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1. JAPANESE QUESTION WISDOM OF DEPENDENCE ON US

Ambassador Allison reports that recent international events adverse to Japanese interests have resulted in a strong undercurrent of criticism in Japan because of the country's "overdependence" on the United States. He cites the rejection of Japan's UN membership, the unresolved Rhee line dispute with South Korea, the lack of response to Japan's request for a relaxation of controls on trade with Communist China, and the American decision to locate the regional nuclear research center in the Philippines as primary factors in undermining the American position.

Allison foresees an increasingly independent effort to bolster Japan's international position, especially by strengthening relations with the Asian-African bloc. He also anticipates greater pressure for concessions to Moscow in the London negotiations which are expected to be resumed next month. He believes the government's resistance to leftist pressures for normalization of relations with the Orbit will decrease.

Comment

Japanese leaders continue to maintain that co-operation with the United States is the keystone of Japan's foreign policy, but sentiment for policies increasing Japan's maneuverability in international affairs can be expected to grow both within the government and in opposition political circles.

2. THE BULGANIN-KHRUSHCHEV VISIT TO AFGHANISTAN

[Redacted]

The five-day visit of the Soviet leaders in Afghanistan ended with the publication of three documents which provide for an expansion of the Soviet Union's ties with Afghanistan.

According to a joint communique, the USSR has offered Afghanistan \$100,000,000 in long-term credits with the final terms to be agreed on later. Soviet and Afghan officials will discuss a number of projects in which aid could be used, including the development of agriculture, reconstruction of the Kabul airport, and construction of hydroelectric stations, irrigation projects and motor-car workshops. The size of the proposed Soviet credit lends weight to reports that the USSR has offered to take over the Western-financed Helmand Valley project and to pay off Afghan contract obligations.

A second declaration emphasized Soviet-Afghan agreement on a number of international issues, including the Chou-Nehru "five principles," UN membership for Communist China and the settlement of Far Eastern questions "in the interest of peace." The declaration only implied Soviet support for Afghanistan on the Pushtoonistan dispute with Pakistan. Unlike the declarations signed with India and Burma, there was no condemnation of military blocs.

The Soviet-Afghan neutrality and non-aggression treaty of 1931 was reaffirmed in the third document.

The Soviet leaders have attempted to give the Afghans greater confidence that they are in a position to follow a neutral course and to stand up to Pakistan and the West. Afghan prime minister Daud has been further strengthened domestically as a result of the Soviet visit.

[Redacted] (Concurred in by ORR)

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3. SUDAN DECLARES ITSELF INDEPENDENT

The declaration of independence adopted by the lower house of the Sudanese parliament on 19 December will probably be accepted by both Britain and Egypt, the two powers which have governed the country under a condominium. The resolution is expected to be approved by the Sudanese upper house on 22 December.

If accepted by the two powers, the declaration presumably will make unnecessary the international commission which was to have supervised the self-determination process.

The movement in favor of an immediate declaration of independence, with a concomitant request to Egypt and Britain for recognition, seems to spring from a recent change of Egypt's policy on the Sudan. The change apparently is aimed at salvaging what good will remains following Egypt's failure to block Sudanese independence. The British indicated several weeks ago that they would agree to a "speed-up" of this kind.

The haste with which the independence resolution was drawn up and passed was probably due largely to Prime Minister Azhari's desire to get the credit for sponsoring the move. Azhari's cabinet has been under heavy pressure to retire in favor of a "national" coalition. Unless Azhari agrees to a coalition, the opposition parties may still attempt to overthrow him during the budget debate in parliament scheduled for 20 December.

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4. JORDAN TO HOLD NEW ELECTIONS

[Redacted]

The dissolution of the Jordanian parliament and the decision of Prime Minister Majali to make way for a

caretaker government will postpone for at least several months any decision on Jordan's adherence to the Baghdad pact. Under Jordan's constitution, new parliamentary elections and the convening of a new parliament must take place within four months of dissolution.

The decision to hold new elections was the result of rioting against Majali, a young and able pro-British politician who was appointed primarily to arrange for Jordan's signature of the Baghdad pact. The rioting, which the Arab Legion appears to have barely prevented from getting completely out of hand, should now subside.

The next few months will be used by Egyptian, Syrian and Saudi Arabian agents to influence the elections and to lay the groundwork for new demonstrations against any Jordanian leader, including King Hussain, who appears to favor joining the pact. Further trouble can be expected during the elections, particularly in West Jordan, where the bulk of the population consists of Palestine refugees who identify a favorable attitude toward the pact with softness toward Israel.

[Redacted]

THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
 (Information as of 1700, 19 December)

Aside from a minor clash between Egyptian and Israeli forces south of Gaza on 19 December, no further military action has been reported.

UN truce chief Burns, who met with Syrian chief of staff Shuqayr on 16 December to discuss the 11-12 December raid and the 22 October raid, said that Shuqayr appeared reasonable and willing to await the result of United Nations action. The army attaché in Damascus reports that 11 Syrian tanks have moved down from the Syrian-Lebanese border to the Syrian-Israeli border, but signs of mobilization are absent.

The Syrian cabinet on 18 December approved a bill extending compulsory military training from 18 months to two years.

the Israelis, while "not unaware of the risks of preventive war," have decided to display the utmost severity henceforth in the reprisals to which they are prompted by enemy raids." Israeli actions, if frequently repeated, might well prompt the Arabs in turn, to counteractions, and these would end in large-scale conflict, the responsibility for which would be shared by both sides, "and this before it was possible for the distribution of Soviet arms to have its full effect."

Ambassador Byroade in Cairo believes that if Western action in the Security Council on the Tiberias incident, and on the issue of supplying arms to Israel, does not make it clear that the West is as concerned about Israeli aggressive actions as the Arabs are, the West cannot expect Egypt again to follow a moderate course, and should anticipate speedy involvement of other Arab states in what could easily become a full-scale war.