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THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

UNITED STATES POLITICAL ADVISER FOR JAPAN

No. 649

Tokyo, October 1, 1948.

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Subject: Transmittal of Press Release Concerning Mine Sweeping.

The Acting Political Adviser has the honor to transmit a copy of a press release by the Public Information Office, Far East Command, entitled "Mine Sweeping Program Makes Headway".

The release states that no ships have been damaged in cleared channels since the start of the Occupation, and that clear ports include Tokyo Bay, Nagoya, Nagasaki, Sasebo, Kobe, and Osaka.

Work is being carried on by Japanese personnel under the supervision of the United States Navy. The cost is borne by the Japanese Government.

Enclosure: att

Copy of SCAP Press Release dated September 22, 1948 on the subject of Mine Sweeping.

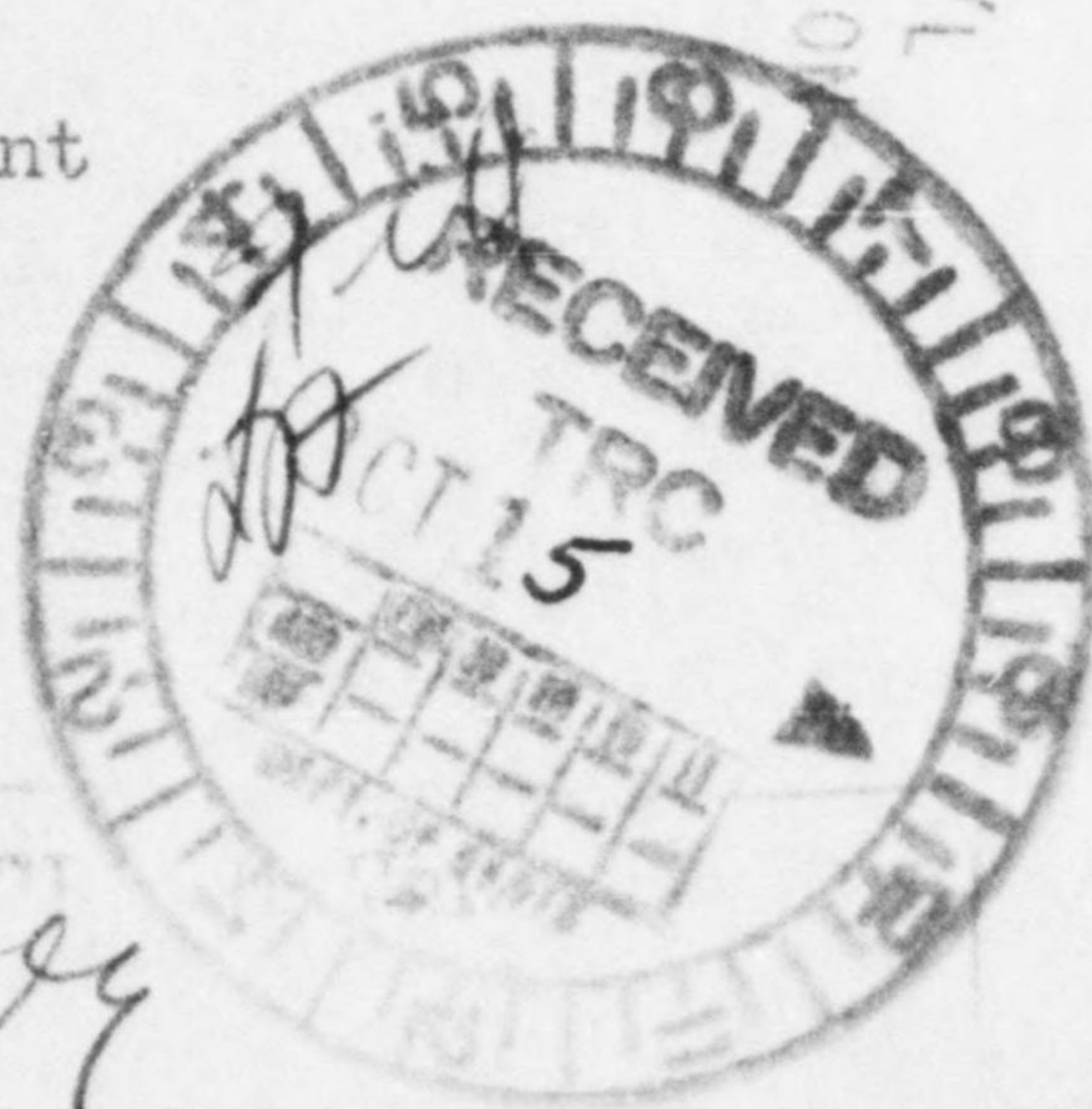
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Enclosure to Despatch No. 649
dated October 1, 1948 from the
Office of the Political Adviser
for Japan, Tokyo, on the subject,
"Transmittal of Press Release Con-
cerning Mine Sweeping."

(COPY)

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
FAR EAST COMMAND
Public Information Office

Press Release:

1330
22 September 1948

MINE SWEEPING PROGRAM MAKES HEADWAY

No ships have been either hit or damaged by mines in any of the channels swept by Japanese minesweepers since the start of the occupation, according to Vice Admiral Russell S. Berkey, Commander Naval Forces Far East.

The present extensive minesweeping program conducted by the Japanese Maritime Safety Bureau under U. S. Navy supervision was started September 1945 and is expected to continue until August 1950. Nearly 1,500 Japanese personnel and 50 minesweeping vessels, including three guinea-pig ships, are used in the work of clearing the waters surrounding all major ports and inland sea areas of Japan.

Guinea-pig ships steam over areas where minesweeping operations will not be conducted to detonate any acoustic and pressure mines which may exist. These ships are also sent over areas which have been swept to explode any mines which may have been left, prior to declaring the waters safe.

Among the major ports reported as being completely clear of mines are Tokyo Bay, Nagoya, Nagasaki, Sasebo, Kobe and Osaka. Work is currently conducted in the Inland Sea and Simonoseki Straits between Kyushu and Honshu.

Entire cost of the program is being borne by the Japanese government.

More than 3,700 acoustic mines, about 2,500 pressure type and an estimated 4,500 magnetic mines were laid in Japanese waters. It was the opinion of a Navy official at Tokyo Headquarters that little danger exists from mines of acoustic and pressure types due to the length of time since they were laid.

However, the Navy spokesman admitted there was danger from some of the magnetic mines which might still be potentially active. Since minesweeping operations started about 3,450 magnetic mines have been rendered ineffective.

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