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Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: February 29, 1956

SUBJECT: Effects of Establishment of Danger Area and Nuclear Tests on Japanese Fishing Interests.

PARTICIPANTS:	<u>Embassy of Japan</u>	<u>Atomic Energy Commission</u>	<u>State Department</u>
	Mr. Shigenobu Shima	Mr. Willis R. Boss	Mr. Hermandinger -
	Mr. Seki	Mr. Chris Henderson	Mr. Fletcher - NA
	Dr. Takashi Mukaibo	DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR	Mr. Herrington - U/
	Mr. Fujinaga	Mr. Looney - U/PW	Mr. Spiegel - S/AE

COPIES TO:

- AEC - Mr. Henderson
- AEC - Mr. Boss
- NA - Mr. Hermandinger
- U/PW - Mr. Herrington
- American Embassy Tokyo
- OCF - Mr. Hirsch

REVIEWED BY A.C. FLOYD DATE 12/30/80

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The meeting was arranged on the Department's initiative to provide for a preliminary discussion on (1) implications for the Japanese fishing interests in the establishment of the danger area around the test site; and (2) the problem of possible radioactive contamination of fish. Mr. Hermandinger noted in connection with point 1 there are the questions of inconvenience and increased expenses to Japanese fishing boats by having to detour around the area and diminished catch because of inability to fish within the danger area.

Dr. Mukaibo then provided charts giving data of the catch in and around the danger area in May 1952. Mr. Shima said the Japanese have charts for every month showing the various types of fish caught and the catch per hundred hooks. He said that they also had charts which would show the distribution of fish in the South Pacific and believed they could obtain data on total catch. In response to a question from Mr. Herrington, Mr. Shima said that each company plans its own fishing program and although the Government would know the number of vessels sailing at any given time it is up to the individual captains where and when to fish.

Mr. Shima said that in about two to three weeks after publishing information on the establishment of the danger area it should be possible for the Japanese Tuna Fishing Association to make an estimate of possible losses resulting from the establishment of the area.

Dr. Boss then asked the three following questions: (1) Approximately how many karrn (pounds) were caught in the area in 1952, 1953 and 1955? (2) How many ships were involved in catching the total karrn? (The total catch of tuna, marlin

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and shark). (3) How many extra miles could the Japanese predict would be involved in going around the danger area as opposed to going through the danger area to the southeast corner of the area? Mr. Herrington said that answers should also be provided to the questions of what kind of losses would be involved and how any claims would be evaluated. It was agreed that Dr. Foss and Mr. Herrington would provide a list of written questions to the Japanese Embassy.

At the conclusion of this part of the conversation Mr. Hermsdinger cautioned Mr. Shima that no implication should be drawn from these preliminary discussions that the US would be prepared to pay compensation for inconveniences, etc. Mr. Shima acknowledged that the discussions were preliminary in nature and that no implication with respect to compensation should be drawn.

The discussion then turned to the question of radioactive contamination of fish. Mr. Hermsdinger observed that there would be no question of radioactive contamination until after the conclusion of the tests. In the meantime he said there is need to (1) reach mutual understanding of radiation standards, and (2) educate the public.

Dr. Foss then gave a resume of the Radiobiology Conference held in November 1954 at Tokyo in the course of which US scientists gave the US interpretation of Handbooks 52 and 59. The US scientists also provided information on how the US determined the question of fish edibility. Although no recommendations were made it was pointed out that we use a standard of 500 counts per minute at 5 centimeters to obtain a gamma reading with the shield closed. Dr. Foss noted that the US would be willing to reopen with the Japanese the discussion of radiation standards and maximum permissible levels should the Japanese so desire. He noted that he had discussed this question with Dr. Mukaibo who in turn raised it with Dr. Kakehi, who is presently at Oak Ridge. Dr. Mukaibo reported that Dr. Kakehi has a negative attitude toward additional discussions. Also Dr. Kakehi had cited the fact that the different opinions held by Japanese scientists in this matter made it difficult to obtain a conclusion on a dangerous level of radioactivity. Dr. Mukaibo noted there are different interpretations of the data set forth in the Handbooks. Dr. Foss said that ^{with} the shields open and with low standards (100 counts per minute) good edible fish might well be destroyed. In this connection Dr. Foss noted that Handbooks 52 and 59 had been established by the ICRP (International Commission for Radiation Protection). Although the Handbooks were prepared by an international group interpretations of the data set forth may vary depending a large part on research the interpreter has been doing in the radiation field.

Mr. Hermsdinger asked if there is any Japanese group that could make determinations on tolerance levels and establish standards. Dr. Fujinaga said there was no such group. Dr. Mukaibo said that the Japanese Science Council had recommended a level of 100 counts per minute with shields open and that the Ministry of Welfare had established this level. Dr. Mukaibo then said that there has been some thought given to establishing a group in the Atomic Energy Institute to handle such matters, but that the group had not yet been established. Dr.

Shima said that he would ask his Government what plans are being made to establish radiation standards. Because of the economic implications of establishing too low standards it was agreed it would be well to determine practical and economic standards as soon as possible. It was generally agreed that a further meeting of Japanese and American scientists might be useful. If authoritative standards would result from the meeting the Japanese representatives would need be Government sponsored. Mr. Harrington thought it would be well to have further discussions before the Japanese Government establishes authoritative standards. Mr. Seld observed that this is a very sensitive matter. He thought it would be well to sound out his Government first. The Government could sound out the scientists on this question. He believed it might be harmful for all concerned should this matter be hurried and thus inadvertently become a matter of premature public controversy. Mr. Boss observed that there first should be an agreement on standards among the Japanese scientists. He reaffirmed our interest in discussing this question again.

Mr. Harwardinger then raised the question of what cooperative measures might be undertaken following the tests to check on radioactivity in the sea, etc. He said the US is trying to work out a constructive cooperative program the details of which would be forthcoming shortly. Mr. Shima said he did not have anything to offer on this item.

The meeting was then adjourned with the understanding that US written questions on fishing patterns, etc. would be provided the Embassy and that another meeting would be subject to requests by either the Embassy or the Department. In response to Mr. Harwardinger's question Mr. Shima said it might be well for Ambassador Allison to raise the various points discussed today with the Foreign Minister.

Mr. Boss undertook to provide Dr. Mukaiho with Norpac analyses of plankton.