

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 07064 240924Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 DODE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00
(ADS) W

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O 240914Z APR 79

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7276

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 07064

E.O. 12065: GDS 04/24/85 (SELIGMANN, A.L.) OR-P

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJECT: SOKA GAKKAI PRESIDENT IKEDA RESIGNS (U)

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. SOKA GAKKAI INTERNATIONAL BUREAU DIRECTOR AKIYAMA TELEPHONED POLCOUNS APRIL 24 TO CONVEY MESSAGE TO THE AMBASSADOR FROM DAISAKU IKEDA THAT LATTER WOULD SUBMIT HIS RESIGNATION AS ORGANIZATION PRESIDENT TO EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS, WHO HAD JUST CONVENED. AKIYAMA SAID IKEDA HAD HAD INTENTION OF RESIGNING FOR SOME TIME, BUT HAD STAYED ON UNTIL ORGANIZATION WAS "FULLY CONSOLIDATED," COINCIDENTAL WITH END OF SEVENTH SEVEN-YEAR PROGRAM SINCE SOKA GAKKAI FOUNDED IN 1930. IKEDA, WHO HAD SERVED AS PRESIDENT SINCE 1960, WILL BE SUCCEDED BY HIS LONG-TIME GENERAL DIRECTOR (DEPUTY) HIROSHI HOJO, 55, WITH KAZUYA MORITA, 52, BECOMING NEW GENERAL DIRECTOR. ACCORDING TO AKIYAMA, BOTH HOJO AND MORITA HAVE BEEN CLOSE ASSOCIATES OF IKEDA DATING BACK TO 1950S. IKEDA WILL REMAIN AS HONORARY PRESIDENT, AND PRESIDENT OF SOKA GAKKAI INTERNATIONAL, WHICH INCORPORATES DOMESTIC AND OVERSEAS ORGANIZATIONS. AKIYAMA SAID IKEDA WOULD DEVOTE HIS TIME TO WRITING, PROMOTION OF WORLD PEACE, AND CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL AFFAIRS, WITH INTENTION OF TRAVELING

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WIDELY.

2. COMMENT: ANNOUNCEMENT HAS CAUGHT OUTSIDE OBSERVERS BY SURPRISE. THERE HAVE BEEN RUMORS, HOWEVER, ABOUT CONFLICT BETWEEN NICHIREN SHOSHU PRIESTHOOD AND LAY LEADERS OF SOKA GAKKAI (C.F. FJT-24531). HINT THAT THIS MAY HAVE BEEN FACTOR IN RESIGNATION COULD BE READ INTO

AKIYAMA'S REMARK, WHEN ASKED FOR REASONS FOR RESIGNATION,
THAT IKEDA BELIEVED HE HAD COMPLETED MAJOR ORGANIZATIONAL
ACHIEVEMENT WITH ADOPTION OF NEW BY-LAWS, WHICH WOULD
"STRENGTHEN HARMONY OF PRIESTHOOD AND LAY ORGANIZATION."
IT IS TOO SOON TO KNOW WHETHER DEVELOPMENT WILL MARK ANY
KIND OF TURNING POINT IN SOKA GAKKAI FORTUNES, WITH
POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS FOR KOMEITO (CLEAN GOVERNMENT
PARTY), WHICH COUNTS ON SOKA GAKKAI FOR MOST OF ITS
SUPPORT, BUT WE WILL MAKE SOUNDINGS IN WEEKS AHEAD.
MANSFIELD

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic DecapTIONing: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESIDENT, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 apr 1979
DecapTION Date: 01 jan 1960
DecapTION Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1979TOKYO07064
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS 19850424 SELIGMANN, A L
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D790187-0635
Format: TEL
From: TOKYO OR-P
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1979/newtext/t19790423/aaaaasoz.tel
Line Count: 72
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8fb112bd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 dec 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3193546
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOKA GAKKAI PRESIDENT IKEDA RESIGNS (U)
TAGS: PINT, JA, SOKA GAKKAI, (IKEDA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8fb112bd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014