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GENERAL

1.

SOVIET UNION

2. Ignatiev affair receiving careful treatment in Soviet press:

The American Embassy in Moscow considers 3.3(h)(2) the Central Committee plenum's release of S. D. Ignatiev from the party Secretariat an indication that the doctors' affair was discussed by a relatively large group of high party officials. The Embassy feels that Ignatiev was probably also deprived of membership on the Central Committee, although this has not yet been announced.

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The Embassy points out that the unusual procedure of limiting coverage of the decision to Pravda while other papers merely reprinted its editorial on the dismissal may indicate that the Ignatiev issue is so delicate or obscure that other editors have been ordered to reprint the Pravda interpretation rather than paraphrase it.

Comment: Evidence is still lacking as to whether Ignatiev's dismissal was necessitated by a decision to eliminate the doctors' conspiracy as inconsistent with the new regime's "liberal and peaceful" character or was the result of an internal power struggle.

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SECURITY INFORMATION4. Soviet jet light bombers possibly ferried to Kamchatka:

Comment: These planes were probably jet light bombers, since the distance of the flight is barely within the known extended ranges of MIG-type aircraft and the prescribed altitude of the flight was almost 33,000 feet.

From bases in Kamchatka, jet light bombers could be used against targets in the western Aleutians as well as against hostile naval operations in the northern Pacific.

The three Tenth Air Army conventional light bomber regiments stationed on Kamchatka have an authorized strength of 126 aircraft; in 1952, one of the three fighter regiments in the Petropavlovsk area was re-equipped with MIG-15's.

FAR EAST

5. North Korean airfield reconstruction possibly linked with cease-fire:

Far East Air Force reports that renewed Communist activity in reconstructing airfields in North Korea, while possibly designed to expand the enemy's intercept capabilities, will allow the transfer of a large number of combat aircraft into Korea just prior to a cease-fire. This would give the North Koreans an air force on their own soil greatly outclassing that of South Korea, and would make the detection of a future build-up of Communist air strength nearly impossible.

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Comment: The portion of the draft armistice already agreed on provides that combat aircraft in Korea cannot be reinforced following the end of hostilities, but worn out or damaged aircraft can be replaced with equipment of the same type.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

6. French general sees planned Vietnam Army build-up as inadequate:

General Alessandri, French military adviser to Bao Dai, believes that current plans for enlarging the Vietnamese Army are "completely inadequate" and will result in only a minor increase in combined French-Vietnamese strength. Apparently basing this view on an anticipated rapid withdrawal of French forces, he estimates the net increase in French-Vietnamese strength over a two-year period at only about 6,000.

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The American Embassy in Saigon states it is unable to comment on the accuracy of Alessandri's figures until he provides further evidence, as he has promised.

Comment: Current French-Vietnamese plans call for an increase in the Vietnamese Army in order to enable troops now used only for static defense to engage in offensive operations against the Viet Minh. These plans would be vitiated if French forces are withdrawn within the next two to three years. Other French authorities, however, have not indicated that they plan such a disengagement.

SOUTH ASIA

7. Pakistani Foreign Minister reportedly may have to resign:

Pakistani Foreign Minister Zafrullah Khan told the American Charge in Karachi on 7 April that Prime Minister Nazimuddin was seeking to oust him from office. Zafrullah

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also stated that Nazimuddin, who was recently forced into suppressing agitation against Zafrullah Khan and the Ahmadiya religious sect to which he belongs, is now reacting by encouraging persecution of the Ahmadiyas.

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Nazimuddin is unlikely to want the resignation of Zafrullah Khan, one of the key men in his cabinet, chief Pakistani spokesman on Kashmir, and a pro-Westerner, at a time when the Kashmir issue is again before the UN Security Council and when Pakistan is seeking military and economic assistance from the United States. Furthermore, Nazimuddin's recent drastic actions to eliminate political opposition would be largely nullified if he acquiesced to opposition demands for Zafrullah's resignation.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

8. Egyptian sentiment may force Nagib to adopt anti-Western campaign:

Unless Britain offers Egypt acceptable terms 3.3(h)(2) for the evacuation of the Suez Canal zone within the next 30 days, Egyptian public opinion may force the Nagib regime to adopt an anti-

Western campaign with paramilitary operations against the British,

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The Revolutionary Command Council still insists that Britain accept the principle of full evacuation before there is any discussion of a defense pact. The Council does not believe that it can accept evacuation or a defense pact on terms similar to those rejected by former governments.

Comment: While Nagib has privately indicated his willingness to compromise, he has consistently demanded public agreement to evacuation as a prerequisite to any negotiations.

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Members of the regime have intimated that Nagib might be forced to yield to extreme nationalist demands and resort to anti-Western action.

Any extensive Egyptian paramilitary operations would result in British occupation of Cairo and the Delta.

WESTERN EUROPE

9. Inadequate economic planning imperils French defense build-up:

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American diplomatic and economic representatives in Paris agree that no increase in French military expenditures is likely in 1954. They warn that the government lacks plans to promote the growth of the economy, and is apparently resigned to economic stagnation.

Comment: The French have stated that present economic trends in France threaten to reduce 1954 defense expenditures below the 1953 level.

Military equipment appropriations originally frozen until 31 March have not yet been released, and Premier Mayer may continue to block these funds rather than take more unpalatable means of covering the serious budgetary deficit.

LATIN AMERICA

10. Comment on Guatemala's charges of foreign intervention:

Guatemala, charging that its sovereignty is threatened by an "international conspiracy" involving former high US officials and the governments of neighboring countries, announced on

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7 April that it had sent to the United Nations a notice of its withdrawal from the Organization of Central American States. This action provides Communist and nationalist propagandists in Latin America with effective material for use in their campaign to undermine US prestige and hemispheric solidarity.

The Guatemalan decision may also stimulate neighboring Central American governments, which genuinely fear the spread of Communist activity, to implement their plans for action against the Communist-influenced Guatemalan Government.

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