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29 September 1953

Copy No. 67

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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

DOCUMENT NO. 15
NO CHANGE IN CLASS.
 DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 2009
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 19/12/79 REVIEWER:

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Office of Current Intelligence

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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GENERAL

1. USSR proposes two conferences of foreign ministers:

[Redacted]

The Soviet note of 28 September, as summarized by the US embassy in Moscow, answers the Western suggestion for a four-power conference on German elections and an Austrian treaty with a proposal for two conferences of foreign ministers.

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One would be a five-power conference including Communist China to consider means of lessening international tension. The other, a four-power conference on the German problem, would consider "all proposals raised in the course of preparation of the conference." The note states in conclusion that no answer has been received to the 28 August Soviet note on Austrian and says that the USSR is willing to consider the question "in usual diplomatic channels."

Comment: By proposing two conferences, the Soviet Union has clarified its note of 4 August which created the impression that it would talk about the German problem only at a five-power conference, and that such a conference must first discuss the lessening of international tensions. The USSR is attempting to leave the agenda of the German meeting as well as that of the five-power conference wide open and at the same time avoid the Western precondition that free elections be discussed first.

The note suggests continued stalling tactics on the Austrian question, probably in an attempt to gain Western acceptance of Soviet terms through diplomatic channels before committing the USSR to discuss the issue at a conference. The Western powers considered that their note of 2 September, to which the USSR is now replying, was an answer to the Soviet note of 28 August.

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SOUTHEAST ASIA

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2. Viet Minh activity in Tonkin delta increasingly serious:

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[redacted] the French have suffered heavy losses of both men and materiel in the Tonkin delta and the situation there is increasingly serious. [redacted]

[redacted] the Viet Minh has 30,000 organized local troops within the defense perimeter, in addition to two regular regiments, [redacted] [redacted] an attempt will be made to move the whole 320th Division into the delta.

[redacted] the first phase of the enemy fall offensive will consist of greatly intensified attacks within the delta.

Comment: [redacted] the mop-up operation launched last week by the French with 16 battalions to remedy the serious deterioration in their position achieved very limited success.

By intensified guerrilla action inside the delta and attacks in force against key objectives, the Viet Minh would be able to upset any early offensive that Navarre may be planning.

3. Large-scale desertions from Vietnam army training camp reported:

[redacted] During the first half of September, 483 Viet- 3.3(h)(2)
namese draftees deserted from the Quang
Yen camp in Tonkin, [redacted]

[redacted] Vietnam army officials attribute the desertions to mismanagement of the camp rather than to Viet Minh propaganda and doubt that many of the deserters have joined the Viet Minh. [redacted] however, that the Viet Minh is greatly increasing propaganda aimed at Vietnam army recruits.

Comment: This is the largest single number of desertions yet reported.

The Quang Yen camp is one of three used in training troops for the Vietnam army's new light battalions. It has facilities for approximately 3,000 trainees.

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Generally low morale, which is the result not only of mismanagement but of Vietnamese distrust of French intentions, has been a continuing factor in retarding the development of the Vietnam army, which has been considered a prerequisite to the success of the Navarre plan.

4. Thai resent lack of American support in UN election:

A member of the Thai delegation to the United Nations indicated on 25 September that because of American failure to support Prince Wan for the presidency of the General Assembly, Thailand's support on colonial issues could no longer be counted on. He said that from now on the Thais intend to work more closely with the Arab-Asian bloc. 3.3(h)(2)

Meanwhile, a Thai cabinet minister informed an officer of the American embassy in Bangkok that his government considered the US attitude to be "a slap in the face," and stated that the king was bitterly disappointed.

Comment: Thai resentment over this issue is concentrated among the few top officials who completely dominate the formulation of Thailand's policies, and who are quite capable of attempting to make their displeasure felt. It is not likely, however, that this attitude foreshadows any drastic revision of Thailand's pro-Western orientation.

SOUTH ASIA

5. India refuses to accept Battle Act provisions as binding:

The Indian government, though prepared not to ship any IA items under the Battle Act, has no controls on certain IB items and is 3.3(h)(2)

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actually exporting some of them, according to the secretary general of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs. The secretary general believed Prime Minister Nehru could not agree to the United States' request for prior notification of any change in the situation. He urged that since senior Indian officials are now thoroughly aware of the implications of the Battle Act, the United States let the matter rest for a few months.

Comment: This statement, following Nehru's earlier refusal to promise advance notice of the shipment of strategic materials, indicates that no formal guarantee of any kind can be expected from India. It is possible that shipments of IB items to Communist China and the Orbit will increase as a result of the Korean armistice.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

6. Iranian army cautions Qashqai tribe against aggressive action:

[Redacted]

The commanding officer of the Sixth Division at Shiraz has been attempting to impress the Qashqai tribes with Iranian military strength and has informed them that if they cause trouble, the army units will act.

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Comment: In spite of numerous reports that the Qashqai are restless and dissatisfied with Iranian political developments, the military authorities appear to be capable of preventing widespread revolt.

7. Comment on the status of Anglo-Egyptian negotiations:

[Redacted]

Cairo's public airing of the details of the informal negotiations over the Suez base may be a device to test popular reaction before the regime finally commits itself. In

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inviting public reaction, the government points up the existing differences, thus indicating that last-minute concessions may have to be made. Should public sentiment strongly oppose any part of the agreement, the Nagib regime could still hold out for better terms.

The premature release by the Egyptians, on the other hand, tended to put the British government on the spot, forcing it to make a similar announcement. Failure or undue delay in solving the dispute can still be blamed on London.

EASTERN EUROPE

8. Arrest of Polish cardinal reliably reported:



[redacted] report

the arrest on 25 September of Cardinal Wyszynski and Bishop Choromanski, secretary of the Polish episcopate. In the official Polish Communist daily newspaper of the same date, politburo member Ochab attacked the cardinal for violating the church-state agreement of 1950 and "sabotaging" the understanding with the government.

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Comment: These arrests will evoke a strong reaction among the people. Despite relentless attacks by the regime over a long period of time, the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, with the adherence of over 90 percent of the people, has retained its organizational strength.

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