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SOVIET UNION

1.

Orbit has "genuine need" for Western trade: 3.3(h)(2)

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Comment: This overstatement of the significance of East-West trade to the Soviet Orbit is in itself an indication of the success of Orbit trade propaganda. Such trade is important to certain sectors of the Orbit economy and to its planned expansion, but not to its survival.

While the new Soviet Government may make some trade concessions as a part of its "peace offensive," the trend in the Orbit toward increased economic self-sufficiency is expected to continue as it has since the war, with East-West trade assuming to an even greater degree the character of a political weapon.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

2. Direction of Viet Minh spring offensive may be changed:



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3.3(h)(2)

Minh may have changed its spring offensive plans. Latest information indicates that the southward movement of at least one Viet Minh division toward the Sam Neua area of Laos has stopped. This suggests that Na San, the French stronghold in western Tonkin, may be the main objective (see map, page 4).

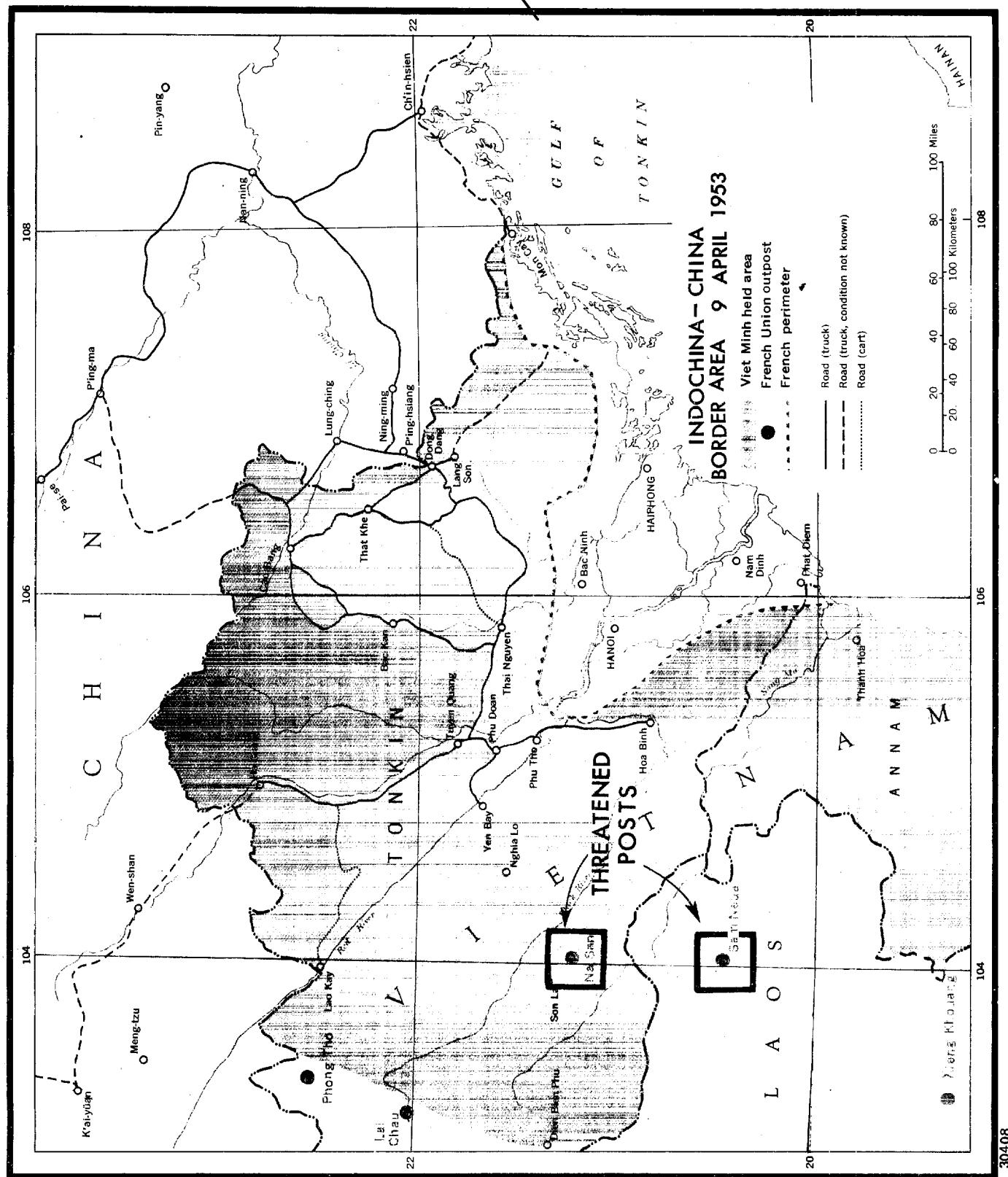
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Comment: [redacted]

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In view of the Communist bloc's current peace offensive it is possible that there will be no major Viet Minh campaign at all at this time.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

3. Mossadeq's control weakens in Iranian-Soviet border area:

[redacted] The American Consul in Tabriz reported on 8 April that the Iranian Government's control in Azerbaijan has visibly weakened in the last two months. Communist activity is increasing and there is growing anti-American sentiment.

3.3(h)(2)

Prime Minister Mossadeq's prestige has declined, and the Consul believes that it will be difficult to maintain public order if he becomes more unpopular.

Comment: A breakdown of security in this strategic frontier area will be particularly serious. The Prime Minister recently sent a personal representative to Azerbaijan to investigate agitation there, [redacted] Army Chief of Staff Riahi has also reportedly appointed his cousin as commander in chief in the northwestern and western areas in an effort to stop anti-Mossadeq activities.

3.3(h)(2)

4. Iraq allegedly supporting plot against Syria:

[redacted] Syrian dictator Shishakli told the US Ambassador in Damascus that reliable reports indicate that Iraq is supporting an ex-Syrian

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army officer plot to overthrow his government. Shishakli said the plan is to seize northeastern Syria and the city of Aleppo, establishing a "Free State of Syria." This state would later be ruled by the Iraqi regent, who will lose his position when King Feisal is crowned on 2 May.

Comment: Iraq has long been interested in a union with Syria under the Hashemite family now ruling in Iraq and Jordan, but there has been little indication of recent activity in this direction.

Protection of his regime against the plotting of Syrian politicians and army officers has been a chief concern of Shishakli. The latest conspiracy was broken up last December.

5. Israel still intends to push UN discussion of anti-Semitism:



Israel still intends to discuss Soviet anti-Semitic in the UN despite Soviet efforts to dissuade it from doing so, according to Israeli delegate Rafael. 3.3(h)(2)

He stated that the Israeli discussion will emphasize that the release of the doctors does not exonerate the Soviet Union for its anti-Semitic actions and that further relaxation of Soviet hostility toward Jews is desirable.

Rafael said that Soviet ambassadors in several East European countries had gone out of their way to be cordial to Israeli diplomats.

Comment: While Israel hopes for resumption of diplomatic relations and relaxation of Soviet restrictions on Jewish emigration, its emotional involvement may cloud its judgment on how to achieve these objectives.

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[redacted]

The British Foreign Office has instructed [redacted] 3.3(h)(2) Embassy in Cairo to inform the Egyptian Foreign Minister that no agreement can be signed until a satisfactory understanding is reached on all five points of the British proposal on the Suez. These points, which include Egyptian participation in a Middle East defense organization, may be discussed in any order the Egyptians desire.

The Embassy is to warn the Egyptian Government that the temper of British public opinion makes it imperative that any announcement of the start of negotiations be phrased generally and not suggest that the talks are concerned only with British evacuation.

Comment: This reply to the Egyptian suggestion that MEDO be excluded from the agenda for defense talks is a repetition of the approach rejected by Cairo on 30 March.

7. Serious dispute developing between Turkish President and Prime Minister:

[redacted]

The opposition of Turkish President Bayar 3.3(h)(2) extensive cabinet changes proposed by Prime Minister Menderes has created a crisis [redacted]

Both Bayar and Menderes claim final authority to approve cabinet changes. A compromise arranged by Democratic Party leaders provided for the President to accept three cabinet changes. The question of final authority was not resolved, however, and neither the constitution nor custom clearly defines either one's prerogatives.

Comment: The details and extent of the dispute are not known. Continued disagreements between the President and the Prime Minister, the two most important members of the Democratic Party, would create a schism within the party and interfere with the smoothly-operating administration of government.

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EASTERN EUROPE

8. Jet light bombers reported in Polish Air Force:

[redacted] The American Air Attaché in Poland recently counted 14 IL-28 twin-jet light bombers at Bydgoszcz airfield, 140 miles northwest of Warsaw. The attaché is "almost certain" the planes are Polish.

This report substantiates the statement [redacted]

[redacted] that the Polish [redacted] light bomber unit at Bydgoszcz is being re-equipped with IL-28's.

Comment: This is the first reliable indication of the allocation of jet light bombers to any Satellite air force.

Jet light bombers were first delivered to Soviet air units in Eastern Europe in April 1951. The transfer of over 100 jet light bombers to the Chinese and North Korean air forces in November and December 1952 constituted the first known allocations outside the Soviet Air Forces.

WESTERN EUROPE

9. Russians propose new air corridor to Berlin:

[redacted] Soviet representatives at the quadripartite [redacted] Berlin air safety conference proposed on 7 April that a single corridor be established to replace the present three 20-mile-wide air lanes. The new corridor would be approximately 78 miles wide at the East-West German border and 60 miles wide at West Berlin. All armed aircraft would be excluded.

Although agreement was reached on an agenda for future meetings, the Allied representatives rejected a

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basic Russian assertion that present flight rules are invalid because the quadripartite control council has never certified them.

Comment: The Russian proposal to restrict the corridor to transport aircraft represents an effort to exert greater control over Allied air access to Berlin.

The creation of a single corridor might involve new operational difficulties for the Allies, especially if a new airlift became necessary. It would also reduce the area of East Germany subject to Allied air observation.

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