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FAR EAST

1. Japanese Government facing decisive tests in Diet:

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[Redacted]

Ambassador Murphy states that in the remaining few days of the Diet session the Japanese Government is faced with a number of severe tests which may be decisive for the Yoshida cabinet. He believes that a series of recent compromises by Yoshida with his opposition may enable the government to survive.

Murphy also reports that the combined attacks of the opposition parties, the Hatoyama faction of the Liberal Party, and labor groups have so weakened the government that neither Yoshida nor any other Liberal Party leader can now effectively manage public affairs. He believes, therefore, that a new alignment of conservative political forces is inevitable.

Comment: Diet controversy, which might force a change in government, centers around the bills relating to the US loan of naval vessels, the supplementary budget, and the Socialist motion of no confidence in Foreign Minister Okazaki, as well as on new demands for governmental intervention in the coal and electric power workers' strikes.

During the past few days, Yoshida has belatedly recognized the weakness of his position by accepting opposition amendments to the ship transfer and budget bills, and by meeting with representatives of the Hatoyama faction.

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NEAR EAST - AFRICA

3. Moroccan Sultan reportedly expects to be deposed by the French:

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[redacted] the Sultan of Morocco on 13 December informed nationalist supporters in New York that he was in grave personal danger. On 15 December, he notified them that he was "threatened with deposition" and was being held "incommunicado" by the French. He added that he had refused to sign the "old

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and known reform program," and had conditioned further negotiations with the French on prior restoration of Morocco to normalcy and the release of prisoners.

The secretary general of the Istiqlal party on 14 December asked the American UN delegation in New York to request US intercession on behalf of the Sultan.

Comment: In February 1951 the French made an attempt to depose the Sultan, who is a rallying point for moderate nationalism in Morocco. The French Resident General is now in Paris for consultation. The strong repressive measures against the moderate nationalists which he has recently employed have tended to heighten tension and pave the way for eventual extremist control over the nationalist movement.

In Tunisia, a Residency spokesman stated on 15 December that the Resident General was leaving for Paris with a plea to have the Bey removed.

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