will give material aid to other nations in the field of peaceful uses of atomic energy.

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