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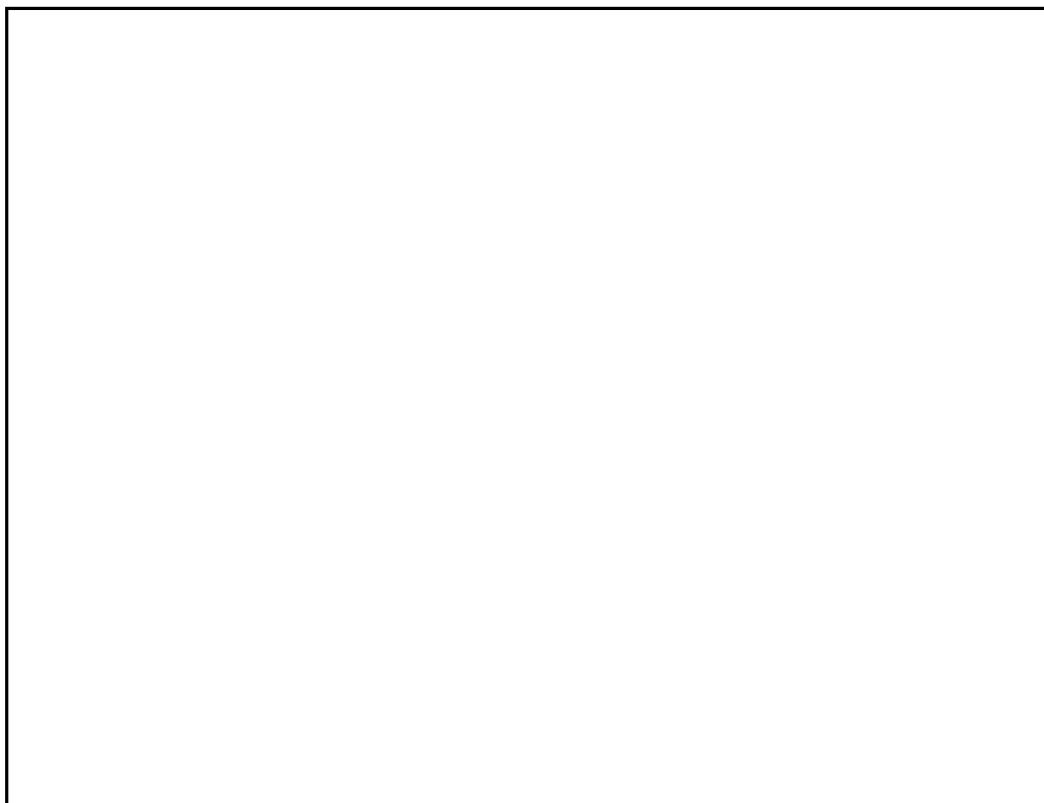
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**1. BEN-GURION ASKS US TO GUARANTEE FREE PASSAGE
IN GULF OF AQABA**

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Israeli prime minister Ben-Gurion told Ambassador Lawson on 30 December that Israeli forces must remain at the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba until there are effective guarantees that the straits are an international waterway open to all nations. When asked what would constitute an "effective guarantee," Ben-Gurion suggested a "United States undertaking that it would move against any attempt to block Eilat (the Israeli port at the head of the gulf) as with the case of Formosa." He regards a United Nations guarantee as ineffective.

The prime minister also emphasized repeatedly he is determined that the Gaza strip shall never revert to Egyptian control. He also objected, though less vehemently, to the idea of the Gaza strip's occupation by a UN force on the ground that this would merely provide a cover for a renewal of Egyptian fedayeen terrorist activity.

Comment

The Israelis regard the United Nations as practically valueless to them in view of the growing influence of the usually hostile Asian-African bloc and the unfriendly attitude of the USSR.

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2. SITUATION IN INDONESIA

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A spokesman for the Masjumi has announced that his party will withdraw from the cabinet if its proposal for a cabinet of experts under former vice president Hatta is not accepted.

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The Masjumi's withdrawal would increase the possibility of a Communist-influenced cabinet largely under Sukarno's direction, in view of Sukarno's reported threat to invite Communist participation in a new coalition.

Two of the three regimental commanders in North Sumatra have refused to recognize the authority of the Djakarta-named territorial commander, Lt. Col. Ginting. Battalions of both regiments reportedly are moving toward the Lake Toba area, in the central part of the province, to support the rebel commander, Colonel Simbolon.

The Communist Party in North Sumatra is continuing its strong support of Ginting and is reported to be arming members of the Communist-controlled estate workers' union in the Lake Toba area. The arms reportedly were obtained from troops in Siantar, presumably those of the regiment which has remained loyal to Ginting.

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4. EGYPTIAN ABROGATION OF 1954 TREATY WITH BRITAIN

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[Redacted]

Nasr's announcement on 1 January that Egypt considers the 1954 Anglo-Egyptian treaty on use of the former British bases in the Suez Canal area nullified by the attack on Egypt reduces Britain's chance of collecting financial compensation for Egyptian seizure of its military supplies. These supplies were worth about \$140,000,000, and were estimated last August to include 20 armored cars, 2,000 transport vehicles, railroad equipment, a small amount of artillery, 18,000 tons of ammunition, and over 130,000 tons of engineering and general stores. The British probably still intend to claim compensation to counteract Egyptian claims for damage inflicted by the military intervention.

London is contesting Egypt's right to abrogate the treaty unilaterally but probably has scant hope that Egypt would ever honor the treaty provision allowing Britain to re-enter the bases in the event of an attack by an outside power--except Israel--on any Arab state or Turkey. [Redacted]

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