

~~TOP SECRET~~DOCUMENT NO. 40NO CHANGE IN CLASS. DECLASSIFIED

CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S

NEXT REVIEW DATE:

AUTH: HR 70-2

DATE: 8 JUN 19802010REVIEWER:

17 February 1960

Copy No. C 67

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

17 February 1960

DAILY BRIEF

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

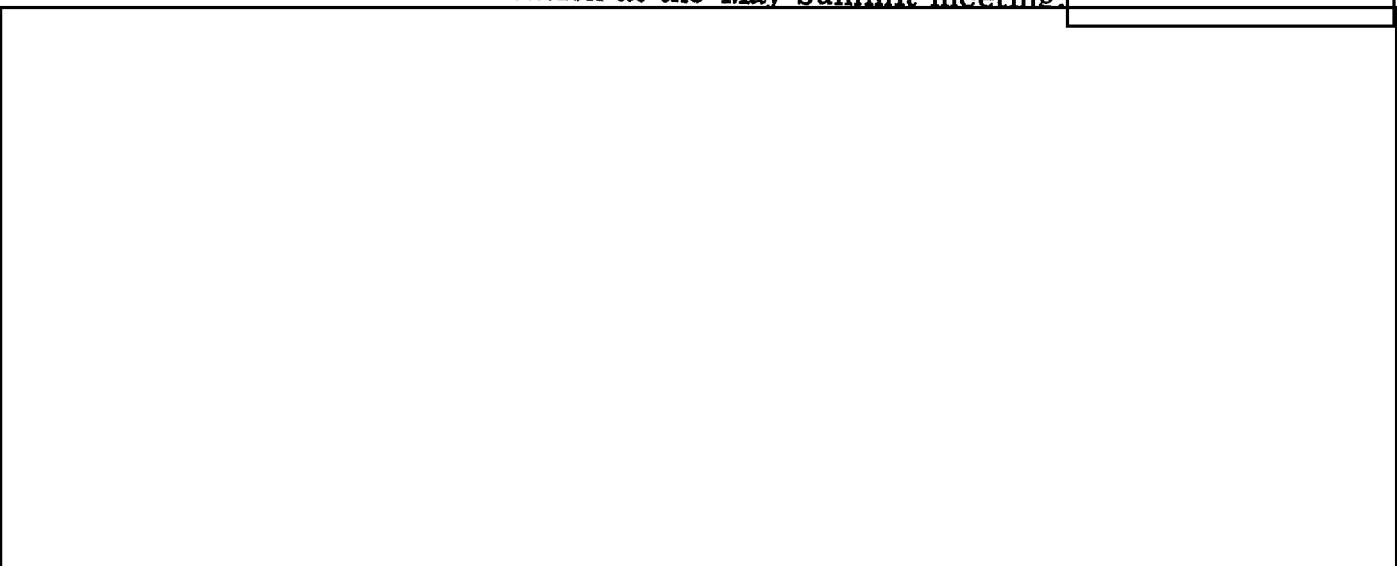
USSR-Germany: [At the recent meeting of bloc leaders in Moscow, Khrushchev is reported to have put forward a new formula--subsequently outlined publicly by East German Premier Grotewohl on 10 February--calling for two basically similar German peace treaties, one between the Western powers and Bonn and the other between bloc governments and East Germany. Grotewohl explained that this procedure would "do away with objections" to signing a single treaty with both German states and lead to the "same results." Khrushchev may elaborate on this modification at the May summit meeting.]

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

Israel-UAR-UN: Israel's boycott of the UN Mixed Armistice Commission meeting on 16 February, which dealt with recent fighting along the Israeli-Syrian border, may lead to UN Security

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Council consideration of the border dispute. Israel's antagonism is directed toward the UN Truce Supervision Organization as well as the UAR in this case because both oppose Israel's claim to sovereignty over the demilitarized zone in which the fighting occurred. A clash with Syrian forces in the central sector of the zone on 12 February, when two Israelis were killed, has again raised the prospect of Israeli reprisal action.

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Belgian Congo: Brussels' recent announcement that independence with full sovereignty will be granted the Congo on 30 June has caused widespread anxiety among the Congo's 100,000 Europeans, and may lead to a substantial exodus. Europeans feel that Brussels is surrendering to virtually every African demand in the current round-table talks, and fear that Belgium will be unprepared to protect its nationals in the Congo during the post-independence period, which may well be chaotic. The prevailing feeling could strengthen secessionist sentiment in mineral-rich Katanga Province, where the Europeans are politically well organized. The Consulate General in Leopoldville observes that an orderly transition period after 30 June will depend on the retention of a substantial cadre of Belgian civil servants. The maintenance of the Force Publique at its present strength would also be essential.

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Iraq: A cabinet change announced in Baghdad on 16 February appears to be a jolt for Communist influence in the Iraqi Government. Following a struggle of some weeks over control of the agrarian reform program, the anti-Communist minister of interior, Brigadier Yahya, has been made acting minister of agrarian reform in addition to his other duties, while the pro-Communist former minister, Ibrahim Kubbah, has been relieved. Kubbah has also been dismissed from his post as acting oil minister, but in this case another extreme leftist, Minister of Planning Shaybani, has taken over the portfolio on an acting basis.

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III. THE WEST

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Cuba: [The American Embassy in Havana believes that the most serious results of Mikoyan's visit to Cuba are the expressed intention of the Soviet and Castro governments to collaborate actively in the UN and the offer of technical assistance by the USSR. Embassy officials state that the Cuban Government has taken a long step toward putting itself definitely in the Soviet camp, that there is little possibility that the United States will reach a satisfactory relationship with the present regime, and that "time is working against us" as Castro's control over Cuban public opinion tightens.] 25X1

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LATE ITEM

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*USSR - Geneva Test Talks: [The Soviet offer on 16 February to accept a set of temporary standards for detecting underground nuclear explosions, provided the West agrees to Khrushchev's plan for a fixed number of on-site inspections each year, is designed to further the USSR's objective of a treaty banning all tests and to undercut the recent American proposal for a limited treaty. An obvious move to divide the Western delegations, the Soviet plan adopts suggestions along these lines put forward by the British delegation on 15 January. An agreement on temporary control measures, which would obtain during the "approximately two- to three-year" period while a permanent control system was being installed, would also include a joint research program to perfect methods of detecting underground explosions. Moscow probably believes that this new concession, which in effect accepts the Western contention that almost any unidentified seismic event should be eligible for an on-site inspection, will make it increasingly difficult for the United States to continue its opposition to the Soviet scheme for an annual quota of inspections--a concept first advanced by Prime Minister Macmillan.] 25X1

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DAILY BRIEF

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Moscow Meeting of Bloc Leaders Discusses Pre-Summit Strategy

[During the recent meeting of bloc leaders in Moscow, Khrushchev reportedly made several proposals designed to strengthen Soviet efforts at the summit to persuade the West to negotiate a German peace treaty.]

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[In a move to make less disastrous to the West the standard Soviet proposal for a peace treaty with both German states, the Soviet premier put forward the formula--subsequently outlined publicly by East German Premier Grotewohl on 10 February--calling for two basically similar treaties, one between the Western powers and Bonn and the other between bloc governments and East Germany. Grotewohl explained that this procedure "would lead to the same result" and "do away with objections raised by some governments." Pravda emphasized these aspects of Grotewohl's speech on 11 February.]

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[Khrushchev and Ulbricht are reported [to have agreed on a peace treaty which would legalize the division of Germany as one of their basic objectives in forthcoming East-West talks. Ulbricht was to take the initiative in proposing that the four powers establish a commission to negotiate a treaty.]

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[Khrushchev plans no basic concessions on Germany or Berlin at the summit, but will urge that the West agree to all-German negotiations.]

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

Israeli-Syrian Border Dispute May Go to UN Security Council

Israel's boycott of the meeting on 16 February of the Israeli-Syrian Mixed Armistice Commission (MAC) to consider recent fighting in the demilitarized zone along the Israeli-Syrian border may lead to UN Security Council consideration of the dispute. [UN Secretary General Hammarskjold has expressed readiness, if necessary, to call a council meeting on his own authority. Prior to such a meeting, however, there probably would be a "reaffirmation" of the UN position regarding the status of the demilitarized zone, perhaps in the form of a stern letter from Hammarskjold to Israel and the UAR.]

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The Israeli claim to sovereignty over the demilitarized zone has become a central issue in the dispute and was the reason for Israel's refusal to attend the MAC meeting. The Israelis deny that the MAC has any authority to discuss an issue involving Israeli sovereignty. The UN and the UAR, as well as the US Government, hold that the 1949 General Armistice Agreement between Israel and Syria left the status of the zone in abeyance pending a final Arab-Israeli settlement.

Israel has offered to meet separately with the Arab inhabitants of Tawafiq, the focal point of recent fighting within the zone, to discuss measures to enable them to cultivate the land they claim. The Israelis also have said they are willing to meet the Syrians "anytime and anywhere" to discuss peace and means of preserving order along their common border, while insisting that there be no discussion of the demilitarized zone.

A clash on 12 February in the central sector of the demilitarized zone, 25 miles north of Tawafiq, has again

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raised the prospect of Israeli reprisal action. The Syrians apparently fired first, and two Israelis reportedly were killed in the two-hour fight. Israeli Chief of Staff Laskov is quoted as threatening new reprisals if the Syrians "start anything else." [redacted]

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[redacted]
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The Under Secretary of State

The Deputy Under Secretary for Political Affairs

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