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SECURITY INFORMATION~~

29 November 1953

3.5(c)

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GENERAL

1. Strong sentiment in France and Germany for talks with USSR:

The French Foreign Ministry expects the latest Soviet note to reawaken a "widespread latent demand" in France that nothing be done on the EDC until after four-power talks, which it now considers "unavoidable." Foreign Ministry spokesmen believe that the EDC has suffered a very serious reverse in the past few days.

They told American minister Achilles that January is probably the most likely time for four-power talks, in view of the "crowded" December calendar. They prefer a Swiss site, and assert Berlin is entirely unacceptable.

In the opinion of American officials in Bonn, Allied rejection of the Soviet note would provoke an adverse reaction in West Germany, where public opinion expects the Allies to grasp any opportunity for a four-power meeting to determine Soviet intentions on the German unity question.

Comment: The debate just concluded in the French National Assembly marked the first time since the war that a government had been faced with defeat on a foreign policy issue. Although the government survived, France's whole participation in Western defense plans could now be threatened by an ostensibly sincere Soviet offer to neutralize Germany.

The main hope for French EDC ratification rests on the fact that without the Popular Republicans, who are solidly behind EDC, no government can be formed in the present assembly.

FAR EAST

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2. Rhee accepts NNRC nations as observers at Korean political conference:

President Rhee and his cabinet have accepted Ambassador Dean's proposal to include India, Sweden, Switzerland, Poland and Czechoslovakia,

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the members of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission in Korea, as nonvoting observers at the Korean political conference.

Foreign Minister Pyun told Ambassador Briggs on 27 November that South Korea would not force a rupture of either the preliminary talks or the political conference if the Indians were seated as observers, provided they were not designated as "neutrals."

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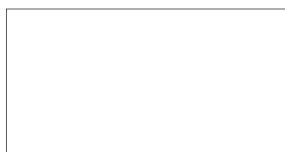
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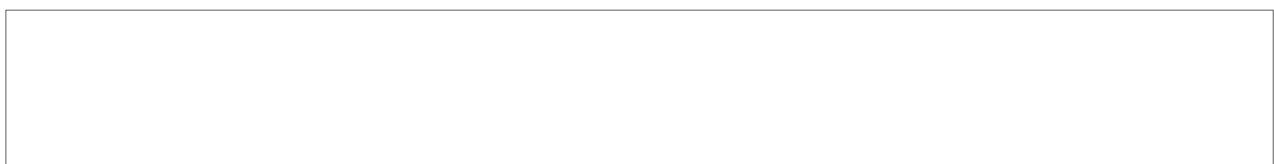
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SOUTHEAST ASIA

4. Construction of airfield in Burmese insurgent-held territory confirmed:

The American air attache in Bangkok has 3.3(h)(2)
 confirmed the presence of an airfield, possibly adequate for C-47's, in Burmese territory just west of the Thai border and east of

the port of Moulmein. When the attache's plane flew over, workmen on the field dispersed.

Comment:

[redacted] the Karen insurgents in Burma and the Chinese Nationalists, and of airfield construction in Karen-held territory. Actual construction of an airfield is a strong indication that Taipei intends to exploit the Karen tie after the present partial evacuation is completed.

By basing themselves in Karen areas, the Nationalists could maintain their hold on the lucrative opium traffic.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

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WESTERN EUROPE

6. Spanish army minister reportedly hostile to base agreements:

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[redacted] may soon remove Army Minister Augustin Munoz Grandes from his post because of the latter's outspoken opposition to the American base agreements and his unpopularity in the army.

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Comment: Munoz Grandes, an influential and forceful commander feared by many subordinates, has been quoted as saying that, as former commander of the Spanish Blue Division which fought with the Nazis in Russia, he cannot wholeheartedly accept military collaboration with the Americans. Most Spanish army officers are reportedly in favor of the agreements.

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