



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Washington, D.C. 20520

June 29, 1972

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MEMORANDUM

TO : PM - Mr. Ronald I. Spiers PMG
FROM : PM/ISO - ED. R. Day D
SUBJECT: Politics-Military Co
Homeporting in Japan

6/29/72

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file 6-6

Background: You will recall that on May 26, Ambassador Johnson, as Acting Secretary, replied to Secretary Laird's request to homeport a CVA in Yokosuka. The sense of that reply was that we are sympathetic to the operational requirement to homeport a CVA in East Asia, but the proposal for Yokosuka presents us with several political problems - i.e., the questions of prior consultation and nuclear weapons on board the CVA, and the requirements for facilities ashore. Ambassador Johnson asked Secretary Laird for possible East Asia alternatives, an assessment of homeporting the CVA in Japan without nuclear weapons aboard, and for his views on prior consultations and the introduction of nuclear weapons into Japan.

Secretary Laird's reply of June 17 (attached) was somewhat forthcoming and indicated that more detailed information requested by State would be provided through his staff. He believes we should "face up to the prior consultation problem now since it is a fundamental factor in shaping our future relations with Japan in the area of military security." He indicated that homeporting the CVA without nuclear weapons aboard is militarily impractical.

Status: We are working with EA/J on a response to Secretary Laird which will indicate what we are waiting for the detailed answers he promises in his letter before moving forward to consider private discussions with the GOJ sometime after a successor government has taken office. We believe this response is required since informal contacts with the DOD indicate that they expect us to begin the discussions now. (As a related matter, the proposal to

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homeport two combat stores ships in Sasebo has been separated from the CVA proposal, and we are coordinating a joint State/Defense message for Amembassy Tokyo to effect that homeporting)

Recommendation: That no action be taken until we develop a coordinated EA/J-PM response to Secretary Laird's latest letter.

Attachment: Secretary Laird's June 17 Letter.

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