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25X1

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SUMMARY

GENERAL

1. Possible Soviet diplomatic "feeler" regarding Korea (page 3).

25X1

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25X1

4. US B-29 encounters night attack (page 5).
5. Indonesian Prime Minister resigns (page 5).

25X1

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GENERAL

1. Possible Soviet diplomatic "feeler" regarding Korea:

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According to the Israeli delegation at the UN, at an Israeli reception on 14 March Soviet delegate Malik twice

took the initiative in raising the Korean question. Malik reportedly asked an Israeli delegate for his views regarding the possibility of a settlement of the Korean war and appeared to be interested in the ensuing conversation, although no specific suggestions were made by either participant. The Israeli delegation was struck by Malik's repeated references to the current Paris meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers and thought Malik showed "great awareness" of the connection between the Korean problem and the Paris conference.

Comment: This is the only available report of a Soviet "feeler" at the UN regarding Korea in recent months. Since the Israelis were active during the January attempt at mediation between the US and Communist China, the USSR may well have approached the Israeli delegation in order to gain information as to how firmly the UN is behind its Korean objectives. British UN Delegate Jebb has suggested that Gromyko be approached in Paris concerning a possible Korean settlement, but the US, British and French deputies recently agreed that it was not advantageous to do so.

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- 3 -

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4. US B-29 encounters night attack:

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A US medium bomber flying a night-harassing mission over northwestern Korea on 17 March was attacked by from three to five enemy aircraft at 16,000 feet. The engagement began northwest of Pyongyang at midnight,

with the enemy breaking contact ten minutes later just north of the 38th Parallel. The bomber's air crew reported that the enemy aircraft displayed aggressiveness and flew at a high rate of speed.

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Comment: This is the first instance of night interception of a UN aircraft. The tactics and speed demonstrated by the attackers suggest that the enemy fliers involved possessed an advanced degree of training and that jet aircraft were employed. Enemy use of radar may have been involved, or this may have been a chance interception by some kind of special night patrol. The incident is another indication of a current step-up in enemy air efforts.

5. Indonesian Prime Minister resigns:

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On 20 March Prime Minister Mohammed Natsir tendered his resignation to President Sukarno.

- 5 -

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Comment: The fall of the Natsir Cabinet presages the probable emergence of a coalition government that will include representatives of Natsir's Masjumi Party and the Indonesian National Party. The latter party is highly nationalistic and has been increasingly supported by Communist-oriented groups. As a result of its influence, the government will probably move towards the left and display a less cooperative attitude toward the US. 25X1